

Charter Schools

The Governing Board believes that charter schools provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

- (a) Improve pupil learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- (e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- (f) Hold the schools established accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools. (cf. Education Code, 47601)

The Governing Board expects the education program of each charter school to fulfill the intent of the Charter Schools Act as listed in Education Code 47601. In reviewing petitions for the establishment of charter schools pursuant to this section, the Governing Board shall be guided by the intent of the Legislature. The Superintendent or designee shall develop Administrative Regulations, consistent with Board Policy, for the review and approval of petitions. The Governing Board may deny a charter school request for presenting an unsound educational program if the educational program does not comply with the intent of the Charter Schools Act. (cf. Education Code Sections 47601 and 47605)

Charter schools must comply with the Charter Schools Act; otherwise, they are generally exempt from state laws governing school districts, except where specifically included. (cf. Education Code, 47610)

The charter between the District and the charter school is a contract that holds charter schools accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes and for other behaviors. Charter schools are obligated to comply with the provisions of federal law, specified state law, their charters, and administrative requirements that are components of Board oversight. Charters may not be unilaterally amended. Material revisions of the provisions of a charter require Board approval.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop Administrative Regulations, consistent with Board Policy, for the review and approval of material revisions of the provisions of a charter. The Board may revoke charters with schools that fail to meet any of these requirements by following provisions in the California Charter Schools Act. (cf. Education Code, 47605)

The Board may interpret failure to open an approved charter school for more than two years following Board approval as evidence of inability to implement the charter school's

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educational program and thus, revoke the authorized charter.

In order to protect the District and students, the Superintendent or designee shall establish Administrative Regulations, consistent with Board Policy, including appropriate controls, defining oversight requirements and other aspects of the relationship between the charter school and the District. The Superintendent or designee shall develop Administrative Regulations, consistent with Board Policy, for revocation and renewal of a charter.

The Board recognizes that charter schools are independent of the District, but shall endeavor to structure relationships between charter schools and the District that stimulate continual improvements in all public schools. The Board expects new charter developers to create their charter proposals independently from the District as one indication of their readiness to operate a charter school.

At his/her discretion, the Superintendent or designee may establish a staff advisory committee to review a submitted petition and the supporting documentation. Such a committee may be used to evaluate the completeness of the proposal, the merits of the proposed educational program, the level of community support, and any concerns that should be addressed by the petitioners. The Superintendent or designee shall also consult with legal counsel as appropriate regarding compliance of the proposal with legal requirements.

The Superintendent or designee may work with charter school operators to establish workable plans for technical assistance or other contracted services, after a charter is granted, which the District may provide to charter schools for a fee.

In determining whether to grant or deny a charter, the Board shall carefully review the proposed charter and any supplementary information, consider public and staff input, and determine whether the charter petition adequately addresses all the provisions required by law. The Board shall not deny a charter school petition unless specific written factual findings are made pursuant to law and administrative regulation. If the Board denies a charter, petitioners may submit the petition first to the County Board of Education and then, if denied by the County Board, to the State Board of Education. A charter granted by the Governing Board may be for a term up to five years, beginning July 1 of the first year the charter school enrolls students, unless revoked following provisions in the California Charter Schools Act. (cf. Education Code, 47605; 5 CCR 11967.5- 11967.5.1)

Any charter granted by the Board shall contain adequate processes and measures for holding the charter school accountable for fulfilling the terms of its charter. These shall include, but not be limited to, fiscal accountability systems, public governance systems, resolution of parent complaint systems and multiple measures for evaluating the educational program. In accordance with law, charter provisions, and District administrative regulations, charters shall provide regular reports to the Board to assist the Board in fulfilling its oversight responsibility. These reports shall be in a form and timeline prescribed by the Administrative Regulations, consistent with Board policy, and shall include at least a reporting of: (1) fiscal accountability systems, (2) public governance systems, and (3) multiple measures for evaluating the educational program. The Superintendent or designee may inspect or observe

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any part of the charter school at any time. (cf. Education Code 47607).

All requests for new charters, material revisions, charter renewals, and conversions must be filed at a regular meeting of the Board, in forms and formats and by process defined in the Administrative Regulations, consistent with Board Policy. All filings must be complete as submitted to the public record. Petitioners are strongly encouraged to file no later than November 15 of the year prior to their proposed charter school opening. In the case of petitions received after that date, the Governing Board reserves the right to consider approval on the basis of a one-year delay in the commencement of charter school operation. The Board will accept a request to renew a charter that is not prior to 270 days from the expiration of the charter; following form, format and process defined in the Administrative Regulations, consistent with Board policy. Charter renewal petitions are strongly encouraged to be submitted to the Governing Board no later than 150 days prior to the expiration of the charter. Filings that request charter renewal must include, but not be limited to, a reporting of: fiscal accountability systems, public governance systems, multiple measures for evaluating the educational program, and student performance data.

All new charter schools operating in the District will operate as, or be operated by, a nonprofit public benefit corporation, formed and organized pursuant to the California Nonprofit Corporation Law and organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Board may choose to exercise its right to place a representative on any charter school's governing board at any time. The Board may select any individual it deems appropriate to serve in this capacity. (c.f. Education Code 47604)

The Board may approve one or more memoranda of understanding to clarify the financial and operational agreements between the district and the charter school. Any such memorandum of understanding shall be annually reviewed by the Board and Charter school and adjusted as necessary.

The District shall not require any student to attend a charter school and shall not require any District employee to work at a charter school. (cf. Education Code 47605)