

DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Board of Education believes that public school programs should be designed to fit the needs of individual students and parents and educators have a right and responsibility to participate in their schools. As authorized by the State of Colorado Charter School Act, the Board offers charter schools as an additional opportunity for parents, teachers and community members to express concerns and identify needs that they feel are not currently being met. In accordance with state law, charter schools are intended to:

- Improve student learning by creating schools with high, rigorous standards for student performance that meet or exceed district and state standards
- Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students identified as academically low achieving
- Encourage diverse approaches to learning through the use of different, proven innovative teaching methods
- Allow development of different and innovative forms of measuring student learning and achievement
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning programs at a school site
- Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system
- Encourage parental and community involvement with public schools
- Create a legitimate avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to take responsible risks, and create new innovative and more flexible ways of educating students
- Create an atmosphere where research and development of different learning opportunities are actively pursued

A charter school shall be a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, non-home-based school that operates within a public school district and is accountable to the Board. 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, national origin, religion, or ancestry. Sexual orientation is a person's orientation toward heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or transgender status or perception of the individual's sexual orientation. A charter school has standing to sue and be sued in its own name for the enforcement of any contract it is authorized by law to enter into.

A charter school may offer any educational program allowed to the district unless expressly prohibited by its charter or by state law.

Enrollment shall be open to any child who resides within the district and who meets the criteria in the charter application. However, no charter school shall be required to make alterations in the structure of its facility or the arrangement or function of rooms within the facility except as may be required by state or federal law. The majority of a charter school's students, other than on-line students, must reside within the district or contiguous school districts. Except as provided by law, the charter school shall not charge tuition.

A charter school shall be administered and governed by its own governing body in a manner agreed to by the charter school applicant and the Board of Education. Based on its contract with the Board, the charter school may be allowed to operate free from specified district policies and state regulations; however, the Board will not waive any laws or regulations regarding open records or open meetings of the governing body and the charter school shall comply with the same state financial and budget rules, regulations and financial reporting requirements that apply to the

district.

A charter school shall be responsible for its own operation including, but not limited to, preparation of a budget, contracting for services, acquiring facilities, and personnel matters. Any moneys received by the charter school from any source that remain at the end of any budget year shall remain in the charter school account for its use in subsequent years. It may negotiate and contract with the district or other parties for the use of a school building and grounds, the operation thereof, and for services required to carry out its educational program. Services for which a charter school contracts with the district shall be 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 serve as the basis for a contract between the charter school and the Board. The relationship between the district and the charter school shall be established by a contract. The length of the contract will be determined mutually between parties, not to exceed 5 years, and will have opportunity for renewal. The contract shall reflect all agreements, including any release of the charter school from district policies and any requests for release from state regulations, 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 begin operation in the fall following the date the application is approved.

The Board shall submit evaluation reports for each district charter school to the State Board of Education as required.

Adopted August 3, 1994
Revised November 15, 1999
Revised September 5, 2001
Revised January 15, 2003
Revised April 6, 2005
Revised August 4, 2010

Legal refs.: C.R.S. 22-30.5-101 et seq. (Charter Schools Act)
C.R.S. 22-32-124 building codes

Cross refs.: BEC, Executive Sessions
FD, Facilities Funding
IHBHDA, Facilities Planning and Funding for Charter Schools
IHBHA, Alternative Schools