



Charter Schools Rating Template for

FY 08 - 09

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
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Rating Template for Application

This Rating Template is a guideline of criteria to be addressed in an application for a charter. Please see the directions included in the application for more information.

Upon receipt of an application to operate a charter school, the Department's Charter School Technical Review Team will evaluate the application using this Rating Template. The team will identify any deficiencies in the application and determine if any modifications or additional information are necessary. Once the Technical Review Team deems that the application is acceptable, it will be sent to the State Board of Education for approval.

The rating template is in a scoring guide format and will be used by the EED Charter School Technical Review Team to evaluate applications received. Each item on the rating template corresponds to one of the fifteen criteria in the application.

The charter school will need to properly address the question(s) under each criterion. For instance, number "1." concerns the "Academic Policy Committee". There are two questions in this section that need to be addressed. Under the question in each section are guidelines regarding "what the reviewers will look for," followed by "suggested sources of evidence". These two review guidelines should assist the charter school in properly submitting what the technical review team and State Board want in the review process. If a question in one of the criteria is not applicable, please write that in your application. For example, if this is a first application (a new charter school), the shaded **N/A check boxes** indicate the question may not apply, but must be addressed with comments for future plans to deal with the specific issue.

The application should not leave to the reader any responsibility for deciphering the explanation or interpreting the evidence presented. Successful applicants will also identify weaknesses, as well as strengths, and will explain why the weaknesses do not outweigh the school's strengths. The application and rating template is a response to questions about the school's performance and to questions about the school's future. In conclusion, the charter school's application should be looked upon favorably by the State Board of Education and Early Development if the fifteen criteria are adequately addressed.

Requirements

Timeline:

- (a) An initial charter application (after local school board approval) for a new or conversion school may not be submitted to the Department of Education & Early Development sooner than twelve (12) months prior to the start-up of the school.
- (b) An existing charter school cannot apply for reapplication to the state sooner than twelve (12) months before the expiration date of their charter.
- (c) The completed application materials shall be presented to the local school board, which will then forward the application to the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development's charter school program manager as required by AS 14.03.250(c).
- (d) *Mail to:*
 - Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
 - Attn: Charter School Program Manager
 - 801 W. 10th Street, Suite 200
 - P.O. Box 110500
 - Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500
- (e) 4 AAC 33.110(g) states: "No later than 20 working days after a local school board's decision to approve or deny an application for a charter school, the local school board shall mail to the Department of Education & Early Development the application and the decision, including the supporting documents required by (a) of this section, and the minutes of the local school board meeting at which the charter school was approved or denied...."
- (f) The completed application must be in the hands of the charter school program manager no later than 90 days before the next regular scheduled meeting of the State Board of Education & Early Development. See schedule at: www.eed.state.ak.us/State_Board/

Required Format:

1. Not more than 200 pages single-sided, *unbound*, in 12 point font.
2. ALL pages numbered in consecutive order (i.e. 1, 2, 3, ...200).
3. A table of contents.
4. Follow in numerical order the numbered headings of the application.
5. ALL numbered headings and subheadings must be addressed.

Application will not be read if any of the above five requirements are not met.

Charter Schools Rating Template

A= Adequate

IA= Inadequate

N/A= Not Applicable

Name of Charter School: _____

Date of Application and Rating Template: _____

District: _____

1.	RATING			COMMENTS
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Has the school's independent academic policy committee operated at an acceptable level?				
(b) Is there an independent academic policy on file?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school is meeting the objectives as stated in the independent academic policy.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: The number of academic policy sessions and the minutes from those committee meetings.</i>				

2.	RATING			COMMENTS
LAW PROVISIONS	A	IA	N/A	
(a) To be valid, the application must include a separate, signed, charter school contract with the district, addressing the fourteen provisions as listed under AS 14.03.255(c)(1 – 14).				
(b) Have the responsibilities of the academic policy committee regarding provisions of the law been fully addressed?				
(c) Is the charter school within the bounds of the most current applicable statutory and regulatory requirements?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school complies with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations in regards to the academic policy.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Charter contract, charter school bylaws, and minutes of meetings where committee has adopted bylaws, etc.</i>				

3.	RATING			COMMENTS
EDUCATION PROGRAMS	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting its academic goals?				
(b) Has the school demonstrated progress, where applicable, on the statewide assessment?				
(c) Has the school demonstrated progress, where applicable, on other assessments?				
(d) Does the school use its assessment data to drive decision-making in curriculum and instruction?				
(e) Where performance-based assessments are used, does the school have clear criteria?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school is providing an instructional program that meets or exceeds the academic standards, including assessments set by the state.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Promotion & graduation requirements & results of assessments that determine whether students are achieving standards.</i>				

4.	RATING			COMMENTS
PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENT	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Is the school implementing a well-conceived plan to ensure equal and bias-free access for all students, for all facilities, courses, programs, activities, and services?				
(b) Is the school systematically addressing the needs of students who do not perform at acceptable levels of proficiency in the statewide assessment program?				
(c) Is the school systematically informing parents of their child's performance and progress?				
(d) Did the charter school provide student assessment participation rates?				

4. (CONT.)	RATING			COMMENTS
PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENT	A	IA	N/A	
(e) Has the charter school made a comparison between their assessment scores and the district's assessment data?				
(f) Has the charter school made a comparison between their assessment scores and the state's assessment data?				
(g) Has the charter school shown disaggregated scores across all categories?				
(h) Does the school provide professional development that is goal-based and driven, in large part, by the student assessment data?				
(i) Is the school implementing a well-conceived plan to demonstrate progress over time?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school is meeting the objectives agreed to for program achievement, particularly assessment data comparisons, student assessment participation rates, and disaggregated scores across all categories</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Implementation of approved plans for special education, relevant data regarding enrollment & services provided to special needs & bilingual students, school schedule & calendar, and student records of statewide assessment performance. Also, student report card/progress report & description of staff development activities.</i>				

5.	RATING			COMMENTS
ADMISSION PROCEDURES	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Does the school have admission procedure criteria?				
(b) Are eligible students specifically defined?				
(c) What are the provisions for accommodating additional students, if necessary?				
(d) Is there a lottery or other type of provision for random drawing for enrollment when applicants exceed the school's capacity?				
(e) Is there a provision for accommodating vacancies that may occur mid year?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school is viable in terms, of student admissions, and has adequate provisions for accommodating additional students and a plan for random drawing for enrollment when applicants exceed capacity.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Enrollment data, turnover data, waiting list data, exit interviews or surveys, and written admissions/enrollment procedures.</i>				

6.	RATING			COMMENTS
ALTERNATIVE OPTION	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Is there a provision in place for students who do not wish to attend the charter school, even though it's the only option?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence through a local written provision that there are alternative choices for students who choose not to attend the local charter school, even though it is the only local school available.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Check local provision.</i>				

7.	RATING			COMMENTS
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Is there an administrative policy that follows charter school law?				
(b) Does the school present evidence that there is a full and abiding understanding of the obligations of the administration in providing for the control and supervision of the charter school?				
(c) Is there compelling evidence that the school's leadership is strong?				
(d) Is there compelling evidence that the school has handled organizational challenges effectively and competently?				
(e) Are the mechanisms in place; (e.g. an advisory grievance committee) to respond to, and, where indicated, resolve complaints?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school is administered in an efficient and effective manner. Evidence that there is clear governance and administrative structures and problems are addressed adequately when they arise.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Written evaluations, formal complaints, leadership changes, board turnover, and examples of governance issues & how they are addressed, and the administrative policy manual.</i>				

8.	RATING			COMMENTS
FUNDING ALLOCATION	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Is a charter school budget summary in place that designates the funding allocation from the local school board in addition to a summary of the charter school budget?				
(b) Is the school district going to implement indirect costs? If so, what services are provided to the charter school for this indirect fee?				
(c) Will the charter school be eligible for the additional local revenue over the 4-mills required in the foundation program?				
(d) Has the charter school met the requirement to achieve a positive or zero ending fund balance?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence of an understanding of the financial management and reporting requirements associated with operating a school per the charter school budget summary.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: A clear concise narrative statement providing sufficient evidence that the school has competently & effectively managed its finances. Evidence of an approved budget procedure for amending the budget, and procedures for amending budget minutes of meetings where the budget is adopted or amended.</i>				

9.	RATING			COMMENTS
FISCAL SOLVENCY	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Has the charter school, over the course of the initial charter, implemented a well-conceived financial plan to ensure the fiscal solvency of the charter school?				
(b) Do the audit reports to date indicate that the school has met its obligation to ensure the fiscal integrity of the school's financial operation?				
(c) Has the school achieved efficiencies in its operation?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence of sound fiscal management and fiscal viability of the charter school as confirmed by a balanced budget.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Financial audits & financial statements.</i>				

10.	RATING			COMMENTS
FACILITY PLANS	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Does the school present a clear and detailed plan for maintaining the present site or, if indicated, acquiring a suitable and adequate education facility?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence of how the charter school is in compliance with and is meeting their detailed facility plan.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: A drawn schematic of the physical plant.</i>				

11.	RATING			COMMENTS
TEACHER TO STUDENT RATIO	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Is there a plan which adequately addresses teacher to student ratio?				
(b) Is the plan reasonably based on projected enrollment figures?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school has a workable plan that addresses teacher to student ratio including projected enrollment figures.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Minutes of board meeting where staffing ratio was approved and evidence of deployment for determining enrollment projections.</i>				

12.	RATING			COMMENTS
ENROLLMENT	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Has the student enrollment been stable?				
(b) Has the school's enrollment been at a maximum?				
<i>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school is viable in terms of student enrollment, has an adequate student recruitment process to attract students, and is successful enough to retain the number of students it projected in the charter application.</i>				
<i>Suggested Sources of Evidence: A written statement that is a reflective self-appraisal of strengths & weaknesses of the school's charter with credible & compelling plans for building on success, maintaining or increasing student enrollment & momentum, & making necessary changes for improvement of the school.</i>				

13.	RATING			COMMENTS
TEACHING METHOD/CURRICULUM	A	IA	N/A	
(a) Does the school have a plan that addresses explicit teaching methods that will benefit an age group, grade level, or specific type of student?				
(b) Does the school have a systematic plan in place to monitor curriculum implementation and curriculum quality?				
(c) Has the school undertaken curriculum review and revision?				
(d) Is there evidence to support effective intervention with students who are “at risk?”				
(e) Is the school addressing the needs of students with educational disabilities?				
(f) Where applicable, does the school address the needs of students with limited English proficiency?				
What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that the school utilizes various teaching methods that would benefit specific age groups, grade levels, or explicit types of students. Evidence that the charter school has a written systematic plan to monitor curriculum implementation and quality, including curriculum review and revision. Evidence that the school is attracting and accommodating at-risk students and special education students and meeting their needs. Evidence that the school is complying with federal and state laws and regulations regarding these populations.				
Suggested Sources of Evidence: Check written plans on monitoring curriculum implementation, check that laws regarding special needs students are being adhered to. Evidence of an adopted curriculum/course of study, regular monitoring and updating of curriculum/course of study.				