

**Virginia Board of Education
Charter School Committee**

**Consensus Report
Application Submitted by the
Bertha B. Williams Academy
Norfolk, Virginia**

February 24, 2016

The *Code of Virginia*, [Section 22.1-212.9](#), requires that all public charter school applications be submitted to the Board prior to being submitted to the local school board. Applications must adhere to the format prescribed by the Board and address the application elements stated in the *Code of Virginia*, [Section 22.1-212.8](#). The Board is required to render a decision on whether the application meets its approval criteria. A decision by the Board that an application meets its approval criteria does not guarantee that the local school board will approve a request for a public charter school.

To meet the intent of the legislation, the Board of Education established a Charter School Committee. The committee met with the applicant at the Virginia Department of Education on February 24, 2016, to discuss the charter school application submitted by Bertha B. Williams Academy (BBWA) in Norfolk.

The applicant had previously submitted a public school charter application to the Board, but the application was withdrawn by the applicant following the Board's Charter School Committee review on April 21, 2015. Subsequently, a new application was submitted to the Board, with committee review scheduled for November 18, 2015. That meeting was postponed at the request of the applicant in order to address Department of Education staff concerns. Responses to the concerns by BBWA were shared with the committee in advance of the scheduled meeting on January 27, 2016. Inclement weather caused the Charter School Committee meeting to be postponed until February 24, 2016.

At the meeting on February 24, 2016, it was confirmed by the committee chair that the applicant information was complete; an executive summary provided an overview of the proposed charter school; and the assurances were signed. The applicant was given the opportunity to address the educational (Sections II.-VI.), logistical (Sections VII.-X.), and business (Sections XI.-XV.) components of the application with the committee being provided an opportunity to comment or ask questions.

The applicant provided a general overview of BBWA and addressed the educational (Sections II.-VI.) components of the application. The committee, Dr. Williams, and members representing BBWA discussed several of the educational components including:

- Curriculum benchmark tests;
- Scaling back a program with many different components;
- Whether the curriculum would align with Virginia's Standards of Learning assessments; and
- Funding and costs associated with a year-round school.

The committee, Dr. Williams, and members representing BBWA discussed logistical (Sections VII.-X.) components including:

- Working with Norfolk City Public Schools and community partners in the areas of transportation, food services, and funding;
- Clarifying the role of the principal and the evaluation process;
- Funding and contractual agreements for teachers at a year-round school; and
- Providing professional development.

The committee, Dr. Williams, and members representing BBWA discussed the business (Sections XI.-XV) components including:

- Funding and revenue;
- Incentive grants and fundraising;
- Budget and sustainability;
- Insurance; and
- Human Resources.

Following the discussion by BBWA representatives and dialogue with the committee, a vote was taken on the required application components as outlined below. The committee agreed unanimously that overall the application did not meet the application components.

Required Application Components		Met the Criterion	Yes	No	Consensus Met Components (Y/N)
I.	Executive Summary	Yes	7		
II.	Mission Statement	Yes	7		
III.	Goals and Educational Objectives	No	3	4	
IV.	Evidence of Support	Yes	7		
V.	Statement of Need	No	2	5	
VI.	Educational Program	No	1	6	
VII.	Enrollment Process	Yes	7		
VIII.	Displacement	Yes	7		
IX.	Transportation	No	1	6	
X.	Residential Charter School	NA			
XI.	Economic Soundness	No		7	
XII.	Management and Operation	No	3	4	
XIII.	Employment Terms and Conditions	No		7	
XIV.	Liability and Insurance	Yes	7		
XV.	Disclosures	Yes	7		
Overall Consensus					No

The seven application components that met the criterion were:

I.	Executive Summary
II.	Mission Statement
IV.	Evidence of Support
VII.	Enrollment Process
VIII.	Displacement
XIV.	Liability and Insurance
XV.	Disclosures

The seven application components that did not meet the criterion were:

III.	Goals and Educational Objectives
V.	Statement of Need
VI.	Educational Program
IX.	Transportation
XI.	Economic Soundness
XII.	Management and Operation
XIII.	Employment Terms and Conditions

One application component was not applicable:

XV.	Residential Charter School
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The following pages contain the Charter School Committee Criteria Checklist. The Bertha B. Williams Academy applicant has two options to proceed following issuance of the Consensus Report. They are: 1) withdraw the application with the option of resubmitting; or 2) proceed with Board of Education review to make the determination whether the BBWA application overall meets the approval criteria.



Charter School Committee

Criteria for Bertha B. Williams Academy Norfolk, Virginia

February 24, 2016

Bertha B. Williams Academy Criteria Checklist

Required Application Components	Does the Response Meet the Board's Approval Criterion?
<p>Cover Page All requested information has been provided and the authorized official has signed and dated the cover page.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>Applicant Information All applicant information has been provided.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>I. Executive Summary: The executive summary provides an overview of the proposed charter school and must include the need for the public charter school and its goals and objectives.</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>II. Mission Statement: The mission statement of the public charter school is consistent with the principles of the Standards of Quality (SOQ). The following elements are addressed:</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1. A description of the public charter school's mission and how it is consistent with the principles of the Virginia SOQ. (Section 22.1-253.13:1, Code of Virginia)	
2. A description of any specialized area of academic concentration.	
3. Information about the public charter school's anticipated student population consistent with Section 22.1-212.6 , of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> .	
<p>III. Goals and Educational Objectives: The goals and educational objectives to be achieved by the public charter school are stated, and meet or exceed the Standards of Learning. The following elements are addressed:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1. A description of the performance-based goals.	
2. A description of the related measurable educational objectives to be achieved by the public charter school. (Section 22.1-253.13:1.B, Code of Virginia)	
<p>IV. Evidence of Support: Evidence that an adequate number of parents, teachers, pupils, or any combination thereof, supports the formation of a public charter school is provided. The following elements are addressed:</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1. Information and materials indicating how parents, the community, and other stakeholders were involved in supporting the application for the public charter school.	
2. Tangible evidence of support for the public charter school from parents, teachers, students, and residents, or any combination thereof, including but not limited to information regarding the number of persons and organizations involved in the process and petitions related to the establishment of the charter school.	
3. A description of how parental involvement will be used to support the educational needs of the students, the school's mission and philosophy, and its educational focus.	
<p>V. Statement of Need: A statement describing the need for a public charter school in a school division or relevant school divisions in the case of a regional public charter school, or in a geographic area within a school division or relevant school divisions, is provided. The following elements are addressed:</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1. A statement of the need for a public charter school that describes the targeted school population to be served and the reasons for locating the school within a particular school division.	
2. An explanation of why the public charter school is being formed. (Is the school being formed at the request of parents or community organizations? How was the need determined? What data were examined as part of the needs assessment? Briefly describe the need and include a summary of the quantitative data.)	

3. An explanation of why a public charter school is the appropriate vehicle to address the identified need.	
VI. Educational Program: A description of the public charter school's educational program is provided. The following elements are addressed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1. A synopsis of the public charter school's educational program.	
2. A description of the pupil performance standards and curriculum, which must meet or exceed any applicable Virginia SOQ. (Sections 22.1-253.13:1 through 22.1-253.13:9 , <i>Code of Virginia</i>)	
3. A description of how the Virginia SOL and the corresponding SOL Curriculum Framework will be used as the foundation for curricula to be implemented for each grade or course in the public charter school. Include within the description how the goals and objectives of the curricula will meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL), address student performance standards, relate to state and federal assessment standards, and include measurable student outcomes (See http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml on the Department's Web site for more information about the SOL).	
4. A description of any assessments to be used to measure pupil progress towards achievement of the school's pupil performance standards, in addition to the SOL assessments prescribed by Section 22.1-253.13:3 , in the <i>Code of Virginia</i> .	
5. A description of the public charter school assessment plan to obtain student performance data, which includes how the data will be used to monitor and improve achievement and how program effectiveness, will be measured over a specified period of time. Also, provide benchmark data on how student achievement will be measured and how these data will be established and documented in the first year of operation and how the data will be measured over each year of the term of the charter as approved by the local school board. The benchmark data should address targets for student improvement to be met in each year.	
6. The timeline for achievement of pupil performance standards, in accordance with the Virginia SOL.	
7. An explanation of the procedures for corrective actions needed in the event that pupil performance at the public charter school falls below the standards outlined in the Virginia Board of Education's Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia , (8 VAC 20-131-310).	
8. Information regarding the minimum and maximum enrollment per grade as well as class size and structure for each grade served by the public charter school.	
9. Information regarding the proposed calendar and daily schedule, including any plans to open prior to Labor Day and how and when a waiver to open early will be submitted by the local school board to the Virginia Board of Education. (Section 22.1-79.1 , <i>Code of Virginia</i>)	
10. A description of plans for identifying and serving: a) students with disabilities; b) English Language Learners (ELLs); c) academically at-risk students; and d) gifted and talented students. Such plans must indicate the extent of the involvement of the local school board in providing such services and must comply with state and federal laws and regulations.	
11. A description of the learning environment and scientifically-based research instructional strategies to be used at the public charter school to ensure student achievement.	
12. If the public charter school plans to utilize virtual learning in its educational program, identify the virtual learning source, describe how virtual learning will be used and estimate how many students may participate.	
13. A general description of any alternative accreditation plans, in accordance with the Virginia Board of Education's Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (8 VAC 20-131-280), that the public charter school would request the local school board to submit to the Virginia Board of Education for approval.	

<p>14. A general description of any alternative accreditation plan for serving students with disabilities, in accordance with the Virginia Board of Education’s <i>Regulations Governing Special Education Programs For Children With Disabilities in Virginia</i> (8 VAC 20-80-40) that the public charter school would request the local school board to submit to the Virginia Board of Education for approval.</p>	
<p>VII. Enrollment Process: A description of the lottery process consistent with all federal and state laws and regulations and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination that are applicable to public schools and with any court-ordered desegregation plan in effect for the school division or, in the case of a regional public charter school, in effect for any of the relevant school divisions is provided. (Section 22.1-212.6, Code of Virginia). The following elements are addressed:</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>1. A description of the lottery process to be used to determine the public charter school enrollment.</p>	
<p>2. A lottery process shall also be developed for the establishment of a waiting list for such students for whom space is unavailable.</p>	
<p>3. A description of a tailored admission policy that meets the specific mission or focus of the public charter school, if applicable.</p>	
<p>4. A timeline for when the lottery process will begin for the first academic year of enrollment and when parents will be notified of the outcome of the lottery process.</p>	
<p>5. A description of any enrollment-related policies and procedures that address special situations, such as the enrollment of siblings and children of faculty and founders and the enrollment of nonresident students, if applicable.</p>	
<p>6. An explanation of how the applicant will ensure that, consistent with the public charter school’s mission and purpose, community outreach has been undertaken so that special populations are aware of the formation of the public charter school and that enrollment is open to all students residing in the school division where the public charter school is located or in school divisions participating in a regional charter school.</p>	
<p>7. A description of how the transfer of students to and from the public charter school will be accomplished.</p>	
<p>8. A description of how students seeking enrollment after the school year begins will be accommodated.</p>	
<p>VIII. Displacement: A description of the plan for the displacement of pupils, teachers, and other employees who will not attend or be employed in the public charter school, in instances of the conversion of an existing public school to a public charter school, and for the placement of public charter school pupils, teachers, and employees upon termination or revocation of the charter is provided. The following elements are addressed:</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>1. Identification of a member of the school’s leadership team who will serve as a single point of contact for all activities that may need to take place in order for the school to close, including but not limited to the transfer of students to another school, the management of student records, and the settlement of financial obligations.</p>	
<p>2. A notification process to parents/guardians of students attending the school and teachers and administrators of the closure date.</p>	
<p>3. A notification process to parents/guardians of students attending the public charter school of alternative public school placements within a set time period from the date that the closure is announced.</p>	
<p>4. Provisions for ensuring that student records are provided to the parent/guardian or another school identified by the parent or guardian within a set time period. If the student transfers to another school division, provisions for the transfer of the student’s record to the school division to which the student transfers shall be made upon the request of that school division. (Section 22.1-289, Code of Virginia).</p>	
<p>5. Notification to the local school board of a list of all students in the school and the names of the schools to which these students will transfer.</p>	

6. A placement plan for school employees that details the level of assistance to be provided within a set period of time from the date of closure. For teachers and administrators, the level of assistance should address finding employment within the school division where the public charter school is located or other public school divisions.	
7. A closeout plan related to financial obligations and audits, the termination of contracts and leases, and the sale and disposition of assets within a set period of time from the date of closure. The plan shall include the disposition of the schools' records and financial accounts upon closure.	
IX. Transportation: A description of how the public charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of its pupils is provided. The following elements are addressed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1. A description of how the transportation of students will be provided: a) by the local school division; b) by the public charter school; c) by the parent(s); or d) through a combination of these options.	
2. If transportation services will be provided by the public charter school, explain whether the school will contract for transportation with the local education agency or with another entity or have its own means of transportation and indicate whether transportation will be provided to all students attending the school.	
3. A description of transportation services for students with disabilities in compliance with Section 22.1-221 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> and the Board's Regulations Governing Special Education Programs For Children With Disabilities in Virginia .	
X. Residential Charter Schools: If the application is for a residential charter school for at-risk students, the following elements must be addressed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
1. A description of the residential program to include: a) the educational program; b) a facilities description to include grounds, dormitories, and staffing; c) a program for parental education and involvement; d) a description of after-care initiatives; e) the funding the residential facility and other services provided; f) any counseling and other social services to be provided and their coordination with current state and local initiatives; and g) a description of enrichment activities available to students.	
2. A description of how the facility will be maintained including, but not limited to: a) janitorial and regular maintenance services and b) security services to ensure the safety of students and staff.	
XI. Economic Soundness: Evidence that the plan for the public charter school is economically sound for both the public charter school and the school division is provided. The following elements are addressed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1. A description of the public charter school's financial plan, including financial controls and audit requirements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.	
2. A start-up and three-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions and information regarding projected revenues and expenditures.	
3. A start-up and three-year cash flow projections with clearly stated assumptions and indications of short- and long-term sources of revenue.	

4. A description of anticipated fundraising contributions, if applicable.	
5. A description of the funding agreement that the public charter school intends to have with the local education agency, including information regarding anticipated local, state, and federal per-pupil-amounts to be received and any information pertaining to the maintenance of facilities. In accordance with Section 22.1-212.14 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> , the per pupil funding provided to the charter school, shall be negotiated in the charter agreement and shall be commensurate with the average school-based costs of educating the students in the existing schools in the division or divisions unless the cost of operating the charter school is less than that average school-based cost. To the extent discussions have been held with the school division, please describe the outcome of those discussions. If there have been no discussions to date, please indicate the reason.	
XII. Management and Operation: A description of the management and operation of the public charter school, including the nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the management and operation of the public charter school is provided. (Section 22.1-212.7 , <i>Code of Virginia</i>) The following elements are addressed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1. A description of any discussion, to date, with the local public system or local school board where the charter school will be located regarding the management and operations of the public charter school.	
2. A description of the functions, roles, and duties of the management committee as defined in Section 22.1-212.6 of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> in the operation and oversight of the public charter school and its proposed constitution and bylaws.	
3. An explanation of how support services will be provided. These services, include, but are not limited to: 1) food services; 2) school health services; 3) custodial services; 4) extracurricular activities; and 5) security services.	
4. An explanation of any partnerships or contractual relationships (education management organization, food services, school health services, custodial services, security services, etc.) central to the school's operations or mission, including information regarding the relationship of all contractors to the governing board of the public charter school, and information regarding how contractors and the employees of the contractors having direct contact with students will comply with the provisions of Section 22.1-296.1 , of the <i>Code of Virginia</i> .	
5. A detailed start-up plan, identifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.	
6. A proposed organization chart that clearly presents the school's organizational structure, including the lines of authority and reporting between the management committee, staff, any related bodies (such as parent organizations, the school division and external organizations) that will play a role in managing the school.	
7. Plans for recruiting school leadership and staff.	
XIII. Employment Terms and Conditions: An explanation of the relationship that will exist between the proposed public charter school and its employees, including evidence that the terms and conditions of employment have been addressed with affected employees is provided. (Sections 22.1-212.13 , 22.1-296.1 and 22.1-296.2 , <i>Code of Virginia</i>) The following elements are addressed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
1. A plan that addresses the qualifications of teachers and administrators at the public charter school, including compliance with state law and regulation regarding Virginia Board of Education licensing endorsements.	
2. A plan to provide high-quality professional development plans. (Section 22.1-253.13.5 , <i>Code of Virginia</i>)	
3. Provisions for the evaluation of staff at regular intervals and in accordance with state law and regulation.	
4. Provisions for a human resource policy for the public charter school that is consistent with state and federal law.	
5. Notification to all school employees of the terms and conditions of employment.	

6. A staffing chart for the school's first year and a staffing plan for the term of the contract.	
XIV. Liability and Insurance: A description of the agreement between the parties regarding their respective legal liability and applicable insurance coverage is provided. (Section 22.1-212.16, Code of Virginia) The following elements are addressed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1. The types of insurance for the public charter school, its property, its employees, the charter school management committee, and the board and the levels of coverage sought. Types of insurance include, but are not limited to: a) general liability; b) health; and c) property.	
2. A justification for each type of insurance coverage sought.	
3. A description of any plans of the public charter school to provide indemnity for the local school division.	
XV. Disclosures: Disclose ownership or financial interest in the public charter school by the charter applicant and the governing body, administrators, and other personnel of the proposed public charter school, and require that the applicant and the governing body, administrators, and other personnel of the public charter school shall have a continuing duty to disclose such interest during the term of any charter. The following elements must be addressed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
1. A description of how the applicant and members of the management committee will disclose any ownership or financial interest.	
2. Information regarding the frequency by which such disclosures will be made (Section 2.2-3114, Code of Virginia).	
3. A description of ownership or financial interest of the applicant and/or members of the management committee in the proposed charter school. This includes any relationships that parties may have with vendors performing services at the school.	
Assurances The certification statement has been signed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No