

Proposed Public Charter School Application Evaluation Process – Staff Recommendation



[Section 22.1-212.5](#) defines a public charter school as “a public, nonreligious, or non-home-based alternative school located within a public school division. A public charter school may be created as a new public school or through the conversion of all or part of an existing public school; however, no public charter school shall be established through the conversion of a private school or a nonpublic home-based educational program. A charter school for at-risk pupils may be established as a residential school.”

[Section 22.1-212.9.H](#) requires all applications for public charter schools to be submitted to the Virginia Board of Education (Board) for review prior to the submission of the application to the local school board. Charter school applications must address a list of elements required by [Section 22.1-212.8](#). **The Board is required to review, comment, and decide as to whether the application satisfies the criteria developed by the Board.**

Updates to the public Charter School Evaluation Rubric were needed to better align with proposed updates to the public Charter School Application Process and Application. Therefore, the proposed Evaluation Rubric now runs parallel to the proposed Charter School Application and more succinctly outlines the requirements in the *Code of Virginia* and shows how the 2016 Board-approved criteria have also been addressed.

This proposed Evaluation Rubric looks explicitly at this criterion as outlined in the *Code* and restructures under Feasibility, Curriculum, Financial Soundness, and other Board priorities as required. The proposed evaluation rubric ensures a more transparent feedback process for the applicant, the standing committee, the Board, and the public.

This rubric is modeled after other states that have technical charter experts guide the application review process, and the rubric is publicly posted to ensure expectations on the evaluation demonstrate whether the applicant has satisfied the Board criteria and requirements outlined in the *Code of Virginia*.

Since one of the main duties of the Board is to “review and comment” on each application, strengths and suggestions boxes were added under each element to provide feedback to applicants. As outlined in the proposed 2024 public Charter School Application Process document, applicants will receive all the comments provided by each CSSC member within five days of the Committee. This is intended to help the applicant further address gaps or any weaknesses ahead of the Board of Education review and, more importantly, before they approach their local school division governing board for consideration to approve and authorize their public charter school. This level of feedback will also help the Board of Education to determine better whether the overall application satisfied the criteria of the Board.