



# LIMESTONE CHARTER ASSOCIATION

## *CHARTER SCHOOL TRANSFER APPLICATION GUIDANCE DOCUMENT*

*Updated July 2022*

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in applying to the Limestone Charter Association (LCA). LCA is committed to the highest levels of quality for itself and the schools it authorizes. LCA's work is guided by the mission to serve as the cornerstone of charter school authorizing in South Carolina and to facilitate a positive, educational environment that fosters school autonomy through support and oversight to its member schools. This document outlines the process, timeline, and required documentation needed to satisfy the transfer process.

## PROCESS OVERVIEW AND TIMELINE

In making the determination to approve a school's transfer request, LCA will comprehensively evaluate the school's historical academic performance, fiscal soundness, operational compliance, and board governance. Evidence to be evaluated may be gathered by site visits, stakeholder interviews, attendance at board meetings, *Charter School Transfer Application* documents, and state data extractions. The process is designed to provide LCA staff with the necessary documentation to make an informed recommendation to the LCA Board of Trustees, who ultimately either approve or deny the transfer request.

Date	Activity
August 30	The charter school's board of trustees votes on the proposed transfer request in a public meeting.
TBD by current authorizer's policies	The charter school board notifies their current authorizer of their intent to transfer, pursuant to their current authorizer's policies and timelines.
October 1	<i>Charter School Transfer Application</i> due to LCA by 11:59 p.m. EST via LCA's website.
October-November	LCA staff conducts a comprehensive review of the submitted <i>Charter School Transfer Application</i> and schedules a final meeting with the school to share the LCA staff recommendation regarding the transfer request, prior to the LCA board meeting in November.
November 30	LCA Board shall act on the submitted Charter School Transfer Application in a public meeting.
December 5	LCA shall provide the South Carolina Department of Education notice of any transfer request presented to the LCA Board and the outcome of said request.

Any transfer requests not approved by the LCA Board by December 31 must be resubmitted for consideration pursuant to LCA Board policy and the current authorizer's policies during the next calendar year unless an extension is granted.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The application provides an opportunity for the school to provide an overview of its educational program, organizational structure, financial management, and oversight. In addition, it allows for the school to present evidence of school performance, articulate school plans, and demonstrate capacities for success.

All application items should be completed by the school and questions should be addressed through written narrative responses, including attachments or supplemental information as necessary. The transfer application must be submitted via LCA's website using the Charter Transfer Application Submission link in the following format:

- Section 1 of the application will be submitted as a Formstack cover page in the submission portal.
- Sections 2-12 of the application must be uploaded as one Pdf document, with each section clearly labeled and all sections must be complete.
- Section 13 of the application must be uploaded as individual appendix items.

The transfer application and all supporting documents must be submitted electronically via LCA's website no later than **October 14<sup>th</sup> by 11:59 p.m. EST.**

### 1. COVER PAGE: GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

- School Name and Address
- Current Sponsor
- Year of charter renewal based on current contract
- School Leader: name, email, phone
- School Board Chair: name, email, phone
- School Website Address
- Grades Served
- Grade Level at Build-out
- Current Enrollment/Max Enrollment
- Three- year Enrollment Projections: use template provided by LCA **(Appendix A)**

### 2. TRANSFER REQUEST NARRATIVE AND BOARD RESOLUTION

- Explain why the school's Board is requesting a change in authorizers.
- Provide a copy of the executed resolution from the school's Board supporting the transfer of the school's charter to LCA. **(Appendix B)**
- Evidence the charter school has notified their current authorizer of the transfer request. **(Appendix C)**

### 3. CHARTER MODIFICATIONS AND SPONSOR CONTRACT

- Provide a table indicating any modifications being proposed to the school's existing charter and provide a response explaining the school's ability to carry out each modification successfully. **(Appendix D)**
- Provide a red line copy indicating changes to the currently approved charter. **(Appendix E)**
- Provide a current copy of the contract executed with your current sponsor. **(Appendix F)**

#### 4. VISION, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES STATEMENT

- State the vision, mission, and the core values of your school.
- Explain how your charter school's mission is in alignment with your Board's vision for transferring your school to LCA's authorization.
- Describe your strategic growth plan and desired outcomes over the next five years.

#### 5. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- Provide a description of the community/population served by the school.
- Describe the educational philosophy of the school.
- Provide an overview of the school's educational program, key design elements, and how your school differentiates instruction for diverse learners.
- Explain any proposed changes to the school's educational program and how these changes are well suited to support the school's student population.

#### 6. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE

- Provide a narrative which explains your school's academic performance over time, with an emphasis on achievement data for the past three years.
- Provide a clear picture of the process for monitoring academic achievement throughout an academic year. Include the process of using assessments to guide instructional decisions.
- Explain the Response to Intervention (RtI) program and how the school determines whether strategies are effective in addressing student needs.
- Discuss the school's student attendance and retention rates over the last three years.

#### 7. FINANCE

- Provide a budget for the current year and projected budgets for the next five years. **(Appendix G)**
- Provide a copy of the school's two most recent audits. **(Appendix H)**
- If applicable: Provide table listing any audit findings and an explanation/context for any findings. **(Appendix I)**
- Identify who is responsible for managing the school's finances (internal staff and/or a contracted provider). Provide name and contact information for all person(s) associated with the management of the school's finances.

#### 8. OPERATIONS

- Submit an organizational chart that provides a graphic representation of the school and clearly delineates the roles, responsibilities, and reporting structure. **(Appendix J)**
- Explain any proposed changes to the school's organizational chart that may arise should the school transfer to LCA.
- If applicable: Provide a copy of the contract between the school and any Charter Management Organization (CMO), Education Management Organization (EMO), or Education Service Provider (ESP). **(Appendix K)**
- What resources or supports do you currently receive from your authorizer and/or expect to receive from your future authorizer.

## 9. GOVERNANCE

- Provide an overview of the school's board and their expertise.
- Provide a table listing current board members and their term dates. **(Appendix L)**
- Provide a copy of (or link to) the school's by-laws and articles of incorporation. **(Appendix M)**
- Provide copies of board policies, including policies governing potential conflicts of interest and governing board agreements or disclosure forms, if any. **(Appendix N)**

## 10. FACILITIES

- Provide a description of the current facilities for the school and/or facilities that are utilized in any capacity for the operation of the school.
- Describe any anticipated facility needs in the next five years.

## 11. TRANSPORTATION

- If applicable: Provide a detailed description of the transportation offered to students.

## 12. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- If applicable: Provide a list of any current or past litigations or judgements against the school. **(Appendix O)**
- Explain any performance deficiencies or compliance violations with applicable state or federal laws that have led to formal notification by your current authorizer or any governmental body and led interventions or sanctions in the last three years. Explain how such deficiencies or violations have been resolved.

## 13. APPENDICIES

The following is a list of appendix items to be uploaded as separate documents with the application. Use the following naming convention for each attachment:

***School Name\_Appendix Letter (Ex: Spring HS\_ Appendix A)***

- A. Three-year enrollment projections (use template provided by LCA) **(Section 1)**.
- B. Copy of the executed Board resolution to transfer the school's charter to LCA. **(Section 2)**
- C. Evidence the school has notified their current authorizer of the transfer request. **(Section 2)**
- D. Table indicating any modifications to the school's existing charter document and a description of the school's ability to carry out each modification successfully. **(Section 3)**
- E. Red-line copy indicating changes to the currently approved charter. **(Section 3)**
- F. Copy of the contract executed with the school's current sponsor. **(Section 3)**
- G. Budget for the current year and projected budgets for the next five years. **(Section 7)**
- H. Copy of the school's two most recent audits. **(Section 7)**
- I. If applicable: Provide a table of audit findings and corresponding explanations. **(Section 7)**
- J. Organizational chart that provides a graphic representation of the school and clearly delineates the roles, responsibilities, and reporting structure. **(Section 8)**
- K. If applicable: Copy of the contract between the school and any CMO, EMO, or ESP **(Section 8)**.
- L. Table listing current board members and their term dates **(Section 9)**.
- M. Copy of (or link to) the school's by-laws and articles of incorporation. **(Section 9)**.

- N. Copies of board policies, including policies governing potential conflicts of interest and governing board agreements or disclosure forms, if any. **(Section 9)**.
- O. *If applicable:* Provide a list of any current or past litigations or judgements against the school. **(Section 12)**