

PHILOSOPHY, OBJECTIVES & COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter Schools

The California Legislature has enacted legislation to govern the establishment of charter schools that operate independently from the existing school structure as an alternative method to:

- (a) Improve pupil learning.
- (b) Increase the learning opportunities for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers.
- (e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.

Charter schools are accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes based on performance-based accountability systems. Charter schools shall operate under the provisions of their charters, federal laws, specified state laws, and general oversight of the Board. The District shall not require any student to attend a charter school and shall not require any District employee to work at a charter school.

The Superintendent or designee may work with charter school petitioners prior to the formal submission of the petition in order to gather information about the proposal and suggest components that would align the petition with the District' vision and goals for student learning. As needed, he/she may work with the petitioners to establish workable plans for technical assistance or contracted services, which the District may provide to the proposed charter school.

Advisory Review Committee

At his/her discretion, the Superintendent or designee may establish an advisory committee to review a submitted petition and the supporting documentation. Such a committee may be used to evaluate the completeness of the proposal, the merits of the proposed educational program, the level of community support, and any concerns that should be addressed by the petitioners. The Superintendent or designee shall also consult with legal counsel as appropriate regarding compliance of the proposal with legal requirements.

Board Review Process

In determining whether to grant or deny a charter, the Board shall carefully review the proposed charter and any supplementary information, consider public and staff input, and determine whether the charter petition adequately addresses all the provisions required by law. The Board shall not deny a charter school petition unless specific written factual findings are made pursuant to law and administrative regulation.

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The Board may approve one or more memoranda of understanding to clarify the financial and operational agreements between the District and the charter school. Any such memorandum of understanding shall be annually reviewed by the Board and charter school and adjusted as necessary.

Accountability

The Board shall ensure that any charter granted by the Board contains adequate processes and measures for holding the school accountable for fulfilling the terms of its charter. These shall include, but not be limited to, fiscal accountability systems, multiple measures for evaluating the education program, and regular reports to the Board.

The Board shall monitor each charter school to determine whether it makes “adequate yearly progress” as defined by the State Board of Education and federal Title I accountability requirements. If a charter school fails to make adequate yearly progress for two or more consecutive years, the Board shall take action for program improvement in accordance with the law, Board policy, and administrative regulations.

*Reference: Education Code 47600 – 47616.5 Charter Schools Act of 1992, as amended*