Charter School Authorization
Petition Signatures
A petition for the establishment of a start-up charter school must be signed by either 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 school for its first year of operation

2. A number of teachers equivalent to at least one-half of the total number of teachers that the charter school estimates will be employed at the school during its first year of operation

If the charter petition calls for an existing public school to be converted to a charter school, the petition must be signed by at least 50 percent of the permanent status teachers currently employed at the school. (Education Code 47605)

(cf. 4116 - Probationary/Permanent Status)

In circulating a petition, the petitioners shall include a prominent statement explaining that a parent/guardian's signature means that 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)

Advisory Committee

At his/her discretion, the Superintendent or designee may establish a staff advisory committee to evaluate the completeness of a charter petition based on the requirements in Education Code 47605 and to identify any concerns that should be addressed by the petitioners.

(cf. 2230 - Representative and Deliberative Groups)

Components of Charter Petition

The charter petition shall include affirmations that the charter school will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and operations; not charge tuition; and not discriminate against a student on the basis of characteristics listed in Education Code 220. It shall also contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of: (Education Code 47605, 47611.5)

1. The educational program of the proposed 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.

The petition shall include a description of annual goals for all students and for each numerically significant subgroup of students identified pursuant to Education Code 52052, including ethnic subgroups, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disabilities, foster youth, and homeless students. These goals shall be aligned with the state priorities listed in Education Code 52060 that apply to the grade levels served or the nature of the program operated by the charter school. The petition also shall describe specific annual actions to achieve those goals. The petition may identify additional priorities

established for the proposed school, goals aligned with those priorities, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals.

(cf. 0420.41 - Charter School Oversight)
(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

If the proposed school will serve high school students, the petition shall describe the manner in which the school will inform parents/guardians about the transferability of courses to other public high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements. Courses offered by the charter school that are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges may be considered transferable, and courses approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the "a-g" admissions criteria may be considered to meet college entrance requirements.

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, including outcomes that address increases in student academic achievement both schoolwide and for each numerically significant subgroup of students served by the charter school. The student outcomes shall align with the state priorities identified in Education Code 52060 that apply for the grade levels served or the nature of the program operated by the charter school.

3. The method by which student progress in meeting the identified student outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring student outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.

(cf. 0510 - School Accountability Report Card)

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, including 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. The charter school's student admission policy. The petition shall, in accordance with Education Code 47605(d), specify procedures for determining enrollment when the number of applicants exceed the school's capacity, including requirements for the use of a public random drawing, admission preferences, and priority order of preferences as required by law and subject to Board approval.

9. The manner in which annual, independent financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the Board's satisfaction.

10. The procedures by which students can be suspended or expelled for disciplinary reasons or otherwise involuntarily removed for any reason, including an explanation of how the charter school will comply with federal and state constitutional procedural and substantive due process requirements as specified in

Education Code 47605(b). Such procedures shall also include processes by which the charter school will notify the superintendent of a district and request to be notified by a district about a student when the circumstances specified in Education Code 47605(d) exist.

11. The manner by which staff members of the charter school 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 to not attend the charter school.

13. A description of the rights of any district employee upon leaving district employment to work in the charter school and of any rights of return to the district after employment at the charter school.

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

15. A declaration as to whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the school's employees for purposes of collective bargaining under Government Code 3540-3549.3.

16. The procedures to be used if the charter school closes, including, but not limited to: (5 CCR 11962)

    a. Designation of a responsible entity to conduct closure-related activities

    b. Notification to parents/guardians, the Board, the county office of education, the special education local plan area in which the school participates, the retirement systems in which the school's employees participate, and the California Department of Education, providing at least the following information:

    (1) The effective date of the closure

    (2) The name(s) and contact information of the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure

    (3) The students' districts of residence

    (4) The manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of student records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements

    c. Provision of a list of students at each grade level, the classes they have completed, and their districts of residence to the responsible entity designated in accordance with item #16a above

    d. Transfer and maintenance of all student records, all state assessment results, and any special education records to the custody of the responsible entity designated in accordance with item #16a above, except for records and/or assessment results that the charter may require to be transferred to a different entity

    e. Transfer and maintenance of personnel records in accordance with applicable law

    f. Completion of an independent final audit within six months after the closure of the school that includes an accounting of all financial assets and liabilities pursuant to 5 CCR 11962 and an

assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the school

g. Disposal of any net assets remaining after all liabilities of the school have been paid or otherwise addressed pursuant to 5 CCR 11962

h. Completion and filing of any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code 47604.33

i. Identification of funding for the activities identified in item #16a-h 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, including where the school intends to locate

(cf. 7160 - Charter School Facilities)

2. The manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided

3. Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and district

4. Financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including start-up costs and cash-flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation

Location of Charter School

Unless otherwise exempted by law, the charter petition shall identify a single charter school that will operate within the geographic boundaries of the district. A charter school may propose to operate at multiple sites within the district as long as each location is identified in the petition. (Education Code 47605, 47605.1)

A charter school that is unable to locate within the district's jurisdictional boundaries may establish one site outside district boundaries but within the county, provided that: (Education Code 47605, 47605.1)

1. The district is notified prior to approval of the petition.

2. The County Superintendent of Schools and Superintendent of Public Instruction are notified before the charter school begins operations.

3. The charter school has attempted to locate a single site or facility to house the entire program but such a facility or site is unavailable in the area in which the school chooses to locate, or the site is needed for temporary use during a construction or expansion project.

A charter school may establish and locate a resource center, meeting space, or other satellite facility in an adjacent county if both of the following conditions are met: (Education Code 47605.1)

1. The facility is used exclusively for the educational support of students who are enrolled in nonclassroom-based independent study of the charter school.

2. The charter school provides its primary educational services in, and a majority of the students it serves are residents of, the county in which the school is authorized.

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