

ILLINOIS STATE CHARTER SCHOOL  
COMMISSION

Charter School  
Renewal Application

2019-20

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## INTRODUCTION

The Illinois State Charter School Commission (“the Commission” or “SCSC”) is committed to fulfilling its authorizing responsibilities with integrity and transparency. The Commission is committed to authorizing only those charter schools that provide high-quality educational options to serve the diverse needs of Illinois students. The Commission is dedicated to approving and supporting high-quality charter schools and, ultimately, holding them accountable for high standards of performance.

The charter renewal decision makes charter schools unique in public education. Unlike other public schools, each charter school is created with the presumption that its future depends on its performance, as measured and evaluated throughout the charter term and formally evaluated at the end of the term. More specifically, the contract between the Commission and each of its charter schools requires that a charter school will be closed *unless* the school demonstrates that it is achieving the academic, financial, and organizational outcomes to which it committed in the charter contract. This sharp focus on performance both annually and at the time of renewal is not a negative: it is simply the natural outcome of the “autonomy for accountability” understanding that each charter school makes with the Commission in its contract. The Illinois Charter Schools Law follows this best-practice standard for renewals, stating that charter schools in Illinois may be renewed only if the school demonstrates that:

- it is making reasonable progress toward achievement of content standards or pupil performance standards set forth in the charter;
- it follows General Accepted Accountability Principles (“GAAP”) of fiscal management; and
- the school has not committed a material violation neither of the charter agreement, nor of any provision of law from which the charter school is not exempted.

The charter renewal process serves several purposes.

- It requires each school to formally request renewal.
- The renewal application process provides an opportunity for schools both to reflect on performance over the charter term and delineate plans for the future.
- It informs the Commissioners decision on whether to renew a school’s contract by providing evidence of school performance in relation to the academic, financial, and organizational performance standards set out in the charter.

**NOTE: charter schools at the end of their contract term are not required to seek renewal by submitting a Renewal Application. Schools electing not to request renewal are choosing to voluntarily surrender their charter at the end of the contract terms.**

The Commission’s renewal process is **differentiated** by school performance. That is, schools that have consistently been in “Good Standing” as outlined in the Commission’s accountability system over their term follow a “streamlined” process, including a shorter (one-day) site visit. All other renewals will undergo a more detailed review and more intensive (two-day) site visit. Each school’s renewal site visit will be tailored to areas of inquiry identified for that school. Regardless of the school’s performance, the renewal process requires the collaboration of the school and Commission staff over a period of several months. It is designed to provide the Commission staff adequate time to evaluate all evidence relevant to school performance and, ultimately, to allow

the Commissioners to reach a merit-based decision regarding renewal. The Commission is committed to ensuring that this process demonstrates integrity, transparency, and high standards.

The following pages explain the stages of the renewal process, the structure of the renewal application, the criteria for renewal, renewal decision procedures, and the renewal process timeline. Also included in this renewal package are the renewal application instructions, the narrative questions that schools must answer to apply for renewal and instructions for attachments. Finally, the Exhibits section of this packet contains links to critical information, as well as template documents that schools should use to prepare their applications. ***For schools electing not to seek renewal, the charter school's board should submit a formal letter, signed by the charter board chair, to the Commission indicating its plan for voluntary closure at the end of the charter term. The Commission must receive the letter on or before the Renewal Application deadline.***

## RENEWAL PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Commission will conduct rigorous, transparent renewal decision processes that lead to merit-based decisions consistent with both the National Association of Charter School Authorizers' ("NACSA") Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, and the Illinois Charter Schools Law.

These standards and process are embedded within and are part of the contract between the Commission and each charter school. In accordance with the law, the contract, and best practices in authorizing, the Commission will base its renewal decisions on the school's record of performance to date, including but not limited to the school's response to Part II (Looking Back: The Record of Performance) of this Renewal Application. The timeline for the Commission's renewal process is included in this package; below is a summary of each stage of the process.

### PHASES OF THE RENEWAL PROCESS

**Phase 1:** The first phase of renewal is the preparation by the Commission of Initial Renewal Findings. The Initial Renewal Findings constitute the record of the charter school's academic, financial, and organizational performance over the current charter term in relation to the criteria for renewal established in the Accountability Plan. Schools will have an opportunity to respond to the Initial Renewal Findings and to submit corrections or additional objective data to supplement the record.

**Phase 2:** The second phase requires the school to prepare and submit its Charter Renewal Application. Also, during this stage, schools should hold a community forum/meeting to inform parents and community stakeholders of the intent to apply for renewal of the charter contract.

**Phase 3:** The third phase is analysis of the school's submissions by Commission staff and an independent evaluation team and gathering additional information through site visits, interviews, stakeholder focus groups, and a public hearing to allow stakeholders to provide input on a school's renewal directly to the Commissioners. Once all information has been collected, analyzed and synthesized, the Commission staff will present Renewal Recommendations to the Commission in a public meeting. The charter school will receive prior notice of the staff's Renewal Recommendation. Each Renewal Recommendation will include a comprehensive analysis of the evidence collected through the renewal process.

**Phase 4:** For schools that are renewed by the Commission, the final stage is charter school certification with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). During this phase, the charter applicant will submit to ISBE important documents related to English Language Learners, Special Education, Curriculum, and financials. For more information on charter certification, please visit: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ISBECharterSchoolCertification.aspx>

The school's plans for the next charter term will not, in most cases, affect whether the school is recommended for renewal, but could likely affect the *length* of the renewal term and will inform the development of the terms of a new charter contract following the Commission's consideration and vote.

Following a decision to renew a charter by the Commission, staff counsel and the school will begin negotiating the charter contract that will govern the new charter term. Once the contract is

finalized, the last step is to present the contract to the Illinois State Board of Education (“ISBE”) for certification.

### **EVIDENCE SOURCES**

The Renewal Findings are a compilation of the factual record of school performance based on three primary sources of information gathered over the term of the charter:

- school-reported evidence such as enrollment, attendance, and financial reports;
- evidence generated by the Commission and ISBE- such as annual performance reports, site visit reports, and other documentation from school monitoring activities; and
- evidence provided by independent third parties including state assessment results and independent financial audits.

Whenever possible, the Commission will verify findings by relying on more than one source. The Renewal Application provides schools an opportunity to submit additional evidence that will clarify or correct the record. The process is designed to ensure that renewal decisions made by the Commissioners are based on the most accurate and verifiable information available.

## **RENEWAL APPLICATION STRUCTURE**

The Renewal Application outlined in this package contains four parts, with the purposes described below.

**Part I. Executive Summary** – provides a high-level overview of the school’s mission and vision, educational program, community and local connections, leadership and governance, fiscal health, major successes, challenges, best practices to be shared with other schools, lessons learned during the current contract term, and any significant or “material” modifications requested from the current contract provisions;

**Part II. Looking Back: The Record of Performance** — responds to the Initial Renewal Findings and provides any objective, supplemental evidence to correct, augment, and/or offer additional context for the record of performance to date;

**Part III. Reflection on Best Practices** – describes best practices the school has implemented and how the school has or will share those practices with other schools in the next charter term;

**Part IV. Looking Forward: Plans for the Next Charter Term** – outlines anticipated plans, priorities, and potential modifications that further support the mission and vision of the school and the intent of the Charter Schools Law.

The requirements for each part of the Renewal Application are detailed in this package.

## **DECISION CRITERIA**

The Commissioners’ charter renewal decisions are based on the analysis of each school’s academic, financial, and organizational performance over the previous contract term as measured by the Commission’s Accountability System and Plan. The Commission has

developed and adopted a comprehensive Accountability System, including an Accountability Plan, by which its schools are evaluated. The Commission's Accountability System, last amended in June 2017 and the Methodology for the Operation of the Components of the Accountability Plan can be accessed on the Commission website at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Charter-School-Commission.aspx>

## DECISION PROCEDURES

The renewal process requires the Commissioners to determine, first and foremost, what the school has accomplished with respect to the academic outcomes of its students, the financial stability of the organization, and the soundness of the school's governance and operations.

The decision-making process is designed to provide adequate time for the Commission staff to collect and consider all relevant evidence, to engage third-party experts for analysis and synthesis of the evidence, to provide schools and other stakeholders an adequate opportunity to submit relevant information and comment on preliminary findings, and for the public to provide comment.

## KEY COMPONENTS OF THE RENEWAL PROCESS

**Renewal Findings:** The Initial Renewal Findings prepared by Commission staff are comprised of the collective record of school performance based on the cumulative evidence available from all relevant sources, including performance (academic, financial, and organizational) and other data collected by the Commission and ISBE over the charter term as measured by the Commission's Accountability System and Plan. Schools will have the opportunity to respond to Initial Renewal Findings in the Renewal Application, as explained below.

**Renewal Application:** The Renewal Application constitutes the school's formal request for renewal of the charter contract. It is the school's opportunity to submit any facts, data, or supplemental objective evidence to correct, clarify, or augment its performance record (the Initial Renewal Findings); to describe the school's best practices that it can share with other schools; and to articulate the school's goals and vision for the next charter term. The Commission encourages schools to be thoughtful, clear, and concise in responding to the questions posed in the Renewal Application. Commission staff will consider corrections or supplemental evidence provided by the school and will incorporate all verified objective evidence in the Renewal Recommendation ultimately presented to the Commissioners.

**Community Forums and Public Hearings:** The Commission will conduct public hearings in each school's host district to provide information on the renewal process to school stakeholders including parents, staff, and the public, and to invite and hear public testimony on the school's request for renewal. All public testimony will be recorded, will be available to the Commissioners following the hearing, and will be treated as a public record. The Commission will also provide public participation opportunities at regular Commission meetings. Schools are encouraged to host a community forum/meeting before the public hearing to inform parents and community stakeholders of the intent to apply for renewal of the charter contract.

**Renewal Investigations and Considerations:** The Commission will provide opportunities for other input into the renewal process in the form of school site visits, interviews, and/or focus groups, facility inspections, and community forums and public meetings. The Commissioners will holistically consider all evidence sources in deliberating on staff Renewal Recommendations.

**Renewal Recommendations:** Renewal Recommendations prepared by Commission staff will incorporate supplemental evidence submitted by the school, final Renewal Findings, and synthesis of the Renewal Findings and all other Renewal Investigations and Considerations into an evidence-based conclusion on whether the school has met the standards for renewal of the charter, including whether a renewal of the charter would comply with the terms of the Illinois Charter Schools Law. Staff Renewal Recommendations will be presented to each school in advance of the public presentation of Renewal Recommendations to the Commissioners. While the staff and external evaluators are tasked with analyzing all evidence and developing the recommendation, the Commissioners alone hold the power to decide whether to renew a school's charter. *See timeline on page 7 for a complete list of dates.*

**Renewal Decisions:** The Commission is committed to making merit-based decisions and will grant renewal only to schools that have achieved reasonable performance standards, are organizationally and fiscally sound, have been faithful to the terms of the contract, and applicable law.

## RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### Recommendations for Renewal

If the Renewal Findings, coupled with other investigations conducted during the renewal process, indicate that the school has substantially satisfied the criteria for renewal in all areas over the term of the charter, the school will be recommended for renewal by Commission staff. The Commissioners will study the Findings, publicly deliberate, and vote on whether to renew or not renew the school's charter.

### CHARTER CONTRACT AND STATE BOARD CERTIFICATION

The renewal decision does not complete the transition to the new charter term. The Commission and each school approved for renewal must negotiate and execute a new Charter Contract (the "Charter"). The contents of the Charter will be based on the plans set forth in the original Charter, the Renewal Application, applicable law, Commission policy, and the parties' experience from the previous charter term. The Commission intends to execute a Charter with each renewed school before the end of the final school year of the charter term. Execution of the Charter is a condition for continued school operation. Charters finalized between the Commission and the charters are then sent to ISBE for certification. Requirements for certification can be found at: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/ISBECharterSchoolCertification.aspx>.

*Renewal Term:* A Recommendation for Renewal means that the Commission staff will recommend the school for a renewal term of five years unless specific performance concerns warrant renewal for a shorter term.

### Recommendations for Non-Renewal

If the Renewal Findings, coupled with the Commission's investigations conducted during the renewal process, indicate the school has failed to substantially meet the standards for renewal in one or more areas, the Commission staff will recommend non-renewal. The Commissioners will study the Findings, publicly deliberate, and then vote on whether to renew or not renew the school's charter.



**NOTE: A decision by a charter to voluntarily close will not require a vote for non-renewal by the Commission.**

## RENEWAL PROCESS TIMELINE

RENEWAL STAGE	PURPOSE	DATE
<b>Release of Renewal Application &amp; Information</b>	The Commission provides school leaders (and the public) transparent expectations for the renewal process and renewal decision making.	August
Initial Renewal Findings Presented to Schools	Commission staff provides to each renewal-eligible school a report on the school's cumulative record of performance over the first four years of the contract term, allowing a response from the charter school in its Renewal Application.	August
Community Forums <i>(highly recommended)</i>	Each school provides and hosts at least one community forum to provide information to stakeholders (including parents, staff, and the public) about the renewal process and the school's intent to apply for renewal or to voluntarily surrender the charter.	September-October
Facilities Inspection	If applicable, the Commission obtains an independent inspection of school premises for ADA and safety compliance.	September – November
<b>Renewal Applications (or Notice of Voluntary Surrender of Charter) Due</b>	Schools submit their application for renewal, and submit comments and/or factual or data corrections to their record of performance (the Initial Renewal Findings), OR submit a letter from the school's board indicating a choice to voluntarily surrender their charter	October 15, 2019
Public Hearing	The Commission conducts a public hearing to solicit input from and provide information on the renewal process to school stakeholders including parents, staff, and the public.	September – November
School Site Visits/Focus Groups/ Interviews	Commission staff and external evaluators conduct a site visit to each school including interviews and/or focus groups with stakeholders. (Site visit and interviews/focus groups to be tailored to each school)	September – November
Renewal Recommendations Presented to Schools	Staff finalizes and presents Renewal Recommendations to each school seeking renewal.	December
<b>Charter School Renewal Decisions by Commission</b>	Commission discusses, deliberates, and votes on staff's Renewal Recommendations, during a public meeting; after that rendering a written decision to each school and the public.	December
Contract Negotiations	If the Commission votes to renew a school, the Commission's General Counsel and staff negotiate with the school to establish the terms of the next charter contract.	January-June
State Board Certification	By law, the State Board must review and certify a contract between the Commission and a school before the contract can take effect; the new contract would begin on July 1, 2020.	July

# CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION

Charter Renewal applications must be submitted via the file link at <https://filet.illinois.gov/filet/pimupload.asp> to [SCSC.CommissionSchools@illinois.gov](mailto:SCSC.CommissionSchools@illinois.gov) by **Friday, October 15, 2019, at 5:00PM CST** in accordance with the format submissions instructions below.

## Instructions and Format for Submissions

The Renewal Application must include the Formal Request for Renewal (which must be signed by both the School Leader/Director and the Board Chair/President) and the Key Information Forms (both provided in this package).

The Renewal Application narrative (starting with the Executive Summary) may not exceed a total of 45 pages, excluding any cover pages, the Formal Request for Renewal, and attachments. (Except for the Executive Summary, there are no page limits per response, provided that the total narrative does not exceed 45 pages. *(This 45-page limit includes an allotment of 5 pages for reproduction of the Renewal Application questions.)*)

The application narrative should include a Table of Contents, including a list of all attachments.

Applicants should reference attachments clearly in the application. Any attachment should provide information that:

- a) meaningfully augments the body of evidence that the Commission has already collected on the school's performance
- b) illustrates and/or supports plans or strategies for the next charter term that would be material to the charter contract for the renewal term.

The Renewal Application should not include any photographs, diagrams, or news clippings unless they are being submitted as evidence of performance for one or more renewal criteria.

## RENEWAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS

### I. Executive Summary

Provide a brief description of the school, not exceeding two (2) pages, including an overview of the mission and vision, educational program, community and local connections, leadership and governance, and fiscal health. Highlight the school's major successes, challenges, and best practices that can be shared with other schools, and lessons learned during the current contract term.

The summary should also, highlight any request for significant variance or modifications from the current contract's provisions. If the application includes a significant variance or modification from the current contract terms, describe the reason for the requested variance.

### II. Looking Back: The Record of Performance

Section II provides schools an opportunity to provide **factual, non-anecdotal evidence** to clarify, correct, supplement, or augment their performance record over the current charter term as summarized in the Initial Renewal Findings. In this section, schools should respond directly to evidence and analyses presented in the Initial Renewal Findings and submit **only** evidence of performance related to the Accountability Plan that is **not included or is incorrect** in the Initial Renewal Findings.

Responses may include but are not limited to information about interim assessments or progress reports, evidence of performance on school or mission-specific goals, and evidence of progress in any areas where the school has not previously met or is not currently meeting the performance standard. Responses should reference the specific criteria and benchmarks in the Commission's Accountability Plan to which the information applies. In addition, schools should provide a response to conditions or expectations set forth in the most recent charter contract or in accountability actions levied by the Commission during the term.

This section is not meant to be cumbersome or duplicative. If the school agrees with the information presented in the Initial Renewal Findings and has no corrections or additional evidence to submit, simply state so in the response. A detailed response and/or additional data are not needed.

**Schools should NOT use the Renewal Application to tell a story about why the school should be renewed that is disconnected from its record of performance or to provide anecdotal or subjective information that is not relevant to the school's performance expectations as defined by the Accountability Plan and the school's charter contract.**

Renewal Recommendations will be based on all evidence of school performance in the renewal record, including, but not limited to, the school's responses in this section.

#### ***Academic Performance***

- 1. Initial Academic Findings:** Examine the Initial Academic Findings and state whether the school agrees with, or where and why it disagrees with, the Initial Academic Findings.
- 2. Results of Modifications:** Describe any significant modifications made to the school's educational program or approaches over the charter term, why they were made, and what

improvement was achieved by or because of the modification. Responses to this question should provide objective, verifiable evidence and should not be anecdotal.

3. **Supplemental Academic Information:** Provide any academic performance-related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information which may not be captured in Commission records or in the Initial Renewal Findings but is important to the school's academic achievement and pertinent to the Academic Domain of the Accountability Plan. Submissions may include supplements related to the Initial Renewal Findings. Identify the specific Accountability Plan measures to which the information applies, as appropriate.
4. **School-Specific Goals and Measures** (optional): If the school has adopted any school or mission-specific academic goals and measures, state the measure(s) and provide evidence of outcomes (if not already captured in the Initial Renewal Findings). Any measures identified for this response should show student performance, learning, or achievement (as opposed to simply participation or attendance). **Data on outcomes should be objective, valid, reliable, and verifiable.**

### ***Financial Performance***

5. **5 Year Enrollment & Budget Projections (use template provided).**
6. **Initial Financial Findings:** Examine the Initial Financial Findings and state whether the school agrees with, or where and why it disagrees with, the Initial Financial Findings.
7. **Current Financial Statement:** Provide, as an attachment, evidence that the school is current at the time of completing this Renewal Application in meeting its liabilities, including, but not limited to, payroll taxes, debt service payments, and employee benefits.
8. **Supplemental Financial Information:** Provide any financial performance-related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information which may not be captured in Commission records or in the Initial Renewal Findings but is important to the financial health of the school and pertinent to the Financial Domain of the Accountability Plan. Submissions may include, but are not limited to, documentation of actions taken, and results achieved in response to audit findings, updated financial records, or other updates regarding the Initial Renewal Findings. Identify the specific Accountability Plan measures to which the information applies, as appropriate.

### ***Organizational Performance***

9. **Initial Organizational Findings:** Examine the Initial Organizational Findings and state whether the school agrees with, or where and why the school disagrees with, the Initial Organizational Findings.
10. **Supplemental Organizational Information:** Provide any organizational performance-related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information which may not be captured in Commission records or in the Initial Renewal Findings but is important to the school's organizational viability and pertinent to the Organizational Domain of the Accountability Plan. Submissions may include, but are not limited to, evidence of current compliance in areas for which the school was previously found to be non-compliant, or other updates relevant to the Initial Renewal Findings. Identify the specific Accountability Plan measures to which the information applies, as appropriate.

In addition, to allow the Commission to fully comprehend the school's organization and the context of its operations, please address the following areas:

- a. Provide, as an attachment, the school's organization chart, and provide a brief narrative description of the chart, including the names of staff, each staff member's role, and the responsibilities associated with each role.
- b. Discuss the school's level of parent and community engagement, support, and satisfaction. Provide evidence on this topic such as parent and student engagement rates, satisfaction survey data, or other measures of engagement, support, and satisfaction. Also provide, as an attachment, the school's 5 Essentials Survey results for the term of the charter, as available.
- c. Discuss the school's recruitment, attrition, disciplinary and expulsion policies and practices over the last contract term and provide evidence that the school is implementing best and fair practices in these areas, specifically including compliance with SB100, data on lotteries, student waiting lists, and student retention and expulsion. Provide this information for all subgroups identified in the Accountability Plan. Finally, provide a comparison of the school's expulsion and retention data to that of the host district's for the current contract term.
- d. List any complaints, claims, legal actions or lawsuits in which the school is or was a party during the term of the current contract and identify all parties, the forum, and the nature of the complaint, claim, action or lawsuit. Describe how the matter was resolved or its present procedural status.

### **III. Reflection on Best Practices**

Describe best practices that the school has implemented which can be disseminated or shared with other schools in the next charter term and describe how the school will share or disseminate these best practices.

### **IV. Looking Forward: Plans for the Next Charter Term**

Section IV asks the school to discuss plans for the next charter term. In addition to providing basic data, schools should use this section to outline a deliberate plan for sustaining success, improving where needed, and ensuring the ongoing viability of the organization.

In this section, schools should describe and discuss any anticipated changes to the charter. Changes may include proposed material changes to the original educational or organizational plans (e.g., changing the school mission, bylaws, curriculum, school calendar, etc.), as well as significant structural changes, such as proposing to increase total student enrollment or add new grade levels. Schools are strongly encouraged to identify any modifications they would like to make over the next charter term, even if changes would not occur immediately. The Commission will consider the requested changes as part of the Renewal Application and during contract negotiation. However, proposed modifications that are significant (e.g., adding multiple grade levels) will likely require additional submissions by the school and related procedures.

In addition, schools should be sure to discuss in the relevant sections below how the proposed change(s) will impact other aspects of the charter (e.g., how an organizational change would affect the Educational Plan).

**Note:** Responses to this section will not be the basis for the Commission’s decision for renewal or non-renewal. However, plans for the next charter term are critically important. In keeping with quality authorizing standards, the Commission will make its decisions based on the school’s demonstrated record of performance in all three domains, as opposed to promises of future performance. Responses to this section may, however, affect the length of the new charter term awarded to the school and will inform the terms of a new charter contract. Should the Commission grant renewal for an additional term, the plans presented here will serve as a blueprint for relevant sections of the charter contract for the new term.

### ***Educational Plans***

**Vision:** Provide a vision for what the school will look like in five years, and years and support that vision by describing the incremental goals that will make the vision a reality. Describe any changes to the school’s mission or substantial revisions to the educational program as described in the current charter that the school proposes to make for the next charter term. Discuss any associated challenges or risks.

**Educational Plan Modifications:** Describe any significant modifications pertaining to the educational program that the school seeks to implement in the new contract term. Explain how the anticipated changes in the educational plan will help the school to meet the targets set in the Commission’s Accountability Plan. Any modifications planned or anticipated for the educational program must also be reflected in the five-year budget.

**Academic Standards:** Identify the educational standards by subject area and grade level that will guide the school’s academic program. Explain the rationale for choosing them. Include, as an attachment, the chosen standards or provide a link if publicly available.

**Curriculum:** Describe the school’s curriculum for each subject area and instructional level, along with rationale for the curriculum development or selection decisions.

Applicants must address the following:

- Describe the curricula for the school in the core subjects of reading/ELA, math, science, and social studies. Explain the rationale for the curricular choices, such as textbook selection and supporting materials by subject. Provide evidence that any selected curricula are research-based, standards-aligned, have been effective with students similar to those the school expects to serve, and will keep students on track for college and career readiness.
- Identify the full sequence of subjects/courses that students will be required to complete and the exit standards necessary to graduate from the school or be promoted to the next grade. Include any elective subjects/courses.
- Explain how teachers will know what to teach and when to teach it, including the curriculum resources that will support instructional planning. Identify who will be responsible for creating or selecting these resources.

## **Special Student Populations**

**Students with Disabilities:** Describe the school's methods and strategies for identifying and serving students with disabilities, including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans, in compliance with all federal laws and regulations. Include the following information:

- How the school will identify students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities (and avoid misidentification), develop plans for their education, and monitor their progress to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in their IEP.
- The continuum of special education services (including related services) the school has and will make available to students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) possible.
- How the school will adjust the curricula, instructional practices, daily schedule, staffing plans, and supports to meet identified needs.
- Who will carry out responsibilities related to special education (including the identification of school staff and external professionals), how parents will be involved in this process, and how the school will ensure that there is qualified staffing to meet the needs of the student population.
- How will the school IEP team develop Individual Education Plans based on student need with appropriate accommodations and modifications, develop individualized measurable IEP goals, and monitor student progress to ensure academic growth?

**English Language Learners:** Describe the proposed school's methods and strategies for identifying (and avoiding misidentification) and serving English Learners (ELs) in compliance with federal and state law and regulations. Describe the specific process for identifying students whose first language is not English, including how the school will determine the scope of assistance the students may need and monitor the implementation of services and the progress of ELs, including exit criteria. This answer must describe the approach, programs, resources, and personnel, including qualifications, that the school will use to meet the needs of ELs and cite any research and evidence that supports the appropriateness of this approach.

**Multi-Tiered Systems of Support:** Describe how the school's educational program will identify and meet the needs of students who require academic support or intervention beyond that which is provided in the general education program. Identify specific differentiated instructional strategies, programs, services, and supports. Note: This question does not refer to services to support only students with Special Education needs or who are English Learners, but rather refers to all students (including special populations) and should be a system that is designed to improve outcomes for all students in the school.

## ***Financial Plans***

**Five-year Financial Projections.** Complete all portions of the five-year projected budget template for the next proposed contract term, an Excel spreadsheet with multiple tabs, provided by the Commission. Provide the completed workbook as an attachment.

- 1. Budget Narrative:** A budget narrative should be provided as an attachment and should explain the budget with line references and footnotes to explain the assumptions used for key revenue and expenditure projections as well as other key inputs used in creating the proposed budget for the next contract term.
- 2. Proposed Modifications:** The proposed five year budget should clearly articulate the financial impact of any proposed modifications (material or otherwise) to the school's educational, financial, or organizational plans (e.g., new curriculum or instructional materials; modified staffing structure; increased enrollment; longer school day or year; facility renovation, acquisition, or construction, etc.) that might be proposed earlier in this application.

## ***Organizational Plans***

**Organizational Goals and Plan Modifications:** Provide an overview of the school's organizational goals for the next five years. Describe any material modifications to the organizational plan that the school aims to undertake should its charter be renewed. Responses should include any plans to change the governance structure, modify policies or practices, or any other organizational change necessitated or anticipated due to any educational or financial proposed changes noted above. This answer should summarize these proposed changes, if any, and responses to the other questions in this section should describe the impact of any such proposed modifications to the school's finances and academic targets.

**Enrollment Plan:** Provide, as an attachment, the school's enrollment plan for the next charter term by completing the template (provided as an Exhibit in this package). If the proposed enrollment varies greatly from the current enrollment, provide the rationale for a significant enrollment change.

**Governance:** Describe any anticipated changes during the next contract term to the governance of the school, including, but not limited to, board composition, committee structure, and/or amendments to by-laws.

**Leadership and Management:** Describe any anticipated changes during the next contract term to the proposed leadership and/or management of the school, including, but not limited to, the leadership team structure and leadership succession plans, if any. Complete, and provide as an attachment, the Governance and Leadership Structure Table template to describe the current and anticipated governance and leadership structure.

**Discipline:** Provide, as an attachment, a copy of the school's Student Discipline Policy, which must include the Anti-Bullying Policy and link to the policy on the school website.

**Certified Instructional Staff:** Include a list of the charter school's instructional staff, which indicates the credentials and certification of those individuals.



**Transportation:** Clarify the charter school’s plan to meet the transportation needs of its pupils, including transportation for at-risk and low-income students, which may include (but is not limited to) bus service, subsidized public transportation, coordinated parent or volunteer carpools, participation in the state’s Parental Transportation Reimbursement Program, or any combination thereof. The charter school’s budget should adequately support the proposed transportation plan.

**Facility:** Describe the current status of the school facility (e.g., district-owned facility, privately-owned facility, temporary location, facility co-share, etc.). Discuss any anticipated changes during the contract term in facilities needs and/or location, including whether the school intends to remain in its current location, seek a different facility, or plans to renovate, improve, or change the current facility. The Commission will provide the school with the Facilities Report, which is expected in October. Please include in this answer how the school will address deficiencies noted in this Facilities Report, if any. Lastly, *explain how the school’s facilities plans for the next term are reflected in and corroborated by the five-year budget as presented.*

**Education Service Providers:** Please state whether or not the school intends to contract with an Education Service Provider (“ESP”) during the next contract term. The term “Education Service Provider” refers to organizations that contract with the governing board of a school to provide comprehensive or substantial educational services (all or a substantial portion of the services needed to operate or manage the school).

Applicants should include in their narrative response one of the three statements listed below that best describes their school’s relationship with an Education Service Provider:

1. *We have not previously contracted with an Education Service Provider (“ESP”), nor do we plan to do so going forward.*
2. *We have previously contracted with an Education Service Provider (“ESP”), and we plan on continuing to contract with an Education Service Provider (“ESP”) in the future.*
3. *We have previously contracted with an Education Service Provider (“ESP”), but we do not plan on contracting with an Education Service Provider (“ESP”) in the future.*

**NOTE:** If OPTION 2 best describes the school’s relationship with an Education Service Provider, provide, as an attachment, a copy of the draft ESP agreement

## ATTACHMENTS

- A. Illinois State Charter School Law Regarding Renewal, 105 ILCS 5/27A-9
- B. Accountability System of the Illinois State Charter School Commission
- C. Methodology for Illinois State Charter School Commission Accountability Plan
- D. Templates Provided by the Commission in this packet:
  - 1. Formal Request for Renewal (MS Word)
  - 2. Governing and Leadership Structure (MS word)
  - 3. Enrollment and Demographics Data and Trends (MS Word)
  - 4. 5-year Proposed Budget Template (MS Excel)
    - 5-year Proposed Budget Instructions
    - 5-year Proposed Budget Excel Document with Multiple Tabs
- E. Renewal Application Checklist
- F. Site Visit Preparation Checklist
- G. Renewal Application Evaluation Rubric
- H. Conclusion

## FORMAL REQUEST FOR RENEWAL

This Renewal Application seeks a renewal of the charter contract between

\_\_\_\_\_ School and the  
 Illinois State Charter School Commission for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ years, from  
 \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, to serve  
 a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ students in grades \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ at the following address:

(Insert school address)

with funding to be provided at \_\_\_\_\_% of the per capita tuition charge of the feeder district(s).

Name of School:		
Contact Person - Name and Title:	Contact Person - Mailing Address:	Contact Person - Phone & Email:
Alternate Contact - Name and Title:	Alternate Contact – Mailing Address:	Alternate Contact - Phone & Email:
Board Chair/President - Name:	Board Chair/President - Mailing Address:	Board Chair/President – Phone & Email:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of School Director/Leader

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of Board Chair/President

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

## GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

*Please complete the following tables, listing all members of the governing board and all members of the school's leadership teams.*

*You may add rows as needed.*

### SCHOOL LEADERHIP TEAM

Name	Title	Phone Number/Email

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Name	Employer/Title	Position

## ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS DATA AND TRENDS

*Please complete the table below to enumerate the student body at the school over the current charter term.*

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Total Enrollment	#	#	#	#	#
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					
Gender	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
Male					
Female					
Ethnicity/Race	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
White					
Black					
Hispanic					
Asian					
Other					
Special Populations	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %	# and %
Students with IEPs					
English Language Learners					
Homeless Students					
Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch					

Please use this space to briefly describe and identify the source(s) of information used to obtain the numbers and percentages provided in the School Population Information table above. The box will expand as you type:

*Please complete the table below to project anticipated enrollment over the next charter term.*

	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>
Total Enrollment					
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					

## RENEWAL APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Formal Request for Renewal (prepared using template in this document)
- Renewal Application Narrative
  - Part I: Executive Summary
  - Part II: Looking Back: The Record of Performance
  - Part III: Reflection on Best Practices
  - Part IV: Looking Forward: Plans for the Next Charter Term
- Attachments:
  - Evidence that the school is financially current
  - School organizational chart
  - Five Essentials survey results for the term of the charter
  - School's academic standards
  - Enrollment plan (prepared using the Enrollment and Demographics Data and Trends template in this document)
  - Governance and Leadership Structure Table (prepared using template in this document)
  - Student discipline policy
  - (if applicable) ESP contract
  - 5 Year Budget (prepared by completing ALL tabs and sections of the Excel template)
  - Budget Narrative

## CONCLUSION

This completes the Illinois State Charter School Commission's Application Questions for Renewal. The Commission and its staff thank you for completing these Application Questions. If the Commission staff may be of service in any way during the renewal process, please contact the office at 312.814.1258 or at [SCSC.CommissionSchools@illinois.gov](mailto:SCSC.CommissionSchools@illinois.gov).

Information regarding the renewal application and process or the Illinois State Charter School Commission is available at: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Illinois-State-Charter-School-Commission.aspx>

### **Illinois State Charter School Commission**

**Chair:** *DeRonda Williams*

**Member:** *David Feinberg*

**Member:** *Melissa Connelly*

**Vice Chair:** *Dr. Catherine Burns*

**Member:** *Carlos Perez*

**Member:** *Lisa Schuchart*

**Secretary:** *William Farmer*

**Member:** *Troy Ratliff*