

**DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
APPLICATION TO MODIFY AN APPROVED CHARTER
2013-2014**

DE Department of Education
Charter School Office
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I. INTRODUCTION

Opportunities for schools to grow and change do not always conveniently occur at the time of a charter school's renewal. As a result, we have developed this Modification Application to allow charter schools an opportunity to propose areas they would like to amend in their approved charters.

Modifications include any change to a school's original charter, such as increasing/decreasing student enrollment capacity, adding/subtracting additional grades, changing the school's mission, and moving to a new facility. Table 1 below outlines the most common types of modification requests and identifies them as either minor or major modifications.

The Delaware Department of Education's Charter School Office has developed specific application questions based on your school's desired change. These questions are designed to provide schools with an opportunity to demonstrate how this proposed modification will enhance their program's success and viability.

As required by law, charter schools shall be modified by the same procedure and based on the same criteria as they are approved. Minor modifications to a charter may be approved by the Secretary of Education with the assent of the State Board of Education. Most major modifications to a charter must be considered through the application process with recommendation for approval or denial made initially by the Charter School Accountability Committee, which is then considered by the Secretary of Education and a final recommendation presented to the State Board of Education for action.

Table 1

Type of modification	Minor Modification	Major Modification	Application Deadline	Charter School Accountability Committee Required
Enrollment change(increase or decrease) between 5% and 15%	X		Applications only accepted between November 1 st and December 31st	
Enrollment change(increase or decrease) of greater than 15%		X	Applications only accepted between November 1 st and December 31st	X
Grade configuration (adding grade levels or reducing grade levels)		X	<i>Recommended: March 1st</i>	X
Educational Program (i.e., curriculum)		X	<i>Recommended: March 1st</i>	X
Mission (includes At-Risk designation)		X	<i>Recommended: March 1st</i>	X
Replace, remove, or add EMO/CMO, or transfer of authorizer		X	<i>Recommended: March 1st</i>	X
Change agreement with EMO/CMO	X		None	
Enrollment preferences		X	<i>Recommended: March 1st</i>	X
Location change		X	<i>Recommended: March 1st</i>	X
Goals for student performance		X	<i>Recommended: March 1st</i>	X
Performance Agreement		X	None	
Start date/one-time delay	X		None	
Name of charter school	X		None	
Existing or planned school facilities or structures (including any plan to use temporary or modular structures)	X		None	
Change in terms to current site facility arrangement (i.e., lease to purchase)	X		None	

*****Please note:** In addition to meeting the approval criteria established in 14 Del. Code Chapter 5 §512, an authorizer considering a charter school’s application for **expansion by more than 15% occurring less than 18 months from the date of the modification application** shall also consider the potential positive and negative impact of the proposed new school or expansion on the schools and the community from which the charter school's new students will likely be drawn. In reviewing the impact, the authorizer shall consider all information furnished to it during the modification application process and may exercise its reasonable discretion in determining whether the proposed expansion is contrary to the best interests of the community to be served, including both those students likely to attend the charter school and those students likely to attend traditional public schools in the community.

II. MODIFICATION PROCESS

Application Submission: A completed application must be received as a hard copy by the Department of Education’s Charter School Office between November 1 and December 31 if requesting an *increase or reduction of enrollment of between 5% and 15% OR more than 15% of the currently approved total enrollment*. Please note that all other modification requests do not have statutory deadlines, but the Charter School Office has provided *recommended* deadlines in order to facilitate a more efficient application process. An electronic copy shall also be submitted at the same time either as an attachment to an e-mail message or by electronic portable storage. The electronic copy shall be identical in all respects to the original application. Incomplete applications, or applications received after the deadline, will not be considered.

Applicants submitting a minor modification will answer the “Core Questions” only and provide evidence of fiscal viability as it applies to the modification request.

Applicants submitting a major modification will answer the “Core Questions” *and any additional related questions*, including evidence of fiscal viability, as applicable to the modification request. These additional questions are identified in Table 2.

Application Review: All applications must be fully complete in order to be evaluated. The application for modification will be reviewed and evaluated by the approving authority as outlined in 14Del. C. Chapter 5 and applicable provisions of Regulation 275.

III. APPLICATION CONTENT AND FORMAT

The prescribed content and format for the renewal application are specified below.

Document Length: The application may not exceed 20 pages, not including the cover page, table of contents, or appendices.

Format: All pages must be typed with 1-inch page margins and 12-point font, single-spaced (Helvetica or Arial font and left justification), and include consecutive page numbers in the footer. Charts may use single spacing and a type size of 10-point font.

Cover Page: Provide a cover page that includes the school's name, the date of the report and the type of modification requested (minor or major).

Table of Contents: Provide a clearly labeled Table of Contents naming all major sections and appendices with corresponding page numbers.

Appendices: All supplementary documents should be identified appropriately and properly labeled as appendices at the end of the application.

IV. CHARTER SCHOOL MODIFICATION APPLICATION QUESTIONS

There are core questions that must be answered by the applicant, regardless of whether the modification is considered a minor or a major modification. Additional questions are determined by the specific nature of the request, for example expansion or reduction by more than 15%, change of name, change of location, etc. Please provide clear, complete, and accurate information in response to each question.

Please indicate the type(s) of modification(s) you are requesting by checking all applicable boxes below:

Table 2

Minor Modification (Section A Only)		Major Modification (Section A <u>AND</u> additional questions identified below)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment change(increase or decrease) between 5% and 15%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment change(increase or decrease) of greater than 15% (<18 mos includes impact study) Section B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change agreement with EMO/CMO	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade configuration (adding grade levels or reducing grade levels) Section B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start date/one-time delay	<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Program (i.e., curriculum) Section C
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name of charter school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mission (includes At-Risk designation) Section D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing or planned school facilities or structures (including any plan to use temporary or modular structures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Replace, remove, or add EMO/CMO, or transfer of authorizer Section E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in terms to current site facility arrangement (i.e., lease to purchase)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment preferences Section F
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Location change Section G
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Goals for student performance Section H
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance Agreement Section A only

Section A: Core Questions

1. What modification does the school’s Board of Directors wish to make to the term(s) of the charter? Identify the page number(s) on which the term(s) is/are stated in the currently approved charter. If the term(s) of the charter the school wishes to modify is/are conditions placed on the charter by the Secretary of Education and members of the State Board of Education, state the condition(s) and the date(s) on which the condition(s) was/were placed on the school’s charter.
2. What is the effective date of the proposed modification? (Please note: if this is a request for an enrollment expansion of greater than 15%, the applicant must provide an impact analysis pursuant to 14 Del. Code Chapter 5 §511(b)3 as an Attachment See Section B Question 3 in this application.)
3. The authorizer will review your most recent Performance Review Reports as part of your application. Discuss the school’s academic performance, its compliance with the terms of its charter, and its financial viability as measured by the Performance Framework.

4. Describe the rationale for the request(s). Discuss any relevant research-base or evidence that supports this type of request. *(Attachments may be provided.)*
5. Describe how the proposed modification will impact the operation of the school. Include how student achievement, staffing, facilities, and the financial viability of the school may be impacted in the current school year and for the remainder of the school's charter term.
6. Indicate the projected impact, if any, of the proposed modification on the school's present financial position, and its financial position going forward. If the modification promises to create financial challenges, indicate how those will be remedied.

Section B Questions:

1. Discuss your objective in seeking the proposed modification.
2. Describe the nature and extent of the proposed changes to the school's current grade configuration. Indicate whether you seek to add or cease offering a grade or grades, substantially increase or decrease current enrollment practices and/or projections for future enrollment, etc. *(Please make sure to indicate whether you seek an increase or reduction of enrollment of between 5% and 15% or more than 15% of the currently approved total enrollment and note that modification requests that fall into those ranges must be received by the Department of Education's Charter School Office between November 1 and December 31.)*
3. If your proposed modification involves an expansion of greater than 15% of your currently approved enrollment and the change will be effective within 18 months of the date of this application, please provide as an Attachment and impact analysis that discusses both the positive and negative impacts this expansion will have on the surrounding school districts and community.
4. Describe the projected impact of the enrollment modification on the school's program, mission, culture and offerings (both academic and non-academic). Please note: any projected financial impact should be addressed in Core Question #6.

If you are proposing to add grade levels that would create a new grade band not currently served by the school (i.e., K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12):

5. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including a course scope and sequence by subject for each grade level that will be affected by this modification. The scope and sequence documents should identify course outcomes and demonstrate clear alignment with the Delaware Content Standards

(Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Math) in all curricular content areas. Summarize curricular choices, by subject, and the rationale for each choice, including research and other evidence of effectiveness.

6. Provide three units of instruction in all content areas with corresponding summative assessments and scoring rubrics per grade band (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12) by subject to demonstrate alignment of instruction to the Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Math) pursuant to 14 Del Admin. C. 501.

Section C Questions:

7. Present evidence that the proposed educational program is research-based and has been or will be rigorous, engaging, and effective for the anticipated student population. If evidence of effectiveness in other schools serving similar populations is not available, explain why the proposed program is likely to succeed with your anticipated population.
8. Describe how the proposed educational program will serve the diverse needs of students, such as those with disabilities, gifted and talented learners, and English Language Learners.
9. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including a course scope and sequence by subject for each grade level that will be affected by this modification. The scope and sequence documents should identify course outcomes and demonstrate clear alignment with the Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Math) in all curricular content areas. Summarize curricular choices, by subject, and the rationale for each choice, including research and other evidence of effectiveness.
10. Provide three units of instruction in all content areas with corresponding summative assessments and scoring rubrics per grade band (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12) by subject to demonstrate alignment of instruction to the Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Math) pursuant to 14 Del Admin. C. 501.

Section D Questions:

1. Describe the school's current educational philosophy and how the proposed mission will be integrated into the current educational program.
2. Describe your objective in seeking the proposed modification?
3. Describe how the proposed mission will result in higher academic achievement for the school's student population.

Section E Questions:

1. Describe your objective in seeking the proposed modification.
2. If you are seeking to transfer from your current authorizer to another, please articulate your rationale and identify the projected benefits to the school and its students. Identify any prospective challenges and indicate your plans for remedying them.
3. If you are seeking to add, replace or remove an EMO/CMO, please articulate your reason or reasons for doing so. Discuss any challenge or challenges this will remedy. Include the projected benefits.
4. If the proposed modification will entail costs that the school is not currently carrying, please identify them and present financial information indicating that such costs are viable and how the school will address them.
5. If the school seeks to add or replace an EMO/CMO, please present evidence that its program is sound, and that affiliation with that organization is likely to improve academic performance for students. If the EMO/CMO works or has worked with other schools within or outside the state, provide evidence of its record of such performance.

Section F Questions:

1. Discuss your objective in seeking the proposed modification.
2. Please articulate all ways in which your current enrollment preference practices are problematic and in need of revision. Please articulate how you anticipate that the modification will remedy current problems and ultimately benefit the school.
3. Identify any changes to the school's program that will likely result from the modified preference practices.

Section G Questions:

1. Discuss your objective in seeking the proposed modification.
2. Please describe any challenges that the current school facility presents. If the modification is approved, will it generate any new challenges, and if so, how will you address them?

3. Please describe the proposed location of the school. Include information about siting, space available, costs to the school (and how they differ from the current facilities arrangement), safety, any co-located programs sharing the same facility, the quality of the instructional and non-instructional space and any other significant factors impacting the attractiveness and viability of the proposed facility.
4. Describe the projected impact of the location modification on the school's program, mission, culture and offerings (both academic and non-academic).
5. Articulate a facility usage plan for the school going forward. Will the proposed location solve space needs for a limited amount of time or permanently? Will further modifications be required?

Section H Questions:

1. Discuss your objective in seeking the proposed modification. *(Please note: a change in student performance goals also imposes a change in your Performance Agreement.)*
2. Explain how the school's current goals for student performance are problematic. Discuss how the modification you seek will likely remedy those problems, including any established evidence or research base. Provide evidence that the proposed student performance goals are academically sound and will benefit all students.
3. Discuss your students' current performance as measured by the Performance Framework and how the proposed change will improve academic performance.
4. If the modification is approved, discuss any new challenges this would present and how you will address them.