

## **Relations With Charter Schools**

The Board of Education shall support efforts by parents, teachers or other interested persons or organizations interested in establishing charter schools within the district. In accordance with state law, among other purpose, charter schools are intended to:

- Expand learning opportunities for all students.
- Encourage diverse approaches to learning and education through the use of different, innovative, research-based, or proven-teaching methods
- Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- Encourage parental and community involvement with public schools.

A charter school shall be a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, non-home-based school, which operates within the school district and is accountable to the Board of Education. It is subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry or need for special education services.

Enrollment shall be open to any child who resides within the school district and to non-resident students as provided by law. However, no charter school shall be required to make alterations in the structure of its facility or the arrangement or function of rooms within the facility except as may be required by state or federal law. A charter school shall not charge tuition except as otherwise provided by law.

Each charter school shall be governed by its own governing body in a manner agreed to by the charter school applicant and the Board. Pursuant to contract, the charter school may operate free from specified Board policies and state regulations.

A charter school shall be responsible for its own operation including but not limited to preparation of a budget, contracting for services and personnel matters. Services for which a charter school contracts with the school district shall be negotiated and provided at district cost. No rent shall be charged for use of district facilities that may be deemed available by the Board for the charter school. All charter schools shall annually complete a governmental audit that complies with the requirements of the Colorado Department of Education.

The relationship between the district and the charter school shall be established by a contract which shall incorporate the charter application once it is approved. The contract

also shall reflect all agreements between the district and the charter school including the release of the charter school from Board policies and all requests for release from state regulations which the Board and the charter school shall jointly request from the State Board of Education.

Each charter school shall have an educational program that is researched-based and proven to be effective with student performance standards and curriculum that meets or exceeds district and state standards.

The date for submitting charter school applications for schools which propose to operate during the following school year shall be October 1.

All charter school applications shall be ruled upon, by resolution of the Board, within seventy-five (75) days of being filed. If approval is granted with stated conditions, a date for fulfilling the conditions shall be stated which, except in unusual circumstances, shall not be later than March 15. If the application is denied, the Board shall state its reason for denial.

A charter school shall begin in the fall following the date the application is approved, unless another starting time is agreed upon by the Board and the applicant.

Pursuant to section 109 of the Charter Schools Act the Board shall not impose a moratorium on the approval of charter schools within the School District.

The applicant and the Board of Education may jointly waive the deadlines contained in this policy.

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Revised: January 1995

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LEGAL REF.: C.R.S. 22-30.5-101 *et seq.* (Charter Schools Act)

Adams County School District No. 1/Denver, Colorado

## **Relations With Charter Schools (Procedures For Establishment)**

### **Review by District Accountability Committee**

Prior to submission of an application to the Board of Education, the charter school applicant must submit the application to the district accountability committee for review and comment. The accountability committee will have two meeting days to review the proposal.

### **Date for Submission of Applications**

To allow sufficient time for an approved charter school to begin operations at the beginning of the academic school year, the application must be officially submitted to the Board or its designee by October 1.

Prior to submission of a formal application, persons preparing applications may submit a preliminary draft of the application to the Board or its designee for review and comment prior to formal submission.

An administrative team will be designated to provide information to the applicant about matters subject to negotiation between the applicant and the district and to begin the negotiation process.

### **Contents of the Application**

In accordance with law, the charter school application will be a proposed agreement and will include:

1. Cover page

Provide the name of the applicant(s) and the name, address and phone number of a contact person.

2. Purpose and support

State the purpose for this charter school including a geographic description of the area of intended service.

Provide evidence that an adequate number of parents, teachers and students support the formation of the proposed charter school.

3. Mission and goals

Provide a copy of the mission statement of the charter school including the process used to develop this statement. The mission statement of the proposed charter school must be consistent with the declared purposes set forth in the law.

State the proposed three-year goals for the school including timelines. The applicant also should describe the process used to identify the goals. Was this once a private school or a nonpublic home-based educational program?

4. Student achievement and curriculum

Describe the charter school's educational program and the student performance standards to be achieved by the proposed school. Standards must meet or exceed any content standards adopted by the district.

Detail the plan for academic accountability.

Provide a description of the curriculum to be used in the school. It should list the objectives and means of measuring student performance for each subject and each grade level.

Present a description of the charter school's plan for evaluating student performance including types of assessment that will be used to measure student progress toward achievement of the school's performance standards, timelines for achievement of such standards and procedures for taking corrective action in the event that student performance at the charter school falls below such standards.

5. Enrollment and educational program

Describe the enrollment policy and the criteria for enrollment decisions including a description of the proposed school's plan to include academically low-achieving students and to promote diversity and the plans for educational programs for exceptional students as well as students with special needs.

6. Governance and decision making

Describe the governing body. This should include a detailed description of the relationship between the proposed school and the school district.

Describe the types and extent of parental and community involvement in the operation of the proposed school. Provide information on how the charter school

will be accountable to the public. Specifically include how the following areas will be addressed:

- a. Provisions for a representative school accountability committee.
- b. Development of an annual school improvement plan with supporting profile information.
- c. Representation on the district accountability committee.
- d. Reporting procedures to the Board and school community.

7. Employment plan and practices

Describe the employment practices of the school including a description of the qualifications for certificated and classified employees, employee compensation schedule, recruitment and selection procedures, plan for resolving employee relation problems, and a description of the relationship that will exist between the charter school and its employees including evidence that the terms and conditions of employment have been addressed with affected employees and their recognized representatives.

Include a plan for the displacement of students, teachers and other employees who will not attend or be employed in the charter school.

8. Financial data, facilities, and transportation

Provide necessary evidence that the plan for the charter school is economically sound for both the charter school and the district.

Include a proposed budget for the term of the charter and a description of the manner in which an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the charter school including any services purchased from the district is to be conducted. A student fee schedule should be included in addition to a proposed schedule of cash flow.

Detail the plan for fiscal accountability.

Describe the services the charter school plans to purchase from the school district.

Provide a detailed summary of all insurance coverage. The legal liability issues must be fully addressed in the contract.

Describe the facilities to be used and the way they will be obtained and maintained. Include any contracted services and the proposed contractor.

Describe the proposed student transportation system including the contract if services will be provided by a second party. If transportation is to be provided by the charter school, include a plan for addressing the transportation needs of low income and academically low-achieving students.

9. Requested waivers

List the Board policies for which waivers are requested. Include the reasons for each request.

List the state laws and regulations for which waivers are requested. Include the reasons for each request. Waivers granted by the State Board of Education are subject to review every two years and may be revoked if the State Board determines that the waivers are no longer necessary.

10. Additional information

Provide aggregate information concerning the grade levels and schools in which prospective students are enrolled.

Provide any additional information that might be helpful in supporting this request to establish a charter school.

**Submission Procedures**

The applicant must provide two original copies of the completed application printed single-sided on white paper, not stapled.

Applications will be accepted no later than October 11 for schools beginning in August. Applications are to be submitted to the Superintendent.

**Incomplete Application**

If the application is incomplete, the Board will request additional information from the applicant. The parties may mutually agree to extend the deadline for Board consideration of the application.

## **Public Meetings**

After giving reasonable notice, the Board will schedule and hold community meetings in the affected areas or the entire district to obtain information to assist the Board in making a decision about the charter school application.

All persons or groups who have an interest in the approval or denial of the charter school application must present their comments or concerns to the Board in writing in a timely manner or in testimony during a public meeting on the charter application to preserve a right to appeal the Board's decision on the charter application.

## **Decision on the Charter Application**

The Board will make a decision on the charter school application either in a regular or special meeting within 75 days after receipt of the official application unless the parties have mutually agreed in writing to extend this deadline. A charter may be approved for a period not to exceed five academic years.

If the application is denied, the Board will set forth in writing the grounds for denial.

## **Appeal Process**

The charter applicant or any other person who wishes to appeal the Board's decision concerning a charter school to the State Board of Education must provide the State Board and the Board with a notice of appeal within 30 days of the Board's decision.

## **Renewal of a Charter**

A charter may be renewed for a period not to exceed five academic years. The renewal application must contain a complete report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals, objectives, student performance standards, content standards and other terms of the initial application.

The renewal application also must include a financial statement that discloses the costs of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the school, as well as a statement specifying how the school intends to use the one percent increase in the statewide base per pupil funding to raise student achievement.

A charter may not be renewed upon a determination by the Board that it is not in the interests of students residing within the district to continue the operation of the charter school.

### **Revocation of a Charter**

A charter may be revoked or not renewed by the Board if the Board determines following a hearing that the charter school did any of the following:

1. Committed a material breach or violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures in the application or contract.
2. Failed to meet or make reasonable progress towards achievement of student performance standards.
3. Failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.
4. Violated any provision of law for which the charter school is not specifically exempt.

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