

The New Jersey Charter Application



NJCSA

Step # 1: Preliminary Exploration

Research

- NJ Charter Law and Regulations
- NJDOE Focus Areas & per-pupil funding
- Charter Performance Framework
- NJCSA & NJDOE websites for resources, deadlines, webinars and workshops
- Schools, instructors & programs aligned with your proposed educational model
- The needs of the community in your selected district/region of residence
- Visit at least 5 charter schools

Develop & Network

- Draft school's mission, vision & goals
- Connect with potential families
- Connect with community stakeholders, & leaders who share your vision
- Use assessment results to guide community outreach efforts

Take Action

- Select core design team of people who share your vision
- Join NJCSA to gain access to resources (\$)
- Attend NJCSA CharterStartUp workshop (\$)& webinar
- Attend DOE Charter Application workshop
- Notify DOE of intent to apply in order to receive access to the charter application

Does the data received from your research and community outreach show a need for your school program and a willingness of parents, students and community members to support your school?
Do you have a solid core team committed to developing a quality school program?

Yes

No

Next steps

Reevaluate your target community. Find 2-3 people who share your mission/vision.

Or, abandon school development.

Step #2: Plan Your Charter School

Research

- Assess capacity of your founding group
- Research data on specific school models with specific population
- Research facility options
- Research financing
- Research incorporation and 501 3(c)

Develop & Network

- Select an application coordinator
- Develop timeline and process for reviewing and revising the application
- Revise mission/vision statements
- Select experts in school design areas
- Fill gaps & build capacity of founding group
- Begin application for incorporation/501c3
- Develop financial plan

Take Action

- Share mission and vision with community members and prospective parents
- Secure letters of support
- Incorporate as nonprofit

Do you have data of proven success of model? Do you have founding board with diverse skills?
Have you connected with your chosen community and received feedback?

Yes

No

Next steps

Reevaluate mode, recruit diversely skilled founders. Increase level of community engagement & buy-in.

Or, abandon school development.

Step #3: Draft the Charter Application

Research

- Review Phase I and evaluation criteria
- Review Phase II and evaluation criteria
- Companies that offer application review services

Develop & Network

- Write Phase I application
- Draft Phase II application

Take Action

- Finalize mission, vision, goals and ensure alignment
- Meet with core team to review application sections
- Submit application for external review

Has your team completed and reviewed application sections? Is the team satisfied with the application?

Yes

No

Next steps

Read application feedback, set new timeline for revisions and evaluate willingness of team to proceed.

Or, abandon application submission.

Step #4: Complete & Submit Application

Research

- Review the application submission process
- Review the hours of operations for the county offices
- Review the addresses and directions to county offices

Develop & Network

- Develop application submission plan
- Revise any application sections as identified during review process

Take Action

- Submit Phase I application to NJDOE via EPICenter and to county office(s) via hard copy
- Secure receipts from county office(s) and deliver to NJDOE as required

Has your application been successfully submitted?
Are your core team members available & willing to continue?

Yes

No

Next steps

Report EPICenter submission issues to DOE. Reengage team and/or recruit additional team members.

Or, abandon application submission.

Research

- Continue facility & finance search
- Inquire about NJCSA mock interview service

Develop & Network

- Revise Phase II draft application
- Identify team members for DOE interview

Take Action

- WAIT for Qualified Applicant Status from Phase I Approved Application

Has Phase I application been approved? Are your core team members available and willing to continue?

Yes

No

Next steps

Make plans to revise or start over application

Or, abandon charter application development & submission

Research

- Companies that offer implementation services

Develop & Network

- Finalize Phase II application

Take Action

- Submit Phase II Application
- Request NJCSA mock interview (\$)

Has your Phase II Application been approved? Are your founding group & team available to continue?

Yes

No

Next steps

Make plans to revise and start a new application

Or, abandon charter application development.

Step #5: Prepare for Final Authorization

Research

- NJDOE final authorization checklist
- NJCSA final authorization self-assessment

Develop & Network

- Develop timeline and plan for attaining final authorization
- Plan to operate a quality charter school on the first day of opening

Take Action

- Attend NJCSA workshop series for Approved Applicants (\$) & DOE boot camp
- Complete final authorization tasks & prepare for DOE site visit
- Implement your high-quality program!