CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIATION

BOARD POLICY

The Governing Board recognizes that charter schools may assist the district in offering diverse learning opportunities for students. In considering any petition to establish a charter school within the district, the Board shall give thoughtful consideration to the potential of the charter school to provide students with a high-quality education that enables them to achieve to their fullest potential.

The district shall not require any district student to attend the charter school nor shall it require any district employee to work at the charter school. (Education Code 47605)

One or more persons may submit a petition for a start-up charter school to be established within the district or for the conversion of an existing district school to a charter school. (Education Code 47605)

Any petition for a start-up charter school or conversion charter school shall include all components and signatures required by law and shall be submitted to the Board. The Superintendent or designee shall consult with legal counsel, as appropriate, regarding compliance of the charter petition with legal requirements.

The Superintendent or designee may work with charter school petitioners prior to the formal submission of the petition in order to ensure compliance of the petition with legal requirements. As needed, the Superintendent or designee may also meet with the petitioners to establish workable plans for technical assistance or contracted services which the district may provide to the proposed charter school.

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 mutual consent of the petitioners and the Board, the Board shall either approve or deny the request to establish the charter school. (Education Code 47605)

The approval or denial of a charter petition shall not be controlled by collective bargaining agreements nor subject to review or regulation by the Public Employment Relations Board. (Education Code 47611.5)

Approval of Petition

The Board shall approve the charter petition if doing so is consistent with sound educational practice. In granting charters, the Board shall give preference to petitions that demonstrate the capability to provide comprehensive learning experiences for students who are identified by the petitioner as academically low-achieving. (Education Code 47605)

The Board shall verify that any approved charter contains adequate processes and measures for holding the school accountable for complying with applicable law, including Education Code 47604.1, and for fulfilling the terms of its charter. These shall include, but are not limited to,

fiscal accountability systems, multiple measures for evaluating the educational program, including student outcomes aligned with state priorities as described in Education Code 52060, and regular reports to the Board.

(cf. 0420.41 - Charter School Oversight)

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 governing body and amended as necessary.

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

(cf. 0420.42 - Charter School Renewal)
(cf. 0420.43 - Charter School Revocation)

It shall be the responsibility of the petitioners to provide written notice of the Board's approval and a copy of the charter to the County Superintendent of Schools, the California Department of Education, and the State Board of Education (SBE). (Education Code 47605)

Denial of Petition

The Board shall deny any charter petition that:

1. Proposes to operate a charter school as or by a for-profit corporation, a for-profit educational management organization, or a for-profit charter management organization (Education Code 47604)

2. Authorizes the conversion of a private school to a charter school (Education Code 47602)

3. Proposes to serve students in a grade level that is not served by the district, unless the petition proposes to serve students in all the grade levels served by the district (Education Code 47605)

Any other charter petition shall be denied only if the Board makes written factual findings specific to the petition that one or more of the following conditions exist: (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 in Education Code 47605(d).

5. The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the charter provisions in Education Code 47605(b).

6. The petition does not contain 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 pursuant to Government Code 3540-3549.3.

The Board shall not deny a petition based on the actual or potential costs of serving students with disabilities, nor shall it deny a petition solely because the charter school might enroll students with disabilities who reside outside the special education local plan area in which the district participates. (Education Code 47605.7, 47647)

(cf. 0430 - Comprehensive Local Plan for Special Education)

If the Board denies a petition, the petitioners may choose to submit the petition to the County Board of Education and, if then denied by the County Board, to SBE. (Education Code 47605)

Legal Reference:
EDUCATION CODE
200 Equal rights and opportunities in state educational institutions
220 Nondiscrimination
17078.52-17078.66 Charter schools facility funding; state bond proceeds
17280-17317 Field Act
17365-17374 Field Act, fitness for occupancy
32282 Comprehensive safety plan
33126 School Accountability Report Card
41365 Charter school revolving loan fund
42238.51-42238.2 Funding for charter districts
44237 Criminal record summary
44830.1 Certificated employees, conviction of a violent or serious felony
45122.1 Classified employees, conviction of a violent or serious felony
46201 Instructional minutes
47600-47616.7 Charter Schools Act of 1992
47640-47647 Special education funding for charter schools
47650-47652 Funding of charter schools
49011 Student fees
51745-51749.6 Independent study
52052 Accountability: numerically significant student subgroups
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan
56026 Special education
56145-56146 Special education services in charter schools
CORPORATIONS CODE
5110-6910 Nonprofit public benefit corporations
GOVERNMENT CODE
1090-1099 Prohibitions applicable to specified officers
3540-3549.3 Educational Employment Relations Act
6250-6270 California Public Records Act
54950-54963 Ralph M. Brown Act

CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIATION

BOARD POLICY

81000-91014 Political Reform Act of 1974
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
11700.1-11705 Independent study
11960-11968.5.5 Charter schools
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
7223-7225 Charter schools
COURT DECISIONS
Ridgecrest Charter School v. Sierra Sands Unified School District, (2005) 130 Cal.App.4th 986
ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINIONS
Opinion No. 11-201 (2018)
89 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 166 (2006)
80 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 52 (1997)
78 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 297 (1995)

Management Resources:
CSBA PUBLICATIONS
Uncharted Waters: Recommendations for Prioritizing Student Achievement and Effective Governance in California's Charter Schools, September 2018
Charter Schools in Focus, Issue 1: Managing the Petition Review Process, Governance Brief, November 2016
Charter Schools and Board Member Responsibilities, Education Insights Legal Update Webcast, March 2016
Charter Schools: A Guide for Governance Teams, rev. February 2016
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS
Sample Copy of a Memorandum of Understanding
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS
Dear Colleague Letter: Guidance Regarding the Oversight of Charter Schools Program and Regulatory Requirements, including the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, August 2016
Charter Schools Program: Title V, Part B of the ESEA, Nonregulatory Guidance, January 2014
Guidance on the Voluntary Use of Race to Achieve Diversity and Avoid Racial Isolation in Elementary and Secondary Schools, December 2011
WEB SITES
CSBA: http://www.csba.org
California Charter Schools Association: http://www.ccsa.org
California Department of Education, Charter Schools: http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cs
National Association of Charter School Authorizers: http://www.qualitycharters.org
U.S. Department of Education: http://www.ed.gov

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