



LBD - CHARTER SCHOOLS

Poudre School District charter applications and charter schools are governed by the Colorado Charter Schools Act and this policy.

CHARTER APPLICATION CONTENTS AND STANDARDS

In order to be considered complete, a charter application filed with the District must satisfy the content requirements specified in C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1) and in this policy. The District may, however, require any charter applicant to provide additional information and/or documents as part of the application process.

In addition to the content requirements specified in C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1), any charter application filed with the District shall contain:

1. Aggregate information concerning the grade levels and schools in which the proposed charter school's prospective students are currently enrolled.
2. Two budgets for each fiscal year during the requested term of the proposed charter: one budget based on the number of students the applicant reasonably anticipates will be enrolled that year, and the other budget based on the minimum number of students that will allow the proposed charter school to continue economically viable operations throughout that year.
3. A description of the proposed charter school's viable options for a suitable facility, including for each such facility: (a) the amount of available indoor and outdoor space; (b) reasonable plans for utilization of the space; (c) an explanation of how the facility will be made ready for use by the time the proposed charter school opens; (d) an explanation of any zoning, permitting or similar issues that must be addressed before the facility can be used as a school; (e) whether the facility will be leased or purchased; and (f) reasonable facility costs (including lease or purchase payments and all renovation, remodeling and retrofit costs) reflected in the budget for each fiscal year during the requested term of the proposed charter.

Charter applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the District's Charter Application Review Handbook for guidance in the preparation and drafting of their charter applications, and not to file an application with the District's charter school liaison until they are able to prepare a complete application that meets the requirements of C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1) and this policy, as well as the standards set forth in the Charter Application Review Handbook. Making substantial changes to a charter application after it has been filed with the District may cause it to be treated as a new charter

application as of the date of the changes, which will be subject to the filing deadline specified in this policy.

CHARTER APPLICATION PROCEDURES

No later than thirty (30) days prior to filing a charter application, the charter applicant must submit a letter to the District's charter school liaison that provides a brief description of the proposed charter school and specifies the date on which the charter application will be filed.

Except in unusual circumstances expressly approved by the Board of Education, new charter schools may open only at the beginning of a school year. In order for a proposed charter school to be eligible for opening at the beginning of a school year, the original charter application plus fifteen (15) copies must be filed with the District's charter school liaison on or before 4:00 p.m. on August 15 of the year preceding the school year of requested opening. For any year in which August 15 falls on a weekend or holiday, the original charter application plus fifteen (15) copies must be filed with the charter school liaison on the first day after August 15 when the District's Support Services Center is open.

Within fifteen (15) days after the charter application is filed with the charter school liaison, the District administration will review it to determine whether it is complete and, if the District administration determines that the application is not complete, it shall specify in writing the deficiencies and provide a list of the information required to complete the application. The charter applicant must correct the deficiencies within fifteen (15) days after receiving the District administration's written list of deficiencies in order for the proposed charter school to remain eligible for approval by the Board.

The Board shall receive the charter application at its next regularly scheduled meeting after the District administration has determined that it was timely filed and is complete.

The following requirements shall apply in order to help ensure that the Board is fully advised by the time it takes action on the charter application:

1. The charter application shall be evaluated by an application review committee comprised of members of the District Accountability Committee, including at least: (a) one person with a demonstrated knowledge of charter schools, regardless of whether that person resides within the District; and (b) one parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in a charter school in the District. In addition, representatives of the District's existing charter schools shall be invited to participate on the application review committee. The application review committee may meet with and solicit additional information from the charter applicant in order to obtain additional information that responds to the committee's questions or concerns. At the conclusion of its evaluation process, the application review committee shall prepare an insight memorandum for the Board's consideration.

2. The charter application shall be evaluated by District employees who are subject matter experts in the areas of: (a) budget; (b) facilities and operations; (c) risk management and insurance; (d) human resources; (e) students with special needs; and (f) curriculum, instruction and assessment. A separate insight memorandum evaluating the charter application from the perspective of each of these subject-matter experts shall be prepared for the Board's consideration.
3. The charter applicant shall be provided with copies of the insight memoranda prepared by the application review committee and the District's subject matter experts, and may provide additional documents and/or written information that responds to the insight memoranda and/or explains the charter application. Unless otherwise specified in writing by the District, the charter applicant's additional documents and/or written information must be provided at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date scheduled for the Board hearing on the charter application.
4. The Board shall hold a hearing on the charter application prior to taking action thereon. Copies of the insight memoranda prepared by the application review committee and the District's subject matter experts, as well as the charter applicant's additional documents and/or written information, shall be provided to each Board member prior to the hearing.
5. In evaluating the charter application, the Board and administration shall consider the standards specified in the District's Charter Application Review Handbook.

The Board shall take action on the charter application within ninety (90) days after it is received by the District, except as may otherwise be provided by law.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The District shall review the performance of each charter school on an annual basis during the term of its charter. The review shall include: (a) the charter school's progress in meeting the objectives identified in its unified improvement plan; (b) the charter school's most recent annual financial audit; and (c) the charter school's compliance with the terms of its charter school contract. The District shall provide the charter school with written feedback regarding any concerns raised as a result of its review.

CHARTER RENEWAL

If the governing body of a charter school wishes to renew the school's charter, it must submit a letter to the Board of Education no later than December 1 of the year in which the charter is due to expire specifying the renewal term and any other conditions it is requesting for the renewal, together with a written report on the charter school's progress in achieving the goals, objectives and pupil performance standards specified in its charter school contract. The Board shall consider this information in ruling on the

charter school's renewal request, as well as information from the annual reviews of the school's performance and the results achieved by the school's students on the assessments administered through the Colorado student assessment program.

The Board of Education shall rule by resolution on the charter school's renewal request no later than February 1 of the year in which the charter is due to expire. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the date on which the Board is scheduled to determine whether to revoke or renew a school's charter, the superintendent shall provide to the Board and the charter school a written recommendation, including the reasons supporting the recommendation, on whether to revoke or renew the charter. The Board may revoke or decline to renew a school's charter for any one or more of the reasons specified in C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110.

CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE

The District shall attempt to work with a charter school to coordinate the winding up of its operations in an orderly fashion as provided in its charter school contract in the event of the school's closing for any reason.

The District shall work with the parents of all students enrolled at a charter school that is closing to help ensure the students' orderly transition to another District school in accordance with District Policy JFBA (Choice/Open Enrollment).

If it is practicable, economically feasible for the District and in the best interest of the charter school students, the District shall allow the charter school to continue operating through the end of the school year following a revocation or nonrenewal of its charter.

Adopted by Board: April 22, 2002
Revised by Board: August 9, 2004
Revised by Board: August 23, 2011
Revised by Board: May 28, 2013

LEGAL REFS:
C.R.S. 22-30.5-101, et seq. (Colorado Charter Schools Act)