

Executive Summary

United Community Middle/High School, Inc. United Community Middle/High School

Applicants seeking to open a charter school must complete the Model Florida Virtual Charter School Application from the Florida Department of Education School Choice website or the District's Charter School website. The application clearly specifies the statutorily required standards and supporting criteria that reviewers should expect to find. In order to demonstrate the quality of the proposed charter school, as well as the capacity of the applicant to meet the challenge of operating a quality charter school, applicants are asked to provide detailed plans in three areas critical to the success of the school:

- Educational Plan
- Organizational Plan
- Business Plan

Pursuant to Section 1002.33, Florida Statutes, charter school applications are due on or before August 1 of each calendar year for charter schools to be opened at the beginning of the school district's next academic year. Applications received in a timely manner are evaluated by the Superintendent's Charter School Review Committee, which is comprised of representatives from Instruction and Intervention, Budget, Facilities, District Administration, Student Transportation and Fleet Services, Exceptional Student Education and Support Services (ESE), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and other areas of the organization.

Staff Comments and Recommendations:

The Charter School application for United Community Middle/High School, Inc., (United Community Middle/High School), was reviewed by the Superintendent's Charter School Review Committee and is recommended for denial. It is recommended that the application of United Community Middle/High School, Inc., (United Community Middle/High School), be denied due to the following deficiencies:

- Failure to describe the anticipated target population of the school and explain how the school will be organized by grade structure, class size, and total student enrollment over the term of the school's charter. Section 1002.33(10)(e), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(6)(b)(2), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(7)(a)(1), Florida Statutes; Section 1003.03, Florida Statutes, a required element of the Model Florida Charter School Application.
 - Section 1002.33(6)(a)(2), Florida Statutes, states that, "charter school applications are subject to the following requirements: Provides a detailed curriculum plan that illustrates how students will be provided services to attain the Sunshine State Standards."
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to accurately reference the correct standards and the courses to which they apply.
- Failure to explain not only what the school will teach but also how and why. Section

1002.33(6)(a)(2), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(6)(a)(4), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(7)(a)(2), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(7)(a)(4), Florida Statutes, a required element of the Model Florida Charter School Application.

- Section 1002.33(6)(a)(2), Florida Statutes, states that, “charter school applications are subject to the following requirements: Provides a detailed curriculum plan that illustrates how students will be provided services to attain the Sunshine State Standards.”
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to identify a detailed curriculum plan that clearly describes the reading curriculum and differentiated strategies for students reading at, above or below grade level.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide a detailed curriculum that aligns to the 2014-2014 full implementation requirement for CCSS.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide the most current district plan for Reading and does not provide curriculum materials aligned to CCSS.
- Section 1002.33(7)(a)(2)(a), Florida Statutes, states that, “the charter shall ensure that reading is a primary focus of the curriculum and that resources are provided to identify and provide specialized instruction for students who are reading below grade level. The curriculum and instructional strategies for reading must be consistent with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and grounded in scientifically based reading research.” State Board Rule 6A-6.054, F.A.C., requires that FCAT Level 1 and 2 students with deficits in decoding & text reading efficiency must be placed in reading intervention instruction and may not be served through Content area reading intervention (CAR-PD/NGCAR-PD).
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to clearly identify when intensive reading will take place during the school day.
- Failure to demonstrate an understanding of the requirements of the school to serve exceptional students and provide a concrete plan for meeting the broad spectrum of educational needs and providing all enrolled students with a quality education. Section 1002.33(10), Florida Statutes, a required element of the Model Florida Charter School Application.
 - State Board Rule 6A-6.03028(11)(i)(3), F.A.C., Provision of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities states that “a continuum of alternative placements must be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities for special education and related services, including instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions and a school district must make provision for supplementary services (such as resource room or itinerant instruction) to be provided in conjunction with regular class placement.”
 - Application Deficiency: This application fails to provide a clear description of a continuum or levels of services to be provided to students with disabilities.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to demonstrate a clear

understanding of appropriate ESE placement and services, special diploma options and their implications.

- Application Deficiencies: This application fails to clearly describe how students with disabilities who enter below grade level will benefit from the curriculum.
 - State Board Rule 6A-6.03019(2)(b)(2)(F), F.A.C., states that, “an evaluation design which addresses evaluation of progress toward the district’s goal for increasing participation by students from under-represented groups.
 - Application Deficiency: This application fails to provide a clear explanation or plan to evaluate the effectiveness in servicing ESE students, including Gifted.
 - State Board Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., states that, “the state’s goal is to provide full educational opportunity and a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all students with disabilities ages three (3) through twenty-one (21) and to school age students who are gifted. School districts have the responsibility to ensure that students suspected of having a disability are subject to general education intervention procedures. They must ensure that all students with disabilities or who are gifted and who are in need of specially designed instruction and related services are identified, located, and evaluated, and appropriate exceptional student education is made available to them if it is determined that the student meets the eligibility criteria specified in Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.0361, F.A.C.”
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to address a system of interventions for struggling students before they reach the evaluation level of the Response to Intervention process.
 - The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications, and governmental activities. The ADA also establishes requirements for telecommunications relay services.
 - Application Deficiency: The application failed to describe how the school will utilize regular school facilities and adapt them to the needs of exceptional students to the maximum extent appropriate.
- Failure to demonstrate an understanding of the requirements of the school to serve English Language Learner Students (ELLs) and to provide a concrete plan for meeting the broad spectrum of educational needs for all enrolled students as required in Section 1003.56, Florida Statutes, English Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient Students and Rules 6A-6.0900 to 6A-6.0909, F.A.C., Programs for Limited English Proficient Students and Section 1002.33(10), Florida Statutes, a required element of the Florida Model Charter School Application.
 - State Board Rule 6A-6.0902, F.A.C., Requirements for Identification, Eligibility, and Programmatic Assessments of English Language Learners, and the state-approved District ELL Plan require that all students with limited English proficiency must be properly identified and assessed to ensure the provision of appropriate services.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide a clear understanding of district’s procedures for classifying ELL students.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to identify the assessments used for placement in the district.

- Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide a clear understanding of the functions of ELL Committee.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide procedures for maintaining and creating ELLSEP folders for ELLs.
 - State Board Rule 6A-6.0903, F.A.C., Requirement for Exiting English Language Learners from the English for Speakers of Other Languages Program and the state-approved District ELL Plan require that all students identified as limited English proficiency shall continue to receive appropriate instruction until the student meets standards for exiting the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide a clear understanding of district policies and procedures for exiting ELLs from the ESOL Program.
 - State Board Rule 6A-6.0904, F.A.C., Equal Access to Appropriate Instruction for English Language Learners and the state-approved District ELL Plan require that each student identified as limited English proficiency shall have equal access to appropriate programs and instruction which is comprehensible, equal and comparable in amount, scope, and sequence and quality to that provided to English proficient students. In addition, ELLs shall have access to trained personnel proficient in the same language to assist in basic subject area instruction.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide a clear understanding of how the school will implement Equal Access for ELLs.
 - State Board Rule 6A-6.09091, F.A.C., Accommodations of the Statewide Assessment Program Instruments and Procedures for English Language Learners and District ELL Plan state that all ELLs shall receive accommodations to enable them to fully participate in the statewide assessment program.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to identify implementation of allowable accommodations for state, district, and classroom assessments.
- Failure to define the policies and procedures that frame the school’s relationship with its staff. Section 1002.33(7)(a)(14), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(12), Florida Statutes, a required element of the Model Florida Charter School Application.
 - Section 1002.33(7)(a)(14), Florida Statutes, states that the charter school shall address “the qualifications to be required of teachers and the potential strategies used to recruit, hire, train, and retain qualified staff to achieve best value.”
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to provide an understanding of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Highly Qualified Teacher requirements.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to address the process for identifying and monitoring teachers who are placed in teaching assignments for which they are out-of-field.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to explain how parents will be notified that their child’s teacher is out-of-field for the course being taught.
- Failure to provide an understanding of the school’s anticipated facilities needs and how the school plans to meet those needs. Section 1002.33(7)(a)(13), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(18), Florida Statutes, a required element of the Model Florida Charter School Application.
 - Section 1002.33, Florida Statutes, states that, “a startup charter school shall utilize

facilities which comply with the Florida Building Code pursuant to chapter 553 except for the State Requirements for Educational Facilities...”

- Application Deficiency: The application fails to identify the process for having the building inspected for asbestos.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to identify the process for having the building inspected for lead and radon.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to identify the process regarding health and sanitation inspections, specifically standards for food service, drinking water, and sewer/sanitary facilities.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to identify the process for providing a traffic plan to Broward County Traffic Engineering for approval.
- Failure to provide budgetary projections that are consistent with all parts of the application, including the school’s mission, education program, staffing plan and facility. Section 1002.33(6)(a)(5), Florida Statutes; Section 1002.33(6)(b)(2), Florida Statutes, a required element of the Model Florida Charter School Application.
 - Section 1002.33(6)(b)(2), Florida Statutes, states that, “in order to ensure fiscal responsibility, an application for a charter school shall include a full accounting of expected assets, a projection of expected sources and amounts of income, including income derived from projected student enrollments and from community support, and an expense projection that includes full accounting of the costs of operation, including start-up costs.”
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to include a start-up budget.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to accurately reflect the number of teachers needed to meet class size.
 - Application Deficiency: The application fails to adequately budget reserves for contingencies or unexpected expenses.

It is requested that The School Board of Broward County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent of Schools to notify United Community Middle/High School, Inc., (United Community Middle/High School), of the denial of the charter application. A draft letter notifying the applicant of the decision is attached (Exhibit 3).

The applicant for United Community Middle/High School, Inc., (United Community Middle/High School), will be encouraged to resubmit an application for the 2015 Application Review Cycle after the foregoing application deficiencies have been remedied.