

AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Revisions to the New Charter Application

Issue

Consideration of the proposed revisions to the New Charter Application for the 2021–2022 cycle (attached).

Statutory Provisions

A.R.S. §15-183 requires a charter school sponsor to post on the sponsor’s website the “application, application process, and application time frames”. The law further requires that the application adopted by the sponsor include a detailed educational, business, and operational plan and any other materials required by the sponsor. Additionally, Arizona Administrative Code R7-5-201 requires the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (“Board”) to approve an application for a new charter for a specified annual application cycle by March 31 every year.

Background

As part of the new charter application process, staff updates the New Charter Application and instructions to reflect the upcoming cycle. The proposed revisions to the New Charter Application for the 2021–2022 cycle include:

- Technical changes to provide clarity and transparency to the instructions
- All relevant due dates are updated to reflect the new calendar year
- Clarification that provided enrollment caps are not projections, but yearly maximums
- Updated page limits based on applicant feedback from previous cycles
- Arizona standards required for section A.6 Instructional Analysis are updated with a different set of standards for each grade level span, as is done yearly
- Updates to information regarding Education Service Providers

The table below provides the proposed substantive changes to the New Charter Application and the rationale for the change.

Overview of the Application Process	Proposed Change and Rationale
In-person Interview	Language has been adjusted to indicate that the Applicant team shall make themselves available for an interview with the TRP team. Additionally, a statement was added to clarify that the Board will deny any application package that does not include completion of the in-person interview component.
Online Submission Process	Proposed Change and Rationale
Target Population Page	Instructions have been added to indicate that applicants will outline the grades served each year. This is to align with the online form in the Application Wizard. The word “projected” has been removed from the Enrollment Cap language to indicate that these are not projections, but the maximum number of students an applicant may serve in each of the first three years of operation.

Educational Plan	Proposed Change and Rationale
A.3 Program of Instruction	Additional instructions have been added for applicants intending to operate an online school or program clarifying that additional documentation and fees are required. This will allow the applicant to understand the rationale for contacting Board staff if it chooses to include an online component as part of its program.
Operational Plan	Proposed Change and Rationale
B.3.1 Education Service Providers	Although applicants will still be required to indicate whether they will contract with an Education Service Provider (“ESP”), this section has been updated to remove identification of whether the ESP will be an EMO or CMO. It was determined that the terms EMO and CMO have different meanings in different states, and with the federal government. Therefore, this identification has been removed. Applicants will still be required to provide all information related to the ESP, including the proposed service agreement, description of services, and background information as was previously required.