

**Book:** Policy Manual  
**Section:** 9000 Relations  
**Title:** Cabell County Charter Public Schools  
**Code:** Policy 9710  
**Legal:** 126CSR79, Code of West Virginia  
WVDE Policy 3300  
**Adopted:** May 26, 2020

## **I. Charter Public Schools.**

West Virginia Charter Public Schools Policy 3300 requires school board oversight responsibilities for all Charter Public Schools in Cabell County Schools and those charter schools that are located in neighboring counties but include Cabell County students. The school board referred to as the authorizer designates the superintendent as the contact for all charter school operations. The superintendent shall recommend to the board the conditional approval or denial of each charter application, charter contract, and charter renewals. The board shall have final authority by majority vote to approve or deny any application, contract, or renewal.

The purpose of this policy is to direct the establishment of charter schools in Cabell County to:

- offer students more educational options than are currently available;
- employ innovative methods and programs designed to increase student engagement and achievement; and/or
- utilize distinctive school curricula, specialized academic programs, or technical themes.

Consistent with the stated intent and objectives in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1, the purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and transparent process that allows for the creation and operation of charter schools described above. To this end, charter schools are afforded significantly greater autonomy than non-charter public schools in exchange for greater expectations and accountability than non-charter public schools.

Cabell County Schools charge charter schools to empower all students to reach their highest potential so that they become life-long learners and responsible citizens. Charter schools must align their mission and vision with the beliefs and educational outcome goals of Cabell County schools as stated in district policy.

## **II. Definitions.**

A. **Accountability Plan.** The set of objectives against which the success of a charter school is evaluated. The accountability plan must be comprised of two parts. First, charter schools must participate in the state accountability system, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(1) and §18-5G-8(b)(10). Second, charter schools are accountable to a performance framework defined in the charter contract that includes a set of student outcome goals and specific measures aligned to the educational mission of the charter school, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(a)(4), §18-5G-6(h), and §18-5G-9(c). Authorizers will use success in meeting the goals of the accountability plan in evaluating the status of charter contracts.

B. **Authorizer.** Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(2), the school board that reviews charter school

applications, determines whether to approve or reject charter school applications, enters into charter contracts with approved charter school applicants, oversees the charter public school the board has authorized, and determines whether to renew, not renew, or revoke a charter contract. The authorizer may include (2) two or more county boards of education when the application includes a primary recruitment area that encompasses territory in two or more counties over which the respective boards have jurisdiction. The West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) may serve as an authorizer in a county where the WVBE is currently intervening pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-2E-5 or when an authorizer has approved an application and then submits a request to the WVBE to perform all other authorizer duties and responsibilities because demonstrating that the authorizer lacks the capacity to fulfill the authorizing duties and responsibilities set forth in law and policy.

B.1 Authorizers serve as the local education agency (LEA) for charter schools. As such, they shall receive federal and state funding on behalf of the authorized charter schools. Authorizers are responsible for distributing funds as specified by W. V. Code 18-5G-5 and section 12 of WVBE Policy 3300. Throughout WVBE Policy 3300, the term authorizer is used in place of LEA for consistency. When the provision relates to federal law and regulations governing LEAs, the term authorizer shall be understood to mean LEA.

C. Charter Applicant or Applicant – Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(1), any one or more combination of parents/guardians, community members, teachers, school administrators, or institution of higher education in this state who are interested in organizing a charter school, have obtained or applied to obtain 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) (501 (c)(3)) tax-exempt status, and have developed and submitted a charter school application to the authorizer. Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, an applicant must obtain 501(c)(3) status before operation of any charter school commences.

D. Charter Contract. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(3), the fixed-term, renewable contract between a charter school's governing board and an authorizer.

E. Charter Public School or Charter School. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(11), a public school that is authorized in accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-1, et seq. and this policy. References to the entity of a charter school encompass the governing board, administration, and staff of the charter school in question, except where specific reference is made to one group. In all cases, the governing board of a charter school is ultimately responsible for the actions and performance of the charter school.

F. Conditional Approval. Approval given by the authorizer after thoroughly reviewing a charter school application based upon the representations and commitments made by the applicant in the application. Satisfaction of those representations and commitments will result in final approval of the charter school application by the authorizer.

G. Conversion Charter School. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(5), a public school that existed as a

non-charter public school prior to being authorized to operate as a charter school. Applicants seeking to establish a conversion charter school can only apply to the county board of education where the school is located. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(e), existing private, parochial, and nonpublic schools are not permitted to apply as a conversion charter school.

H. Education Service Provider (ESP). An entity that manages the day-to-day delivery of education to students in a charter school and meets and adheres to the requirements set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(7) and in this policy.

I. Governing Board. The entity that meets the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-7 and is party to a charter contract with the authorizer. Specific references to the governing board in this policy indicate where the governing board has a specific duty to perform certain acts. The governing board is the entity responsible for the actions and performance of charter schools.

J. Non-charter Public School. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(9), a public school or multicounty career technical education (CTE) center other than a charter school.

K. Start-up Charter School. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(13), a charter school that did not exist as a non-charter public school prior to becoming a charter school. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(e), existing private, parochial, and nonpublic schools are not permitted to apply as start-up charter schools.

L. Student. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(15), any person who is eligible to attend a public school in West Virginia.

M. Student with Special Needs. A student who has a documented need that may require additional focus, support, and resources to successfully educate the student. Such students include, but are not limited to, at-risk students, English learners, students with severe disciplinary problems at a non-charter public school, or students involved with the juvenile justice system, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(4)(B). A student with disabilities, with an individualized education program (IEP), and/or a plan that meets the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Pub.L. 93-112, 87 Stat. 394 (1973) (Section 504) also qualifies as a student with special needs. The explicit inclusion of specific needs does not limit the inclusion of other needs that meet the spirit and intent of this definition and W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq.

N. Virtual, Asynchronous Instruction. Instruction that a student receives that is:

N.1 Virtual instruction is delivered via digitally transmitted class materials, often in an online environment such as a learning management system; and

N.2 Asynchronous instruction is non-real time communication with the instructor, often through online messaging or email.

### **III. Charter School Application.**

A. Potential applicants are required to submit the standard, statewide application to provide information and evidence about a charter applicant's ability to open and operate a charter school that expands educational options and improves student outcomes. Well-designed charter school applications ensure that such evidence is sufficient to enable authorizers to make well-informed decisions regarding the approval status of charter school applications.

B. Cabell County schools will utilize the state application and issue addenda to modify the application to provide a comprehensive submission that fully explains the educational program. The initial application and addenda will be available on the Cabell County website no later than May 15, 2020 and in subsequent years by January 1st.

C. In accord with W. Va. Code §18-5G-3 and §18-5G-8, the following items must be addressed in a charter school application:

1. An executive summary that provides a concise overview of the proposed plan for the charter school; its mission and vision; the educational need for the school and the anticipated population; the education plan and school design; the school culture; community engagement or partnerships to date; and the applicant's capacity to successfully open and operate a high quality school. It should not exceed two pages and will not be counted against the page limit for the entire application.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(1), a mission statement and a vision statement for the charter school and how the mission and vision will be implemented, inclusive of any specialized focus to be advanced through the establishment of the charter school. The applicant must include the rationale for establishing the charter school that aims to better serve groups of students – characterized by geography, socio-economic status, other demographic attributes, special needs, etc. – in the local school district(s) who have been historically underserved.

3. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(2) and §18-5G-8(14), a detailed description of the charter school's proposed educational program, including the grades and ages the charter school seeks to serve. While the charter school may include virtual learning opportunities for its students as part of its proposed program, the proposed program shall not have enrolled students receive a majority of their instruction through virtual, asynchronous instruction. The educational program must be grounded in research and focused on state standards. Evidence must be provided that reading is a primary focus of the school and that there is a research-based reading curriculum and set of strategies for students who are reading at grade level or higher and a curriculum and set of strategies for students who are reading below grade level. Evidence that the charter school will comply with all instruction required in statute.

4. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(5), an explanation of how the proposed program is likely to improve achievement of traditionally underperforming students in the county.

5. Proposed accountability plan, including but not limited to:

a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(3), student achievement goals for the proposed program and the method to evaluate whether students have attained the skills and knowledge specified for those goals;

b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(4), the charter school's plan for using data derived from student evaluations and assessments to drive differentiated instruction and promote continued school improvement;

c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(4), an acknowledgement that the charter school will participate in the state's accountability system and an explanation of how the charter school will consider the state accountability results in its specific accountability plan;

d. For charter schools seeking to enroll high school students, the proposed requirements for students to meet or exceed the state graduation requirements.

6. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(6), the proposed governance structure, inclusive of at least:

a. List of initial governing board members. For the initial governing board members, the applicant shall identify any education-related lawsuits in which such individuals have been involved, either directly or indirectly. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(a), the initial governing board shall consist of no fewer than five members elected or selected in a manner specified in the charter school application, including at least the following: Two parents of students attending the charter school. These members may be identified after enrollment has occurred; and two members who reside in the community served by the charter school. No board members shall count as both a parent representative and community representative.

b. Bylaws, which shall include descriptions of the qualifications, terms, and methods of appointment or election of governing board members, subject to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(b), which requires members of governing boards to:

- Not be employees of the charter school administered by the governing board;
- Not be employees of an ESP (Education Service Provider) that provides services to the charter school;
- File a full disclosure report to the authorizer identifying potential conflicts of interest, relationships with management organizations, and relationships with family members who are employed by the charter public school or have other business dealings with the school, the management organization of the school, or any other charter public school;

- Collectively possess documented expertise in leadership, curriculum and instruction, law, human resources, and finance; require the school leader to have an educational background;
- Be considered an officer of a school district under the provisions of W. Va. Code §6-6-7 and removal from office shall be in accordance with the provisions of that section;
- Not be a member of the authorizing county board of education; and
- Provide documentation of and explanation for any education-related actions taken, legal or otherwise, against them for academic, financial, or ethical concerns. These actions may relate to education generally and/or the operation of charter schools specifically.

c. Organizational structure of the charter school, which shall include clear lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, school administrators, staff, any advisory bodies or parent and teacher councils, and any external individuals or organizations that will play a role in managing the charter school, including, but not limited to ESPs.

7. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(7), the plans and timelines for student enrollment application to and enrollment in the charter school, inclusive of the school's primary recruitment area and process for conducting a transparent and random admission lottery when necessary, subject to W.V. Code §18-5G-11 and section XIII. – Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention of this policy. The primary recruitment area shall be based on the charter school's estimated facility and program capacity, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(5). The applicant shall also identify any student enrollment preferences, as defined in Section 9 of WVBE Policy 3300 and in ranked order, it plans to use should student enrollment applications exceed capacity. The use of agreed upon preferences in any lottery conducted for admission to the charter school shall conform to the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-11 and section XIII. – Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention of this policy.

8. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(8), a proposed five-year budget, including the start-up year and projections for four additional years with clearly stated assumptions.

9. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(9), the proposed fiscal and internal control policies of the charter school, including that the charter school will provide for an annual financial audit.

10. A staffing plan that outlines a strategy for hiring the professional and service personnel necessary to reasonably achieve the charter school's educational mission and that meets the hiring criteria identified in the charter school application. The staffing plan must include, but is not limited to, the staffing ratio, an explanation of how the governing board plans to establish requisite qualifications and any associated certification and/or licensure necessary for administrators, teachers, and other instructional and support staff to be employed at the charter school and a method for verifying that these requirements are met, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(8). ~~Instructional staff should meet the same certification requirements as a non-charter public school.~~ At a minimum, the proposed criteria for hiring qualified teachers and

other instructional staff shall demonstrate that individuals have relevant documented academic or occupational qualifications or experiences that reasonably indicate they will be competent to fill the positions in which they would be employed. Documentation of such relevant qualifications or experiences may include a four-year undergraduate degree or higher in a subject related to those the individual will teach, a professional certification in a field related to the one the individual will teach, and/or other comparable documentation deemed acceptable by the authorizer.

11. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(11), a proposed handbook outlining the charter school's personnel policies, which, at a minimum, shall include:

- a. A description of staff responsibilities;
- b. Performance management processes and plans for administrators, teachers, other instructional personnel, and other staff at the charter school; and
- c. Employment practices and policies including those covering disputes and due-process procedures for staff.

12. (XIII. Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention Section in this policy) Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(12) an explanation of the school culture and proposed student discipline procedures, allowing for appropriate due-process procedures all students including students with disabilities, which shall provide for appropriate due process protections for students with disabilities. The discipline procedures shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations governing the placement of students with disabilities.

13. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(13), a description of the facilities to be used by the charter school and how the facility supports the implementation of the school's program and meets zoning, building, and safety requirements established for non-charter public schools, pursuant to W. Va. §18-5G-3(c)(12) and §18-5G-3(c)(13).

14. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(14), the projected minimum and maximum enrollment per grade per year throughout the duration of the contract.

15. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(15), the school calendar and school day schedule.

16. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(16), the types and amounts of insurance coverage the charter school will obtain, which shall include adequate insurance for liability, property loss, and personal injury.

17. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(17), a description of food services to be provided to students attending the school and how those services shall meet federal nutrition standards, or state nutritional standards when they are stricter, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(1).

18. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(19), the ethics standards for the school as well as governing board, officers, and school employees.

19. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(20), the plan for serving students with disabilities, English Learners, bilingual students, students who are academically behind, and students who are gifted. At a minimum, this plan must comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. To the extent known, the application shall identify the specific areas and services where the charter school will seek to contract with the authorizer and/or other service providers.

20. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(21), a description of co-curricular and extracurricular programs to be offered and how such programs will be funded and delivered. All extracurricular programs offered by the charter school are subject to Secondary Schools Activities Commission (SSAC) rules.

21. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(22), a clear, articulated proposed process for resolving disputes with the authorizer.

22. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(23), a detailed start-up plan, including financing, tasks, timelines, and individuals responsible for carrying out the plan.

23. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(24), the charter school's plan to notify students, parents, and others in the school's primary recruitment area of the school as an option available for students and the process for applying for enrollment in the charter school.

24. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(25), the charter school's plan for parental and community involvement. Any student or parent contracts must be included in the application and approved by the district.

25. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(c), if the charter school intends to contract with an ESP, the information included in section XV - Education Service Provider of this policy must be included in the charter school application.

26. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(11), the process the charter school will use to obtain a criminal history check for charter school personnel and governing board members. Charter applicants may rely on any criminal history check performed by the WVDE in conjunction with the issuance of a license or other credential to work in the public schools in this state as required in section 7 of WVBE Policy 3300.

27. Any charter school approved by the board that provides transportation for students in two or more counties should not encroach upon another district without prior approval of their school board.

28. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(18), the proposed process and procedures to be followed in the case of closure or dissolution of the charter school for any reason. At a minimum, the proposed process shall:

- a. Explain the method for notifying interested students, parents, staff, and stakeholders of



reasons and timeline for closure;

b. Describe the process for the transfer of students, student records, staff/human resource records, and administrative and financial documents and information to the appropriate county board of education;

c. Provide assurance and agreement to return net assets or equity to authorizer after payment of debts;

d. Detail the process for reporting any outstanding data and completing necessary auditing;

e. Establish a timeline for performing and completing all tasks related to the closure; and

f. Comply with the provisions of section XII. Process for Renewal and Revocation of Charter Contracts of this policy.

29. Conversion Charter School - The following items must also be addressed in a charter school application seeking to establish a conversion charter school:

a. The support of 90% of staff and 90% of the students and families of students enrolled in the non-charter public school for the filing of the application to convert the non-charter public school to a charter school. This staff support should be determined by an anonymous survey of all staff members. The student and family support should be determined by an anonymous survey during a public meeting at the school to explain the charter conversion process.

b. The charter schools' plans for leasing and using the facilities and equipment of the existing non-charter public school, including but not limited to existing school buildings, information technology (IT) equipment, athletic facilities and equipment, etc., pursuant to W.V. Code §18-5G-12. The conversion charter school is responsible for the future costs of any repairs and replacements of existing equipment in the building, including kitchen, air conditioning and other facility repairs.

30. All charter applicants must agree to the following terms and include these terms with affirmative acknowledgements in the charter school application:

a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(1), the applicant is a 501(c)(3) organization or has applied for such status.

b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(1) and §18-5G-3(c)(6), charter schools will administer the same required general summative assessments using the same protocols as non-charter public schools.

c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(3), the charter school will not be home school or

virtual school-based.

d. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(4) and §18-5G-3(a)(5), the charter school is not affiliated with any religious organization and will not espouse any religious preference or promote/engage in any religious practices in their educational program, admissions, employment policies, or operations.

e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(7), the charter school will not charge tuition and will only charge fees as may be imposed by non-charter local public schools.

f. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(8), the charter school will not, whether through the enrollment process or general operation of the school, put in place requirements or practices that would exclude any child from enrollment at the charter school who would not be excluded at a non-charter public school.

g. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(1), the charter school will comply with all federal requirements, including but not limited to federal nutrition standards, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub.L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 241 (1964)), the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act U.S.C. 11431 et seq, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), Pub.L. 108-446; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Pub.L. 101-336, 104 Stat. 328 (1990), and Section 504.

h. In accordance with IDEA, charter schools shall comply with its provisions, including its mandate that students with disabilities covered by its protections receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) with access to the general curriculum in the least restrictive environment (LRE) appropriate for their needs. Charter schools shall develop, implement, and monitor an IEP for each such student eligible under the provisions of IDEA and W. Va. 126CSR16, Policy 2419, Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities.

i. In accordance with Section 504 and the ADA, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability seeking to engage in a major life activity shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by a charter school. Charter schools shall create, maintain, and implement a service plan and provide accommodations for each student determined to be eligible for such services.

j. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(2), the charter school will timely comply and respond to requests received pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (W. Va. Code §29B-1-1, et seq.).

k. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(2), the governing board will conduct its business in

compliance with The Open Governmental Meetings Act (W. Va. Code §6-9A-1, et seq.).

l. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(3), the charter school will adhere to the same immunization and other health requirements that are applicable to non-charter public schools.

m. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(4), the charter school will adhere to the same compulsory school attendance requirements that are applicable to non-charter public schools.

n. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(5), students attending the charter school will receive the same minimum number of days or an equivalent amount of instructional time per year as required of students attending non-charter public schools under W. Va. Code §18-5-45.

o. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(7), the charter school will comply with the West Virginia Student Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act as set forth in W. Va. Code §18-2-5h and W. Va. 126CSR94, Policy 4350, Procedures for the Collection, Maintenance and Disclosure of Student Data (Policy 4350).

p. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(11), contractors and service providers, and employees of the same, will be prohibited from making direct contact with students and will not be permitted unaccompanied access to school grounds when students are present until it can be verified that such individuals have not previously been convicted of a qualifying offense pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5-15(c).

q. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(f), no elected official is receiving, or will receive, monetary compensation or otherwise profit from the approval or operation of the charter school. Provided, that this prohibition does not prohibit the employment of an elected official by a charter school once it has been authorized.

r. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(8), the charter school will use the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) to report all data required by statute or policy or the charter contract.

s. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10), the charter school will meet the same accounting and financial reporting requirements required of non-charter public schools, including but not limited to participation in the State Auditor's financial transparency website.

t. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(13) and §18-5G-3(c)(13), the charter school will adhere to the same building codes, occupancy requirements, regulations, and facility fees

that apply to non-charter public schools under Chapter 18 of the W. Va. Code, including but not limited to West Virginia State Fire Marshal inspections and certificate of occupancy certificate requirements. The charter school shall further acknowledge that it will obtain all required occupation and operation certificates and licenses at least one week before teachers and students occupy the building.

u. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(6), the charter school shall not discriminate against any person on any basis which would be unlawful, under state or federal law, for non-charter public schools in the school district. Provided, this prohibition shall not be construed to limit a charter school from establishing any of the limited set of enrollment preferences allowed in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. and this policy.

v. The charter school will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health and safety within the buildings and on school property.

#### **IV. Charter School Application Process.**

The district strives to provide a transparent, clearly defined process for accepting and evaluating charter school applications to help build public confidence that approval or denial decisions are fairly rendered based on consistent criteria. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(a)(3), authorizers have the responsibility to solicit high-quality applications for charter schools. The district will require charter applicants to submit the state charter school application forms and any district adopted addenda. Charter applicants should verify with a county board of education that it has not issued an addendum to the standard charter school application that also needs to be completed and timely submitted with the standard charter school application form.

Authorizers have the option to go beyond the materials developed by the WVDE and release requests for applications (RFAs) or other forms of active solicitation for charter school applications to fulfill the legislative intent outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 to provide options that expand educational opportunities not currently available to students in their jurisdiction. These RFAs may specify additional application requirements, forms, and criteria, but authorizers are still required to use the statewide application as the core of the application. Authorizers may also highlight specific unmet educational needs or demands in their RFAs. Authorizers shall only add addenda in good faith that create criteria that are reasonably related to the purpose of WVDE Policy 3300.

A. Active charter school solicitations may include but are not limited to, the following preferences for schools that:

1. Serve students with a specific special need (e.g., students with a specific disability, students not on track to graduate due to insufficient credit accumulation, etc.);
2. Serve a geographic area/community where students are poorly served by current educational options;
3. Serve students in a specific set of grades or programmatic level;

4. Serve students with particular academic or career interests, so long as the school does not exclude students based on prior achievement or performance in the focus area;
5. Serve students using a specific pedagogy or educational philosophy not otherwise available to students in the community; and
6. Meet educational needs or demands expressed by local students and/or community members.

## **V. Evaluation of Charter School Applications.**

### **A. Charter Review Committee**

The purpose of the charter review committee is to evaluate the quality of the written application, the capacity of the group to properly implement the proposed plan, and make a recommendation to the Superintendent for the approval or denial of each application. The charter review committee shall be comprised of district representatives from operational services, instructional services, curriculum and instruction, facilities, finance, human resources, exceptional student education, federal programs, transportation, food service and other appropriate departments.

### **B. Evaluation Policy**

Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(a)(2), the district will establish and maintain policies and practices consistent with professional standards for authorizers relating to the evaluation of charter school applications. The district will use the evaluation criteria in this policy to determine the evaluation criteria that is consistent with the intent of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 and recognized standards for charter school authorizers no later than May 31, 2020. To fulfill this requirement and so charter applicants are aware of the criteria to be used in evaluating applications. The district shall adopt a policy outlining evaluation criteria that is consistent with the intent of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 and recognized standards for charter school authorizers no later than May 31, 2020.

### **C. Review of a Charter School Application**

As part of its review of a charter school application and prior to rendering a decision on the application, in accord with W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(b), the district shall:

1. Thoroughly review the contents of the application;
2. Conduct an in-person interview with the applicant or applicants;
3. Provide an opportunity in a public forum for local residents and stakeholders to provide input and learn about the proposed charter school described in the charter school application;
4. Identify material deficiencies in an application and allow the applicant 15 days after receipt of identified deficiencies to provide additional materials, clarifications, and amendments to its application to address the deficiencies. This is a onetime option. The authorizer need only identify deficiencies and is not required to suggest appropriate steps to address application deficiencies. This is the responsibility of the charter school applicant. The authorizer shall only provide a single 15-day revision period after providing feedback on the initial application. This application, including any revisions, shall be deemed final at the end of the 15-day revision

period. Furthermore, the authorizer is not required to provide the 15-day response period if the initial application is:

a. Obviously and intentionally incomplete such that evaluation of major components of the application against the specified criteria is not possible. Applicants may not submit incomplete applications to gain additional time to complete the application through the 15-day response window. However, authorizers shall not use this clause to deny applications with missing information that may be reasonably deemed to be an oversight or error.

b. Grossly deficient in numerous areas that indicates an applicant currently is not prepared to move forward with the operation of a charter school. Applications with major deficiencies may be rewritten and resubmitted in subsequent application cycles.

## **VI. Evaluation Criteria.**

A. As required by W. Va. Code §18-5G-4, the WVDE will provide guidance and forms on how to evaluate each component in the charter school application.

B. The district shall utilize the following criteria in evaluating charter school applications:

### **1. Educational Design Program and Capacity.**

a. **Educational Program Overview.** A concise summary of the education program offered by the charter school and how it will achieve the charter school's educational mission and vision and how this program is unique and different from what is already offered in the school district.

b. **Overall Purpose, Mission and Vision of School.** A clear, thorough explanation for how the educational mission, vision and plan of the charter school will promote unique, innovative, and/or flexible educational options not available in the non-charter public schools that are accessible to students in the primary recruitment area, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b) by:

(1). Creating more public-school options with high standards for student performance, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(1);

(2). Allowing proven innovative educational methods, practices, and programs that result in higher student achievement, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(2);

(3). Establishing a distinctive theme, curriculum, or mode of instruction, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(3) and §18-5G-1(b)(4)(C);

(4). Providing parents with options to best serve the interests or needs of their children, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(4);

(5). Providing for greater student, parent, and community involvement, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(5);

(6). Utilizing exceptional levels of self-direction and flexibility to meet the robust levels of accountability expectations, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(6);

(7). Encouraging the replication of research-based successful strategies for improving student learning pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b)(7); and/or

(8). Offering targeted strategies that specifically focus on students with special needs, including, but not limited to, at-risk students, English learners, students with severe disciplinary problems, students involved with the juvenile justice system, or students with disabilities pursuant to W. Va. Code §18 5G 3(b)(4)(B).

c. Identified need.

(1). A rationale for establishing the charter school that aims to better serve groups of students – characterized by geography, socio-economic state, other demographic attributes, special needs, etc. – in the local school district(s) who have been historically underserved.

(2). A clear explanation of how the educational mission and plan of the school will address the needs of these students, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(5).

d. Demonstrated Demand. An analysis of the sustainability of the charter school based on the current and future size of the population of school-aged children that the charter school aims to serve and the demand among this population for additional educational options beyond existing non-charter public schools. This analysis must provide reasonable evidence of sustainability, as in any business plan, and may, but is not required to, include:

(1). Evidence of sufficient demand among parents and school-aged children in the local school district, primary recruitment area, and/or target underserved or underperforming student population, including surveys of school-aged children and parents and data on school-aged children currently pursuing educational options besides existing non-charter public schools; and

(2). Projections of changes in demand based on factors including, but not limited to, population and demographic changes, local economic outlook, enrollment changes in surrounding non-charter public schools, interest in additional educational options, etc. that provide evidence of sufficient enrollment for the charter school to operate sustainably.

e. Curriculum and instructional design. A detailed curriculum and instructional philosophy and strategies that the charter public school plans to implement, including justification for their selection in relation to student population, educational mission, and mastery of the West Virginia College-and-Career-Readiness Standards. Provide evidence that reading is a primary focus of the school and that there is a research-based reading curriculum and set of strategies for students who are reading at grade level or higher and a curriculum and set of strategies for students who are reading below grade level.

f. Pupil performance standards. An overview of the learning standards for students at

the charter school and detailed explanation for how deviation from the West Virginia College-and Career-Readiness Standards exceeds the rigor of those standards.

g. High school graduation requirements and postsecondary readiness (high schools only). A clear definition of the requirements to graduate from the charter school and how those requirements prepare a student for college, career, or other postsecondary opportunities. Graduation requirements should meet or exceed state requirements. Charter schools are required to use the district waiver process if deviating from the state graduation requirements.

h. School calendar and schedule. A description of the school calendar and how the charter school will meet minimum instructional time requirements, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(5).

i. School culture and safety. An explanation of the routines that the charter school will employ to establish the envisioned school culture and create an environment that promotes academic, social, and emotional well-being. Describe the school safety and security plan to ensure a safe learning environment for all students.

j. Supplemental programming. A thoughtful proposal for providing extracurricular and co-curricular programming, enrichment activities, and student supports, including but not limited to, interscholastic athletics, student-led clubs, summer school, and afterschool, if the charter school elects to offer such programming. All extracurricular programs offered by the charter school are subject to Secondary Schools Activities Commission (SSAC) rules.

k. Special populations and at-risk students. A comprehensive plan for serving students with special needs and for meeting related federal and state law, regulations, rules, and policies.

l. Student recruitment and enrollment. A context-specific outreach strategy that ensures the charter school expands educational options for students in the primary recruitment area and is aligned with the status of the school as a start-up or conversion charter school.

m. Student discipline. A thorough discipline policy that promotes strong school culture, outlines disciplinary procedures and consequences, and protects the rights of students.

n. Parent and community involvement. A thoughtful set of strategies for engaging with parents and the community, including local elected officials, community leaders, and business partners, around the development, opening, and operation of the charter school. Any student or parent contracts must be included in the application and approved by the district.

o. Educational program capacity. A well-crafted plan for recruiting and retaining a school leader, with the documented background and experience necessary to be an instructional leader, as well as other key instructional staff, support staff, and operational managers. Include evidence that the school leader has the appropriate educational background and experience that provides the capacity to be an instructional leader.



p. Conversion planning, if applicable. A proposal for executing a successful conversion that offers students enrolled at the existing non-charter public school expanded educational options and is reasonably likely to result in improved outcomes including:

(1). The results of the survey of the interest of students, staff, and families indicating 90% approval in converting the school from a non-charter public school to a charter school; and

(2). The capacity of the conversion charter school and authorizer to develop a plan and timeline for determining which students and staff will remain at the conversion charter school. The authorizer and charter school must consider how students who do not remain at the conversion charter school, for reasons including, but not limited to lack of transportation, etc., will enroll in other schools. Students who do not remain at the conversion charter school must have reasonable alternative educational options. The authorizer and charter school must also develop a plan for how staff who do not remain at the conversion charter school are to be reassigned in a manner that meets personnel law, policy, and deadlines.

## 2. Operations Plan and Capacity.

### a. Governance.

(1). Legal Status and Governing Documents. A proposed legal status and structure that complies with state law and policy in accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-7.

(2). Governing Board. A detailed plan for ensuring that board members meet the ethics and expertise requirements established in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. and this policy. Require professional learning for governing board members in The Open Governmental Meetings Act (W. Va. Code §6-9A-1, et seq.) and charter school law, ethics, conflicts of interest, financial responsibility, curriculum, instruction and assessment. Include a commitment that the governing board will meet at least five (5) times during the school year with the minutes from each meeting sent to the authorizer within 7 days of each meeting.

(3). Dispute Resolution Process. A clearly defined process for dispute resolution that is fair to parents, students, and staff.

## 3. Human Capital.

a. School Staff Structure. A proposal for organizing school staff that establishes clear roles, responsibilities, and relationships among school administrators and staff.

b. Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation. A comprehensive strategy for recruiting, developing, and retaining the high-quality staff necessary to achieve the educational mission of the charter school.

c. Professional Learning. A thoughtful approach for the induction and professional learning

of school leaders, teachers, and staff to support strong and improving instruction.

d. Performance Management. An overview of a mission-aligned, individually-tailored performance management system that holds the charter school, its governing board, and all staff accountable and provides for continuous improvement.

4. Facilities.

a. Public Facilities. A description of the facilities needed to achieve the charter school's educational mission and how available public facilities meet those needs.

b. Independent Facilities. A description of the facilities needed to achieve the charter school's educational mission and how the charter school will obtain independent facilities that meet requirements.

5. Start-up and Ongoing Operations. A sound, detailed plan for executing start-up of the charter school and maintaining smooth school operations, including, but not limited to: areas such as school and student safety, transportation (if applicable), and insurance coverage.

6. Operations Capacity. A description of individual and team qualifications for executing a comprehensive operations plan that includes, but is not limited to: topics such as staffing, performance management, facilities management, professional learning, start-up plans, and general operations.

a. ESP (if applicable). A detailed explanation of how any proposed ESPs meet the requirements of section XV. Education Service Providers in this policy.

7. Financial Plan and Capacity.

a. Financial Plan. A detailed proposal for start-up and 5 year operating budgets necessary to achieve the educational mission of the charter school as well as the standard operating procedures, roles and responsibilities, and contingency plans to realize sound financial management across the term of the contract.

b. Financial Capacity. A clear demonstration of the capacity of the governing board and school administration to execute the financial plan.

**VII. Initial Application Timeline.**

A. Training for Potential Applicants and Authorizers. Timeframe: March-May 2020. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(2), the WVDE will, under direction of the WVBE, organize and provide training opportunities for potential charter school applicants, administrators, and governing board members as well as potential authorizers. While primary training will occur by May, training and support activities for authorizers and applicants will continue throughout the process.

B. Release of Active Solicitation by Potential Authorizers. Deadline: May 31, 2020. Authorizers must release any RFAs, other active application solicitations, and additional application requirements or

forms they choose to adopt, no later than May 31, 2020, to allow potential applicants sufficient time to address such requirements.

B. Submission of Charter School Application. Deadline: August 31, 2020. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(1), charter applicants must complete applications and submit all required materials to authorizer no later than August 31, 2020. Materials must be submitted in a single submission with signed confirmation that the submission is complete.

C. Identification of Application Deficiencies. Deadline: October 31, 2020. Authorizers must provide feedback to the applicant that identify application deficiencies by October 31, 2020, as described in subsection 5.3.b.4 of this policy and pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(b)(5).

D. Revision of Charter School Application. Deadline: November 15, 2020. Applicants must provide revisions, responses, additional materials, and amendments to their original application in response to deficiencies identified by authorizers by November 15, 2020.

E. Conditional Approval or Denial Decision by Authorizer. Deadline: November 30, 2020. Any potential authorizer receiving a charter school application shall issue a decision conditionally approving or denying all applications received no later than November 30, 2020.

1. Decisions on status of charter school applications shall be based on objective criteria, as defined in subsection 5.4 of this policy. set forth in The WVBE established these criteria pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4 and Code §18-5G-6(b)(6) and all the evaluation criteria of this policy.

2. The decision shall be rendered in an open public meeting, in compliance with The Open Governmental Meetings Act (W. Va. Code §6-9A-1, et seq.) (open public meeting), and shall include a detailed explanation stating the reasons for the approval or denial.

3. The decision on a charter school application shall be reduced to writing, inclusive of a detailed explanation for the decision. The written decision, as well as the charter school applications conditionally approved by virtue of lack of action by the authorizer, shall promptly be provided to the charter applicant and the WVDE.

4. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(d), failure of a potential authorizer to render a decision on a charter school application by the November 30, 2020, deadline is statutorily deemed a conditional approval of the application.

5. Upon satisfaction of any incomplete items in a conditionally approved charter school application or resulting charter contract, an authorizer shall issue final approval of the charter school application. It is the responsibility of the applicant and/or governing board to promptly notify the authorizer in writing once all such items are complete.

E. Execution of Charter Contract. Deadline: March 15, 2021 (or March 1, 2021, if three or fewer applications are approved statewide). Authorizers and charter applicants receiving conditional approval, subject to any additional review required, are to work diligently to negotiate, agree, and execute a charter contract satisfying the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section X.

Charter School Contracts of this policy no later than March 31, 2021, or March 1, 2021, under the conditions described below. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-9(a), the governing board and the authorizer shall negotiate and enter into a charter contract within 90 days of charter school application approval. However, additional time has been added to this final deadline in case the number of approved applications would cause the number of charter schools to exceed the statutory limit (three until July 1, 2023 and three additional on that date and every three years thereafter). If the number of approved applications does not exceed the statutory limit, the deadline for executing a charter contract to open a school in 2021-2022 is March 1, 2021. So long as both parties are negotiating in good faith, contract negotiations may continue beyond the deadline unless both parties agree to cease negotiations. However, if the charter contract is executed after the deadline of March 1, 2021, the approved charter school cannot open until the 2022-2023 school year. The initial contract should be approved for no more than 5 years.

G. Prior to the start date for students for any charter school in this state, a charter contract must be executed by the authorizer and the charter school's governing board.

### **VIII. Timeline After Initial Application Cycle.**

After the first cycle of charter school applications outlined above, the charter school application process will begin earlier to provide additional time for charter schools to prepare to begin operations.

A. Training for Potential Applicants and Authorizers. Timeframe: July-January. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(2), the WVDE will, under direction of the WVBE, organize and provide training opportunities for potential charter school applicants, administrators, and governing board members as well as potential authorizers.

B. Release of Active Solicitation by Potential Authorizers. Deadline: January 1. Potential authorizers must release any requests for applications (RFAs), other active application solicitations, and additional application requirements or forms they choose to adopt no later than January 1 in the calendar year prior to opening (e.g., January 1, 2021, for schools seeking to open in the 2022-23 school year). Any changes to the application evaluation criteria must be adopted by January 1 as well.

C. Submission of Charter School Application. Deadline: April 30. Charter applicants must complete applications and submit all required material to potential authorizer(s) no later than April 30 in the calendar year prior to opening. Materials must be submitted in a single submission with signed confirmation that the submission is complete.

D. Identification of Application Deficiencies. Deadline: June 30. Authorizers must provide feedback to the applicant that identify application deficiencies by June 30, as described in subsection 5.3.b.4 of this policy and pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(b)(5).

E. Revision of Charter School Application. Deadline: July 15. Applicants must provide revisions, responses, additional materials, and amendments to their original application in response to

deficiencies identified by authorizers by July 15.

F. Conditional Approval or Denial Decision by Authorizer. Deadline: July 1. Any potential authorizer receiving a charter school application shall issue a decision no later than July 1 in the year prior to opening conditionally approving or denying all applications received.

1. Decisions on status of charter school applications shall be based on objective criteria defined in subsection 5.4 of WVBE Policy 3300. The WVBE established these criteria pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(b)(6) and all evaluation criteria as required in this policy.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(d), failure of a potential authorizer to render a decision on a charter school application by the July 1 deadline is statutorily deemed a conditional approval of the application.

3. The decision shall be rendered in an open public meeting and shall include a detailed explanation stating the reasons for the approval or denial.

4. The decision on a charter school application shall be reduced to writing, inclusive of a detailed explanation for the decision. The written decision, as well as charter school applications conditionally approved by virtue of lack of action by a county board of education, shall promptly be provided to the charter applicant and the WVDE.

5. Upon satisfaction of any incomplete items (e.g., obtaining 501(c)3 status) in a conditionally approved charter school application or resulting charter contract, an authorizer shall issue final approval of the charter school application. It is the responsibility of the applicant and/or governing board to promptly notify the authorizer in writing once all such items are complete.

E. Execution of Charter Contract. Deadline: November 15. Authorizers and charter applicants receiving conditional approval, subject to any additional review required, are to work diligently to negotiate in good faith, agree, and execute a charter contract satisfying the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section X. Charter Contract of this policy no later than November 15 in the year prior to opening. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-9(a), the governing board and the authorizer shall negotiate and enter into a charter contract within 90 days of charter school application approval. However, additional time has been added to this final deadline in case the number of approved applications would cause the number of charter schools to exceed the statutory limit (three charter schools until July 1, 2023, three additional charter schools, for a total of six, on that date and three additional every three years thereafter). Prior to the start date for students for any charter school in this state, a charter contract must be executed by authorizer and the charter school's governing board. The initial contract should be approved for no more than 5 years. So long as both parties are negotiating in good faith, contract negotiations may continue beyond November 15 unless both parties agree to cease negotiations. However, if the charter contract is executed after December 15, the approved charter school cannot open until the following school year. For example, if the contract is executed in January 2022, the school cannot open until the 2023-2024 school year.

**IX. Authorized Schools in Excess of Statutory Limit.**

A. If the number of conditionally approved charter schools statewide exceeds statutory limit (three until July 1, 2023, and three additional on that date and every three years thereafter), the WVDE will

assemble a neutral, impartial panel to review each of the conditionally approved applications and rank the applications based on the merits of the program proposed and the student population to be served. For the initial cycle, the ranking will be made available to approved charter applicants and authorizers no later than December 15, 2020. The first three charter school applications listed in such rankings may begin the contract negotiation process as outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and all evaluation criteria as required in this policy. Conditionally approved charter school applications in excess of the statutory limit that are not selected by the panel may be resubmitted in future years for consideration.

B. For subsequent annual application cycles, the ranking will be made available no later than August 15. In subsequent cycles, the number of conditionally approved charter school applications that can begin contract negotiations is not necessarily three. Instead, it depends on how many charter schools may be opened without exceeding the statutory limit. Starting from the top of the rankings, a conditionally approved charter school application may proceed to contract negotiations so long as that charter school application would not cause the total number of charter schools in the state to exceed the statutory limit. Charter school applications meeting these criteria may begin the contract negotiation process as outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section IV. Charter School Application Process of this policy. Conditionally approved charter school applications in excess of the statutory limit that are not selected by the panel may be resubmitted in future years for consideration.

## **X. Charter Contract.**

The purpose of the charter contract is to outline the expectations of both the charter school and the authorizer. It delineates the working relationship between the charter school and its authorizer.

A charter contract should provide clear boundaries around the authority and influence that an authorizer has over the day-to-day operations of a charter school. By doing so, it affords the charter school the autonomy necessary to offer students new and diverse educational options.

At the same time, a charter contract must define the expectations that a charter school must meet to continue operating. These expectations include the areas over which the charter school does not have autonomy (e.g., providing legally required services to students with disabilities). Contracts should define the immediate consequences for failing to meet these expectations. The contract should also define expectations for student outcomes that define a charter school's long-term success and help the authorizer determine whether the charter contract warrants renewal.

A. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-9, the charter contract must be negotiated, agreed to, and executed by the authorizer and the charter applicant prior to the commencement of any charter school operations. At a minimum, the following items must be addressed in the charter contract. A template charter contract will be available on the WVDE's website. The template contract may be modified as deemed appropriate by the parties to a charter contract, so long as the required items below are addressed.

1. The term of the initial contract which shall be no longer than five years.
2. The agreements relating to each specific item required in the charter school application identified in section III. Charter School Application of this policy.

3. The acknowledgments included in the charter school application identified in section III. Charter School Application of this policy.
4. A shared understanding of the charter school's plans for contracting with ESPs and descriptions of the specific services that any ESPs will provide.
5. The rights and duties of the parties to the charter contract, which shall not contradict section XI. Responsibilities of Parties to a Charter Contract of this policy.
6. The administrative relationship between the authorizer and the charter school.
7. The process the authorizer will use to provide ongoing oversight, consistent with professional standards.
8. The specific commitments of the authorizer relating to its obligations to oversee, monitor the progress of, and supervise the charter school. The contract should specifically identify the evaluation tools and oversight activities the authorizer will use to measure student outcomes and ensure compliance with applicable statutes and terms of the charter contract.
9. The agreement of how the charter school and the authorizer will collaborate to provide special education and related services to eligible students required by applicable state and federal laws and policies as outlined in section 4 of WVBE Policy 3300. The agreement shall specify the roles and responsibilities 126CSR79 22 of both the authorizer and the charter school to ensure students receive FAPE in the LRE. The agreement shall also define a process for allocating resources appropriately to the party administering or delivering the required services. The WVDE will provide additional information to help the parties come to an agreement that complies with federal and state law and policy.
10. The process and criteria the authorizer will use to annually monitor and evaluate the overall academic, operating, and fiscal conditions of the charter school, including the process and timeline the authorizer will use to oversee the correction of any deficiencies found.
11. The recourse available should either of the parties fail to adhere to their contractual duties or responsibilities outlined in this policy or state code.
12. The process the authorizer, governing board, and charter school will follow in the event of closure of the charter school, subject to section XII. Process for Renewal and Revocation of Charter Contracts of this policy.
13. The process for any revisions or amendments to the terms of the charter contract agreed to by the authorizer and the governing board.
14. The process agreed to by the authorizer and the governing board, that identifies how disputes between the authorizer and the governing board will be handled.
15. The indicators, measures, and metrics, that comprise the Accountability Plan defined in section 3 of WVBE Policy 3300. The authorizer will use the Accountability Plan to measure the performance of the charter school and inform renewal decisions. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-

5G-9(c), the contractual performance measures may build upon those outlined in the charter school application and must include, at a minimum, the following:

- a. The indicators included in state accountability for all public schools in West Virginia, including disaggregated indicators for student subgroups;
- b. Student proficiency or overall achievement, if not included in state accountability;
- c. Student growth or progress, if not included in state accountability;
- d. The achievement gaps in both student proficiency or achievement and student growth between student subgroups, including race, sex, socioeconomic status, and areas of exceptionality, if not included in state accountability;
- e. Student attendance, if not included in state accountability;
- f. Student suspensions, if not included in state accountability;
- g. Student withdrawals;
- h. Student retention/turnover within a year and from year to year;
- i. Governing board's performance and stewardship, including compliance with all applicable statutes and terms of charter contract; and
- j. Demographic makeup in comparison to the demographics of the community the charter school aims to serve as defined by non-charter public schools overlapping the primary recruitment area of the charter school, non-charter public schools under the jurisdiction of the authorizing county board(s) of education, and/or another reasonable and agreed upon definition.
- k. The authorizer and governing board may also agree to include any other additional valid and reliable indicators as necessary or desired.
- l. Any other terms and conditions agreed upon by the authorizer and the governing board, including preopening conditions for the charter school.

- F. Amendments to a duly executed charter contract must be in writing and agreed upon by all parties to the charter contract.

## **XI. Responsibilities of Parties to a Charter Contract.**

A. Authorizer Responsibilities. Authorizers are responsible for ensuring the conditions necessary for charter schools to offer diverse educational options not available in non-charter public schools and to help improve student outcomes in the community served. To fulfill its duty, an authorizer shall carry out its duties and responsibilities with an aim to achieve the following goals and objectives:



1. Tailor charter school flexibility outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. appropriately to the educational mission of the charter school and needs of the students and community it aims to serve;
2. Provide adequate accountability to require that charter schools it oversees are making reasonable progress towards achieving their educational mission;
3. Conduct necessary oversight to ensure students in charter schools it oversees receive legally required services in a safe and healthy learning environment, including, but not limited to: oversight of special education services, school nutrition, ADA compliance, etc.
4. Consider how charter schools enrich and otherwise impact the educational opportunities in its jurisdiction in present and future years.

B. In addition to any duties and responsibilities outlined in the charter contract, an authorizer is responsible, in part pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6, for adhering to the following duties and responsibilities. Unless specifically addressed in state law, this policy, or the charter contract, the authorizer is responsible for determining the appropriate method for carrying out its duties and responsibilities.

1. Demonstration of public accountability and transparency. The authorizer must earn and maintain public trust around the operation of charter schools. Therefore, authorizers shall conduct meetings and business in an open and transparent manner consistent with the rules for conducting other business of county boards of education in West Virginia (or the WVBE in the case that the WVBE is acting as the authorizer).
2. Establishment of Authorizing Policies and Practices. The authorizer shall affirmatively establish the written, nationally-benchmarked oversight policies and practices it will follow in its role. Policies and practices adopted by authorizers shall not contradict federal or state law or this policy. If the authorizer does not adopt a local policy relating to charter schools, it shall follow the state policy. The authorizer may rely on processes (including deadlines) and systems (including electronic forms or other tools) established by the WVDE for the implementation of charter schools unless required by W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. or local policy to establish and publicize specific practices, processes, or systems.
3. Solicitation of High-Quality Charter School Applications. Authorizers have the responsibility to solicit high-quality charter school applications as outlined in section IV. Charter School Application Process of this policy.
4. Approval of high quality Charter School Applications. The authorizer shall evaluate applications in accordance with the state law and this policy to create charter schools likely to improve student outcomes in West Virginia by expanding the educational options available to students. To promote transparency, in deciding on charter school applications, the authorizer shall use the evaluation set forth in state policy and the evaluation criteria set forth in a properly adopted county board policy.
5. Denial of Unsatisfactory Charter School Applications. The authorizer shall deny applications for charter schools that do not meet specified criteria as outlined above. To promote

transparency, in deciding on charter school applications, the authorizer shall use the evaluation criteria set forth in this policy.

6. Negotiation of Charter School Contracts. The authorizer shall negotiate and execute charter contracts with approved applications in good faith. In such negotiations, the authorizer shall adhere to the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-5G-9 and section X. Charter Contract of this policy. In doing so, the authorizer shall aim to provide the charter school with the conditions necessary to succeed while safeguarding students under their jurisdiction.

7. Monitoring of Charter School Performance and Compliance. The authorizer shall ensure that charter schools comply with the terms of the charter contract and applicable federal law, state code, and WVBE policies. In performing its monitoring duties, the authorizer shall not unnecessarily inhibit the instructional and educational flexibility provided to charter schools by W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. and this policy.

a. In executing monitoring duties, authorizers will focus on whether the charter school is delivering on the spirit and intent of the educational plan and other components defined in the charter contract. These efforts will focus primarily on whether charter schools are meeting the goals set forth in the Accountability Plan. While authorizers must monitor the compliance of charter schools with federal and state law and policy, authorizers are not expected to undertake the same level of monitoring and compliance support they provide to non-charter public schools. Instead, authorizers are expected to safeguard students through more limited monitoring that may occur less frequently and rely more heavily on data reporting and review, though relying solely on annual reporting to ensure compliance with legal requirements will likely be insufficient. Authorizer monitoring stands in contrast to management by the charter school governing board, which maintains responsibility for personnel, curriculum, calendar, finances, and other decisions as outlined below and throughout this policy.

b. When the authorizer identifies instances where a charter school is not complying with the terms of the charter contract or applicable federal law, state code, and/or this policy, the authorizer shall notify the governing board of the identified issues and “provide reasonable opportunity” for remediation as set forth in the charter contract. To avoid unduly inhibiting charter school autonomy, the authorizer shall not require charter schools to take specific remediation as the result of performance monitoring, unless outlined otherwise in the charter contract. Authorizers may provide specific remediation if necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of authorizers under federal law, state code, and/or this policy such as when failing to provide specific steps would violate the authorizers’ obligations under IDEA. However, the authorizer may require charter schools to develop and execute a corrective action plan (CAP), pursuant to §18-5G-6(g).

c. The above notwithstanding, if a charter school fails to comply with legal requirements or fails to adhere to the CAP, the authorizer may intervene directly and prescribe specific action and/or require representatives of the charter school and its governing board to appear before the WVBE.

d. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(b), the authorizer is responsible for continually monitoring adherence to the charter school’s Accountability Plan. The authorizer must

ensure that standards and goals included in the Accountability Plan are met by each charter school along with other performance measures agreed upon in the charter contract. If monitoring activities reveal performance deficiencies, the authorizer may require charter schools to develop and execute a corrective action plan (CAP). If a charter school does not execute the agreed upon CAP or the CAP provides insufficient to address the deficiencies, the authorizer may require representatives of the charter school and its governing board to appear before the WVBE.

e. If an authorizer fails to take appropriate action in response to a charter school that does not meet the standards, including but not limited to: issuing CAPs, denying a renewal application, and/or suspending or revoking a charter contract, the authorizer shall appear before the WVBE to justify its actions. The WVBE may uphold or overturn the authorizer's decision and may revoke the authority of the authorizer to authorize charter schools. When the WVBE revokes the authorizing authority of a county board, the WVBE shall serve as the authorizer for all charter schools previously authorized by that county board. The county board with revoked authorizing authority may only renew its authorizing authority by action of the WVBE, which shall review whether the efforts to address authorizing deficiencies are sufficient to warrant renewed authorizing authority at the request of the county board.

8. Determination of Charter Renewal or Revocation. As set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. and XII. Process for Renewal and Revocation of Charter Contracts of this policy, the authorizer shall perform a comprehensive review of charter school performance against the expectations set out in the charter contract to determine whether to renew the contract, or whether the current situation is such that immediate suspension or revocation of the charter contract is warranted.

9. Authorizers are the primary liaison between the WVDE and charter schools they authorize. While governing boards are ultimately responsible for complying with state reporting requirements, the authorizer shall facilitate reporting and other communication upon the request of the charter school. In this spirit, authorizers shall provide support to start-up charter schools in using WVEIS and other state or countywide reporting systems that the charter schools are required to use (e.g., online individualized education plan) upon request of the charter school. The authorizer shall also regularly update the WVDE with contact information for the governing board and key administrators of charter schools it authorizes.

10. Upon request of the charter school, the authorizer shall provide additional support and oversight to help charter schools comply with state and federal laws in the first year of operation. Any specific requests for additional support must be submitted in writing during the first year of operation. Such help does not need to be explicitly negotiated as part of the charter contract. The authorizer is not required to complete compliance activities or reporting for charter schools with the exception of responsibilities outlined in subsection 7.1.b.12 of WVBE Policy 3300. Help from its authorizer notwithstanding, the charter school has an affirmative duty to become familiar with its duties and responsibilities under state and federal law.

11. Authorizers have the authority and responsibility to engage in oversight of charter school special education practices and to coordinate with the WVDE in order to ensure equitable access in these schools and compliance with applicable law. If an authorizer determines that a charter

school is not ensuring that students with disabilities are receiving the benefits provided by IDEA, such as FAPE in the LRE, the authorizer shall work with the charter school to create a publicly available CAP that will modify practices and expand access and services on a specific timeframe. Creation and implementation of the CAP may inform expansion, replication, or renewal decisions. Authorizers shall be primarily responsible for requiring and overseeing such corrective steps, and failure on the part of the charter school to make progress toward goals articulated in the CAP could result in charter revocation.

12. Pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §1413(a)(5) and 34 CFR §§300.241, authorizers must provide information to the WVDE demonstrating that they will:

- a. Serve students with disabilities attending charter schools in the same manner as the authorizer serves students with disabilities in non-charter public schools; and
- b. Provide IDEA Part B funds to charter schools on the same basis and timeline as it provides Part B funds to its non-public charter schools.

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13. The authorizer shall timely adhere to all reporting requirements outlined in federal law, state code, or this policy.

14. Upon request of the governing board, an authorizer shall allow facilities within its control, in whole or in part, to be used by the charter school either under long-term occupancy lease agreements or rental agreements for individual events, subject to the following:

- a. The facility being requested for use is safe and habitable for the purpose in which the charter school seeks to use the facility.
- b. The facility is not being used by the authorizer for any non-charter public school at the time the charter school seeks to use or lease the facility, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-12(a).
- c. If a charter school seeks to lease the whole or part of a public facility, the cost of the lease must be at or under the current market value, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-12(a).
- d. If a charter school seeks to rent the whole or part of a public facility for an individual event, including, but not limited to, athletic events, theater performances, etc., the cost of the rental must be at or below the cost to the authorizer of making the facility available to the charter school.
- e. The authorizer may lease or rent equipment (including athletic or information technology equipment) to a charter school. The parties must agree to standard lease or rental terms prior to lease or rental. The rental or lease rate may include additional costs borne by the authorizer due to increase usage of said equipment.

15. An authorizer shall not harass, threaten, discipline, discharge, retaliate, or in any manner

discriminate against any of its employees involved directly or indirectly with an application to establish a charter school.

16. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(7), authorizers shall ensure all personnel in a charter school who were previously employed by the county board of education shall continue to accrue seniority with the county board in the same manner that they would accrue seniority if employed in a non-charter public school in the county. County boards of education shall adapt their current processes and systems to allow for the proper maintenance of seniority for former county board of education personnel who move to a charter school authorized by the county.

17. County boards of education have an affirmative responsibility to develop their internal capacity to act as authorizers. The WVDE will provide training to help county boards accomplish this end. County boards may also engage in additional capacity building as necessary. If a county board wants to forgo the WVDE training to use alternate organizations, trainings, or resources to build their authorizing capacity, they must demonstrate how their plan will adequately prepare them to act as authorizers.

18. In the case that an authorizer approves a charter school application but lacks the capacity to fulfill its ongoing authorizing duties and responsibilities, it may request that the WVBE act as authorizer, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(c). The WVBE shall only act as authorizer after the requesting county board of education has demonstrated its lack of capacity to fulfill the responsibilities of charter school authorizing to the satisfaction of the WVBE. In cases when the WVBE acts as authorizer, the county board of education that approved the application remains the LEA for the charter school and must make every effort possible to assist the WVBE with monitoring and oversight activities, especially those activities for which local knowledge or physical proximity are particularly advantageous.

19. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(k), no civil liability shall attach to an authorizer or to any of its members or employees for any acts or omissions of the charter public school. Neither the county board of education nor the State of West Virginia shall be liable for the debts or financial obligations of a charter public school or any person or entity that operates a charter public school.

C. Governing Board/Charter School Responsibilities. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-5, the governing board is ultimately accountable and responsible for the actions of the charter school, the safety and security of enrolled students, and its ability to deliver the educational options and outcomes specified in the charter contract. The governing board is responsible for the overall safety and security of students.

D. In addition to any duties and responsibilities outlined in the charter contract, a charter school and its governing board are responsible for adhering to the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Ensuring all instructional personnel employed at the charter school hold a valid and appropriate certification, as specified in the charter school application and contract.
2. Providing the WVDE adequate information to certify such individuals pursuant to the charter certification provided for in W. Va. 126CSR136, WVBE Policy 5202, Minimum Requirements for the Licensure of Professional/Paraprofessional Personnel and Advanced Salary Classifications,

and the criteria agreed upon in the charter school application and/or contract as outlined in section III. Charter School Application in this policy.

3. Sufficient information for county boards of education to track the seniority of former employees of the county board of education now employed by the charter school who continue to accrue seniority for the purpose of employment at non-charter public schools, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(b)(7) and subsection 7.1.b.15 of this policy.

4. The charter school is responsible for documenting its students' progress towards achieving the defined graduation requirements and certifying completion of requirements for the purpose of reporting graduation outcomes to the authorizer and the WVDE. Charter schools will have the ability to use the same electronic course scheduling and transcript platforms provided by the WVDE as non-charter schools.

5. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c), the governing board shall operate the charter school in accordance with the charter contract and under the oversight of the authorizer. To execute the educational mission and operational plans of the charter contract, the governing board holds powers as a public corporate body including, but not limited to those outlined in W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(2):

- a. Receive and disburse funds for school purposes;
- b. Secure appropriate insurance and enter into contracts and leases;
- c. Contract with an ESP, as long as the governing board retains final oversight and authority over the school;
- d. Pledge, assign, or encumber its assets to be used as collateral for loans or extensions of credit.
- e. Solicit and accept any gifts or grants for school purposes, subject to applicable laws and the terms of its charter.
- f. Apply for federal funds that may be available for the implementation of charter school programs; and
- g. Acquire real property for use as its facilities or facilities from public or private sources.

6. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(3), the governing board shall enroll students in the charter school pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11 and section XIII. Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention of this policy.

7. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(4), the governing board shall require any ESP the governing board is contracting with to timely provide a monthly detailed budget to the governing board.

8. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(6)(ix), require any ESP the governing board is

contracting with to provide an annual review of educational and operational practices that the ESP found particularly effective for delivering improved student outcomes. The governing board shall report these practices to its authorizer and the state as part of annual reporting on successful innovations as required by state code.

9. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(5), the governing board is required to comply with all federal and state laws, rules, and regulations, including Policy 2419. The precise responsibilities of the charter school are subject to the required section of the charter contract that outlines roles, responsibilities, and funding related to special education and related services as described in section 6 of this policy. .

10. The governing boards must timely provide information and data upon request by the authorizer or the WVDE so that those entities may fulfill federal and statutory reporting requirements. Such requests must give charter schools at least 14 days to fulfill such requests, except when such time period would cause non-compliance with legally required reporting or when standard reporting schedules allow charter schools to be aware of upcoming reporting requirements.

11. The governing board must timely respond and take appropriate action to correct any deficiencies identified by the authorizer.

12. The governing board must remit to the authorizer an oversight fee in accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(i) and section XVI. Finances of this policy.

13. The governing board must ensure that the primary financial official, the principal, and the governing board president are appropriately bonded using the requirements for equivalent positions at the county board of education level, which are contained in W. Va. 126CSR200, Policy 8100, Public School Finance.

14. The governing board shall hold an open public meeting at least once quarterly.

E. The charter school is responsible for facilities it uses during periods it is the primary user.

1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-12(c), if the charter school enters into a lease of public facilities, in part or in whole, the charter school is solely responsible for the direct expenses related to the public facility lease, including utilities, insurance, maintenance, repairs, and remodeling. The county board is responsible for any debt incurred or liens that are attached to the school building before the charter school leases the public facility.

2. If the charter school uses public facilities for individual events, the rental agreement shall define the responsibilities of each party and the costs to be reimbursed by the charter school.

3. Each charter school must, consistent with the requirements of the ADA and Section 504, ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from programs, activities, or services at the school, even if their facility is not fully accessible. Each charter school shall make its program accessible to students with disabilities, as well as to parents and guardians, to school personnel, and to members of the public in accordance with Section 504. If the school has obtained a waiver from the authorizer due to undue burden or fundamental alteration, this

information should be publicly available.

F. Governing boards and charter schools shall not harass, threaten, discipline, discharge, retaliate, or in any manner discriminate against any of its employees for participation or affiliation in a union or teacher organization.

## **XII. Process for Renewal and Revocation of Charter Contracts.**

The renewal process is pivotal to ensuring that authorized charter schools continue to promote the aims of improved student outcomes, innovative educational methods, and expanded educational opportunities set forth in W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b). The renewal process provides the charter school authorizer with the opportunity to review the practices and outcomes of a charter school and determine whether its continued operation supports these aims in the area within which it operates.

### **A. Renewal Review and Application Process.**

1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(a), no later than June 30 preceding the final school year of a charter school's final year of its charter contract, the authorizer shall issue a performance report on the charter school. The performance report shall summarize the charter school's performance record to date, based on agreed data collection in the charter contract state law, and this policy, and shall provide notice of any weaknesses or concerns perceived by the authorizer concerning the school that may jeopardize its position in seeking renewal if not timely rectified. The school and the authorizer shall mutually agree to a reasonable time period for the charter school to respond to the performance report and submit any corrections for the report. During the final year of the contract, the charter school is responsible for submitting all data needed for the performance report by a date determined by the authorizer.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(b), no later than June 30 preceding the final school year of a charter school's final year of its charter contract, the authorizer shall provide contract renewal application guidance to the charter school. The renewal application guidance shall include or refer explicitly to the criteria and standards agreed upon in the charter contract and will guide the authorizer's renewal decisions. To assist authorizers, the WVDE will provide a standard renewal application template. The authorizer may use and/or modify the standard renewal application to the extent necessary to align the renewal process with the original contract and the educational mission of the charter school. The renewal application guidance that the authorizer provides shall, at a minimum, require and provide an opportunity for charter school to:

- a. Present evidence, beyond the data contained in the performance report, supporting its case for charter renewal;
- b. Describe improvements undertaken or planned for the school, and
- c. Detail the school's plans for the next charter term.

3. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c), no later than September 30 of a charter school's final authorized year of operation under a term of a charter contract, the governing board of the charter school seeking renewal shall submit a renewal application to the authorizer pursuant to



the renewal application guidance offered by the authorizer.

4. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c), no later than 45 days after receiving a properly completed renewal application, an authorizer shall adopt a resolution in a public meeting regarding the renewal application. In reaching a decision on the renewal application, the authorizer shall:

a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(1), ground its decisions on a thorough analysis of evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with the terms and measures established in the accountability plan set forth in the charter contract and public input collected through the same means as other public comments on county board of education actions;

b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(2), ensure that data used in making renewal decisions are available to the charter school and the public;

c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(3), include, as part of the resolution, a report summarizing the evidence basis and specific reasons for its decision; and

d. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(4), specifically, include one of the following rulings:

(1). Renew the charter contract for a specified term of years based on the school's performance data and demonstrated capacities of the charter school for no longer than five (5) years; or

(2). Decline to renew the charter contract. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(f), the authorizer may rely on any of the following reasons for not renewing a charter contract:

(a). The health and safety of students attending the charter school is threatened;

(b). The governing board and/or charter school failed to comply with the provisions of this policy, state code, or federal law;

(c). The governing board and/or charter school committed a material violation of any of the terms, conditions, standards, or procedures required in the charter contract and/or provided false or fraudulent information, by omission or commission, on its charter school application;

(d). The charter school failed to meet the performance expectations set forth in the charter contract;

(e). The governing board and/or charter school failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;

(f). The governing board and/or charter school violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not exempted; or

(g). With supporting evidence and rationale, continued operation of the charter school would not be in the best interests of students.

5. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(4)(B), in the case of nonrenewal of a charter contract, the governing board of the charter school shall have 30 days to respond in writing to the authorizer's decision. The authorizer shall arrange for a public hearing, which shall be recorded, if timely requested by the governing board.

6. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(c)(4)(B), no later than 40 days after rendering its initial decision on the renewal application, the authorizer shall render a final decision on the renewal application. The authorizer shall consider the governing board's response, testimony, and documentation, as well as the recorded public hearing, prior to rendering a final decision on the renewal application. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(g), the authorizer's final decision, and the reasons supporting the final decision, must be clearly stated in a resolution adopted in a public meeting.

7. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(e), within 10 days of taking final action on a renewal application, the authorizer shall report the action taken and reasons for the decision to the school's governing board and the state board or affected county board, as applicable. A copy of the report shall be submitted at the same time to the State Superintendent of Schools.

8. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(d), the failure of the authorizer to act on a renewal application within the designated timeframes shall be deemed an approval of the renewal application.

#### B. Revocation of a Charter Contract.

1. Revocation Process. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(f), A charter contract may be revoked at any time if the authorizer determines that:

- a. The health and safety of students attending the charter school is threatened;
- b. The governing board and/or charter school failed to comply with the provisions of this policy, state code, or federal law.
- c. The governing board and/or charter school committed a material violation of any of the terms, conditions, standards, or procedures required in the charter contract and/or provided false or fraudulent information, by omission or commission, on its charter school application;
- d. The charter school failed to meet the performance expectations set forth in the charter contract.
- e. The governing board and/or charter school failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or
- f. The governing board and/or charter school violated any provision of law from which the

charter school was not exempted.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-9(d), the authorizer and governing board shall include in the charter contract a procedural process to be followed if an authorizer determines revocation of the charter contract is warranted. At a minimum, that process shall include the following:

- a. Information that must be included in authorizer's initial decision to revoke the charter contract;
- b. How the authorizer will notify the governing board of the initial decision to revoke the charter contract and the reasons for the revocation;
- c. The timeframe for the governing board to provide a written response, documentation, and testimony as to why the charter contract should not be revoked;
- d. The process and timeframe for the governing board to request a public hearing;
- e. A requirement that the authorizer will consider any written response, documentation, testimony, and recorded public hearing prior to rendering a final decision on the revocation of the charter contract;
- f. The information that must be included in the authorizer's final decision on whether to revoke the charter contract; and
- g. The timeframe for the authorizer to render a final decision on whether to revoke the charter contract.

3. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(g) and (i), the rationale for revocation of a charter contract and closure of the charter school shall be stated in a resolution adopted by the authorizer in an open public meeting and by resolution stating the reasons for the revocation. Notwithstanding, nothing in this section prevents or discourages an authorizer from taking immediate action to suspend a charter contract to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students.

4. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(e), within 10 days of acting to revoke a charter contract, the authorizer shall report the action taken and reasons for the decision to the school's governing board, WVBE, and any affected county boards, as applicable. A copy of the report shall be submitted at the same time to the State Superintendent of Schools. The authorizer shall adopt a resolution in an open public meeting containing its decision to revoke the charter contract as well as the accompanying reasons for taking such action.

5. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(h), following an authorizer's action to revoke a charter contract, the charter school shall be closed. Pursuant to state law, charter schools may not operate without a valid charter contract in place.

#### C. Suspension of a Charter Contract and Immediate Closure for Extraordinary Circumstances.

1. An authorizer may immediately suspend a charter contract when continued operation of the

charter school presents a clear and immediate threat to the health and safety of students.

2. A charter school shall be closed while its charter contract is suspended and may not reopen until the authorizer formally reinstates the charter contract.
3. If the charter school and its governing board do not remedy the cause of suspension or develop a plan to remedy it that is acceptable to the authorizer within 30 days, the authorizer may revoke the charter contract.
4. The authorizer and the suspended charter school must collaborate to provide an alternate setting for students to receive adult supervision during the charter suspension.

#### D. Closure of a Charter School.

1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(j), in the event a charter school is closed for any reason, the authorizer and governing board shall follow the process outlined in the charter contract for closing the school. To ensure a smooth and orderly closure and transition for students and parents, the WVDE will oversee and assist where needed and appropriate in the closure process to ensure the following items are accomplished:

- a. Timely notification to parents of the reason(s) and timeline for closure;
- b. Orderly transition of students and student records to new non-charter or charter schools.
- c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(j)(2), proper disposition of school funds, property and assets in the following order: (1) to satisfy outstanding payroll obligations for employees of the charter school; (2) to satisfy creditors of the charter school, and (3) remaining funds, property, or assets shall transfer to the authorizing county board. If the assets of the charter school are insufficient to pay all the parties to whom the charter school owes compensation, the prioritization of assets may be altered by decree of a court of law.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(h), when the charter is revoked or not renewed for a school that began as a conversion charter school, the county board with authority over the district in which the school is located may return it to non-charter public school status.

3. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-10(k), if a charter school is subject to closure or transition back to a non-charter public school, an authorizer may remove at will at any time any or all of the members of the charter school governing board if deemed necessary to ensure a smooth and orderly closure or transition. If the authorizer removes members of the governing board such that it can no longer function, the authorizer shall be empowered to take any further necessary and proper acts connected with closure or transition of the charter school in the name and interest of the charter school.

### **XIII. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention.**

To fulfill the legislative intent of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq., charter schools must remain an open and

reasonable option to all students, except as identified in W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(6) in the case of charter schools with an educational mission focused on serving students with special needs. Efforts to recruit, enroll, and retain students must align with this objective.

Students must have the ability to transfer between charter and non-charter public schools without impairing their ability to graduate high school on time. To this end, the authorizer and the governing board are responsible for working collaboratively to translate student credits between the two schools and ensuring transferring students and parents understand what coursework will be required to graduate at the receiving school, be it a charter or non-charter public school. The determination of grade levels for transferring students shall be based on what is age and educationally appropriate. All extracurricular programs offered by the charter school are subject to Secondary Schools Activities Commission (SSAC) rules.

The authorizer and governing board must agree to and include in the charter contract provisions, consistent with the requirements of this section, relating to a charter school's primary recruitment area, preferences to be used in a lottery, enrollment processes and timelines, and student transfer processes.

#### A. Recruitment and Retention.

##### 1. Primary Recruitment Area.

a. Charter school applications must include a defined primary recruitment area. The primary recruitment area shall be based, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11, on the charter school's estimated facility and program capacity. The primary recruitment area for a charter school may include territory from more than one county. When the primary recruitment area includes territory from more than one county, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-2(2), the county boards with concurrent jurisdiction over such territories must work together as the authorizer, subject to the following provisions:

(1) When two or more county boards of education act together as authorizer, they collectively hold all the roles and responsibilities of an authorizer outlines in this policy, as well as state and federal law.

(2) When two or more county boards of education act together as authorizer, they may form a cooperating county charter authorizing board that consists of a subset of board members from cooperating county boards. The cooperating county charter authorizing board shall not have fewer than five members and shall not have fewer than two members from each individual county board. The cooperating county charter authorizing board shall act as authorizer, with all according roles and responsibilities, for all matters except those relating to charter school application approvals and charter contract renewals. For these decisions, the individual county boards of education must approve applications or renewal applications, though charter schools may submit a single set of materials.

b. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11, the primary recruitment area of a charter school is a geographic area within which students who reside in the primary recruitment area may receive preference for enrollment in the charter school as outlined in subsection XIII. Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention of this Policy 3300.

c. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(4), the primary recruitment area is defined in the charter contract based on the initial proposed primary recruitment area outlined in the application as required by W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(7).

(1). Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(5), the primary recruitment area is open to annual revision based on the facility and program capacity of the charter school. The determination of said capacity is made by the governing board of the charter school in conjunction with its authorizer. The capacity determination shall define capacity by school, grade level, and/or special need preference category to the extent necessary to make it clear and transparent the number of enrollment slots available to a prospective student interested in a particular charter school.

(2). The governing board and authorizer shall consider how any changes to the primary recruitment area will impact the ability of the charter school to execute its educational mission, provide required services to students, and ensure safe facilities. Changes in primary recruitment area must be made and agreed upon by the governing board of the charter school and its authorizer no later than January 1 of the year in which the change shall go into effect.

(3). In determining the primary recruitment area, the governing board of the charter school and the authorizer shall consider the potential impact of the primary recruitment area on separation along the lines of student characteristics including, but not limited to, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, or prior academic achievement. Demographics should align with that of the district.

d. Notwithstanding the defined primary recruitment area included in a charter contract, if more than one-third of the students enrolled at the charter school are from a single county outside the jurisdiction of the authorizing county board of education, the county board of education with jurisdiction over such county shall be given the option to join as an authorizer of the charter school. If a county board does decide to join as an authorizer, the charter contract shall be modified to include the county board of education as a party and to otherwise update as necessary to make clear each party's duties and responsibilities.

## 2. Establishment of Enrollment Preferences.

a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(9), a conversion charter school shall guarantee enrollment to all students who previously enrolled in the non-charter public school and shall adopt and maintain a policy that gives enrollment preference to students who reside within the attendance zone as established prior to the conversion of the school. Enrollment beyond guaranteed enrollment shall follow the enrollment process for all charter schools outlined below, subject to the above attendance area preference and other preferences in the charter contract.

b. The governing board of a charter school and its authorizer shall agree to the specific preferences and the order of preferences in the charter contract.

c. A preference for students enrolled in the charter school in the previous school year must

be included in the charter contract to provide educational stability for these students.

d. A preference for children who reside within the primary recruitment area must be included in the charter contract in line with the intent of W. Va. Code §18-5G-1 et seq. to expand the educational options available to students and families under the jurisdiction of the authorizer.

e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(7), charter schools must establish enrollment preferences for:

- (1). Students enrolled in the charter school the previous school year; and;
- (2). Children who reside within the school's primary recruitment area.

f. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(7), charter schools may establish enrollment preferences for:

- (1). Children who are siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school;
- (2). Children with special needs; and
- (3). Children of governing board members and full-time employees of the charter school as long as the number of students enrolled under this preference constitutes no more than five percent of the school's total student enrollment.

g. Preferences for students with special needs must define the documentation required to qualify for this preference. Documentation requirements must be minimally intensive to afford access to students with special needs and their families independent of their access to the resources necessary to complete documentation.

h. This section does not preclude the formation of a charter school whose mission is focused on serving students with disabilities. Charter schools with a mission to serve students with disabilities may prioritize recruitment and enrollment of students with a specific disability profile. In such cases, the agreement between authorizer and charter school on the provision of special education and related services, described in section 6 of this policy, shall reflect the charter school's mission.

### 3. Recruitment Activities.

a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(1), the charter school shall engage in comprehensive publicity about the school throughout its primary recruitment area. Publicity shall include easy-to-understand information about the school, its educational mission, its educational program, and any focus on students with special needs. The charter school shall make all reasonable efforts to reach students in or entering the grade levels it serves and their families. Publicity and other recruitment activities shall describe, in plain language, the processes and timelines for student enrollment application.

b. Charter schools must publicize their offerings and actively recruit students in their

primary recruitment area annually. Publicity and recruitment activities must provide families in the primary recruitment area with ample opportunity to complete the required student enrollment application prior to the deadline.

c. Charter schools must prioritize outreach to students with special needs that qualify them for an enrollment preference at the charter school as well as their families.

d. Such activities shall be designed to welcome all students and families regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, religion, home language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, other exceptionality, and prior academic performance and disciplinary record.

e. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(1), authorizers shall provide or publicize to parents and the general public information about charter schools with primary recruitment areas wholly or partially contained in the county as an enrollment option to the same extent and through the same means that the county provides and publicizes information about non-charter public schools in the county.

#### 4. Enrollment and Retention Review.

a. On an annual basis, the governing board of a charter school and its authorizer shall review student enrollment, turnover, and transfer at the charter school. The purpose of the review is to ensure the school is providing a welcoming and positive educational environment for all students and their families within the primary recruitment area and/or eligible for enrollment preference based on special needs.

b. The enrollment review will compare the demographics of students enrolled in a charter school to surrounding non-charter public schools under the authorizer's jurisdiction. There are no hard benchmarks that trigger action and differences in student demographics are not themselves a reason for concrete actions. However, significant and persistent differences demand further exploration by the charter school in collaboration with its authorizer. These collaborative efforts should aim to guard against charter school enrollment contributing to nearby schools having divergent demographics, which runs counter to the spirit of W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(6). Enrollment reviews will consider enrollment of subgroups defined by characteristics including, but not limited to: socioeconomic status, sex, race, ethnicity, disability, other exceptionality, and prior academic performance and disciplinary record.

c. The turnover review will explore overall turnover rates and the turnover rates for student subgroups. Student turnover, where a student transfers out of a charter school in between school years, is an inherent characteristic of charter schools in which students and parents/families/caregivers exercise choice over enrollment. However, excessive turnover, either overall or among specific student subgroups, is a warning sign that the charter school is failing to provide a significant segment of students with a positive learning environment. The purpose of the review is to identify instances of excessive turnover among all students or specific subgroups and outline steps to remediate the situation. In instances of problematic turnover, the charter school must work with its authorizer to create a positive and welcoming learning environment for all students. The review shall



consider turnover for all students and student subgroups.

d. The mid-year (including any time during the academic school year) transfer review will explore overall rates of mid-year transfers from a charter school and this rate for different student subgroups. A mid-year transfer is any transfer into or out of a charter school that occurs during the instructional school year for that school or any sending or receiving school. A high rate of mid-year transfers is a sign that the charter school is failing to provide students with a positive, welcoming learning environment. Examining differential rates for various student subgroups helps ensure that average rates do not mask issues specific to certain subgroups at a charter school. The purpose of the review is to identify instances of excessive mid-year transfer among all students or specific subgroups and outline steps to remediate the situation. In instances of problematic mid-year transfer, the charter school must work with its authorizer to create a positive and welcoming learning environment for all students. The review shall consider mid-year transfers for all students and student subgroups defined characteristics including but not limited to socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, home language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, other exceptionality, or prior academic performance and disciplinary record, when applicable and subject to data availability.

e. The charter school is responsible for providing all the necessary data for the student enrollment, turnover and mid-year (including any time during the academic school year) transfer reviews, according to district timelines. As a result of the student enrollment, turnover, and mid-year transfer reviews, the authorizer may request charter schools to prepare a corrective action plan to remedy concerning trends for review and approval by the authorizer. Upon approval, the authorizer shall monitor the implementation of the plan by the charter school. If the charter school does not remedy the concerning student enrollment, turnover, and/or transfer trends through its CAP, the authorizer has the authority to take such action it deems as necessary to address the concerns and may recommend that the charter school appear before the WVBE to discuss the situation and develop appropriate remedies.

f. Authorizers who fail to faithfully uphold their responsibility to administer annual enrollment, turnover, and mid-year transfer reviews or take appropriate action when necessary may be subject to adverse consequences from the WVBE, including suspension of their role as authorizer.

## B. Charter School Enrollment.

1. Annual target size announced by January 1 of each year. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(5), the capacity of a charter school will be determined annually by the governing board of the charter school in conjunction with its authorizer. The capacity determination shall include both the overall enrollment capacity for a charter school as well as enrollment capacities by grade level within the charter school. The sum of sub-school capacities may exceed the overall capacity to account for variation in grade level enrollment. To allow for planning for both the charter school and public schools, the enrollment capacity must be agreed upon by the governing board of the charter school and its authorizer no later than January 1 of the year for which it will go into effect. Notwithstanding this annual deadline, the governing board of a charter school and its authorizer(s) may engage in cooperative planning to set multi-year target

enrollments to guide long-term strategy and decision-making.

## 2. The Enrollment Timeline and Process.

a. The governing board of the charter school and its authorizer shall agree upon an initial and annual enrollment process in their charter contract, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(b)(7). This agreement shall clearly define the responsibilities of the charter school when it comes to managing the enrollment process, verifying student enrollment preferences, and conducting the enrollment lottery, if necessary, as well as the role of the authorizer in overseeing these processes.

b. For the initial year (charter schools opening in 2021-2022), the primary round of charter school student enrollment applications, lottery, and enrollment shall conclude by April 15, 2021. This date attempts to balance the timeline for the first application review process with the needs of both charter and non-charter public schools to plan appropriately for the upcoming year. In the 2021-2022 school year, this also establishes an initial enrollment to use project funding levels. Subsequent 126CSR79 40 enrollments for a given school year shall be subject to available capacity, student transfers, etc.

c. In the event that the number of student enrollment applications approved statewide does not exceed the statutory limit, the deadline for enrollment shall be April 1, 2021, to provide additional time for charter schools and county boards to plan for the upcoming school year based on a more accurate projection of enrollment at charter schools.

d. For every subsequent year, the primary round of charter school student enrollment applications, lottery, and enrollment shall conclude by February 15 of each year to allow charter and non-charter public schools to plan appropriately for the upcoming year. In the initial year of a charter school's operation, this round of enrollment also establishes an initial enrollment to use to project funding levels. Subsequent enrollments for a given school year shall be subject to available capacity, student transfers, etc.

e. A charter school must make its student enrollment application available to the public at least 60 days prior to the application deadline.

(1). The purpose of the student enrollment application is to allow students and parents to declare their desire to enroll in a charter school. The student enrollment application should promote an application process that is accessible to all students and families.

(2). The student enrollment application is open to all students of the appropriate age or grade level in West Virginia, though some students will have preferences that make it more likely they will be able to enroll.

(3). The student enrollment application must collect basic student information necessary for enrollment as well as to identify and document enrollment preferences.

(4). The student enrollment application cannot include essay questions, admissions tests, or other barriers to enrollment that demand the demonstration of high

achievement. Academic, discipline, or other education-related data may only be collected for schools with a preference for students with special needs that need to use such data to determine student eligibility for the preference.

(5) The admissions process of a charter school shall be blind to disability status, except that the school may request that parents applying for enrollment disclose whether their child has an IEP if and only if the sole purpose of such disclosure is to apply an enrollment preference for such students, as permitted by W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(7)(C). In this case, parents shall be provided information on the enrollment preference before being asked to disclose their child's disability status. Any such disclosure shall be voluntary; parents shall not be required to provide information as to special education status when applying for admission, but students will not be eligible for an enrollment preference tied to disability if disability status information is not provided. Any school utilizing an enrollment preference benefiting students with disabilities shall include information about such a preference and the number of students utilizing it as part of its annual report to its authorizer.

(6) Students and families must be able to complete the student enrollment application electronically or by using a paper hard-copy. Applications submitted electronically and by paper must be maintained for audit purposes.

(7) The WVDE shall provide a student enrollment application template that meets the criteria above that charter schools in West Virginia may choose to use.

f. Student applicants shall be offered enrollment at the charter school if:

(1). The number of qualified student applicants to a charter school for a particular grade level is less than the capacity for that grade level;

(2). The number of overall student applicants to a charter school is less than its overall enrollment capacity.

g. If these conditions are met, student enrollment at the charter school is open. All student applicants shall be offered enrollment. Additional students (i.e., those who did not apply prior to the application deadline) may enroll based on space availability and the order in which they apply.

h. If either of the above conditions is not met, an enrollment lottery shall determine the order in which additional students are offered enrollment.

i. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(a)(8), enrollment lotteries shall be conducted in open public meetings and involve procedures and timelines that support equal and open access for all students. The charter school must notify the district of the location, date, and time of their lottery.

(1). Enrollment lotteries may be conducted using computer-based randomization software. If randomization software is used, it must produce audit records verifiable by the WVDE.

(2). The outcome of the random lottery is a priority ordering for students for enrollment in a charter school.

(a). The random lottery shall occur during the open public meeting with the results announced and displayed publicly.

(b). Students apply for enrollment in particular grade levels within a charter school. As such, enrollment lotteries will be separate for each grade level but must be conducted at one time in an open public meeting.

(c). To incorporate the enrollment preferences in the charter contract, the random lottery will be stratified by grade level and enrollment preferences, including those without preference.

(d). Within a given grade level, students are placed in the enrollment preference group with the highest level of preference as defined in the charter contract. Within each group, they are ordered by random lottery. Each preference group is then added to the enrollment order starting with the highest preference group to form the enrollment list.

(e). Students who have a number on the list less than or equal to the capacity of the grade level are added to the preliminary enrollment pool.

(f). If the number of students in the preliminary enrollment pool is less than or equal to the overall school capacity, all students in the preliminary enrollment pool will be offered enrollment.

(g). If the number of students in the preliminary enrollment pool exceeds the overall school capacity, students in the preliminary pool enter a random lottery within students in their preference group but not combining students across grade level.

(h). Within preference groups, students are ordered by random lottery. Students are then added to the final enrollment list in this order starting with the students in the highest preference group.

(i). Students with a number on the final enrollment list less than or equal to the capacity of the school are added to the final enrollment pool and will be offered enrollment.

(j). Students not initially offered enrollment are added to the top of the waitlist in their random lottery order.

(k). Each student offered enrollment has the ability to opt out of enrollment. As students opt out of enrollment, students on the waitlist are offered enrollment, beginning with the first student at the top of the waitlist.

(3) Each charter school shall enroll students without regard to disability status.

(a). Following selection via the lottery, the IEP of any student with a disability shall be immediately reviewed. The review may result in adjustments to the IEP and/or the charter school's program necessary to ensure the student receives FAPE in the LRE.

(b). In rare instances where an IEP Team determines that the charter school is not the appropriate LRE, the authorizer shall take responsibility for the student and determine his or her placement. If a charter school is repeatedly unable to provide students with disabilities with FAPE in the LRE, the authorizer may choose to address the issue in the annual enrollment review, request corrective action to address the limitations, and/or consider the situation as a factor in its renewal decision.

#### G. Student Discipline.

1. Charter schools shall define and publicize their own student behavior and discipline policies as approved by their governing boards. Provisions concerning student expulsion and out-of-school suspension must be incorporated into the charter contract.

2. Student expulsions from a charter school shall be approved by the governing board of the charter school. Charter schools must provide students facing expulsion with appropriate due process rights. In accordance with federal law, students with disabilities must be provided procedural safeguards and due process rights and procedures in accordance with IDEA and Policy 2419.

a. Students expelled from a charter school remain the responsibility of the charter school. The charter school is responsible for providing the student with educational instruction and other legally required services to expelled students.

b. Charter schools may contract with county school boards to provide students expelled from charter schools with instruction and other legally required services at alternative education settings operated by the county school board. In such cases, the charter schools have the affirmative obligation to provide the receiving county school districts and alternative education settings with reports on students' academic and disciplinary standing as well as potential instructional materials to reduce the academic disruption for the students before their return to their charter schools.

c. When a student returns from a period of expulsion from a charter school, the student has the right to return to the expelling charter school. The student may also choose to return to a non-charter public school at the end of his/her expulsion.

3. Students receiving out-of-school suspensions from charter schools must continue to receive educational instruction and other legally required services during the term of their suspension. The charter school remains responsible for these services.

a. Charter schools may contract with county school boards to provide their students with instruction and other legally required services at alternative education settings operated by the county school board. In such cases, the charter schools have the affirmative obligation to provide the receiving county school district and alternative education setting with a report on the student's academic program and standing and disciplinary circumstances as well as potential instructional materials to reduce the academic disruption for the student before his/her return to the charter school. Any services for which a charter school contracts with a school district shall be provided by the district at cost and may be negotiated as a separate agreement from the charter contract.

b. Charter schools must provide students receiving out-of-school suspensions lasting more than 10 days with procedural safeguards and appropriate due process rights. In accordance with federal law, students with disabilities must be provided procedural safeguards and due process rights pursuant to IDEA and Policy 2419.

D. Transfers to/from a charter school.

1. Transfers to charter schools.

a. Students who wish to transfer to charter schools between school years will follow the enrollment process defined in the above Subsection XIII. Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention of this policy.

b. Students who wish to transfer to charter schools mid-school year (including any time during the academic school year) must complete the charter school application. If enrollment at the charter school is below capacity overall and in the grade level to which the student is applying, the charter school shall offer enrollment to the student. If the school or grade is at capacity, the student shall be added to the bottom of the waitlist.

2. Transfers from charter schools.

a. Students who wish to transfer from a charter school to a non-charter public school between the school years shall be enrolled at a non-charter public school based on the standard enrollment process, considering both school attendance zones and open enrollment policies.

b. Students who wish to transfer from a charter school to a non-charter public school during the school year shall be enrolled at a non-charter public school based on the standard enrollment process, considering both school attendance zones and open enrollment policies.

3. Responsibilities of sending and receiving schools.

a. When students transfer between charter public and non-charter public schools, educators at both schools have an affirmative responsibility to collaborate to smooth the transition for students.

b. Electronic records in WVEIS shall automatically transfer to the receiving school. Sending

schools shall compile other relevant educational records and transfer them to the receiving school in a manner compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99, state law regarding student privacy and data protection, and Policy 4350

c. Receiving schools shall make every effort to accept and recognize progress grades and credits earned at sending schools based on the demonstrated achievement and educational needs of transferring students.

(1). Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(b), non-charter public schools shall accept grades and credits earned by the student in courses or instructional programs at the charter school in a uniform and consistent manner and according to the same criteria that are used to accept academic grades and credits from other non-charter public schools or that consider content competency when appropriate due to differences in curriculum delivery, instructional methods and strategies, or course designations and sequence.

(2). In the spirit of furthering the best interests of students, charter schools shall accept transfer credits from non-charter public schools or other charter schools using similarly uniform and consistent processes as those outlined above.

#### **XIV. Educational Reporting Requirements.**

Flexibility, innovation, and accountability are the key underpinnings to fulfilling the charter schools' promise of increasing educational options in order to improve student outcomes. To hold a charter school accountable, its authorizer must have access to relevant evidence about the charter school's results. Straightforward reporting requirements and processes allow this access with minimum burden on the authorizer and charter schools. This access helps ensure that charter schools are held accountable to their educational mission, their ability to improve student outcomes, and their promise of developing successful strategies for diffusion across public schools.

In order to achieve the requirements above, charter schools shall comply with reporting requirements, specifications, processes, and timeline set annually by the WVDE.

##### **A. Student data.**

1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(7) and §18-5G-11(c), charter schools must comply with The Student Data Accessibility, Transparency, and Accountability Act pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-2-5h and Policy 4350.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(8) and §18-5G-11(c), charter schools will have access to and shall use WVEIS, and any successor electronic education information system, maintained by the WVDE for the purpose of reporting required information. Charter schools must utilize any district data reporting systems as applicable.

3. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-11(d), charter schools shall certify the following data to the WVDE and to the county board of the school district in which the charter school is located: student enrollment; average daily attendance; student participation in the national school lunch

program, special education, vocational education, CTE, gifted education, advanced placement and dual credit courses, and federal programs; and other education data in the same manner as county boards of education.

4. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(6), charter schools shall administer the same student assessments required of non-charter public schools. However, in accord with W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(6) and W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(9), nothing in this policy precludes charter schools from establishing additional student assessment measures or other student or school performance measures.

5. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(9) and §18-5G-11(c), charter schools shall report information on student and school performance to parents, policy-makers, and the general public in the same manner as non-charter public school utilizing the electronic format established by the WVDE. This includes reporting all data necessary to participate in the state's accountability system.

6. Consistent with the requirements of federal law, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Pub.L. 114-95, as amended by The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, as well as applicable state law, authorizers shall collect, maintain, annually access, disseminate and make publicly available data pertaining to students with disabilities in the charter schools for which they have oversight authority. To facilitate compliance, authorizers and charter schools shall use the Online IEP system provided by the WVDE.

7. In order to execute the monitoring, oversight, and accountability responsibilities established in W. Va. Code §18-5G-6, the authorizer will have electronic access to the same set of records in WVEIS and any subsequent replacements as the county school district would have for non-charter public schools in their jurisdiction. This access extends to the authorizer even when a charter school is located outside the geographic boundaries of the authorizer, as in the case of co-authorized charter schools.

8. Any school utilizing an enrollment preference, including those benefiting students with disabilities, shall include information about such a preference and the number of student utilizing it as part of its annual reporting to its authorizer.

#### B. Educational Practices and Innovations Reporting.

1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-1(b), establishing charter schools in West Virginia is intended to both promote innovative educational methods, practices, and programs and encourage the replication of successful strategies from charter schools.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(6), the WVBE is required to report on successful innovations applied in authorized charter schools which may be replicated in non-charter public schools as well as how non-charter public schools may implement these innovations.

3. In order to achieve these aims, the WVDE will develop and maintain a system for recording innovative educational practices. Charter schools must complete required reporting within this system annually in order to fulfill the legislative intent noted above.



## **XV. Education Service Providers.**

The role of an ESP is to manage the day-to-day education of students in charter schools. The specific functions performed by an individual ESP are defined by its contract with an authorized charter school's governing board. Notwithstanding any contrary provision in the ESP's contract, pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(2)(C), the governing board retains final authority and oversight over the charter school.

A. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-8(c), if a charter applicant intends to contract with an ESP to be involved with the operations of its proposed charter school, the charter school application must include the following information relating to the ESP:

1. Evidence of success in serving student populations similar to the targeted population, including demonstrated academic achievement and growth as well as successful management of nonacademic school functions, if applicable;
2. Student performance data, state grades, and financial audit reports for all current and past charter schools;
3. Documentation of and explanation for any actions taken, legal or otherwise, against any of its charter schools for academic, financial, or ethical concerns;
4. The proposed duration of the ESP's intended contract with the charter school's governing board;
5. The proposed annual fees and any other amounts to be paid to the ESP;
6. The roles and responsibilities of the governing board, the charter school staff, and the ESP;
7. The scope of services and resources to be provided by the ESP;
8. Performance evaluation measures and timelines;
9. Methods of contract oversight and enforcement by the governing board;
10. Investment disclosure, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Any interests or entanglements in the ESP, its parent companies, or subsidiaries held by members of the governing board;
  - b. Any investors, interest holders, subsidiaries, etc. in the ESP;
  - c. Conditions for renewal and termination of the ESP contract; and
  - d. Disclosure and explanation of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the governing board and the proposed ESP or any affiliated business entities.
11. As part of the evaluation of charter school applications, the authorizer shall consider the information provided in determining whether the ESP is reasonably likely to succeed in their

context. In doing so, the authorizer may consider the following:

- a. The ESP'S demonstrated success in improving student outcomes relative to other students with similar incoming achievement and demographics to those it serves in existing schools;
- b. The ESP'S demonstrated ability to successfully manage school operations and finances;
- c. The ESP's involvement in part of a charter school network or network of networks that has demonstrated success improving student outcomes relative to similar students;
- d. The ESP's experience serving students and communities similar to the one it plans to serve;
- e. The ESP's identification of key members of its school leadership team (e.g., instructional leader, operational leader, etc.) and whether those leaders possess the experience, qualifications, and past success that make them reasonably likely to succeed;
- f. The ESP and governing board's adequate address of any past actions, legal or otherwise, against the ESP or any schools or other entities that it operates;
- g. The ESP and governing board's tailoring of adequate educational and business plans to the local context in which it will operate to create a reasonable likelihood that the school will achieve its educational mission;
- h. The governing board's plans to provide adequate educational, operational, and financial services not provided by the ESP;
- i. If the ESP is or is a subsidiary of a for-profit entity, the terms of the contract that generate profits are not excessive;
- j. The governing board's draft of reasonable oversight and accountability methods to address performance concerns prior to issues rising to the attention of the authorizer; and
- k. The ESP and governing board's establishment of adequate additional oversight and monitoring plans if the proposed charter school relies heavily on virtual, asynchronous instruction.

**B. Reporting Requirements for ESPs.**

- 1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-7(c)(4), ESPs shall provide monthly detailed budgets to the charter school's governing board.
- 2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(6)(ix), ESPs shall provide the charter school's governing board with an annual review of educational and operational practices that the ESP found particularly effective for delivering improved student outcomes. The governing board shall report these practices to its authorizer and the state as part of annual reporting on successful innovations as required by state code.

## **XVI. Finances.**

W. Va. Code §18-5G-5 outlines the funding of charter schools as well as tools to mitigate the fiscal impact on county school districts. Clearly articulating the financial rules and processes for charter schools will help applicants complete thorough applications and county boards determine the financial viability of applications and plan for the fiscal effects on county school districts where charter schools operate.

### **A. Portion of Net Enrollment (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)).**

1. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a), 90 percent of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance follows the student to the charter school. The per pupil total basic foundation allowance amount is calculated annually by the WVDE by dividing each county's total basic foundation allowance (Step 8 of the Public School Support Plan (PSSP)) by the county's adjusted net enrollment for state aid funding purposes. This amount differs by county board of education and changes annually.

2. State aid funding for county boards of education is based on the prior year enrollment. For example, funding for the 2020-2021 school year is based on student enrollment in the 2019-2020 school year.

3. In the initial year of existence for a charter school, the charter school will receive 90 percent of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance for each pupil based on a projected enrollment count for the initial year as determined by the primary round of charter school enrollment (see section XIII. Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention).

4. County boards of education may begin distributing funding based on projected enrollment counts starting on July 1. The exact payment schedule shall be negotiated by the authorizer and charter school as described in subsection 12.2.f of this policy. The payment schedule and amounts shall later be adjusted to based on the charter school's certified October 1 (second month) student enrollment full-time equivalency count to provide the appropriate total funding for the school year.

5. To determine which county board of education is responsible to pay the per pupil allocation to the charter school, the WVDE will determine the actual county of enrollment for each enrolled pupil for the prior school year and will calculate the amount to be paid by each county board of education to the charter school based on the student's full time enrollment (FTE) status at the charter school. If the student was not enrolled in a county school system the prior year, no county board of education received state aid funding for that pupil for the initial year of existence for the charter school. Although no state aid funds were received for the student, the county of residence for the student did receive property tax funding for the pupil and therefore must pay 90 percent of the local share amount 126CSR79 49 per pupil to the charter school.

6. If a county board of education authorizes a charter school to open the first year possible, 2021-2022, the county board of education will not receive a solid estimate of the projected enrollment until as late as April 15, 2021, when the initial enrollment process must conclude. However, the county board of education will have information available from the charter school

application including, but not limited to, enrollment capacity, grade levels, and primary recruitment area prior to receipt of the projected enrollment count in April. The county board of education shall consider that information for initial personnel and budgetary planning for the 2021-2022 school year. Planning ahead will be critical given the condensed timeline of the first year.

7. Once a student is enrolled in a charter school, that student will be included in the charter school's certified October 1 (second month) student enrollment count moving forward. All charter schools are considered a school under a specific county board of education, so after the initial year of operations, the state aid funding will flow through the PSSP to the county board of education.

a. Accordingly, after the initial year of operations of the charter school, the payment of the 90% of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance will be made by that county board of education to the charter school based on the charter school's student enrollment count included in the PSSP calculations for the particular school year. For example, if the charter school reported a student enrollment of 100 FTE in the initial year of operations, the state aid funding calculations for the second year of operations of the charter school were based on that enrollment count and the county board of education will only receive funds from the state based on that 100 FTE count. The per pupil allocation paid to the charter school in the second year of operations will be based on 100 students, regardless of the charter school's actual student enrollment in the second year since that is all the funding that the county board of education will have received on behalf of the charter school. County boards of education are not expected to provide funding that they have not received to a charter school.

b. After the initial year, 2021-2022, initial enrollment activities for charter schools will conclude by February 15. This schedule will provide more time for county boards of education to make financial and personnel plans based on projected charter school enrollment. Even prior to the receipt of the projected enrollment, county boards of education will have key information available, including but not limited to, primary recruitment area, charter school capacity by grade, and enrollment preferences, to start planning as early as possible for the impact of the charter school enrollment on their budgets.

5. Under the provisions of W. Va. Code §18-9A-15, county boards of education are eligible for increased enrollment funding if they experience an increase in net student enrollment over the previous year. Eligibility for the increased enrollment funding shall also be extended to charter schools. The calculations under W. Va. Code §18-9A-15 will be modified in a manner such that each county board of education's eligibility for the increased enrollment funding will be determined exclusive of any charter school student enrollment for their county. Each charter school shall be evaluated for eligibility based on the charter school's net student enrollment for the current year as compared to the prior year. Any increased enrollment funding allocation calculated for a charter school shall be added to the amount of the allocation for the authorizing county board of education.

a. Once the increased enrollment funds are distributed to the county board of education, the county board of education will transmit 90 percent of the total state aid allowance

amount to the charter school within 30 days of receipt of the funds from the WVDE. The county board of education shall also be responsible for transferring 90 percent of the local share amount per pupil to the charter school for the FTE increase in the charter school's net student enrollment for the current year as compared to the prior year, but those local share amounts shall be spread over the remainder of the school year in accordance with the disbursement timing schedule of the charter contract.

6. County boards of education receive state aid funding annually from the WVDE in accordance with the expenditure schedule approved by the West Virginia State Budget Office. The payments are generally sent four times per month and the monthly totals vary based on the cash flow outlook for the State of West Virginia. County boards of education also receive regular levy tax collections monthly from the county sheriff, but the amounts fluctuate greatly between months based on the property tax due dates for taxpayers. Because of the timing of these sources of funds, authorizers generally would not have the cash flow to pay the total per pupil amounts due to the charter schools in one lump sum at the beginning of the school year. Accordingly, the timing of the payments to the charter school shall be negotiated by the charter school and the authorizer county board of education, and a disbursement timing schedule should be placed in the charter contract so that both parties can accurately project cash flow.

a. During their early years of operation, charter schools often have planned capacity expansions, such as adding a new grade each year. In such situations and to the extent that is if financially feasible for the authorizer, the agreed upon disbursement timing schedule should consider the projected additional enrollment and the anticipated resulting increase enrollment funding and aim to provide the funds necessary for a charter school to operate prior to the distribution of increased enrollment funding based on October 1 enrollment.

B. Transportation Allowances (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(a)).

1. The calculation of the allowance for student transportation under W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 is based largely on the actual student transportation expenditures incurred by the county board of education. By requiring county boards of education to provide 90 percent of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance to the charter school, which includes the allowance for student transportation, county boards of education are required to provide funds to the charter school without a corresponding reduction in their actual transportation expenses. W. Va. Code §8-5G-5(a)(1) provides that the calculations under W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 may be modified to account for these situations to provide additional funding to the county boards of education.

2. The calculations under the PSSP in W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 will be modified by adding to the county board's total allowance for student transportation the equivalent of the authorizer's prior year transportation allowance per pupil multiplied by the charter school FTE student enrollment being utilized in the PSSP calculations for the current fiscal year, if either of the following conditions is met:

a. The charter school does not provide transportation to students but the county board of education must provide 90 percent of the transportation allowance to the charter school;

b. The county boards of education provides the transportation on behalf of the charter school but must still provide 90 percent of the transportation allowance to the charter school.

3. In situations where the charter school provides transportation to students through means other than the county board, the calculations in W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 will be modified to add the charter school's actual transportation expenditures to those of the county board in the allowance for student transportation calculation.

C. Current Expenses Allowances (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(1)).

1. The calculation of the allowance for current expense under W. Va. Code §18-9A-9(1) is based largely on the actual current expenses (operations and maintenance expenditures) incurred by the county board of education. By requiring the county board of education to provide 90% of the per pupil total basic foundation allowance to the charter school, which includes the allowance for current expense, county boards of education are required to provide funds to the charter school without a corresponding reduction in their actual current expenses. W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(1) provides that the calculations under W. Va. Code §18-9A-9(1) may be modified to account for these situations to provide additional funding to the county boards of education.

2. The calculation of the allowance for current expense under the PSSP contained in W. Va. Code §18-9A-7 will be modified to add the charter school's actual operations and maintenance expenditures to those of the county board of education and to add the square footage of the charter school to the square footage of the county board of education in the allowance for current expense calculation. Inclusion of the charter school's expenditures and square footage in the calculation ensures consistency with the student enrollment utilized in the calculation, which will also include the charter school student enrollment.

D. Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) Funding.

1. W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(e) permits the WVBE to address unforeseen circumstances in the implementation of charter schools. While the provisions of W. Va. Code §5-16-2 were modified to allow charter schools to participate in the PEIA and the statutory language in W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(7) allows the charter school to manage employee participation in insurance plans, the Legislature has not addressed funding for PEIA insurance for charter school employees. The funding for county board of education employees to participate in PEIA is outside of the total basic foundation allowance under the PSSP and is provided directly to PEIA by the WVDE pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-9A-24 on behalf of the county boards of education, so the funds being remitted by the county board of education to the charter school do not include funding for PEIA.

2. If a charter school elects to provide health insurance coverage to employees using PEIA, the WVDE will calculate the amount of PEIA funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school and provide an allocation on behalf of the charter school directly to PEIA in the same manner in which the allocations are provided to PEIA on behalf of the county boards of education.

3. In the initial year of operation of a charter school, the WVDE will calculate the amount of

PEIA funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:

- a. Determine the number of charter school students who were enrolled in each county board of education in the previous year.
  - b. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel positions, and professional student support personnel positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on each county's population density category.
  - c. Multiply the number of total positions attributable to the charter school students by the average employer PEIA premium for the county board of education.
  - d. Multiply the subtotal from c. above by 90 percent.
  - e. Reduce the county board of education's calculated PEIA allowance by the amounts derived in d. above.
  - f. The charter school's PEIA allowance is the total of the amount derived in d. for all county boards of education that had charter school students enrolled in the previous year.
  - g. The PEIA allowance for the charter schools is subject to the same annual reallocation process based on updated employer premium rates as the county boards of education.
4. In subsequent years, the WVDE will calculate the amount of PEIA funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:
- a. Determine the number of charter school students who were enrolled in the authorizing county board of education in the previous year.
  - b. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel positions, and professional student personnel support positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on the authorizer county's population density category.
  - c. Multiply the number of total positions attributable to the charter school students by the average employer PEIA premium for the authorizer county board of education. The calculation of the average employer premium for the authorizing county boards of education shall also consider insured persons employed by charter schools.
  - d. Multiply the subtotal from c. above by 90 percent.
  - e. Reduce the authorizer county board of education's calculated PEIA allowance by the amount derived in d. above.
  - f. The charter school's PEIA allowance is equal to the amount of the reduction made to the authorizer county board of education from e. above.
  - g. The PEIA allowance for the charter schools is subject to the same annual reallocation

process based on updated employer premium rates as the county boards of education.

5. If a charter school does not elect to participate in PEIA, the unspent allocation for the charter school shall be treated by the WVDE the same as any unspent allocation for the county boards of education.

#### E. Retirement Funding.

1. W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(e) permits the WVBE to address unforeseen circumstances in the implementation of charter schools. While the provisions of W. Va. Code §18-7A-3 and §18-7B-2 were modified to allow charter schools to participate in the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and the Teachers' Defined Contribution Retirement System (TDC) and the statutory language in W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(a)(7) allows the charter school to manage employee participation in retirement, the Legislature has not addressed funding for retirement contributions for charter school employees. The funding for county board of education employees to participate in retirement is outside of the total basic foundation allowance under the PSSP and is provided directly to the West Virginia Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB) by the WVDE pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-9A-6a(b) on behalf of the county boards of education, so the funds being remitted by the county board of education to the charter school do not include funding for retirement.

2. If a charter school elects to participate in the TRS and TDC retirement plans provided by the CPRB, the WVDE will calculate the amount of retirement funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school and provide an allocation on behalf of the charter school directly to the CPRB in the same manner in which the allocations are provided to the CPRB on behalf of the county boards of education.

3. In the initial year of operation of a charter school, the WVDE will calculate the amount of retirement funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:

a. Determine the number of charter school students who were enrolled in each county board of education in the previous year.

b. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel positions, and professional student support personnel positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on each county's population density category.

c. For each category of personnel, multiply the number of positions calculated in b. above by the average state minimum salary of the county and county's average retirement contribution rate.

d. Add the total calculated in c. above for each category of personnel to determine the total estimated retirement contribution attributable to charter school students.

e. Multiply the total from d. above by 90%.

f. Reduce the county board of education's calculated retirement allowance by the



amount derived in e. above.

g. The charter school's retirement allowance is the total of the amounts derived in e. for all county boards of education that had charter school students enrolled in the previous year.

4. In subsequent years, the WVDE will calculate the amount of retirement funding which is attributable to the students enrolled in the charter school in the following manner:

a. Determine the number of charter school students that were enrolled in the authorizer county board of education in the previous year.

b. Calculate the total number of professional educator positions, service personnel positions, and professional student support personnel positions that were attributed to the charter school students based on the authorizer county's population density category.

c. For each category of personnel, multiply the number of positions calculated in b. above by the average state minimum salary for the authorizer county board of education and the authorizer county's average retirement contribution rate.

d. Add the total calculated in c. above for each category of personnel to determine the total estimated retirement contribution attributable to the charter school students.

e. Multiply the total from d. above by 90%.

f. Reduce the authorizer county board of education's calculated retirement allowance by the amount derived in e. above.

g. The charter school's retirement allowance is equal to the amount of the reduction made to the authorizer county board of education's retirement allowance determined in e. above.

5. If a charter school does not elect to participate in the TRS and TDC plans sponsored by the CPRB, any unspent retirement allowance for the charter school shall be transferred to the CPRB to apply to the TRS unfunded retirement liability.

F. Federal Funds (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(a)(3)).

1. The WVDE will follow all federal regulations with regards to funding for charter schools. The WVDE issues grants and provides federal funds for various federal programs, and the treatment of charter schools under the federal regulations varies depending on the specific federal program. Federal regulations also change on a regular basis. Accordingly, the specific treatment of charter schools under each federal program will not be included in WVBE policy to allow the WVDE to comply promptly with any changes in federal regulations related to charter schools. Authorizers and charter schools should develop processes in their charter contract for disbursing federal funds appropriately and for adjusting disbursement based on updates to federal regulations.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-4(b)(4), the WVDE will make a good faith effort to obtain Charter School Program grant funds from the United States Department of Education.

G. Authorizers Costs (W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(d)).

1. In accordance with W. Va. Code §18-5G-6(i), each charter public school shall remit to its respective authorizer an oversight fee.

a. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-5(d), the oversight fee charged by the shall be equal to one percent of the total per pupil funding amount for all charter school students, as calculated in Section XVI. Finances above.

b. The amount of the oversight fee shall be remitted by the charter school to the authorizer county board of education by no later than June 1 annually.

2. The WVDE will review the oversight fee structure annually to determine if the amount of the oversight fee is effective or if it needs adjusted by a sliding scale that considers the number of schools authorized, the number of students attending each school, etc. The annual review will continue input from authorizers and charter schools. Recommendations to change the oversight fee structure will be made to the WVBE.

H. Accounting and Financial Reports (W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10)).

1. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10), each charter school will meet the same accounting and financial requirements required of non-charter public schools, including but not limited to participation in the State Auditor's financial transparency website.

2. Pursuant to W. Va. Code §18-5G-3(c)(10), each charter school shall annually engage an external auditor to perform an independent audit of the school's finances. The charter school shall submit the audit report to its authorizer and the State Superintendent of Schools no later than nine months following the end of the fiscal year for which the audit is performed.

3. Each charter school shall submit unaudited financial statements to its authorizer and the State Superintendent of Schools in accordance with the annual financial statement instructions and deadlines published annually by the WVDE.

**XVII. Severability.**

If any provision of this policy or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this policy.