

**DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**APPLICATION TO MODIFY AN APPROVED CHARTER**  
**2015-16**

DE Department of Education  
Charter School Office  
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## I. INTRODUCTION

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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 decision is presented to the State Board of Education for assent.

**Table 1**

<b>Type of modification</b>	<b>Minor Modification</b>	<b>Major Modification</b>	<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>Charter School Accountability Committee Required</b>
Enrollment change(increase or decrease) between 5 and 15%	X		Applications only accepted between November 1 <sup>st</sup> and December 31 <sup>st</sup>	
Enrollment change(increase or decrease) of greater than 15%		X	Applications only accepted between November 1 <sup>st</sup> and December 31 <sup>st</sup>	X
Grade configuration (adding grade levels or reducing grade levels)		X	Recommended: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	X
Educational Program (i.e. curriculum)		X	Recommended: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	X
Mission (includes At-Risk designation)		X	Recommended: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	X
Replace, remove, or add EMO/CMO, or transfer of authorizer		X	Recommended: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	X
Change agreement with EMO/CMO	X		None	
Enrollment preferences		X	Recommended: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	X
Location change		X	Recommended: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	X
Goals for student performance		X	Recommended: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	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	

## II. MODIFICATION PROCESS

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**Application Submission:** A completed application must be emailed to the Department of Education's Charter School Office email at [infocso@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:infocso@doe.k12.de.us) 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. 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 complete to be evaluated. The application for modification will be reviewed and evaluated by the approving authority as outlined in 14 Del. C. ch. 5 and applicable provisions of 14 DE Admin. Code § 275.

## III. APPLICATION CONTENT AND FORMAT

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The prescribed content and format for the modification 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 submission 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 labeled as appendices at the end of the application.

## IV. CHARTER SCHOOL MODIFICATION APPLICATION QUESTIONS

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There are core questions that must be answered by the applicant, regardless of whether the modification is considered a minor or 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**

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

## Section A Core Questions:

1. What modification does the school's Board of Directors want 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 wants 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?
3. The authorizer will review your most recent Performance Review Reports as part of your application. Discuss the school's academic performance, compliance with the terms of its charter, and 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 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. Describe the nature and extent of the proposed changes to the school's current grade configuration, if applicable. 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.)*
2. 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, identify the impacts of this expansion on the surrounding school districts and community for consideration.

**\*\*Please note:** In addition to meeting the approval criteria established in 14 Del. C. § 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 impact of the proposed new school or expansion. **"Impact"** is the positive and negative effect that a new charter school or charter school expansion, if it should be

approved, is projected to have upon the surrounding area and the education system of the state. Information regarding Impact may, by itself or in combination with other factors, form the basis for conditions being placed on the approval of a new charter school or modification. Impact shall include educational, financial, and community information.

Pursuant to 14 Del. C. § 511(b)(4), “information regarding impact may, by itself or in combination with other factors, form the basis for conditions being placed on the approval. Those conditions may include but shall not be limited to restrictions or prohibitions on geographic location, programmatic offerings, academic focus or emphasis, and grade levels served.”

For each application, members of the public will have the opportunity to submit public comments that describe the positive and negative impact that the proposed charter school will have on the surrounding area and the education system of the state. Based on the information submitted in these public comments, the Department of Education and the State Board of Education may propose conditions relating to impact. A charter applicant will have opportunities to respond to any proposed conditions at the CSAC Final Meeting, a public hearing, and in writing prior to the decision on whether the charter is approved.

3. Describe the projected impact of the enrollment modification on the school’s program, mission, culture and offerings (both academic and non-academic).

### **Section C Questions:**

1. 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.)*
2. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including one scope and sequence per subject area per grade band (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) 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 (including Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards) in all content areas. Summarize curricular choices, by subject, and the rationale for each choice, including research and other evidence of effectiveness. If the modification includes a commitment to join the Social Studies Coalition, then a signed MOU would replace the scope and sequence requirement for Social Studies.
3. Provide one Mathematics unit of instruction with corresponding summative assessments and scoring rubrics, and one ELA unit with corresponding summative assessment and scoring rubrics to

demonstrate alignment of instruction to the Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in ELA and Mathematics). If the school does not intend to join the Delaware Science or Social Studies Coalitions, then 1 Science unit and 1 Social Studies unit with corresponding summative assessments and scoring rubrics to demonstrate alignment of instruction to the Next Generation Science Standards and Delaware Social Studies Content Standards are also required.

#### **Section D Questions:**

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including one scope and sequence per subject area per grade band (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) 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 (including Common Core State Standards in ELA and Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards) in all content areas. Summarize curricular choices, by subject, and the rationale for each choice, including research and other evidence of effectiveness. If the modification includes a commitment to join the Social Studies Coalition, then a signed MOU would replace the scope and sequence requirement for Social Studies.
4. Provide one Mathematics unit of instruction with corresponding summative assessments and scoring rubrics, and one ELA unit with corresponding summative assessment and scoring rubrics to demonstrate alignment of instruction to the Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in ELA and Mathematics). If the school does not intend to join the Delaware Science or Social Studies Coalitions, then 1 Science unit and 1 Social Studies unit with corresponding summative assessments and scoring rubrics to demonstrate alignment of instruction to the Next Generation Science Standards and Delaware Social Studies Content Standards are also required.

#### **Section E Questions:**

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



**Section F Questions:**

1. If you are seeking to transfer from your current authorizer to another, detail the rationale and identify the projected benefits to the school and its students. Identify any prospective challenges and indicate your plans for remediation.
2. Detail the reason(s) for seeking to add, replace or remove an EMO/CMO Identify any prospective challenges and indicate your plans for remediation. Include the projected benefits. (Note: Pursuant to 14 DE Admin. Code § 275.9.4.3, an application to replace, remove or permit the school to operate without an educational management organization providing administrative, managerial or instructional staff or services to the charter holder at any time before the First Instructional Day is considered an application for a new charter and shall not be processed or considered as a modification application.)
3. 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.
4. 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. (Note: Pursuant to 14 DE Admin. Code § 275.9.4.3, an application to replace, remove or permit the school to operate without an educational management organization providing administrative, managerial or instructional staff or services to the charter holder at any time before the First Instructional Day is considered an application for a new charter and shall not be processed or considered as a modification application.)

**Section G Questions:**

1. Describe the reasons why the current enrollment preference practices are problematic and require revision.
2. Discuss how the modification will solve the 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 H Questions:**

1. Please describe any challenges that the current school facility presents. If the modification is approved, will it generate any new challenges and describe how you will address them.
2. 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.

3. Describe the projected impact of the location modification on the school's program, mission, culture and offerings (both academic and non-academic).
4. 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 I Questions:**

1. 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.
2. Discuss your students' current performance as measured by the Performance Framework and how the proposed change will improve academic performance.
3. If the modification is approved, discuss any new challenges this would present and how you will address them.