



Charter Schools

Rating Template

for

Review Date: _____

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
Attn: Charter Schools
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, AK 99811-0500

April 2025 rev

Rating Template for Application

About the Rating Template:

This Rating Template serves as a guide for evaluating charter school applications. For additional details, please refer to the instructions included within the application itself.

Reviewer Instructions:

When a Local Education Agency (LEA) submits a charter school application, the Department's Charter School Lead will review it using this Rating Template. The reviewer's role is to:

- Identify any deficiencies in the application.
- Determine whether revisions or additional information are needed.
- Forward the application to the Commissioner's Executive Secretary for submission to the State Board of Education once it addresses all criteria.

How to Use the Rating Template:

This template provides a structured format for assessing applications. Each criterion includes:

- Specific questions the applicant must address.
- Guidance on what reviewers will look for.
- Suggested sources of evidence to support responses.

For example, **Criterion 1: Academic Policy Committee** includes two questions. Applicants must address both, using the review guidance to ensure their responses meet expectations.

If a question does not apply (e.g., in a new charter school application), indicate "Not Applicable" and provide a brief explanation or a plan for addressing the issue in the future. Shaded N/A checkboxes help identify questions that may not apply but still require a response.

Applicant Expectations:

Applications should be clear, complete, and easy to understand. Reviewers should not be left to interpret or infer meaning from vague responses. Strong applications will:

- Fully address each question.
- Include both strengths and weaknesses.
- Explain how any weaknesses are mitigated by the school's overall strengths.

The application and this template collectively provide a comprehensive look at both current performance and future plans.

Requirements

Timeline for Charter School Applications

Initial Applications (New or Conversion Schools):

Charter applications approved by a local school board must not be submitted to the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) more than 12 months before the proposed school start-up date.

Reapplications (Existing Charter Schools):

Existing charter schools may reapply to the state no earlier than 12 months before the expiration of their current charter.

Submission Process:

After local school board approval, the complete application package must be submitted to DEED by the board, as required by AS 14.03.250(c).

Send to:

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

Attn: Charter School Program Lead

P.O. Box 110500

Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500

Note: A digital copy is preferred and may meet regulatory requirements in place of a hard copy.

Regulatory Deadline:

According to 4 AAC 33.110(g):

Within 20 working days of the local school board's decision to approve or deny a charter school application, the board must send the following to DEED:

- The full application
- The board's official decision
- Required supporting documents (per 4 AAC 33.110(a))
- Meeting minutes reflecting the decision

Submission Deadline to State Board:

DEED's Charter School Program Manager must receive the final application at least 90 days before the next regularly scheduled State Board of Education & Early Development meeting. (Meeting schedules are available on the DEED website.)

Required Application Format

To be accepted for review, applications must meet all of the following formatting requirements:

1. Maximum length: 200 single-sided, unbound pages in Font: 12-point, standard typeface
2. Pagination: All pages numbered consecutively (e.g., 1, 2, 3 ... 200)
3. Table of Contents: Included and clearly organized
4. Order: Follow the numerical order of the application headings exactly
5. Completeness: All numbered sections and subsections must be addressed

Applications that do not meet all five format requirements will not be reviewed.

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?				
<p>What Reviewers Will Look For: <i>Evidence that the school is meeting the objectives as stated in the independent academic policy.</i></p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: <i>The number of academic policy sessions and the minutes from those committee meetings.</i></p>				

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?				
<p>What Reviewers Will Look For: <i>Evidence that the school complies with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations in regards to the academic policy.</i></p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: <i>Charter contract, charter school bylaws, and minutes of meetings where committee has adopted bylaws, etc.</i></p>				

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?				
<p>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.</p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Promotion & graduation requirements & results of assessments that determine whether students are achieving standards.</p>				

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?				
<p>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</p> <p>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.</p>				

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?				
<p>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.</p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Enrollment data, turnover data, waiting list data, exit interviews or surveys, and written admissions/enrollment procedures.</p>				

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?				
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.				
Suggested Sources of Evidence: Check local provision.				

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?				
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.				
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.				



8.	RATING			COMMENTS
	A	IA	N/A	
FUNDING ALLOCATION				
(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?				
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.				
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.				

Budget Revision -- no specific guidance on revision process, only that revision will occur after official count.

Food Service Program -- not serving breakfast/lunch; not participating in National School Lunch Program. Future years will incorporate school-produced ingredients.

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?				
<p>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence of sound fiscal management and fiscal viability of the charter school as confirmed by a balanced budget.</p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Financial audits & financial statements.</p>				

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?				
<p>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence of how the charter school is in compliance with and is meeting their detailed facility plan.</p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: A drawn schematic of the physical plant.</p>				

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

12.	RATING			COMMENTS
	A	IA	N/A	
ENROLLMENT				
(a) Has the student enrollment been stable?				
(b) Has the school's enrollment been at a maximum?				
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.				
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.				

13.	TEACHING METHOD/CURRICULUM	RATING			COMMENTS
		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?					
<p>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.</p>					
<p>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.</p>					

14.	RATING			COMMENTS
	A	IA	N/A	
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING				
(a) Where applicable, does a collective bargaining contract exist that alludes to contract exemptions that are agreed to by both the school district and bargaining unit?				
(b) If no contract exemptions are agreed to, are the employees of the charter school subject to all provisions of the collective bargaining agreements enforced in the school district?				
<p>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that a written collective bargaining contract exists, if applicable, regarding contract exemptions. In the event of no contract exemptions, evidence that the employees of the charter school are subject to all provisions of the school district's collective bargaining agreements.</p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Written collective bargaining unit contract, and board approval of exemptions from the collective bargaining agreement.</p>				

15.	RATING			COMMENTS
	A	IA	N/A	
Contract Termination				
(a) Is there a charter school contract termination clause currently in effect?				
<p>What Reviewers Will Look For: Evidence that a written charter school contract termination clause is present.</p> <p>Suggested Sources of Evidence: Check for written charter school termination clause.</p>				