

# Jefferson County School District Charter School Manual

*Revised 2022*

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## CHARTER QUALITY AUTHORIZING

### I. Jeffco’s Commitment to Authorizing Quality Schools

The Jeffco Board of Education is committed to providing all parents with a robust program of school choice to enable them to provide their students with an education that fully prepares them for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. Toward that end, Jeffco is committed to implementing quality authorizing practices that are based on national best practices and which are consistent with Colorado law and the Quality Authorizing Standards adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education. Through our policies, practices and procedures as a quality authorizer, the district will provide high standards for all charter schools.

### II. Core Principles of Quality Charter Authorizing

Jeffco promotes the three core principles of charter authorizing as defined by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education:

1. ***Jeffco maintains high standards for all schools.*** This includes setting high standards for approving charter applicants; maintaining high standards for all of the schools the district oversees; effectively cultivating quality charter schools that meet identified educational needs of the district; overseeing charter schools that meet the performance standards and targets set

forth in their charter contracts through established measures; and closing schools that fail to meet standards and targets set forth in statute and by contract.

2. **Jeffco upholds school autonomy.** This includes honoring and preserving core autonomies crucial to school success, including governing board independence from the authorizer; school control over personnel, school vision and culture, instructional programming and budgeting; assuming responsibility for holding schools accountable for their performance; minimizing administrative and compliance burdens on schools; and focusing on holding schools accountable for outcomes rather than processes.
3. **Jeffco protects student and public interests.** This includes the well-being and interests of students informing all the district's actions and decisions; upholding district conflict of interest policies; holding schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental public education obligations to serve all students for our community; ensuring a focus on the school's vision and mission; transparency, effective and efficient public stewardship; compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and supporting and engaging parents and students with information about the quality of education provided by charter schools .

### III. Standards of Quality Authorizing

The Colorado State Board of Education has adopted the following standards of Quality Authorizing. These standards should drive charter and district organizational structures and practices:

1. **Commitment and Capacity:** Jeffco recognizes that charter schools, along with other choice options, offer parents and students opportunities to meet identified student needs. Jeffco authorizing decisions are made solely based on the best interests of pupils, the district, and the Jeffco community. Jeffco creates organizational structures that lead to consistent implementation of policies and practices and commits the financial resources necessary to conduct its authorizing duties effectively and efficiently.
2. **Application Process and Decision Making:** Jeffco implements a comprehensive application process that includes clear application questions and guidance; fosters open communication with all charter applicants; follows fair and transparent procedures; has transparent and rigorous evaluation criteria; engages outside experts in the review of applications; and grants charters only to applicants who demonstrate a strong capacity through their application to establish and operate a quality charter school.
3. **Performance Contracting:** Jeffco executes contracts with charter schools that articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcomes, measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. The contract is an essential document, based on the approved charter application, that establishes the legally binding agreement and terms under which the school will operate.
4. **Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation:** Jeffco conducts contract oversight that evaluates performance and monitors compliance and uses such information to inform renewal, intervention and revocation decisions while upholding schools' autonomy. Jeffco ensures that

schools provide fair and open access to students without discrimination. Jeffco provides annual performance reports on school performance.

5. **Revocation and Renewal Decision Making:** Jeffco designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses academic, financial, governance and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions, establishes clear criteria for renewal and revocation, and will revoke charters when necessary to protect students and the public interest.
6. **Collaboration to Improve Student Outcomes:** Jeffco establishes procedures to facilitate ongoing collaboration between the District and charter schools to improve outcomes for all students. These collaborations include, but are not limited to, monthly all leadership administration meetings, ability for charter administrators to join the Principal meetings, ability for charter staff to join district professional development offerings, and unlimited support and communication with the Charter office staff. In addition, the District seeks feedback in developing policies and practices impacting charter schools.
7. **Commitment to Creating Equitable Opportunity, Equitable Responsibility and Access, and Equitable Accountability:** Jeffco commits to ensuring that all schools open and operate on the basis of three equities that apply to all our schools: (1) equity of opportunity; (2) equity of responsibility and access; and (3) equity of accountability.
  - a. Equity of opportunity means that the schools have the same access to per-pupil dollars and choices about which support services they want to purchase from the district, and to the maximum extent possible access to land and facility partnerships.
  - b. Equity of responsibility and access means that the schools must offer equitable and open access to all our students—regardless of socio-economic, disability, language or other status—and share an equal burden in district-wide responsibilities such as the cost of district-wide special education funding needs for students with disabilities that have significant support needs.
  - c. Equity of accountability means that all schools have the same accountability system under our School Performance Framework, including charter schools.

## CHARTER SCHOOL HISTORY IN JEFFCO

The history of charter schools in Jeffco dates back nearly 25 years when the Colorado legislature passed the Charter Schools Act. As a district, Jeffco has embraced opportunities for choice through innovation, academic need, and personal preference. Jeffco remains committed to providing the highest quality, well-rounded educational experience in all classrooms, in every school, every day, for every student.

In 1993, state Senator Bill Owens (R) and State Representative Peggy Kerns (D) introduced the original Charter Schools Act, which received bi-partisan support and was signed into law. The original philosophy of the Act was that charter schools would be smaller environments free to experiment with educational programs and develop innovative ways to educate at-risk students. A charter school in Colorado is a public school operated by a group of parents, teachers and/or community members as a semi-autonomous school of choice within a school district, operating under a contract or "charter" contract between the members of the charter school community and the local board of education

CRS 22-30.5-102(3) states:

In authorizing charter schools, it is the intent of the general assembly to create a legitimate avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to implement new and innovative methods of educating children that are proven to be effective and to take responsible risks and create new and innovative, research-based ways of educating all children within the public education system. The general assembly seeks to create an atmosphere in Colorado's public education system where research and development in developing different learning opportunities is actively pursued. As such, the provisions of this part 1 should be interpreted liberally to support the findings and goals of this section and to advance a renewed commitment by the state of Colorado to the mission, goals, and diversity of public education.

Jeffco Charter Schools currently authorized include:

- Addenbrooke Classical Academy
- Collegiate Academy of Colorado
- Compass Montessori (Golden and Wheat Ridge)
- Doral Academy
- Excel Academy
- Great Work Montessori
- Jefferson Academy
- Lincoln Academy
- Montessori Peaks Charter Academy
- Mountain Phoenix Community School
- New America School
- Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen
- Rocky Mountain Deaf School
- Two Roads Charter School
- Woodrow Wilson Academy

## SELECTED STATE LAWS APPLICABLE to CHARTER SCHOOLS (Colo. Rev Statutes, unless otherwise noted)

### **Governance, Records and Charter Schools**

1. Colorado Charter Schools Act 22-30.5
2. Colorado Open Meetings Law: 24-4-401 et seq.
3. Colorado Open Records Act: 24-72-201 et seq.
4. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974: 20 U.S.C. 1232g
5. Colorado Code of Ethics: 24-18-101 et seq.
6. Non-Profit Corporations Act: 7-121-101 et seq.

### **Safety and Discipline**

7. Certificate of occupancy for the school facility: 22-32-124
8. Safe School Plan: 22-32-109.1 (2)
9. Grounds for suspension, expulsion and denial of admission of students: 22-33-106
10. Procedures for suspension, expulsion and denial of admissions of students: 22-33-105
11. Services for expelled students: 22-33-203
12. Child Protection Act of 1987: 19-3-301 et seq.
13. Background checks for employees: 22-1-121

### **Educational Accountability**

14. Educational Accountability: 22-11-101 et seq. (especially 22-11-210 and 22-11-401 et seq.)
15. Accreditation: Accreditation Rules of the State Board of Education 1 CCR 301-1
16. ESEA Act: P.L. 107-110

### **Curriculum, Instruction and Extra-Curricular Activities**

17. Instruction in federal and state history and government: 22-1-104
18. Honor and use of the U.S. Flag: 22-1-106
19. Instruction in the Constitution: 22-1-108, 109
20. Instruction in the effects of use of alcohol and controlled substances: 22-1-110
21. On-line programs: 22-33-104.6

22. Participation in sports and extra-curricular activities: 22-32-116.5

23. Content Standards: 22-7-407

### **Exceptional Students**

24. Discipline of students with disabilities: 20 U.S.C. 1415 (k) 34 C.F.R. 519-529
25. Exceptional Children's Educational Act: 22-20-101 et seq.
26. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: 29 U.S.C. 794
27. Americans with Disabilities Act: 42 U.S.C. 12101
28. Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act: 42 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.
29. English Language Proficiency Act: 22-24-101 et seq.

### **Finance**

30. School funding Formula: 22-54-104 (3)
31. Funded pupil enrollment: 22-54-103 (10)
32. Tuition: 22-20-109 (5), 22-32-115 (1) and (2), 22-54-109
33. Fees: 22-32-110 (1) (o) and (p), 22-32-117
34. Allocation of funds to a capital reserve fund: 22-54-105 (2) (b)
35. Expenditures from a capital reserve fund: 22-45-103, 24-10-115, Article 13 of title 29
36. Allocation of funds for instructional supplies and materials: 22-54-105 (l)
37. Allocation of funds for at-risk students: 22-54-105
38. Colorado Department of Education Financial Policies and Procedures
39. Excess tuition charges for out-of-district special education students: 22-20-109 (5)
40. Participation if PERA: 22-30.5-512 and 22-30-5-111 (3)
41. Financial Transparency Act: 22-44-301 et seq.

## CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

*Board File: LBD*

Title: Charter Schools

Code LBD

Status: Active

Adopted: June 26, 1997

Last Revised: October 17, 2022

Last Reviewed: October 17, 2022

The district believes that public school programs should be designed to fit the needs of individual students and that parents and educators have a right and responsibility to participate in the schools that serve them. The state of Colorado has authorized charter schools as one avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to provide for education of children within the public school system.

A district charter school shall be a public, nonsectarian, non-religious, non-home-based school which operates within the district and is accountable to the district's Board of Education. It shall be subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, genetic information, need for special education services, or conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth. A district charter school has standing to sue and be sued in its own name.

Enrollment must be open to any child who resides within the school district. Except as provided by law, a charter school shall not charge tuition. Enrollment decisions for charter schools may be made in accordance with district policy on choice enrollment (see policy JFBA) or as specified in the approved charter school contract.

Where a non-resident student with a disability enrolls in and attends a charter school in the district, the district of residence shall be responsible for paying to the charter school tuition for excess costs for educating the child. The amount of tuition charged shall be established in a contract between the district of residence and the charter school approved by the Board of Education and the Colorado Department of Education.

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. It may negotiate and contract with the school district or other parties for the use and operations of school buildings and grounds and for services required to carry out its educational program. Services for which a charter school contracts with the school district shall be negotiated and provided at district cost. If district facilities are used, no rent shall be charged.

An approved charter school application, submitted in accordance with district procedures, shall become part of a contract between the charter school and the Board. The contract shall reflect all agreements including the release of the charter school from school district policies and all requests for waivers of state law which the Board and charter school shall jointly request from the State Board of Education. A material revision of the terms of the contract may be made only with the approval of the Board and the governing body of the school.

A charter school shall have an education program with student performance standards and curriculum that meets or exceeds district and state standards.

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 applicant.

Legal

C.R.S. 22-20-109(5)

C.R.S. 22-30.5-101 et seq. (Charter Schools Act)

Cross References

IA - Instructional Goals and Learning Objectives

IHB - Special Instructional Programs

JFBA - District Choice Enrollment

[LBD-E](#) - Application and Rubric

[LBD-R](#) - Charter Schools (Procedures for Applying for a Charter School)

## CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Jeffco has modified for district use the model standard application and rubric developed in 2018 by the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado League of Charter Schools, the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers, and the Colorado Charter School Institute. The application is divided into 19 statutory application components. The components appear in the application in the same order that they appear in the Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended (C.R.S. 22-30.5-106.1). It is important to remember that each of these components may require significant prior assistance to the applicant to meet the quality standard expected by the state and the potential authorizer. Jeffco strongly recommends that all applicants contact the Colorado League of Charter Schools for application review and drafting assistance. [www.coloradoleague.org](http://www.coloradoleague.org)

The new standard application and rubric used by Jeffco are available on the Jeffco Board Docs website at this link: [LBD-E](#)

It is important for applicants to remember that each of the components relate to one another. Curriculum is not complete without consideration of assessment. Facilities cannot be sufficiently addressed in isolation from budgetary decisions. The completed application should tell a story that relates the application components into one comprehensive package. The vision and mission should be evident throughout the application, and all program elements and resource allocations should be in alignment with the proposed budget and school program. It is important to also consider that online school applications or other unique programs may not conform precisely to all components of this standard application. In these cases prior communication with Jeffco staff is imperative.

1. By February 1 of each year, a new charter applicant must submit a Letter of Intent to Apply to the Charter office. If February 1 falls on a weekend, the form is due the Monday after the weekend.
2. A copy of the Intent to Submit form will be forwarded to the Jeffco Board of Education and Jeffco department leaders as well as representatives of the DAC as notification of the applicant's intent to turn in an application.
3. Members of the Superintendent's Cabinet will nominate personnel from each pertinent department to staff the charter application review team. In addition, representatives of the



DAC will be appointed, along with outside reviewers, in alignment with national best review practices.

4. By 4:00 p.m. on March 15 of each year the applicant should submit one printed copy and one electronic copy of the Charter School Application to the Charter Office. If March 15 falls on a weekend, the application will be due the Monday following March 15. ***Note: It is anticipated under this timeline that an approved charter will open approximately 18 months from the application date. Applications submitted prior to March 15 will not be reviewed until that date.***
5. The Jeffco Board of Education and department leaders will be notified and provided with a copy of the applications that were submitted by the due date and time.
6. Within 15 days of submission of the application, Jeffco staff will determine whether the application is “complete” as containing all the necessary elements as set forth in statute. In the event the application is determined to be incomplete, the applicant will have 15 days to resubmit a complete application.
7. The applicant will meet with representatives of the application review team after it is determined that the application is complete to review the timeline for the application process and to answer any applicant questions.
8. CDE and the League of Charter Schools will be contacted to determine whether the applicant has received prior assistance with the application.
9. Upon review of the application, members of the DAC will review the application and participate in the applicant interview process with a view to providing a DAC recommendation for the Board.
10. The review process will be completed by the review team following the charter application review timeline within the timeline set forth in statute. The review team will make a proposed recommendation to the Cabinet and the Superintendent, and the Superintendent will make a final recommendation on the charter application to the Board. The Board will vote on the application within 90 days of the application deadline.

If the Jeffco Board of Education does not approve the application, the applicant may appeal the Jeffco Board decision to the State Board of Education, pursuant to the timelines and procedures set forth in statute. A notice of denial of the application must be submitted by Jeffco to CDE within 15 days.

## CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION AND REPLICATION PROCEDURE

### Expansion

For existing district charter schools interested in expanding grade levels (i.e. from an elementary K-5 or K-6 to a middle school or a K-8 to a high school) or planning to establish an additional location or campus in Jeffco under the same charter contract and board, the following criteria will need to be met:

- The school must have been in operation for at least three years except when adding grades as outlined in their initial application for years 1 -4;
- The school must have a proven program demonstrating compliance with district and contract standards in the areas of academics, finance, operations and governance; and
- There is demonstrated demand for the expansion.

Schools meeting these criteria must supply the district with the following components derived from the standard application:

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Vision and Mission Statements
- C. Goals and Objectives
- D. Evidence of Support
- E. Educational Program (if different than program currently used)
- F. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance (if different than plan currently used)
- G. Budget and Finance
- N. Facilities
- O. Waivers (if applicable for the expansion)
- Q. Serving Students with Special Needs

## Replication

Replication readiness begins with a track record of outstanding achievement and demand that exceeds supply. The school that wishes to replicate is saying “grant us an additional charter based on our past success and the demand for our school.” When this condition is met, the district still needs assurance that the financial, human resources and operational systems are in place to support expansion. The district will need evidence that the school community supports replication and that current students are not disadvantaged. Finally, the school that wishes to replicate needs a vision or plan that describes the desired end state for the organization that incorporates the replication of one or more schools.

Replication is defined as a charter school seeking to establish one or more additional schools using the same educational model with separate contracts, where there will be an ongoing relationship between the schools. This definition is meant to be fairly broad and include a range of practices, including

- One governing board overseeing two or more schools with separate contracts;
- An educational service provider contracting for services with two or more schools; and
- Shared services among schools via a collaborative or network arrangement.

Conditions for replication are described below and are intended to provide general guidelines – replication readiness will vary to some extent based on a school’s replication plan and its unique circumstances.

## Operational History

The school should:

1. Have been operating for at least four years.
2. Be serving all grade levels that are included in its original charter or current charter contract.

## Student Outcomes

The school should:

1. Be awarded a plan assignment of **Performance**.
2. Meet or exceed standards in all three (elementary and middle) or four (high school) Colorado performance indicators – academic achievement, academic growth, academic growth gaps, and postsecondary and workforce readiness (high school only) or consistently exceed standards for academic growth or academic growth gaps.
3. Meet or exceed the performance of comparable schools.
4. Be achieving its unique charter school objectives.

### **Efficient, Effective and Compliant Operations**

The school should:

1. Demonstrate that the school has a history of timely and accurately completing required reporting.
2. Be in compliance with its charter contract, health, safety, and other legal requirements including IDEA and services for English language learners.
3. Have unqualified annual independent audits for the preceding four years and an adequate or growing reserve.
4. Be in compliance with Articles 44 and 45, C.R.S., financial policies and procedures and accounting and reporting requirements.

### **Governance and Leadership**

The school should:

1. Have strong, stable, and effective governance that includes a history of compliance with its governance documents (bylaws, policies, grievance procedures, conflict of interest disclosure, and human resources policies/procedures).
2. Demonstrate strong support for replication in the targeted location and school community.
3. Have incorporated replication into the school's mission, vision, and/or strategic plan.
4. Have a succession and leadership development plan in place.

### **Replication Plan**

The school should have:

1. A financial plan in place for replication that addresses the needs of starting a new school and does not disadvantage students at the original school(s).
2. An educational program whose key features have been identified and can be replicated including school culture, staff development, and data/assessment systems.
3. A clearly defined target population and evidence that demand for the program among the target population exceeds available space.
4. A plan for allocating sufficient human resources for a successful replication without disadvantaging existing schools.

Schools meeting these criteria must supply the district with the following components derived from the standard application:

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Vision and Mission Statements
- C. Goals and Objectives
- D. Evidence of Support
- E. Educational Program
- F. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance
- G. Budget and Finance
- N. Facilities
- O. Waivers (if applicable for the expansion)
- Q. Serving Students with Special Needs
- R. School Management Contracts (if applicable)

## Replication Process Summary

For charter schools planning to replicate, the following process will be followed:

1. A charter school may not replicate until it has been in operation for 4 years.
2. A charter school meeting the operational period requirement must submit evidence of demand for the expansion, which may include demonstrations of community support, student intent to enroll documentation, and other proof of demand for the replication.
3. The replication process also includes meeting with representatives of the district to ascertain location availability and feasibility.

Note: Charter schools that are authorized in another district or by the Charter School Institute (CSI) that are seeking replication in Jeffco must apply as a new school, using the standard new school application and process.

## CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT RENEWAL PROCEDURE

The charter contract renewal process examines a number of factors revealing the health of the charter school. This process is most transparent when it is characterized by the following criteria:

1. Putting the interests of children first;
2. Identifying performance indicators that have been in place for the duration of the contract;
3. Gathering accurate performance, financial and governance data;
4. Undertaking annual performance evaluations;
5. Adopting reasonable academic performance expectations;
6. Considering multiple measures, including comparable school performance, across three or more years;
7. Weighting the evidence based on importance, rather than relying on numeric cut scores;
8. Listening to the points of view of both the district staff and the charter school;
9. Taking into account the number of years that the school has been operating.
10. For schools seeking renewal that have not been rated "Performance" in the last three years, and/or there is evidence of historical financial or operational challenges, the District will seek additional evidence demonstrating a plan to improve performance or overcome those challenges.

Charter school contracts in Jeffco will be reviewed for renewal in the year prior to the charter expiration year. The charter school must submit a Charter Renewal Application on or before December 1 of the year prior to the year that the contract expires. See the renewal timeline on the next page for renewal deadlines.

Charter schools are evaluated for renewal based on their yearly accreditation, financial health, and governance and operations. The charter school accreditation procedure answers the following key questions that are essential for renewal status:

- Is the educational program a success?
- Are school operations effective and efficient?
- Is the school meeting its legal and other obligations?

- Does the school have excellent governance and leadership?

**CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL FORMAT**

For schools rated “Performance” in at least the prior three years, and with no district-identified financial or operational challenges, the following documents should be included in a renewal application that is due to the Board of Education on December 1. NOTE: the renewal application should not exceed 75 pages, including attachments.

1. An executive summary outlining how the school implements and maintains integrity with the school’s mission and vision statement.
2. State reports on academic progress and growth.
3. Other standardized testing or measures the school implements.
4. A narrative outlining the academic achievement of the school and identifying achievement gaps and plans to address those gaps.
5. Copies of district-provided annual surveys, and a narrative addressing any issues revealed in the surveys.
6. Demographic data for the school’s current enrollment, including percentages of FRL, SPED, ELL and GT students.
7. A five year projected budget, including a budget narrative outlining spending priorities.
8. Areas of perceived strengths in the program and any areas identified as areas in need of improvement.
9. Other achievements you would like the Board to be aware of, and any explanatory materials that would help the Board of Education to interpret and understand any of the data listed above.

For schools not rated “Performance” in at least the prior three years, or that have district-identified financial or operational challenges, district staff will identify which of the following items must be submitted in addition to items 1-9 above:

- For academic challenges, provide a copy of the current UIP and a plan to address deficiencies over the next three years, including how such changes will be staffed and financed;
- For financial challenges, provide a plan to enter into a cooperative process with District finance staff in order to address current and ongoing financial challenges;
- For operational challenges, identify the areas of challenge and provide a plan to address deficiencies over the next three years, including how such changes will be staffed and financed.

**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT RENEWAL TIMELINE**

Date	Task
Spring of the year prior to the charter’s expiration	The parties meet so that the district can explain the renewal process, application format and timeline, and address any questions regarding the process
December 1 of the year prior to expiration	<p>The school formally submits Renewal Application to the Charter office. The school should also submit the contract appendix documents to the Charter office which includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>ESP/CMO Agreement, if applicable</b></li> <li>2. <b>Request for Automatic Waivers of State Laws</b></li> <li>3. <b>Request for Additional Waivers of State Laws (if any)</b></li> </ol>

	<p><b>4. Request Waivers of District Policy (if any)</b></p> <p><b>5. Enrollment Preferences, Methods, Timelines and Procedures</b></p> <p><b>6. Bullying Policies</b></p> <p><b>7. Safety Plan</b></p>
December board meeting	Renewal applications accepted for review by the board.
January of the year prior to expiration	District staff submits to the Cabinet a renewal recommendation and supporting data.
January board meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Superintendent presents the renewal recommendation and supporting evidence at a public meeting.</li> <li>2. Board asks questions and requests clarifications as needed.</li> <li>3. Charter school responds to the staff report and recommendation.</li> <li>4. Charter parents and other interested persons may address the board.</li> </ol>
No later than February 1 (or other date by mutual agreement)	District board of education acts by resolution to approve or deny the request to renew the charter
Within 90 days of Board Approval of the application	All negotiations between the charter school and the local board of education on the contract shall be concluded by, and all terms of the contract agreed upon, no later than ninety days after the local board of education rules by resolution on the application for a charter school.
No more than 30 days after a district board denial decision	A notice of appeal may be filed with the State Board of Education
No more than 60 days after the notice of appeal has been filed	The State Board of Education holds a hearing and makes a decision to uphold the district's decision or remand the decision back to the district for reconsideration

## CHARTER SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

Schools are required to be accredited through an Accreditation Process yearly. The Accreditation process for district charter schools mirrors the district procedure for our neighborhood schools, and is as follows:

**Accredited with Distinction:** The school meets or exceeds state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a performance plan;

**Accredited with Performance Plan:** The school meets state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a performance plan;

**Accredited with Improvement Plan:** The school has not met state expectations for attainment on the Performance Indicators and is required to adopt and implement an improvement plan;

**Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan:** The school has not met state expectations for attainment on the Performance Indicators and is required to adopt and implement a priority improvement plan.

**Accredited with Turnaround Plan:** The school has not met state expectations for attainment on the Performance Indicators and is required to adopt and implement a turnaround plan.

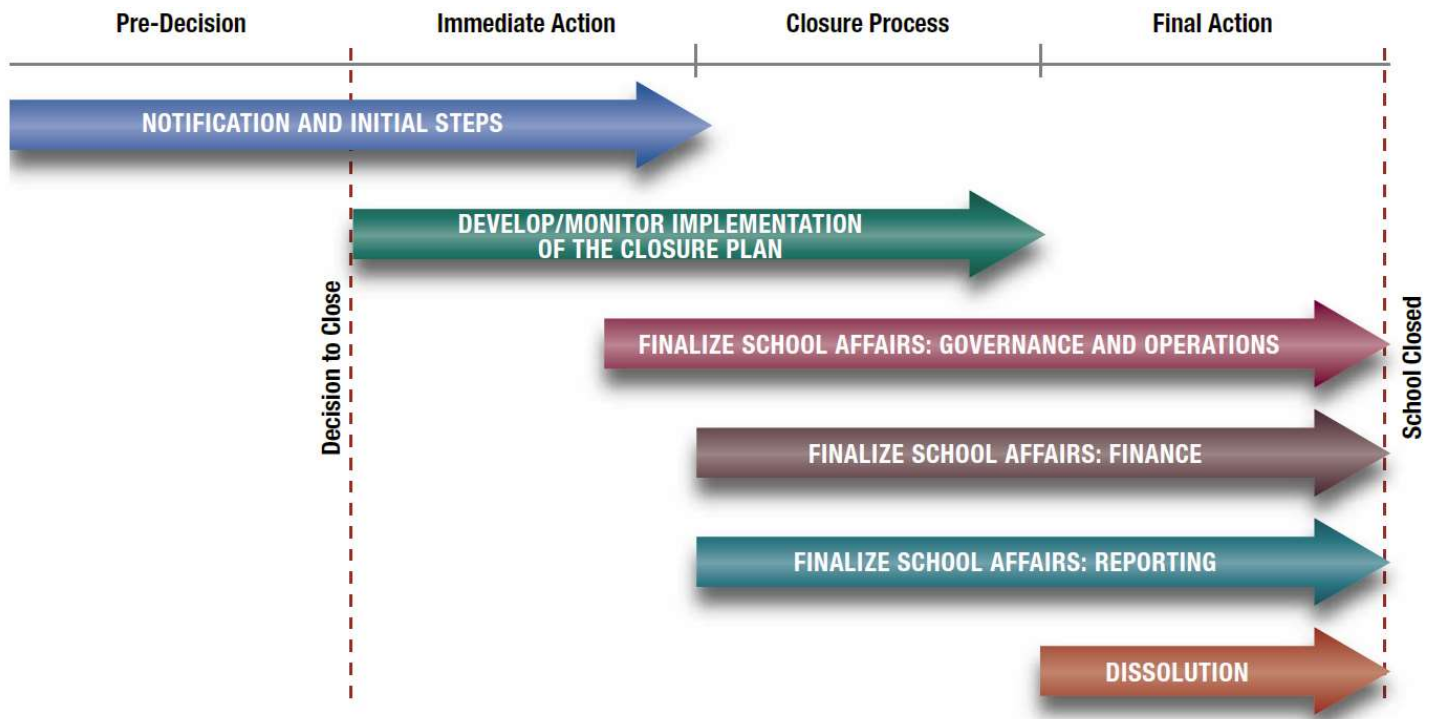
## CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURE

A closure of a charter school and termination of the charter contract may occur when a charter school's current contract is set to expire, and the district or the school does not opt to renew the contract. In addition, a charter school may voluntarily surrender its charter and cease operations, or may surrender its charter in connection with becoming a School of Innovation/Option School.

In addition, in some extreme circumstances the district may opt to revoke a charter school contract prior to expiration. Evidence of failure in one or more of the following areas may provide the grounds for Jeffco to close a charter school:

- Academic Underperformance
- Financial Mismanagement
- Organizational Incompetence
- Non-compliance with state and federal law or district policy
- Failure to serve the best interest of the students at the school

When a charter school is to be closed, timing is extremely important. In order to provide a transparent process, this timeline will be followed:



### Notification and Initial Steps

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p><b>Notify Parents / Guardians of Closure Decision</b></p> <p>Within one day of the authorizer’s decision to close the charter school, authorizer staff and charter staff/board collaborate to ensure that parents / guardians are notified regarding the closure decision. Such notification includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 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.</li> <li>2. Assurance that instruction will continue through the end of the school year or the date when instruction will cease.</li> <li>3. Assurance that after a final decision is reached, parents/students will be assisted in the reassignment process.</li> <li>4. FAQ about the charter closure process.</li> <li>5. Contact information for parents/guardians with questions.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Notify School Districts Materially Impacted</b></p> <p>Within two days of the authorizer’s decision to close the charter school, notify districts materially impacted by the closure decision, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Possible appeals and timeline for final decision.</li> <li>2. Copy of the letter sent to parents.</li> <li>3. Closure FAQ.</li> <li>4. Information about the plan being developed to ensure an orderly closure process..</li> <li>5. Contact information for questions.</li> </ol>			



<p><b>Review Budget</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review budget to ensure that funds are sufficient to operate the school through the end of the school year, if applicable.</li> <li>2. 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.</li> <li>3. Acknowledge that there are unique expenditures associated with closure for both the authorizer and school and that the parties will meet to identify these expenditures and funding sources.</li> <li>4. Ensure that the school continues to collect revenues included in the school's budget, if applicable.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Meet with Charter School Faculty and Staff</b></p> <p>Principal and charter board chair meet with the faculty and staff to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss reasons for closure, the status of appeals/legal action and likely timeline for a final decision.</li> <li>2. Emphasize importance of maintaining continuity of instruction through the end of the school year.</li> <li>3. Discuss plans for helping students find new schools.</li> <li>4. Identify date when last salary check will be issued, when benefits terminate, and last day of work.</li> <li>5. Describe assistance, if any, that will be provided to faculty and staff to find new positions.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Send Additional and Final Notifications</b></p> <p>Notify parents and affected school districts in writing after key events (e.g., denial of an appeal) and when the closure decision is final. In the letter to parents after the closure decision is final, include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The last day of instruction.</li> <li>2. Any end-of-the-year activities that are planned to make the transition easier for parents and students.</li> <li>3. Assistance that will be provided to families in identifying new schools. This may include a list of school options, choice fairs, individual meetings with families, and prospective school visitations.</li> </ol>			

Develop/Monitor Implementation of the Closure Plan

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p><b>Establish Transition Team, Develop Closure Plan, and Assign Roles</b></p> <p>Transition team includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lead person from authorizer staff.</li> <li>2. Charter school board chair.</li> <li>3. Lead administrator from the charter school.</li> <li>4. Lead finance person from the charter school.</li> </ol> <p>Develop plan, exchange contact information and assign roles.</p>			
<p><b>Establish a Schedule for Meetings and Interim Status Reports</b></p> <p>Agree on a meeting schedule to review progress and interim, written status reports to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reassignment of students.</li> <li>2. Return or distribution of assets.</li> <li>3. Transfer of student records.</li> <li>4. Notification to entities doing business with the school.</li> <li>5. The status of the school's finances.</li> </ol>			

6. Submission of all required reports and data to the authorizer and/or state.			
<b>Submit Final Report</b> Submit a final report to the authorizer detailing completion of the closure plan.			

Finalize School Affairs: Governance and Operations

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p><b>Maintain Identifiable Location</b> Maintain the school’s current location through the winding up of its affairs or relocate its business records and remaining assets to a location with operational telephone service that has voice message capability.</p>			
<p><b>Notify Commercial Lenders / Bond Holders</b> Within 10 days after the final decision on the charter school closure and after all appeals have been exhausted, notify banks, bond holders, etc., of the school’s closure and a likely date as to when an event of default will occur as well as the projected date of the last payment by the school toward its debt.</p>			
<p><b>Terminate EMO /CMO Agreement (if applicable)</b> Review the management agreement and take steps needed to terminate the agreement at the end of the school year or when the charter contract expires.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The management company should be asked for a final invoice and accounting, including an accounting of any retained school funds and the status of grant funds.</li> <li>2. The school and the management company should agree upon how the company will continue to provide educational services until the last day of instruction.</li> <li>3. The school and the management company agree when other services including business services will end.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Protect School Assets</b> Protect the school’s assets and any assets in the school that belong to others against theft, misappropriation and deterioration.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain existing insurance coverage on assets, including facility and vehicles, until the disposal of such assets in accordance with the closure plan.</li> <li>2. Negotiate school facility insurance with entities that may take possession of school facility – lenders, mortgagors, bond holders, etc.</li> <li>3. Obtain or maintain appropriate security services. Action may include moving assets to secure storage after closure or loss of facility.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Maintain Corporate Records</b> Maintain all corporate records related to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Loans, bonds, mortgages and other financing.</li> <li>2. Contracts.</li> <li>3. Leases.</li> <li>4. Assets and asset distribution.</li> <li>5. Grants -- records relating to federal grants must be kept in accordance with 34 CFR 80.42.</li> <li>6. Governance (minutes, bylaws, policies).</li> <li>7. Employees (background checks, personnel files).</li> <li>8. Accounting/audit, taxes and tax status, etc.</li> </ol>			

<p>9. Personnel.</p> <p>10. Employee benefit programs and benefits.</p> <p>11. Any other items listed in the closure plan.</p> <p>Determine where records will be stored after dissolution.</p>			
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Finalize School Affairs: Governance and Operations (continued)

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p><b>Notify Employees and Benefit Providers</b> Formally notify all employees of termination of employment at least 60 days before closure to include date of termination of all benefits in accordance with applicable law and regulations (i.e. COBRA) and eligibility for Colorado Unemployment Insurance pursuant to any regulations of the Colorado Department of Labor. Notify benefit providers of pending termination of all employees, to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Medical, dental, vision plans.</li> <li>2. Life insurance.</li> <li>3. Cafeteria plans.</li> <li>4. 403(b), retirement plans.</li> <li>5. PERA.</li> </ol> <p>Consult legal counsel as specific rules and regulations may apply to such programs.</p>			
<p><b>Notify Contractors and Terminate Contracts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Notify all contractors of school closure.</li> <li>2. Retain records of past contracts and payments.</li> <li>3. Terminate contracts for goods and services as of the last date such goods or services will be needed.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Transfer Student Records and Testing Material</b> Send student records, including final grades and evaluations, to the authorizer, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and all records regarding special education and supplemental services.</li> <li>2. Student health / immunization records.</li> <li>3. Attendance record.</li> <li>4. Any testing materials required to be maintained by the school.</li> <li>5. Student transcripts and report cards.</li> <li>6. All other student records.</li> </ol> <p>Document the transfer of records to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The number of general and special education records transferred.</li> <li>2. Date of transfer.</li> <li>3. Signature and printed name of the charter school representative releasing the records.</li> <li>4. Signature and printed name of the authorizer’s representative who receives the records.</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Inventory assets</b> Inventory school assets, and identify items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Loaned from other entities.</li> <li>2. Encumbered by the terms of a contingent gift, grant or donation, or a security interest.</li> <li>3. Belonging to the EMO/CMO, if applicable, or other contractors.</li> <li>4. Purchased with federal grants (dispose of such assets in accordance with federal regulations).</li> <li>5. Purchased with Public Charter School Program startup funds (transfer assets to another charter school within the district or state).</li> </ol>			

Return assets not belonging to school where appropriate documentation exists. Keep records of assets returned.			
<b>Notify Food and Transportation Services and Cancel Contracts</b> Cancel school district or private food and/or transportation services for summer school and the next school year.			

Finalize School Affairs: Finance

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<b>Review and Revise School Budget</b> 1. Review the school's budget and overall financial condition. 2. Make revisions that take into account closure and associated expenses while prioritizing continuity of instruction. 3. Identify acceptable use of reserve funds.			
<b>Maintain IR S 501(c)(3) Status</b> Maintain IRS 501(c)(3) status, including: 1. Notify IRS regarding any address change. 2. File required tax returns and reports.			
<b>Notify Funding Sources / Charitable Partners</b> Notify all funding sources, including charitable partners of school closure. Notify state and federal agencies overseeing the school's grants that the school will be closing.			
<b>List all Creditors and Debtors</b> Formulate a list of creditors and debtors and any amounts accrued and unpaid with respect to such creditor or debtor. 1. This list is not the same as the contractor list, above, but may include contractors. 2. Creditors include lenders, mortgage holders, bond holders, equipment suppliers, service providers and secured and unsecured creditors. A UCC search should be performed to identify secured creditors. 3. Debtors include persons who owe the school fees or credits, any lessees or sub-lessees of the school, and any person holding property of the school.			
<b>Notify Creditors</b> Notify all creditors of the school's closure and request a final bill.			
<b>Notify Debtors</b> Contact all debtors and request payment.			
<b>Determine PER A Obligations</b> Contact PERA to determine remaining liabilities for employee retirement program.			
<b>Itemize Financials</b> Review, prepare and make available the following: 1. Fiscal year-end financial statements. 2. Cash analysis. 3. Bank statements for the year, investments, payables, unused checks, petty cash, bank accounts, and payroll reports including taxes. Collect and void all unused checks and destroy all credit and debit cards. Close accounts after transactions have cleared.			
<b>Close Out All State and Federal Grants</b> Close out state, federal, and other grants. This includes filing any required expenditure reports or receipts and any required program reports, including disposition of grant assets.			

<p><b>Prepare Final Financial Statement</b>  Retain an independent accountant to prepare a final statement of the status of all contracts and other obligations of the school, and all funds owed to the school, showing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All assets and the value and location thereof.</li> <li>2. Each remaining creditor and amounts owed.</li> <li>3. Statement that all debts have been collected or that good faith efforts have been made to collect same.</li> <li>4. Each remaining debtor and the amounts owed.</li> </ol>			
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Finalize School Affairs: Finance (continued)

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p><b>Complete Final Financial Audit</b>  Complete a financial audit of the school in accordance with the Charter Schools Act by a date to be determined by the authorizer.</p>			
<p><b>Reconcile with Authorizer</b>  Reconcile authorizer billings and payments, including special education payments or other “lagged” payments. If the school owes the authorizer money, it should list the authorizer as a creditor and treat it accordingly.</p>			

Finalize School Affairs: Reporting

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p><b>Prepare End-of-Year Reports</b>  Prepare and submit all required end-of-year reports to the authorizer.</p>			
<p><b>Prepare Final Report Cards and Student Records Notice</b>  Provide parents / guardians with copies of final report cards and notice of where student records will be sent along with contact information.</p>			

Dissolution

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p><b>Dissolve the Charter School</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The charter school board adopts a resolution to dissolve that indicates to whom the assets of the non-profit corporation will be distributed after all creditors have been paid.</li> <li>2. Unless otherwise provided in the bylaws, the members (if any) or board votes on the resolution to dissolve. A non-profit corporation is dissolved upon the effective date of its articles of dissolution. (C.R.S. 7-134-103).</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Notify the Secretary of State</b>  After the resolution to dissolve is authorized, dissolve the corporation by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing articles of dissolution setting forth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The name of the non-profit corporation.</li> <li>2. The address of the non-profit corporation’s principal office.</li> <li>3. The date dissolution was authorized.</li> </ol>			

<p>4. If dissolution was authorized by the directors, a statement to that effect.</p> <p>5. If dissolution was approved by the members, a statement of the number of votes cast for the proposal to dissolve.</p> <p>6. Such additional information as the Secretary of State determines is necessary or appropriate.</p>			
<p><b>Notify Known Claimants</b> Give written notice of the dissolution to known claimants within 90 days after the effective date of the dissolution.</p>			
<p><b>End Corporate Existence</b> A dissolved non-profit corporation continues its corporate existence, but may not carry on any activities except as is appropriate to wind up and liquidate its affairs, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collecting its assets.</li> <li>2. Transferring, subject to any contractual or legal requirements, its assets as provided in or authorized by its articles of incorporation or bylaws.</li> <li>3. Discharging or making provision for discharging its liabilities.</li> <li>4. Doing every other act necessary to wind up and liquidate its assets and affairs. (C.R.S. 7-134-105).</li> </ol>			
<p><b>Notify IRS</b> Notify the IRS of dissolution of the education corporation and its 501(c)(3) status and furnish a copy to the authorizer.</p>			

## CHARTER SCHOOL APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

A charter school planning to add to the school’s approved grade levels as set forth in its charter school contract must follow the expansion procedure outlined above. Failure to obtain prior approval from the District will constitute a breach of contract.

## CHARTER SCHOOL PURCHASED SERVICE CONTRACT PROCEDURE

Charter schools can purchase a number of services from the district. The services offered to charter schools are set forth in the Purchased Service Agreement.

## CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT ANNUAL AMENDMENTS

The district may provide an annual contract amendment document to each charter school board to reflect updated district, state and federal requirements.

## CHARTER SCHOOL DATA SUBMISSION

Charter schools must submit certain academic, staffing and financial data to the district on an ongoing basis. The district maintains a submission calendar online which is available to all charter schools.