



**Application for a Massachusetts Public Charter School:
Proposed Commonwealth or Horace Mann Charter School
By a New Operator**

2015-2016

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370
www.doe.mass.edu



This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.



The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, an affirmative action employer, is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. The Department does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Copyright © 2015 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Permission is hereby granted to copy any or all parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes. Please credit the "Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education."

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND REVIEW STAGES.....	4
COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE	7
HORACE MANN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE	8
HORACE MANN II PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE (NO DATES)	9
REQUIRED LETTER OF INTENT TEMPLATE.....	10
COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET (COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL).....	11
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	14
COMMONWEALTH CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT	15
HORACE MANN I CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT.....	16
HORACE MANN II CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT	17
HORACE MANN III CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT.....	18
GENERAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES.....	19
STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES FOR THE FEDERAL CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT	22
COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER PROSPECTUS OUTLINE FOR NEW OPERATORS.....	23
COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER PROSPECTUS FOR NEW OPERATORS... 24	
I. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER?	24
<i>A. Mission</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>B. Key Design Elements</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>C. Description of the Community(ies) to be Served</i>	<i>25</i>
II. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?	27
<i>A. Overview of Program Delivery.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>B. Curriculum and Instruction</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>C. Student Performance, Assessment, and Program Evaluation</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>D. Supports for Diverse Learners</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>E. Culture and Family Engagement.....</i>	<i>33</i>
III. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY?.....	34
<i>A. Capacity.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>B. Governance and Management.....</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>C. School Finances</i>	<i>36</i>
IV. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS - PROSPECTUS.....	38
<i>A. Applicant Group Members</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>B. Curriculum</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>C. Draft Organizational Chart.....</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>D. Proven Provider Request (if applicable).....</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>E. Current School Improvement Plan (if Horace Mann II – conversion)</i>	<i>38</i>

COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER FINAL APPLICATION OUTLINE FOR NEW OPERATORS	39
COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER FINAL APPLICATION.....	41
I. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER?	41
A. <i>Mission</i>	41
B. <i>Key Design Elements</i>	41
C. <i>Description of the Community(ies) to be Served</i>	42
D. <i>Enrollment and Recruitment</i>	43
II. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?	45
A. <i>Overview of Program Delivery</i>	45
B. <i>Curriculum and Instruction</i>	46
C. <i>Student Performance, Assessment, and Program Evaluation</i>	48
D. <i>Supports for Diverse Learners</i>	49
E. <i>Culture and Family Engagement</i>	51
III. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY?.....	53
A. <i>Capacity</i>	53
B. <i>Governance</i>	53
C. <i>Management</i>	57
D. <i>Facilities and Student Transportation</i>	58
E. <i>School Finances</i>	59
F. <i>Action Plan</i>	61
IV. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS – FINAL APPLICATION	62

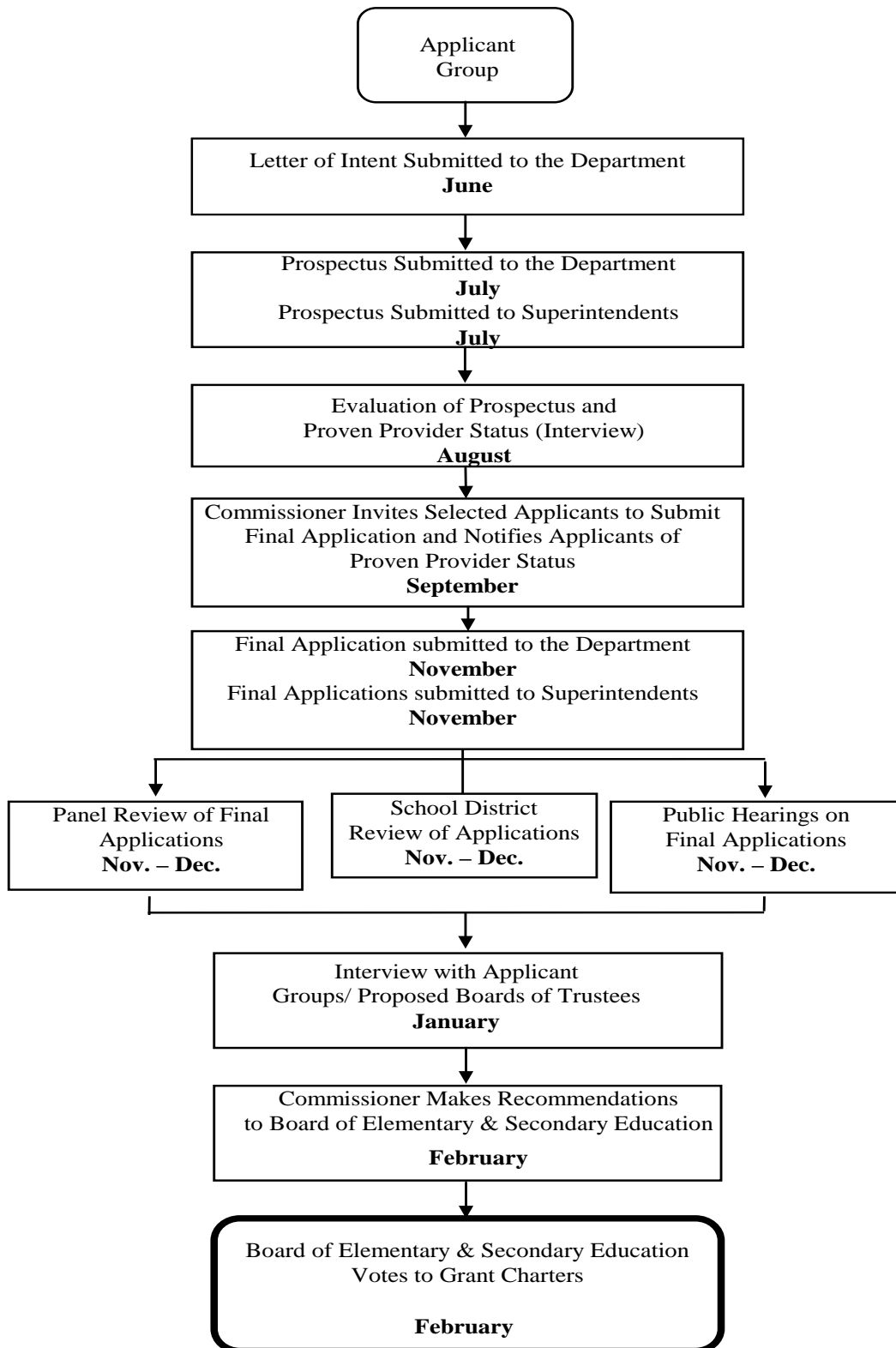
THE APPLICATION PROCESS AND REVIEW STAGES

Deadlines	<p>The deadline for receipt of all materials is 5:00 PM as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of Intent..... June 8, 2015 • Prospectus.....July 28, 2015 • Proven Provider Request (if applicable).....July 28, 2015 • Final Application.....November 4, 2015
Electronic Submission	<p>The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) has instituted electronic submission for all charter applicants via an online tool. All eligible applicant groups will be required to participate in training related to application submission and the use of the online tool.</p> <p>Online tool will be launched and accessible for all prospective applicants on Friday, May 22, 2015 at http://charterapplication.doe.mass.edu/.</p>
How to Submit <i>Note: All documents, when submitted to the Department, become part of the public record.</i>	<p>Applicant groups will be asked to submit the prospectus and final application electronically via an online tool as well as submit an unbound copy with original signatures to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906 (781) 338-3227</p>
Letter of Intent and Applicant Information Sheet <i>Note: Letter of Intent submissions are submitted to the Department via the online tool.</i>	<p>Letter of Intent, and Applicant Information Sheet are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, June 8, 2015</p> <p>An applicant group's letter of intent and applicant information sheet are submitted via the online tool. All interested charter school applicants are required to notify the Department of their intention to apply for a charter.</p> <p>After submission of a letter of intent, applicant groups will be contacted by the Department to confirm attendance at the required two hour applicant training on June 15, 2015.</p>
Submitting the Prospectus and Proven Provider request, if applicable <i>Submit:</i> <i>A) One (1) unbound original copy with original signatures</i> <i>B) Electronic submission via online tool</i>	<p>Prospectus and Proven Provider request, if applicable, are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 28, 2015</p> <p>Incomplete applications will not be accepted.</p> <p>District Review</p> <p>Applicants for a Commonwealth charter must file a copy of the prospectus with the school committee(s) in the school district(s) from which the charter school expects to enroll students by Thursday, July 30, 2015 and must provide evidence to the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign that this has been completed by Friday, July 31, 2015. Submission to the office(s) of the superintendent(s) is considered sufficient to meet this requirement.</p>
Submitting the	All Horace Mann charter applicants will be permitted to submit

Prospectus (Horace Mann Charter Schools)	their signed Certification Statement up to 6 weeks after the prospectus deadline to accommodate school committee meeting schedules. For Horace Mann I and III applicants, the deadline for signed Certification Statements is Wednesday, September 9, 2015 by 5:00 p.m. All other prospectus requirements for Horace Mann I and III applicants must be completed on or before the prospectus deadline of July 28 by 5:00 p.m.
Prospectus Review	The prospectus is reviewed by the Department and external reviewers against the criteria in the application.
Proven Provider Request Review (as applicable) Proven Provider Interview	The Proven Provider request is reviewed by the Department. Applicants for Proven Provider status will be contacted immediately after the submission of the request and prospectus to schedule a Department interview in August as part of the review of Proven Provider qualifications.
Applicant Notification	During the month of September, applicant groups may be invited to submit a final application. The Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education will invite those applicants whose prospectus demonstrates the greatest probability of creating the highest quality charter schools to submit a final application. For applicants who must qualify as Proven Providers, an invitation to submit a final application is contingent on the Commissioner's granting of Proven Provider status. The Commissioner will make the Proven Provider determination, if applicable, in September.
Submitting the Final Application <i>Submit:</i> <i>A) One (1) unbound original copy with original signatures.</i> <i>B) Electronic submission via online tool</i>	Final Application is due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 4, 2015 Incomplete applications will not be accepted. District Review (November to January) Applicants for a Commonwealth charter must file a copy of the application with the school committee(s) in the school district(s) from which the charter school expects to enroll students by Friday, November 6, 2015 . Submission to the office(s) of the superintendent(s) is considered sufficient to meet this requirement. Applicant groups must submit evidence the requirement has been met to the Department by Monday, November 9, 2015 . Superintendents from those districts and all contiguous districts will be invited to submit written comments to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding the application and the impact of the proposed Commonwealth charter school on their district.
Review of Final Applications	The final application will be reviewed by the Department and external reviewers against the criteria described throughout the application.

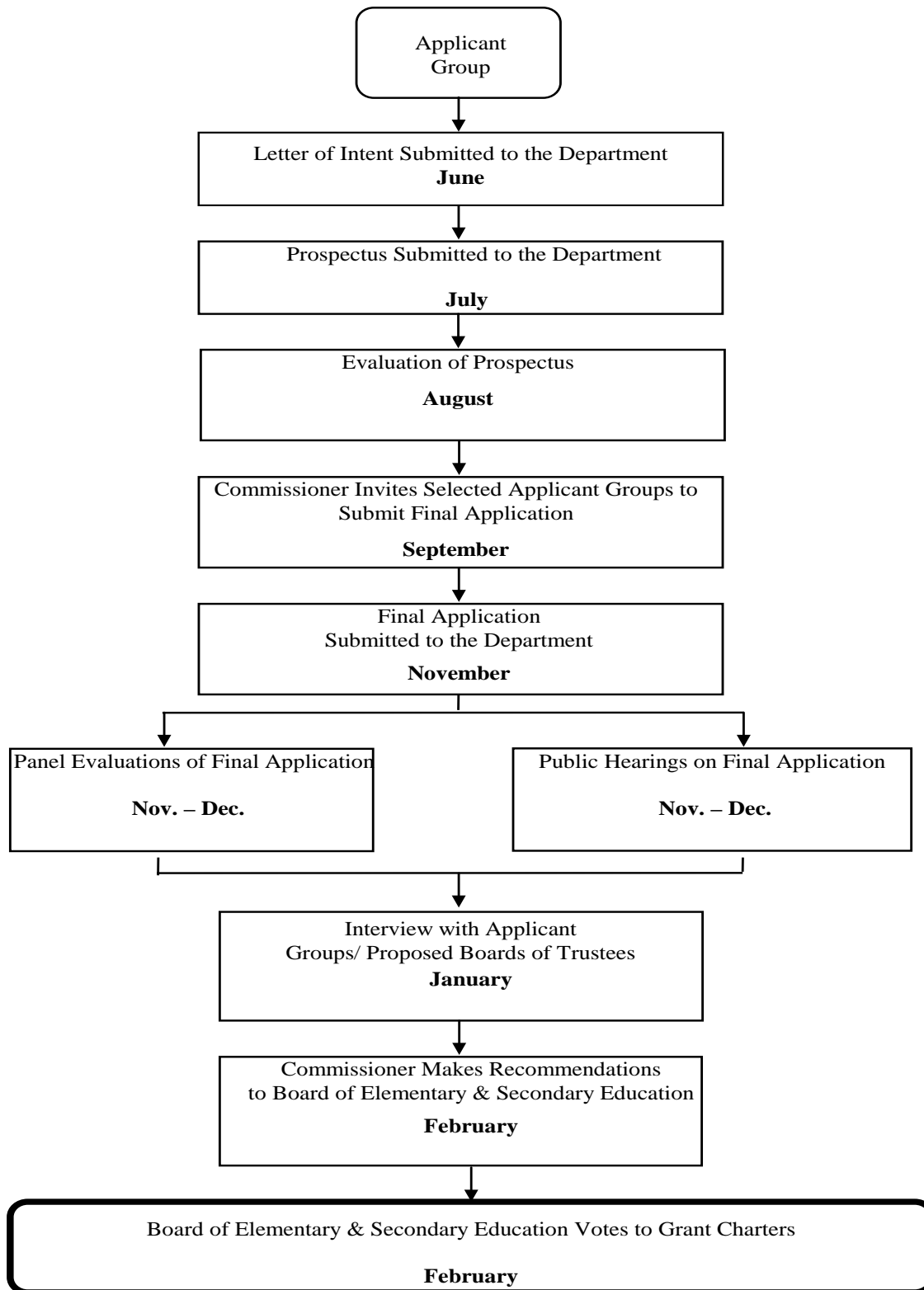
Public Hearings	<p>Public Hearings (November and December)</p> <p>The public hearing on a final application is held in the school district in which the proposed charter school intends to locate and attended by members of the public, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education member(s), and Department staff. Public hearings take place on a single weekday from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</p>
Interviews	<p>Interview with Applicant Group/Board of Trustees (January)</p> <p>Department staff conduct an interview with the applicant group and current board of trustees. Comments and questions from the final application review teams, the public hearings, and the proposed sending districts will serve as a basis for the interview.</p>
Commissioner's Recommendation	<p>Commissioner's Recommendation (February)</p> <p>The Commissioner will review the results of this process and make recommendations to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding the award of charters.</p>
Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Grants Charters	<p>Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Votes on New Charter Schools (February)</p> <p>The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will vote to award charters no later than the February Board meeting. The Board reserves the right to grant a charter with the terms and conditions that it deems are appropriate, including, but not limited to, the opening date, grade span, and maximum enrollment of the school.</p>

COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

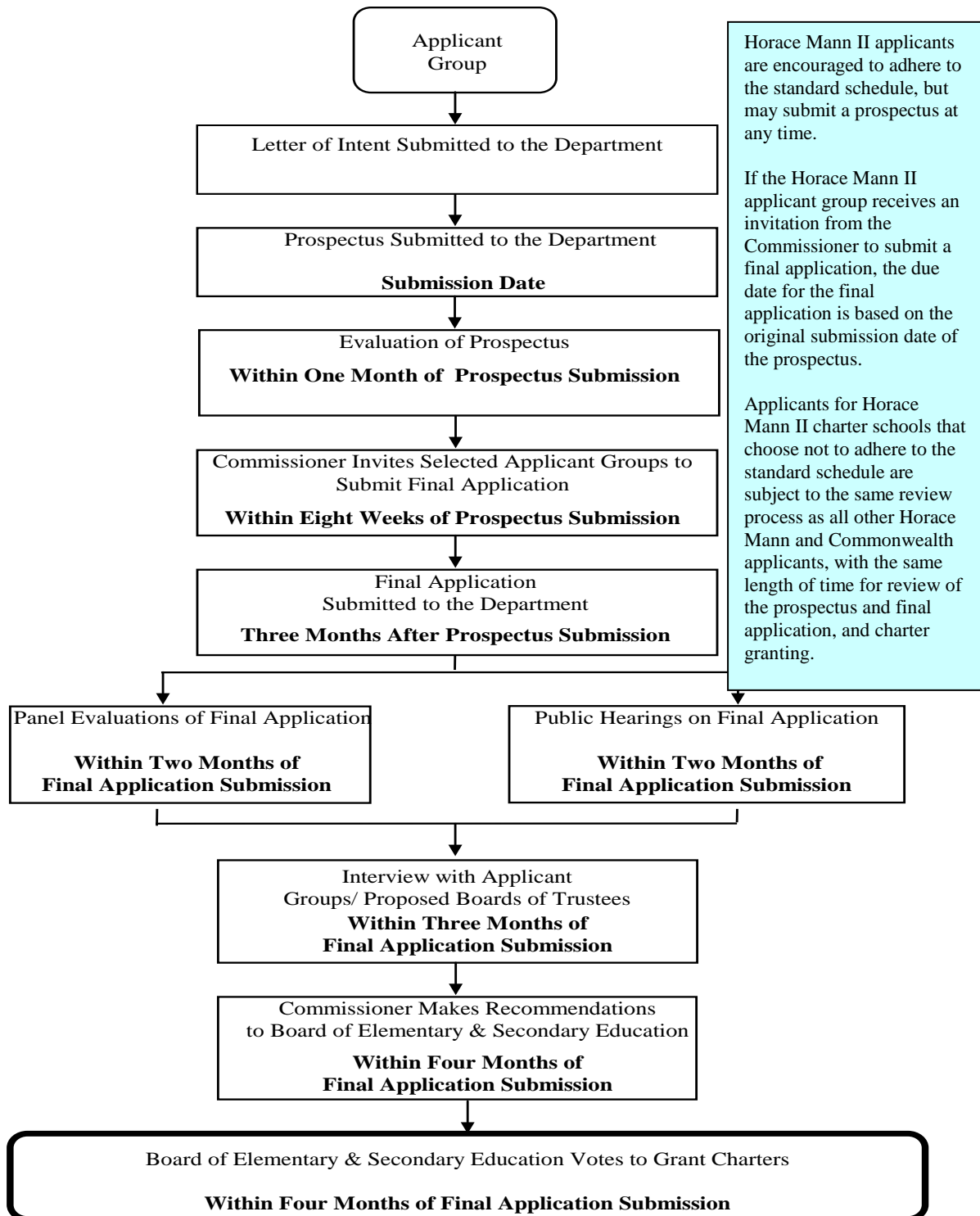


HORACE MANN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE



HORACE MANN II¹ PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE (NO DATES)



¹ For a description of Horace Mann II Charter Schools, see the Questions and Answers document at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/>.

REQUIRED LETTER OF INTENT TEMPLATE

*Applicant groups are **required** to submit a letter of intent to the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign via the [online tool](#) by June 8, 2015. An applicant information sheet must also be submitted with the letter of intent.*

Letter of Intent Template

Date

Contact Person's Name, Proposed Position/Role

Mailing Address

City, State Zip Code

Daytime Phone, Email Address

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906

Dear Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign,

Introductory sentence(s)

Provide a brief explanation of the mission and purposes of the proposed school and describe the type(s) of students to be served by the proposed school (e.g., targeted population, at risk youth) and the general approach to curriculum and teaching (e.g., Core Knowledge, Montessori, Coalition of Essential Schools, college preparatory, or replication of an existing school). Statement should also discuss the key design elements of the proposed charter school.

Provide information on the composition of the applicant group (e.g., parents, teachers, partner school district, non-profit organization) and if applicable, if the applicant group is applying as a Proven Provider or with what Proven Provider the applicant group proposes to contract.

Salutation,

Signature

COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET (COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL)

This information is included with all submissions. The application, including this form, will be posted on the Department website. Applicants are advised that the primary contact person may be contacted by the public and/or media with questions about the proposed school.

Name of Proposed Charter School: _____

School Address (if known): _____

School Location (City/Town REQUIRED): _____

Primary Contact Person: _____

Role or relationship of contact person to proposal: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Tel: (_____) _____ Secondary Tel: (_____) _____

Email: _____

1. The proposed school will open in the fall of school year: ☐ 2016-2017 ☐ 2017-2018

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
First Year		
Second Year		
Third Year		
Fourth Year		
Fifth Year		
<i>Add additional rows as needed to show planned growth to reach full proposed grade span and maximum enrollment.</i>		

2. Grade span at full enrollment: _____

3. Total student enrollment when fully expanded: _____

4. Age at entry for kindergarten, if applicable: _____

5. If applicable, the proposed Horace Mann charter school is: ☐ New or ☐ Conversion

6. If applicable, the proposed type of Horace Mann² charter school is:

☐ Horace Mann I ☐ Horace Mann II ☐ Horace Mann III

Questions #7-10 are for applications for a Commonwealth charter school ONLY.

7. If applicable, will this proposed Commonwealth school be a **regional charter school**? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, list the school districts (including regional school districts) in the proposed region. Please only list districts that are included in *District Information on Enrollment Projections for New Applications and Expansion Amendments* at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app> when posted. (Use additional sheets if necessary.)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

If no, please specify the district's population as reported in the most recent United States census estimate for the community the school intends to serve: _____.

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall not approve a new Commonwealth charter school in any community with a population of less than 30,000 as determined by the most recent United States census estimate [available at <http://www.census.gov/>], unless it is a regional charter school. (MGL c. 71 § 89(i)(1).

8. For all proposed Commonwealth charter schools, list the districts that are contiguous with the proposed school's district or region. Please only list districts that are included in *District Information on Enrollment Projections for New Applications and Expansion Amendments* at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app> when posted. (Use additional sheets if necessary.)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

9. Will the proposed Commonwealth charter school serve a district where overall student performance on the MCAS is in the lowest 10 percent, as designated in *District Information on Enrollment Projections for New Applications and Expansion Amendments* or in any updated analysis performed by the Department? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Will the proposed Commonwealth charter school serve a district or districts in which the 9 percent net school spending cap is, or **could be**, exceeded by 2015-2016 applications? ☐ Yes ☐ No

² The revision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89 in 2010 created three types of Horace Mann charter schools, each with a particular set of requirements.

11. Have members of the applicant group previously submitted a prospectus or final application that did not result in a charter? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, is the present submission related in content to the previous application? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please indicate the name of the previous proposal and the year submitted.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

12. Is the applicant group currently the board of trustees of an existing charter school?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If answered YES, please explain why the group is not using the charter application designed for use by a current board of trustees.

13. Do members of the applicant group currently operate or are they employed by a private or parochial school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Are any members of the applicant group present or past members of a charter school board of trustees, school committee, or other type of public governing body? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please indicate the person's name; the charter school name and school location, or school committee district; and dates of membership.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Summary is a required submission with the prospectus and the final application.

The Executive Summary should provide a broad overview of the proposed school, including its mission and school design, how this potential school will enhance options for students, the community's demonstration of support for this school, and the proposed board of trustees' (board) capacity to make the school a success. The Executive Summary is limited to a maximum of three pages and should include the following information:

Mission and School Design: Provide the proposed school's mission and vision. Describe the proposed board's core beliefs and values about education. Describe the key design elements of the proposed educational program, including curriculum and instruction. Be explicit about the key design elements of the proposed school's educational program that distinguishes it from other public schools. Indicate if the proposal is a replication of an existing model or the rationale behind the new model proposed. Explain how the key design elements will support the goal of improved student outcomes.

Community(ies) to Be Served: Explain the rationale for the selection of the community(ies). Describe the educational needs of the targeted community(ies) and how the proposed school aims to address those needs. Describe any relationships that have been established in the targeted community to support the success of the proposed school. Describe the strategies used to assess demand and/or establish support for the proposed school and the progress of your efforts thus far. Indicate the details of the proposed school growth, including proposed date of school opening, projected maximum enrollment, and the grades to be served.

**COMMONWEALTH CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT
(COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL AND
ORIGINAL HARD COPY WITH SIGNATURE PROVIDED TO ESE)**

Note: Applicant group submits an updated certification statement with the final application, if invited to submit.

Proposed Charter School Name:

Proposed School Location (City/Town):

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this prospectus/final application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and that this prospectus/application has been or is being sent to the superintendent of each of the districts from which we expect to draw students. Further, I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed school shall be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I further understand that the information submitted in this prospectus/application serves as an initial application for start-up assistance funding under the federal Charter Schools Program grant. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury.

Signature of
Authorized Person_____ Date_____

Print/Type Name_____

Address_____

Daytime Phone_____ Fax _____

HORACE MANN I CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT (COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL AND ORIGINAL HARD COPY WITH SIGNATURE PROVIDED TO ESE)

Note: Applicant group submits an updated certification statement with the final application, if invited to submit.

Proposed Charter School Name _____

School's Current Name
(If different from above) _____

I hereby certify that this prospectus/final application has received approval from a majority of the school committee and from the local teacher's union in the district in which this Horace Mann I Charter School would be located. The information submitted in this prospectus/final application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed charter school shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I understand that the final application for the proposed school shall include a signed final draft memorandum of understanding that describes the intended relationship between the proposed charter school and the school district. I also understand that any memorandum of understanding, modifying provisions of a collective bargaining agreement must be signed by the proposed charter school, the school committee, and the local collective bargaining unit and submitted with the final application. I further understand that the information submitted in this prospectus/final application serves as an initial application for start-up assistance funding under the federal Charter Schools Program grant. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury.

I. School Committee

Signature _____ Date _____
Chairperson, School Committee

Print/Type Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Telephone _____ Fax _____

II. Local Collective Bargaining Unit

Signature _____ Date _____
President, Local Teacher's Union

Print/Type Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Telephone _____ Fax _____

HORACE MANN II CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT (COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL AND ORIGINAL HARD COPY WITH SIGNATURE PROVIDED TO ESE)

Note: Applicant group submits an updated certification statement with the final application, if invited to submit.

Proposed Charter School Name _____

School's Current Name

(If different from above) _____

I hereby certify that this prospectus/final application has received approval from a majority of the school committee. The information submitted in this prospectus/final application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed charter school shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I understand that the final application for the proposed school shall include a signed final draft memorandum of understanding that describes the intended relationship between the proposed charter school and the school district. I also understand that any memorandum of understanding, modifying provisions of a collective bargaining agreement must be approved by a majority of faculty at the school, with the vote to be held within 30 days of submission of application. I further understand that the information submitted in this prospectus/application serves as an initial application for start-up assistance funding under the federal Charter Schools Program grant. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury.

I. School Committee

Signature _____ Date _____

Chairperson, School Committee

Print/Type Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Telephone _____ Fax _____

HORACE MANN III CHARTER SCHOOL CERTIFICATION STATEMENT (COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL AND ORIGINAL HARD COPY WITH SIGNATURE PROVIDED TO ESE)

Note: Applicant group submits an updated certification statement with the final application, if invited to submit.

Proposed Charter School Name _____

School's Current Name
(If different from above) _____

I hereby certify that this prospectus/final application has received approval from a majority of the school committee. The information submitted in this prospectus/final application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed charter school shall be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I understand that the final application for the proposed school shall include a signed final draft memorandum of understanding that describes the intended relationship between the proposed charter school and the school district. I also understand that an agreement with the collective bargaining unit is not required prior to Board approval of a charter, however the charter school's board of trustees must negotiate with the collective bargaining unit and the school committee in good faith regarding any modifications to collective bargaining agreements following the award of a charter. If an agreement is not reached at least 30 days before scheduled opening, charter school operates under the terms of its charter until an agreement is reached. I further understand that the information submitted in this prospectus/application serves as an initial application for start-up assistance funding under the federal Charter Schools Program grant. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury.

I. School Committee

Signature _____ Date _____
Chairperson, School Committee

Print/Type Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Telephone _____ Fax _____

GENERAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES (COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL AND ORIGINAL HARD COPY WITH SIGNATURE PROVIDED TO ESE)

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant group and submitted with the **final application**. An application will be considered incomplete and will not be accepted if it does not include the Statement of Assurances.

As the authorized representative of the applicant group, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for a charter for _____
(name of school) to be located at _____ is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I certify that, if awarded a charter, the school:

1. Will not charge tuition, fees, or other mandatory payments for attendance at the charter school, for participation in required or elective courses, or for mandated services or programs (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(m), and 603 CMR 1.03(3)).
2. Will not charge any public school for the use or replication of any part of their curriculum subject to the prescriptions of any contract between the charter school and any third party provider (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(l)).
3. Will permit parents to enroll their children only voluntarily and not because they must send their children to this school (The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1 — Public Charter Schools Section 5210(1)(h)).
4. Will enroll any eligible student who submits a timely and complete application, unless the school receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students. If the number of application exceeds the spaces available, the school will hold a lottery in accordance with Massachusetts charter laws and regulations (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71 § 89(n), and 603 CMR 1.05).
5. Will be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(m)).
6. Will be secular in its curriculum, programs, admissions, policies, governance, employment practices, and operation in accordance with the federal and state constitutions and any other relevant provisions of federal and state law.
7. Will comply with the federal Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
8. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws.
9. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students who are English language learners including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of

1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and chapter 71A of the Massachusetts General Laws.

10. Will comply with all other applicable federal and state law including, but not limited to, the requirement to offer a school nutrition program (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 69, § 1 (c)).
11. Will meet the performance standards and assessment requirements set by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for all students in public schools including, but not limited to, administering the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(v), and 603 CMR 1.04(3)(k)).
12. Will submit an annual report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on or before the required deadline (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71 § 89(jj)).
13. Will submit an accountability plan no later than the end of the first year of the school's charter, establishing specific five year performance objectives as specified in the state regulations (603 CMR 1.04 (3)(l)) and guidelines.
14. Will submit an annual independent audit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office of the State Auditor no later than November 1st of every year, as required by the charter school statute (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(jj), or at such other time as designated in 603 CMR 1.08 (3)).
15. Will submit required enrollment data each March to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education by the required deadline (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(o), and 603 CMR 1.08(5)).
16. Will meet enrollment projections through demonstration of support for the proposed charter school in the communities from which students would be likely to enroll (603 CMR 1.04(3)(c)).
17. Will operate in compliance with generally accepted government accounting principles (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(jj)).
18. Will maintain financial records to meet the requirements of Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89 and 603 CMR 1.00.
19. Will participate in the Massachusetts State Teachers' Retirement System (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(y)).
20. Will employ individuals who either hold an appropriate license to teach in a public school in Massachusetts or who will take and pass the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) within their first year of employment and meet all applicable staff requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71 § 89(ii), and 603 CMR 1.06(4)).
21. Will provide the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with written assurance that a criminal background check has been performed, prior to their employment, on all employees of the school who will have unsupervised contact with children (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 38R, and 603 CMR 1.04(7)(d)).
22. Will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health, and safety within the building(s) and on school property (603 CMR 1.04(7)(e), 1.04(7)(f), 1.05(7)(g), and 1.05(7)(h)).

23. Will maintain uninterrupted necessary and appropriate insurance coverage (603 CMR 1.04(7)(h)).
24. Will submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education the names, home addresses, and employment and educational histories of proposed new members of the school's board of trustees for approval prior to their service (603 CMR 1.06(1)(b)).
25. Will ensure that every member of the school's board of trustees shall meet all training as required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and any other requirements by other state agencies, including the requirements under the Commonwealth's open meeting law and conflict of interest law (603 CMR 1.06).
26. Will ensure that all members of the school's board of trustees file with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the State Ethics Commission, and the city or town clerk where the charter school is located completed financial disclosure forms for the preceding calendar year according to the schedule required by the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(u)). The disclosure is in addition to the requirements of said chapter 268A and a member of a board of trustees must also comply with the disclosure and other requirements of said chapter 268A.
27. Will recognize, if applicable, an employee organization designated by the authorization cards of 50 percent of its employees in the appropriate bargaining unit as the exclusive representative of all the employees in such unit for the purpose of collective bargaining (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(y)).
28. Will provide the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with a federal taxpayer identification number issued solely to the charter school and all required information regarding a bank account held solely in the name of the charter school (603 CMR 1.04(8)).
29. Will, in the event the board of trustees intends to procure substantially all educational services for the charter school through a contract with another person or entity, submit such contract for approval by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide for any necessary revisions and approval prior to the beginning of the contract period (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(k)(5)).
30. Will notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education immediately in writing of any change in circumstances that may have a significant impact on the school's ability to fulfill its goals or missions as stated in its charter (603 CMR 1.08(11)).
31. Will submit in writing to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education a request to amend its charter if the school plans to make a change to its operations as defined in 603 CMR 1.10.

Signature

Date

Affiliation

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES FOR THE
FEDERAL CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT
(COMPLETED IN ONLINE TOOL AND ORIGINAL HARD COPY
WITH SIGNATURE PROVIDED TO ESE)**

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant group and submitted with the **final application**. An application will be considered incomplete and will not be accepted if it does not include the Statement of Assurances for the federal Charter School Program Grant.

These additional assurances are required to ensure compliance with requirements for the federal Charter Schools Program grant:

1. Will annually provide the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving objectives described in this application (The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1 — Public Charter Schools Section 5203(b)(3)).
2. Will cooperate with the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in evaluating the program described in the application (The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1 — Public Charter Schools Section 5203(b)(3)).
3. Will provide other information and assurances as the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education may require (The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1 — Public Charter Schools Section 5203(b)(3)).

Signature

Date

Affiliation

COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER PROSPECTUS OUTLINE FOR NEW OPERATORS

The prospectus is limited to no more than 55 pages of text, excluding the Cover Page, the Table of Contents, the Applicant Information Sheet, the Certification Statement, Executive Summary, and the required attachments: the curriculum for grade levels beyond the four grade levels that is required in the text of the application; individual questionnaires and resumes from each applicant group member; budget; and, if applicable, the Proven Provider request containing the proposed Proven Provider's qualifications as defined and explained in 603 CMR 1.00.

- ☐ Cover Page
- ☐ Table of Contents
- ☐ Applicant Information Sheet
- ☐ Certification Statement
- ☐ Executive Summary – no more than three pages
- ☐ I. How will the school demonstrate faithfulness to charter?
 - ☐ A. Mission
 - ☐ B. Key Design Elements
 - ☐ C. Description of the Community(ies) to be Served
- ☐ II. How will the school demonstrate academic success?
 - ☐ A. Overview of Program Delivery
 - ☐ B. Curriculum and Instruction
 - ☐ C. Student Performance, Assessment, and Program Evaluation
 - ☐ D. Supports for Diverse Learners
 - ☐ E. Culture and Family Engagement
- ☐ III. How will the school demonstrate organizational viability?
 - ☐ A. Capacity
 - ☐ B. Governance and Management
 - ☐ C. School Finances
- ☐ IV. Required Attachments (do not count towards 50 pages)
 - ☐ Individual questionnaires and resumes from each applicant group member, indicating if a member is a proposed board member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other position(s).
 - ☐ Description of curriculum scope and sequence for grade levels beyond those required in the text of the application, including the content and skills to be taught in the core content areas.
 - ☐ Draft organizational chart
 - ☐ Draft Operating Budget: Projected Revenues and Expenditures
 - ☐ Proven Provider request, if applicable.
 - ☐ School Improvement Plan, for Horace Mann II conversion schools, as applicable.

COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER PROSPECTUS FOR NEW OPERATORS

I. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER?

A. MISSION

The mission communicates the essence of the proposed charter school and defines the core purpose and key values of the school to its stakeholders and the public. It should be succinct, meaningful, and consistent with high academic standards. A school's mission provides the foundation for the entire charter application and for the five year term of the school's charter. The mission should be reflected throughout all sections of the prospectus.

Provide the proposed mission. The mission and application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The mission defines the purpose and specialized focus of the school to its stakeholders and the public.
- ✓ The mission speaks to the value of the school, based on its own merit, and communicates the applicant group's core beliefs and values about education.
- ✓ The mission indicates the key design elements proposed to achieve outcomes.
- ✓ The mission is consistent with high academic standards and student success.
- ✓ The mission is succinct and comprehensible.
- ✓ The mission is reflected throughout all sections of the application.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed mission is different from the existing school's mission and how it differs.

B. KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

The application must contain a clear description of the key design elements of the proposed school that make the school unique and distinct from other public school options, and provide readers with an image of the future the applicant group wishes to create. The key design elements must align with the mission and be reflected throughout the application. This section of the application should further articulate what the school will achieve for the school community—students, parents, teachers, board members, and beyond.

When describing the key design elements, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application briefly describes the educational philosophy of the applicant group and their core beliefs and values about education which aligns with the school's mission and key design elements.
- ✓ The application describes the key design elements of the proposed school, such as length of school year and day, and aspects of school design, that make the school unique and distinct from other public school options. The key design elements align with the mission statement, and are reflected throughout all sections of the application.
- ✓ The application describes the key academic and nonacademic goals for students that are consistent with the stated mission, key design elements of the academic program, and educational philosophy of the school. Goals should be specific; measurable; action oriented; rigorous, realistic, and results focused objectives that are time-bound and tracked.
- ✓ The application describes how this school will enhance or expand the educational options available to the targeted student population, including whether the innovative methods to be used by the proposed school differ from the district or districts from which the charter school is expected to enroll students.

- ✓ The application illustrates a compelling image of the school's future and what the school will look like in five years if it is achieving its mission. Explicitly reference key pieces of evidence to demonstrate how the school's success will be measured, including the ways in which the school will positively impact all stakeholders in the school.

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMUNITY(IES) TO BE SERVED

State law asserts that charter schools are to be established to 1) stimulate the development of innovative programs within public education; 2) provide opportunities for innovative learning and assessments; 3) provide parents and students with greater options in choosing schools within and outside of their school districts; 4) provide teachers with a vehicle for establishing schools with alternative, innovative methods of educational instruction, and school structure and management; 5) encourage performance-based educational programs; 6) hold teachers and school administrators accountable for students' educational outcomes; and 7) provide models for replication in other public schools.

The prospectus should describe the community(ies) to be served by the school and how the school will offer educational opportunity to students, including the needs of students and their families. These are essential factors that inform the design of a successful charter school, ultimately driving support for and enrollment in the school. Data on district performance on the MCAS is available on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department) website and does not need to be reiterated here.

When describing the community(ies) the school plans to serve, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the student population that the proposed charter school would serve and the needs of that population.
- ✓ The application discusses the reason for the selection of the community(ies) and the applicant's ability to serve this particular area and current connections to the community.
- ✓ The application describes how the educational option provided by the charter school will address the needs of the student population, including the proposed mission, curriculum, instruction, and services.
- ✓ The application describes how the applicant group has assessed parental support within the proposed sending district(s)/region for the proposed school.
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application provides a description of how the founding group has assessed parental, district, teacher, and other staff support within the proposed sending district for the proposed school.
- ✓ The application describes supporting evidence for the projected student enrollment at the proposed **Commonwealth charter school**, such as an analysis of eligible potential students in the community(ies) to be served, analysis of documented demand from families with eligible potential students, and/or an analysis of enrollment at schools currently operating in the community(ies) to be served. Applicants should not submit copies of petitions or interest forms in the charter application.
- ✓ The application describes how the school will publicize and market its program to a broad cross-section of prospective students throughout the district(s) that the school plans to serve, including families that may be less informed about options. The application discusses specific strategies of how the proposed school will ensure adequate enrollment and full access to the school and its proposed educational program for all eligible students.
- ✓ The application describes the school's plan to provide families and community members opportunities to support the success of the school.
- ✓ The application explains why a **Commonwealth or Horace Mann charter** is necessary in order for this school to exist or succeed.
- ✓ The application discusses specific ways in which the **Commonwealth charter school** will collaborate with school districts from which it draws students to provide educational models;

including programs, curriculum, and teaching methods that can be replicated by other public schools.

- ✓ The application discusses specific ways in which the **Horace Mann charter school** will collaborate with schools within the district to provide educational models; including programs, curriculum, and teaching methods that can be replicated by other public schools.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application summarizes the School Improvement Plan currently in use including: data used, problem(s) identified, implementation status, and description of what has worked, what has not worked, and why. School Improvement Plan is submitted with prospectus.
- ✓ The application describes what the applicant group perceives as roadblocks to the successful implementation or inadequacies of the current School Improvement Plan.
- ✓ The application provides an analysis of the external and internal factors, strengths, and/or needs that moved the applicant group to propose a Horace Mann charter school.
- ✓ The application explains how this information has informed what the applicant group is proposing and how becoming a Horace Mann charter school will lead to greater academic success for students.

II. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

A. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM DELIVERY

All Massachusetts charter schools are expected to deliver academic programs that provide improved academic outcomes and educational success for all students. The proposed educational program should address the diverse needs of the student population and should be founded on an understanding of effective, research-based educational practices and high standards for student learning. The proposed school should incorporate a pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, culture, and other elements, based on the applicant group's educational philosophy, that create a comprehensive educational program. The overview of program delivery describes how the educational program will be delivered, and provides evidence that the proposed educational program and its associated educational practices may result in high academic achievement and the attainment of the knowledge, skills, and experiences that ensures college and career readiness for the anticipated student population.

When describing the school's program delivery, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application demonstrates that the proposed educational program will serve the diverse needs of individual students by providing evidence, including **explicit research citations**, that demonstrates their educational program and its associated educational practices may result in high academic achievement and the attainment of the knowledge, skills, and experiences that ensures college and career readiness for the anticipated student population. Evidence should include the specific subgroups of students listed in the recruitment and retention plan consistent with requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, such as students with disabilities, English language learners, and students participating in the federal free/reduced lunch nutrition program.
- ✓ The application describes the school calendar including the number of days school will be in session; and the daily hours of operation, including the length of the school day with start and dismissal times. Please be specific in describing these items and pay attention to the state requirements on minimum number of school days and instructional hours as described in 603 CMR 27.00, which is available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr27.html>. If the school would not meet the minimum number of school days and instructional hours based on the program proposed, provide justification for a waiver of the requirement. All public schools may request from the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education a waiver of student learning time for good cause to support innovative programs or schedules to improve student learning.
- ✓ The application provides a description of the mechanics of the educational program in terms of the daily or weekly organization of students and faculty (e.g., multi-grade, tracking, team-teaching, etc.) to explain the sample schedule.
- ✓ The application indicates if mandatory or optional programming will be offered to students during summer months, and the goals of such programming if offered.
- ✓ The application describes the extra or co-curricular activities or programming that the school will offer, how often they will occur, and the goals of such programming if offered.
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application describes the proposed school's ability, if any, to access programs offered by the district, including arts or sports programs.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed educational program delivery is different from the existing school's educational program delivery and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes any proposed changes in expectations for staff related to program delivery, such as length of school year and day.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

B. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Charter schools have the freedom to choose and/or develop curriculum models that best reflect the mission and educational philosophy of the school and that best serve the needs of the expected student population. Regardless of whether the curriculum is purchased or internally developed, it is important that it aligns with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF) since the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is based on the learning standards outlined in the MCF. Additional information about the MCF can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/>. Charter schools also have the freedom to determine the instructional methods that will be used to deliver the chosen curriculum model(s).

When describing the school's curriculum and instruction, the application should address the following criteria:

Use of Commercial Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ If intending to use developed curriculum, the application identifies the curriculum, explains the process utilized to identify the curriculum that will be used by the school, and provide reasons why the curriculum was chosen. Also indicate which individual(s) in the school's organizational chart will be responsible for identifying and selecting curriculum.✓ The application describes the process that is used to ensure alignment of the curriculum to the MCF and identifies the individual(s) who will be responsible for curriculum alignment to the MCF.✓ If modifications to the curriculum will be required, the application explains the process utilized to identify areas for revision and to make adjustments. Indicate the individual(s) that will be responsible for the process.
New Curriculum Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ If intending to develop curriculum, the application explains the process that will be used by the school to develop curriculum. Identify which individual(s) on the school's organizational chart will be responsible for developing curriculum and who will participate in the process.✓ The application describes the process that is used to ensure alignment of the curriculum to the MCF and identify the individual(s) on the school's organizational chart who will be responsible for curriculum alignment to the MCF.

- ✓ The application contains the curriculum scope and sequence that will be used by the school, including the content and skills to be taught in the core content areas at each grade level.³ Four grade levels should be included in the text of the application. All additional grade levels must be included in the attachments, but will not be counted toward the page limit. For proposed schools that plan to have fewer than four grade levels, please include all of the intended grades in the application narrative. The curriculum scope and sequence should be clearly aligned with MCF as well as aligned across the grades proposed for implementation.
- ✓ The application describes the processes for the ongoing development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum. The description should include incorporation of the curricular structures that will be used by the school, e.g. scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans, etc.

³ Content is what students should know; skills are what students should be able to do; and the core content areas include English, reading/language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

Identify which individual(s) on the school's organizational chart will be responsible for, and participate in the development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum.

- ✓ The application describes the process and procedures that will be used to evaluate whether the curriculum is effective and successfully implemented. Identify which individual(s) on the school's organizational chart will be responsible for curriculum evaluation.
- ✓ The application describes the learning environment(s) that will be used to deliver the proposed curriculum model, including the use of technology, and class size and structure.
- ✓ The application describes the pedagogy or instructional methods that will be used to deliver the curriculum model(s).
- ✓ The application contains a detailed plan for a responsive general education classroom that would support the needs of all students. The plan should include how the proposed curriculum and instructional methods will support high standards of achievement for students with a wide range of needs, and be accessible and appropriate for all students at all levels, including students with diverse learning styles; English language learners; students with disabilities; students who enter below grade level, or students identified as at risk; and advanced students who perform significantly above grade level. The plan should also describe the strategies the school will implement to ensure academic success for all students, including students struggling to meet performance standards.
- ✓ The application demonstrates that the proposed curriculum and instruction will serve the diverse needs of individual students by providing evidence or relevant experience, including **explicit research citations**, that demonstrates the proposed curriculum and instruction may result in high academic achievement and the attainment of the knowledge, skills, and experiences that ensures college and career readiness for the anticipated student population. Evidence should include the specific subgroups of students listed in the recruitment and retention plan consistent with requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, such as students with disabilities, English language learners, and students participating in the federal free/reduced lunch nutrition program.
- ✓ The application describes the proposed structures for regular, frequent collaboration and professional development to improve implementation of the curriculum and instructional practice. Include a description of how the school plans to train and support teachers to address the unique needs of all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners.
- ✓ The application describes how the school will determine the professional development needs of the staff, including administrators and teachers, on an on-going basis and how these opportunities will be delivered during and outside of the scheduled school year.
- ✓ The application explains the process and frequency of teacher performance evaluations, including the key elements of the evaluation and who will conduct the evaluations. For more information about educator evaluation in Massachusetts see: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/>.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed curriculum and instruction is different from the existing school's curriculum and instruction and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

C. STUDENT PERFORMANCE, ASSESSMENT, AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

Charter schools must ensure that students will meet the same performance standards and assessment requirements set by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for students in other public schools. Performance, promotion, and graduation standards should be based on high expectations that are aligned with the school's mission, educational program, assessment system, and the MCF. An

integrated assessment system, which includes the MCAS/PARCC test,⁴ serves as a structure for how teachers and administrators will measure what students know and are able to do as a result of the delivery of curriculum and instruction.

Information from assessments serves to help determine what areas of instruction need additional time, the needs of individual students, the quality of instruction, decisions on improvement strategies, and the school's overall progress in meeting Accountability Plan goals. Ultimately, the assessment system provides information to all stakeholders on whether the school is an academic success. The proposed system should reflect how the school would link curriculum and instruction to assessment by measuring the academic progress of individual students, cohorts of students over time, and the school as a whole, with the goal of continual school improvement.

When describing student performance, assessment, and program evaluation, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the proposed school's policies and standards for promoting students to the next grade, achievement level, or grouping level in alignment with the educational program.
- ✓ The application describes the graduation requirements or "exit standards" for the school's grade groupings as applicable (e.g., elementary, middle, high school, or primary, upper elementary, etc.). These exit standards should be aligned with the school's mission and provide a clear sense of expected student achievement at the end of the last grade of each school level and/or upon graduation. If the proposed educational program includes a high school, explain how your graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college and career opportunities.
- ✓ The application describes a thorough, clear, measurable, externally credible, and conceptually sound design for measuring and reporting the performance and progress of the school as a whole, student cohorts over time, and the academic and social development of each student to all relevant stakeholders. Selected assessments are both research based and consistent with the school's mission, broad academic and nonacademic student goals, educational program, and high expectations of students. Descriptions should include, but are not limited to, the following information:
 - The types of internal/school-developed assessments that will be administered to measure and report student progress. Explain why these particular assessments were selected for the targeted student population and how the data will be used to support the goal of student learning and outcomes.
 - Describe the school's philosophy and plans for student homework.
 - A meaningful and practical approach for measuring and supporting student progress toward attaining non-academic goals in alignment with the proposed school's mission and vision as well as students' needs.
 - Evidence of multiple measures of student performance outcomes that may include reports of absolute scores, within-year student gains/losses, and year-to-year student gains/losses.
 - A plan to use student data, including MCAS/PARCC performance, to facilitate decision-making about necessary adjustments to the educational program and the staff development plan that will support the goal of improved student learning and outcomes.
 - Indicate if any additional standardized assessment tools will be used to determine and report student progress. If so, explain why those tools were selected for the targeted population and how the data will be used.

⁴ The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will decide in fall 2015 whether to adopt PARCC and transition away from MCAS English language arts and math tests.

- Indicate the roles of school leadership and faculty in the collection, analysis, and use of student data, and the individual responsible for oversight of the system.
- Indicate the system for reporting the performance and progress of the school, grades, individual classes, and students, including the frequency of the different forms of assessment, the types of stakeholders who will receive assessment information, and the types of metrics reported.
- ✓ The application describes the processes that will ensure the assessment system is linked to curriculum and instruction, and is used to facilitate timely adjustments that will support the goal of improved student learning and outcomes.
- ✓ The application describes how each of the following stakeholder groups will participate in the review and response to student achievement data:
 - The school's board of trustees
 - School administrators
 - Teachers
 - Students
 - Parents

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed standards for student performance, promotion, and graduation and the proposed assessment system is different from the existing school's standards and assessment system and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

D. SUPPORTS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

All charter schools in Massachusetts are public schools that enroll students through a lottery process. Therefore, all charter schools must be prepared to enroll students with diverse learning needs including English language learners and students with disabilities, all of whom must be provided with full and meaningful access to the general educational curriculum.

The general education classroom needs to be responsive to the educational needs of all children, and accommodates their needs. A full continuum of services must be available within the school so that all students can receive needed services in an appropriate setting and participate fully in the educational goals and mission of the school. This section of the application should describe the school's programs and services, and how they will be implemented within the context of your proposed school.

For information on special education, please see the Massachusetts Primer on Special Education and Charter Schools and related documents found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/sped/default.html>. For information on special education laws and regulations see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/laws.html>. Please review the required elements of the special education policies and procedures found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/>. Special education policies and procedures are submitted to the Department during opening procedures of the proposed charter school. Consider the required elements when crafting your response to the application criteria related to the processes and procedures used to identify, assess, and serve students with disabilities.

For information on the laws and regulations relating to English language learners, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr14.html>. For guidance on English language learners, please see the Department's website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance_laws.html. Please review the required elements of the English language education policies and procedures found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/>. English language education policies and procedures are submitted to the Department during opening procedures of the proposed charter school. Consider the

required elements when crafting your response to the application criteria related to the processes and procedures used to identify, assess, and serve English language learners.

When describing the school's plan for special student populations and student services, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the processes and procedures that the proposed school will employ to **identify, assess, and serve students** who are English language learners. In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, indicate what role, if any, the district will have in the assessment and delivery of services. Descriptions will be considered incomplete if they do not include:
 - a description of the English language development program and support services to be offered including the curriculum and strategies that will be used;
 - how student identification and assessment will be conducted;
 - the settings in which required services will be implemented;
 - how services will be delivered within the school's daily schedule;
 - the plan to support core academic teachers in obtaining SEI endorsement;
 - the titles, salaries, and qualifications of the individuals delivering the services; and
 - how the program will be evaluated.
- ✓ The application describes the processes and procedures that the proposed school will employ to **identify, assess, and provide specialized instruction** to each student in need of special education services. In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, indicate what role, if any, the district will have in the assessment and delivery of services. Descriptions will be considered incomplete if they do not include:
 - a description of support services to be offered and some of the methods that will be used to provide a continuum of services;
 - how student identification and assessment will be conducted;
 - the development of individualized education programs;
 - the settings in which required services will be delivered;
 - how services for students in need of special education services will be delivered within the school's daily schedule;
 - the qualifications of individuals who will be recruited to deliver services;
 - the titles, salaries, and qualifications of each position proposed; and
 - how the program will be evaluated.
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application indicates clearly the expectations surrounding district involvement in the provision of services for students with disabilities and English language learners.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed plans for special education programming and English language development programming is different from the existing school's programs and how it differs.
- ✓ The application provides an analysis of the existing school's current efforts serving students receiving special education services and English language learners and how the proposed programming addresses identified areas for improvement.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

E. CULTURE AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Massachusetts charter schools support students' social and emotional health in safe and respectful learning environments that engages families. The application must describe how the proposed school will create a safe school environment and address the physical, social, emotional, and health needs of its anticipated student population. The application must also describe how the proposed school will develop strong working relationships with families/guardians in order to support students' academic progress and social and emotional well-being.

When describing the school's plan for school culture and parent engagement, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the culture of the school, and a clear plan for establishing a school culture and norms consistent with the school's mission, educational philosophy, and educational program from the first day of the school's operation. The plan should include specific strategies the school will implement to develop and maintain a safe school environment conducive to learning and consistent with the school's mission and educational philosophy. Describe how school culture and climate will be fostered for and by school leadership, teachers, students, and parents.
- ✓ The application describes the school's programs or strategies to address the physical, social, emotional, and health needs of the anticipated student population.
- ✓ The application describes the school's philosophy and plans regarding student behavior and discipline for the general student population and students with special needs. Student discipline should be consistent with requirements and the school's mission and educational philosophy.
- ✓ The application describes how the school plans to involve parents/guardians as partners in the education of their children and to build and maintain family-school partnerships that support students' academic progress and social-emotional well-being. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school will offer to parents.
- ✓ The application describes the relationships the applicant group has established or intends to establish with community agencies and organizations that will support the school's educational program and serve the youth who attend the school. Explain the nature of the proposed partnership/relationship(s) and how it will support the school's mission and vision.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed school characteristics and culture are different from the existing school's school characteristics and culture and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes any proposed changes in expectations for staff related to implementation of school culture or parent engagement.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

III. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY?

A. CAPACITY

A public school charter is granted to a board of trustees. Members of the board of trustees are public agents authorized by the state and are responsible for governing charter schools. In general, it is important that these individuals possess a wide variety of skills and qualifications that will enable them to found and sustain an excellent school. Members of a founding group may be proposed for the school's board of trustees or may assume other roles in the school. Each founding group should be able to clearly define who is proposed to be a member of the board of trustees and what other roles will be assumed. The proposed board of trustees must be of a number sufficient to provide effective oversight of the school and to participate in the considerable amount of work required to open a charter school.

When describing the capacity of the founding group and/or proposed board of trustees the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes how the applicant group came together to form this proposed school and why the group is united to establish the proposed charter school.
- ✓ The application explains how often the group meets, how the planning and writing process is completed, and identifies the primary author of the application.
- ✓ The application summarizes briefly within the text of the document each founder's and/or proposed board member's experience and qualifications. The experience and qualifications should demonstrate that the founders and/or proposed board members:
 - have the experience and qualifications necessary to implement the proposal;
 - demonstrate the capacity to found and sustain an excellent charter school;
 - can manage public funds effectively and responsibly;
 - include members who possess skills and experience in areas such as education, management, finance, development, and law; and
 - have tangible ties to, and broad and diverse representation from the communities the school will serve.
- ✓ The application explains how the proposed board of trustees is reflective of or consistent with the school's mission and program.
- ✓ Each member of the applicant must submit a resume as an attachment to the application. The application must indicate if a founder is a proposed board member, proposed school leader, or other school employee. Resumes should indicate the founder's prior experience as it relates to the charter application. Additionally, proposed board members and proposed school employees must complete individual questionnaires to further establish their understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

B. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

As entities of the state, public charter schools must meet a number of legal requirements set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Many of these requirements are outlined in the *Charter School Administrative and Governance Guide: An Overview of the Laws and Regulations that Boards of Trustees and School Leaders Need to Know*, this document can be found online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/governance/adminguide.doc>. The guide begins by explaining that a strong board of trustees defines the mission of the school, develops school policies and changes them when appropriate, hires qualified personnel to manage the school's day-to-day operations and holds them accountable for meeting established goals, and formulates a long-range plan and charter school accountability plan that will ensure the school's continued stability. In addition to its many other responsibilities, the board must ensure that the school is complying with all of the state and federal laws that apply to the school and that the board itself is operating in accordance with the rules set out

by all applicable Massachusetts laws and regulations. Finally, the board is responsible for operating the school in accordance with its charter and with any approved amendments to its charter.

A school's ability to carry out its purpose and objectives is largely determined by the governance structure of the school and by developing an effective board of trustees.

(1) Governance and Management Structure

- ✓ The application explains the proposed reporting structure and relationship between the board of trustees and the individual(s) reporting directly to the board regarding the governance and management of the proposed charter school.
- ✓ The application includes an organizational chart that encompasses employees of the school and the board of trustees. The application briefly explains the reporting structure and relationship between the school's leader and administration regarding teachers, specialists, and other staff members.
- ✓ The application indicates if there are any ex-officio members of the board of trustees, denoting seats that are earmarked based on a person's position or status, such as school principal, teacher, parent, or student representative, and explains the rationale for the proposed governance model as applicable.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application describes how the applicant group and potential board of trustees will ensure the successful transition to the new governance structure required for a Horace Mann charter school.

(2) Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ The application describes the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees. The application clearly articulates the role distinctions amongst the board, the school district (in the case of **Horace Mann charter schools**), and the school administration as they relate to curriculum, personnel decisions, budget allocation, and vendor selection.
- ✓ The application provides examples of the proposed board's future actions in governing the proposed school that accurately reflect an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees, consistent with public accountability, such as open meeting law, state ethics law, and charter school law.
- ✓ If the applicant group includes the proposed school leader (or any other position at the school), the application describes the process and criteria used to determine that the individual is the best candidate for the position. Identify the skills and experience of the selected individual(s) and describe how their professional background supports their capacity to be successful in founding a high quality charter school and achieving the school's mission as the school leader or a member of the leadership team. If the proposed school leader has never led a school, describe any training programs that she/he has completed or is currently participating in.
- ✓ If the applicant group does not include the proposed school leader, the application describes the desired skills and experience of the ideal individual and the plans for the recruitment and selection of the school leader.
- ✓ The application briefly describes processes related to the board's oversight of the school, including setting priorities and goals; monitoring progress towards priorities and goals; supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the school leader(s); developing the annual budget; monitoring the school's finances; and conducting long-term financial and strategic planning.
- ✓ The application describes the annual process the board uses to evaluate its own performance, and describe the steps taken to guide its development as an effective governing board.
- ✓ The application describes the plan for how the school will make key organizational decisions about curriculum and instruction, student achievement, professional development, culture, staffing, fiscal planning, and operations.

- ✓ If the founding group intends to enter into a contract with another entity to provide substantially all the school's educational or management services, such as an educational management organization (EMO), (whether or not the entity meets the requirements of Proven Provider), the applicant should:
 - o Identify the entity and describe how and why the entity was selected, including its relevance to the proposed school's mission and key design elements.
 - o Include a summary of the entity's history, a description of how it implements its program, past results (including student academic achievement and financial status) of its school management efforts, and its educational philosophy. There should be evidence that the entity has demonstrated positive academic results and responsible fiscal management.
 - o Define the school's board of trustees' relationship with the entity and how the board of trustees will provide effective oversight to the entity.
- ✓ If you are submitting the prospectus with a college, university, museum, educational institution, another not-for-profit entity, or any other partner, please provide the information below:
 - o Identify the partner organization.
 - o Indicate the name of the contact person at the partner organization with the mailing address, phone number, facsimile number, and email address.
 - o Describe the nature and purpose of the school's partnerships with the organization.
 - o Briefly explain how the relationship enhances, complements, and/or supports the mission and educational philosophy of the proposed charter school.
 - o Explain if the partner organization will be involved in the governance of the school.

(3) Board Sustainability

- ✓ The application describes the recruitment, and selection processes for new board members.
- ✓ The application describes specific plans for the recruitment of additional board members with the skills and expertise that will ensure the sustainability of the proposed charter school, and the targeted qualifications sought in additional board members, if applicable.

C. SCHOOL FINANCES

Having the capability to manage school finances is essential for accountability and organizational viability. Comprehensive financial planning is an indispensable tool for successful charter school planning, program implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of resource allocations. In this section, we ask applicants to complete a **draft five year operating budget**; and provide a descriptive budget narrative. The school finances narrative and budget should demonstrate knowledge of the practical matters relevant to the operation of a school. The applicant group **does not submit** a cash flow projection of its first year of operation at the prospectus stage.

- ✓ The application explains how the budget was developed and the process used by the applicant group to ensure the accuracy and realistic nature of their final projections.
- ✓ Applicants must submit a multi-year budget from the school's start-up phase through its fifth year of operation. Download the electronic budget template, including instructions, from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app>.
- ✓ The application summarizes financial forecasts from the school's start-up phase through its fifth year of operation. Financial forecasts must include total expected realistic sources of revenue—including tuition and other grants (federal, state, and private), and fundraising—as well as all expenditures, the timeframe for a positive cash balance, and the anticipated growth of the school. Define and give support for the assumptions behind projections.

- ✓ The budget needs to be realistic and reflect the expenses related to all commitments proposed in the application, through the proposed school's fifth year of operation, including the school's educational program, expected student population of students with disabilities and English language learners, human resources needs, and the acquiring and repayment of potential debt.
- ✓ The budget narrative should discuss and explain the projected revenue and expense amounts in the budget, including generalized descriptions of administrative and instructional staff and other operating expenses. Provide clear and detailed explanations for each of the five years of the draft budget. Define and give support for the assumptions behind projections.
- ✓ The application explains how the school will ensure it has sufficient funds to cover all anticipated expenses, including but not limited to start-up costs, and school operation.
- ✓ The application describes whether the applicant group expects the school to raise additional funds and why. The application briefly describes any planned fundraising efforts and who will lead and coordinate these efforts. The application briefly describes any financing, short-term or long-term, that the school anticipates securing during the period covered by this budget, including the planning and first year implementation period.

IV. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS - PROSPECTUS

The following attachments are **required** and should be sequentially numbered and clearly referred to in the text. Attachments do not count toward the 55-page prospectus text limit.

A. APPLICANT GROUP MEMBERS

Individual questionnaires and resumes from each applicant group member, indicating if a member is a proposed board member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other position(s). Resumes indicates the individual's prior experience as it relates to the charter application.

B. CURRICULUM

Description of the curriculum scope and sequence for grade levels beyond those required in the text of the application, including the content and skills to be taught in the core content areas.

C. DRAFT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

D. DRAFT OPERATING BUDGET: PROJECTED REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

E. PROVEN PROVIDER REQUEST (IF APPLICABLE)

F. CURRENT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (IF HORACE MANN II – CONVERSION)

COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER FINAL APPLICATION OUTLINE FOR NEW OPERATORS

A final application is limited to 75 pages of text and 40 pages of specifically required and optional attachments

- ☐ Cover Page
- ☐ Table of Contents
- ☐ Applicant Information Sheet
- ☐ Certification Statement
- ☐ General Statement of Assurances – Application for a Massachusetts Commonwealth Public Charter School
- ☐ Statement of Assurances – Federal Charter School Program Grant
- ☐ Executive Summary – no more than three pages
- ☐ I. How will the school demonstrate faithfulness to charter?
 - ☐ A. Mission
 - ☐ B. Key Design Elements
 - ☐ C. Description of the Community(ies) to be Served
 - ☐ D. Enrollment and Recruitment
- ☐ II. How will the school demonstrate academic success?
 - ☐ A. Overview of Program Delivery
 - ☐ B. Curriculum and Instruction
 - ☐ C. Student Performance, Assessment, and Program Evaluation
 - ☐ D. Supports for Diverse Learners
 - ☐ E. Culture and Family Engagement
- ☐ III. How will the school demonstrate organizational viability?
 - ☐ A. Capacity
 - ☐ B. Governance
 - ☐ C. Management
 - ☐ D. Facilities and Student Transportation
 - ☐ E. School Finances
 - ☐ F. Action Plan
- ☐ IV. Required Attachments counted toward 40 page maximum:
 - ☐ Draft Bylaws (use Bylaws Checklist).
 - ☐ Draft Recruitment and Retention Plan (use Recruitment and Retention Plan Template).
 - ☐ Draft Enrollment Policy and Admission Application (use Enrollment Policy Checklist).
 - ☐ Draft School Calendar.
 - ☐ Draft Organizational Charts – first year of operation and at full student enrollment.

- ☐ Operating Budget: Projected Revenues and Expenditures; and Cash Flow Projection. (use electronic budget template, available on the Department website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app.>)
- ☐ V. Required Attachments not counted toward 40 page maximum:
 - ☐ Individual resumes from each applicant group member, indicating if an individual is a proposed board member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other position(s).
 - ☐ Individual completed questionnaires of each applicant group member. There are two different versions of the questionnaire: one for proposed board members, and one for proposed school employees and/or founding group members who are playing an advisory role.
 - ☐ Description of curriculum scope and sequence for grade levels beyond those required in the text of the application, including the content and skills to be taught in the core content areas.
 - ☐ Draft management or EMO contract, for Proven Provider and non-Proven Provider applicants (if applicable).
 - ☐ School Improvement Plan for Horace Mann II (conversion) schools only.
 - ☐ Memoranda of Understanding (if applicable).

Optional:

The choice of non-required attachments is determined by the applicant group, although attachments should only be used to provide additional evidence, support a particular aspect of the application, or lend insight into the applicant group.

COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER FINAL APPLICATION

I. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER?

A. MISSION

The mission communicates the essence of the proposed charter school and defines the core purpose and key values of the school to its stakeholders and the public. It should be succinct, meaningful, and consistent with high academic standards. A school's mission provides the foundation for the entire charter application and for the five year term of the school's charter. The mission should be reflected throughout all sections of the final application.

Provide the proposed mission. The mission and application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The mission defines the purpose and specialized focus of the school to its stakeholders and the public.
- ✓ The mission speaks to the value of the school, based on its own merit, and communicates the applicant group's core beliefs and values about education.
- ✓ The mission indicates the key design elements proposed to achieve outcomes.
- ✓ The mission is consistent with high academic standards and student success.
- ✓ The mission is succinct and comprehensible.
- ✓ The mission is reflected throughout all sections of the application.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed mission is different from the existing school's mission and how it differs.

B. KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

The application must contain a clear description of the key design elements of the proposed school that make the school unique and distinct from other public school options, and provide readers with an image of the future the applicant group wishes to create. The key design elements must align with the mission and be reflected throughout the application. This section of the application should further articulate what the school will achieve for the school community—students, parents, teachers, board members, and beyond.

When describing the key design elements, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application briefly describes the educational philosophy of the applicant group and their core beliefs and values about education which aligns with the school's mission and key design elements.
- ✓ The application describes the key design elements of the proposed school, such as length of school year and day, and aspects of school design, that make the school unique and distinct from other public school options. The key design elements align with the mission statement, and are reflected throughout all sections of the application.
- ✓ The application describes the key academic and nonacademic goals for students that are consistent with the stated mission, key design elements of the academic program, and educational philosophy of the school. Goals should be specific; measurable; action oriented; rigorous, realistic, and results focused objectives that are time-bound and tracked.
- ✓ The application describes how this school will enhance or expand the educational options available to the targeted student population, including whether the innovative methods to be used by the proposed school differ from the district or districts from which the charter school is expected to enroll students.

- ✓ The application illustrates a compelling image of the school's future and what the school will look like in five years if it is achieving its mission. Explicitly reference key pieces of evidence to demonstrate how the school's success will be measured, including the ways in which the school will positively impact all stakeholders in the school.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMUNITY(IES) TO BE SERVED

State law asserts that charter schools are to be established to 1) stimulate the development of innovative programs within public education; 2) provide opportunities for innovative learning and assessments; 3) provide parents and students with greater options in choosing schools within and outside of their school districts; 4) provide teachers with a vehicle for establishing schools with alternative, innovative methods of educational instruction, and school structure and management; 5) encourage performance-based educational programs; 6) hold teachers and school administrators accountable for students' educational outcomes; and 7) provide models for replication in other public schools.

The final application should describe the community(ies) to be served by the school and how the school will offer educational opportunity to students, including the needs of students and their families. These are essential factors that inform the design of a successful charter school, ultimately driving support for and enrollment in the school. Data on district performance on the MCAS is available on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (Department) website and does not need to be reiterated here.

When describing the community(ies) the school plans to serve, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the student population that the proposed charter school would serve and the needs of that population.
- ✓ The application discusses the reason for the selection of the community(ies) and the applicant's ability to serve this particular area and current connections to the community.
- ✓ The application describes how the educational option provided by the charter school will address the needs of the student population, including the proposed mission, curriculum, instruction, and services.
- ✓ The application describes how the applicant group has assessed parental support within the proposed sending district(s)/region for the proposed school.
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application provides a description of how the founding group has assessed parental, district, teacher, and other staff support within the proposed sending district for the proposed school.
- ✓ The application describes supporting evidence for the projected student enrollment at the proposed **Commonwealth charter school**, such as an analysis of eligible potential students in the community(ies) to be served, analysis of documented demand from families with eligible potential students, and/or an analysis of enrollment at schools currently operating in the community(ies) to be served. Applicants should not submit copies of petitions or interest forms in the charter application.
- ✓ The application describes how the school will publicize and market its program to a broad cross-section of prospective students throughout the district(s) that the school plans to serve, including families that may be less informed about options. The application discusses specific strategies of how the proposed school will ensure adequate enrollment and full access to the school and its proposed educational program for all eligible students.

- ✓ The application describes the school's plan to provide families and community members opportunities to support the success of the school.
- ✓ The application explains why a **Commonwealth or Horace Mann charter** is necessary in order for this school to exist or succeed.
- ✓ The application discusses specific ways in which the **Commonwealth charter school** will collaborate with school districts from which it draws students to provide educational models, including programs, curriculum, and teaching methods that can be replicated by other public schools.
- ✓ The application discusses specific ways in which the **Horace Mann charter school** will collaborate with schools within the district to provide educational models; including programs, curriculum, and teaching methods that can be replicated by other public schools.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application summarizes the School Improvement Plan currently in use including: data used, problem(s) identified, implementation status, and description of what has worked, what has not worked, and why. School Improvement Plan is submitted with the application.
- ✓ The application describes what the applicant group perceives as roadblocks to the successful implementation or inadequacies of the current School Improvement Plan.
- ✓ The application provides an analysis of the external and internal factors, strengths, and/or needs that moved the applicant group to propose a Horace Mann charter school.
- ✓ The application explains how this information has informed what the applicant group is proposing and how becoming a Horace Mann charter school will lead to greater academic success for students.

D. ENROLLMENT AND RECRUITMENT

Charter schools are public schools and are therefore open to all students. This means that a charter school may not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, or prior academic achievement when recruiting or admitting students. Moreover, a charter school may not set admissions criteria that are intended to discriminate or that have the effect of discriminating based upon any of these characteristics.

All Massachusetts charter schools are required to have a student recruitment and retention plan that includes deliberate, specific strategies the school will use to attract, enroll, and retain a student population that, when compared to students in similar grades in schools from which the charter school enrolls students, contains a comparable demographic and academic profile. The plan must include strategies for recruiting and retaining students including, limited English-proficient, special education, free lunch, and reduced price lunch students, as well as those who are sub-proficient on the MCAS, at risk of dropping out of school, have dropped out of school, or other at risk students who should be targeted to eliminate achievement gaps.

When preparing the enrollment and recruitment section of the application, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application indicates in a table the projected number of students to be enrolled by grade each year over the five year term of the charter, **as well as** up to the year of operation when the overall maximum enrollment requested will be reached. Explain in detail your rationale for selecting the particular enrollment size for your school as well as the growth strategy you have developed. In your projection, indicate clearly the potential for variation in enrollment year-to-year that reflects an understanding of potential student retention and attrition within your growth plan. Inclusion of projected maximum and minimum annual levels of student

enrollment will safeguard against the need for a future minor amendment to your growth plan, if chartered.

- ✓ The application includes a draft of the proposed recruitment and retention plan as an attachment. The plan should clearly incorporate strategies that will attract, enroll, and retain a student population that has a comparable academic and demographic profile when compared to students in similar grades in schools from which the charter school is expected to enroll students.
- ✓ The application describes the grade levels at which students will be admitted to the school and the required age for kindergarten admission, if applicable.
- ✓ The application contains a complete draft enrollment policy and application for admission as an attachment. Indicate dates for the application period, including application and lottery deadlines. **Pay close attention to March reporting requirements when setting application deadlines and lottery dates in draft enrollment policy and application for admission.**
- ✓ The application describes how the school will be ready for the required submission of enrollment data to the Department by mid-March prior to opening.

II. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

A. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM DELIVERY

All Massachusetts charter schools are expected to deliver academic programs that provide improved academic outcomes and educational success for all students. The proposed educational program should address the diverse needs of the student population and should be founded on an understanding of effective, research-based educational practices and high standards for student learning. The proposed school should incorporate a pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, culture, and other elements, based on the applicant group's educational philosophy, that create a comprehensive educational program. The overview of program delivery describes how the educational program will be delivered, and provides evidence that the proposed educational program and its associated educational practices may result in high academic achievement and the attainment of the knowledge, skills, and experiences that ensures college and career readiness for the anticipated student population.

When describing the school's program delivery, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application demonstrates that the proposed educational program will serve the diverse needs of individual students by providing evidence, including **explicit research citations**, that demonstrates their educational program and its associated educational practices may result in high academic achievement and the attainment of the knowledge, skills, and experiences that ensures college and career readiness for the anticipated student population. Evidence should include the specific subgroups of students listed in the recruitment and retention plan consistent with requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, such as students with disabilities, English language learners, and students participating in the federal free/reduced lunch nutrition program.
- ✓ The application describes the school calendar including the number of days school will be in session; and the daily hours of operation, including the length of the school day with start and dismissal times. Please be specific in describing these items and pay attention to the state requirements on minimum number of school days and instructional hours as described in 603 CMR 27.00, which is available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr27.html>. If the school would not meet the minimum number of school days and instructional hours based on the program proposed, provide justification for a waiver of the requirement. All public schools may request from the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education a waiver of student learning time for good cause to support innovative programs or schedules to improve student learning.
- ✓ The application provides an annual calendar for the first year of operation as an attachment to your application. Draft calendar should reflect the required inclusion of five days within the school year for unanticipated school closures pursuant to 603 CMR 27.03.
- ✓ The application provides a sample weekly schedule for one grade in each grade level grouping at which the school intends to serve (e.g., elementary, middle, high school, or early, primary, upper elementary, etc.). The schedules should clearly describe any variation across the grades proposed that are related to the educational programming and school design.
- ✓ The application provides a description of the mechanics of the educational program in terms of the daily or weekly organization of students and faculty (e.g., multi-grade, tracking, team-teaching, etc.) to explain the sample schedule.
- ✓ The application indicates if mandatory or optional programming will be offered to students during summer months, and the goals of such programming if offered.
- ✓ The application describes the extra or co-curricular activities or programming that the school will offer, how often they will occur, and the goals of such programming if offered.
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application describes the proposed school's ability, if any, to access programs offered by the district, including arts or sports programs.
- ✓ The application illustrates a typical day from the perspective of a student in a grade level of your choice.

- ✓ The application illustrates a typical day from the perspective of a teacher of any subject or grade of your choice.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed educational program delivery is different from the existing school's educational program delivery and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes any proposed changes in expectations for staff related to program delivery, such as length of school year and day.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

B. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Charter schools have the freedom to choose and/or develop curriculum models that best reflect the mission and educational philosophy of the school and that best serve the needs of the expected student population. Regardless of whether the curriculum is purchased or internally developed, it is important that it aligns with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF) since the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is based on the learning standards outlined in the MCF. Additional information about the MCF can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/>. Charter schools also have the freedom to determine the instructional methods that will be used to deliver the chosen curriculum model(s).

When describing the school's curriculum and instruction, the application should address the following criteria as applicable:

Use of Commercial Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If intending to use developed curriculum, the application identifies the curriculum, explains the process utilized to identify the curriculum that will be used by the school and provide reasons why the curriculum was chosen for the school. Identify which individual(s) in the school's organizational chart will be responsible for identifying and selecting curriculum. ✓ The application describes the process that is used to ensure alignment of the curriculum to the MCF and identifies the individual(s) who will be responsible for curriculum alignment to the MCF. ✓ If modifications to the curriculum will be required, the application explains the process utilized to identify areas for revision and to make adjustments. Indicate the individual(s) that will be responsible for the process.
New Curriculum Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If intending to develop curriculum, the application explains the process that will be used by the school to develop curriculum. Identify which individual(s) on the school's organizational chart will be responsible for developing curriculum and who will participate in the process. ✓ The application describes the process that is used to ensure alignment of the curriculum to the MCF and identifies the individual(s) who will be responsible for curriculum alignment to the MCF.

- ✓ The application contains the curriculum scope and sequence that will be used by the school, including the content and skills to be taught in the core content areas at each grade level.⁵ Four grade levels should be included in the text of the application. All additional grade levels must be included in the attachments, but will not be counted toward the page limit. For proposed schools that plan to have fewer than four grade levels, please include all of the intended grades in the application narrative. The curriculum scope and sequence should be clearly aligned with MCF as well as aligned across the grades proposed for implementation.
- ✓ The application describes the processes for the ongoing development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum. The description should include incorporation of the curricular structures that will be used by the school, e.g. scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans, etc. Identify which individual(s) on the school's organizational chart will be responsible for, and participate in the development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum.
- ✓ The application describes the process and procedures that will be used to evaluate whether the curriculum is effective and successfully implemented. Identify which individual(s) on the school's organizational chart will be responsible for curriculum evaluation.
- ✓ The application describes the learning environment(s) that will be used to deliver the proposed curriculum model, including the use of technology, and class size and structure.
- ✓ The application describes the pedagogy or instructional methods that will be used to deliver the curriculum model(s).
- ✓ The application contains a detailed plan for a responsive general education classroom that would support the needs of all students. The plan should include how the proposed curriculum and instructional methods will support high standards of achievement for students with a wide range of needs, and be accessible and appropriate for all students at all levels, including students with diverse learning styles; English language learners; students with disabilities; students who enter below grade level, or students identified as at risk; and advanced students who perform significantly above grade level. The plan should also describe the strategies the school will implement to ensure academic success for all students, including students struggling to meet performance standards.
- ✓ The application demonstrates that the proposed curriculum and instruction will serve the diverse needs of individual students by providing evidence or relevant experience, including **explicit research citations**, that demonstrates the proposed curriculum and instruction may result in high academic achievement and the attainment of the knowledge, skills, and experiences that ensures college and career readiness for the anticipated student population. Evidence should include the specific subgroups of students listed in the recruitment and retention plan consistent with requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89, such as students with disabilities, English language learners, and students participating in the federal free/reduced lunch nutrition program.
- ✓ The application describes the proposed structures for regular, frequent collaboration and professional development to improve implementation of the curriculum and instructional practice. Include a description of how the school plans to train and support teachers to address the unique needs of all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners.
- ✓ The application describes how the school will determine the professional development needs of the staff, including administrators and teachers, on an on-going basis and how these opportunities will be delivered during and outside of the scheduled school year.
- ✓ The application explains the process and frequency of teacher performance evaluations, including the key elements of the evaluation and who will conduct the evaluations. For more information about educator evaluation in Massachusetts see: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/>.

⁵ Content is what students should know; skills are what students should be able to do; and the core content areas include English, reading/language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed curriculum and instruction is different from the existing school's curriculum and instruction and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

C. STUDENT PERFORMANCE, ASSESSMENT, AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

Charter schools must assure that students will meet the same performance standards and assessment requirements set by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for students in other public schools. Performance, promotion, and graduation standards should be based on high expectations that are aligned with the school's mission, educational program, assessment system, and the MCF. An integrated assessment system, which includes the MCAS test, serves as a structure for how teachers and administrators will measure what students know and are able to do as a result of the delivery of curriculum and instruction.

Information from assessments serves to help determine what areas of instruction need additional time, the needs of individual students, the quality of instruction, decisions on improvement strategies, and the school's overall progress in meeting Accountability Plan goals. Ultimately, the assessment system provides information to all stakeholders on whether the school is an academic success. The proposed system should reflect how the school would link curriculum and instruction to assessment by measuring the academic progress of individual students, cohorts of students over time, and the school as a whole, with the goal of continual school improvement.

When describing student performance, assessment, and program evaluation, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the proposed school's policies and standards for promoting students to the next grade, achievement level, or grouping level in alignment with the educational program.
- ✓ The application describes the graduation requirements or "exit standards" for the school's grade groupings as applicable (e.g., elementary, middle, high school, or primary, upper elementary, etc.). These exit standards should be aligned with the school's mission and provide a clear sense of expected student achievement at the end of the last grade of each school level and/or upon graduation. If the proposed educational program includes a high school, explain how your graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college and career opportunities.
- ✓ The application describes a thorough, clear, measurable, externally credible, and conceptually sound design for measuring and reporting the performance and progress of the school as a whole, student cohorts over time, and the academic and social development of each student to all relevant stakeholders. Selected assessments are both research based and consistent with the school's mission, broad academic and nonacademic student goals, educational program, and high expectations of students. Descriptions should include, but are not limited to, the following information:
 - The types of internal/school-developed assessments that will be administered to measure and report student progress. Explain why these particular assessments were selected for the targeted student population and how the data will be used to support the goal of improved student learning and outcomes.
 - Describe the school's philosophy and plans for student homework.
 - A meaningful and practical approach for measuring and supporting student progress toward attaining non-academic goals in alignment with the proposed school's mission and vision as well as students' needs.

- Evidence of multiple measures of student performance outcomes that may include reports of absolute scores, within-year student gains/losses, and year-to-year student gains/losses.
- A plan to use student data, including MCAS performance, to facilitate decision-making about necessary adjustments to the educational program and the staff development plan that will support the goal of improved student learning and outcomes.
- Indicate if any additional standardized assessment tools will be used to determine and report student progress. If so, explain why those tools were selected for the targeted population and how the data will be used.
- Indicate the roles of school leadership and faculty in the collection, analysis, and use of student data, and the individual responsible for oversight of the system.
- Indicate the system for reporting the performance and progress of the school, grades, individual classes, and students, including the frequency of the different forms of assessment, the types of stakeholders who will receive assessment information, and the types of metrics reported.
- ✓ The application describes the processes that will ensure the assessment system is linked to curriculum and instruction, and is used to facilitate timely adjustments that will support the goal of improved student learning and outcomes.
- ✓ The application describes how each of the following stakeholder groups will participate in the review and response to student achievement data:
 - The school's board of trustees
 - School administrators
 - Teachers
 - Students
 - Parents
- ✓ The application briefly describes the process to create an effective accountability plan⁶ during the first year of operation. The application identifies who will be primarily responsible for defining and overseeing this process, as well as for collecting and analyzing the data to evaluate the school's progress towards accountability plan objectives and measures.
- ✓ The application contains draft objectives and measures related to mission and key design elements as an attachment. Review the Guidelines for Writing Charter School Accountability Plans at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/acct.html?section=guidelines> for additional information.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed standards for student performance, promotion, and graduation and the proposed assessment system are different from the existing school's standards and assessment system and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

D. SUPPORTS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

All charter schools in Massachusetts are public schools that enroll students through a lottery process. Therefore, all charter schools must be prepared to enroll students with diverse learning needs including English language learners and students with disabilities, all of whom must be provided with full and meaningful access to the general educational curriculum.

⁶ The *Guidelines for Writing Charter School Accountability Plans* may be found online at http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/guides/acctplan_guidelines.pdf.

The general education classroom needs to be responsive to the educational needs of all children, and accommodates their needs. A full continuum of services must be available within the school so that all students can receive needed services in an appropriate setting and participate fully in the educational goals and mission of the school. This section of the application should describe the school's programs and services, and how they will be implemented within the context of your proposed school.

For information on special education, please see the Massachusetts Primer on Special Education and Charter Schools and related documents found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/sped/default.html>. For information on special education laws and regulations see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/laws.html>. Please review the required elements of the special education policies and procedures found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/>. Special education policies and procedures are submitted to the Department during opening procedures of the proposed charter school. Consider the required elements when crafting your response to the application criteria related to the processes and procedures used to identify, assess, and serve students with disabilities.

For information on the laws and regulations relating to English language learners, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr14.html>. For guidance on English language learners, please see the Department's website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/guidance_laws.html. Please review the required elements of the English language education policies and procedures found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/>. English language education policies and procedures are submitted to the Department during opening procedures of the proposed charter school. Consider the required elements when crafting your response to the application criteria related to the processes and procedures used to identify, assess, and serve English language learners.

When describing the school's plan for special student populations and student services, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the processes and procedures that the proposed school will employ to **identify, assess, and serve students** who are English language learners. In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, indicate what role, if any, the district will have in the assessment and delivery of services. Descriptions will be considered incomplete if they do not include:
 - a description of the English language development program and support services to be offered including the curriculum and strategies that will be used;
 - how student identification and assessment will be conducted;
 - the settings in which required services will be implemented;
 - how services will be delivered within the school's daily schedule;
 - the plan to support core academic teachers in obtaining SEI endorsement;
 - the titles, salaries, and qualifications of the individuals delivering the services; and
 - how the program will be evaluated.
- ✓ The application describes the English language development program **staffing levels** the school intends to provide by year for each of your school's first five years. Include qualified individuals who will work with your school, administrators, teachers, and other staff, as well as the number of staff you propose to hire each year and their qualifications, salary, and the percentage of their time that will be devoted to English language learner education.
- ✓ The application describes the processes and procedures that the proposed school will employ to **identify, assess, and provide specialized instruction** to each student in need of special education services. In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, indicate what role, if any, the district will have in the assessment and delivery of services. Descriptions will be considered incomplete if they do not include:
 - a description of support services to be offered and some of the methods that will be used to provide a continuum of services;
 - how student identification and assessment will be conducted;
 - the development of individualized education programs;
 - the settings in which required services will be delivered;

- how services for students in need of special education services will be delivered within the school's daily schedule;
 - the qualifications of individuals who will be recruited to deliver services;
 - the titles, salaries, and qualifications of each position proposed; and
 - how the program will be evaluated.
- ✓ The application describes the special education **staffing levels** the school intends to provide by year for each of your school's first five years. Include the Special Education Administrator who will work with your school, teachers, aides, and other staff, as well as the number of staff you propose to hire each year and their qualifications, salary, and the percentage of their time that will be devoted to special education. Specify the amounts of time the administrator will allocate to administrative duties and to service delivery. Indicate if you anticipate outsourcing services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech therapy and if possible, with whom you anticipate contracting for the provision of services.
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application indicates clearly the expectations surrounding district involvement in the provision of services for students with disabilities and English language learners.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed plans for special education programming and English language development programming is different from the existing school's programs and how it differs.
- ✓ The application provides an analysis of the existing school's current efforts serving students receiving special education services and English language learners and how the proposed programming addresses identified areas for improvement.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

E. CULTURE AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Massachusetts charter schools support students' social and emotional health in safe and respectful learning environments that engages families. The application must describe how the proposed school will create a safe school environment and address the physical, social, emotional, and health needs of its anticipated student population. The application must also describe how the proposed school will develop strong working relationships with families/guardians in order to support students' academic progress and social and emotional well-being.

When describing the school's plan for school culture and parent engagement, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the culture of the school, and a clear plan for establishing a school culture and norms consistent with the school's mission, educational philosophy, and educational program from the first day of the school's operation. The plan should include specific strategies the school will implement to develop and maintain a safe school environment conducive to learning and consistent with the school's mission and educational philosophy. Describe how school culture and climate will be fostered for and by school leadership, teachers, students, and parents.
- ✓ The application describes the school's programs or strategies to address the physical, social, emotional, and health needs of the anticipated student population.
- ✓ The application describes the school's philosophy and plans regarding student behavior and discipline for the general student population and students with special needs. Describe proposed policies regarding student discipline, including suspension and expulsion, or a reasonable plan for the development of the required discipline policies. Student discipline should be consistent with requirements and the school's mission and educational philosophy.

- ✓ The application describes how the school's discipline policy will be implemented for teachers, students, and parents starting from the first day of the school's operation to ensure a safe environment conducive to learning with consistent and transparent implementation.
- ✓ The application describes how the school plans to involve parents/guardians as partners in the education of their children and to build and maintain family-school partnerships that support students' academic progress and social-emotional well-being. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school will offer to parents.
- ✓ The application describes how stakeholder satisfaction will be gauged and the process for collecting and publicizing results. Stakeholders include parents, faculty, and students.
- ✓ The application describes the relationships the applicant group has established or intends to establish with community agencies and organizations that will support the school's educational program and serve the youth who attend the school. Explain the nature of the proposed partnership/relationship(s) and how it will support the school's mission and key design elements. Letters of support or commitment should be included as attachments.
- ✓ The application explains how the school plans to deliver nutrition program services to students, including what meals and/or snacks will be served and when. Describe how you plan to administer the free and reduced lunch program and in the case of a Horace Mann charter school, indicate what role, if any, the district will have in delivery of the school's nutritional program. All public schools in the Commonwealth are required to make a school lunch available to students, including a free or reduced price lunch for students who meet income eligibility requirements. Regardless of a school's participation in the National School Lunch Program, school lunches must be made available and under certain circumstances, breakfast as well.
- ✓ The application describes any ancillary and support services you expect to offer students and families, for example counseling, family outreach, and/or relationships with community organizations or service agencies. Any wrap-around services described by the school should indicate committed partners and provide letters of commitment as attachments.
- ✓ The application describes your plan to hire a school nurse and his/her role in your school.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed school characteristics and culture are different from the existing school's school characteristics and culture and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes any proposed changes in expectations for staff related to implementation of school culture or parent engagement.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

III. HOW WILL THE SCHOOL DEMONSTRATE ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY?

A. CAPACITY

A public school charter is granted to a board of trustees. Members of the board of trustees are public agents authorized by the state and are responsible for governing charter schools. In general, it is important that these individuals possess a wide variety of skills and qualifications that will enable them to found and sustain an excellent school. Members of a founding group may be proposed for the school's board of trustees or may assume other roles in the school. Each founding group should be able to clearly define who is proposed to be a member of the board of trustees and what other roles will be assumed. The proposed board of trustees must be of a number sufficient to provide effective oversight of the school and to participate in the considerable amount of work required to open a charter school.

When describing the capacity of the founding group and/or proposed board of trustees the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes how the applicant group came together to form this proposed school and why the group is united to establish the proposed charter school.
- ✓ The application explains how often the group meets, how the planning and writing process is completed, and identifies the primary author of the application.
- ✓ The application summarizes briefly within the text of the document each founder's and/or proposed board member's experience and qualifications. The experience and qualifications should demonstrate that the founders and/or proposed board members:
 - have the experience and qualifications necessary to implement the proposal;
 - demonstrate the capacity to found and sustain an excellent charter school;
 - can manage public funds effectively and responsibly;
 - include members who possess skills and experience in areas such as education, management, finance, development, and law; and
 - have tangible ties to, and broad and diverse representation from the communities the school will serve.
- ✓ The application explains how the proposed board of trustees is reflective of or consistent with the school's mission and program.
- ✓ Each member of the applicant must submit a resume as an attachment to the application. The application must indicate if a founder is a proposed board member, proposed school leader, or other school employee. Resumes should indicate the founder's prior experience as it relates to the charter application. Additionally, proposed board members and proposed school employees must complete individual questionnaires to further establish their understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

B. GOVERNANCE

As entities of the state, public charter schools must meet a number of legal requirements set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Many of these requirements are outlined in the *Charter School Administrative and Governance Guide: An Overview of the Laws and Regulations that Boards of Trustees and School Leaders Need to Know*, this document can be found online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/governance/adminguide.doc>. The guide begins by explaining that a strong board of trustees defines the mission of the school, develops school policies and changes them when appropriate, hires qualified personnel to manage the school's day-to-day operations and holds them accountable for meeting established goals, and formulates a long-range plan and charter school accountability plan that will ensure the school's continued stability. In addition to its many other responsibilities, the board must ensure that the school is complying with all of the state and federal laws that apply to the school and that the board itself is operating in accordance with the rules set out by all applicable Massachusetts laws and regulations. Finally, the board is responsible for operating the school in accordance with its charter and with any approved amendments to its charter.

A school's ability to carry out its purpose and objectives is largely determined by the governance structure of the school and by developing an effective board of trustees.

(1) Governance and Management Structure

- ✓ The application explains the proposed reporting structure and relationship between the board of trustees and the individual(s) reporting directly to the board regarding the governance and management of the proposed charter school.
- ✓ The application includes a brief job description for each officer of the board of trustees.
- ✓ The application describes any committees, advisory groups, and/or task forces and their role in supporting school development and success.
- ✓ The application includes a copy of your complete bylaws in the attachments.
- ✓ The application and draft bylaws indicates if there are any ex-officio members of the board of trustees, denoting seats that are earmarked based on a person's position or status, such as school principal, teacher, parent, or student representative, and explains the rationale for the proposed governance model as applicable.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application describes how the applicant group and potential board of trustees will ensure the successful transition to the new governance structure required for a Horace Mann charter school.

(2) Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ The application describes the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees. The application clearly articulates the role distinctions amongst the board, the school district (in the case of Horace Mann charter schools), and the school administration as they relate to curriculum, personnel decisions, budget allocation, and vendor selection.
- ✓ The application provides examples of the proposed board's future actions in governing the proposed school that accurately reflect an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees, consistent with public accountability, such as open meeting law, state ethics law, and charter school law.
- ✓ The application describes the processes related to the board's oversight of the school, including setting priorities and goals; monitoring progress towards priorities and goals; supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the school leader(s); developing the annual budget; monitoring the school's finances; and conducting long-term financial and strategic planning.
- ✓ The application describes the proposed systems that will be put into place to ensure clear decision-making and communication processes that facilitate and ensure public accountability, including board meetings that are designed to foster open, deliberate, and thorough discussions.
- ✓ The application describes the proposed process and procedure for handling inquiries and complaints made to the board.
- ✓ The application describes the proposed annual process the board uses to evaluate its own performance, and describe the steps taken to guide its development as an effective governing board.

(3) Policy Development

- ✓ The application describes the proposed process by which the board of trustees will develop policies and make decisions. Provide specific examples whenever possible.
- ✓ The application describes the plan for seeking feedback from the school staff, parents, and the larger community when setting policy. Provide specific examples whenever possible.

(4) Board Sustainability

- ✓ The application describes the recruitment, and selection processes for new board members.
- ✓ The application describes specific plans for the recruitment of additional board members with the skills and expertise that will ensure the sustainability of the proposed charter school, and the targeted qualifications sought in additional board members, if applicable.
- ✓ The application describes the orientation and development process for new board members.
- ✓ The application describes the succession planning for board officers.

(5) Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)⁷

For all Horace Mann Applicants (I, II, and III)

All final applications for Horace Mann charter schools must include a **Type A Memorandum of Understanding**, and if the information in the application indicates that modifications are required to the collective bargaining agreement(s), the final application must also include a draft Type B Memorandum of Understanding. The memoranda of understanding ensure that the proposed charter school, the school committee of the district in which the charter school is located, and the collective bargaining unit understand and agree to the relevant portions of the charter application. Collective bargaining employees continue to be members of the local collective bargaining unit; accrue seniority; and receive, at a minimum, the salary and benefits established by the local collective bargaining agreement. Employees may be exempt from specific provisions of the local collective bargaining agreement (including work rules) to the extent provided by the charter and the executed memorandum of understanding.

Type A: Agreements with District

MOU with the school committee of the district in which the charter school is located and the proposed charter school's board of trustees. **A final signed copy of this type of MOU is required in the final application for all types of Horace Mann charter schools.**

Type B: Agreements with Staff

MOU with the school committee, the collective bargaining unit, and the proposed charter school board of trustees. The timeline and potential faculty vote vary by type of Horace Mann charter school. The requirements regarding the submission of this type of MOU vary, as follows:

Horace Mann I

- ✓ Attach the **signed final draft (Type B) MOU** that describes any modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s) between the proposed charter school, the school district and the local collective bargaining unit(s).

Horace Mann II

- ✓ Attach the **final draft (Type B) MOU** that describes any proposed modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s). **This MOU must be approved by a majority of the faculty at the school within 30 days of submission of application.**

Horace Mann III

- ✓ Attach the **final draft (Type B) MOU** that describes any proposed modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s). The charter school's board of trustees must negotiate with

⁷ For Guidance for the Memoranda of Understanding, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/governance/MOU-hm.pdf>

the collective bargaining unit and school committee in good faith regarding any modifications to collective bargaining agreements following the award of a charter.

(6) School Management Contract⁸

If the proposed board intends to enter into a contract with another entity to provide substantially all the school's educational or management services, such as an educational management organization (EMO), (whether or not the entity was granted Proven Provider status), the applicant group must include the following information:

- Identify the entity.
- Include a comprehensive summary of the entity's history, a description of how it implements its program, extensive evidence of past results (including student academic achievement and financial status) of its school management efforts, and its educational philosophy. There should be strong evidence that the entity has demonstrated positive academic results and responsible fiscal management, as well as success in serving similar student populations.
- Explain how and why the entity was selected, what due diligence has been conducted, and how contracting with this entity will assist the school in meeting the challenges outlined in your description of the community(ies). Provide a clear description of the services to be provided by the entity.
- Describe the respective roles and responsibilities of the proposed school's board of trustees and the entity for the financial management and effective oversight of the school, and the internal controls that the board will put into place, including a plan to monitor the performance of the entity to hold them accountable.
- Include a draft of the proposed contract. The draft contract may be submitted as an attachment and does not count towards the page limit for the application. The contract must include a delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the other entity and the school, a description of how the charter school board of trustees will monitor the academic performance and fiscal activity of the school, performance evaluation measures (including student academic performance), the total fee paid for management services, a description of the payment structure, clarification of authority over hiring and firing, and the conditions and procedures for the contract's renewal and termination.

(7) Programmatic Relationship with Other Organizations

If you are filing the application with a college, university, museum, educational institution, other not-for-profit entity, or any other partner, the applicant group must provide the following information:

- Identify the partner organization. Indicate the name of the contact person at the partner organization with the mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- Provide a letter of commitment from the organization indicating the proposed affiliation, and the terms and scope of the partnership.
- Describe the nature and purpose of the school's partnership with the organization.
- Briefly explain how the relationship enhances, complements, and/or supports the mission and educational philosophy of the proposed charter school.
- Explain if the partner organization will be involved in the governance of the school.

⁸ Please see the Management Contract section of the *Opening Procedures Handbook*, available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=handbook> ; and the Purchasing section of the *Charter School Administrative and Governance Guide*, available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/governance/adminguide.doc>. (This document indicates the Department's review criteria and protocol for management contracts.)

C. MANAGEMENT

School management is fundamental to creating an environment that can support a successful charter school. In this section we ask applicants to write about (1) school management structure; (2) school leadership roles and responsibilities; and (3) human resources.

(1) School Management Structure

- ✓ The application includes a school organizational chart for year one of operation and at full student enrollment that encompasses all employees of the proposed school and the board of trustees. The application describes how the applicant group determined the structure shown in the organizational chart.
- ✓ The application includes a narrative that clearly explains the reporting structure and relationship between the school's leader and administration regarding teachers, specialists, and other staff members.
- ✓ The application describes the lines of authority and communication among school leadership (e.g. executive director, principal, instructional leader, operational leaders, and other key leaders and administrators) and staff at the proposed school.

Additional criterion for Horace Mann II (conversion) applicants:

- ✓ The application indicates whether the proposed school management structure is different from the existing school's management structure and how it differs.
- ✓ The application describes any proposed changes in expectations for staff.
- ✓ The application describes the process the applicant group and proposed board of trustees will use to make these changes and support successful implementation.

(2) School Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

- ✓ The application describes the plan for how the school will make key organizational decisions about curriculum and instruction, student achievement, professional development, culture, staffing, fiscal planning, and operations.
- ✓ The application describes the roles and primary responsibilities of the school's leader and other administrative staff. Articulate key role distinctions with regard to curriculum development and implementation, instructional leadership, student achievement, personnel decisions, financial management, and operations.
- ✓ If the applicant group includes the proposed school leader (or any other position at the school), the application describes the process and criteria used to determine that the individual is the best candidate for the position. Identify the skills and experience of the selected individual(s) and describe how their professional background supports their capacity to be successful in founding a high quality charter school and achieving the school's mission as the school leader or a member of the leadership team. If the proposed school leader has never led a school, describe any training programs that s/he has completed or is currently participating in.
- ✓ If the applicant group does not include the proposed school leader, the application describes the desired skills and experience of the ideal individual and the plans for the recruitment and selection of the school leader.
- ✓ If the educational/instructional leader is different from the school leader, the application describes the desired skills and experience of the ideal individual and the plans for the recruitment and selection of the instructional leader.
- ✓ The application describes how administrators will be evaluated and by whom. For more information about educator evaluation in Massachusetts see: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/>.
- ✓ The application describes how the proposed board of trustees will address potential human resource challenges as it grows to scale over the next five years. The application describes the actions that will be taken to attract, develop, and retain an effective leadership team to implement the proposed school.

(3) Human Resources

- ✓ The application describes the qualifications and attributes of an ideal teacher for the proposed school.
- ✓ The application describes the school's plan for staff recruitment, advancement, and retention. The plan should include specific strategies for recruiting and retaining effective teachers.
- ✓ The application describes briefly the teaching program of typical teachers. Indicate how many hours they will be performing instructional duties and other school-related responsibilities they will have outside the classroom (lunch duty, dismissal, advisory group, after-school program).
- ✓ The application explains the school's working conditions and compensation package(s) that will attract highly qualified staff. Be clear on the specific commitments expected of and made to school employees, including leadership, administrators, faculty, and non-instructional staff.
- ✓ The application explains how individual base salaries and increases will be determined for all employees, including leadership, administrators, teachers, and non-instructional staff.
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application describes the procedures for:
 - a) hiring, evaluating, transferring, promoting, and dismissing teachers (including potential layoffs in the district that could affect the charter school faculty);
 - b) hiring, evaluating, transferring, promoting, and dismissing non-teaching staff; and
 - c) communicating and coordinating between the charter school and the school district superintendent on items a) and b).
- ✓ In the case of a **Horace Mann charter school**, the application describes the intended relationship between the proposed charter school and the staff at the school, summarizes the key agreements and specifies the details of any relevant waivers to the local collective bargaining agreement(s) within the Type B MOU. Modifications to these agreement(s) that are made after the charter is granted will require approval from the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- ✓ The application includes a staffing chart and narrative staffing plan, for each year of the proposed charter school within the five year term of the charter that is viable and adequate for the effective implementation of the proposed educational program. Explain the process of determining job positions, roles, and responsibilities that provides evidence of knowledge of opening and operating a high quality charter school. Indicate the number of administrators by title, the number of faculty including classroom teachers by grade and/or subject, the number of aides or assistants, the number of special student service providers, and other specialists, clerical staff, and any other school employees. Include contractors or district resources as applicable. Ensure the chart and plan are consistent with the submitted budget, the organizational chart(s), student enrollment planning, and staffing levels described in other sections of the application. For information on teacher qualifications, please see the technical advisory entitled Teacher Quality in Massachusetts Charter Schools at http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/tech_advisory/07_1.html.

D. FACILITIES AND STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

The school must provide facilities and transportation that meet applicable state and federal requirements, are suited to its programs, and are sufficient to serve diverse student needs.

When describing plans for school facilities and student transportation, the application should address the following criteria:

- ✓ The application describes the process for identifying viable options for a facility for this school and any sites already identified. Explain why these sites were chosen as possibilities. If a specific facility has not been determined, describe the applicant group's plan for identifying possible locations, choosing the final location, securing all necessary local building approvals for use of the facility as a charter school, and securing financing.
- ✓ In the case of a proposed Horace Mann charter school, the application indicates the facilities that will be provided by the local school district and at what cost to the charter school.

- ✓ If possible, the application includes a layout and description of the proposed charter school facility. Include the number and size of classrooms, common areas, and recreational space.
- ✓ If a facility has not been selected, the application includes potential locations that are under consideration and discusses the process and timeline for selecting, acquiring, renovating as applicable, and occupying a suitable facility.
- ✓ The application describes the financing plans and proposed budget for acquisition (purchase or lease) of a facility and any necessary renovations to meet the school's needs, to meet all local building requirements for use of the facility as a charter school, and to meet accessibility requirements. Please be aware that Commonwealth charter schools may take out loans, but the loan may not extend beyond the term of the charter without approval of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(k) (6).
- ✓ The application includes plans for student transportation and describes how transportation services will be provided to eligible students. The application states explicit intent to utilize district transportation services or to provide services independently of the district.
- ✓ In the case of a proposed Horace Mann charter school, the application describes the capacity of the district to adapt to a district wide school, as opposed to "neighborhood schools."
- ✓ The application explains how students who are physically challenged will be transported and how all students, staff, parents, and the general public who are physically challenged will have access to the school facility in accordance with state and federal law.⁹

E. SCHOOL FINANCES

Having the capability to manage school finances is essential for accountability and organizational viability. Comprehensive financial planning is an indispensable tool for successful charter school planning, program implementation, and the monitoring and evaluation of resource allocations. In this section, we ask applicants to describe their proposed fiscal policies and procedures; complete a five year operating budget; complete a cash flow projection for the first year of operation; and provide a descriptive budget narrative. The school finances narrative and budget should demonstrate knowledge of the practical matters relevant to the operation of a school.

(1) Fiscal Management¹⁰

- ✓ The application explains the systems and procedures for managing the school's finances, describes the role(s) responsible for financial oversight and managements and describes his/her qualifications.
- ✓ The application describes the fiscal controls and financial management policies the board of trustees employs to remain informed of the school's financial position.
- ✓ The application describes how the school will track finances in its daily business operations in order to maintain needed cash-flow.
- ✓ The application describes contingency planning for potential challenges in cash flow or budget shortfalls due to lower than anticipated student enrollment or other financial challenges in the early years of operation, including specific strategies.

⁹ For more information, please see the Coordinated Program Review Procedures, Special Education Methods of Administration at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/cpr>, Criterion SE49A; the Coordinated Program Review Procedures, Civil Rights Methods of Administration at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/cpr>, MOA 22 and the ADA checklist; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 791 et seq.) and its accompanying regulations (34 CFR 104.21 and 104.22); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12132) and its accompanying regulations (28 CFR 35.149 and 35.150).

¹⁰ Please refer to the Department's *Recommended Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual*, available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/finance/auditing/>.

- ✓ In the case of a proposed Horace Mann charter school, the application explains the financial arrangement with the local district described within the attached final draft Type A MOU. The financial arrangement ensures the charter school's autonomy over its operations, ensures that the school receives district funds as scheduled, and indicates the dates when school district funds will be transferred to the school's account. Horace Mann charter schools are required to open their own bank account.
- ✓ In the case of a proposed Horace Mann charter school, the application describes the basis that will be used for calculating the district's payments to the school, and indicates the specific services that will be provided by the local school district and at what cost to the charter school.
- ✓ In the case of a proposed Horace Mann charter school, the application describes the capacity of the district to keep a separate accounting for the Horace Mann charter school.

(2) Operating Budget and Budget Narrative

- ✓ The application explains how the budget and cash flow projection were developed and the process used by the applicant group to ensure the accuracy and realistic nature of their final projections.
- ✓ The application summarizes financial forecasts from the school's start-up phase through its fifth year of operation. Financial forecasts must include total expected realistic sources of revenue—including tuition and other grants (federal, state, and private), and fundraising—as well as all expenditures, the timeframe for a positive cash balance, and the anticipated growth of the school. Define and give support for the assumptions behind projections.
- ✓ Applicants must submit a cash flow projection for the first year of operation, and a multi-year budget from the school's start-up phase through its fifth year of operation. Download the electronic budget template, including instructions, from <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app>. Cash flow projections are expected to reflect a similar level of detail to the budget template used for the annual budgets – see templates.
- ✓ The cash flow projection and budget need to be realistic and reflect the expenses related to all commitments proposed in the application, through the proposed school's fifth year of operation, including the school's educational program, expected student population of students with disabilities and English language learners, human resources needs, and the acquiring and repayment of potential debt.
- ✓ The cash flow projection narrative should discuss and explain the assumptions behind the projections made for the first year of operation.
- ✓ The budget narrative should discuss and explain the projected revenue and expense amounts in the budget, including descriptions of administrative and instructional staff and other operating expenses. Provide detailed explanations for each of the five years of the draft budget. Define and give support for the assumptions behind projections.
- ✓ The application explains how the school will ensure it has sufficient funds to cover all anticipated expenses, including but not limited to start-up costs, and school operation.
- ✓ The application describes whether the applicant group expects the school to raise additional funds and why. The application briefly describes any planned fundraising efforts and who will lead and coordinate these efforts. The application briefly describes any financing, short-term or long-term, that the school anticipates securing during the period covered by this budget, including the planning and first year implementation period.

F. ACTION PLAN

After a charter is granted, but before the school opens is a time of great activity. The action plan outlines the steps that need to be taken within a clear timeline for opening the school.

The applicant group's Action Plan should:

- ✓ Outline the strategies, steps, designated point person and provide a clear timeline for opening the school, dating from March 1st, in the year the charter is granted to the first day of school. The action plan should be specific and consistent with the proposal's objectives, and outline the steps that need to be taken for a successful school launch. In a chart, describe the timeline; action(s) to be taken (specific to and consistent with the application's objectives); designated point person; and start date and projected completion date.

Applicant groups are encouraged to consult the *Opening Procedures Handbook* for specific requirements, available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=handbook>.

IV. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS – FINAL APPLICATION

Limited to 40 pages

All attachments should be sequentially numbered and clearly referred to in the text. The choice of non-required attachments is up to the applicant group, though attachments should be used to provide additional evidence, support a particular aspect of the application, or lend insight into the applicant group.

Required and counted toward 40 page maximum:

- ☐ Draft Bylaws (use Bylaws Checklist).
- ☐ Draft Recruitment and Retention Plan (use Recruitment and Retention Plan Template).
- ☐ Draft Enrollment Policy (use Enrollment Policy Checklist).
- ☐ Draft Organizational Chart.
- ☐ Operating Budget: Projected Revenues and Expenditures, and Cash Flow Projection. (use electronic budget template, available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app.>)

Required, but not counted toward 40 page maximum:

- ☐ Cover Sheet
- ☐ Table of Contents
- ☐ Applicant Information Sheet
- ☐ Appropriate Certification Statement
- ☐ General Statement of Assurances - Application for a Massachusetts Public Charter School
- ☐ Statement of Assurances - Federal Charter School Program Grant
- ☐ Executive Summary (no more than three pages)
- ☐ Individual resumes from each founding group member, indicating if a founder is a proposed board member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other position(s).
- ☐ Individual completed questionnaires of each founding group member. There are two different versions of the questionnaire: one for proposed board members, and one for proposed school employees and/or founding group members who are playing an advisory role.
- ☐ Description of curriculum scope and sequence for grade levels beyond those required in the text of the application, including the content and skills to be taught in the core content areas.
- ☐ Draft management or EMO contract (if applicable).
- ☐ School Improvement Plan for Horace Mann II (conversion) schools only.
- ☐ Memoranda of Understanding (if applicable)

Horace Mann I

- ☐ The signed (Type A) final draft MOU between the board of trustees of the proposed charter school and the school district.
- ☐ The signed (Type B) final draft MOU between the board of trustees of the proposed charter school, the school district and the local collective bargaining unit, if there are any modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s).

Horace Mann II

- ☐ The signed (Type A) final draft MOU between the board of trustees of proposed charter school and the school district.
- ☐ The draft (Type B) MOU that describes any proposed modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s), if there are any modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s).

Horace Mann III

- ☐ The signed (Type A) final draft MOU between the board of trustees of proposed charter school and the school district.
- ☐ The draft (Type B) MOU that describes any proposed modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s), if there are any modifications to the collective bargaining agreement(s).