



AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR LIBERAL EDUCATION  
CHARTER SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

**AMERICAN ACADEMY**  
for  
**LIBERAL EDUCATION**

Application for  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
PROGRAM DESIGN CERTIFICATION

American Academy for Liberal Education  
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## **Introduction**

### **Charter School Program Design Certification**

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

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

Charter School Program Design Certification is an important step toward AALE Accreditation and thus to full AALE membership status. It allows individuals and organizations developing plans and applications for public charter schools to establish public recognition by the Academy that the design of the school's educational program is exemplary. Further, AALE Program Design Certification is public acknowledgement that when the design is fully developed into a mature educational program any charter school implementing it *as designed* will have the potential to become fully accredited upon meeting all required AALE standards. Program Design Certification is granted for a period of up to five (5) years at which point a charter school's developers or operators must apply for AALE accreditation.

Charter schools and organizations seeking program design certification must complete this application and demonstrate that they meet the Academy's *Program Design Certification Standards* (Appendix 1), including its *Curriculum Design Standards* (Appendix 2), by submitting to the Academy thorough and detailed descriptions of relevant educational program design plans and documents.

All AALE application materials are available for viewing, downloading, and printing at our website ([www.aale.org](http://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 design certification, about this program design 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](mailto:charters@aale.org).

## **Overview of the Program Design Certification Application Process**

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

### **Eligibility Requirements**

Program Design Certification is granted only to eligible organizational entities (charter schools or sponsoring organizations).

#### **Organizational Agreements and Administrative Structure**

1. To be eligible the organization or charter school (or schools) seeking program design certification must attest to:
  - a. Its commitment and intent to establish a charter school within two (2) years of receiving AALE Program Design Certification. This charter school must implement the design submitted for certification.
  - b. Its commitment and intent to comply with the *Academy's Standards for Charter School Program Design Certification*, either current or as these may be modified hereafter, consistent with the policies and procedures of the Academy;
  - c. 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 design certification status with the Academy;
  - d. Its agreement to disclose all such information to the Academy as it may require in order to carry out its evaluation and program design certification functions;
  - e. Its agreement to refrain from making any promotional use of its application for program design certification prior to the actual granting of certification status and then to promote only those program designs 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 accreditation by 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 organization seeking program design certification has or will have an active, policy-making administrative structure or governing board which has the authority and duty to ensure that the educational program design to be certified is of the highest quality and effectiveness.
  3. The organization seeking program design certification has accurately completed the organizational information form included with the application.

#### **Mission and Program Information**

4. The organization seeking program design certification has a clearly defined, explicit mission to establish a charter school or charter schools that provide(s) a high-quality educational program based on the liberal arts and is appropriate to a public charter school.
5. The organization seeking program design certification has clear, accurate, and current information describing the design of 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**

6. The educational program design to be certified is scheduled to be implemented 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. Or that the organizational entity seeking program design certification will apply for a charter (charters) and the formal authority to operate a charter school (charter schools) implementing the design from the appropriate charter school authorizer(s) within two years of receiving program design certification.

## **Estimated Timeline**

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

### **Weeks 1-4**

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 program design consultants to review application materials and supporting documents.

### **Weeks 5-12**

Step III. AALE staff and consultants review application materials and supporting documents, submit preliminary report, and conduct application review debriefing with organization (either by teleconference or in person). Organization amends, revises, etc. application where necessary.

Step IV. AALE staff and program design consultants complete final program design certification report.

### **Weeks 13-16**

Step V. AALE submits application materials and supporting documents, and organization's response to Expert Reviewers. AALE's Expert Reviewers come from the ranks 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 VI. Based on Expert Reviewer recommendations, AALE takes formal action on Program Design Certification.

For more information about AALE reviewers and staff, please visit the Academy's website, [charters@aaale.org](mailto:charters@aaale.org).

## Completing the Program Design Certification Application

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A complete Program Design Certification Application requires:

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

Any person authorized by the Chief Executive Officer of an organization seeking program design certification (charter school or sponsoring organization) may complete the information requested in these forms. The Program Design Certification Agreement **must** be signed by the Chief Executive Officer or an individual authorized by the Chief Executive Officer. A letter of intent to apply for AALE Program Design 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 Design 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 Design Certification application. Electronic versions of these forms may be downloaded from the AALE website ([www.aale.org/charters](http://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 Design 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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 Design Certification Liaison to AALE**

**Name:**

**Title:**

**Address:**

**City, State, and Zip Code:**

**Phone:**

**E-mail:**

**Program(s) Submitted for Design Certification**

**Charter School(s) Planning to Implement Program**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, and Zip Code:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Main Phone:</b>	<b>Main Phone:</b>
-----	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, and Zip Code:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Main Phone:</b>	<b>Main Phone:</b>
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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, and Zip Code:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Main Phone:</b>	<b>Main Phone:</b>
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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, and Zip Code:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Main Phone:</b>	<b>Main Phone:</b>
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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, and Zip Code:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Main Phone:</b>	<b>Main Phone:</b>
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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, and Zip Code:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Main Phone:</b>	<b>Main Phone:</b>
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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>Address:</b>
<b>City, State, and Zip Code:</b>	<b>City, State, Zip Code:</b>
<b>Main Phone:</b>	<b>Main Phone:</b>
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## Program Certification Agreement

**Organizations applying for Program Design 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 program design certification, program certification, accreditation, or renewal of 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 Design 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 design 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 Design 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 within five (5) years.
- e. The organization agrees to refrain from making any promotional use of its application for program design certification prior to the actual granting of design certification status and then to promote only those program designs certified.
- f. The organization agrees that failure by the Academy to act favorably on an application for program design certification, program certification, accreditation, or renewal of accreditation by 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 Design Certification Application Program Design 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 Design Certification by grade level of implementation.

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

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

Please refer to *AALE's Program Design Certification Standards* (Appendix 1) and *Curriculum Design Standards* (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.
- Assessment strategies, instruments, schedules, and outcome measures.
- Expected impact on student achievement and performance for all populations (test data, research, case study, or testimonial).
- Special instructional programs for special education, limited English proficiency, gifted, and remedial students.
- Staff qualifications and training.
- Program support systems and resources and the nature of their match with essential program elements.

## B. Planned Implementation

Please provide a list of the charter school(s) where the program will be implemented and copies of the document(s) showing the plan to implement with appropriate pages and sections highlighted. If the planned implementation information appears on 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.]:**

**Target Start Date:**

**Target Start Date:**

-----  
**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.]:**

**Target Start Date:**

**Target Start Date:**

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**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.]:**

**Target Start Date:**

**Target Start Date:**

**APPENDIX 1**

**PROGRAM DESIGN CERTIFICATION  
STANDARDS**

## **APPENDIX 2**

# **PROGRAM DESIGN CERTIFICATION CURRICULUM REVIEW STANDARDS**