



Charter School Application
for
Currently Operating Non-Charter Schools

Revised August 2021

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in applying to the Indiana Charter School Board (“ICSB”). ICSB’s work is guided by five core principles:

- 1) Students First. When performing its duties, ICSB always assesses whether its actions will further the best interests of students.
- 2) High Expectations. ICSB expects the charter schools it authorizes to set high academic achievement expectations, develop strong plans for family and community engagement, and adhere to high ethical standards for students, staff, and board members. Similarly, ICSB establishes high performance expectations and ethical standards for itself.
- 3) Excellence in Leadership. Operating a high-performing charter school requires excellent leadership from school boards and staff. ICSB authorizes schools that demonstrate strong leadership at both the school governance and administrative levels.
- 4) Commitment to Innovation. ICSB is interested in operators that demonstrate the potential to accelerate student success through different school models, instructional strategies, uses of technology, staffing models, governance arrangements, family and community engagement strategies, and other approaches.
- 5) Rigorous and Transparent Accountability. ICSB holds schools accountable for performance through rigorous and transparent accountability mechanisms that uphold schools’ autonomy, foster excellence, and protect student and public interests.

Each application will be carefully evaluated for its alignment with ICSB’s core principles and compliance with applicable law. Only those applicants who can demonstrate the capacity to operate a high-performing charter schools will receive a charter from ICSB. The final decision on all charter school applications will be made by ICSB’s governing board in a public meeting.

Application Description

An applicant group should file a Charter School Application for Currently Operating Non-Charter Schools if it is the governing body of a currently operating public or private school that is not a charter school and which has been in operation for at least three (3) years. This includes, for example, an existing (district) innovation network school or an accredited private school. Schools that have been in operation less than three (3) years should contact ICSB at the following email address: charter-applications@icsb.in.gov to inquire as to eligibility. Additional information and application resources can be found on ICSB’s website: <http://www.in.gov/icsb/>.

Application and Submission Instructions

Application Process

ICSB's current Application Timeline may be found here: <https://www.in.gov/icsb/apply-for-a-charter/application-timeline/>. However, beginning in 2022, ICSB is moving away from set Application Cycles to a more flexible submission process. Once finalized, information about this process may be found in on ICSB's website.

Letter of Intent

An applicant group who wishes to submit a Charter Application may start the process by submitting a non-binding Letter of Intent to the following email address: charter-applications@icsb.in.gov.

Capacity Interview and Public Hearing

After submission and acceptance of a completed Charter Application, ICSB will reach out to the applicant group's designated representative to schedule a capacity interview. Only those individuals who are designated as part of the applicant group or as proposed or existing members of the governing board will be permitted to participate in the capacity interview. ICSB staff will use the capacity interview to address specific questions and concerns raised by the Charter Application, and to assess the capacity of the group to implement the proposed program effectively. The capacity interview is ninety (90) minutes long. ICSB staff reserves the right to ask for additional information to clarify and/or support specific answers given in the capacity interview. The requested information must be submitted within five (5) business days of the time of the request.

As required by Indiana law, a public hearing will be held to allow for comments from community members about the school. ICSB hosts public hearings within the school corporation where the charter school is located which are attended by ICSB staff and Board members. The purpose of the public hearing is for ICSB representatives to receive comments from community members about the potential impact of the proposed school on the community. The hearing is not a question and answer session between the public attendees and the applicant group or ICSB.

In addition to, or in lieu of, attending public hearings, community members may submit public comments via email to the following address: 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"), which may be found at IC § 5-14-3. Those submitting a public comment are asked to provide their name and the name of the charter school along with their comment.

ICSB Board Meeting

Approximately one (1) week prior to the ICSB application Board Meeting, ICSB staff will contact the designated representative for the applicant group to inform them of the staff recommendation for the school. At this time, the applicant group may choose to continue the application process and

present to ICSB members or the applicant group may “withdraw” its application from consideration which means that, while ICSB members will be provided with a copy of the staff recommendation, no discussion or vote will occur with respect to the application. Applicants who withdraw because the staff recommendation is declination or who are declined by the ICSB board may reapply in a later application cycle or to another authorizer in accordance with IC § 20-24-3-11.

During the meeting, ICSB board members hear ICSB staff recommendations, conduct a question and answer session with the members of the applicant group, and hold a roll call vote to approve or decline the application. Following the meeting, all decisions of the ICSB board are posted on ICSB’s website. ICSB application meetings are open to the public and streamed live over the internet.

Submission Instructions

All submissions are final. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that the Application and all documents submitted as part of the Application are responsive and complete by the submission deadline. Applicants should carefully review the Application and all documents referenced therein, including ICSB’s Charter Application FAQ, and use the Application Checklist as a guide.

ICSB reserves the right to reject all untimely or incomplete Applications.

Once an applicant group has submitted a letter of intent, the applicant group’s designated representative will be provided with a specific timeline and email address to which the Charter Application and all attachments must be sent along with specific submission instructions. ICSB is currently in the process of transitioning from one submission platform to another and ICSB will notify applicants if these submission instructions change.

ICSB will stop accepting email submissions at 11:59 p.m. ET on the date specified in the timeline. The application must be complete and submitted before that time. For planning purposes, ICSB recommends that applicants begin emailing the Application and all required attachments at minimum one day prior to the deadline. Combining the Application 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 is required.

Specifications

The Application must be typed and single-spaced, on letter-sized paper, with 1-inch page margins and a minimum of 11-point font. The Application Overview and Narrative must be in either Microsoft (“MS”) Word or PDF format. **PDF documents must be created electronically from the original document files and should not be scanned from hardcopy documents.** All Attachments must be numbered, clearly labeled, comply with the page limit requirements, and 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.”

Please limit your narrative response to sixty (60) total pages, excluding attachments. Do not exceed the listed page limits. ICSB will exclude information from its review that exceeds these limits.

Disclosure Notice

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 Application

Application Overview

Complete the Application Overview attached hereto as [Exhibit B](#). Each applicant must also complete Tab 1 of either the [Enrollment Plan for K-12 Schools](#) or the [Enrollment Plan for Adult High Schools](#), as applicable. Please ensure that you are completing the correct Enrollment Plan.

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should provide a concise overview of the school's mission and vision, the applicant's capacity (governance and leadership) to operate the school, the education model or design, the school's current financial health and past academic performance, and the reason the school is seeking a charter.

Section I: School Overview

ICSB is committed to authorizing high-performing charter schools. Only those applicants that demonstrate strong academic performance, fiscal responsibility, and legal and organizational compliance are likely to receive charter approval.

School Governance

1. List the school's current board members and provide a brief explanation of the expertise each member brings to the board. Has there been any recent significant board member turnover? How long has the current board chair been in his or her role? Provide, as **Attachment 1**, resumes for all current board members. Provide, as **Attachment 2**, a signed Statement of Economic Interest and Conflict of Interest Form (as provided in [Exhibit C](#)) for each current board member who is responsible for oversight of the school.
2. Provide, as **Attachment 3**, a copy of the board minutes from the last three Board meetings, including the meeting in which the board voted to submit this application.
3. How does the chosen governance model support quality oversight of the school, including monitoring of academic outcomes, financial health, organizational compliance, and school leadership performance? Provide an organization chart listing governance and operational responsibilities for the organizer and the school(s).
4. Provide, as **Attachment 4**, copies of the school's governance documents, including: 1) the organizer's 501(c)(3) Determination Letter from the Internal Revenue Service, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Conflict of Interest, and Code of Ethics policies.

School Management

Describe the school's leadership and management structure. How does this support the school design, as well as effective operations of the school? Has there been any recent significant leadership turnover at the school?

The following two questions apply only to charter schools that contract with an Education Service Provider ("ESP") to manage school operations.

- 1) Explain why the ESP was selected to manage the school. How satisfied is the board with the ESP's performance to date?
- 2) Summarize the primary responsibilities of the ESP and provide, as **Attachment 5**, a copy of the current executed management contract.

Education Plan/School Design

- 1) Describe the educational philosophy of the school. Provide an overview of the learning environment, class size and structure, curricula, tools, methods, and instructional strategies used to provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students and that support the school's education plan.
- 2) Describe how the school's curriculum is aligned with Indiana's Academic Standards, integrated across subjects and grade levels served, and how it will enable students to reach proficiency in core subjects.
- 3) Describe any interim assessments (e.g., DIBELS, ClearSight, NWEA MAP, TABE) used by the school to assess student performance and improvement.
- 4) Describe how the school collects, manages, and uses student academic data to refine and improve instruction.
- 5) Is the board satisfied with the school's academic outcomes to date? If not, what corrective actions have the board and the school taken to ensure the school is on a positive academic trajectory?
- 6) If available and/or applicable, provide, as **Attachment 6**, a copy of, or a link to, the school's performance report or dashboard for the three (3) most recently completed school years. If available and/or applicable, provide, as **Attachment 7**, a copy of, or a link to, any formal academic review or evaluation conducted by a state or local agency (including a school corporation) or a third party on behalf of a state or local agency within the last three (3) years.,
- 7) Describe the culture of the school and how this culture promotes a positive academic environment and reinforces student intellectual and social development.

- 8) Describe how the school serves students with special needs, including but not limited to those with IEPs, students with Section 504 plans, English learners, students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.

Organization and Compliance

- 1) Is the school currently facing any major operational or organizational challenges, including, but not limited to, problems with facilities, transportation, technology, staffing, enrollment, state or federal funding, etc.? If yes, briefly describe the board's plan to address these challenges.
- 2) Provide a brief description of the history of the school's compliance with applicable laws (e.g., state and federal reporting, special education, etc.).
- 3) Identify any current or past litigation, including arbitration proceedings, involving the charter school. Provide, as **Attachment 8**, copies of: (a) complaints, (b) any responses to complaints, and (c) the results of any arbitration or litigation.
- 4) Provide, as **Attachment 9**, a single complete Statement of Assurances form, attached hereto as Exhibit D, signed by an authorized representative of the applicant group.

Section II: School Finance

- 1) Provide, as **Attachment 10**, a detailed 5-Year Pro-Forma Budget for the school by completing ICSB's [Budget Projections Workbook](#).
- 2) Provide, as **Attachment 11**, a detailed budget narrative that provides a high-level summary of the budget. 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. The narrative should also address any financial issues previously identified by its current authorizer. The narrative should specifically address:
 - a) The degree to which the school (and network) budget relies on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising).
 - b) The school's contingency plans to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than the estimated budget.
 - c) How the school will ensure it has sufficient funds to cover all anticipated expenses, including but not limited to: (a) special education costs, (b) transportation costs necessary to ensure the school will be accessible for all enrolled students, and (c) required retirement plan contributions.
 - d) How the school addressed previous financial compliance issues found by current authorizer (if applicable).

Section III: Portfolio Review and Performance Record

- 1) Provide, as **Attachment 12**, a completed [Academic Performance Workbook](#).
- 2) List all performance deficiencies or compliance violations that have led to formal intervention by the Indiana Department of Education, the State Board of Education, a school corporation, or other state or local entity with oversight over the school in the last three years, and how such deficiencies or violations were resolved.

Submission of Full Application

Provide, as **Attachment 13**, one (1) PDF file that contains all application components, including the Application Overview, the Executive Summary, the Application Narrative, and all required Attachments. 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 on page seven of this document for any other information considered confidential.

Exhibit A

Application Checklist – Existing Non-Charter School

#	Document	Page Limit	Format	Completed
	Application Overview	Use Template in <u>Exhibit B</u>	PDF	
	Application (including Executive Summary)	60	MS Word or PDF	
1	Board Member Resumes	None	MS Word or PDF	
2	Statement of Economic Interest and Conflict of Interest Form (completed by each board member)	Use Template in <u>Exhibit C</u>	PDF	
3	Board Minutes	None	MS Word or PDF	
4	Governance Documents	None	MS Word or PDF	
5	Education Service Provider Contract	None	MS Word or PDF	
6	Performance Reports	None	MS Word or PDF	
7	Academic Reviews or Evaluations	None	MS Word or PDF	
8	School Litigation Information (if applicable)	10 pages	MS Word or PDF	
9	Statement of Assurances (only one form required)	Use Template in <u>Exhibit D</u>	PDF	
10	Budget Projections Workbook	Use required Template	MS Excel	
11	Budget Narrative	5 pages	MS Word or PDF	
12	Academic Performance Workbook	Use required Template	MS Excel	
13	Entire Application (including Attachments)	None	PDF	

Exhibit B

Application Overview

The applicant group’s **designated representative** will serve as the contact for all communications, interviews, and notices from ICSB regarding the submitted application. The full application, including this form, will be posted on the ICSB website. Applicants are advised that local community members, including members of the media, may contact the designated representative for questions about the school(s).

Legal name of group applying for Charter:

Designated Representative:

Contact Information (Phone & Email):

Name of School(s):

School Address(es):

Name of Board Chair:

Contact Information:

Year School(s) Opened:

Name of Education Service Provider (if applicable):

Grade Levels Served (most recent school year):

Student Enrollment (most recent school year):

Projected Student Enrollment

Complete [Tab 1](#) of either the [Enrollment Plan for K-12 Schools](#) or the [Enrollment Plan for Adult High Schools](#), as applicable. Please ensure that you are completing the correct Enrollment Plan.

Signature of Designated Representative

Name

Signature

Date

Exhibit C

Statement of Economic Interest & Conflict of Interest Form

(Must be completed individually by each Board member)

Background Information

1. Name of charter school on whose governing board you serve:

2. Your full name:

3. Your spouse's full name:

Employment History

4. Brief educational and employment history (no narrative response is required if your resume is attached to the charter application).

My resume is attached.

My resume is not attached. Please provide a narrative response:

5. List the name(s) of your current employer(s) and the nature of the business (an "employer" is defined as "any person from whom the board member or the board member's spouse receives more than thirty-three (33%) of their income"):

6. List the name(s) of your spouse's employer(s) and the nature of the business:

7. Do you and/or your spouse currently operate a sole proprietorship or professional practice?

No.

Yes. Please provide the name and describe the nature of the business:

8. Are you and/or your spouse a member of a partnership and/or limited liability company?

No.

Yes. Please provide the name and describe the nature of the business:

9. Are you and/or your spouse an officer or director of a corporation?

No.

Yes. Please provide the name and describe the nature of the business:

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

1. Do you or your spouse have a personal or business relationship with any other board member for the proposed school?

No.

Yes. Please identify the board member and indicate the nature of the relationship:

2. Do you or your spouse have a personal or business relationship with anyone who is conducting, or who plans to conduct, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of another entity)?

No.

Yes. Please identify the business and indicate the nature of the relationship:

3. Do you, your spouse, or any immediate family members conduct, or anticipate conducting, any business with the school?

No.

Yes. Please describe the nature of the business that is being, or will be, conducted:

4. (If the school intends to contract with an Education Service Provider). Do you, your spouse, or any immediate family members have a personal or business relationship with any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of the service provider?

Not applicable.

No.

Yes. Please describe the relationship:

5. (If the school intends to contract with an Education Service Provider). Do you, your spouse, or any immediate family members have a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the service provider?

Not applicable.

No.

Yes. Please provide a description of the interest:

6. (If the school intends to contract with an Education Service Provider). Do you, your spouse, or any immediate family members conduct, or anticipate conducting, any business with the provider?

Not applicable.

No.

Yes. Please describe the nature of the business:

7. Are you, your spouse, or any other immediate family members, a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any other organization that is partnering, or plans to partner, with the charter school?

No.

Yes. Please describe the relationship and the nature of the partnership:

8. Are there any other potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests that would, or are likely to, exist should you serve on the school's board?

No.

Yes. Please describe the nature of the potential conflict(s):

9. Do you understand the obligations of a charter school's board of directors to comply with Indiana's Public Access laws, including the Open Door Law and the Access to Public Record Act?

Yes.

Don't Know/ Unsure.

I, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Indiana Charter School Board as a prospective board member for the above charter school is true and correct in every respect.

Name

Signature

Date

Exhibit E

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 Indiana Code ("IC") § 20-24.
- 3. Recipients will, for the life of the charter, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as required by the Indiana Charter School Board ("ICSB") and the Indiana Department of Education. 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 receiving federal Charter School Program Grant funds 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*, 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 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 the 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 the ICSB may revoke the charter if the ICSB deems that the recipient is not fulfilling the academic goals, fiscal management, or legal and operational responsibilities outlined in the charter.

Signature from Authorized Representative of the Charter School Applicant

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

Title

Signature

Date