



LIMESTONE CHARTER ASSOCIATION

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

*FOR SCHOOLS CURRENTLY
AUTHORIZED BY LIMESTONE
CHARTER ASSOCIATION*

Updated September 2022

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in renewing your charter with 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 renewal process.

PROCESS OVERVIEW AND TIMELINE

In making the determination to approve a school's renewal 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 Renewal 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 renewal request.

Date	Activity
Prior to September 15	The charter school notifies LCA of its interest in the LCA renewal process. Schools should send an official board resolution to LCA.
September- October	LCA staff will meet with each interested renewal charter school, providing an orientation to the application process.
October 14	The school submits the <i>Charter School Renewal 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 Renewal Application</i> . LCA schedules a final meeting with the school to share the recommendation regarding the renewal request, prior to the LCA Board meeting.
TBD	LCA Board shall act on the submitted <i>Charter School Renewal Application</i> in a public meeting in accordance with the timelines established in the South Carolina Charter Schools Act of 1996.
TBD	LCA shall provide the South Carolina Department of Education notice of any renewal request presented to the LCA Board and the outcome of said request.

REQUIRED RENEWAL 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 and articulate school plans and capacities for the next charter term.

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 renewal application must be submitted via LCA's website using the Charter Renewal 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 2-4 of the application must be uploaded as one Pdf document, with each section clearly labeled and all sections must be complete.
- Sections 5-6 of the application must be uploaded as individual appendix items.

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

1. COVER PAGE: GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

- School Name and Address
- Year of charter renewal based on current contract
- School Leader: name, email, phone
- School Board Chair: name, email, phone
- School Website Address
- Grades Served
- Current Enrollment/Max Enrollment
- Enrollment Projections: for next 3 years- use template provided by LCA. **(Appendix A)**

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Provide a summary of the school's program and any unique or innovative features of the school including an overview of the educational model, a description of the school culture, major instructional methods, and assessment strategies.
- Provide an overview of the school's board and their expertise.
- Provide a table listing current board members and their term dates. **(Appendix B)**

3. LOOKING BACK: RECORD OF PERFORMANCE

This section allows the school to demonstrate their academic, organizational, and financial performance; and provides an opportunity for the school to reflect on its progress during the most recent charter term. The school should submit narrative responses to the questions in this section, as well as provide evidence with any data reports. All responses must reference specific criteria or data points that can be identified in a provided attachment. Responses to this section may include but are not limited to information regarding educational performance data (state and/or school level data), operational information, and financial metrics. Provide evidence of school specific goals, or improvements made by the school along with evidence of progress/achievement. Responses to this section should not include evidence that is not relevant to the school's academic, organizational, or financial performance.

a. Academic Performance

- Describe academic data the school has from the last charter term regarding student achievement and growth.
- Describe the performance of subgroups and how the school is addressing any growth gaps.
- Describe key student performance goals and progress made towards the goals outlined in your current charter.

b. Organizational Structure

- Describe how the school leaders evaluate operational performance, including student academic performance, school culture, and what metrics are collected and how they are used to inform decision making.
- Describe and provide an analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in administrative operations, reporting, and legal responsibilities.
- Describe how the board is engaging in strategic planning and monitoring of operations?

c. Financial Performance

- Describe how the board or other applicable parties practice financial management, track financial viability and sustainability, and use financial metrics to inform the strategic plan. How is progress monitored toward financial goals that relate to the school's long-term health?
- Describe the current level of enrollment and its corresponding financial/programmatic implications. If enrollment is meeting anticipated projections, please describe the systems that are in place to support sustained enrollment.
- Please describe any changes to financial policy and procedures and include any updated agreements or updated contracts, if applicable.

4. LOOKING AHEAD: PLANS FOR PROPOSED NEXT CHARTER TERM

This section provides the school an opportunity to discuss plans for the proposed next charter term. The school is expected to identify any anticipated changes to the educational program, governance structure, partnering entities, and financial outlook. The school is required to identify any proposed changes that would affect its educational or organizational success and overall financial viability. The school should submit narrative responses to the questions in this section. The authorizer reserves the right to request additional information regarding proposed plans, so that it may sufficiently evaluate and assess the impact and planning required for such change requests.

a. Education Plan

- Describe the status of any changes and anticipated improvements to the educational program the school will undertake in the next five years based on the analysis of previous student performance outcomes.
- Describe how the school plans to address the gaps of underperforming subgroups, if any.

b. Organizational Plan

- Describe the status of any anticipated changes to the governance of the school, including but not limited to board composition, committee structure, and/or amendment to by-laws.

- Describe the status of any anticipated changes to the school leadership or staffing model and any proposed changes to the management of school. Include any information regarding the school's relationship with a third-party organization providing services to the school, or charter management organization (CMO) if applicable.
- Describe the status of and any anticipated changes to the school's facilities or location.

c. Financial Plan

- Provide a five-year projected budget for the proposed next charter term. **(Appendix C)**
- Include a budget narrative that makes clear the assumptions on which the school bases its key revenue and expenditure projections. In addition, the budget and narrative should describe any anticipated changes to the school's financial position and clearly articulate the financial impact of any proposed modifications on other aspects of the school's educational program or operations.
- Describe any anticipated changes regarding the school's financial management and oversight structure, including but not limited to, management structure, process for creating and implementing financial policies, and relationships with financial service providers or partners, if any.
- If enrollment is not meeting the school's expectations, describe the student recruitment and retention efforts for future years and/or programmatic shifts expected due to future enrollment predictions.

5. CHARTER MODIFICATION REQUESTS

This section provides the charter school an opportunity to request modifications to the charter for the proposed next charter term. The authorizer may request additional information and/or documentation as necessary.

- Provide a table indicating any major modification requests being proposed for the school's next charter term and provide a response explaining the school's ability to carry out each modification successfully. **(Appendix D)**
- Provide a red-lined copy indicating changes to the currently approved charter. **(Appendix E)**

6. 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)*

- Provide 3-year enrollment projections (using template provided by LCA) **(Section 1)**.
- Provide a table listing current board members and the dates of their terms **(Section 2)**.
- Provide a five-year projected budget for the proposed next charter term **(Section 4)**.
- Provide a table indicating major modification requests to the current charter document and a description of the school's ability to execute each modification **(Section 5)**
- Red-lined copy of the charter indicating proposed changes **(Section 5)**.