

OVERVIEW OF CHARTER AGREEMENTS

Rules and Policy Committee
Meeting

December 7, 2020



TENNESSEE
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

PURPOSE OF CHARTER AGREEMENTS

- It is required under statute - T.C.A. 49-13-110(a).
- It is in alignment with national and state best practices.
- It is required by Commission Policy 4.300.

CONTENTS OF CHARTER AGREEMENTS

- Terms of the agreement
 - Agreement is between the Commission and the governing board and for ten years in length.
- Exhibits:
 - Approved Charter School Application
 - Current Approved Commission Performance Framework
 - Pre-Opening Checklist
 - Approved Waivers

CHARTER SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Maintain enrollment based on the approved charter application.
- Implement an academic plan as approved in the application.
- Conduct all required student assessments.
- Provide all required services for students with disabilities, English Learner students, and other special populations.
- Implement student discipline in a manner consistent with state and federal law.
- Adopt the Commission's student information system and maintain accurate student information.

CHARTER SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Hire staff that have the required licensure and endorsements and conduct background checks for all staff.
- Ensure the facility meets all applicable health and safety laws.
- Provide students with food service.
- Provide transportation in alignment with the charter application.
- Maintain insurance for the school, staff, and governing board.
- Ensure governing board and governance maintain compliance with state law.
- Have a process to handle complaints.
- Adopt any required policies and/or procedures required by federal and state law, State Board rules and policies.

CHARTER SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure any contract signed with an external service provider is in compliance with the charter agreement.
- Cannot charge tuition to students.
- Maintain finance records in accordance with federal and state laws.
- Pay the authorizer fee in accordance with state law.

COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Monitor schools at least annual monitoring and conduct a high-stakes interim review at five years.
- Evaluate school performance using the charter school performance framework and will use the Commission's intervention policy, as needed.
- Conduct a pre-opening process to a school is ready to open.
- Allocate BEP to schools in accordance with state law.
- Allocate federal funds to schools based on their eligibility based on federal regulations.
- Require amendments to the charter agreement for material changes, but do not require amendments for non-materials changes.

COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES

- Conduct renewal, revocation, and/or closure in accordance with state law and Commission policies.
- Regularly review the charter agreements for any necessary updates based on changes to state law and best practices and to ensure operational efficiencies.

WAIVERS

Charter schools cannot waive:

- Federal and state civil rights;
- Federal, state, and local health and safety;
- Federal and state public records;
- Immunizations;
- Possession of weapons on school grounds;
- Background checks and fingerprinting of personnel;
- Federal and state special education services;
- Student due process;
- Parental rights;
- Federal and state student assessment and accountability;
- Open meetings;
- At least the same equivalent time of instruction as required in regular public schools; and
- Teacher licensure and teacher evaluation.

WAIVERS

- Charter schools apply for waivers through the application process.
- The waivers included in the charter agreement are those that have been approved through the application as well as any additional waivers negotiated between staff and the governing board.
- All waivers have been reviewed by staff for compliance with state and federal law.
- Schools can apply for and receive waivers during the charter term.

LOOKING AHEAD

- Commission will be reviewing and approving agreements for:
 - Nashville Collegiate Prep - New Agreement
 - Cornerstone Prep Academy - New Agreement
 - KIPP Antioch College Prep High School - New Agreement
 - Bluff City High School - Agreement transitioning from State Board
 - Rocketship Nashville #3 - Agreement transitioning from State Board
 - KIPP Antioch College Prep Elementary - Agreement transitioning from State Board
 - KIPP Antioch College Prep Middle - Agreement transitioning from State Board