

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

Title: CHARTER SCHOOL QUALITY POLICY
Section: 302.10
Board Report: 15-1028-PO1

Date Adopted: October 28, 2015

Policy:

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Board adopt a Charter School Quality Policy.

PURPOSE: This policy sets out the charter school academic performance standards which shall be considered when the Board evaluates a charter school's request to expand or replicate. The standards shall also be considered when determining which charter schools are subject to contract revocation or non-renewal for failure to meet or make reasonable progress towards student academic achievement in accordance with Section 27A-9(c)(2) of the Illinois School Code. The academic performance standards set out in this policy utilize the key indicators of performance and the rating designations set out in the Board's School Quality Rating Policy ("SQRP") applicable to all Chicago Public Schools, including charters per the terms of their agreement.

This policy also ensures that (1) there is transparency regarding the expectations and standards for charter school academic performance; and (2) the portfolio of charter schools available to Chicago families and students contains high quality schools.

POLICY TEXT:

I. SCOPE OF POLICY: The charter school performance standards outlined in this policy shall inform the decisions throughout the District's annual charter school evaluation cycle as well as the Board's determinations regarding a charter school's expansion or replication, non-renewal and/or revocation.

II. DEFINITIONS:

Academic Warning List: Refers to the list maintained by the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") or designee that identifies charter schools or campuses failing to meet or make reasonable progress towards student academic achievement. A charter school or campus shall be placed on the Academic Warning List, if the charter school or campus:

- Has a SQRP rating of Level 3; or
- Has a two-year SQRP point value average of 2.5 or lower; or
- Has a SQRP rating of Level 2 in three consecutive years.

Provided however, the first SQRP rating received by a newly established charter school or campus will not be considered by the CEO or designee to place a school or campus on the Academic Warning List.

If the charter school or campus on the Academic Warning List achieves an SQRP rating of Level 2+ or higher, the school or campus shall be removed from the Academic Warning List, regardless of its two-year SQRP point value average or the number of consecutive years it achieved a Level 2 rating.

Charter school expansion: Refers to adding one or more new grade level outside of the original grade levels approved, or increasing by more than 10% of the total of the authorized student enrollment at any charter school or campus.

Charter school replication: Refers to either (a) increasing the number of authorized school campuses, if the charter is permitted under section 27A-5(b) of the Illinois School Code to operate more than one campus, or (b) increasing the number of single-site charters granted to the same operator.

III. STANDARDS FOR CHARTER SCHOOL EXPANSION: If a charter school seeks to expand, the CEO will make recommendations to the Board for approval of school expansion based on the following standards:

(A) Charter school operators who operate a single-site charter school will have their applications for expansion recommended to the Board for approval if the school has a current two-year SQRP point value average of 3.2.

(B) Charter school operators who operate two or more charter schools or campuses will have their applications for expansion recommended to the Board for approval if (i) all of the operator's schools or campuses combined have a current two-year SQRP point value average of 3.2 and (ii) the school or campus the operator is seeking to expand is not on the Academic Warning List.

IV. STANDARDS FOR CHARTER SCHOOL REPLICATION: If a charter school seeks to replicate, the CEO will make recommendations to the Board on school replication based on the following standards:

(A) Charter school operators who operate a single-site charter school will have their applications for replication recommended to the Board for approval if the school has a current two-year SQRP point value average of 3.5.

(B) Charter school operators who operate two or more charter schools or campuses will have their applications for replication recommended to the Board for approval if all of the operator's schools or campuses combined have a current two-year SQRP point value average of 3.2.

V. STANDARDS FOR NON-RENEWAL: If a charter school seeks to renew its charter school contract, the CEO will make recommendations to the Board on school renewal based on the following standards:

(A) Charter school operators who operate a single-site charter school will be recommended for non-renewal to the Board if the school (i) is on the Academic Warning List during the final year of the charter contract and has a current two-year SQRP point value average rating of 2.5 or below or (ii) was previously on the Academic Warning List for two consecutive or non-consecutive years during its contract, unless the charter school has at least a Level 2+ or higher SQRP rating in the final year of its charter agreement.

(B) Charter school operators who operate two or more charter schools or campuses will have each school or campus evaluated individually for renewal or non-renewal. A school or campus will be recommended for non-renewal to the Board if that charter school or campus is on the Academic Warning List during the final year of the charter contract and has a current two-year SQRP point value average rating of 2.5 or below or (ii) was previously on the Academic Warning list for two consecutive or non-consecutive years during its charter agreement, unless the charter school or campus has at least a Level 2+ or higher SQRP rating in the final year of operation under its charter contract.

VI. STANDARDS AND PROCESS FOR REVOCATION: When a charter school or campus is placed on the Academic Warning List, the CEO or designee will send notice that the school or campus is in revocation status and subject to closure. Upon receipt of such notice, the charter school or campus shall submit a written remediation plan to the CEO or designee to rectify the problems that resulted in the charter school or campus being placed on the Academic Warning List. The written remediation plan shall include a timeline for implementation and the CEO or designee shall monitor the implementation and adherence to the remediation plan requirements.

The CEO will recommend the revocation of a charter school or campus to the Board if either: (1) the CEO determines that the charter school or campus failed to implement the remediation plan and adhere to the timeline; or (2) the charter school or campus remains on the Academic Warning List for two consecutive years.

VII. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: Nothing in this policy prohibits the CEO from making individual recommendations regarding charter school expansion or replication, non-renewal or revocation based on the totality of factors the CEO deems relevant, including but not limited to the quality of the charter school's surrounding schools. Nothing in this policy prohibits the Board from revoking or not renewing a charter for failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management, for failure to comply with applicable law or for committing a material violation of any of the conditions, standards or procedures set forth in their charter school agreement. Nothing in this policy prohibits the Board from making individual determinations regarding charter school expansion or replication, non-renewal or revocation based on the totality of factors the Board deems relevant. In the event the Board adopts a modified SQRP or new school accountability policy, this policy shall apply the modified or new current performance rating level designations found in the modified SQRP or new school accountability policy. In such instances, the CEO or designee shall issue a document that equates the SQRP rating levels in place at the time this policy is adopted with any new rating level designations found in modified SQRP or new school accountability policy.

Amends/Rescinds:

Cross References:

Legal References: 105 ILCS 5/27A-9(c); 105 ILCS 5/27A-5(b)