

For immediate release
Dec. 10, 2013

NCDPI Receives 71 Applications to Open Charters in 2015

Nonprofit organizations have submitted 71 applications to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to open a public charter school in August 2015. These applications met the Dec. 6 submission deadline through the automated application system utilized for the first time this year by the NCDPI.

"High-quality charter schools play an important role in addressing the needs of some of our 1.5 million students," said State Superintendent of Public Instruction June Atkinson. "The Department and State Board of Education will continue to work together with these applicants and local school districts to foster cooperation and partnerships so that we can better serve all students."

During the first phase of the application process, applicants submitted a total of 175 Letters of Intent to the NCDPI in September. Several other states also require these Letters of Intent, and have found this part of the application process produces stronger applications and fully functional boards and contributes to academic excellence and fiscal accountability among high quality charter schools. If a group failed to submit an application the NCDPI by Dec. 6, they can submit a **Letter of Intent** by Sept. 5, 2014 to participate in the application cycle for schools that will open in August 2016.

For the first time in North Carolina's history, the charter school applicants also were required to pay an application fee, as now mandated in charter school law. The State Board of Education set the fee at \$500, and that money will be used to assist in the application review process. The Office of Charter Schools will be reviewing applications for completeness before forwarding them to the newly-formed Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB). The CSAB will divide into evaluation teams to read and review these applications. After applicant interviews and deliberation, the CSAB will recommend the highest quality applicants to the State Board of Education for conditional approval.

There are currently 127 public charter schools open in North Carolina serving students in about half of North Carolina's counties. An additional 26 schools received preliminary approval during the summer and have been working through the planning phase. These schools will go before the State Board of Education for final approval in January. For more information, contact the NCDPI Office of Charter Schools at 919.807.3491.