



Board File LBD-R-1 Douglas County School District Charter School Procedure Manual

Mission:

The Mission of the Douglas County School District's Office of Choice Programming is to provide our district charter schools with efficient and effective support and service in order to allow them to focus on their students' academic achievement and school community.

Revised _____



Douglas County School District Charter School
Procedure Manual

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CHARTER QUALITY AUTHORIZING POLICY

I. Douglas County School District Commitment to Authorizing Quality Schools

The Douglas County School District (DCSD) Board of Education is committed to providing all parents with a robust program of school choice to enable them to provide their students with an education that fully prepares them for the 21st century workforce. Toward that end, DCSD is committed to implementing quality authorizing practices that are based on national best practices and which are consistent with Colorado law and the Quality Authorizing Standards adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education. Through our policies, practices and procedures as a quality authorizer, the district will provide high standards for all charter schools.

II. Core Principles of Quality Charter Authorizing

The DCSD Office of Choice Programming promotes the three core principles of charter authorizing as defined by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education and the DCSD Board:

1. **DCSD maintains high standards for all schools.** This includes setting high standards for approving charter applicants; maintaining high standards for all of the schools the district oversees; effectively cultivating quality charter schools that meet identified educational needs of the district; overseeing charter schools that meet the performance standards and targets set forth in their charter contracts through established measures; and closing schools that fail to meet standards and targets set forth in statute and by contract.
2. **DCSD upholds school autonomy.** This includes honoring and preserving core autonomies crucial to school success, including governing board independence from the authorizer; school control over personnel, school vision and culture, instructional programming, and budgeting; assuming responsibility for holding schools accountable for their performance; minimizing administrative and compliance burdens on schools; and focusing on holding schools accountable for outcomes rather than processes.
3. **DCSD protects student and public interests.** This includes the well-being and interests of students informing all the authorizer's actions and decisions; upholding district conflict of interest policies; holding schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental public education obligations to serve all students for our community; ensuring a focus on the school's vision and mission; transparency, effective and efficient public stewardship; compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and supporting and engaging parents and students with information about the quality of education provided by charter schools.

III. Standards of Quality Authorizing

The DCSD Office of Choice Programming has adopted the following standards of Quality Authorizing. These standards should drive charter and district organizational structures and practices:

1. **Commitment and Capacity:** DCSD recognizes that charter schools, along with other choice options, offer parents and students opportunities to meet identified student needs. DCSD

authorizing decisions are made solely based on the best interests of pupils, the district, and the DCSD community. DCSD creates organizational structures that lead to consistent implementation of policies and practices and commits the financial resources necessary to conduct its authorizing duties effectively and efficiently.

2. **Application Process and Decision Making:** DCSD implements a comprehensive application process that includes clear application questions and guidance; fosters open communication with all charter applicants; follows fair and transparent procedures; has transparent and rigorous scoring criteria; engages outside experts in the review of applications; and grants charters only to applicants who demonstrate a strong capacity through their application to establish and operate a quality charter school.
3. **Performance Contracting:** DCSD executes contracts with charter schools that articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcomes, measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. The contract is an essential document, separate from the charter application, that establishes the legally binding agreement and terms under which the school will operate.
4. **Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation:** DCSD conducts contract oversight that evaluates performance and monitors compliance and uses such information to inform renewal, intervention and revocation decisions while upholding schools' autonomy. DCSD ensures that schools provide fair and open access to students without discrimination. DCSD provides annual performance reports on school performance.
5. **Revocation and Renewal Decision Making:** DCSD designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses academic, financial, governance and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions, establishes clear criteria for renewal and revocation, and will revoke charters if there is a determination that the charter school did any of the following consistent with C.R.S. 22-30.5-110(3):
 - a. Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter contract;
 - b. Failed to meet or make adequate progress toward achievement of the goals, objectives, content standards, pupil performance standards, targets for the measures used to determine the levels of attainment of the performance indicators, applicable federal requirements, or other terms identified in the charter contract;
 - c. Failed to meet generally accepted standard of fiscal management; or
 - d. Violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.
6. **Collaboration to Improve Student Outcomes:** DCSD establishes procedures to facilitate ongoing collaboration between the district and charter schools to improve outcomes for all students. These collaborations include, but are not limited to, monthly charter administration meetings, ability for charter administrators to join the principal meetings in their feeder area, ability to join the quarterly district administration meetings, and unlimited support and communication with the Office of Choice Programming. In addition, the district regularly solicits feedback in developing policies and practices impacting charter schools.

7. Commitment to Creating Equitable Opportunity, Equitable Responsibility and Access, and Equitable Accountability: DCSD commits to ensuring that all schools open and operate on the basis of three equities that apply to all our schools: (1) equity of opportunity; (2) equity of responsibility and access; and (3) equity of accountability.

- a. Equity of opportunity means that the schools have the same access to per-pupil dollars and choices about which support services they want to purchase from the district, and access to land and facility partnerships if the charter school meets the DCSD land use protocols as developed by the Board and the Long Range Planning Committee in alignment with CRS 22-30.5-104(7.5).
- b. Equity of responsibility and access means that the schools must offer equitable and open access to all our students—regardless of socio-economic, disability, language or other status—and share an equal burden in district-wide responsibilities such as the cost of district-wide special education funding needs for students with disabilities that are served in severe needs programs.
- c. Equity of accountability means that all schools have the same accountability system under our School Performance Framework, including charter schools.

CHARTER SCHOOL HISTORY IN DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The history of school choice in Douglas County School District dates back nearly 30 years. In 1987, the district established Daniel C. Oakes High School as a small public high school of choice, giving students an alternative setting in which to complete their education. As a district, DCSD has embraced opportunities for choice through innovation, academic need, and personal preference. Nearly 30 years later, DCSD remains committed to providing the highest quality, well-rounded, 21st Century educational experience in all classrooms, in every school, every day, for every student.

In 1993, state Senator Bill Owens (R) and State Representative Peggy Kerns (D) introduced the original Charter Schools Act, which received bi-partisan support and was signed into law. The original philosophy of the Act was that charter schools would be smaller environments free to experiment with educational programs and develop innovative ways to educate at-risk students. A charter school in Colorado is a public school operated by a group of parents, teachers and/or community members as a semi-autonomous school of choice within a school district, operating under a contract or "charter" contract between the members of the charter school community and the local board of education. The same year that Senator Owens and Representative Peggy Kerns introduced the original Charter Schools Act, DCSD became the first school district to authorize a K-8 charter school (Academy Charter School, 1993.)

CRS 22-30.5-102(3) states

In authorizing charter schools, it is the intent of the general assembly to create a legitimate avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to implement new and innovative methods of educating children that are proven to be effective and to take responsible risks and create new and innovative, research-based ways of educating all children within the public education system. The general assembly seeks to create an atmosphere in Colorado's public education system where research and development in developing different learning opportunities is actively pursued. As such, the provisions of this part 1 should be interpreted

liberally to support the findings and goals of this section and to advance a renewed commitment by the state of Colorado to the mission, goals, and diversity of public education.

DCSD Charter Schools currently authorized include:

- Academy Charter School, chartered in 1993
- Parker Core Knowledge Charter School, chartered in 1994
- Renaissance Charter School, chartered in 1995
(Converted from a charter school to a district magnet in 2002)
- Douglas County Montessori Charter School, chartered in 1997
- Platte River Academy, chartered in 1997
- Challenge to Excellence, chartered in 2002
- American Academy, chartered in 2005 (3 Campuses)
- North Star Academy, chartered in 2006
- Hope Co-op Online Learning Academy, chartered in 2008
- SkyView Academy, chartered in 2008
- STEM High and Middle School, chartered in 2009
- Ben Franklin Academy, chartered in 2010
- Aspen View Academy, chartered in 2011
- World Compass Academy, chartered in 2015
- Global Village Academy, chartered in 2015
- Parker Performing Arts School, chartered in 2016
- Lemay Classical Academy, chartered in 2016 (2 Campuses)
- Ascent Classical Academy, chartered in 2017 (moved to CSI in 20/21 school year)
- Renaissance Secondary, chartered in 2017

Second Reading Revised

SELECTED STATE LAWS APPLICABLE to CHARTER SCHOOLS (Colo. Rev. Statutes, unless otherwise noted)

Governance, Records and Charter Schools

1. Colorado Charter Schools Act 22-30.5
2. Colorado Open Meetings Law: 24-4-401 et seq.
3. Colorado Open Records Act: 24-72-201 et seq.
4. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974: 20 U.S.C. 1232g
5. Colorado Code of Ethics: 24-18-101 et seq.
6. Non-Profit Corporations Act: 7-121-101 et seq.

Safety and Discipline

7. Certificate of occupancy for the school facility: 22-32-124
8. Safe School Plan: 22-32-109.1 (2)
9. Grounds for suspension, expulsion and denial of admission of students: 22-33-106
10. Procedures for suspension, expulsion and denial of admissions of students: 22-33-105
11. Services for expelled students: 22-33-203
12. Child Protection Act of 1987: 19-3-301 et seq.
13. Background checks for employees: 22-1-121

Educational Accountability

14. Educational Accountability: 22-11-101 et seq. (especially 22-11-210 and 22-11-401 et seq.)
15. Accreditation: Accreditation Rules of the State Board of Education 1 CCR 301-1
16. ESEA Act: P.L. 107-110

Curriculum, Instruction and Extra-Curricular Activities

17. Instruction in federal and state history and government: 22-1-104
18. Honor and use of the U.S. Flag: 22-1-106
19. Instruction in the Constitution: 22-1-108, 109

20. Instruction in the effects of use of alcohol and controlled substances: 22-1-110
21. On-line programs: 22-33-104.6
22. Participation in sports and extra-curricular activities: 22-32-116.5
23. Content Standards: 22-7-407

Exceptional Students

24. Discipline of students with disabilities: 20 U.S.C. 1415 (k) 34 C.F.R. 519-529
25. Exceptional Children's Educational Act: 22-20-101 et seq.
26. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: 29 U.S.C. 794
27. Americans with Disabilities Act: 42 U.S.C. 12101
28. Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act: 42 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.
29. English Language Proficiency Act: 22-24-101 et seq.

Finance

30. School funding Formula: 22-54-104 (3)
31. Funded pupil enrollment: 22-54-103 (10)
32. Tuition: 22-20-109 (5), 22-32-115 (1) and (2), 22-54-109
33. Fees: 22-32-110 (1) (o) and (p), 22-32-117
34. Allocation of funds to a capital reserve fund: 22-54-105 (2) (b)
35. Expenditures from a capital reserve fund: 22-45-103, 24-10-115, Article 13 of title 29
36. Allocation of funds for instructional supplies and materials: 22-54-105 (l)
37. Allocation of funds for at-risk students: 22-54-105
38. Colorado Department of Education Financial Policies and Procedures
39. Excess tuition charges for out-of-district special education students: 22-20-109 (5)
40. Participation if PERA: 22-30.5-512 and 22-30-5-111 (3)
41. Financial Transparency Act: 22-44-301 et seq.

CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY

Board File: LBD

The Douglas County School District RE-1 embraces school choice by offering a wide variety of pathways to learning. Matching students to a learning model or school creates a level of synergy not found in historic educational models, creating the highest probability of success for all. One option in our district is charter schools.

A charter school shall be a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, non-home-based school, which operates within a public school district. A charter school shall be a public school of the school district that approves its charter application and enters into a charter contract with the charter school. The charter school shall be subject to accreditation by the school district. A charter school applicant cannot apply to, or enter into a charter contract with, the school district unless a majority of the charter school's pupils, other than on-line pupils, will reside in the school district or in a contiguous district.

A charter school 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, ancestry, or need for special education services. Enrollment decisions shall be made in a nondiscriminatory manner specified by the charter school applicant in the charter school application. Enrollment in a charter school must be open to any child who resides within the school district; except that no charter school shall be required to make alterations in the structure of the facility used by the charter school or to make alterations to the arrangement or function of rooms within the facility, except as may be required by state or federal law. Except as otherwise provided by statute, a charter school shall not charge tuition.

All decisions regarding the planning, siting, and inspection of charter school facilities shall be made in accordance with state statute and as specified by contract with the school district.

A charter school shall be administered and governed by a governing body in a manner agreed to by the charter school applicant and the Board of Education. The contract between the charter school and the Board of Education shall designate responsibility for charter school operations including, but not limited to, preparation of a budget, contracting for services, facilities, and personnel matters. A charter school, as a public school, is a governmental entity. Direct leases and financial obligations of a charter school shall not constitute debt or financial obligations of the school district unless the school district specifically assumes such obligations.

A charter school application may be submitted pursuant to the district application process or in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP) from the district. The Superintendent is authorized to create procedures and regulations concerning charter application process and the supervision of charter schools.

Adopted: June 3, 2008

Revised: October 16, 2012

Board File: LBD Douglas County School District RE-1

LEGAL REF.:

C.R.S. 22-30.5-101 et seq. (*Charter School Act*)

C.R.S. 22-32-124 (*Building Codes-Zoning-Planning-Fees-Rules-Definitions*)

C.R.S. 22-20-109 (*Tuition*)

CROSS REF.:

LBD-R-1 Charter School Application Process

LBD-R-2 Charter School Application Contents

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The DCSD Application process is posted to the DCSD website www.DCSDK12.org under Departments-Choice Programming-Charter Schools. If unavailable or inaccessible for any reason, the District's Choice Programming Office will make this information available. The application is divided into 19 application components. The components appear in the application in the same order that they appear in the Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended (C.R.S. 22-30.5-106). It is important to remember that each of these components may require significant prior assistance to the applicant to meet the quality standard expected by the state and the district. DCSD strongly recommends that all applicants contact the Colorado League of Charter Schools for application review and drafting assistance.

Each component is divided into three sections: a **Component Description**, a **Checklist for a Comprehensive Application**, and **Evaluation Criteria**. The Component Description is a narrative designed to give the applicant background information, reference to statute, and general explanation of the component. The Checklist for a Comprehensive Application may be used by both the applicant and the authorizer to monitor the completeness of the application. The Evaluation Criteria provides the authorizer with means of determining the quality of the application component but may also be used by the applicant when targeting a high-quality school program. An Evaluation Rubric accompanies this document as Appendix B.

The components of the application are as follows.

- A. Executive Summary**
- B. Vision and Mission Statements**
- C. Goals, Objectives and Pupil Performance Standards**
- D. Evidence of Support**
- E. Educational Program**
- F. Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance**
- G. Budget and Finance**
- H. Governance**
- I. Employees**
- J. Insurance Coverage**
- K. Parent and Community Involvement**
- L. Enrollment Policy**
- M. Transportation and Food Service**
- N. Facilities**
- O. Waivers**
- P. Student Discipline, Expulsion, or Suspension**
- Q. Serving Students with Special Needs**
- R. Dispute Resolution Process**
- S. School Management Contracts**

Appendix A: Charter School Intent to Submit Form

Appendix B: Evaluation Rubric

It is important for applicants to remember that each of the components relate to one another. Curriculum is not complete without consideration of assessment. Facilities cannot be sufficiently addressed in isolation from budgetary decisions. The completed application should tell a story that

relates the application components into one comprehensive package. The vision and mission should be evident throughout the application, and all program elements and resource allocations should be in alignment with the proposed budget and school program. It is important to also consider that online school applications or other unique programs may not conform precisely to all components of this application. In these cases, prior communication with the Office of Choice Programming is imperative.

The DCSD Charter School Application Procedure is as follows:

1. On January 15th of each year, a new charter must submit an 'Intent to Submit Form' in the DCSD Digital System, Anvilar. If January 15th falls on a weekend, a legal holiday, or a day school is not in session, then the form is due the next school day. Intent to Submit Forms will not be accepted before January 15th.
2. A copy of the Intent to Submit form will be forwarded to the DCSD Board of Education and DCSD department leaders as notification of the applicant's intent to turn in an application.
3. The full application must be submitted in Anvilar : <https://anvilar.com> no earlier than February 1 and no later than 4:00pm Mountain Time on April 1 each year. If either date falls on a weekend, a legal holiday, or a day school is not in session, then such date is extended to the next school day, eighteen months before the Charter School is set to open.
4. No later than April 1, membership on the District's Charter Application Review Team shall be finalized. Membership shall include:
 - a. One person with a demonstrated knowledge of charter schools; regardless of whether that person resides within the school district;
 - b. One parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in a charter school in the school district (preferably a parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in a charter school who is also a member of the District's Accountability Committee);
 - c. At least two individuals who are members of the District's Accountability Committee;
 - d. At least one individual who is a member of the Board's Financial Oversight Committee;
 - e. At least one individual who is a member of the Board's Long Range Planning Committee;
 - f. Representative District Department leaders;
 - g. An independent third party reviewer with demonstrated knowledge of charter schools; and
 - h. One person who is a charter school leader from a District authorized charter school
5. The DCSD Board of Education will be provided with the charter applications no later than May 1. District department leaders will be notified with a list of all charter applications received.
6. Within 15 days of submission of the application, the Office of Choice Programming will determine whether the application is "complete" as containing all the necessary elements required by statute. If the application is determined to be incomplete, the applicant will be notified and will have 15 days to resubmit a complete application.
7. Once the charter applications are determined complete, CART will review the completed applications consistent with the review process set forth in this policy.
8. Charter Applicant Capacity Interviews will also be held (such interviews generally occur in April). The Charter Applicant Capacity Interviews will be held in a manner which allows charter

applicant representatives an opportunity to share information about their application and to respond to any existing questions from CART membership at the time.

9. No later than May 1, all members of the District's Accountability Committee (DAC) will be provided with a copy of full completed charter applications. Thereafter, a representative of the Choice Programming Office will attend a DAC meeting to answer any questions and receive feedback on the charter applications.
10. After all of the Charter Applicant Capacity Interviews are completed, feedback from CART memberships will be collected by the Choice Programming Office. After this feedback is gathered, CART responsibilities are complete.
11. Members of the District's staff and the outside reviewer who participated as a member of CART shall discuss and consider CART's input and DAC's feedback to the Choice Programming Office and will thereafter make a recommendation to be shared with District's Cabinet. After Cabinet's review and evaluation of this information, the final District Staff Recommendation is provided to the District's Board of Education for its consideration and decision.
12. The District's Board of Education will make its decision by resolution on the application in a public hearing, upon reasonable public notice, by June 30th, consistent with Colorado law.
13. Consistent with the resolution approving a charter contract, all negotiations between the charter school and the DCSD Board of Education on the contract shall be concluded by, and all terms of the contract agreed upon, no later than ninety days after the resolution on the application, or September 30, whichever date is later.
14. The DCSD Board of Education and the charter applicant may waive or extend the timelines set forth in this procedure.
15. PLEASE NOTE: Experience has shown that a failed charter school opening can have significant negative impacts on students at existing charter and neighborhood schools. To avoid confusion and uncertainty around the timing of a new charter opening, approved charter applicants shall meet one of the following criteria:
 - a. For a new-build facility: purchase or lease a site and submit evidence of appropriate approved permits issued by the local jurisdiction(s), with a final construction schedule approved by the building contractor, no later than August 15 of the year before the planned opening year; or
 - b. For an existing facility: submit a Letter of Intent or site lease to lease an existing facility no later than February 15 of the planned opening year.

If the DCSD Board of Education does not approve the application, the applicant may, pursuant to statute, appeal the DCSD Board decision to the State Board of Education. The applicant may also seek feedback from District staff on how to improve an application for the following year. At least one of DCSD's existing charter schools were successfully approved after receiving feedback from staff after the first unsuccessful application.

CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION PROCEDURE

For existing district charter schools interested in expanding the scope by adding grade levels or major programs at the same physical location as indicated in the current charter contract, the following criteria will need to be met first:

- The school must have been in operation for at least three years;
- The school must have a proven program demonstrating compliance with district and contract standards in the areas of academics, finance, operations and governance; and
- There is demonstrated demand for the expansion.

An expansion application is not an evaluation of an application team's capacity to create a new charter school. Instead, it is an evaluation of an existing charter school's success, capacity of the existing leadership to expand the scope by adding grade levels or major programs of the current authorized charter school, and strong student and family demand for the expansion of the scope by adding grade levels or major programs. Expansion applications are submitted by existing DCSD-authorized charter schools for expansion of the scope by adding grade levels or major programs at the same physical location as indicated in the current charter contract. If approved, they are treated as an amendment to a charter school's existing charter contract, and do not change the school's existing charter term.

An application for expansion will be submitted to the DCSD Office of Choice Programming for review. This review may include various departments, depending on the scope of the application. Applicants may be asked to provide a summary of the proposed expansion to the DCSD Board of Education during a public hearing at a regularly scheduled DCSD Board meeting. Any request for a summary to the Board of Education will come with advance notice.

Existing DCSD Charter Schools who meet all eligibility criteria, as explained above, should work with the DCSD Choice Programming Office to begin the application process for expansion. Expansion Applications may be submitted in Anvilar, anvilar.com, at any time throughout the year, but the applicant should consult with the Choice Programming Office in advance of any pending expansion request.

An expansion application will be taken to the DCSD Board of Education for approval by resolution. The Board's decision on an Expansion Application must be consistent with the Charter Schools Act at C.R.S. § 22-30.5-109 (7).

CHARTER SCHOOL REPLICATION PROCEDURE

Introduction

Replication is when an existing DCSD authorized charter school seeks to establish one or more additional schools using the same educational model and grade levels with ongoing relationship between the new and existing schools. Replication applicants must be affiliated with and have approval from the existing charter school(s) to submit a replication application. This definition is meant to be broad and include a range of practices, some of which are described below:

- One governing board overseeing two or more schools;
- An educational service provider contracting for services with two or more schools; and
- Shared services among schools.

Replication Process

For district charter schools planning to replicate, the following process will be followed:

1. A district charter school may not replicate to a new location and open for operation before its first charter contract renewal, which generally occurs in year 4 of operation.
2. A charter school meeting the operational period requirement must submit evidence of demand for the replication, which may include demonstrations of community support, student intent to enroll documentation, and other proof of demand for the replication.
3. If requesting District land, the replication process also includes meeting with representatives of the Long Range Planning Committee to ascertain capacity relief needs, location availability, and feasibility. Approval of any land request is ultimately granted at the discretion of the Board of Education.
4. The replicating charter school must note any changes from the school's initial charter application in connection with the replication, using the DCSD charter school application and contract formats.
5. Replication Readiness - the charter school should meet the replication standards in the replication application, which include:
 - a. Successful School Performance – the School is meeting expectations on the School Performance Framework; and
 - b. Effective School Operations as determined by successful annual site reports conducted by the Office of Choice Programming for at least two (2) of the prior school years; and
 - c. Evidence of Community Need and support in the geographic area of intended replication including student intent to enroll documentation sufficient to ensure financial viability; and
 - d. Effective Governance and Leadership demonstrating necessary capabilities as evidenced by the annual site reports showing effectiveness for at least two (2) of the prior school years; and
 - e. Solid Business and Viable Financial Plan evidencing a plan for replication that addresses the needs of starting a new school and does not disadvantage students at the original school(s).

Charter schools that are authorized in another district or by the Charter School Institute (CSI) and seek replication in Douglas County School District, must apply as a new charter school, using the standard new charter school application and process. Contact DCSD Choice Programming to create your Anvilar : <https://anvilar.com> account for the application.

- On January 15 of each year, a charter intending to replicate their school must submit an 'Intent to Submit Form' to the Office of Choice Programming. If January 15 falls on a weekend, a legal holiday, or a day school is not in session, then the form is due the next school day.
- Between February 1 and 4:00 p.m. on April 1 of each year the applicant will submit the Charter School Replication Application to the Office of Choice Programming through Anvilar : <https://anvilar.com> If either date falls on a weekend, a legal holiday, or a day that school is not in session, then such date will be extended to the next school day.

Applicants may be required to host a geographic meeting in the geographic community where the School intends to replicate. The time and place of the geographic meeting would be determined by the applicant's Board of Directors and communicated with DCSD Choice Programming to allow for DCSD staff to be present. Applicants will be asked to share information about the proposed replication and address questions and comments from the community.

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL PROCEDURE

The charter contract renewal process examines a number of factors revealing the health of the charter school. This process is most transparent when it is characterized by the following criteria:

1. Putting the interests of children first;
2. Identifying performance indicators that have been in place for the duration of the contract;
3. Gathering accurate performance, financial and governance data;
4. Undertaking annual performance evaluations;
5. Adopting reasonable academic performance expectations;
6. Considering multiple measures, including comparable school performance, across three or more years;
7. Weighting the evidence based on importance, rather than relying on numeric cut scores;
8. Listening to the points of view of both the district staff and the charter school;
9. Taking into account the number of years that the school has been operating.

Charter school contracts in DCSD will be reviewed for renewal in the year prior to the charter expiration year. The charter school must submit a Charter School Intent to Renew Contract form on or before June 1 of the year prior to the year that the contract expires. See the renewal timeline on the next page for renewal deadlines.

Charter schools are evaluated for renewal based on their yearly Accreditation, financial health, and governance and operations. The charter school Accreditation procedure answers the following key questions that are essential for renewal status:

- Is the educational program a success?
- Are school operations effective and efficient?
- Is the school meeting its legal and other obligations?
- Does the school have excellent governance and leadership?

DCSD Renewal Timeline

Date	Task
Between March 1 and May 15 of the year prior to the charter’s expiration	The parties meet so that the district can explain the renewal process, application format and timeline, and address any questions regarding the process
June 1 of the year prior to expiration	The school formally submits the Intent to Renew letter, renewal narrative and additional data to the Office of Choice Programming
September 1 of the year prior to expiration	The Charter school submits the renewal application in Anvilar. Choice Programming Department coordinates site visit to be done by outside reviewers.
No later than November 1 of the year prior to expiration	<p>The school submits the contract appendix documents to the Office of Choice Programming which includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board Conflict of Interest form 2. ESP Agreement, if applicable 3. Request for Automatic Waivers of State Laws 4. Request for Additional Waivers of State Laws (if any) 5. Request for Waivers of District Policy (if any) 6. Preferences, Methods, Timelines and Procedures for Enrollment
November 15 of the year prior to expiration	District staff submits to the superintendent’s cabinet a renewal review and supporting data.
Prior to December district board meeting	District staff reviews the renewal recommendation and adds additional information as needed
December	<p>District board of education meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board asks questions and requests clarifications as needed. 2. Charter school responds to the staff report and recommendation. 3. Charter parents and other interested persons may address the board.
Prior to January district board meeting	District staff sends any additional written information and clarifications to the board of education
No later than February 1	District board of education acts by resolution to approve or deny the request to renew the charter
No more than 30 days after the district board decision	A notice of appeal may be filed with the State Board of Education
No more than 60 days after the notice of appeal has been filed	The State Board of Education holds a hearing and makes a decision to uphold the district’s decision or remand the decision back to the district for reconsideration

CHARTER SCHOOL WAIVER REQUEST PROCESS AND FILES

A charter school application must include a list of waivers of state statute, state rule, and DCSD policies that the applicant is requesting. For each requested waiver that is not an automatic waiver, the applicant must state the rationale for the requested waiver and the manner in which the applicant proposes to meet the intent of the waived statute, rule, or policy. A waiver of statutes, state rules, or district policies will be for the term of the charter for which the waiver is made, unless otherwise provided by applicable law. The district's waiver request process, including a list of statutes, state rules, and district policies that may be waived, is set forth in Board File LBD-R-3. The templates that applicants must use to request waivers in accordance with this provision and Board File LBD-R-3 are available on the DCSD Choice Programming Website.

A charter school may seek a waiver of certain district policies consistent with the term of its applicable charter contract and the policies of the Douglas County School District RE-1. A charter school shall be granted certain waivers from District policies upon approval of the District's Board of Education, which may include approval by the District's Board of an acceptable rationale for the waiver and replacement plan. Charter schools shall submit a waiver request of District policy through a systemized process implemented by the District's Choice Programming Office. This process shall conform to the requirements applicable to the categories of District policy identified in DCSD Board Policy LBD-R-3.

CHARTER SCHOOL ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

Schools are required to be accredited through an accreditation process yearly. The Accreditation Process for district charter schools mirrors the district procedure for our neighborhood schools, and is as follows:

Charter School Accreditation for High Performing Schools-

Accredited with Distinction- the school meets or exceeds state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a performance plan;

Accredited with Performance Plan- the school meets state expectations for attainment on the performance indicators and is required to adopt and implement a performance plan;

Main Accreditation Documentation-

1. Current School Performance Frameworks
2. Current Unified Improvement Plan

Supporting Accreditation Documentation-

1. Documentation of yearly and one time compliance e-Trainings
2. Crisis Management Documents:
 - Complete Team Documents
 - School Crisis Management Plan
 - School Safety Drill Logs
3. SAC Compliance Documents
4. Parent Surveys
5. Facility Inspection
6. Data Submission Timeline documents (i.e. audit, financials, Monitoring Report)

Supporting Information from the Office of Choice Programming

1. Contract Compliance
2. Data Submission Timeline Deadlines

Charter School Accreditation for Low-Performing Schools-

Accredited with Improvement Plan- the school has not met state expectations for attainment on the Performance Indicators and is required to adopt and implement an improvement plan;

Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan- the school has not met state expectations for attainment on the Performance Indicators and is required to adopt and implement a priority improvement plan.

Main Accreditation Documentation-

1. Current School Performance Frameworks
2. Current Unified Improvement Plan
3. District Charter School Team Visit

Supporting Accreditation Documentation-

1. Documentation of yearly and one time compliance e-Trainings
2. Crisis Management Documents:
 - Complete Team Documents
 - School Crisis Management Plan
 - School Safety Drill Logs
3. SAC Compliance Documents
4. Parent Surveys
5. Facility Inspection
6. Data Submission Timeline documents (i.e. audit, financials, Monitoring Report)

Supporting Information from the Office of Choice Programming-

1. Contract Compliance
2. Data Submission Timeline Deadlines

Charter School Accreditation for Schools on Turnaround-

Accredited with Turnaround Plan- the school has not met state expectations for attainment on the Performance Indicators and is required to adopt and implement a turnaround plan.

Main Accreditation Documentation-

1. Current School Performance Frameworks
2. Current Unified Improvement Plan
3. One-on-one meetings with school staff conducted by System Performance Office Staff
4. Possible District Charter School Team Visit

Supporting Accreditation Documentation-

1. Documentation of yearly and one time compliance e-Trainings
2. Crisis Management Documents:
 - Complete Team Documents
 - School Crisis Management Plan
 - School Safety Drill Logs

3. SAC Compliance Documents
4. Parent Surveys
5. Facility Inspection
6. Data Submission Timeline documents (i.e. audit, financials, Monitoring Report)

Supporting Information from the Office of Choice Programming-

1. Contract Compliance
2. Data Submission Timeline Deadlines

Charter School Accreditation for New Schools-

New School Definition-

A new charter school is a school that is in its first, second or third year of operation as a school.

Main Accreditation Documentation-

1. Current School Performance Frameworks (after year one)
2. Current Unified Improvement Plan
3. CSSI Team Visit Report
(District Team Visit if CSSI has not occurred by the end of the 2nd year of operation, or if the charter school has not received a start-up grant)

Supporting Accreditation Documentation-

1. Documentation of yearly and one time compliance e-Trainings
2. Crisis Management Documents:
 - Complete Team Documents
 - School Crisis Management Plan
 - School Safety Drill Logs
3. SAC Compliance Documents
4. Parent Surveys
5. Facility Inspection
6. Data Submission Timeline documents (i.e. audit, financials, Monitoring Report)

Supporting Information from the Office of Choice Programming

1. Contract Compliance
2. Data Submission Timeline Deadlines

CHARTER SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURE

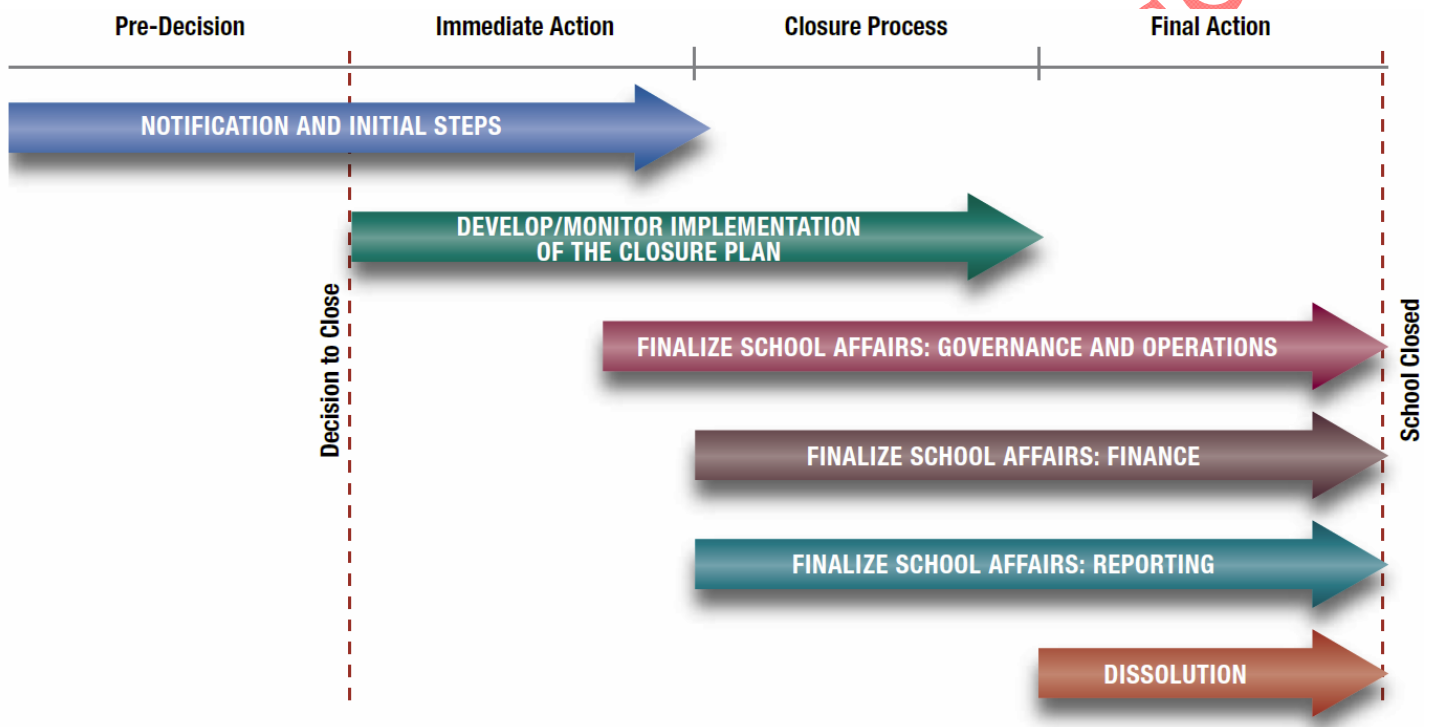
A closure of a charter school may occur when a charter school's current contract is set to expire, and the district or the charter school does not opt to renew the contract.

In addition, in some extreme circumstances the district may opt to revoke a charter school contract prior to expiration.

Closing a charter school is never easy; however, at times it is a necessary process. Evidence of failure in one or more of the following areas may provide the grounds for DCSD to close a charter school:

- Academic Underperformance
- Financial Mismanagement
- Organizational Incompetence
- Non-compliance with state and federal law or district policy
- The best interest of the students at the school

When a charter school is to be closed, timing is extremely important. In order to provide a transparent process, this timeline will be followed:



Notification and Initial Steps

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p>Notify Parents / Guardians of Closure Decision</p> <p>Within one day of the authorizer’s decision to close the charter school, authorizer staff and charter staff/board collaborate to ensure that parents / guardians are notified regarding the closure decision. Such notification includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If applicable, an explanation of the process for an appeal to the Colorado State Board of Education and possible litigation including the implications for families. 2. Assurance that instruction will continue through the end of the school year or the date when instruction will cease. 			

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Assurance that after a final decision is reached, parents/students will be assisted in the reassignment process. 4. FAQ about the charter closure process. 5. Contact information for parents/guardians with questions. 			
<p>Notify School Districts Materially Impacted</p> <p>Within two days of the authorizer’s decision to close the charter school, notify districts materially impacted by the closure decision, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possible appeals and timeline for final decision. 2. Copy of the letter sent to parents. 3. Closure FAQ. 4. Information about the plan being developed to ensure an orderly closure process.. 5. Contact information for questions. 			
<p>Review Budget</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review budget to ensure that funds are sufficient to operate the school through the end of the school year, if applicable. 2. Emphasize the legal requirement to limit expenditures to only those in the approved budget, while delaying approved expenditures that might no longer be necessary until a revised budget is approved. 3. Acknowledge that there are unique expenditures associated with closure for both the authorizer and school and that the parties will meet to identify these expenditures and funding sources. 4. Ensure that the school continues to collect revenues included in the school’s budget, if applicable. 			
<p>Meet with Charter School Faculty and Staff</p> <p>Principal and charter board chair meet with the faculty and staff to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss reasons for closure, the status of appeals/legal action and likely timeline for a final decision. 2. Emphasize importance of maintaining continuity of instruction through the end of the school year. 3. Discuss plans for helping students find new schools. 4. Identify date when last salary check will be issued, when benefits terminate, and last day of work. 5. Describe assistance, if any, that will be provided to faculty and staff to find new positions. 			
<p>Send Additional and Final Notifications</p> <p>Notify parents and affected school districts in writing after key events (e.g., denial of an appeal) and when the closure decision is final. In the letter to parents after the closure decision is final, include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The last day of instruction. 2. Any end-of-the-year activities that are planned to make the transition easier for parents and students. 3. Assistance that will be provided to families in identifying new schools. This may include a list of school options, choice fairs, individual meetings with families, and prospective school visitations. 			

Develop/Monitor Implementation of the Closure Plan

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p>Establish Transition Team, Develop Closure Plan, and Assign Roles</p> <p>Transition team includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead person from authorizer staff. 2. Charter school board chair. 3. Lead administrator from the charter school. 4. Lead finance person from the charter school. 			

Develop plan, exchange contact information and assign roles.			
Establish a Schedule for Meetings and Interim Status Reports Agree on a meeting schedule to review progress and interim, written status reports to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reassignment of students. 2. Return or distribution of assets. 3. Transfer of student records. 4. Notification to entities doing business with the school. 5. The status of the school's finances. 6. Submission of all required reports and data to the authorizer and/or state. 			
Submit Final Report Submit a final report to the authorizer detailing completion of the closure plan.			

Finalize School Affairs: Governance and Operations

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
Maintain Identifiable Location Maintain the school's current location through the winding up of its affairs or relocate its business records and remaining assets to a location with operational telephone service that has voice message capability.			
Notify Commercial Lenders / Bond Holders Within 10 days after the final decision on the charter school closure and after all appeals have been exhausted, notify banks, bond holders, etc., of the school's closure and a likely date as to when an event of default will occur as well as the projected date of the last payment by the school toward its debt.			
Terminate EMO /CMO Agreement (if applicable) Review the management agreement and take steps needed to terminate the agreement at the end of the school year or when the charter contract expires. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The management company should be asked for a final invoice and accounting, including an accounting of any retained school funds and the status of grant funds. 2. The school and the management company should agree upon how the company will continue to provide educational services until the last day of instruction. 3. The school and the management company agree when other services including business services will end. 			
Protect School Assets Protect the school's assets and any assets in the school that belong to others against theft, misappropriation and deterioration. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain existing insurance coverage on assets, including facility and vehicles, until the disposal of such assets in accordance with the closure plan. 2. Negotiate school facility insurance with entities that may take possession of school facility – lenders, mortgagors, bond holders, etc. 3. Obtain or maintain appropriate security services. Action may include moving assets to secure storage after closure or loss of facility. 			

<p>Maintain Corporate Records Maintain all corporate records related to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loans, bonds, mortgages and other financing. 2. Contracts. 3. Leases. 4. Assets and asset distribution. 5. Grants -- records relating to federal grants must be kept in accordance with 34 CFR 80.42. 6. Governance (minutes, bylaws, policies). 7. Employees (background checks, personnel files). 8. Accounting/audit, taxes and tax status, etc. 9. Personnel. 10. Employee benefit programs and benefits. 11. Any other items listed in the closure plan. <p>Determine where records will be stored after dissolution.</p>			
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Finalize School Affairs: Governance and Operations (continued)

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p>Notify Employees and Benefit Providers Formally notify all employees of termination of employment at least 60 days before closure to include date of termination of all benefits in accordance with applicable law and regulations (i.e. COBRA) and eligibility for Colorado Unemployment Insurance pursuant to any regulations of the Colorado Department of Labor. Notify benefit providers of pending termination of all employees, to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical, dental, vision plans. 2. Life insurance. 3. Cafeteria plans. 4. 403(b), retirement plans. 5. PERA. <p>Consult legal counsel as specific rules and regulations may apply to such programs.</p>			
<p>Notify Contractors and Terminate Contracts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify all contractors of school closure. 2. Retain records of past contracts and payments. 3. Terminate contracts for goods and services as of the last date such goods or services will be needed. 			
<p>Transfer Student Records and Testing Material Send student records, including final grades and evaluations, to the authorizer, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual Education Programs (IEPs) and all records regarding special education and supplemental services. 2. Student health / immunization records. 3. Attendance record. 4. Any testing materials required to be maintained by the school. 5. Student transcripts and report cards. 6. All other student records. <p>Document the transfer of records to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The number of general and special education records transferred. 2. Date of transfer. 3. Signature and printed name of the charter school representative releasing the records. 			

4. Signature and printed name of the authorizer's representative who receives the records.			
Inventory assets Inventory school assets, and identify items: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loaned from other entities. 2. Encumbered by the terms of a contingent gift, grant or donation, or a security interest. 3. Belonging to the EMO/CMO, if applicable, or other contractors. 4. Purchased with federal grants (dispose of such assets in accordance with federal regulations). 5. Purchased with Public Charter School Program startup funds (transfer assets to another charter school within the district or state). Return assets not belonging to school where appropriate documentation exists. Keep records of assets returned.			
Notify Food and Transportation Services and Cancel Contracts Cancel school district or private food and/or transportation services for summer school and the next school year.			

Finalize School Affairs: Finance

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
Review and Revise School Budget <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the school's budget and overall financial condition. 2. Make revisions that take into account closure and associated expenses while prioritizing continuity of instruction. 3. Identify acceptable use of reserve funds. 			
Maintain IR S 501(c)(3) Status Maintain IRS 501(c)(3) status, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify IRS regarding any address change. 2. File required tax returns and reports. 			
Notify Funding Sources / Charitable Partners Notify all funding sources, including charitable partners of school closure. Notify state and federal agencies overseeing the school's grants that the school will be closing.			
List all Creditors and Debtors Formulate a list of creditors and debtors and any amounts accrued and unpaid with respect to such creditor or debtor. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This list is not the same as the contractor list, above, but may include contractors. 2. Creditors include lenders, mortgage holders, bond holders, equipment suppliers, service providers and secured and unsecured creditors. A UCC search should be performed to identify secured creditors. 3. Debtors include persons who owe the school fees or credits, any lessees or sub-lessees of the school, and any person holding property of the school. 			
Notify Creditors Notify all creditors of the school's closure and request a final bill.			
Notify Debtors Contact all debtors and request payment.			
Determine PER A Obligations Contact PERA to determine remaining liabilities for employee retirement program.			

<p>Itemize Financials Review, prepare and make available the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fiscal year-end financial statements. 2. Cash analysis. 3. Bank statements for the year, investments, payables, unused checks, petty cash, bank accounts, and payroll reports including taxes. <p>Collect and void all unused checks and destroy all credit and debit cards. Close accounts after transactions have cleared.</p>			
<p>Close Out All State and Federal Grants Close out state, federal, and other grants. This includes filing any required expenditure reports or receipts and any required program reports, including disposition of grant assets.</p>			
<p>Prepare Final Financial Statement Retain an independent accountant to prepare a final statement of the status of all contracts and other obligations of the school, and all funds owed to the school, showing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All assets and the value and location thereof. 2. Each remaining creditor and amounts owed. 3. Statement that all debts have been collected or that good faith efforts have been made to collect same. 4. Each remaining debtor and the amounts owed. 			
<p>Complete Final Financial Audit Complete a financial audit of the school in accordance with the Charter Schools Act by a date to be determined by the authorizer.</p>			
<p>Reconcile with Authorizer Reconcile authorizer billings and payments, including special education payments or other "lagged" payments. If the school owes the authorizer money, it should list the authorizer as a creditor and treat it accordingly.</p>			

Finalize School Affairs: Reporting

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p>Prepare End-of-Year Reports Prepare and submit all required end-of-year reports to the authorizer.</p>			
<p>Prepare Final Report Cards and Student Records Notice Provide parents / guardians with copies of final report cards and notice of where student records will be sent along with contact information.</p>			

Dissolution

Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<p>Dissolve the Charter School</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The charter school board adopts a resolution to dissolve that indicates to whom the assets of the non-profit corporation will be distributed after all creditors have been paid. 2. Unless otherwise provided in the bylaws, the members (if any) or board votes on the resolution to dissolve. A non-profit corporation is dissolved upon the effective date of its articles of dissolution. (C.R.S. 7-134-103). 			
<p>Notify the Secretary of State</p>			

<p>After the resolution to dissolve is authorized, dissolve the corporation by delivering to the Secretary of State for filing articles of dissolution setting forth:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The name of the non-profit corporation. 2. The address of the non-profit corporation's principal office. 3. The date dissolution was authorized. 4. If dissolution was authorized by the directors, a statement to that effect. 5. If dissolution was approved by the members, a statement of the number of votes cast for the proposal to dissolve. 6. Such additional information as the Secretary of State determines is necessary or appropriate. 			
<p>Notify Known Claimants Give written notice of the dissolution to known claimants within 90 days after the effective date of the dissolution.</p>			
<p>End Corporate Existence A dissolved non-profit corporation continues its corporate existence, but may not carry on any activities except as is appropriate to wind up and liquidate its affairs, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collecting its assets. 2. Transferring, subject to any contractual or legal requirements, its assets as provided in or authorized by its articles of incorporation or bylaws. 3. Discharging or making provision for discharging its liabilities. 4. Doing every other act necessary to wind up and liquidate its assets and affairs. (C.R.S. 7-134-105). 			
<p>Notify IRS Notify the IRS of dissolution of the education corporation and its 501(c)(3) status and furnish a copy to the authorizer.</p>			

CHARTER SCHOOL PURCHASE SERVICE AGREEMENT PROCEDURE

Charter schools can purchase a number of services from the District. The services offered to charter schools are set forth in the Purchased Service Agreement, provided to charter schools each February for the next school year.

CHARTER SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES PROCEDURE

Charter schools generally provide for their own staffing for special education need in Douglas County.

CHARTER SCHOOL COMPLIANCE WITH DATA SUBMISSION BENCHMARKS

Charter schools must submit certain academic, staffing and financial data to the District on an ongoing basis. The Office of Choice Programming maintains Data Submission Benchmarks in Anvilar : <https://anvilar.com>, which is available to all charter schools.