

Charter School Enrollment Process Review

May 2018





Charters Reviewed in FY 2018

Whose enrollment documents have we reviewed?

- Charter Holders appearing on a Board agenda
 - Prior to placing an item on the agenda, whether as a consent agenda item or item for discussion, the Education Program Manager confirms the charter holder is in compliance. This includes a review of enrollment documents and processes. All charter expansion requests must be approved by the Board, and are therefore subject to a compliance check and enrollment documentation review prior to expansion approval.
- New Charter Application
 - Descriptions of enrollment and registration documents are required to be submitted and are reviewed in new charter applications.
- First Year Site Visit
 - During the first year of operation of every charter school, an Education Program Manager reviews the enrollment policy and documents to ensure the school's enrollment process meets compliance requirements.



Charters Reviewed in FY 2018

Whose enrollment documents have we reviewed?

- Academic Systems Review (ASR)
 - During the 5th year and 10th year of a charter contract each school operated by the charter holder receives a site visit. Enrollment documents are reviewed during the site visit.
 - After a charter holder submits a Charter Renewal Application (14th year), a site visit is scheduled at each of the schools operated by that charter holder. Enrollment documents are reviewed during the site visit.
- ACLU issued letters
 - Board staff reviewed the enrollment documents and website of each school that received a letter from the ACLU.
- “Unresponsive” Charters
 - Board staff required enrollment documentation from each school that did not respond to ACLU requests for enrollment documents.



Charters Reviewed in FY 2018

Whose enrollment documents have we reviewed?

- 45% of the Board's portfolio was reviewed in the past few months
 - Academic Systems Review (ASR) - 68 schools
 - ACLU Letters - 97 schools
 - Unresponsive - 67 schools (currently under review)
 - Jan - May Agenda Items - 16 schools
- The ACLU did not identify enrollment violations for the remaining charters in the Board's portfolio.
- The Board will continue to review charters' compliance in the coming months through its regulatory processes.



Review Process

What was reviewed?

- Enrollment Documents on school website;
- Enrollment policies as described on website;
- Parent/Student Handbook available on school website; and
- Other relevant documents available.
- For schools receiving a site visit all enrollment documents and policies were reviewed prior to the visit and discussed with school leadership during the visit.



Review Process

What changes have been required?

- If a violation was found, the charter is required to make specific changes to documents, processes, and policies available on the school's website.
- Revisions to enrollment documents, processes, and policies included but were not limited to:
 - Removing caps on the number or percentage of special education students at a school;
 - Changing policies that prevented students that have been suspended from enrolling or made enrollment contingent upon a review of student discipline history;
 - Removing required payment of fees; and
 - Eliminating requirements for parents to complete volunteer hours.

Updates to the Board's Online Complaint Process

- Board staff met with parents from the Demand2Learn campaign and received feedback on the complaint process.
- Board staff is currently working on updating the Board website to make it more user friendly for parents and the general public.
- Board staff will continue conversations with parents to discuss additional changes desired in the complaint process.



Ongoing Monitoring and Actions


How will compliance continue to be monitored?

- Board staff conduct periodic reviews of enrollment documents and processes at the following times:
 - New Charter Application - before being granted a charter contract
 - Site Visits
 - 1st Year
 - Academic Systems Review (5yr, 10yr, Renewal Application(15yr))
 - Prior to being placed on Board agenda
- When complaints regarding enrollment documents or processes are submitted to the Board
- Board staff has the ability to conduct a review of charter school documentation, including enrollment documentation, at any time.



Ongoing Monitoring and Actions

How will the Board continue to improve practices?

- Board leadership and Board staff will continue to meet with stakeholders to get feedback regarding monitoring of school enrollment processes.
 - Board staff are making revisions to site visit documents to clearly direct charter holders to the enrollment guidance documents on the Board's website, and creating enrollment documentation review checklists that will be provided to charter schools prior to site visits.
 - The "Newsletter and Guidance" page of the Board's website will continue to be used to communicate new information and guidance regarding any applicable changes to requirements for charter schools.
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Guidance for Charter Schools

How will charters know what is expected?

- In collaboration with Arizona Department of Education and Arizona Attorney General's Office, the Board has provided enrollment guidance on the following:
 - General Enrollment Policies;
 - Special Education;
 - Fees and Volunteer Hours;
 - Preferential Enrollment; and
 - Required Documentation (currently being drafted)
- Enrollment guidance documents will be shared with all charter holders prior to and during site visits.
- Enrollment guidance documents are publicly available on the "Newsletters and Guidance" page of the Board's website



Guidance for Charter Schools

How will charters know what is expected?

- Education Program Managers (EPM)
 - Sharing guidance documents with schools prior to charter holders receiving a site visit FY 2019
 - 1st Year Site Visits (August - September 2018)
 - ASR (5 year, 10 year, Renewal) (October 2018 - April 2019)
 - Available to answer questions for charter holders
 - Each charter has an assigned EPM
 - Prior to submitting expansion requests, charter holders are encouraged to contact assigned EPM with any questions related to enrollment



Questions?

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