

**Application Instructions for the 2026-2027 Cycle
(August 1, 2026 – July 31, 2027)**

1. The DeSoto County School Board is authorized to sponsor charter schools.
2. It is the responsibility of the charter school applicant to request technical assistance from the Florida Department of Education or the DeSoto County Superintendents office.
3. Acceptance of an application for review does not imply or ensure approval of the application.
4. Approval of an application does not authorize the operation of the charter school. Approval of an application authorizes the parties to negotiate a contract to open and operate the proposed school.
5. Charter school applicants wishing to apply during the 2026-2027 review cycle shall provide a letter of intent to establish a charter school to the DeSoto County Public Schools Charter Office at least 30-days prior to application submission. The letter should include the intended name of the school, the name of the board chair, the identified management company (if applicable), enrollment projections, grade configuration, educational program focus, and the location, if known.
6. Applicants shall submit the charter application according to the process delineated in the State's [Model Florida Charter School Application](#) and ensure the following formatting specifications are adhered to when submitting the application to DeSoto County:
 - Two (2) application binders organized with labeled tab dividers identifying each section (1-22), each applicable attachment and each applicable addenda of the application.
 - One (1) USB flash drive labeled with the school's name containing a compiled PDF of the application with each section, attachment, and addenda bookmarked within the PDF. Must be identical to application binders.
 - Ensure both the binders and PDF contain a table of contents with page numbers identifying all sections, attachments, and addenda.
 - Ensure consecutive page numbers throughout the binder and PDF compilation (sections, attachments, and addenda) aligns with the table of contents.
7. Applications will be received according to the submission deadlines found in the table below between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. in the School District office attn Dr. Bobby Bennett or via mail at Attn Dr. Bobby Bennett, 530 LaSolona Ave, Arcadia Florida 34266. **Electronic submissions of the Application will not be accepted.**

Letter of Intent Submission Deadline (Email or US Mail)	*Application Submission Deadline (no Electronic Submission accepted)	DeSoto County School Board (DCSB) Meeting Date
December 17, 2025	January 16, 2026	April 14, 2026

*Exceptions must be scheduled in advance.

8. All applications will be presented to the DeSoto County School Board within 90 days of submission, with the recommendation for approval or denial from the Superintendent unless otherwise agreed upon by both parties.
9. For more information and/or guidance on submitting a charter school application to The School District of DeSoto County, contact the Superintendents' office at 863-494-4222 or email to bobby.bennett@desotoschools.com.