

New School Application Addendum



South Carolina law specifies required distinctions be confirmed between public schools and religious institutions, creeds, and systems. Many charter schools nationwide interface with religious institutions in the areas of community involvement, partnerships, facilities, transportation, and even staffing. The Institute developed the questions below to assist with ensuring required separations have been planned for by the school.

Church and State Questions

1. If the school plans to enter into a contract or lease agreement with a church or other religious organization, please respond to the following questions with as much detail as possible. If a question is not applicable, please indicate in your response the reason that the question does not apply.
2. Is there a church or other religious organization connected to the school building?
3. What proportion of the School's planning committee/governing board are also officers, board members, or employees of the church or other religious organization? Also, what proportion of the School's planning committee/ governing board are members of the church or other religious organization?
4. Will there be any shared time programs with the church or other religious organization?
5. If the church or other religious organization is connected to the school building, does the school building have a separate entrance? Is the separate entrance clearly marked and identified?
6. Will there be any religious symbols, pictures, or statues in the school building? Will there be any religious symbols, pictures, or statues in the classrooms and common areas used by school students?
7. Does the church or other religious organization conduct any programs in the building during school hours? If so, will those programs and the school share common areas in the building or at the building site (e.g., bathrooms, teacher's lounge, playground, or lunchroom)?
8. Does the school have its own signage separate from the church or other religious organization to indicate that it is not organized by or affiliated with the church or other religious organization?
9. Does the school and church or other religious organization plan to share employees, textbooks, or services such as food services and transportation?
10. Is the school parking lot separate from the church or other religious organization parking lot?

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Church and State Questions Continued

11. Is the school being operated or organized by the church or other religious organization? Will the school have any organization, ties, or affiliations with the church or other religious organization that would be prohibited by state and federal constitutional laws?
12. Will there be any other tenants occupying the school building? If so, please list those additional tenants by name (including church or other religious organization personnel).
13. Are there any provisions in the proposed lease agreement requiring the school to teach or promote religion?
14. Describe how the school's planning committee/governing board will notify the general public that the school is a public school and that it is not operated by or affiliated with a church or other religious organization.
15. Is the agreed rental rate comparable to that being charged for structures of similar size in the same geographical location?
16. Did the school search for other potential sites? If so, please describe the search efforts.
17. Is the church/religious organization building used for any other public functions?
18. Does the lease agreement include any restrictions on the school's curriculum or activities?
19. Are any restrictions or conditions imposed by the church/landlord or lease relating to what kind of clubs or other religious groups can be at the school?