



## Charter Renewal Application

*For Charter Schools Authorized by  
the Indiana Charter School Board*

Revised August 2020

For more information, please visit the  
Indiana Charter School Board website:  
<http://www.in.gov/icsb>.

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# Renewal Guidance

## Background

*Pursuant to Indiana Code (“IC”) § 20-24-2.2-2, the minimum standard for renewal of a charter school includes a requirement that the school not remain in the lowest category or designation of school improvement for four consecutive years. Absent exceptional circumstances, a charter school failing to meet this minimum standard is not eligible for renewal.*

Unless otherwise specified in the agreement, a charter between an organizer and the Indiana Charter School Board (“ICSB”) automatically terminates forty-five (45) days after completion of the school’s fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) year. Each school authorized by ICSB that wishes to continue being authorized by ICSB following the term of a charter must submit a Renewal Application in accordance with this guidance. The charter renewal process begins in the Fall of the final school year of the term of the charter.

ICSB may grant a renewal for any length of time up to five (5) years, with or without additional conditions. If ICSB determines that a school’s charter should be renewed, the school will be responsible for the terms of the new Charter Agreement, including ICSB’s Accountability System, plus any further conditions required by ICSB.

Renewal decisions are based on the school’s performance on ICSB’s Accountability System, the contents of the Renewal Application, an interview with the governing board of the school, public comments, and questions from ICSB board members. The organizer is encouraged to be represented by counsel at the renewal hearing.

As data regarding a school’s performance on ICSB’s Accountability System has been collected by ICSB during the term of the existing charter, the primary purpose of the Renewal Application is to allow the applicant:

- (1) To present explanatory, new, or supplemental information pertaining to the school’s performance on the Accountability System; and
- (2) To articulate the school’s strategy and capacity for sustaining success and improvement over the next charter term.

To assist schools in the completion of item (1) above, as part of the renewal process, ICSB will provide the organizer with a summary of the school’s performance to date on ICSB’s Accountability System.

## Renewal Process

**Statement of Intent to Seek Renewal** – By August 31<sup>st</sup> in the final school year of the term of the charter, the organizer of the school must submit a *Statement of Intent to Seek Renewal* to ICSB staff. The *Statement* should be a letter on school letterhead signed by the chair of the governing board of the school, indicating the organizer’s intent to seek renewal of its charter. The *Statement* itself does not need to provide any specific details or plans, and may be submitted electronically to [charter-applications@icsb.in.gov](mailto:charter-applications@icsb.in.gov).

**Summary Dashboard and Application Conference** – Within fourteen (14) days of the collective receipt of a school’s state assessment results, state letter grade, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter financial report, ICSB staff will provide the organizer with a summary of the school’s performance to date on ICSB’s Accountability System and will reach out to the organizer and the school to schedule a meeting or conference call with school leadership (designees of the board and administration) to discuss the Renewal Application.

**Renewal Application** – No later than 11:59 p.m. EST on October 12<sup>th</sup> in the final school year of the term of a charter, an organizer must submit a complete *Renewal Application* to ICSB staff. Renewal Applications must be concise, complete, and in compliance with the Application and Submission requirements contained in this document. Supplemental documentation not specifically required by the application should be included as exhibits, and be limited to information that meaningfully adds to or supplements existing data, or illustrates or supports plans or strategies discussed in the application.

**Renewal Site Visit and Public Hearing** – Within fourteen (14) days after receiving a Renewal Application, ICSB staff will reach out to the organizer and the school to schedule a school site visit. Site reviews may include: 1) interviews with members of the governing board, leadership, staff, and students; 2) classroom observations; 3) observation of school routines and operations; 4) inspection of the physical learning environment; 5) document reviews; 6) anything else ICSB staff determines is relevant to the renewal process. ICSB staff will coordinate logistics of a public hearing to allow input from parents and the community regarding the school’s performance.

**ICSB Renewal Meeting**– No later than the second week of December in the final school year of the term of the charter, ICSB will hold a public meeting on the Renewal Application. ICSB will determine the date of the meeting based on Board member availability. Public notice must be posted both by ICSB and the school at least seven (7) business days before the meeting. The school must post notice of the meeting in the same manner it posts notice of its regular board meetings.

**Written Decision** – No later than seven (7) business days following the Renewal Meeting, ICSB staff will provide the organizer with a final written report summarizing ICSB’s final recommendation on the Renewal Application.

## Nonrenewal and Closure

If ICSB staff plans to recommend non-approval of a request for renewal, the chairperson of the governing board will be notified by phone call and email at least ten (10) days prior to the ICSB meeting. If ICSB votes for non-renewal of a charter, the Charter Agreement will automatically terminate forty-five (45) days after the last instructional day of school.

ICSB has developed a charter school protocol to ensure timely notification to parents, orderly transition of students and student records to new schools, and proper disposition of school funds, property, and assets. ICSB will oversee and work with the organizer and school to ensure a smooth and orderly closure and transition for students and parents. This [Closure Protocol](#) document is designed to both fulfill these statutory obligations and to provide transparency and information to ICSB-authorized schools.

## Application Process and Submission Instructions

### Application Process

Renewal Applications must be received by ICSB no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on October 12<sup>th</sup> of the final school year of the term of the charter. All submissions are final; however, ICSB staff reserves the right to ask for additional information to clarify and/or support specific answers given during the interview process. The requested information must be submitted within five (5) business days of the time of the request. No extensions will be granted.

All renewal decisions will be made during a public meeting of the ICSB no later than the second week of December in the final school year of the term of the charter.

During the public meeting, ICSB staff will present its recommendation on the renewal request; the applicant will be permitted to make a short presentation; members of the public will have the opportunity to comment on the renewal; ICSB members will have the opportunity to ask the renewal applicant questions; and ICSB will vote on the renewal application. The ICSB meeting is open to the public and is recorded.

*All decisions concerning renewal of a school's charter shall be made at the discretion of the ICSB in accordance with applicable law. See [Section 15.3](#) of the Charter School Agreement ([Section 9.2](#) of the Revised Charter Agreement).*

In addition to, or in lieu of, attending the renewal hearing, community members may submit public comments via email to the following address: [charter-applications@icsb.in.gov](mailto:charter-applications@icsb.in.gov). Please note that all emails are subject to Indiana's public access laws including the Access to Public Records Act ("APRA"). Those submitting public comments are asked to provide their name and the name of the proposed charter school along with their comment.

## Submission Instructions

*ICSB reserves the right to reject untimely or incomplete Applications that have not been corrected before the deadline for submission. All Application materials must be submitted by the deadline.*

### Epicenter

Upon receipt of the *Statement of Intent to Seek Renewal*, the organizer's designated representative will be provided with a link, username and password to the ICSB's web-based submission platform, Epicenter. Each section of the application is uploaded separately, so applicants may prepare each section as a separate document.

Epicenter will automatically shut down access to all applications at 11:59 p.m. EST on October 12<sup>th</sup>. The application must be complete and submitted before that time. For planning purposes, ICSB recommends that applicants begin uploading the proposal and all required attachments approximately one day prior to the deadline. Please be advised that combining the proposal narrative and required attachments into one Portable Document ("PDF") file may take some time, so this step in the application preparation process should commence well in advance of the deadline. No hard copy submission or email submission is required.

### Specifications

The Renewal Application is limited to **30** pages total, excluding required Attachments. The application should be on white, letter-sized paper, with standard one-inch margins, be clearly paginated, and use no smaller than an 11-point font. Tables, graphs, and other data in the application must be clearly presented, clearly explained, and directly relevant to the text. Any supplemental documents should be clearly referenced in the application and directly relevant to that part of the text. The Renewal Application must be in either Microsoft ("MS") Word or PDF format. **Where possible, all PDF submissions should be created electronically from the original document files, and not be scanned from hardcopy originals.** All Attachments must be numbered, clearly labeled, comply with the page limit requirements, and be in the format specified in the Application Checklist attached hereto as Exhibit A. If a specific question does not apply to your application, please respond "Not Applicable."

Do not exceed the listed page limits. ICSB will exclude information from its review that exceeds these limits.

### Notice of Disclosure

**All information submitted as part of an application (including financial information) is subject to APRA and may be subject to review and copying by the public, including the media, unless either: 1) the applicant specifically requests that certain information be**

withheld (and cites the appropriate exception to disclosure); or 2) ICSB independently determines that it must withhold from disclosure certain information in the application. In the event there is a dispute between ICSB and the applicant as to whether certain information is disclosable, the applicant must obtain an advisory opinion from the State of Indiana's Public Access Counselor supporting the applicant's position. The applicant and its representatives, employees, and agents acknowledge and agree that ICSB Board members and staff, and any official, agent, employee or representative of the State of Indiana shall not be held liable or legally responsible in any way for any such disclosure pursuant to APRA, and such parties hereby waive any rights to redress or claims of action pursuant to any such disclosure.

# Charter School Renewal Application

## Renewal Proposal Overview

Please complete the Renewal Proposal Overview attached as Exhibit B. This should be the front page of **Attachment 4**, Entire Application.

## Section I: Performance Review

Please submit a narrative addressing the issues in Sections I, II, and III. This narrative must be submitted as the “Renewal Application” in PDF format.

Section I focuses on the success of the organizer in meeting the goals and measures set forth in the ICSB Accountability Plan over the term of the Charter Agreement. In forming its charter renewal recommendations, ICSB staff will review the school’s performance in all three categories of the Accountability Plan.

Prior to submission of the Renewal Application, ICSB will provide each school with a *Performance Dashboard Summary* which outlines the school’s cumulative performance over the existing charter term. Additionally, ICSB staff will schedule a meeting or conference call with school leadership (designees of the board and administration) to outline particular information required for a school’s Renewal Application.

In Section I, schools should address those measures in the *Performance Dashboard Summary* in which the school received a rating of “Approaches Standard,” “Improvement Necessary,” or “Does Not Meet Standard,” focusing primarily, but not exclusively, on the school’s most recently completed school year. **If you discover a calculation or rating in the Summary (for any year) that you believe to be in error, please contact ICSB staff as soon as possible so that the issue may be addressed.** Be prepared to provide data supporting your interpretation.

Schools should ensure that the Renewal Application addresses all categories and subcategories of the Accountability System in which the school received a rating of “Approaches Standard,” “Improvement Necessary,” or “Does Not Meet Standard.” Failure to address any one of the required categories or subcategories will count against the applicant.

Schools that were rated as “Meets or Exceeds Standard” in all performance categories and subcategories for the most recently completed school year, and who are comfortable being evaluated by the relevant data on record with ICSB, are not required to complete Section I. The school may, however, use Section I to provide any supplemental data or contextual information to augment the school’s record with ICSB for any area of the Accountability System if it so wishes.

Examples of information a school may provide to address a deficiency in a particular category

include, but are not limited to:

- A root cause analysis, explaining the underlying cause(s) of lagging performance.
- Action the school has taken or intends to take to address the deficiency (including any relevant data or evidence that performance on the indicator has improved since the most recent report).
- Any supplemental data or contextual information to augment the school’s record for any category or subcategory.
- A timeline as to when the school expects to “Meet Standard” on the indicator.

In addressing each subcategory, the school should *refer specifically* to the subcategory and criteria set forth in the Accountability System.

## Section II: Improvement

In Section II, the school should describe how it will sustain success and/or continue to improve over the next charter term. Responses should demonstrate that the school is planning carefully and strategically for the future and has the capacity to achieve long-term success. The school should also detail the school's plans for the next charter term. Specifically:

- (1) Describe the school’s plans and strategies for sustaining and continuing to build academic, organizational and operational success over the next charter term. Explain how the school will build and achieve long-term sustainability and success in:
  - a. The governing board;
  - b. The leadership team;
  - c. The teaching staff; and
  - d. Academic achievement.

In describing these strategies for sustaining success, please specify implementation timelines or timeframes as well as the responsible individuals or parties.

- (2) Identify particular weaknesses, challenges and areas for improvement, and detail the school’s plans for addressing each of these needs. Responses here should demonstrate that the school has reflected honestly and critically on those areas in need of improvement and ways to improve in those areas. In describing these plans and strategies for ongoing improvement, specify implementation timelines or timeframes as well as responsible individuals or parties.
- (3) Present any additional evidence, beyond the data contained in the final performance report for the charter school, supporting the schools case for renewal.
- (4) Please provide, as **Attachment 1**, a detailed five-year pro-forma budget for the school,

including the start-up year, by completing ICSB’s “Budget Projections Workbook” which can be found on the ICSB website: <https://www.in.gov/icsb/2361.htm> under “Important Renewal Documents”.

- (5) Please provide, as **Attachment 2**, a detailed budget narrative providing a high-level summary of the budget and how the budget aligns with the five-year business plan. The budget narrative should clearly describe assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to the basis for per-pupil revenue projections, staffing levels, facilities expenses, and technology costs.
- (6) Please provide, as **Attachment 3**, a single complete Statement of Assurances form, attached hereto as Exhibit C, signed by an authorized representative of the applicant group.

### **Section III: Proposed Changes to the Charter Agreement**

In this section, please specify any changes the school would like to see in any of the material terms in the Charter Agreement. Please note that any request for a material change, such as switching service providers, school location, grade configuration, etc., may result in a request for supplemental information from ICSB staff.

### **Submission of Entire Application**

Please provide, as **Attachment 4**, one (1) PDF file that contains all application components, including the Renewal Proposal Overview, the Renewal Application, including any exhibits, and all required Attachments. The order of the documents in the Entire Application should correspond to that in the Renewal Application Checklist in Exhibit A. This PDF file will be posted on ICSB’s website as required under Indiana law and in accordance with ICSB policy. Therefore, please be certain that this attachment contains no confidential personal information. In addition, please adhere with the guidelines provided under the Notice of Disclosure section beginning on page 7 of this RFP for any other information considered confidential.

Exhibit A

<b>Renewal Application Checklist</b>				
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#	Document	Page Limit	Format	Completed
	Renewal Proposal Overview	Use Template in <u>Exhibit B</u>	PDF	
	Renewal Application	30	MS Word or PDF	
1	Budget and Staffing Workbook	Use required template	MS Excel (no PDF submissions)	
2	Budget Narrative	5 pages	MS Word or PDF	
3	Statement of Assurances (only one form required)	Use Template in <u>Exhibit C</u>	PDF	
4	Entire Application (excluding items exempt from Indiana's Public Access Laws <b>assuming prior written approval from Indiana's Public Access Counselor</b> )		PDF	

Exhibit B

**Renewal Proposal Overview**

The applicant group’s **designated representative** will serve as the contact for all communications, interviews, and notices from the ICSB regarding the submitted application.

**Charter School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Charter School Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Designated Representative and Contact Information (Phone & Email):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mission Statement:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Leader/Principal:** \_\_\_\_\_

Current Board of Directors	

Current Grades Served	Future Enrollment	Grade Span for Next Charter Term	Maximum Enrollment for Next Charter Term
	Year 6		
	Year 7		
	Year 8		
	Year 9		
	Year 10		
	At Capacity		

**Identify ESP or partner organization (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

Exhibit C

**Statement of Assurances**

The charter school agrees to comply with all of the following provisions: *(Read and check)*

- 1. A resolution or motion has been adopted by the charter school applicant's governing body that authorizes the submission of this application, including all understanding and assurances contained herein, directing and authorizing the applicant's designated representative to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as required.
- 2. Recipients operate (or will operate if not yet open) a charter school in compliance with all federal and state laws, including Indiana Charter Schools Law as described in all relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 3. Recipients will, for the life of the charter, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as required by ICSB and IDOE. See in particular IC § 20-20-8-3 and relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 4. Recipients will comply with all relevant federal laws including, but not limited to, the *Age Discrimination in Employment Act* of 1975, Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964, Title IX of the *Education Amendments of 1972*, section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act* of 1973, Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, and section 427 of the *General Education Provision Act*.
- 5. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the Non regulatory Guidance—Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, which includes the use of a lottery for enrollment if the charter school is oversubscribed, as well as with applicable Indiana law. See also relevant sections of IC § 20-24.
- 6. Recipients shall ensure that a student's records, and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program as defined at 20 U.S.C. § 1401(14) of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, will follow the student, in accordance with applicable federal and state law.
- 7. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 ("ESSA")*, including but not limited to, provisions on school prayer, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, the Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information, the Unsafe School Choice Option, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") and assessments.
- 8. Recipients will operate with the organizer serving in the capacity of fiscal agent for the charter school and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- 9. Recipients will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.

- 10. Recipients will indemnify and hold harmless ICSB, the State of Indiana, all school corporations providing funds to the charter school (if applicable), and their officers, directors, agents and employees, and any successors and assigns from any and all liability, cause of action, or other injury or damage in any way relating to the charter school or its operation.
- 11. Recipients understand that ICSB may revoke the charter if ICSB deems that the recipient is not fulfilling the academic goals, fiscal management, or legal and operational responsibilities outlined in the charter.

I, the undersigned, am an authorized representative of the charter school applicant and do hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief. In addition, I do hereby certify to the assurances contained above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date