

Philosophy-Goals-Objectives and Comprehensive Plans

CHARTER SCHOOLS

To be considered by the Governing Board, a charter school petition must be signed by one of the following: (Education Code 47605)

1. A number of parents/guardians equivalent to at least one-half of the number of students that the charter school estimates will enroll in the charter school for its first year of operation.
2. A number of teachers equivalent to at least one-half of the number of teachers that the charter school estimates will be employed at the school during its first year of operation.
3. At least 50 percent of the permanent status teachers currently employed at the public school to be converted if the charter petition calls for an existing public school to be converted to a charter school.

(cf. 4116 - Permanent/Probationary Status)

In circulating a petition, the petitioners shall include a prominent statement explaining that a signature means the parent/guardian is meaningfully interested in having his/her child attend the charter school or, in the case of a teacher's signature, that the teacher is meaningfully interested in teaching at the charter school. The proposed charter shall be attached to the petition. (Education Code 47605)

Charter Provisions

A charter petition shall include descriptions of all of the following:
(Education Code 47605)

1. The educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an "educated person" in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling students to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.
2. The measurable student outcomes identified for use by the charter school. "Student outcomes" means the extent to which all students of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school's educational program.

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3. The method by which student progress in meeting those student outcomes is to be measured.
4. The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parent/guardian involvement.
5. The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school.
6. The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each school employee furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Education Code 44237.
7. The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its students that is reflective of the general population residing within the District's territorial jurisdiction.
8. Admission requirements, if applicable.
9. The manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which the audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the Board.
10. The procedures by which students can be suspended or expelled.
(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
11. The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or Federal social security.
12. The public school attendance alternatives for students residing within the District who choose not to attend charter schools.
13. A description of the rights of any District employee upon leaving District employment to work in a charter school and of any rights of return to the District after employment at a charter school.

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14. The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the Board to resolve disputes relating to charter provisions.

The petition also shall include affirmations that: (Education Code 47605)

1. The charter school shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations; shall not charge tuition; and shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability.
2. The charter school shall admit all students who wish to attend the school according to the following criteria and procedures:
 - a. Admission to the charter school shall not be determined according to the student's place of residence, or that of his/her parents/guardians, within this State, except that any existing public school converting partially or entirely to a charter school shall adopt and maintain a policy giving admission preference to students who reside within the school's former attendance area.
 - b. If the number of students who wish to attend the charter school exceeds the school's capacity, attendance, except for existing students of the charter school, shall be determined by a public random drawing. Preferences shall be extended to students currently attending the charter school and students who reside in the District. In the event of a drawing, the Board shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the charter school and shall not take any action to impede the charter school from expanding enrollment to meet student demand.
 - c. Other admission preferences permitted by the Board on an individual school basis and if consistent with law.

In addition to submitting the proposed charter and the affirmations described above, charter school petitioners shall provide information to the Board regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the school, including, but not limited to: (Education Code 47605)

1. The facilities to be used by the school.
2. The manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided.

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3. Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and District.
4. Financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including startup costs and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation.

Charter Approval/Denial

Within 30 days of receiving a petition to establish a charter school, the Board shall hold a public hearing to determine the level of support for the petition by teachers, other employees of the District, and parents/guardians. (Education Code 47605)

(cf. 9320 - Meetings and Notices)

Within 60 days of receiving a petition, or within 90 days with the consent of the petitioners and the Board, the Board shall either grant or deny the request to establish a charter school. (Education Code 47605)

The Board shall grant the charter if doing so is consistent with sound educational practice. A charter shall be denied only if the Board presents written specific factual findings that one or more of the following conditions exists: (Education Code 47605)

1. The charter school presents an unsound educational program for the students to be enrolled in the charter school.
2. The petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition.
3. The petition does not contain the number of signatures required.
4. The petition does not contain an affirmation of each of the conditions described above and in Education Code 47605(d).
5. The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the 14 provisions described above and in Education Code 47605(b).

The Board also shall not grant any charter that authorizes the conversion of a private school to a charter school. (Education Code 47602)

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In granting charter petitions, the Board shall give preference to schools best able to provide comprehensive learning experiences for academically low-achieving students according to standards established by the California Department of Education under Education Code 54032.

(Education Code 47605)

The Board may initially grant a charter for a specified term not to exceed five years. (Education Code 47607)

The petitioners shall provide written notice of the Board's approval and a copy of the charter to the State Board of Education. (Education Code 47605)

Revisions

Material revisions to a charter may be made only with Board approval and shall be governed by the same standards and criteria that apply to new charter petitions as set forth in Education Code 47605. (Education Code 47607)

Renewals

A charter school seeking renewal for the charter shall submit a written request to the Board at least 120 days before the term of the charter is due to expire.

At least 90 days before the term of the charter is due to expire, the Board shall conduct a public hearing to receive input on whether or not to extend the charter. At least 60 days before the expiration date, the Board shall either grant or deny the request for renewal.

Renewals shall be governed by the same standards and criteria that apply to new charter petitions as set forth in Education Code 47605. (Education Code 47607)

Each renewal shall be for a period of five years. (Education Code 47607)

Revocations

The Board may revoke a charter whenever it finds that the charter school has done any of the following: (Education Code 47607)

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1. Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter.
2. Failed to meet or pursue any of the student outcomes identified in the charter.
3. Failed to meet generally accepted accounting principles or engaged in fiscal mismanagement.
4. Violated any provision of law.

Prior to revocation, the Board shall notify the charter school of any violation and give the school a reasonable opportunity to correct the violation unless the Board determines, in writing, that the violation constitutes a severe and imminent threat to the health or safety of the students. (Education Code 47607)

Requirements for Charter Schools

No student shall be required to attend a charter school. (Education Code 47605)

No District employee shall be required to work at a charter school. (Education Code 47605)

Charter schools shall be exempt from the State laws governing school districts, except all of the following:

1. Charter schools shall be subject to Education Code 47611 regarding the State Teachers' Retirement System. (Education Code 47610)
2. Charter schools shall be subject to Education Code 41365 regarding the revolving loan fund for charter schools. (Education Code 47610)
3. Charter schools shall be subject to all laws establishing minimum age for public school attendance. (Education Code 47610)

(cf. 5111- Admission)

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4. Charter schools shall meet all Statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required by Education Code 60605 and any other Statewide standards or assessments applicable to noncharter public schools. (Education Code 47605)

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)

5. Charter schools shall be subject to State law prohibitions regarding the employment of any person, in either a certificated or classified position, who has been convicted of a violent or serious felony. (Education Code 44830.1, 45122.1)

(cf. 4112.5/4312.5 - Criminal Record Check)
(cf. 4212.5 - Criminal Record Check)

Teachers in charter schools shall hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file at the charter school and shall be subject to periodic inspection by the Board. (Education Code 47605)

(cf. 4112.2 - Certification)

In order to generate State funding based on average daily attendance, a charter school student must be a California resident and, if over 19 years of age, must be continuously enrolled in a public school and make satisfactory progress toward a high school diploma. (Education Code 47612)

Students with disabilities shall be served by charter schools in the same manner as such students are served in other public schools. (Education Code 56145)

(cf. 0430 - Comprehensive Local Plan for Special Education)
(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)
(cf. 6164.4 - Identification of Individuals for Special Education)

Charter schools shall, on a regular basis, consult with parents/guardians and teachers regarding the school's educational programs. (Education Code 47605)

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Charter schools shall promptly respond to all reasonable inquiries from the Board or the Superintendent of Public Instruction, including, but not limited to, inquiries regarding its financial records. (Education Code 47604.3)

Financial Relationship

The District shall permit a charter school to use, at no cost, facilities not currently being used by the District for instructional or administrative purposes or not historically being used for rental purposes provided that the charter school shall be responsible for reasonable maintenance of those facilities. (Education Code 47614)

(cf. 1330 - Use of School Facilities)

The District may charge for the actual costs of supervisory oversight of a charter school not to exceed one percent of the charter school's revenue. If the District is able to provide substantially rent-free facilities to the charter school, the District may charge actual costs up to three percent of the charter school's revenue for supervisory oversight. (Education Code 47613.7)

The charter school may separately purchase administrative or other services from the District or any other source. (Education Code 47613.7)