

Authorizing North Dakota Charters for
High-Quality Outcomes and Results

NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

NEW SCHOOL WRITTEN APPLICATION

Outcome-Driven Authorization Framework

Issued by: North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Authority: NDCC Chapter 15.1-40; NDAC Chapter 67-36

PURPOSE OF THIS APPLICATION

The North Dakota Public Charter School Application is intentionally structured around student outcomes, governance capacity, and financial sustainability. Consistent with North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) Chapter 15.1-40 and North Dakota Administrative Code (NDAC) Chapter 67-36, the application focuses first on whether a proposed school is likely to produce strong, measurable academic and developmental results for students and second on whether the governing board and leadership team have the capacity to deliver and sustain those results.

The framework separates application-stage evaluation from operational readiness requirements to ensure that approval decisions are driven by mission clarity, performance targets, and accountability systems, not simply by the submission of procedural documents. This approach aligns with nationally recognized authorizing best practices (NACSA 2025 New School Application Guidance) and reflects North Dakota's commitment to responsible oversight, transparency, and strong public accountability for charter schools.

*The purpose of this application is to determine whether a proposed public charter school is likely to produce **strong, measurable student outcomes, particularly for the students and communities it intends to serve, and** whether the founding team has the capacity, judgment, and commitment to achieve and sustain those outcomes over time.*

Approval decisions will be driven by:

- The clarity, rigor, and ambition of proposed student outcomes
- The degree to which the educational model is designed to deliver those outcomes
- Evidence that the founding team can execute, monitor, and improve results
- A realistic, outcomes-focused plan for accountability and continuous improvement
- A credible financial plan aligned to the resources required to achieve proposed outcomes

This application intentionally focuses on outcomes, people, and plans, rather than finalized operational artifacts. Proof of operational readiness will be verified through a Ready-to-Open (RTO) process following approval. The burden rests on the applicant to demonstrate readiness and capacity to deliver strong, measurable student outcomes.

Applicants are encouraged to provide concise, evidence-based responses that directly address each question. Excess narrative that does not respond to the question will not strengthen the application.

Application Review Process

This application is one component of a multi-stage authorization process consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-09 and NDAC 67-36-01-03. The Superintendent of Public Instruction has 90 days from the filing deadline to approve or deny each application. The application submission window shall be no less than 90 days, and all application materials, required templates, and submission procedures will be published on the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) website no less than 30 days prior to the beginning of the submission window (NDAC 67-36-01-03(1).

The superintendent shall grant charters to applicants demonstrating competence, with all decisions based on documented evidence collected through the review process. Charter granting policies are transparent, merit-based, and structured to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest. If an application is conditionally approved or denied, the superintendent shall clearly state the reasons in writing. Approval decisions may include reasonable conditions the applicant must meet before a charter performance agreement may be executed; reasonable conditions may not include enrollment caps. The superintendent shall publicly notice and publish all application decisions and shall maintain a chronological list of approved applications by date of approval. An approved application is not a charter performance agreement.

ⓘ ***Note:*** *The review process includes the following stages:*

1. *Notice of Intent (optional and non-binding),*
2. *A completeness and eligibility check,*
3. *Written application evaluation using a standardized rubric approved by the superintendent,*
4. *Requests for clarification,*
5. *Challenge Scenarios assessing the founding team's judgment, problem-solving ability, and commitment to student outcomes under realistic conditions,*
6. *At least one public interview with the applicant team (NDAC 67-36-01-03(4)), and*
7. *A final recommendation and decision.*

Applicants should be prepared to demonstrate capacity at each stage. Application materials, interview results, and all evaluation records will be documented and maintained in the public record (NDAC 67-36-01-03(5)).

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Name of proposed school:

Proposed location of the school:

- City:
- School District/LEA:

Primary contact person:

- Mailing address:
- Phone:
- Email address:

Names, roles, and current employment of all persons on applicant team (you may add lines as needed):

Full Name	Current Job Title & Employer	Position with Proposed School

Applicant Type (check one):

- ☐ New Operator
- ☐ Conversion Operator

If this is a conversion school, attach evidence of support from a majority of teachers and parents/guardians as required by NDCC 15.1-40-07(2).

Does the school intend to contract with an Education Service Provider (ESP) to manage the educational program and operations of the school, but not hold the charter directly?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, identify the ESP: _____

Model or Focus of Proposed School (e.g., Arts, College Prep, Dual-Language, etc.):

Name of Proposed Principal/Head of School:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Maximum Narrative Length: 2 pages

Directions: Provide a clear and compelling overview of the proposed school. The Executive Summary should be cohesive, strategic, and focused on measurable student outcomes. Keep the response high-level and avoid detailed descriptions of implementation or operations.

At a minimum, address the following:

- The proposed school's mission and vision
- An overview of the proposed school's education program, including key innovations and defining features of the school model.
- An overview of total projected enrollment over the initial five-year charter term.
- A description of the community and students the school intends to serve and the specific need or opportunity the school is addressing
- What makes this school a meaningful choice for families in the community
- An overview of the school's governance, management structure, and leadership team, including their collective knowledge, skills, abilities, and track record.

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY NEED & JUSTIFICATION

Maximum Narrative Length: 6 pages

This section must clearly demonstrate that the proposed school addresses a defined and documented community need. Responses should be evidence-based and directly connected to measurable student outcomes. Avoid philosophical or general statements of interest. Clearly connect community need to the proposed model and outcomes.

(NDCC 15.1-40-07(3)(g), (h))

1.1 Community Need, Demand, and Engagement

1. Describe the community the school intends to serve and the students it seeks to enroll. Explain how the community context and student needs informed the outcomes the school is designed to achieve.

2. What innovation will the proposed school bring to your community and how does the proposed innovation address specific unmet educational needs?

3. Describe how families, students, and community stakeholders were engaged in defining desired outcomes. Explain how community input shaped both the school's outcome priorities and its design.

4. Provide evidence of community demand sufficient to support the proposed enrollment. Explain why families believe this school will produce better outcomes for their children.

5. Complete the Enrollment Projection Template (Appendix A) for Years 1–5. Include the number of students in each grade level and anticipated percentages of students with disabilities, English learners, and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

> ***Note:*** *Complete and submit the NDDPI Enrollment Projection Workbook (Excel) described in Appendix A. Enrollment verification will continue into the Ready-to-Open phase.*

6. Describe how the founding team has identified and responded to community concerns, and what that response reveals about their capacity for transparent, accountable governance.

SECTION 2: MISSION & OUTCOMES

Maximum Narrative Length: 7 pages

This section defines the school's intended impact. Outcomes must be specific, measurable, and aligned to community need. Clearly articulate what success will look like and how it will be measured. Avoid vague or aspirational language. State the school's mission and clearly identify the specific academic and developmental outcomes that will indicate success in fulfilling that mission.

7. State the school's mission and clearly identify the specific academic and developmental outcomes that will indicate success in fulfilling that mission.

(NDCC 15.1-40-07(3)(a))

8. Describe the long-term impact of the school by explaining what will be demonstrably different for students if the mission is successfully realized.

9. Describe the grade levels to be offered in Year 1 and the school's planned growth in grade levels over the initial charter term. Include the timeline and rationale for expansion, if applicable.

(NDCC 15.1-40-07(3)(c))

10. Clearly define the student outcomes that will define success for this school. Outline the proposed school's student outcome goals and describe how they will be measured. Goals and targets must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. Include specific annual performance targets for each indicator over the initial charter term.

Outcomes must include:

- **Academic proficiency**
- **Academic growth**
- **Attendance**
- **Recurrent enrollment**
- **Readiness for success upon graduation (if applicable)**
- **Any mission-aligned non-academic, developmental, or postsecondary outcomes**
- **Family and community engagement indicators**

11. Explain the rationale for these goals and targets and why the proposed outcomes and performance targets are ambitious, realistic, and appropriate given the community context and school design. Explain how these goals and outcomes align with the school's mission and vision.

SECTION 3: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

Maximum Narrative Length: 6 pages

Directions: This section must describe how the school will ensure performance results and intervene when outcomes are not being met. Clearly explain systems for monitoring, reporting, and continuous improvement. Demonstrate internal accountability systems specific to the charter's performance commitments, beyond compliance with state testing requirements. The school's accountability framework should center on the outcome goals proposed in Section 2 and anticipate the Charter Performance Agreement. Post-approval, the charter school will be subject to the monitoring and corrective action framework in NDAC 67-36-01-04(1), which includes ongoing data reporting, site visits, and documentation reviews. Noncompliance or performance concerns will trigger written notice, required corrective action within one year, and potential revocation or nonrenewal as described in NDCC 15.1-40-15.

12. Describe how progress toward the charter's student outcome goals will be:

- **Internally monitored at the student, class, and the school level**
- **Reported to stakeholders, including families and the public**
- **Used to drive instructional improvement and school-level decision-making**
- **How the school's internal monitoring systems connect to and complement North Dakota's state accountability system.**

13. Identify and describe the school's balanced assessment system, including:

- **State-required interim assessments (NDCC 15.1-21-17.1)**
- **Universal screeners, including a dyslexia screener consistent with NDCC 15.1-32-26**
- **Classroom-level formative assessments**
- **How student achievement and growth will be measured**
- **How student-level progress monitoring will inform individual student supports**
- **How school-level progress monitoring will track progress toward charter outcome goals**

14. Explain how the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data to inform instruction and improve student learning, and how this data will be reported to the governing board.

15. Describe the corrective actions the organization will take if the school falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

SECTION 4: EDUCATIONAL MODEL (THEORY OF ACTION)

Maximum Narrative Length: 10 pages

Directions: This section must demonstrate that the proposed educational model is coherent, research-informed, and designed to produce the defined student outcomes. Clearly connect instructional design, curriculum, supports, and culture to the outcomes identified in Section 2.

16. Provide an evidence-based framework for the proposed educational model and describe its key design elements. Explain how the model is designed to produce the intended student outcomes, including:

- **How the core components align with and advance the mission**
- **The research base, evidence, or comparable schools that informed the model**
- **What was learned from this research or engagement**
- **How those lessons will be applied in this school**
- **Explain how the approach to instruction and assessment will be tailored to the mission and the school model.**

17. Explain how curriculum and instructional materials will align with North Dakota academic content standards while supporting the school's mission and performance goals. Address:

- **Why the chosen curriculum was selected and how it supports the target student population**
- **The basic learning environment, class size, and instructional structure**
- **The use of technology or AI in delivering instruction, if applicable**
- **Strategies for differentiation, remediation, and intervention to meet the needs of all students**
- **The school's policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next, and how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to families and students**
- **How graduation requirements will prepare students for postsecondary success, including college, trade school, military service, or entering the workforce**

(NDCC 15.1-21-01; 15.1-21-02; 15.1-40-04)

18. Describe how the school will ensure that students with disabilities (students on IEPs), students with 504s, English learners, and students experiencing homelessness or foster care placement have equitable access to the full program and achieve strong outcomes. Focus on capacity, expertise, systems of support, and continuous improvement rather than procedural detail.

Additionally address:

- **How the school will identify students performing below grade level and monitor their progress toward grade-level expectations**
- **If applicable, the school's plan for supporting graduation for students with special education needs, including any alternative ways of demonstrating competency**
- **If applicable, systems and structures for students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation requirements**

(NDCC 15.1-40-17; NDAC 67-36-01-09)

19. Describe the school's approach to discipline, culture, safety, and student well-being, and explain how it supports a learning environment conducive to academic and developmental success.

SECTION 5: FOUNDING TEAM & GOVERNANCE CAPACITY

Maximum Narrative Length: 6 pages

Directions: This section must demonstrate that the team has the experience and capacity to execute the proposed model successfully. Provide evidence of measurable prior results and clearly identify any capacity gaps and mitigation strategies.

> ***Note:*** *The founding team's capacity will also be assessed through Challenge Scenarios during the review process. Challenge Scenarios will present realistic situations requiring the team to demonstrate creative problem solving, effective decision-making, strategic focus on mission, community commitment, and reflective learning.*

20. Identify each founding team member and describe their specific role in developing, launching, and overseeing the proposed school. Explain how responsibilities are structured to ensure clear decision-making and performance oversight.

21. Explain how the team's collective experience demonstrates the ability to successfully implement the proposed model. Provide specific examples of measurable results for which team members were directly responsible.

22. Summarize the founding team's current capacities and gaps and identify which members of the founding team plan to sit on the charter school's proposed governing board. Provide a plan to recruit new governing board members to close any gaps in expertise.

23. Describe how the governing board will provide appropriate and effective oversight of the school. In your response, address the following:

- **Provide the names of all proposed governing board members and each member's area of expertise.**
- **Provide a professional development plan for the governing board that includes a process for onboarding new board members, selecting board members, and self-evaluating their own governance effectiveness. Include how the governing board plans to hold the school leader accountable for compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the approved Charter Performance Agreement.**

Attach the following:

- **Resumes for each proposed governing board member**
- **Signed conflict-of-interest disclosures for all proposed governing board members (in the applicant's own format)**
- **A signed Governing Board Member Statement of Assurances (Appendix C) for each proposed governing board member**
- **Resumes or brief bios for all founding team members**
- **Draft governing board by-laws that describe how members will be chosen, elect officers, committee structures, etc.**

(NDCC 15.1-40-18)

SECTION 6: EXECUTION

6.1 Governance and Accountability

Maximum Narrative Length: 6 pages

Directions: Describe the governance systems and practices that ensure accountability for student outcomes. Explain how board independence is maintained, how oversight responsibilities are structured, and how the organization demonstrates a commitment to transparent and ethical governance. (An organizational chart and draft board policy documents submitted in response to Question 25 & 26 do not count toward the page limit.)

24. Describe the governing board's role in monitoring student outcomes and holding school leadership accountable for results. Explain how the board will use academic and operational data to identify when outcomes are not being met and what intervention steps the board will take.

25. Describe the proposed school's organizational structure. Include the rationale and any research basis for this structure. Include an organizational chart to help communicate the proposed school's organizational systems and structures for Year 1 and full build-out.

- **Include a clear delineation of decision-making authority between the school leader and the governing board across key functions, including curriculum, culture, hiring, staffing, budgeting, oversight, and corrective action.**

26. Describe how the board will be organized to manage and provide strategic direction for the proposed school, including any board committees.

- **Include a draft board policy document addressing: how new board members will be selected, the total number of governing board members, a description of meetings held to date, planned frequency, committee structure, compliance with North Dakota's Open Meetings Laws *(NDCC Chapter 44-04),* and the board's approach to grievances and complaints.**
- **Describe the board's role and responsibilities related to charter renewal and ongoing authorizer relations.**
- **Describe how the board will ensure transparency, public access, and adherence to public records obligations consistent with its status as a public entity under NDCC Chapter 44-04.**

27. Describe how governance performance will be evaluated, including compliance monitoring, board self-evaluation practices, and oversight of academic and financial performance.

(NDCC 15.1-40-10)

28. Describe the board's plan for initial and ongoing training, including training related to fiduciary duties, open meeting law compliance, academic oversight, and financial monitoring.

(NDCC 15.1-40-18)

6.2 Leadership and Staffing

Maximum Narrative Length: 8 pages

Directions: Describe how leadership and staffing structures support strong student outcomes and compliance with licensure requirements.

(NDCC 15.1-40-07(3)(k); 15.1-40-19)

29. Describe the leadership and staffing model and how it is designed to support the performance framework outcomes and goals described in Section 2.

30. Explain how the school will ensure staff meet licensure requirements and are supported to improve student results.

31. If a school leader has been identified, summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational leadership record. If no candidate has yet been identified, provide your timeline, criteria, and process for recruiting and hiring a school leader. Provide a brief description of the process the governing board will use to replace the Head of School should the candidate choose to leave or be terminated.

32. Describe the staffing plan (e.g., leadership, instructional, and support roles) your school will use to ensure that every student has access to excellent teaching.

33. Describe your strategy and timeline for recruiting and hiring teachers. Explain key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to the school's mission, vision, and academic program.

34. Provide the key elements of the proposed professional development plan and explain how it will support capacity to drive and improve student outcomes.

35. Explain how and with what frequency the school will evaluate the performance of the school leader and teachers. Identify the key data elements and questions that will drive evaluations, and describe how the school will use performance data to support continuous improvement.

36. Explain how the school will handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as termination proceedings.

6.3 Facilities and Operations

Maximum Narrative Length: 6 pages

Directions: Describe operational readiness, including facilities, launch milestones, recruitment, and student access systems. Clearly identify material risks and corresponding mitigation strategies.

(NDCC 15.1-40-21; NDCC 15.1-40-22)

37. Describe the facility strategy. Explain anticipated risks and contingency planning, and how the plan will comply with applicable zoning, safety, and occupancy requirements.

38. If a facility has been identified, describe the viable options and include any plans for renovation, timelines, and financing to ensure compliance with applicable state health, life, and safety codes.

- **If you are in the process of identifying a facility, describe with as much detail as possible the viable facility options that your team has identified.**

39. Discuss the key milestones achieved to date and the key milestones that must be achieved to successfully launch this school.

> ***Note:*** *Approved schools are expected to target a Fall 2027 or Fall 2028 opening. After approval, the Ready-to-Open evidence collection and verification process will take place from late spring through summer of the applicable opening year. Applicants should demonstrate awareness of this timeline when developing and sequencing project milestones.*

40. Describe the marketing, outreach, and student recruitment strategies the school will employ and once operational, to reach proposed enrollment targets.

41. Describe the proposed enrollment and lottery process and how it will ensure compliance with NDCC 15.1-40-05 and NDAC 67-36-01-06. Explain:

- **How the school will conduct a public lottery if enrollment exceeds capacity**
- **How the lottery will be randomized, transparent, and impartial**
- **How the required enrollment preference for returning students and their siblings (NDCC 15.1-40-05(2)(e)) and any optional employee preference (not to exceed ten percent of total enrollment) will be implemented**
- **How waiting lists will be maintained and managed**
- **How the school will ensure nondiscrimination in admissions**
- **Enrollment policies for student withdrawals, re-enrollment, and mid-year transfers, including whether the school will backfill vacated seats during the school year and under what conditions.**

42. Describe the approach to transportation and food service, if applicable, and how these support student access and success.

6.4 Education Service Provider (If Applicable)

Maximum Narrative Length: 5 pages

Directions: Demonstrate how the ESP was selected based on its ability to support student outcomes and how the board will ensure ongoing accountability and independence.

(NDCC 15.1-40-08)

43. Explain the process used to select the education service provider and the reasoning for that selection.

44. Provide evidence of the education service provider's success serving student populations similar to the school's targeted population, including demonstrated academic achievement and, where applicable, successful management of nonacademic school functions.

45. Describe the proposed performance agreement, including: proposed duration; roles, responsibilities, and scope of services and resources to be provided by the education service provider; performance evaluation measures and timelines; compensation structure; methods of oversight and enforcement; and conditions for renewal and termination.

46. Explain the relationship between the governing board, the school's leadership and management team, and the education service provider. Describe specifically how both the governing board and the school's leadership and management team will monitor and evaluate ESP performance and intervene if performance standards are not met.

47. Provide a statement of assurance that the governing board and the school's leadership and management team are legally and operationally independent from the education service provider.

48. Confirm that faculty performance agreements will be separate from management performance agreements and describe how that separation will be maintained.

49. Confirm that the governing board retains the right to terminate the performance agreement for failure to meet defined performance standards, and describe the process that will be followed, including notice to the education service provider, a reasonable cure period, and the conditions under which termination would be executed if material deficiencies remain unresolved.

50. Disclose and explain any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the governing board, the school's leadership and management team, and the education service provider or any affiliated business entities.

6.5 Financial Plan and Sustainability

Maximum Narrative Length: 6 pages

Directions: Provide a financially viable plan aligned to the proposed educational model and enrollment projections. Clearly describe assumptions, oversight systems, and contingency planning. (The Appendix B five-year budget and the Year 1 monthly cash flow projection do not count toward page limits.)

(NDCC 15.1-40-07(3)(i); 15.1-40-20)

> ***Note:*** *Complete the Charter School 5 Year Budget (SFN 9149), Appendix B, for Years 1 through 5. Submit a Year 1 monthly cash flow projection in the applicant's own format that ties to the Year 1 column of Appendix B. State aid is calculated under NDCC 15.1-40-21 and NDAC 67-36-01-08 and paid on enrollment certified under NDCC 15.1-27-02. Part 2.4 of the Application Guidance explains how state aid is calculated and when it is paid.*

51. Provide a five-year budget projection, using Appendix B, aligned to the resources required to achieve the proposed outcomes. Include:

- **Clear justification of enrollment assumptions, including evidence supporting projected student demand and student retention**
- **Assumptions regarding enrollment certification pursuant to NDCC 15.1-27-02**
- **Assumptions regarding eligibility for applicable categorical and federal funding**
- **Identification of any material financial risks and contingency strategies**
- **A Year 1 monthly cash flow projection, in the applicant's own format, that ties to the Year 1 column of Appendix B**

52. Provide a budget narrative including detailed assumptions for all revenues and expenditures.

53. Describe how the school will remain financially viable if enrollment or revenue is lower than projected without compromising outcomes.

54. Describe the school's approach to financial oversight, including how audits, internal controls, and financial reporting will support long-term outcome sustainability and ensure compliance with generally accepted accounting principles and NDCC 15.1-40-20 requirements for independent audits submitted every six months to the superintendent of public instruction.

- **Audit reports must be submitted to the superintendent electronically within thirty days of receiving the final report from the certified public accountant or public accountant (NDAC 67-36-01-05). Describe how the school will ensure timely compliance with this requirement.**

55. Describe how the school will approach the development of financial policies and systems. Include any financial services expected to be contracted for by the school; describe the selection process and the criteria to select and evaluate these contractors. Or, if financial management will be handled by in-house staff, describe the qualifications of key internal finance staff and the hiring plan.

SECTION 7: POLICIES AND ASSURANCES

Maximum Narrative Length: 1 page (attachments required)

Directions: Provide required assurances, disclosures, and organizational documents demonstrating legal and ethical compliance.

Narrative Response

56. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discuss specific steps the board will take to prevent any actual conflicts and mitigate perceived conflicts.

Governing Board Policy Requirements

Applicants must submit draft versions of the following governing board policies, consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-18. Final versions of all board policies will be verified during the Ready-to-Open process.

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Code of Ethics
- Nepotism Policy
- *If applicable:* Statement affirming that individuals compensated by an Education Service Provider will not serve as voting members of the governing board unless approved by the superintendent of public instruction
- *If applicable:* Statement affirming that the governing board will maintain access to Education Service Provider records necessary to oversee contractual performance

Required Assurances

The following assurances must be affirmed by the proposed governing board. The Board Chair and Lead Applicant must sign below certifying that the governing board understands and agrees to comply with each of the following commitments upon approval of the charter. Each proposed governing board member must also submit a signed conflict-of-interest disclosure (in the applicant's own format) and a signed Governing Board Member Statement of Assurances (Appendix C).

The proposed governing board affirms that:

- The school will operate as an in-person public school and will not charge tuition or fees for any services provided for students, except fees for field trips, clubs, organizations, and athletic participation, consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-02(12) and (13).
- The school will comply with all applicable state and federal laws.
- The school will serve all eligible students without discrimination.
- The student outcomes described in this application will directly inform the Charter Performance Agreement and ongoing accountability.
- The school will complete all Ready-to-Open requirements prior to serving students.
- The school will operate as a nonsectarian public school and will not engage in religious practices in its educational program, admissions, employment policies, or operations, consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-02(11).
- The school will comply with generally accepted accounting principles and submit independent audits every six months to the superintendent of public instruction, consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-20.

- The school will implement enrollment and lottery procedures consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-05 and NDAC 67-36-01-06.
- The governing board will comply with North Dakota open meeting and public records laws applicable to public entities.
- The school will comply with all applicable state and federal special education laws, including NDCC 15.1-32, NDCC 15.1-40-17, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and will act as its own LEA for IDEA purposes.
- The school will obtain and maintain insurance against loss or damage to its property, liability resulting from the use of its property, and liability from the acts or omissions of its officers and employees, consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-02(3).
- The school acknowledges that state aid funding may be withheld, in whole or in part, for failure to comply with applicable state law, rule, or the charter performance agreement, consistent with NDAC 67-36-01-08.

SIGNATURES

Role	Printed Name	Signature	Date
Board Chair			
Lead Applicant			

FINAL NOTE ON EVALUATION

*Applications will be approved only if NDDPI determines that the proposed school is likely to produce **strong, measurable student outcomes**, supported by a coherent model, a capable founding team, and a credible plan for monitoring, accountability, and continuous improvement.*

SUPPLEMENTAL ATTACHMENTS CHECKLIST

To Be Submitted With the New School Written Application

All required documents must be submitted at the time of application unless otherwise noted. Failure to provide required documentation may result in the application being deemed incomplete. Attachments do not count toward narrative page limits.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

If applicable:

- ☐ Conversion school evidence of majority support from teachers and parents/guardians (NDCC 15.1-40-07(2))

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY NEED & JUSTIFICATION

- ☐ Completed Enrollment Projection Workbook (Appendix A, Excel format)
- ☐ Documentation supporting projected enrollment and student demand (e.g., intent-to-enroll forms, surveys, interest forms, community data)

SECTION 5: FOUNDING TEAM & GOVERNANCE CAPACITY

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-18)

- ☐ Articles of Incorporation (filed or draft, if formation is pending)
- ☐ Draft or adopted Bylaws
- ☐ Resumes for all founding team members
- ☐ Resumes for all proposed governing board members
- ☐ Resume or biography for proposed Principal/Head of School
- ☐ Signed Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure for each proposed governing board member (applicant's own format)
- ☐ Signed Governing Board Member Statement of Assurances for each proposed governing board member (Appendix C)

SECTION 6.1: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-18)

Applicants must submit draft versions of the following governing board policies. Final versions will be verified during the Ready-to-Open process:

- ☐ Conflict of Interest Policy
- ☐ Code of Ethics Policy
- ☐ Nepotism Policy
- ☐ Draft Board Policy Document(s)
- ☐ Organizational Chart showing governing board and management structure
- ☐ If applicable: ESP voting member statement
- ☐ If applicable: ESP records access statement

SECTION 6.3: FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-21; 15.1-40-22)

- ☐ Description of facility search status
- ☐ Letter of Intent or draft lease (if available)

SECTION 6.4: EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER (IF APPLICABLE)

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-08)

If contracting with an ESP:

- ☐ Draft contract, term sheet, or summary of material terms
- ☐ Description of fee structure
- ☐ Performance expectations and termination provisions
- ☐ Disclosure of any existing or prior relationships between board members and the ESP
- ☐ Evidence of ESP academic track record

SECTION 6.5: FINANCIAL PLAN AND SUSTAINABILITY

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-07(3)(i); 15.1-40-20)

- ☐ Completed Charter School 5 Year Budget, SFN 9149 (Appendix B, Excel format)
- ☐ Year 1 Monthly Cash Flow Projection (applicant's own format; ties to the Year 1 column of Appendix B)
- ☐ Documentation of committed start-up funding or grants (if referenced in the application)

APPENDIX A: ENROLLMENT PROJECTION TEMPLATE

Application Question 5 | Section 1: Community Need & Justification

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-05; 15.1-40-07(3)(c), (g), (h); 15.1-40-21; NDAC 67-36-01-06)

PURPOSE

Appendix A is the required format for the enrollment projections requested in Question 5. NDDPI uses these projections to evaluate whether proposed enrollment is supported by community demand, consistent with the school's grade-level growth plan and facility capacity, and aligned with the Appendix B five-year budget. A single format allows reviewers to evaluate every application on the same basis.

HOW TO COMPLETE AND SUBMIT

1. Complete the NDDPI Enrollment Projection Workbook (Excel), provided with this application. Enter data only in the light blue input cells. Totals, student counts, capacity, and retention figures calculate automatically.
2. Complete each item on the Assumptions tab in 75 words or fewer. Reference evidence already submitted with the application rather than restating it.
3. Open the Review Checks tab and resolve any item marked REVIEW.
4. Confirm that the projections match the responses to Questions 4, 9, 37, 38, 41, 51, and 53 and the Appendix B five-year budget.
5. Submit the completed workbook in Excel format with the application. Do not convert the workbook to PDF, rename tabs, or add or delete rows or columns.

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Year 1	The 2027-28 school year, the school's first year of operation. Years 2 through 5 follow consecutively through 2031-32.
Full Build-Out	Optional. Used only if the school will reach its final planned grade span after Year 5.
Projected enrollment	Students the school expects to have enrolled as of the September 10 fall enrollment report required under NDCC 15.1-27-02(1), which a public charter school uses to certify enrollment under NDCC 15.1-40-21(1).
Students with disabilities	Students expected to have an individualized education program (IEP) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Students served only under Section 504 are not included.
English learners	Students expected to be identified as English learners through North Dakota's statewide uniform English learner identification procedures.
FRL eligible	Students expected to be eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program, based on household eligibility, regardless of the school's food service model.
Resident district comparison	The most recent published percentage, as reported on Insights.ND, for the school district(s) where most students are expected to reside.
Section	One class group of students at a grade level. Maximum students per section multiplied by the number of sections equals the capacity of that grade.
Students eligible to return	Students enrolled the prior year in a grade whose next grade the school will offer in the current year.

Term	Definition
Re-enrollment rate	The percentage of students eligible to return who are expected to enroll the following year. Returning students and their siblings receive enrollment preference under NDCC 15.1-40-05(2)(e).
Minimum viable enrollment	The lowest enrollment at which the school's budget remains balanced without reducing the core instructional program. This figure should match the under-enrollment contingency trigger described in Question 53.

*ⓘ **Note:** Enrollment projections are planning figures used to evaluate the application. They do not establish an enrollment cap; under NDCC 15.1-40-09, approval conditions may not include enrollment caps. Projections and supporting evidence will be verified during the Ready-to-Open phase, and state aid is paid on enrollment certified under NDCC 15.1-40-21.*

WORKBOOK LAYOUT

The tables below show the structure of the Enrollment Projection Workbook for reference. Applicants complete and submit the Excel workbook, not these tables.

Table A-1: Projected Enrollment by Grade

Grade	Year 1 2027-28	Year 2 2028-29	Year 3 2029-30	Year 4 2030-31	Year 5 2031-32	Full Build-Out
Kindergarten						
Grade 1						
Grade 2						
Grade 3						
Grade 4						
Grade 5						
Grade 6						
Grade 7						
Grade 8						
Grade 9						
Grade 10						
Grade 11						
Grade 12						
Total Projected Enrollment	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated

Table A-2: Planned Sections and Capacity

Grade	Max Students per Section	Year 1 2027-28	Year 2 2028-29	Year 3 2029-30	Year 4 2030-31	Year 5 2031-32	Full Build-Out
Kindergarten							
Grade 1							
Grade 2							
Grade 3							
Grade 4							
Grade 5							
Grade 6							
Grade 7							
Grade 8							
Grade 9							
Grade 10							
Grade 11							
Grade 12							
Total Sections	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated
Maximum Enrollment Capacity	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated
Projected Enrollment as % of Capacity	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated

Table A-3: Projected Student Population

Measure	Resident District Comparison	Year 1 2027-28	Year 2 2028-29	Year 3 2029-30	Year 4 2030-31	Year 5 2031-32
Students with disabilities (%)						
English learners (%)						
FRL eligible (%)						
Students with disabilities (count)	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated
English learners (count)	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated
FRL eligible (count)	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated

Table A-4: Retention and Viability

Measure	Year 1 2027-28	Year 2 2028-29	Year 3 2029-30	Year 4 2030-31	Year 5 2031-32
Students eligible to return	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated
Projected re-enrollment rate (%)	*n/a*				
Projected returning students	*n/a*	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated
Projected new student seats	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated
Minimum viable enrollment					
Projected enrollment above minimum viable	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated	Calculated

Table A-5: Assumptions and Sources (75 words or fewer per item)

#	Item	Response
1	Resident school district(s) used for the comparison in Table A-3	
2	Source and school year of the resident district comparison data	
3	Basis for projected enrollment by grade (reference the demand evidence submitted for Question 4)	
4	Basis for projected percentages of students with disabilities, English learners, and FRL-eligible students	
5	Basis for projected re-enrollment rates	
6	Basis for planned sections and maximum students per section (reference Questions 37 and 38)	
7	Basis for minimum viable enrollment (reference Questions 51 and 53)	

The workbook also contains a Review Checks tab that confirms required fields are complete, projected enrollment does not exceed planned capacity, returning students do not exceed projected enrollment, and projected enrollment meets minimum viable enrollment in each year. Reviewers use the same checks.

APPENDIX B: CHARTER SCHOOL 5 YEAR BUDGET (SFN 9149)

Application Questions 51 to 53 | Section 6.5: Financial Plan and Sustainability

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-07(3)(i); 15.1-40-20; 15.1-40-21; NDAC 67-36-01-08)

PURPOSE

Appendix B is the required format for the five-year budget requested in Question 51. It uses the NDSFARM 2024 account codes that North Dakota public schools use for their annual budgets, so reviewers can evaluate every budget on the same basis and confirm that it matches the enrollment projection, staffing plan, and educational model.

HOW TO COMPLETE AND SUBMIT

1. Complete the Charter School 5 Year Budget (SFN 9149) workbook, provided with this application, following its Instructions tab. Enter expenditures and revenues for Year 1 (2027-28) through Year 5 (2031-32).
2. Enter the Year 1 beginning balance. Beginning balances for Years 2 through 5 carry forward automatically from the prior year's estimated ending balance.
3. Base State School Aid on the enrollment in Appendix A, and explain the state aid assumptions for each year in the budget narrative (Question 52).
4. Submit the completed workbook in Excel format with the application. Do not convert it to PDF, rename tabs, add or delete rows, or change formulas.

*ⓘ **Note:** Submit the Year 1 monthly cash flow projection separately, in the applicant's own format; it must tie to the Year 1 column of Appendix B. Budget figures are planning estimates. State aid is paid on enrollment certified under NDCC 15.1-40-21(1) and NDCC 15.1-27-02.*

APPENDIX C: GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

Section 5: Founding Team & Governance Capacity | Section 7: Policies and Assurances

(Consistent with NDCC 15.1-40-02; 15.1-40-10; 15.1-40-18; 15.1-40-20; NDCC Chapter 44-04)

PURPOSE

Each proposed governing board member completes and signs this statement. It confirms that the member has reviewed the application, including the Required Assurances in Section 7, and accepts the responsibilities of serving on the governing board of a North Dakota public charter school.

HOW TO COMPLETE AND SUBMIT

1. Use the Appendix C template provided with this application. Complete one statement for each proposed governing board member.
2. Each member completes the member information, reads each assurance, and signs and dates the statement.
3. Submit every signed statement with the application. Conflict-of-interest disclosures are submitted separately, in the applicant's own format.

MEMBER INFORMATION

Item	Response
Proposed school name	
Governing board member name	
Proposed board role (officer position or member)	
Current employer and job title	

ASSURANCES

As a proposed member of the governing board, I affirm that:

1. I have reviewed this application, including the Required Assurances in Section 7, and if the charter is approved, I will support the governing board in meeting each of them.
2. I understand the governing board controls the school and is responsible for its academic, operational, and financial performance under the Charter Performance Agreement (NDCC 15.1-40-02(4) and (5); 15.1-40-10).
3. I understand the governing board is a public entity under NDCC Chapter 44-04, and I will conduct board business in compliance with North Dakota open meetings and open records law (NDCC 15.1-40-18(1)(e)).
4. I will follow the governing board's conflict of interest policy, code of ethics, and nepotism policy, and I will disclose any actual or potential conflict, including potential nepotism in hiring and supervision (NDCC 15.1-40-18(1)(b) and (c)).
5. I have disclosed any existing relationship that could pose an actual or perceived conflict of interest if the application is approved.
6. If the school contracts with an education service provider, I understand that an individual compensated by that provider may not serve as a voting member of the governing board unless approved by the superintendent of public instruction (NDCC 15.1-40-18(2)).
7. I understand the school must follow generally accepted accounting principles and submit an independent audit every six months to the superintendent of public instruction (NDCC 15.1-40-20).
8. To the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is accurate and complete.

SIGNATURE

Item	Response
Governing board member signature	
Printed name	
Date	