

Office of Superintendent of Schools
Board Meeting of March 12, 2014

February 26, 2014

Valtena G. Brown, Chief Operating Officer
School Operations

**SUBJECT: FINAL READING: PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF POLICY 9800,
 CHARTER SCHOOLS**

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, announced on January 15, 2014, its intention to amend School Board Policy 9800, *Charter Schools*, at the meeting of March 12, 2014. The proposed amended policy clarifies appropriate and necessary operations and processes related to the application process, contract amendment process and the District choice platform.

The Notice of Intended Action was published in the *Miami Daily Business Review* on January 21, 2014, posted in various places for public information, and mailed to various organizations, representing persons affected by the amended policy and to individuals requesting information.

The time to request a hearing or protest the adoption of this policy elapsed on February 11, 2014.

In accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, this amended policy is presented to The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, for adoption and authorization to file the policy in the official records of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Attached are the Notice of Intended Action and policy proposed for amendment. Changes from the current policy are indicated by underscoring words to be added and ~~striking-through~~ words to be deleted.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, adopt amended Policy 9800, *Charter Schools*, and authorize the Superintendent to file the amended policy with The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, to be effective March 12, 2014.

VGB/nlb

C-101

NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, announced on January 15, 2014, its intention to amend Board Policy 9800, *Charter Schools*, at its meeting of March 12, 2014.

PURPOSE AND EFFECT: The amendments reflect clarification of the charter school application process, charter contract amendment process and the District school choice platform.

SUMMARY: To amend Board Policy 9800, *Charter Schools*, to clarify District processes.

SPECIFIC LEGAL AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH RULEMAKING IS AUTHORIZED: 1001.41(1), (2); 1001.42(25); 1001.43(10), F.S.

LAW IMPLEMENTED, INTERPRETED, OR MADE SPECIFIC: 39.203, Chapter 120; 218.39; 218.391; 218.503(1); 286.23; 1002.33; 1002.331; 1002.345; 1011.60(1); 1013.62, F.S.

IF REQUESTED, A HEARING WILL BE HELD DURING THE BOARD MEETING OF March 12, 2014, which begins at 1:00 p.m., in the School Board Auditorium, 1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132. Persons requesting such a hearing or who wish to provide information regarding the statement of estimated regulatory costs, or provide a proposal for a lower cost regulatory alternative as provided by Section 120.541(1), F.S., must do so, in writing by February 11, 2014, to the Superintendent of Schools, Room 912, at the same address.

ANY PERSON WHO DECIDES TO APPEAL THE DECISION MADE BY The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, with respect to the action will need to ensure the preparation of a verbatim record of the proceedings, including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based (Section 286.0105, Florida Statute).

A COPY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDED POLICY is available at cost to the public for inspection and copying, in the Citizen Information Center, Room 158, 1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132.

Originator: Mrs. Valtena G. Brown
Date: January 14, 2014

The School Board of Miami-Dade County

Bylaws & Policies

9800 - CHARTER SCHOOLS

The School Board ("Sponsor" or "Board") shall supervise and oversee all charter schools within Miami-Dade County. Approved charter schools are public schools and shall receive goods and services from the Sponsor as required by law and/or as specified through a separate contract with the Sponsor.

Application Procedure

A. Application Submission Guidelines

1. Draft Application

An applicant may submit a draft charter school application, using the most recent state model application form, on or before May 1, with an application fee of \$500, made payable to Miami-Dade County Public Schools in the form of a cashier's check. The District will provide feedback on the application by July 1 but is not responsible for providing feedback on deficiencies resulting from changes in policies or law subsequent to review. The applicant shall submit any final application by the August 1 deadline pursuant to law and this policy.

2. Final Application

Final applications shall be submitted pursuant to the Sponsor's application packet. Applications must be received by the Sponsor no later than 4:30 p.m., on or before the annual submission deadline, August 1. If the submission deadline falls on a non-business day, the deadline shall be postponed to 4:30 p.m. on the next business day. Applications submitted electronically will not be accepted.

Applications shall be submitted to:

Charter School Support
1450 Northeast 2nd Avenue
Miami, Florida 33132

- a. Individuals, organizations, institutions, and groups anticipating submission of an application are urged to contact the Office of Charter School Support (CSS) prior to requesting an application.
- b. The Sponsor and/or any of its designees shall not take unlawful reprisal against another Board employee because that employee is either directly or indirectly involved with a charter school application.
- c. Applicants must submit an application on the most current Model Florida Charter School Application template with any other forms, templates, or appendices required by the Sponsor.

- d. The applicant and Sponsor may mutually agree, in writing, to extend the statutory timeline to consider the charter application. Such agreement shall detail the extension date or timeframe.
- e. Charter schools shall not use or bear the name of an existing traditional public, charter, or private/parochial school in Miami-Dade County.
- f. The Board may deny an application submitted by a high-performing charter school if the Sponsor demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that the application failed to meet one or more of the statutory criteria for a high-performing charter school.

B. Final Application Evaluation Process

- 1. The District shall review all final applications using the current required evaluation instrument developed by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) and may also review additional information required by the Sponsor.
- 2. The District shall evaluate timely final applications as submitted. Applications cannot be amended and no documentation or unsolicited information will be accepted or considered after submission. However, the District shall allow the applicant, upon receipt of written notification, seven (7) calendar days to make technical or non-substantive corrections and clarifications of grammatical or typographical errors and to add missing signatures, if such errors are identified by the Sponsor as cause to deny.
- 3. The Sponsor shall deny any application t (a) that does not comply with the statutory requirements and/or Sponsor's instructions for charter school applications; or (b) where the applicant has made a material misrepresentation or false statement or concealed an essential or material fact in the application and/or during the application evaluation process.
- 4. Additional Information
 - a. The Sponsor shall solicit and consider information to evaluate the applicant's ability to operate a charter school, such as: (1) history and background of individual applicants and/or founding/governing boards and its individual members including, but not limited to, a demonstration of the professional experience or competence of those individuals or organizations applying to operate the charter school or those hired or retained to perform professional services; 2) the description of clearly delineated responsibilities and the policies and practices needed to effectively manage the charter school; (3) desired location and facility information; (4) whether the applicant currently operates charter schools in Florida; and, (5) whether the proposed school will be a replication of an existing school design. A description of internal audit procedures and establishment of controls

to ensure that the financial resources are properly managed must be included. This information shall be used to evaluate the applicant's ability to operate a charter school and considered when recommending approval or denial of an application.

- b. The applicant may provide evidence of prior experience in establishing and operating public charter schools. An applicant's history of establishing and operating charter schools shall be considered when recommending approval or denial of an application.
 - c. If applicant is requesting to replicate a High Performing charter school, the applicant shall:
 - 1) submit a copy of the required letter from the Commissioner of Education verifying High Performing Status of the school to be replicated;
 - 2) provide evidence of substantial replication of the educational program of the existing High Performing school;
 - 3) clearly articulate in the body of the application that the proposed school is being submitted as a replication under F.S. 1002.331 (3)(a); and
 - 4) provide information substantiating that the applicant has not submitted a high performing replication application to any other school district in Florida during the current application cycle.
5. Technical Review - The technical review may involve initial review of applications that comply with the Sponsor's application instructions and recommendations to the Application Review Committee (ARC). If significant deficiencies are found, the application will not be reviewed by ARC but will be forwarded directly to the Superintendent with a recommendation for denial. Applications may also be rejected without review or action by the Sponsor if they are in violation of the law.
- a. The individuals conducting the technical review may include representatives from the following District departments, as deemed necessary by the Sponsor, to properly review each application:
 - 1) Assessment, Research and Data Analysis and Program Evaluation
 - 2) Curriculum and Instruction (including core subject areas, ELL, SPED, and Gifted)
 - 3) Finance (including Budget, Accounting, Audit, and Risk Management)
 - 4) School Operations (including Attendance, Food & Nutrition, and Transportation)

5) Facilities

6) Human Capital

- b. Review by other departments may be required based on the type of application submitted.
6. Application Review Committee (ARC) - The purpose of this committee is to identify deficiencies in the written application, appendices, historical performance, and/or other areas that require clarification to fully evaluate the quality of the application or the capacity of the applicant to properly implement the proposed plan.

Applicants will be notified and requested to attend the review. The applicant shall have no more than ~~three~~five individuals at the review who may participate in the process. Participation means providing verbal responses directly to questions and concerns raised by Committee members. At least ~~one~~two founding governing board members shall be present and not more than a total of ~~two~~three (23) other individuals (i.e., consultants, lawyers or management company representatives). Participation from other meeting attendees ~~shall not~~may be allowed at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

The ARC may, at its sole discretion, evaluate the application without any additional input from the applicant if no founding governing board member of the charter school is available. The ARC may consider prior technical review comments and recommendations. By majority vote, the ARC shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent to approve or deny each application presented. All applications reviewed by the ARC will be submitted to the Sponsor by the Superintendent with a recommendation for approval or denial.

- a. The ARC shall include Superintendent's cabinet members or appropriate designees from the following areas of expertise:
- 1) School Operations (Chair)
 - 2) Assessment, Research and Data Analysis
 - 3) Federal and State Compliance
 - 4) Charter School Support
 - 5) Curriculum and Instruction
 - 6) Diversity Equity and Excellence Advisory Committee
 - 7) Facilities
 - 8) Financial Operations
 - 9) Human Capital

10) Management and Compliance Audits (non-voting)

11) Exceptional Student Education

12) Bi-Lingual Education

- b. The Superintendent shall designate the Chair, who will be a non-voting member except in the case of a tie.
- c. A majority of the entire membership shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required for any ARC recommendations.

C. Appeals of Application Denials

- 1. Pursuant to State law, if an application is denied, the Sponsor shall, within ten (10) calendar days after the denial, articulate in writing the specific reasons for the denial, based upon good cause, and shall provide the letter of denial and supporting documentation to the applicant and the Florida Department of Education (FDOE). An applicant may appeal the Board's failure to timely act upon, or denial of, an application pursuant to State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.0781, F.A.C. If the applicant is a municipality or a legal entity organized under the laws of this state, the decision to appeal must be made in a legally advertised public meeting with a quorum present. Official meeting minutes or an adopted resolution documenting the action and evidence of proper meeting notice must be submitted to the Sponsor. The applicant shall also file the appeal with the School Board Clerk.
- 2. If a high-performing charter school application is denied, the District must, within ten (10) calendar days after the denial, articulate in writing the specific reasons based upon the statutory criteria and provide the notice of denial and supporting documentation to the applicant and the FDOE. The applicant may appeal the denial directly to the State Board of Education pursuant to State law.

Charter Contract and Contract Negotiation Process

A charter school has no authority to operate until the terms and conditions for operation have been set forth and mutually agreed upon by the Sponsor and applicant in a written contract called a charter. The Contract Review Committee (CRC) shall annually review and approve a standard contract that is consistent with this policy and state law which shall be used as the basis for all charters approved under this policy. New contracts and any amendments that materially alter the contract, if approved by the CRC and recommended by the Superintendent, shall be presented to the Sponsor.

A. Charter Contract Review Committee (CRC)

- 1. If the parties are unable to agree on the terms and conditions or the CRC recommends denial of the contract for other reasons, no recommendation shall be forwarded to the Superintendent. In that case, CSS will notify the applicant in writing.

The applicant shall have no more than ~~three~~ five individuals at the review who may participate in the process. Participation means providing direct responses to questions and/or concerns raised by Committee members and actively negotiating terms of the agreement. At least ~~one~~ two governing board members shall be present and not more than a total of ~~two~~ three (23) other individuals (i.e., consultants, lawyers, or management company representatives). Participation from other meeting attendees ~~shall not~~ may be allowed at the discretion of the Committee Chair.

2. The CRC shall include Superintendent's cabinet members or designees, from the following areas of expertise:
 - a. School Operations (Chair)
 - b. Assessment, Research and Data Analysis
 - c. Federal and State Compliance
 - d. Charter School Support
 - e. Curriculum and Instruction
 - f. Facilities
 - g. Financial Operations
 - h. Grants Administration
 - i. Human Capital
 - j. Management and Compliance Audits (non-voting)

The Superintendent shall designate the Chair, who will be a non-voting member except in the case of a tie. A majority of the entire membership shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required for any CRC recommendations.

3. Prerequisites for considering a contract or negotiating a contract:
 - a. Evidence of a proper legal structure (e.g., articles of incorporation, bylaws, municipal charter). The applicant shall be a not for profit organized pursuant to F.S. Chapter 617.
 - b. Actual location and evidence that a facility has been secured for the term of the charter pursuant to this policy.
 - c. If more than one school will operate on the site, the applicant shall identify the grade levels, number of students in each grade level and the total number of students enrolled in each school.
 - d. The sponsor may solicit additional information about the proposed facility from the landlord, mortgagee or appropriate jurisdictional agencies.

B. Request to Extend Negotiations/School Opening

1. The applicant and Sponsor may mutually agree to extend the statutory timeline to negotiate and consider approval of the charter contract for a period not to exceed one (1) year from the approved opening date in the charter school application. Requests shall be submitted to Charter School Operations, in writing, by an authorized agent of the charter school, detailing the reason for the requested extension. The decision whether or not to extend the negotiation period or defer opening shall be at the sole discretion of the Sponsor.
2. If the statutory timeline to negotiate and enter into a charter contract is extended and prior to resuming negotiations, the applicant shall provide an updated budget, application and any revisions necessitated by the delay. The term of the contract shall be adjusted to reflect cancellation of one year of the term.
3. The application shall be automatically rescinded, without further action by the School Board, if the applicant does not enter into contract negotiations or open the school within: (1) the timeframe specified by law, or (2) the date of extension which has been mutually agreed upon in writing by both parties.
4. Unless extended pursuant to this policy, the applicant shall open the charter school at the beginning of the Sponsor's next school year following the approval of the charter school application, subject also to the 15-day requirement for submitting facilities documentation in this Policy.
5. An approved contract shall be automatically revoked, without further action by the School Board, if the applicant does not open the school on: (1) the first day of school of the initial school year indicated in the contract, or (2) the first day of the school year indicated in the approved deferral, subject also to the 15-day requirement for submitting facilities documentation in this Policy..

C. Initial Charter Contract

1. Initial contracts shall be for a term of four (4) or five (5) years unless a longer term is specifically required or allowed by law.
2. Contract Prerequisites

CRC shall not be scheduled until all required documentation has been successfully submitted. No CRC shall be scheduled after the Sponsor's June Board meeting except at the sole discretion of the Sponsor.

- a. Evidence of a proper legal structure to support the school's governance and tax exemption status. (e.g., articles of incorporation, bylaws, municipal charter, 501(C)3 determination letter). The

applicant shall be a not for profit organized pursuant to Chapter 617, F.S.

- b. Actual location and evidence that a facility has been secured for the term of the charter.

- 1) Facility documentation:

- Leased Facility - Evidence for a leased facility may include, but is not limited to: (1) a fully executed lease agreement signed by the duly authorized member of the governing board reflecting the parties to the agreement, term, rental rate, any and all expenses that will be the responsibility of the charter school, cancellation provisions and any other terms and conditions impacting the usability or financial viability of the site, including, but not limited to, the master lease if the lease is with a sublessor, or (2) an original signed and dated letter of intent on letterhead stationery from the duly authorized entity able and willing to lease a location/facility to the charter school. Such letter is to include, but is not limited to, the address of the facility, folio number, date of availability, proposed tenant improvements and party responsible, proposed lease term (including options to extend), proposed rental rate for the initial term, and any other terms and conditions impacting the usability or financial viability of the site, including, but not limited to, the master lease if the lease is with a sublessor.

- Purchased facility - Evidence for a purchased facility may include, but is not limited to, a copy of the recorded property deed showing ownership in the name of the charter school, and a current Opinion of Title for the parcel.

- 2) The Sponsor may solicit additional information about the proposed facility from the applicant, landlord, facility and/or property owner, mortgagee or appropriate jurisdictional agencies.
 - 3) If more than one school will operate on the site, the applicant shall identify the grade levels, number of students in each grade level and the total number of students enrolled in each school.

- c. Evidence of sufficient demand and the demographics of the immediate area to support enrollment projections.

D. Charter Contract Amendments

- 1. There shall be no modification of any contractual provision(s) of the standard charter contract language, unless mutually agreed by both parties in writing. All amendments must be negotiated in compliance with the contract negotiation process. Unilateral modification made by the charter school is grounds for termination or non-renewal.

2. Amendments may be considered by the Sponsor if either party can demonstrate that an amendment is necessary to protect the health, safety, or welfare of the students and/or the school has satisfactory academic performance, fiscal management, and operational compliance.
3. Unless otherwise specifically allowed by law, all contract amendment requests shall be submitted in writing to Charter School Support by March 1, by an authorized agent of the charter school. Only requests pertaining to the health, safety, or welfare of students will be considered after March 1. The Sponsor is not obligated to agree to any amendment requests unless required by law.
4. The charter school shall provide evidence of governing board approval for all requested amendments in the form of a governing board resolution or copy of official governing board meeting minutes that specifically detail the governing board support and the amendment request.
5. At the sole discretion of the Sponsor, additional information or documentation may be requested for consideration of any amendment request.
6. Any charter school seeking an amendment must demonstrate the following:
 - a. success of the current academic program;
 - b. achievement of its goals and objectives, related to accountability standards;
 - c. viability of the organization and school;
 - d. compliance with terms of the charter;
 - e. ~~written evidence from at least 51% of school parent households supporting each amendment request, including parent contact information;~~
 - f. e. evidence that the school will continue serving the existing currently enrolled students without negative impact to that population; and
 - g. f. a copy of the School's most current Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, and all schedules and attachments.

Exceptions may be made by the Sponsor for emergency amendment requests affecting the health, safety and welfare of the school's students. The Sponsor may deny an amendment request if the legal entity that holds the charter has an approved application(s) for a charter school(s) that has not yet opened, has a charter school(s) that fails to demonstrate any of items (a) – (d), and/or are under investigation by any investigative authority. The Sponsor may also deny amendments that change the

legal entity holding the contract and with whom the Sponsor has initially contracted.

7. Additional Requirements for Specific Types of Amendment Requests

a. Education Program Amendments

Significant changes in the curriculum and changes in grade levels (except for high-performing charter schools) constitute a change in the educational program and shall require an amendment which may include submission of a revised charter school application pursuant to the initial application process. Official written notification from the governing board must be provided to CSS by March 1 if the school intends to eliminate grade levels in the current contract.

Requests for such amendments shall include the following information and supporting documentation:

- 1) justification for change;
- 2) effective date of the change; and
- 3) evidence that financial implications, feasibility, facility, and student access issues have been addressed, including provision of required resources, staff, and materials; and-
- 3)4) (i) written evidence from at least 33% of school parent households supporting the amendment request, including parent contact information, or (ii) evidence from a publicly noticed meeting that a majority of school parents households in attendance demonstrated support for the amendment request.

A charter school designated as high-performing pursuant to state law shall notify Sponsor in writing by March 1st, of the preceding school year, of its intent to expand the grade levels it serves the following year. The written notice shall specify the grade levels that will be added and redistribution of enrollment. Failure to timely notify the Sponsor will preclude the school from changing its grade levels under this provision.

b. Location Amendments

- 1) Changes in location or addition of a location shall include the following information and supporting documentation:
 - (a) description of location, including identification as permanent or temporary, and if the relocation will be temporary, the request shall include the period of time during which the school will be at the temporary location;

- (b) effective date of the relocation;
- (c) evidence that financial implications, feasibility, facility, and student access issues have been addressed;
- (d) (i) written evidence from at least 5133% of school parent households supporting each the amendment request, including parent contact information, or (ii) evidence from a publicly noticed meeting that a majority of school parents households in attendance demonstrated support for the amendment request; and
- (e) evidence of the school's property interest in the facility (owner or lessee).

- 2) The Sponsor is not obligated to agree to requests for additional facilities, campuses, and/or locations associated with a charter school's operations.
- 3) The school shall not change or add facilities or locations at any time during the term of this contract without prior approval of the Sponsor through the contract amendment process. Violation of this provision constitutes a unilateral amendment or modification of this contract and good cause for termination.
- 4) If the request for a location amendment involves a facility in which other schools are operating, the names of the school(s), the grade levels, number of classrooms, number of students in each grade level, and the total number of students enrolled in each school shall be included in the request, in addition to the information and documentation described in paragraphs a and b above.
- 5) No later than fifteen (15) days prior to the opening of schools or the initial use of the facility by the school, the school shall have an approved contract and evidence of all necessary permits, licenses, zoning, use approval, facility certification and other approvals required for use of the facility by the local government.

c. Enrollment Capacity Amendments

Changes in enrollment capacity shall include the following information and supporting documentation:

- 1) justification for change;
- 2) effective date of the change;
- 3) evidence of proper facility approvals and/or allowable facility capacity;

- 4) evidence that financial implications, feasibility, facility, and student access issues have been addressed; and
- 5) evidence of demand.

A charter school designated as high-performing pursuant to State law shall notify the Sponsor in writing by March 1st, of the preceding school year, of its intent to increase enrollment the following year. The written notice shall specify the number of students by which the enrollment will increase, by grade level. Failure to timely notify the Sponsor will preclude the school from amending its enrollment.

d. Management Company Contract Amendments

All proposed amendments to the contract between the school and the management company must be submitted to the Sponsor prior to execution. Material changes to the original mission of the school's scope of services, or in the Management Company, may require an amendment to this contract.

8. The CRC shall be convened to negotiate any significant amendments or any changes in the contract that significantly deviate from the standard charter contract language.
9. Except certain amendments such as amendments necessitated by Sponsor policy amendments, high performing charter school amendment requests pursuant to s.1002.331, F.S., and other amendments as determined by the Sponsor, whenever a contract is amended or renewed, it shall be updated to comply with this policy and the current standard charter contract.
10. Following School Board approval, the Superintendent is authorized to negotiate and execute contract amendments and addenda on behalf of the School Board after the School Board approves policy changes that are referenced in charter school contracts.

Pre-Opening Requirements

No later than fifteen (15) days prior to the initial use of the facility by the school, the school shall have an approved contract and provide evidence of all necessary permits, licensing, zoning, use approval, facility certification and other approvals required for use of the facility by the local government. Failure to comply shall result in automatic rescission of the contract, with no further action by the Sponsor.

School Governance/Management

- A. Charter schools shall organize or be operated by a non-profit organized pursuant to F.S. Chapter 617, a municipality, or another public entity as provided by law.

B. Charter School's Governing Board Requirements

1. The charter school's governing board shall be solely responsible for the operation of the charter school which includes, but is not limited to, school operational policies; academic accountability; and financial accountability.
2. Each charter school governing board shall appoint a school representative to facilitate parental involvement, conflict resolution, provide access to information, assist parents and others with questions and concerns, and resolve disputes. The representative must reside in Miami-Dade County and the representative's name and contact information must be provided in writing to parents of children enrolled in the school at least annually and must also be prominently posted on the charter school's website.
3. The charter school's governing board shall hold at least two (2) public meetings per school year in Miami-Dade County. All governing board meetings must be noticed, open and accessible to the public and attendees must be provided the opportunity to receive information and provide input regarding the charter school's operations. The appointed representative and the principal or director must be physically present at each meeting.
4. Governing board members must:
 - a. notify the Sponsor of changes in membership within forty-eight (48) hours of change; and
 - b. successfully fulfill a background check by the Sponsor, as specified by law, within thirty (30) days of appointment.

Costs of background screening shall not be borne by the Sponsor.
5. Governing board members shall develop and approve by-laws and policies which govern the operations of the board and the charter school prior to execution of the charter contract and annually consult with charter school staff to refine overall policy decision-making of the charter school regarding curriculum, financial management, and internal controls.
6. Governing board members shall not be an employee of the charter school, management company, or receive compensation, directly or indirectly, from the charter school's operations, including but not limited to: grant funds; lease/mortgage payments; or contracted service fees.
7. Governing board members shall participate in FDOE sponsored charter school governance training pursuant to law and to ensure that each board member is aware of his/her duties and responsibilities.

8. Dispute Procedures (Sponsor versus Charter School Governing Board)

Application, renewal, and termination decisions are not subject to this dispute resolution process and must follow the procedures in the charter school statute and the charter contract.

- a. The Sponsor and the charter school agree that the existence and the details of a contract dispute notwithstanding, both parties shall continue without delay their performance under the charter contract, except for any performance which may be directly affected by such dispute. However, the Sponsor may withhold charter school payments for non-compliance pursuant to the contract while a dispute is pending.
 - b. Either party shall notify the other party that a dispute exists between them. The notification shall be in writing and shall identify the article and section of the contract that is in dispute and the grounds for the position that such article and section is in dispute. The matter shall be immediately submitted to the Sponsor and the charter school's director for further consideration and discussion to attempt to resolve the dispute.
 - c. Should the representatives named in paragraph (ii) be unable to resolve the dispute within ten (10) days of the date of notification by one to the other of the existence of such dispute, then the matter may be submitted by either party to the Superintendent and to the school's governing board chair for further consideration and discussion to attempt to resolve the dispute.
 - d. Should the parties still be unable to resolve their dispute within thirty (30) days of the date of notification by one to the other of the existence of such dispute, then the matter may be resolved as provided by law.
9. Conflict Resolution (Charter School versus Parents/Legal Guardians, Employees, and Vendors)
- a. Charter schools shall adopt a conflict resolution process that has been approved by the Sponsor. All conflicts between the charter school and the parents/legal guardians of the students enrolled at the charter school shall be handled by the charter school or its governing board pursuant to the school's approved dispute resolution process.
 - b. Evidence of each parent's/guardian's acknowledgement of the charter school's Parent Conflict Resolution Process shall be available for review upon request by the Sponsor.
 - c. All charter school governing boards shall notify their employees, in writing, that charter school employees are not School Board employees and are subject to the conditions, standards, and expectations established by the charter school's governing board. All

conflicts between the charter school and the employees of the charter school shall be handled by the charter school or its governing board.

- d. All conflicts between the charter school and vendors of the charter school shall be handled by the charter school or its governing board.
 - e. The Sponsor shall be provided with the name and contact information of the parties involved in the charter school's conflict resolution process. Representatives of the school's contracted vendors or entities (e.g. education service providers, management companies, consultants) may not serve as the conflict resolution contact for conflicts between the school and parents. The Sponsor shall be notified immediately of any change in the contact information.
10. Each charter school governing board will develop and implement principal and teacher evaluation systems and performance pay pursuant to law.

C. Management Companies/Education Service Provider

- 1. If a management company/education service provider or a combination of contracted professionals will be managing the charter school, the contract(s) between the charter school and company(ies) shall be submitted to the Sponsor for review prior to the approval of the charter school's contract. If a decision to hire any of these entities occurs subsequent to the execution of the charter contract or amendment, the contract(s) between the charter school and company(ies) shall be submitted to the Sponsor before any payment is made to any of the entities.
- 2. Any amendments to these contracts shall be submitted to the Sponsor for approval prior to execution by the charter school. A copy of all executed contracts must be provided to the Sponsor within the timeframe provided by the charter contract.
- 3. All management company/education service provider contracts with the charter school must make it clear that the charter governing body shall retain and exercise continuing oversight over all charter school operations. The contracts must provide the ability for the charter school to terminate the contract and that the management company/education service provider must comply with the school's charter contract with the Sponsor. Additionally, all management company/education service provider contracts with charter schools shall contain clearly defined performance indicators for evaluating the management company/education service provider, initial contract execution date, and renewal amendment provisions. Any default or breach of the terms of the charter contract by the management company(ies)/education service providers shall constitute a default or breach of the charter contract by the charter school.

4. Neither employees of the management company/education service provider nor members of the management company's/education service provider's, employees' families, as defined by s.1002.33(24)(6)2, F.S., shall serve on the charter school's governing board or serve as officers of the Corporation.
5. The District may, at its sole determination, provide management services to a charter school through a separately negotiated management agreement.

D. Charter School Employees

1. A charter school shall disqualify instructional personnel and school administrators, as defined in F.S. 1012.01, from employment in any position that requires direct contact with students if the personnel or administrators are ineligible for such employment under F.S. 1012.315.
2. Charter school personnel may not appoint, employ, promote, or advance any relative, or advocate for appointment, employment, promotion, or advancement of any relative to a position in the charter school in which the personnel are serving or over which the personnel exercises jurisdiction or control pursuant to F.S. 1002.33.
3. Before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that requires direct contact with students, a charter school shall conduct employment history checks of each of the personnel's or administrators' previous employer(s), screen the instructional personnel or school administrators through use of the educator screening tools described in F.S. 1001.10(5), and document the findings. If unable to contact a previous employer, the charter school must document efforts to contact the employer.
4. Employees, representatives, agents, subcontractors, vendors, third party service providers, or suppliers who are permitted access on school grounds when students are present, who have direct contact with students or who have access to or control of school funds must meet level 2 screening requirements as described in F.S. 1012.32 and 435.04.
5. School employees shall not be hired prior to the Sponsor's receipt and review of the fingerprinting and Level 2 background screening results of the charter school applicants from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Potential school employees shall submit official court dispositions for criminal offenses of moral turpitude listed as part of their fingerprint results. The school shall not to hire applicants whose fingerprint check and Level 2 screening results reveal non-compliance with standards of good moral character as determined by the Sponsor.
6. The school agrees to conduct general drug screening on all applicants for instructional and non-instructional positions with the school, including contracted personnel, in compliance with Policy 1124, Drug-Free Workplace, Policy 3124, and Policy 4124 and the Miami-Dade County

Public Schools Drug-Free Workplace Technical Guide. School employees shall not be hired prior to the Sponsor's receipt and review of drug screening results. The School shall not hire applicants who have received a negative drug screening result.

7. Either the charter school or the applicant must pay the cost of background screening.

School Operations

- A. The charter school shall comply with the Charter School Benchmarks, as disseminated by the Sponsor for each school year.
- B. The charter school shall utilize the Charter School Compliance Monitoring System (CSCMS), or any other monitoring software or compliance monitoring procedure required by the Sponsor within the timelines specified.
- C. The Sponsor may document, in writing, any discrepancies or deficiencies—whether fiscal, educational, or related to school climate—and the steps and timelines for correction and additional monitoring. At a minimum, copies will be provided to the charter school's governing board chair, charter school principal and appropriate Sponsor staff.
- D. The charter school shall obtain the appropriate facility capacity approvals from the jurisdictional authority where the facility is located (i.e., county, municipality, or both). Only where a municipality is unable to issue an official determination of allowable occupancy, the charter school may submit an official document from the municipality affirming that it is unable to issue an official determination of allowable capacity and deferring to a Registered Architect to establish allowable occupancy. In that event only, the Registered Architect may submit an original letter attesting to the allowable occupancy of the school and bearing the signature, seal, and license number of the Architect. The Sponsor may withhold monthly payments for FTE for enrollment that exceeds the capacity specified by the charter contract or approved facility capacity.
- E. The charter school's calendar will be consistent with the beginning of the Sponsor's calendar for every school year and must provide instruction for the minimum number of days and minutes required by law for other public schools. Should the charter school elect to provide a summer program or year-round school, the charter school shall notify the Sponsor, in writing, each year to ensure appropriate record keeping.
- F. The School may choose to provide a summer school program using state allocated funds. All students attending a summer school session must be reported in FTE Survey 1 and Survey 4, as appropriate. If a student enrolled in the School attends any of the Sponsor's summer school programs, the

School shall reimburse the Sponsor for the cost of each student's summer school program. If the School fails to comply with this provision, the Sponsor may deduct the appropriate amount from the School's subsequent FTE payments or federal funding payments as appropriate.

G. Code of Student Conduct (COSC), Student Handbooks, Curriculum Bulletins, and Student/Parent Contracts

1. Only the Sponsor may expel a student.
2. The charter school shall follow the Sponsor's COSC or an alternate code of conduct approved by the Sponsor. The Sponsor shall be provided a copy of an approved alternate student code of conduct annually. Any amendments must be approved by the Sponsor prior to implementation. Evidence of governing board approval is required for amendments proposed by the school.
3. Any student/parent handbook, curriculum bulletin, and student/parent contract shall also be submitted to the Sponsor for approval prior to implementation. Any amendments must be approved by the Sponsor, prior to implementation. Evidence of governing board approval is required for all amendments proposed by the school. The school may not persuade a parent to voluntarily withdraw their child or involuntarily withdraw, dismiss or transfer a student, unless the withdrawal or transfer is accomplished after appropriate due process is provided and according to the approved Code of Student Conduct.
4. The charter school may be required to provide proof of parent/guardian's receipt of student code of conduct, handbook, or parent contract.
5. Violations of parent contracts shall not result in the student's involuntary transfer, withdrawal, dismissal, or forfeiture of current or future enrollment/re-enrollment. The school shall not condition a student's enrollment on the parent signing any contracts that include any of the prohibitions described in this section.
6. The school may not require, or determine the amount of, monetary donations in lieu of volunteer hours or other parental obligations.

H. Enrollment Lottery and Wait List Documentation

The School shall maintain documentation of each enrollment lottery conducted, as well as any student wait lists that are generated for a period of three (3) years, or until applicable audits are completed, and make them available to the Sponsor upon request.

I. Charter School Student Transfers

Students shall only be transferred pursuant to Policy 5131, Student Transfers. The school shall not transfer students unless the parent has specifically consented in writing to each individual transfer at the time of the transfer.

1. The parent must be given the option to remain in the school in which the student is currently enrolled.
2. General consent for student transfer is prohibited (e.g. consent included in a parent contract).
3. The transfer form used by the School must be approved by the Sponsor prior to use.

J. Food Service and Transportation

Transportation and food services shall be provided by the charter school according to District, State, and Federal laws, rules, and regulations.

K. Facility Leases

1. If a charter school will be leasing or subleasing a facility, the executed contract(s) between the charter school and landlord or sublessor, and the executed contract between the sublessor and the lessor, or facility owner, if applicable, shall be submitted to the Sponsor for review at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the initial opening day of classes. The lease agreement shall be for the term of the charter contract. The lease shall be signed by the authorized member of the governing board as attested by the official governing board meeting minutes and/or corporate bylaws. In compliance with section 196.1983, F.S., the charter school shall obtain from the landlord and provide to the Sponsor, an affidavit from the owner of the leased property certifying that the property is exempt from ad valorem taxes, and documenting how the school shall receive full benefit of the exemption. In compliance with section 286.23, F.S., the School shall obtain from the landlord and provide to the Sponsor an affidavit from the owner of the leased property which shall include the required disclosure information.
2. Any amendments to the lease shall be submitted by the School to the Sponsor for review prior to execution.
3. A copy of all executed contracts must be provided to the Sponsor within the timeframe provided by law and/or charter contract.
4. Any default or breach of the terms of the charter contract by the lessor/sublessor shall constitute a default or breach of the charter contract by the charter school.
5. At its sole discretion, the Sponsor may provide facilities to a District-managed charter school pursuant to a separate lease or use agreement.

L. Academic Accountability

1. The Sponsor shall monitor all approved charter schools. District administrators, staff and all Board members shall have free and open access to the charter school at all times.
2. The Sponsor shall monitor adherence to the educational and related programs as specified in the approved application, curriculum,

instructional methods, any distinctive instructional techniques to be used, reading programs and specialized instruction for students who are reading below grade level, compliance with State standards, assessment accountability, and achievement of long- and short-term goals. An analysis comparing the charter school's standardized test scores to those of similar student populations attending other public schools in the District will also be conducted.

3. The charter school shall make annual progress reports to the Sponsor as indicated by the Sponsor's Charter School Benchmarks.
4. Exceptional Student Education
 - a. Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students shall be educated in the least restrictive environment. The charter school shall ensure that ESE students are provided with programs and services implemented in accordance with Federal, State, and local policies and procedures and specifically, the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other related statutes and State Board of Education rules.
 - b. The charter school shall be responsible for the cost and delivery of all educational and related services indicated on a student's IEP, EP, or Section 504 Plan.
 - c. The Sponsor shall initially evaluate students referred for potential special education and gifted placement in accordance with Federal and State statutes.
 - d. Non-compliance with these requirements shall result in the Sponsor's withholding of subsequent payments to the charter school without interest (including State capital outlay payments), and may result in non-renewal or termination for good cause.
5. English Language Learners (ELL) -- Students who are of limited proficiency in English will be served by ESOL certified personnel who will follow the Sponsor's Limited English Proficient Plan, which meets the requirements of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) et al. v. State Board of Education Consent Decree.
6. All charter schools shall submit a School Improvement Plan to the Sponsor that maintains or raises student academic achievement within the timelines specified by the Sponsor and the FLDOE.

M. Financial Accountability

1. In order to provide comparable financial information, charter schools shall maintain all financial records in accordance with the accounts and codes prescribed in the most recent issuance of the publication titled, Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools. Charter school governing boards shall also annually adopt and maintain an operating budget as required by F.S. 1002.33(9)(h). Charter schools shall provide annual financial reports and program cost report

information in the State-required formats for inclusion in the Sponsor's reporting in compliance with F.S. 1011.60(1) and 1002.33(9)(g). The financial statements shall be prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles using governmental accounting, regardless of corporate structure F.S. 1002.33(9)(g). The annual financial audit must be in the State-required format.

2. First year charter schools may be required to provide the Sponsor any of the following, which may be in addition to information otherwise required by law:
 - a. A sensitivity analysis and financial plan based on enrollment of fifty percent (50%), seventy-five percent (75%), and 100% of projected capacity.
 - b. Cash flow projections for the first year, displayed by month, and a plan to fund any cash flow shortfalls, updated monthly.
 - c. Contingency plans to replace any loss of State funds for both operation and capital expenditures.
 - d. Within forty-five (45) days of month end, reconciliations of all bank accounts, which must include a copy of the entire bank statement of each account, must be attached to the bank reconciliation.

3. Title I: Upon District Title I Program designation, a memorandum of record will be mailed directly to the governing board chairperson, for the upcoming school year's Title I Program budget. The school shall complete and submit to Title I Administration for approval the school's Title I Budget Appropriation Details Form for the upcoming school year using the Title I allocation within specified Title I Programs as listed in the memorandum of record. The budget form will be returned to the school for expenditures as authorized. If a Title I Program budget amendment becomes necessary, the school must resubmit the request to the Title I Administration on the approved Budget Appropriation Details Form, thirty (30) days in advance of the identified need, and wait for signed authorization.

The School shall complete the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Title I Administration Schoolsite Assurance of Accountability and Compliance Document (FM 7364), and submit by said date to the Title I Administration office, validating authorized Title I budgetary expenditures.

All documentation, including but not limited to, Title I Accountability and Technical Assistance Team (A-TAT) School Site Compliance documents, agendas, schedules, minutes, time sheets, receipts, invoices, purchase orders, rosters, etc., must be maintained at the school for a minimum of five (5) years to validate the use of Title I school site allocations.

Additionally, for purposes of determining Title I student eligibility, the District uses the schools' Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) data from the FDOE bureau of Federal Educational Programs via Survey 3. Therefore, Title I funding will only be provided for students entered into the District Lunch Program Menu in the ISIS File with approved free or reduced-price meal benefit prior to February FTE. (The area that shows the student is eligible for free and reduced priced lunch.)

4. Financial Policies: The School shall establish and implement accounting and reporting policies, procedures, and practices for maintaining complete records of all receipts and expenditures. The charter school shall provide a copy of these policies to the Sponsor annually.

5. Payments to Charter Schools

a. Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) Payments – The Sponsor shall calculate and submit twelve (12) monthly payments to the charter school. The first payment will be made by July 31st; and the other payments will be made by the fifteenth (15th) of each month beginning with August 15th.

b. Capital Outlay Payments – The Sponsor shall make payments to the school pursuant to law.

c. Miscellaneous Payments – The Sponsor shall make timely miscellaneous payments to the school upon receipt of funding from the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) for various programs including Title I and MAP.

d. Federal Entitlement Funding – Currently operating schools requesting to receive federal entitlement funds (e.g., Title I, Title III, IDEA) rather than services pursuant to state law and the charter contract, may request a contract amendment in writing by March 1. The written notification shall include an official governing board resolution or a copy of governing board meeting minutes specifying the request. No amendments for changes to be implemented in the upcoming school year will be allowed if not submitted by the March 1 deadline.

To receive entitlement funds, the School shall also submit a complete application required by the Sponsor for the use of the Funds that complies with all applicable state rules and federal regulations, including but not limited to, the applicable federal Office of Management and Budget Circulars, the federal Education Department General Administrative Regulations, and program-specific statutes, rules, and regulations; and demonstrate that the School is prepared and able to pay for required services on a reimbursement basis so that services will be timely provided and administration of federal funds will be properly monitored in compliance with applicable rules and regulations.

- e. Bank Account – The Sponsor shall remit charter school payments only to depository accounts in the same name as the school. The school shall submit a bank information form providing all necessary bank account information and with an original signature of the current governing board chair of the school. The Sponsor shall not send payments to a trust account, any account not held or completely controlled by the school, or any account that is part of any financing arrangement or debt security.
 - f. Conditions for Non-payment – The Sponsor may withhold payment, without interest, for violation of law or as specified in the charter, including, but not limited to: failure to comply with financial requirements, failure to provide proper banking wiring instructions, exceeding contracted enrollment capacity or allowable facility capacity, insufficient instructional minutes and/or days, inappropriate facility licenses, approvals and/or permits, failure to provide services to ESE or ELL students as required by law, transferring students without obtaining the required parental consent or in violation of the Code of Student Conduct, if applicable, and failure to obtain successful background clearance for potential employees, contractors, and/or governing board members.
6. Financial Reports: As specified by the Charter School Benchmarks, the charter school shall provide to the Sponsor all required financial statements including monthly financial statement summary sheet that contains a Balance Sheet and a Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances. The balance sheet and the statement of revenue, expenditures, and changes in fund balance shall be in the governmental funds format prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. A high-performing charter school shall provide a quarterly financial statement in the same format and requirements as the uniform monthly financial statement summary sheet pursuant to law.
7. Annual Financial Statements
- a. Unaudited June 30th year-end financial statements shall be submitted to the Sponsor no later than August 1 of each year. These financial statements must be prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles using governmental accounting.
 - b. Annual Financial Audit - The charter school agrees to submit to and pay for an annual financial audit and any legally authorized Special Purpose Statements of the Corporation, in compliance with Federal, State and Sponsor regulations, showing all revenue received, from all sources, and all expenditures for services rendered. The audit shall be conducted by an independent certified public accountant selected by the governing board of the charter school, and shall be delivered to the Sponsor no later than September 1 of each year. If the charter school's audit reveals a deficit financial position, the auditors are required to notify the charter school's governing board, the Sponsor and the Florida Department of Education in the manner defined in the charter contract. No later than May 1st of each year,

the charter school must formally notify the Sponsor of the name, address, and phone number of the auditor engaged to perform the year end audit.

- 1) Selection Procedures -- Charter schools shall use auditor selection procedures when selecting an auditor to conduct the annual financial audit pursuant to the processes described in F.S. 218.39 and 218.391, which includes, but is not limited to: the establishment of an audit committee and request for proposal (RFP) for audit services, public advertisement of RFP, and development of evaluation and selection criteria.
 - 2) Requirements -- Pursuant to F.S. 218.391, the procurement of audit services shall be evidenced by a written contract embodying all provisions and conditions of the procurement of such services. An engagement letter signed and executed by both parties shall constitute a written contract. The written contract shall, at a minimum, include the following:
 - (a) a provision specifying the services to be provided and fees or other compensation for such services
 - (b) a provision requiring that invoices for fees or other compensation be submitted in sufficient detail to demonstrate compliance with the terms of the contract
 - (c) a provision specifying the contract period, including renewals, and conditions under which the contract may be terminated or renewed
- c. Failure to comply with the timely submission of all financial statements in the required format specified by the Sponsor, shall constitute a material breach of the charter contract and will result in the Sponsor's withholding of subsequent payments to the charter school without interest, (including capital outlay payments), and may result in non-renewal or termination for good cause.
 - d. The School will annually provide the Sponsor a copy of its Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax, and all schedules and attachments, within 15 days of filing with the IRS. If the IRS does not require the Form 990 to be filed, the School will provide the Sponsor with written confirmation from the IRS of such non-requirement. The School shall also submit the most recent form 990 whenever the charter is amended or renewed.
8. Capital Outlay Payment Process
- a. Using the State-issued online form, each charter school requesting capital outlay funds must submit a charter school Capital Outlay Plan to the Sponsor.

- b. Upon receipt of a complete charter school Capital Outlay Plan from a charter school, the Sponsor's Chief Financial Officer will convene a committee to review, and make a recommendation for each charter school's Capital Outlay Plan. If not enough information is provided, the Sponsor will forward without recommendation.
- c. The charter school Capital Outlay Plan Review Committee will be made up by the following District staff members:
 - 1) Chief Financial Officer (Chair)
 - 2) Chief Facilities Officer or designee
 - 3) Chief Budget Officer or designee
 - 4) Controller or designee
 - 5) Assistant Superintendent, Charter School Support, or designee

A majority of the entire membership constitutes a quorum for voting purposes.
- d. Capital Outlay payments will be distributed pursuant to law.
- e. The Sponsor shall monitor the revenues and expenditures of the charter school and perform the duties provided in section 1002.345, F.S. The Sponsor may request additional supporting documentation during the review process which may include copies of fully-executed contracts such as: lease or lease purchase agreements, rental contracts, sales contracts, or construction contracts. If a lease has been amended or the location changes, a copy of the amended or new lease shall be provided to the sponsor.
- f. The charter school may use capital outlay funds only for the purposes specified by law.

9. Review and Audit

- a. The Sponsor has the right at any time to review and audit all financial records of the charter school to ensure fiscal accountability and sound financial management pursuant to F.S. 1002.33. The charter school shall provide the Sponsor with a copy of the management letter from any audits as well as any responses to the auditor's findings with a corrective plan which shall be prepared and submitted within thirty (30) days from the date of the management letter.
- b. Deteriorating Financial Condition and Financial Emergencies (F.S. 1002.345)
 - 1) Deteriorating Financial Condition – "Deteriorating financial condition" means a circumstance that significantly impairs the

ability of a charter school or a charter technical career center to generate enough revenues to meet its expenditures without causing the occurrence of a condition described in F.S. 218.503(1).

- (a) A charter school shall be subject to an expedited review by the Sponsor upon the occurrence of any of the conditions specified in F.S. 1002.345.
 - (b) The Sponsor shall notify the governing board within seven (7) business days after one or more of the conditions are identified or occur.
 - (c) The governing board and the Sponsor shall develop a corrective action plan and file the plan with the Commissioner of Education within thirty (30) business days after notification is received as provided in paragraph (2). If the governing board and the Sponsor are unable to agree on a corrective action plan, the Commissioner of Education shall determine the components of the plan. The governing board shall implement such plan.
 - (d) Failure to implement the corrective action plan within one (1) year shall result in additional action prescribed by the State Board of Education, including the appearance of the chair of the governing board before the State Board of Education.
 - (e) The Sponsor may require periodic appearances of governing board members and charter school representative.
- 2) Financial Emergency – The charter shall ensure that, if a charter school's internal audit or annual financial audit reveals a state of financial emergency as defined by F.S. 218.503 or deficit financial position, the auditors shall notify the charter school's governing board, the Sponsor, and the Florida Department of Education. If the charter school is found to be in a state of financial emergency, a financial recovery plan shall be filed with the Sponsor and the Florida Department of Education, pursuant to F.S. 1002.345.
 - 3) Annual progress of the corrective action plans and/or financial recovery plans shall be included in an annual progress report to the Sponsor.
 - 4) The Sponsor may require periodic appearances of governing board members and charter school representative.
- c. A Financial Recovery Plan Staff Group (FRSG) shall be convened to review and monitor financial statements, corrective action plans and financial recovery plan(s) submitted by the charter school(s). The FRSG shall report progress and when applicable, make recommendations to the Chief Auditor. At least one (1)

representative of the charter school must be available to answer questions.

- 1) The FRSG shall be comprised of staff members from Financial Operations, Charter School Operations, and, when appropriate, the Office of Management and Compliance Audits.
- 2) The Chief Auditor will present the FRSG's recommendation to the Sponsor's independent Audit Committee for review and recommendation to the Board.
- 3) Inability to cure a deteriorating financial condition and/or status of financial emergency shall result in termination of the charter school contract.

10. Grants

- a. If the Sponsor is required to be the fiscal agent for a grant, the charter school shall comply with the Sponsor's grant procedures as indicated in the charter contract.
- b. The Sponsor shall receive written approval from the charter school to include the charter school in a Sponsor-wide grant. The appropriate pro-rata share of grants will be allocated to the charter school, as defined by the grant awarded.
- c. The charter school is required to maintain adequate records to support grant-funded programs for the minimum years prescribed by the law. The Sponsor may review these records, upon reasonable notice.

Charter Renewals

Prior to renewal of a charter, the Sponsor shall perform a program review to determine the following:

- A. the level of success of the current academic program,
- B. achievement of the goals and objectives required by state accountability standards and successful accomplishment of the criteria under F.S. 1002.33(7)(a),
- C. the viability of the organization,
- D. compliance with terms of the charter, and
- E. that none of the statutory grounds for non-renewal exist.

Any charter school seeking renewal shall be required to complete a charter renewal application and undergo the Sponsor's renewal process. The charter renewal application shall include supporting documentation for items (A)-(E) above.

Renewals shall be for a maximum term of five (5) years unless a longer term is mutually agreed upon, required or allowed by law. Upon approval, the charter contract will be renewed following the charter negotiation process. Charter schools that are not granted a renewal may appeal by following the non-renewal appeal process.

Terminations and Non-Renewals

The Sponsor may choose to cancel or terminate the charter contract before term expiration for any reason set forth in law and/or the charter contract.

- A. **Ninety-Day Termination/Non-Renewal:** At least ninety (90) days' prior to renewing or terminating a charter contract, the Sponsor shall notify the charter school governing board of the proposed action in writing. The notice shall state in reasonable detail the basis for the proposed action. Within fourteen (14) calendar days after receiving the notice, the school's governing board may request a hearing by filing a written request with the Board Clerk pursuant to Board Policy 0133, who will forward the request to the Board Attorney's Office. The School's decision to appeal and request a hearing with the Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH) must be made in a legally advertised public meeting with a quorum present. Official meeting minutes or an adopted resolution documenting the action and evidence of proper meeting notice must be submitted to the Sponsor. If the request is legally sufficient pursuant to F.S. Chapter 120 (5)(b)4, the Board Attorney's office will forward the request with the DOAH which will conduct the hearing pursuant to F.S. Chapter 120. The DOAH recommended order shall be submitted to the Sponsor which will adopt a final order. The final order shall state the specific reasons for the Sponsor's decision and provide it to the charter school's governing board and the Department of Education no later than ten (10) calendar days after issuance.

- B. **Immediate Termination:** The Sponsor may immediately terminate a charter school contract pursuant to law. Upon immediate termination, the Sponsor shall notify the charter school governing board and principal in writing of the basis for the immediate termination. Within ten (10) calendar days after receiving the notice, the charter school may request a hearing by filing the request in writing with the Board Clerk pursuant to Board Policy 0133, who will forward the request to the Board Attorney's Office. The School's decision to appeal and request a hearing with the Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH) must be made in a legally advertised public meeting with a quorum present. Official meeting minutes or an adopted resolution documenting the action and evidence of proper meeting notice must be submitted to the Sponsor. If the request is legally sufficient pursuant to F.S. Chapter 120 (5)(b)4, the Board Attorney's office will forward the request with the DOAH which will conduct the hearing pursuant to F.S. Chapter 120. The DOAH recommended order shall be submitted to the Board which will adopt a final order. The final order shall state the specific reasons for the Sponsor's decision and provide it to the charter school's governing board and the Department of Education no later than ten (10) calendar days after issuance. The final order shall be issued within sixty (60) days after the date of the request. The Sponsor shall operate the school through the date of issuance of the final order unless the continued operation of the charter school would materially threaten the health, safety, and welfare of the students. Upon termination, the charter school must immediately provide the Sponsor access to its accounts and records, including but not limited to, banking accounts, installment accounts, and student, financial, and personnel records.

C. Voluntary Termination: The charter school's governing board may also elect not to renew the charter.

1. Upon election of termination/non-renewal by the charter school's governing board, notification, in writing, shall be provided to the Sponsor indicating the final date of operation. Official meeting minutes or an adopted board resolution, signed by the charter school's governing board chair and secretary, indicating support of this action, and evidence of proper meeting notice shall accompany the written notification provided to the Sponsor.
2. Student records and copies of administrative, operational, and financial records of the charter school shall be made available to the Sponsor immediately.
3. The Sponsor shall notify the appropriate District offices so appropriate action can be taken regarding: staffing and planning; unencumbered public funds (except for capital outlay funds and program grant funds); furniture, fixtures and equipment purchased with public funds; and student and financial records. Funds provided by a charter school to a management company/education service provider to purchase property and assets for the school are public funds.

Charter Collaboration/Partnership

Through collaboration with a variety of choice delivery systems, the Sponsor may create a strategic plan to identify and deploy effective educational choice resources to students on the basis of need, equity, and academic value. The development of future choice options will be based on the goals established in the plan in an effort to provide equity and access to school choice options for all Miami-Dade Public School students.

Interpretation

In the event that an existing charter school contract provision is found to be inconsistent with this policy, the contract provision prevails.

F.S. 39.203, 218.39, 218.391, 218.503(1), 286.23, 768.095, 1001.10(5)

F.S. 1001.41(1)(2), 1001.42(26), 1001.43(10), 1002.33, 1002.33(g), 1002.331, 1002.332

F.S. 1002.345, 1011.60(1), 1012.01, 1012.315, 1012.32, 1013.62

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