

Relevant Florida Statutes that relate to siting of charter schools:

1013.33 Coordination of planning with local governing bodies. -- (excerpts; note that S. 1002.33 provides some exemptions from the Florida Education Code, including Ch. 1013, F.S., but does NOT exempt charter schools from health and safety requirements. Ch. 1013, F.S., clearly relates to the health and safety of students.)

(1) It is the policy of this state to require the coordination of planning between boards and local governing bodies to ensure that plans for the construction and opening of public educational facilities are facilitated and coordinated in time and place with plans for residential development, concurrently with other necessary services. Such planning shall include the integration of the educational facilities plan and applicable policies and procedures of a board with the local comprehensive plan and land development regulations of local governments. ... The planning must also consider the effects of the location of public education facilities, including the feasibility of keeping central city facilities viable, in order to encourage central city redevelopment and the efficient use of infrastructure and to discourage uncontrolled urban sprawl. ...

(4) The location of educational facilities shall be consistent with the comprehensive plan of the appropriate local governing body developed under part II of chapter 163 and consistent with the plan's implementing land development regulations.

(7) A local governing body may not deny the site applicant based on adequacy of the site plan as it relates solely to the needs of the school. If the site is consistent with the comprehensive plan's land use policies and categories in which public schools are identified as allowable uses, the local government may not deny the application but it may impose reasonable development standards and conditions in accordance with s. 1013.51(1) and consider the site plan and its adequacy as it relates to environmental concerns, health, safety and welfare, and effects on adjacent property. Standards and conditions may not be imposed which conflict with those established in this chapter or the Florida Building Code, unless mutually agreed and consistent with the interlocal agreement required by s.163.31777.

1002.33 Charter schools.— (excerpts)

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—Charter schools shall be part of the state's program of public education. All charter schools in Florida are public schools....

(9) CHARTER SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS.—

..._(e) A charter school shall meet all applicable state and local health, safety, and civil rights requirements.

(18) FACILITIES.—

(a) A startup charter school shall utilize facilities which comply with the Florida Building Code pursuant to chapter 553 except for the State Requirements for Educational Facilities. ... Charter schools, with the exception of conversion charter schools, are not required to comply, but may choose to comply, with the State Requirements for Educational Facilities of the Florida Building Code adopted pursuant to s. 1013.37. The local governing authority shall not adopt or impose any local building requirements or site-development restrictions, such as parking and site-size criteria, that are addressed by and more stringent than those found in the State Requirements for Educational Facilities of the Florida Building Code. Beginning July 1, 2011, a local governing authority must treat charter schools equitably in comparison to similar requirements, restrictions, and processes imposed upon

public schools that are not charter schools. The agency having jurisdiction for inspection of a facility and issuance of a certificate of occupancy or use shall be the local municipality or, if in an unincorporated area, the county governing authority.

(b) A charter school shall utilize facilities that comply with the Florida Fire Prevention Code, pursuant to s. 633.025, as adopted by the authority in whose jurisdiction the facility is located as provided in paragraph (a).

(c) Any facility, or portion thereof, used to house a charter school whose charter has been approved by the sponsor and the governing board, pursuant to subsection (7), shall be exempt from ad valorem taxes pursuant to s. 196.1983. Library, community service, museum, performing arts, theatre, cinema, church, Florida College System institution, college, and university facilities may provide space to charter schools within their facilities under their preexisting zoning and land use designations.

(d) Charter school facilities are exempt from assessments of fees for building permits, except as provided in s. 553.80; fees for building and occupational licenses; impact fees or exactions; service availability fees; and assessments for special benefits.

(e) If a district school board facility or property is available because it is surplus, marked for disposal, or otherwise unused, it shall be provided for a charter school's use on the same basis as it is made available to other public schools in the district. ...

(f) To the extent that charter school facilities are specifically created to mitigate the educational impact created by the development of new residential dwelling units, pursuant to subparagraph (2)(c)4., some of or all of the educational impact fees required to be paid in connection with the new residential dwelling units may be designated instead for the construction of the charter school facilities that will mitigate the student station impact. Such facilities shall be built to the State Requirements for Educational Facilities and shall be owned by a public or nonprofit entity. ... The owner of property planned or approved for new residential dwelling units and the entity levying educational impact fees shall enter into an agreement that designates the educational impact fees that will be allocated for the charter school student stations and that ensures the timely construction of the charter school student stations concurrent with the expected occupancy of the residential units. The application for use of educational impact fees shall include an approved charter school application. To assist the school district in forecasting student station needs, the entity levying the impact fees shall notify the affected district of any agreements it has approved for the purpose of mitigating student station impact from the new residential dwelling units.