

Charter School Policy

The State of Indiana has provided for the establishment of charter schools. Charter schools are defined as public elementary or secondary schools. A charter school must have a sponsor. The law permits the governing body of a public school corporation to be a sponsor.

A non-conversion charter school is a new school created by an organizer who applies to a sponsor for authority to operate the school. A conversion charter school results from the reorganization of an existing public school into a charter school. Only the Lafayette School Corporation Board of School Trustees has the authority to sponsor a conversion school in the Lafayette School Corporation.

The statute states that charter schools may be established to provide innovative and autonomous programs that do the following:

- A. Serve the different learning styles and needs of public school students.
- B. Offer public school students appropriate and innovative choices.
- C. Afford varied opportunities for professional educators.
- D. Allow public schools freedom and flexibility in exchange for exceptional levels of accountability.
- E. Provide parents, students, community members, and local entities with an expanded opportunity for involvement in the public school system.

An organizer requesting that this governing body sponsor a non-conversion charter school must submit a written application in the form provided by the school corporation (Appendix A). In the application, the organizer must demonstrate that the proposed charter school meets the purposes prescribed by law for the formation of a charter school and that the proposed charter school will be able to implement a viable program of quality education for its students. All proposed charter schools must certify that it will not discriminate based on disability, race, color, gender, national origin, religion or ancestry.

An application for a non-conversion charter school must be submitted to the Lafayette School Corporation Superintendent of Schools at least ten months prior to the date the school will open for students. An application for a conversion charter school must be submitted to the Lafayette School Corporation Superintendent of Schools prior to the date the school will open. Applications will be reviewed by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. The Superintendent will submit applications to the Board of School Trustees with an administrative recommendation.

The governing body shall determine whether they will sponsor the charter school. When considering whether or not to approve a non-conversion charter school proposal, consideration will be given as to whether the proposal provides educational services not currently provided by the Lafayette School Corporation while maintaining a safe, secure, fiscally responsible, and instructionally effective educational environment open to all children and in compliance with the laws, requirements, and assurances listed on the application and

any other requirements stated in state law. The applications will be reviewed within the time requirements stated in the statute.

The corporation will inform the Indiana Department of Education of actions taken relative to charter school applications in the manner specified in the statute. If an application is approved, the organization and operation of the school will be monitored consistent with the belief that the corporation, although its involvement is less direct, is responsible to the public for the operation of the school. If the application is rejected, the corporation will participate in any resulting appeal and will, should that process result in the organizer resubmitting the application, reconsider the application without prejudice.

The Lafayette School Corporation Board of School Trustees may revoke a charter that they approved if the charter school does not begin school operations and have students in attendance at the charter school by the date specified in the charter, or if in the judgment of the Board of School Trustees of the Lafayette School Corporation the terms, conditions, and assurances set forth at the time of the charter was approved are not being met.

Legal Reference: I.C. 20-24

Board Adopted: July 8, 2002

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