

RELATIONS WITH CHARTER SCHOOLS

General

The District will comply with the requirements provided in the Charter Schools Act C.R.S. §22-30.5-101, et seq. regarding charter applications and renewal proposals. This regulation highlights some of the key aspects of the Act and specifics regarding submissions to the District. Applicants are advised to consult the District's "Charter Schools' Guidelines and Application Procedures" which can be obtained by accessing the District's web site.

Application for Approval of Initial Charter

Voluntary Feedback and Assistance Process for Charter School Applicants

As previously noted, it is the policy of the Board of Education to support the efforts of persons interested in submitting applications for charter schools. In conformance with Board policy in this regard, the District has implemented a feedback and assistance process that is available to charter school applicants who submit a letter of intent by March 1 of the calendar year in which they intend to submit a formal application ("application"). An administrative team will be designated to provide technical assistance to an applicant regarding their informal proposal. Early contact with the District charter liaison to obtain early district specific feedback (such as facility information, educational program fit, application content) is encouraged. The District also recognizes the benefit of potential charter applicants working with the Colorado League of Charter Schools for application feedback.

Additional details relating to the feedback and assistance process are provided in the document "Charter Schools' Guidelines and Application Procedures" available from the District's website.

Submission of Formal Application ("Application")

The deadline for submission of all charter school formal applications ("applications," as distinguished from "informal proposals") shall be September 1 of the calendar year prior to the year in which the charter school is to begin operation, or as may be required by statute. Charter applicants may only submit one application, with applicable modifications as may be required, per calendar year.

The potential charter school (applicant) will submit up to twenty-five (25) copies of the completed formal application, along with one electronic copy in a version compatible with current district technology requirements, in a format agreed to by the parties, by 4 p.m. local time, September 1 for consideration to open a school the next school year. Applicant will confirm specific submittal quantity with the charter school liaison prior to submission. If the September 1 deadline falls on a weekend, the application must be submitted by 4 p.m. the Friday before the September 1 date.

Should the application be found incomplete, applicants will be provided the opportunity to provide additional information in a timely fashion for review by the Board.

Applications, and all copies, are to be delivered by to the District 11 Procurement and Contracting Department, 1115 North El Paso Street Colorado Springs, CO 80903.

Review by District Accountability Committee

Prior to consideration by the Board of Education, each timely and properly submitted application shall be reviewed by the District Accountability Committee (hereinafter referred to as the DAC) for review and

comment. For purposes of reviewing a charter school application, the DAC shall include at least one person with a demonstrated knowledge of charter schools, regardless of whether that person resides within the District, and shall include one parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in a District charter school. The DAC may delegate the review to a subcommittee or ad hoc committee, provided that in all events the reviewing committee shall have a composition which complies with the requirements of Colorado law. The DAC will have thirty (30) days or such time as provided in statute to review the application. In addition, the District Administration will review each timely and properly submitted application and, as requested, may render a recommendation to the Board.

Decision on the Formal Application ("Application")

The Board will make a decision by resolution on the charter school application either in a regular or special meeting within 90 days after receipt of the formal application unless the parties have mutually agreed in writing to extend this deadline, or the timeframe is revised by statute. A charter may be approved for a minimum period of three years, or such time as may be prescribed by statute.

As required by statute the Board will set forth in writing the grounds for the denial of an application.

The Board will send appropriate documentation for approved or denied applications to the Colorado Department of Education within 15 days or such timeframe as may be prescribed for submission.

Contents of the Formal Application ("Application")

Potential Charter Schools must submit a formal application. In accordance with law, the charter school application will be a proposed agreement and will include the required elements specified within the Charter Schools Act and those considered prudent by the District. Potential Charter Schools must submit a formal application. Application section details and current review rubric can be obtained from the District's charter team. For those governed by statute, the applicable citation is provided following the identified item. The standard application sections are as follows:

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Vision and Mission Statement, per C.R.S. 22-30.5-102(2) and (3), and C.R.S 22-30.5-106(1)(a)
- C. Goals, Objectives and Pupil Performance Standards C.R.S 22-30.5-106(b)
- D. Evidence of Support C.R.S 22-30.5-106(c)
- E. Research-Based Educational Program C.R.S 22-30.5-106(e)
- F. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance C.R.S 22-30.5-106(e.5)
- G. Budget and Finance C.R.S 22-30.5-106(g) and 22-54-105
- H. Governance C.R.S 22-30.5-106(h)
- I. Employees C.R.S 22-30.5-106(i.5)
- J. Insurance Coverage C.R.S 22-30.5-106(j)
- K. Parent and Community Involvement
- L. Enrollment Policy C.R.S 22-30.5-104(3) and 22-30.5-106(1)
- M. Transportation and Food Service C.R.S 22-30.5-106(k)
- N. Facilities
- O. Waivers
- P. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension
- Q. Serving Students with Special Needs
- R. Dispute Resolution Process C.R.S 22-30.5-107.5. and 22-30.5-106(m)
- S. School Management Contracts

Application for Renewal of an Existing District Charter

Introduction

Per C.R.S. §22-30.5-110, a charter may be renewed for successive periods. Renewal periods shall be for no less than three years, or such timeframe as specified by statute.

Submission of Renewal Application ("Renewal")

The Renewal Application must be submitted to the District Board of Education no later than 4:00 p.m. local time November 1 of the year prior to the year in which the charter expires, or such date as may be set by statute. The Board must rule by resolution on the renewal application no later than February 1 of the year in which the charter expires or by a mutually agreed upon date, or such date as may be required by statute.

Twenty (20) copies of the Renewal Application, along with one electronic copy in a version compatible with current district technology requirements, are due by 4 p.m. local time, November 1 during the final year of the current contract period. Applications should be in a format agreed to by the parties.

The Renewal Application, plus all required additional copies of same, must be delivered to District 11 Procurement and Contracting Department, 1115 North El Paso Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80903.

Review of Renewal Application

The Renewal Application will be evaluated by the District Administrative Charter School Review team. The Administrative Review Team shall report its findings and recommendation relating to renewal of the charter to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall make the Administration's recommendation to the Board of Education.

Should the application be found incomplete, applicants may be provided the opportunity to provide additional information for review by the Board.

On-Site Evaluation Team Reviews

1. Annual District Review

The District will prepare an annual performance report for each district-authorized charter school.

2. High Stakes Site Visit

In the final year of charter school contract, a District appointed "High Stakes Site Visit Team" shall visit the charter school. The Team shall include representatives from at least one other charter school and from the District's Divisions of Instruction, Assessment, and Business Services. The Team shall minimally review the following general areas: academic progress, learning environment, mission statement, accountability process, self-study, financial status, and the charter school's current accreditation status as well as the likelihood of the school being and remaining accredited under the Education Accountability Act of 2009, C.R.S. 22-11-101, *et seq.* The Team shall conduct interviews of parents, staff and students of the charter school as a part of its evaluation.

Decision

Following receipt of the Administration's recommendation, the Board of Education shall, by February 1 of the final

year of a school's charter, or such date as may be set by statute, render its decision as to whether or not it will approve or deny the charter's request for renewal of its charter, or extend the existing charter contract for a probationary period. A decision to approve a request to renew shall include required contractual changes.

Grounds for Non-renewal or Revocation of a Charter

A charter may be revoked or not renewed by the Board, in accordance with the provisions of C.R.S. §22-30.5-110, if the charter has done one of the following:

1. Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures in the application.
2. Failed to meet or make reasonable progress toward achievement of student performance standards, applicable federal requirements, or other terms identified in the charter contract.
3. Failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.
4. Violated any provision of law for which the charter school is not specifically exempted.

If the Board revokes or does not renew a charter, the Board will state its reasons for the revocation or non-renewal.

Contents of Renewal Application ("Renewal")

In accordance with law, the charter school Renewal Application will include the required elements specified within the Charter Schools Act and those considered prudent by the District. For those governed by statute, the applicable citation is provided following the item identified:

1. A report on the progress of the charter school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards, and other terms of the charter contract and the results achieved by the charter schools students on the assessments administered through the Colorado student assessment program (22-30.5-110(2)(a)). This information should include:
 - (a) Copies of the most recent past year and current year USIPs;
 - (b) Evidence of quarterly reviews and USIP adjustments for the past and current USIPs;
 - (c) TCAP results for all contract years;
 - (d) ACT results, if the charter school has 11th grade, for all contract years;
 - (e) Chart showing AYP ratings for all contract years;
 - (f) Evidence of appropriate school performance based on the Colorado Growth Model;
 - (g) Accreditation status;
 - (h) Evidence of meeting staff (teacher and para)
 - (i) Highly Qualified requirements.
2. A financial statement that discloses the costs of administration, instruction, and other spending categories for the charter school that is understandable to the general public and allows comparison of such costs to other schools and in a format required by the state board of education. (22-30.5-110(2)(b)) This should include:
 - (a) Budget for past year and current year;
 - (b) Copies of previous monthly Expenditures as Compared to Budget Reports for past and current year in format agreed to between the parties during the performance of the contract;
 - (c) Evidence of Charter School's Board's collaboration and/or approval of budget and overview of charter school's expenditures;
 - (d) Copy of most recent Audit;

- (e) A statement specifying how the charter school intends to use the one-percent increase in statewide base per pupil funding for state fiscal years now through 2010-2011 as required by section 17 of article IX of the state constitution to raise student achievement. (22-30.5-110(2)(c)); and
 - (f) A detailed property listing, describing charter-owned and District-owned assets (e.g., items purchase with Title I, MLO or Bond funds).
3. The Renewal Application should also include a Brief Introduction, which includes:
- (a) The name of the charter school;
 - (b) The address of the school;
 - (c) The present and projected enrollment and grades served;
 - (d) The name and phone number of the president of the governing board;
 - (e) The name of the school principal;
 - (f) The mission statement of the school;
 - (g) Information regarding staff turnover;
 - (h) Student stability and mobility information;
 - (i) Student demographic information;
 - (j) The number of graduates/year (if applicable);
 - (k) A listing of accomplishments or highlights accomplished during the contract period and a listing of challenges faced during the contract period;
 - (l) Results of staff/student/parent satisfaction surveys or any other information that would help the D-11 Board of Education (and the Administrative Review Team) understand the school climate and impact may be included. This could also include up to twenty-five (25) letters of support.

Appeal Process

An applicant may appeal the denial of an initial charter application, non-renewal or revocation of an existing charter or the imposition of unilateral conditions it finds unacceptable in accordance with the procedures outlined at 22-30.5-108(2)(a). Alternative dispute resolution approaches are available to the parties. In lieu of a first appeal to the State Board of Education, the parties may agree to facilitation by jointly filing notice of facilitation with the State Board of Education within 30 days of the Board's initial decision. The parties may continue in facilitation as long as they agree to do so. If one party subsequently rejects facilitation, and such rejection is not reconsidered within seven days, the Board shall reconsider its denial (or non-renewal or revocation) and make a final decision relating to the charter school application. The applicant may, within 30 calendar days of the Board's final decision, appeal to the State Board of Education.

School Closure Procedure

School closure procedures will be initiated for: any non-voluntary decision which includes non-renewal decision of an existing charter school; revocation of an existing school; or for a voluntary decision by the charter school to surrender their contract. Closure can present many challenges and will require a carefully developed, detailed and implemented school closure plan. In the event that a decision is made for closure, the following actions will be required, as outlined in the Colorado Charter Schools Sample Closure Framework.

1. Notify parents/guardians of closure decision

Within one day of the District 11 Board of Education decision to close the charter school, the District's charter school team, along with charter school staff and charter school board will meet to collaborate to ensure that parents/guardians are notified regarding the closure. Such notifications shall include:

- (a) If applicable, an explanation of the process for an appeal to the Colorado State Board of Education and possible litigation, including the implications for families.
- (b) Assurance that instruction will continue through the end of the school year or the date when instruction will cease.
- (c) Assurance that after a final decision is reached, parents/guardians will be assisted in the reassignment process.
- (d) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document, including answers, about the charter closure process.
- (e) Contact information for parents/guardians with questions.

2. Notify district material impacted

Within two days of the authorizer's decision to close the charter school, notify districts materially impacted by the closure decision including:

- (a) Possible appeals and timeline for final decision.
- (b) Copy of the letter sent to parents.
- (c) Closure FAQ document.
- (d) Information about the plan being developed to ensure the orderly closure process.
- (e) Contact information for questions.

3. Review budget

- (a) Review budget to ensure that funds are sufficient to operate the school through the end of the school year, if applicable.
- (b) Emphasize the legal requirement to limit expenditures to only those in the approved budget, while delaying approved expenditures that might no longer be necessary until a revised budget is approved.
- (c) Acknowledge that there are unique expenditures associated with closure for both the authorizer and the school and that the parties will meet to identify these expenditures and funding sources.
- (d) Ensure that the school continues to collect revenues included in the school's budget if applicable.

4. Meet with the charter school faculty and staff

Principal and charter board chair meet with the faculty and staff to:

- (a) Discuss reasons for closure, the status of appeals/legal action and likely timeline for a final decision.
- (b) Emphasize importance of maintaining continuity of instruction through the end of the school year.
- (c) Discuss plans for helping student find new schools.
- (d) Identify the dates when last salary check will be issued, the last day of work, and when benefits terminate.
- (e) Describe assistance, if any, that will be provided for faculty and staff to find new positions.

5. Send additional and final notifications

Provide written notification to parents and affected school districts after key events (e.g., denial of appeal) and after closure decision is final, including information on:

- (a) The last day of instruction.
 - (b) Any end-of-the-year activities that are planned to make the transition easier for parents and students.
 - (c) Assistance that will be provided for families in identifying new schools. This may include a list of school options, choice fairs, individual meetings with families, and prospective school visitations.
6. Establish transition team, develop closure plan, and assign tasks
Transition team includes:
- (a) Lead person from authorizer staff
 - (b) Charter school board chair
 - (c) Lead administrator from the charter school
 - (d) Lead finance persons from the charter school and authorizer
 - (e) Representative from the District's Multilingual office
 - (f) Representative from the District's Special Education office
7. Establish a schedule for meetings and interim status reports
Agree on a meeting schedule to review progress and interim, written status reports to include:
- (a) Reassignment of students.
 - (b) Return or distribution of assets (property inventory clarifying district-owned vs. charter owned).
 - (c) Transfer of student records.
 - (d) Notification of entities doing business with the school.
 - (e) The status of the school's finances.
 - (f) Submission of all required reports and data to the authorizer and state.
8. Submit a final report
Submit a final report to the authorizer detailing the completion of the closure plan.

Approved: March 1997
Revised: October 1999
Revised: January 2002
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Revised: May 2006
Revised: May 2007
Revised: May 1, 2012

LEGAL REFS: C.R.S. §22-11-101, *et seq.*
C.R.S. §22-30.5-101, *et seq.*
C.R.S. §22-54-105 (2)(b)