

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2017 Position Statement Regarding Charter School Legislation

If the General Assembly acts to implement charter schools in Kentucky, JCPS believes that the legislation should incorporate the Annenberg Charter School Accountability Standards, some of which are incorporated in this document for emphasis, in addition to the other items shown below.

Authorizers

- Establish local, democratically elected school boards as sole charter authorizers.
- Remove the ability of state charter authorizing commissions to overturn denials of charter applications by local authorizers. Locally made decisions not to license a charter school should be honored.

Accountability

- Require teachers to be certified by the Education Professional Standards Board.
- Establish required reporting from charter schools to include: entrance data, cohort completion rate, expulsion and discipline data; performance/achievement gap data by defined subpopulations to the Commissioner and Interim Joint Committee on Education.

Applicants to Operate a Charter School

- Permit only independent non-profit entities to manage charter schools. The non-profit entities should not be owned or managed by a for-profit entity.
- Prohibit virtual/online charter schools.

Enrollment

- Require charter school enrollment to be available to any parent/guardian in a district.
- Prohibit the exclusion or expulsion of students due to intellectual and/or physical and/or emotional disabilities, limited English proficiency, and/or level of student parent/guardian involvement, or any other characteristic.

Finance

- Ensure that funding for charter schools does not detrimentally impact funding provided to other public schools.
- Require transparency regarding non-public funding sources and external organizations with which the charter school enters into a fee-for-service contract.
- Charter schools should be transparent, and follow all public school sunshine laws. If a charter school contracts with third parties for management and other major functions, those third parties should be subject to all transparency requirements for the charter school.
- Approve funding to provide financial stability for districts with significant enrollment shifts due to charter schools, as districts manage changes to their fixed costs.
- Should a charter school student return to a public school, all public monies attached to said student should be returned on a pro-rated basis to the public school district.

Regulatory Oversight

- Exempt charter schools from state and local laws and regulations that do not specifically apply to charter schools, except for those regarding accountability, health, safety, civil rights, disability employee background checks, open meetings/open records, FOIA requests, school-based decision making councils, and accounting practices.
- Require members of charter school boards to adhere to the same laws as other public school board members, including board training for ethics, finance, and appropriate staff evaluations.
- Charter schools shall not prohibit union membership.
- Charter school employees shall have the same rights as employees at other public schools in the district in which the charter school is located.