
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

I. PURPOSE

As per Maryland law, the Board of Education of Carroll County must establish criteria to consider proposals for public charter schools and procedures for overseeing approved charter schools.

II. DEFINITION

A public charter school must be created in accordance with §9-101 the §9-110 of the Education Article, *Annotated Code of Maryland*, and is defined as a public school, nonsectarian in all its programs, policies, and operations which operates under a charter, or contract, within the public school system and under the authority of the Board of Education of Carroll County.

A public charter school must include the following components:

1. The public charter school must operate pursuant to a specific set of educational objectives which must focus on improving student performance, strive for high academic standards, and be accountable for results.
2. The public charter school is a new school or a conversion of an existing public school.
 - a. The public charter school provides a program of elementary or secondary education or both.
 - b. The public charter school is a school which parents can choose to send their children.
 - c. The public charter school is tuition-free for all students who are eligible to attend any other Carroll County school tuition-free.
 - d. The public charter school is open to all students on a space-available basis and admits students on a lottery basis if more students apply than can be accommodated.
 - e. The public charter school is subject to federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination.
 - f. The public charter school is in compliance with all applicable health and safety laws.
 - g. The public charter school requires students to be physically present on school premises for a period of time substantially similar to that which other Carroll County Public Schools students spend on school premises.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

The Board of Education recognizes that it has a legal obligation to authorize charter schools that provide innovative and varied instructional programs that meet specific criteria. A public charter school may provide non-traditional programs and alternative educational opportunities for students and be established in Carroll County through an approved application process.

Except as provided in §9-106 of the Education Article, *Annotated Code of Maryland*, a public charter school is subject to the federal, state, and local statutes, regulations, ordinances, and policies unless waived by the appropriate governing authority. The public charter school must demonstrate in any waiver request that the exemption would enhance the school's ability to advance the educational goals and objectives of the school. Statutes, regulations, ordinance and/or policies related to health and safety, civil rights, student academic achievement measurements and assessments, or audit requirements shall not be waived.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

There shall be no exceptions to this policy.

V. GUIDELINES

This policy is consistent with Title 9 of the Education Article, *Annotated Code of Maryland*, known as the "Maryland Public Charter School Program".

VI. REPORTS

As indicated in the Policy Statement.

VII. EXPIRATION/REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed to ensure consistency with current law.

VIII. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The Superintendent shall develop regulations to implement this policy that includes the following:

1. The Superintendent will oversee public charter schools and make recommendations to the Board regarding approval, renewal, probation and/or revocation.
 - a. The Superintendent shall develop and implement a regulation which sets forth a process for accepting and evaluating applications for public charter schools.
 - b. The Superintendent shall develop and implement a process for monitoring and reporting educational achievement, fiscal soundness, organizational viability, and compliance with law.
 - c. The Superintendent shall develop and implement a process for the revocation and renewal of charter schools.

2. The Superintendent shall provide information to the public about the process for applying to operate a public charter school in accordance with §9-104 of the Education Article, *Annotated Code of Maryland*.

IX. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective December 12, 2012

APPROVED: October 8, 2003

REVISED: December 12, 2012