



AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR LIBERAL EDUCATION
CHARTER SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

AMERICAN ACADEMY
for
LIBERAL EDUCATION

Application for
CHARTER SCHOOL
PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

American Academy for Liberal Education
1050 17th Street, NW – Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: 202.452.8611
Fax: 202.452.8620
www.aalecharters.org
charters@aale.org

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Introduction Charter School Program Certification

Applicants for program certification must provide all information requested in the Charter School Program Certification Application Form (below)

Please call AALE for further information and a telephone consultation (202) 452-8611

Charter School Program Certification is an important step toward AALE Accreditation and thus to full AALE membership status. It allows public charter schools and charter school management organizations to establish public recognition by the Academy that an educational program is exemplary and that charter schools implementing it *as designed* have the potential to become fully accredited upon meeting all required AALE standards. Program Certification is granted for a period of up to five (5) years at which point a charter school or management organization may apply for continuation.

Charter schools and management organizations seeking program certification must complete this application and demonstrate that they meet the Academy's *Program Certification Standards* (Appendix 1), including its *Curriculum Review Standards* (Appendix 2), by submitting to the Academy thorough and detailed descriptions of relevant educational program and curriculum documents and hosting a small team of site reviewers from AALE.

All AALE application materials are available for viewing, downloading, and printing at our website (www.aale.org). Printed copies are available by request from the Academy. AALE lists the names and locations of all accredited charter schools on its website and may, by mutual agreement, include a link to the school website. No other information about accredited charter schools is included on the website, except by mutual agreement.

If you have any questions about AALE program certification, about this program certification application, or about the Academy's policies and procedures, please feel free to contact us at (202) 452-8611 or email charters@aale.org.

Overview of the Program Certification Application Process

The time required to complete the AALE process for program certification varies from case to case, but it is possible to complete the entire process within six months after submission of a complete application. The following offers brief descriptions of AALE's requirements for program certification, a brief description of the application process, and an estimated timetable for completing the process. This schedule is approximate.

Eligibility Requirements

Organizational Agreements and Administrative Structure

1. To be eligible the organization seeking program certification (charter school or management organization) must attest to:
 - a. Its commitment and intent to comply with the *Standards for Charter School Program Certification* of the Academy, either current or as these may be modified hereafter, consistent with the policies and procedures of the Academy;
 - b. Its understanding and agreement that the Academy may, at its discretion, make known to any agency or member of the public that requests such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding its program certification status with the Academy;
 - c. Its agreement to disclose all such information to the Academy as it may require to carry out its evaluation and program certification functions;
 - d. Its agreement to refrain from making any promotional use of its application for program certification prior to the actual granting of a certification status then to promote only those programs certified; and
 - e. Its agreement that failure by the Academy to act favorably upon an application for program design certification, program certification, accreditation, or renewal of membership in the American Academy for Liberal Education, absent a showing of actual malice, shall not, in and of itself, constitute grounds for legal action against AALE by the applicant school or individuals therein. In all cases when a disagreement cannot be resolved through normal AALE appeals procedures, the school and the individuals therein agree to AALE's arbitration policy which provides for final action after review in accordance with the Rules of the American Arbitration Association.

2. The educational program to be certified is in operation or scheduled to be in operation in a charter school (or schools) that has (have) a charter and formal authority from the appropriate charter school authorizer to offer instruction, diplomas, and/or certificates of completion in the jurisdiction(s) in which the school operates.
3. The organization seeking program certification (charter school or management organization) has an active, policy-making administrative structure or governing board which has the authority and duty to ensure that the educational program to be certified is of the highest quality and effectiveness.
4. The organization seeking program certification (charter school or management organization) has accurately completed the Organizational Profile Form included with the application.

Mission and Program Information

5. The organization seeking program certification (charter school or management organization) has a clearly defined, explicit mission to provide a high-quality educational program that is based on the liberal arts and is appropriate to a public charter school.
6. The organization seeking program certification (charter school or management organization) has clear, accurate, and current information describing this educational program, including:
 - a. Curriculum content in basic skills and liberal arts subjects.
 - b. Instructional approaches.
 - c. Assessment strategies, instruments, and schedules.
 - d. Nature of interface with appropriate federal, state, or local requirements and regulations.

Actual or Planned Implementation

7. The educational program to be certified must be in operation or scheduled to be in operation in a charter school (or schools) that has (have) a charter and formal authority from the appropriate charter school authorizer to offer instruction, diplomas, and/or certificates of completion in the jurisdiction(s) in which the school operates.

Estimated Timeline

Note: The following is for illustration purposes only. Early in the program certification application process AALE staff will conduct a consultation with the school to determine a specific timeline with benchmark dates.

Weeks 1-12

Step I. The organization seeking program certification (charter school or management organization) submits a completed Program Certification application. An application fee of \$7500 is also required at this time.

Step II. AALE conducts first consultation with organization to set timeline and select expert reviewers to review application materials and supporting documents.

Step III. AALE staff and experts review application materials and supporting documents, prepare report, and send report to organization. Organization amends, revises, etc. application where necessary.

Step IV. AALE staff and expert reviewers conduct application review debriefing with organization (either by teleconference or in person) and arrange site visit.

Weeks 12-20

Step V. AALE staff and expert reviewers conduct two-day site visit.

Step VI. AALE staff and expert reviewers prepare site visit report and send report to organization. Organization submits response to site visit report.

Weeks 20-24

Step VII. AALE submits application materials and supporting documents, site visit report, and organization's response to Expert Board of Review. The AALE Expert Board of Review is composed of recognized scholars from liberal arts content areas, educational research and development, curriculum design, and K-12 pedagogy as well as charter school administrators, teachers, and program coordinators.

Step VIII. Based on Expert Board of Review recommendations, AALE takes formal action on Program Certification.

For more information about AALE reviewers and staff, please visit the Academy's website, charters@aale.org.

Completing the Program Certification Application

A complete Program Certification Application requires:

- A completed Organizational Information Form
 - A signed Program Certification Agreement
 - A completed Program Certification Application Form
 - An application fee of \$7500 for each educational program submitted for Program Certification
-

Any person authorized by the Chief Executive Officer of an organization seeking program certification (charter school or management organization) may complete the information requested in these forms. The Program Certification Agreement **must** be signed by the Chief Executive Officer or a senior manager authorized by the Chief Executive Officer. A letter of intent to apply for AALE Program Certification also must be submitted with the completed application. Although some information is called for more than once on these forms AALE asks that all forms be completed.

AALE requires supporting documentation for certain parts of the Program Certification application; these are clearly indicated. *Please be sure to include copies of all documents cited with the completed application.*

This packet contains all the forms necessary to complete a Program Certification application. Electronic versions of these forms may be downloaded from the AALE website (www.aale.org/charters).

Application Fee

An application fee of \$7500 U.S. is required for each educational program submitted by an organization for AALE Program Certification. This fee should be submitted with the completed application in the form of a check or money order made payable to the "American Academy for Liberal Education."

Returning the Completed Application

Please return the completed application packet, including all forms and required supporting documents, the signed Program Certification Agreement, the letter of intent, and the application fee, to the following address:

American Academy for Liberal Education
1050 17th Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

Organizational Information

Organization

Name:

Address:

City, State, and Zip Code:

Main Phone:

FAX:

Website:

Chief Executive Officer

Name:

Title:

Address:

City, State, and Zip Code:

Phone:

E-mail:

Program Certification Liaison to AALE

Name:

Title:

Address:

City, State, and Zip Code:

Phone:

E-mail:

Program(s) Submitted for Certification

Charter School(s) Implementing Program (please include schools planning implementation)

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:

Program Certification Agreement

Organizations applying for Program Certification by the American Academy for Liberal Education must complete and submit this agreement as a requirement of application.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for accreditation by the American Academy for Liberal Education _____ (Name of Organization) does hereby agree to abide by the following conditions:

- a. The organization is committed to and intends to adhere to the *Standards for Charter School Program Certification* of the American Academy for Liberal Education, either current or as these may be modified hereafter, consistent with the policy and procedures of the Academy.
- b. The organization understands and agrees that the American Academy for Liberal Education, at its discretion may make known to any agency or member of the public that requests such information, the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the organization's program certification status with the Academy.
- c. The organization agrees to disclose to the American Academy for Liberal Education any and all such information as the Academy may require to carry out its evaluation and accrediting functions.
- d. The organization, upon receiving Charter School Program Certification, agrees that all charter schools currently open or to be opened under the organization's auspices will apply for full accreditation from the American Academy for Liberal Education during the period that the organization holds Program Certification (up to five [5] years unless a continuation is in effect).
- e. The organization agrees to refrain from making any promotional use of its application for program certification prior to the actual granting of a certification status and then to promote only those programs certified.
- f. The organization agrees that failure by the Academy to act favorably on an application for program certification, accreditation, or renewal of membership in the American Academy for Liberal Education, absent a showing of actual malice, shall not, in and of itself, constitute grounds for legal action against AALE by the applicant organizations, schools, or individuals therein. In all cases when a disagreement cannot be resolved through normal AALE appeals procedures, the organization and the individuals therein agree to AALE's arbitration policy which provides for final action after review in accordance with the Rules of the American Arbitration Association.

Signature – Chief Executive Officer

Date

Print Name

Program Certification Application Program Information

A. Organizational Mission and Program Information

1. Mission

Please provide the full text of the organizational mission statement and copies of all published document(s) containing the full text of the organizational mission statement with appropriate pages and sections highlighted. If the mission statement appears on an organizational Web site, please provide address.

2. Program Information

Please list below all programs submitted to AALE for Program Certification by grade level of implementation.

Kindergarten	Seventh Grade
First Grade	Eighth Grade
Second Grade	Ninth Grade
Third Grade	Tenth Grade
Fourth Grade	Eleventh Grade
Fifth Grade	Twelfth Grade
Sixth Grade	Other (please specify)

For each program submitted please provide information about the following program elements and copies of all published document(s) containing this information with appropriate pages and sections highlighted. If the program information appears on an organizational Web site, please provide address.

Please refer to <i>AALE's Program Certification Standards</i> (Appendix 1) and <i>Curriculum Review Standards</i> (Appendix 2).

- Purpose and intention
- Curriculum structure and content.
- Instructional approaches and design (in general and by-grade level).
- Nature of interface with appropriate federal, state, or local standards, requirements, and regulations including *No Child Left Behind* and IDEA.
- Evidence of positive impact on student achievement and performance for all populations (test data, research, case study, or testimonial).
- Assessment strategies, instruments, schedules, and outcome measures.
- Special instructional programs for special education, limited English proficiency, gifted, and remedial students.
- Special qualifications or training required of staff.
- Other special program requirements and their costs (staffing, materials, equipment, facilities, scheduling, purchasing, licenses, management, staff training, equipment lease or purchase, etc.)

B. Implementation Information

Please provide a list of the charter schools where the program is being implemented or will be implemented and copies of published document(s) showing implementation or the plan to implement with appropriate pages and sections highlighted. If the program implementation information appears on charter school Web sites, please provide addresses. Use additional sheets if necessary.

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:
Website:	Website:
Authorizer [University, school district, etc.]:	Authorizer [University, school district, etc.]:
Years in Operation:	Years in Operation:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:
Website:	Website:
Authorizer [University, school district, etc.]:	Authorizer [University, school district, etc.]:
Years in Operation:	Years in Operation:

Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City, State, and Zip Code:	City, State, Zip Code:
Main Phone:	Main Phone:
Website:	Website:
Authorizer [University, school district, etc.]:	Authorizer [University, school district, etc.]:
Years in Operation:	Years in Operation:

APPENDIX 1

PROGRAM CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

APPENDIX 2

CURRICULUM REVIEW STANDARDS