



MNPS Charter Authorization Handbook 2023-2024

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MNPS CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE

Meet Your MNPS Charter Team

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Table of Contents

About the Authorizer	4
Overview	4
Mission and Vision	4
Guiding Principles and Policies	4
<i>Table A: NACSA Principles and Standards</i>	4
Current Schools Opened and Operating	5
<i>Table B: Current Schools Opened and Operating</i>	5
Application Cycle	5
New Start Charter Applications	5
Purpose	5
Process and Timeline	6
<i>Table C: New Start Application Guidelines and Forms</i>	6
<i>Table D: Timeline for Submission of New Application for a Charter School Opening in SY2025-2026</i>	9
<i>Table E: Timeline for Submission of Amended New Start Application for a Charter School Opening in SY 2025-2026</i>	10
Five Year (Interim) Reviews	11
Purpose	11
Process and Timeline	11
<i>Table F: Five Year (Interim) Review Guidance</i>	11
Renewal Applications	12
Purpose	12
Process and Timeline	12
<i>Table G: Renewal Application Guidelines</i>	12
<i>Table H: Timeline for Renewal Application 2024</i>	14
<i>Table I: Renewal Cycle of Current Charter Schools</i>	14
Charter Amendments	15
Purpose	15
Process and Timeline	16
<i>Table J: Timeline for Charter Amendments</i>	16
<i>Table K: Amendment</i>	17
Charter School Support	17
Charter Office Direct Support	17

Purpose	17
Process and Timeline	18
<i>Table L: Charter Support</i>	18
Extended Core Team	18
<i>Table M: Extended Core Team Support</i>	18
Pre-Opening Support	19
Purpose	19
<i>Table N: Pre-Opening Support</i>	20
Monitoring Oversight	20
Annual Report for Charter School Operators	20
Purpose	20
Process and Timeline	20
<i>Table O: Annual Report for Charter School Operators Guidance</i>	21
LEA Annual Authorizer Report	21
Purpose	21
Process and Timeline	21
<i>Table P: MNPS Charter Schools Office Responsibilities</i>	22
Waiver Requests	22
Purpose	22
Process and Timeline	23
<i>Table Q: Tennessee Code Annotated</i>	24
Enrollment Cap Procedures	24
Purpose	24
Process and Timeline	24
Intervention Policy	25
<i>Table R: Levels of Intervention Outline</i>	27
MNPS Action Plan for Charter School Closure	29
Purpose	29
Process and Timeline	30
<i>Table S: TDOE Closure Guidance</i>	30
Appendix A – MNPS Board Policy 1.900 – Charter School Applications	31
Appendix B – MNPS Board Policy 1.901 – Charter School Oversight	36

About the Authorizer

Overview

With more than 150 schools, including 27 charter schools, Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) is one of the nation's largest school districts. As the most diverse district in Tennessee, the consolidated city-county district covers Nashville and Davidson County, an area of about 525 square miles.

A nine-member elected Board and its appointed Director of Schools leads the school district. The Metropolitan Nashville Board of Education represents the public's voice in public education, providing oversight for what the school system needs and what the community wants.

Mission and Vision

The mission of the MNPS Charter Schools Office is to authorize excellent public schools that change lives.

The vision of the MNPS Charter Schools Office is a world where all children and communities are empowered through exemplary public schools.

Guiding Principles and Policies

National Association of Charter School Authorizers


MNPS Charter Schools Office has developed authorizing practices aligned with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers' (NACSA) Principles and Standards (Table A). Through this process, the stage is set for strategic integration of new schools through this approach to quality authorizing.

Board Policies

Pursuant to the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 (T.C.A. § 49-13-101 et seq.), the MNPS has adopted MNPS School Board Policy 1.900 (Appendix A) to provide the process to review and rate any application that must be approved or denied by the MNPS Board of Education.

All MNPS authorized charter schools shall comply with the requirements of applicable state and federal law, including Tenn. Code. Ann. Title 49, Chapter 13, the rules of the Tennessee State Board of Education, the rules of the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission, MNPS Board of Education Policy 1.900-1.901 (Appendix B), and the MNPS Charter School Authorization Handbook.

Table A: NACSA Principles and Standards

Link	QR Code
NACSA Principles and Standards	

Current Schools Opened and Operating

Table B provides the current charter schools that are opened and operating with Metro-Nashville Public Schools as the authorizer.

Table B: Current Schools Opened and Operating

School ID	School	Comparison	Beginning Year
179	Aventura Community School	K-2	2022
286	East End Prep	K-8	2011
305	Explore! Community School	K-8	2015
457	Intrepid College Prep	5-12	2013
499	KIPP Kirkpatrick ES	K-4	2015
501	KIPP Nashville College Prep ES	K-4	2017
502	KIPP Academy Nashville MS	5-8	2007
503	KIPP Nashville College Prep MS	5-8	2013
504	KIPP Nashville Collegiate HS	9-12	2014
507	LEAD Prep Southeast	5-12	2013
181	LEAD Cameron College Prep	5-8	2011
508	LEAD Academy HS	9-12	2007
509	KA @ The Crossings	5-12	2005
517	Liberty Collegiate Academy	5-8	2011
592	Nashville Classical East	K-8	2013
593	Nashville Classical West	K	2023
594	Nashville Prep	5-8	2011
652	Purpose Prep Academy	K-5	2013
660	RePublic HS	9-12	2011
667	Rocketship NE ES	K-5	2014
668	Rocketship United Academy	K-4	2015
687	Smithson Craighead Academy	K-5	2007
695	STEM Prep Academy	5-8	2011
696	STEM Prep Academy HS	9-12	2015
712	STRIVE Collegiate Academy	6-8	2015
743	Valor Flagship	5-12	2014
744	Valor Voyager	5-8	2015

Application Cycle

New Start Charter Applications

Purpose

The new start application process is designed for use by sponsors seeking to start public charter schools in Tennessee, including: (i) a new-start applicant, (ii) an existing Tennessee sponsor proposing a new school with a change in focus/grade structure, (iii) an out-of-state sponsor, (iv) an existing Tennessee sponsor proposing to replicate an existing school, or (v) an existing sponsor of a charter school in the Achievement School District (ASD) seeking authorization from MNPS.

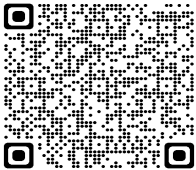
Process and Timeline

Letter of Intent

All applicants must file a Letter of Intent at least 60 days prior to the application deadline of February 1st (T.C.A. § 49-13-107(a)). The form must be completed and delivered to the MNPS Charter Schools Office and the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) no later than December 3rd. When the December 3rd deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a State observed holiday, the Letter of Intent is due on the next business day. Applicants will submit the Letter of Intent to MNPS Charter Schools Office email at charterschooloffice@mnps.org and to TDOE via email at charter.schools@tn.gov

The Letter of Intent shall be completed on the form provided by the TDOE and the applicant shall indicate on the Letter of Intent the application category selected by the applicant. TDOE guidelines and forms can be found in Table C.

Table C: New Start Application Guidelines and Forms

Link	QR Code
TN Department of Education website Pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Application to Start a New Charter School➤ Required Documents	

MNPS Charter Schools Office will determine whether the applicant has selected the correct application category within ten (10) business days of receiving the Letter of Intent and notify the applicant within five (5) business days of a determination if the incorrect application category has been selected. The applicant must correct and resubmit the Letter of Intent within five (5) business days of receipt of a notice from the authorizer that the wrong application category was selected. Failure to submit a Letter of Intent to both the TN Department of Education and the MNPS Charter Schools Office shall exclude a charter school applicant from submitting an application for that application cycle.

All letters of intent become public record after submission to MNPS. Submission of an application is an official waiver of confidentiality, notwithstanding any statements to the contrary that may be contained within the application, or in any other notifications submitted by the applicant.

Original Application Review Process and Timeline

Applicants must use the Application to Start a New Charter School as found on the TDOE website (Table C). The application describes the four category types and the requirements for each category. Applicants should look closely at the application scoring rubric, also found the

TDOE website (Table C). The scoring rubric outlines the criteria under which each section will be evaluated by reviewers.

The full application is due on February 1st by no later than 4:30 pm CT. One electronic copy (pdf) and five (5) hard copies of the application are required. The electronic copy is considered the master copy in the event of discrepancies and should be submitted through e-mail. E-mailed applications must be submitted to the Coordinator of Charter Schools at charterschooloffice@mnps.org and TDOE Office of Charter Schools at charter.schools@tn.gov. The five (5) hard copies must be delivered in person to MNPS Charter Schools Office in the Support Hub Family Information Center at the following address:

Metropolitan Nashville Board of Public Education
2601 Bransford Avenue
Nashville, TN 37204

If in person delivery is not possible, then applicants will need to contact the Coordinator of Charter Schools at charterschooloffice@mnps.org one full business day before the deadline to make other arrangements in time to meet the February 1st 4:30 pm CT deadline.

MNPS will not accept any applications received after this date. Applications must be accompanied by a \$2,500.00 application fee made out to the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. In the event an application is insufficient and returned to the applicant without review, the fee will be returned.

A completed application shall include the following:

- Application fee
- General information
- Executive Summary
- Assurances form signed by the authorized representative of the applicant
- Application narrative that addresses each applicable section
- Projected budget
- Applicable attachments

MNPS will determine whether an application is complete within ten (10) business days of receiving the application and will notify the applicant within five (5) business days of the determination if the application is determined to be incomplete. The application will not be reviewed if any one or more of the following occur:

- Charter application is determined to be incomplete due to the applicant not using the TN Department of Education's state charter application form for the application cycle
- Five (5) hard copies of the application are not submitted to the authorizer by February 1st, 4:30 pm CT
- Electronic application is not submitted to TDOE **and** the authorizer by February 1st, 11:59 pm CT

If MNPS determines an application is incomplete within ten (10) business days of receiving the application and notifies the applicant within five (5) business days of the determination of

incomplete status, the applicant may resubmit the application within five (5) business days of the notification if the following occur:

- Applicant has completed all required sections of the application aligned to the category indicated by the applicant in its letter of intent
- Application contains all required attachments and signatures
- Application fee is submitted with the application

All submitted applications become public record after submission to MNPS. Submission of an application is an official waiver of confidentiality, notwithstanding any statements to the contrary that may be contained within the application, or in any other notifications submitted by the applicant.

The application review consists of an evaluation of the application as submitted and a capacity interview with the prospective applicant and their proposed governing board. The district has ninety (90) calendar days from February 1st to submit evidence findings to the MNPS Board of Education and for the Board to vote on the approval or denial of the application. The timeline for this process is outlined in Table D.

The application review will include the following steps:

- 1) Each application will be reviewed by the MNPS Director of Charter Schools, and the MNPS Coordinator of Charter Schools independently using the appropriate forms. The applications will be reviewed for the following:
 - Category Type
 - Academic Plan and Capacity
 - Operational Plan and Capacity
 - Financial Plan and Capacity
 - Portfolio Review and Performance Record
 - Fiscal Impact
- 2) Each charter application will also be reviewed by a review team. Each reviewer will complete a separate evaluation report and submit it to MNPS Charter Schools Office.
- 3) Legal/technical review of specific sections will be undertaken by qualified reviewers with the appropriate expertise.
- 4) MNPS Charter Schools Office and review teams will review the independent reviewers' reports and prepare questions for a capacity interview with each applicant and their governing board. The purpose of the interview is to evaluate the capacity of the leadership team, governing board members, and others in the proposed organization as they address specific questions and/or concerns that have arisen during the review process. Both internal and external reviewers may be added to the interview team as needed. During the interview the MNPS Director of Charter Schools, the MNPS Coordinator of Charter Schools, and the review team members will ask specific questions to draw out further information and may record the interview for further consideration

when presenting the evidence findings to the MNPS Board of Education.

- 5) At the conclusion of both the written application review and the capacity interview with each applicant, MNPS Charter Schools Office and the review team will determine a consensus rating for each applicable section of the application.
- 6) The evidence findings report will be compiled from the combined analysis of this entire process and presented to the MNPS Board of Education for their review and vote on each application presented.

It is important for applicants to remember that strength in one area of the application does not negate weaknesses in other areas. Every application will receive a rating of the following: Meets or Exceeds Standard, Partially Meets Standard, or Does Not Meet Standard when presenting the evidence findings to the MNPS Board of Education. The standards are specifically outlined in each section of the scoring rubric provided by the Tennessee Department of Education.

- 7) Tennessee law authorizes consideration of “substantial negative fiscal impact” in decisions to approve or deny charter applications (T.C.A. §49-13-108 (c). “The local board of education may consider whether the establishment of the proposed public charter school will have a substantial negative fiscal impact on the LEA such that authorization of the public charter school would be contrary to the best interests of the students, LEA or community.”

Table D: Timeline for Submission of New Application for a Charter School Opening in SY2025-2026

Due Date*:	Item:
December 4, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deadline for submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) to MNPS and TN Department of Education Office of School Choice
February 1, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deadline for completed charter applications to MNPS Charter Schools Office no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications checked for completeness
February 2, 2024- February 12, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent application review process begins for eligibility determination of complete applications
March 4, 2024 – March 8, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Interviews conducted
April 18, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings report from Charter Review Team sent to new start applicant and to the MNPS Board of Education
April 23, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MNPS Board of Education vote on Charter School Applications
April 24, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision letter sent to new start applicant based on the MNPS School Board’s vote

*Dates are subject to change.

Amended Application Review Process and Timeline

T.C.A. 49-13-108(3) provides applicants 30 days from the date of receipt of grounds for denial to submit an amended application to correct the deficiencies. The MNPS Board of Education then has 60 days after the receipt of the amended application to either deny or approve the application based on the recommendation of the review teams.

The same review team that read and provided evidence findings on the initial application will evaluate the amended applications to determine if the deficiencies have been corrected and present the evidence findings to the MNPS Board of Education. Table E provides the timeline for submission of an amended new start application.

The following guidelines apply to the resubmissions:

- Amended applications will be due to MNPS Charter Schools Office on 30th day after the MNPS Board of Education votes to deny an application. Amended applications will not be accepted after that date.
- Corrections may be made only to those areas of the application that the review team has deemed deficient. A complete re-write of the application will not be accepted.
- One electronic copy and five (5) written copies shall be submitted which shall be the same applications submitted previously with changes highlighted in yellow so the review team will be able to see all corrections easily.
- A cover sheet shall be submitted with page numbers so corrected work can be found quickly. It should be clear to reviewers the changes made, where they are located, and which area of the application they replace. All changes must be highlighted in yellow.
- Additional information will not be accepted unless the review team specifically requests it.
- The same review team that evaluated the application during the first round will evaluate the amended application.

Table E: Timeline for Submission of Amended New Start Application for a Charter School Opening in SY 2025-2026

Due Date*:	Item:
April 24, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MNPS Charter Schools Office will send letter to the applicant regarding the reason for denial
May 24, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amended application due to MNPS Charter Schools Office with MNPS no later than 4:30 p.m.
May 25, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independent Review of Amended Application begins
July 18, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Findings report from Charter Review Team sent to new start applicant and to the MNPS Board of Education
July 23, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MNPS Board of Education vote on Charter School findings report
July 24, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decision letter sent to new start applicant based on the MNPS School Board's vote• Denied applicants notified about 10-day window to appeal to the State Board

*Dates are subject to change.

Five Year (Interim) Reviews


Purpose

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-121(k), the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) developed guidelines for local education agency (LEA) authorizers and charter schools to facilitate the five-year interim review process. In Tennessee, charter agreements are established for ten-year periods. Best practice for charter authorizers includes monitoring and meaningful feedback with charter schools on an annual basis during the charter term. In addition to annual reviews, strong interim reviews are a vital component in providing effective oversight of charter schools and sharing best practices across all schools within the charter authorizer's jurisdiction. Tennessee state law requires LEA authorizers to conduct an interim review every five years of each charter school authorized by the LEA. T.C.A. § 49-13-121(k): An interim review of a charter school shall be conducted by the chartering authority under guidelines developed by the department of education in the fifth year of a charter school's initial period of operation and also in the fifth year following any renewal of a charter agreement. Such guidelines shall require a charter school to submit to the chartering authority a report on the progress of the school in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards and other terms of the approved charter agreement. The interim review shall take place during the fifth year of operation for each charter school and then in the fifth year following any renewal decisions.

Process and Timeline

Each charter school shall complete each section based on TDOE Interim Review Guidance for Five-Year Review provided in Table F. An electronic copy of the completed interim review report shall be submitted to the Coordinator of MNPS Charter Schools (charterschooloffice@mnps.org) and the TDOE (charter.schools@tn.gov) no later than December 1st of the charter school's fifth operational year. The MNPS Charter Schools Office will hold a five-year review meeting with the schools that are under review during the month of January.

Table F: Five Year (Interim) Review Guidance

Link	QR Code
TN Department of Education website Pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Operators and authorizers➤ Interim Review Guidelines	

The interim review is intended to be a rigorous review of a charter school's performance and progress toward meeting the performance goals stated in the charter agreement, including essential compliance requirements. The results of the interim review shall be clearly communicated to the school's leadership and governing board and must be used by the chartering authority when making renewal, nonrenewal, or revocation decisions. Interim reviews provide the authorizer with an opportunity to review overall renewal status with the charter school. The authorizer shall be prepared to initiate revocation based on the results of an interim review if indicated by the review and allowed by law. Through the process of the interim review, charter schools should be informed whether they are:

1. On track for renewal,
2. Off track, at risk of non-renewal, or
3. Severely off track, at risk of revocation.

The scope and level of an interim review shall be similar to the review conducted at the end of a school's charter term that is used to determine whether to renew the charter contract.

Renewal Applications

Purpose


Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-121, the Metro Nashville Public Schools Board of Education has adopted Policy 1.900 (Appendix A) to provide the process for charter schools to apply for renewal of their charter agreements with the authorizer for another ten-year period.

As a charter school authorizer, MNPS is responsible for evaluating a current charter school's performance and achievement levels in the process of deciding whether to renew a school's charter. A strong renewal process is critical to protect charter school autonomy, students, and stakeholders and ensures schools are held to high standards.

Process and Timeline

Applicants must follow the Renewal Application guidelines as found on the TN Department of Education website provided in Table G. The application describes the four category types and the requirements for each category. Applicants should look closely at the application scoring rubric, also found on TN Department of Education website. The scoring rubric outlines the criteria under which each section will be evaluated by reviewers.

Table G: Renewal Application Guidelines

Link	QR Code
TN Department of Education website Pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Charter Renewal ➤ Charter Renewal Application 	

In addition to the TDOE required contents, MNPS Charter Schools Office requires that all renewal applications submit an Executive Summary. A complete renewal application will contain the following:

1. Cover Page
2. Signed Assurances
- 3. Executive Summary**
4. Application Narrative
5. Appendices
- 6. Capacity Interview**

Executive Summary (MNPS Requirement)

- Must not exceed two pages (these two pages do not count towards the final page limit)
- Provides an overview of the current mission and vision and any proposed changes
- Provides the key components of your current educational model

Capacity Interview (MNPS Requirement)

- Conducted by MNPS Charter Schools Office during the Fall Semester of renewal year
- Process compares current data to original charter application goals
- Provides review team members comprehensive view of the lifetime of the contractual agreement

One electronic copy (pdf) and five (5) hard copies of the application are required. The electronic copy is considered the master copy in the event of discrepancies and may be submitted through e-mail. E-mailed applications must be submitted to the Coordinator of Charter Schools at charterschooloffice@mnps.org and TDOE Office of Charter Schools at charterschools@tn.gov. Hard copies will be delivered in person to MNPS Charter Schools Office in the Support Hub Family Information Center at the following address:

Metropolitan Nashville Board of Public Education
2601 Bransford Avenue
Nashville, TN 37204

If in person delivery is not possible, then applicants will need to contact the Coordinator of Charter Schools at charterschooloffice@mnps.org one full business day before the deadline to make other arrangements in time to meet the April 1st 4:30pm CT deadline. MNPS will not accept any applications received after this date.

After the application has been determined to be complete, MNPS Charter Schools Office will convene a review team which will analyze and evaluate the renewal application. Capacity interviews will be conducted to gain insight into the progress that has been made toward the goals outlined in the original application. The review team will present the evidence findings to MNPS Charter Schools Office based on measurable, evidentiary criteria. By February 1st of the following year, MNPS will present the evidence findings to the MNPS Board of Education for a ruling by resolution on the renewal application. If the decision is to approve, MNPS and the charter school will immediately enter a new ten (10) year contract. If the decision is to deny renewal, the charter school governing board has ten (10) days to appeal to the Charter Commission. If the Charter Commission upholds the denial, that decision is final and there is no appeal. If the Charter Commission overturns the MNPS Board's decision, the school will continue to operate under authorization of the Charter Commission. Table H provides an overview of the renewal application timeline.

Table H: Timeline for Renewal Application 2024

Due Date*:	Item:
January 1, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide renewal applicants a performance evaluation report
April 3, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed renewal charter applications due in the MNPS Charter Schools Office no later than 4:30 p.m. CT Renewal applications checked for completeness
August 21, 2023-September 1, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Interviews with renewal applicants
November 21, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings Reports due to the MNPS Board of Education and renewal applicants
November 28, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MNPS Board of Education votes on the findings report from MNPS Charter Schools Office
November 29, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MNPS Charter Schools Office sends a decision letter to the applicant based on the MNPS School Board's vote
November 28, 2023-December 8, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewal applicants that are denied have 10 days to appeal to the Charter commission

*Dates are subject to change.

Table I provides the renewal cycle for current charter schools operating under MNPS.

Table I: Renewal Cycle of Current Charter Schools

School ID	School	Term expires June 30th	Renewal Application Due April 1st	Renewal Decision February 1st
504	KIPP Nashville Collegiate HS	2024	2023	2024
667	Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary	2024	2023	2024
743	Valor Flagship	2024	2023	2024
305	Explore Community School	2025	2024	2025
499	KIPP Kirkpatrick ES	2025	2024	2025
668	Rocketship United	2025	2024	2025
695	STEM High School	2025	2024	2025
712	STRIVE Collegiate	2025	2024	2025
744	Valor Voyager	2025	2024	2025
509	KA at the Crossings	2026	2025	2026
502	KIPP Academy Nashville MS	2026	2025	2026

501	KIPP Nashville Collegiate Prep ES	2027	2026	2027
508	LEAD Academy HS	2027	2026	2027
687	Smithson Craighead Academy	2028	2027	2028
286	East End Prep	2031	2030	2031
181	LEAD Cameron College Prep	2031	2030	2031
517/660	Liberty Collegiate/ RePublic	2031	2030	2031
594	Nashville Prep	2031	2030	2031
696	STEM Prep Academy	2031	2030	2031
179	Aventura	2032	2031	2032
457	Intrepid Academy	2032	2031	2032
507	LEAD Southeast	2032	2031	2032
503	KIPP Nashville College Prep MS	2033	2032	2033
592	Nashville Classical East	2033	2032	2033
652	Purpose Prep	2033	2032	2033
593	Nashville Classical West	2033	2032	2033

Charter Amendments

Purpose

In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-13-110(d), the governing body of a charter school may petition its authorizer to amend its charter agreement. Timelines for approval and the appeals process are defined by Tennessee Public Charter Commission rule 1185-01-01-.04.

An amendment to the original charter agreement shall be required for any material modification to the provisions of a charter school's charter agreement. A material modification to a charter agreement is defined as a substantive change to the terms of the charter agreement regarding a charter school's governance, financial, operational, or academic structure. Material modifications include, but are not limited to:

1. Change in governance structure (including, but not limited to, a change in the nonprofit entity governing the school), or addition of or changes to the charter management organization;
2. The addition or removal of a grade level or levels;

3. Changes in student enrollment which fall outside of the minimum or maximum enrollment thresholds set forth in the charter school's charter agreement;
4. The addition or removal of a plan to provide transportation to students attending the charter school;
5. Changes to the charter school's location, if outside the geographic area set forth in the charter agreement;
6. Changes to the charter school's academic focus or goals set forth in the charter agreement; and
7. Changes identified in the charter agreement as material modifications or amendments.

Process and Timeline

Table J provides the timeline for any current charter school seeking an amendment for the Fall or Spring.

Table J: Timeline for Charter Amendments

Fall Dates*	Item
September 1, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters of Intent (LOI) Deadline to the MNPS Charter Schools Office
October 2, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed charter amendment application due to the MNPS Charter Schools Office no later than 4:30 p.m. CT Application checked for completeness.
November 16, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings report due to the Board and applicant
November 28, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments presented to MNPS Board of Education during the MNPS board meeting
November 29, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision letter to the applicant based on the MNPS School Board's vote sent by MNPS Charter Schools Office
Spring Dates*	Item
January 15, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters of Intent (LOI) Deadline to MNPS Charter Schools Office
February 14, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed charter amendment application due to the MNPS Charter Schools Office no later than 4:30 p.m. CT Application will be checked for completeness.
April 18, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding reports due to the Board and applicant
April 23, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments presented to the MNPS Board of Education during the MNPS board meeting
April 26, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision letter to the applicant based on the MNPS School Board's vote sent by MNPS Charter Schools Office

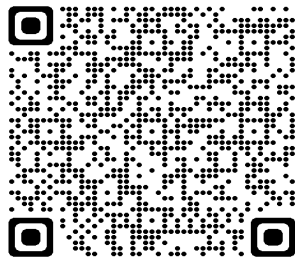
*Dates are subject to change.

Emergency Amendment

A charter school may submit an emergency amendment application at any time if good cause exists for an amendment due to unanticipated extraordinary circumstances. In addition to the category of amendment, the school must check “EMERGENCY Petition” at the bottom of the first page of Part I and briefly describe the circumstances constituting the emergency. The Background Statements shall include detailed written findings explaining the unanticipated extraordinary circumstances giving rise to the emergency amendment application.

Applicants must follow the rules of the Tennessee Public Charter Commission and the Charter Amendment guidelines as found on the TN Department of Education website provided in Table K. The application describes the four category types and the requirements for each category. Applicants should look closely at the application scoring rubric, also found on TN Department of Education website. The scoring rubric outlines the criteria under which each section will be evaluated by reviewers.

Table K: Amendment

Link	QR Code
TN Department of Education website Pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Amendment to a Charter Agreement➤ Letter of Intent and Applicant	

Charter School Support

Charter Office Direct Support

Purpose

MNPS Charter Schools Office has adopted NACSA’s three core principles to guide all aspects of the work used for charter authorizing. The three core principles are maintaining high standards for all schools, upholding high performing school’s autonomy, and protecting student and public interest. By maintaining high standards beginning at the application process, the MNPS Charter Schools Office ensures schools are meeting the needs of all students throughout the implementation of their contract as well as the components outlined in the Charter School Performance Framework. MNPS Charter Schools Office ensures high performing schools’ autonomy is protected while providing support to schools in areas they are experiencing challenges.

Process and Timeline

The MNPS Charter Schools Office supports each charter school with onsite quarterly meetings. The purpose of the meetings is to ensure charter schools provide the necessary information and discuss current data to ensure charter schools are equipped with the necessary knowledge to meet the metrics outlined in the Charter Performance Framework. Table L provides the timeline of direct support charter schools receive from the MNPS Charter Schools Office.

Table L: Charter Support

Dates*	Event	Item
August	Annual Charter School Kickoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led by MNPS Charter Schools Office and charter stakeholders• Meeting with each charter network to provide charter schools vital information as it relates to the latest guidance and requirements for the current school year
October	School Improvement Plan Milestone meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led by the MNPS Office of Strategic Investments• Meeting to focus on action step identified in the School Improvement Plan
February	MNPS Charter Schools Office On-site Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led by MNPS Charter Schools Office• Meeting to focus on the most recent academic and non-academic data results to gauge projections for TN Ready testing
May	End of the Year Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led by MNPS Charter Schools Office• Meeting with each charter school to discuss focus questions that provide a summarization of the year and an opportunity to preview plans for the upcoming year
August - May	Priority Schools Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led by MNPS Office of Innovation• Monthly meetings to discuss progress towards plan of support

*Dates are subject to change.

Extended Core Team

MNPS has dedicated extended core team that provides oversight and monitoring to charter schools to ensure compliance with the charter school's contractual agreement, as well as state, federal, and required district policies. Table M provides examples of the types of support provided.

Table M: Extended Core Team Support

Extended Core Team	Examples of Types of Support
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transcript oversight• Scheduling support• Graduation requirements and rates• Course coding and grades

Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application data support • Model performance framework support • Annual Report support
English Learners (EL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review EL registration information • Support school leaders needs and instructional supports • Survey of needs • Professional development and planning with school leaders and teachers • Analyze ACCESS data to assist with student placement
Exceptional Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support exceptional education lead • Classroom observation • Audits of IEPs • Professional development and planning with school leaders and teachers
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit enrollment for new hires and support • Process transfer forms • Process class change forms • Background checks • Licensure checks
Strategic Investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I Fiscal assistance • Professional development and trainings • School Improvement Plan support • Complete TDOE walkthroughs • Milestone Meeting

Pre-Opening Support

Purpose

New start applicants that are approved by the MNPS Board of Education will receive support throughout the pre-opening process from the MNPS Charter Schools Office. Table N provides an overview of the pre-opening support based on the guidelines provided by the TDOE for the stages of a charter school's existence.

Table N: Pre-Opening Support

Category	Pre-Opening
Academics	Staffing and implemented plan to serve all students
Personnel	Staff licenses, background checks
Governance	Board Changes
Facilities	Certificate of Occupancy
Operations	Community ties, Record retention plans, Insurance, Enrollment
Financials	Budget based on actual enrollment

In addition to the categories of support, MNPS Charter Schools Office will conduct a walkthrough with Facilities Planning and Construction prior to opening to check the progress towards the opening timeline.

All new start charter schools will receive on-site scheduled visits in year 1 from the MNPS Charter Schools Office.

Monitoring Oversight

Annual Report for Charter School Operators

Purpose

T.C.A. § 49-13-120(a) requires the governing body of each public charter school to submit an annual progress report to both the charter school authorizer and the Tennessee Department of Education. This report must include, at a minimum:

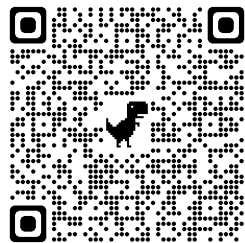
- The progress of the school towards achieving the goals outlined in its charter agreement;
- Financial records of the school, including revenues and expenditures; and
- A detailed accounting, including amounts and sources, of all funds received by the public charter school, other than those funds received under T.C.A. § 49-13-112(a).

Process and Timeline

Annual reports shall be provided to the authorizer and to TDOE no later than 5 p.m. central time on October 1st annually. If the deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state observed holiday, the required report shall be due on the next business day.

The process and required documents can be found by following the links provided in Table O below.

Table O: Annual Report for Charter School Operators Guidance

Link	QR Code
TN Department of Education website Pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Operators and Authorizers ➤ Annual Report Guidance for Charter School Operators 	

If the annual report provided by the school does not meet those statutory requirements, the authorizer may require the governing body to amend and resubmit the report. The process of completing the annual report provides a meaningful opportunity for the school’s governing body to synthesize relevant data and reflect on the performance of the school in the preceding school year. The board should use the annual reports to measure progress toward the goals outlined in its charter agreement, adjust operations based on this information, and gauge the likelihood of renewal of its charter. Chartering authorities use annual reports to provide effective oversight of charter schools, share best practices across schools, and to guide renewal, nonrenewal, or revocation decisions.

LEA Annual Authorizer Report

Purpose

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-120(c), each authorizer shall submit to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) and State Board of Education (SBE) an annual authorizing report by January 1 of each year.

Process and Timeline

The annual report must include the following:

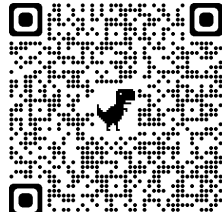
- Cover page that includes the name of the report, authorizer name, contact information, (name, title, email address, phone number), and date of report.
- Section I: A listing of all of the LEA’s authorized charter schools (including any that have closed within the past year). The list of charter schools should include:
 1. Name of school
 2. Current school address
 3. Current school phone number
 4. School leader name(s)
 5. School leader email address
 6. The operating status of the charter school with a designation of:
 - (A) Approved but not yet open;
 - (B) Open and operating;
 - (C) Revoked, including the reason for revocation;

- (D) Non-renewed; or
- (E) Closed, including date of closing and the reason for closing.
- 7. The oversight and contracted services, if any, provided by the authorizer to its authorized charter schools
- 8. Any approved waivers of statute or SBE regulation

- Section II: A performance report for each authorized charter school that addresses the components of the performance framework set forth in the charter agreement.

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) § 49-13-143, if a chartering authority has not adopted a performance framework for all its schools, it must adopt the model performance framework developed by the department for its charter schools. MNPS has adopted the following model performance framework (Table P) for charter schools in compliance with this statute.

Table P: MNPS Charter Schools Office Responsibilities

Link	QR Code
TN Department of Education website Pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Operators and Authorizers ➤ Annual Authorizer Report Guidance 	

Waiver Requests

Purpose

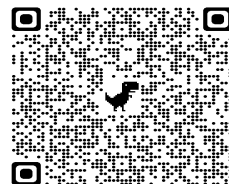
Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-13-111(p), a sponsor of a proposed charter school may apply to either the authorizer or to the Commissioner of Education for a waiver of any state board rule or statute that inhibits or hinders the proposed charter school's ability to meet its goals or comply with its mission statement. Since Tennessee statutes and rules are regularly updated, the waiver request process supports charter schools in ensuring their waivers are aligned with current laws and policies.

Waivers may not be granted for requirements related to:

- Federal and state civil rights;
- Federal, state, and local health and safety;
- Federal and state public records;
- Immunizations;
- Possession of weapons on school grounds;

Tennessee Code Annotated changes yearly and includes many different chapters. To ensure that you are always looking at the most up-to-date information please use the log-in steps provided in Table Q.

Table Q: Tennessee Code Annotated

Link	QR Code
Tennessee Code Annotated Pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ + Title 49 Education ➤ All chapters may pertain to your school (frequently reference chapters 6 and 13) 	

Enrollment Cap Procedures

Purpose

Each year MNPS Charter Schools Office works in conjunction with the MNPS Director of Boundary Planning and Enrollment Forecasting Office to create student projections for the following school year. There are several aspects that must be taken into consideration when providing projections to each charter school. MNPS Charter Schools Office relies on the information in the contract signed by both the charter school and the district and the approved application. The following data is reviewed:

- Enrollment of students in the previous year
- Enrollment numbers based on the current year in the contract
- Enrollment trends
- Trajectory toward enrollment cap
- Building capacity if it hinders the progress toward total enrollment

Process and Timeline

MNPS Charter Schools Office will conduct enrollment audits based on the 20th and 40th day enrollment counts. The charter school will receive an email from MNPS Charter Schools Office indicating the following:

- Projected enrollment number
- Actual enrollment number
- Enrollment cap number
- 20-day enrollment number
- 40-day enrollment number
- Difference between the yearly enrollment cap and the 40-day count

MNPS Charter Schools Office conducts monthly audits when providing each charter schools Average Daily Membership (ADM) rates. If the audit indicates the school is exceeding the enrollment cap, MNPS Charter Schools Office will formally notify the charter school and develop a plan of action to ensure compliance with the enrollment capacity outlined in the charter agreement.

Intervention Policy

T.C.A. § 49-13-111(c) requires authorizers to adopt a “progressive intervention policy”. The below policy outlines the intervention process MNPS will move through if a school meets the criteria for revocation or is not complying with state law or with the charter agreement. MNPS shall monitor its authorized charter schools to ensure sufficient performance, as well as compliance with charter agreements and applicable law. This policy shall outline the criteria and process for authorizer intervention decisions and actions in the event of deficient performance and/or non-compliance.

Grounds for Intervention

1. In the event of a charter school’s deficient performance and/or non-compliance with its charter agreement or applicable law, MNPS shall issue to the school timely written notice within five (5) business days of the MNPS Charter Office becoming aware of the performance deficiency(s) and/or violation(s) justifying intervention.
2. Notices shall state:
 - a. the deficiency(s) and/or violation(s);
 - b. the applicable legal, performance, and/or contractual provision(s) not satisfactorily met;
 - c. the expected remedy(s), including whether a Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan are required (as further described below);
 - d. the timeframe by which the deficiency(s) and/or violation(s) must be remedied and/or a Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan to be submitted; and
 - e. Any additional information deemed appropriate by MNPS.
3. MNPS will provide the charter school with a reasonable time (as determined by the Charter Office) and opportunity for submission of a response to the notice and for submission of a Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan (if applicable).
4. If required by MNPS, a Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan shall be developed by the charter school and submitted to MNPS for review within ten (10) business days of the school’s receipt of the notice (timeline subject to modification if necessary), and approval. The Plan shall include specific improvement objectives, responsible person(s) for each action, a timeline for each action, and indicators of success. MNPS reserves the right to require additional components in the Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan depending on the nature of the deficiency(s) and/or violation(s).

5. The charter school shall submit its Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan to MNPS within the timelines prescribed by MNPS. The Plan shall be approved by the MNPS Chief of Innovation.
6. MNPS' approval of a Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan shall in no way abridge or mitigate the charter school's ultimate responsibility and accountability for remedying the deficiency(s) and/or violation(s), nor MNPS' authority to take additional action in response to the charter school's failure to remedy the deficiency(s) and/or violation(s) satisfactorily, including revocation of the charter agreement.

Charter School Response

1. A charter school may contest MNPS' finding of a deficiency(s) and/or violation(s) by providing a written response within 5 days of receipt contesting such determination, along with supporting evidence, to MNPS within the timeframe prescribed in the notice.
2. If a charter school is not able to meet timeframes for remediation and/or submission of a Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan, it shall provide a written response within five (5) calendar days to MNPS within the stated timelines, which shall include a justification for its inability to meet the timeframe and a proposed timeframe for remedying the deficiency(s) and/or violation(s). MNPS shall consider the charter school's justification and either approve, approve with modifications, or reject the charter school's proposed timeframe.
3. Charter schools shall be responsible for notifying MNPS when a deficiency(s) and/or violation(s) has been remedied, if the charter school requires an extension of time to remedy a deficiency, or if the charter school requires a modification to its Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan.

Levels of Intervention

1. The following table lays out the general conditions that may trigger interventions by MNPS, including types of actions and consequences. The outlined procedures are not a step-by-step process. MNPS reserves the right to place a charter school on any status without going through the preceding steps if more immediate actions are warranted.
2. Depending on the severity of the concern or deficiency, MNPS reserves the right to revoke the charter agreement in accordance with the terms and provisions of the charter agreement and Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-122. If MNPS determines that an intervention other than contract revocation is appropriate, it may begin at any level of intervention and shall be permitted to jump levels. MNPS does not need to commence interventions at Level 1 and move incrementally through the levels.
3. MNPS reserves the right to impose additional actions/consequences to those listed in each category if such additional actions are deemed appropriate by MNPS.
4. A charter agreement may be revoked at any time by the authorizer in an emergency situation without the authorizer first having to implement the progressive intervention policy. An emergency situation includes, but is not limited to, instances of fraud; misappropriation of funds; flagrant violation of health and safety laws, rules, and regulations; flagrant disregard of the charter agreement; or similar misconduct.

Table R: Levels of Intervention Outline

MNPS Response	Possible Triggers	Possible Actions/Consequences
Level 1: Notice of Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One year of Patterns of consistent documented weak performance in any of the three key areas (academic, operational, and/or financial) identified through routine monitoring, implementation, compliance, or performance reviews, or through any other means identified by MNPS • Patterns of consistent documented financial weakness identified through an annual financial audit and/or internal review from the Performance Framework • One year of Achievement rating of “falls far below standard” of the model performance framework or achievement of “does not meet standard” in two or more areas of the Model Performance Framework • Repeated failure to submit required documents and/or respond to MNPS’ requests/communications to the school on a timely basis 	Letter to the school’s governing board and CEO detailing areas of concern and required action steps (if applicable)
Level 2: Notice of Deficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two consecutive years of weak performance in any of the three key areas (academic, operational, and/or financial) identified through routine monitoring, implementation, compliance, or performance reviews, or through any other means identified by MNPS • Two consecutive years of achievement of “falls far below standard” in multiple areas of the performance frameworks or achievement of “does not meet standard” in a significant number of areas of the performance frameworks • Two consecutive years of significant financial weakness identified through an annual financial audit and/or internal review 	<p>Letter to the governing board and CEO detailing areas of deficiency(s) and/or violations and development and implementation of a Performance Improvement Plan</p> <p>The following MNPS individuals will be cc’d on all communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MNPS Director of Schools - MNPS Chief of Innovation - MNPS Chief of Staff - MNPS Director of BOE Relations - MNPS Board of Education Chair

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two consecutive years of failure to comply with applicable state laws, and/or State Board rules, or other regulations • Two consecutive years of failure to comply with terms of charter agreement with LEA 	- MNPS Director of Charter Schools
Level 3: Notice of Probation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three consecutive or cumulative years of weak performance in any of the three key areas (academic, operational, and/or financial) identified through routine monitoring, implementation, compliance, or performance reviews, or through any other means identified by MNPS • Three cumulative years of continued failure to meet performance targets (state accountability, charter contract, or performance frameworks) • Failure to meet objectives set forth in the Performance Improvement Plan • Three consecutive or cumulative years of continued or significant signs of financial weakness identified through annual financial audits or other means • Three consecutive or cumulative of continued or significant failure to comply with applicable state laws, State Board rules/policies, or other regulations • Three consecutive or cumulative continued or significant failure to comply with the conditions of the charter agreement 	<p>Letter to governing board and CEO to serve as notification of probationary status and outlining terms of probation; MNPS Charter Schools Office creates a Corrective Action Plan with the charter school that addresses deficits and has measurable outcomes, a timeline and very specific improvement expectations</p> <p>The following MNPS individuals will be cc'd on all communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Director of Schools -Chief of Innovation -Chief of Staff -Director of BOE Relations - Board of Education Chair -Director of Charter Schools
Level 4: Charter Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four consecutive or cumulative years of achieving “falls far below standard” on the performance frameworks in the same category • Failure to successfully address the terms of the probationary status, including the Performance Improvement Plan or a Corrective Action Plan • Flagrant disregard of the charter agreement (T.C.A. § 49-13-122); fraud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt an interim Reconstitution Plan that may include the appointment of an interim governing board and/or a governing board chairperson. For schools identified on the Priority School List for which revocation is not recommended, the school shall develop and implement

	<p>or misappropriation of funds (T.C.A. § 49-13-122)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four consecutive or cumulative years of failure to comply with the terms of the charter • Four consecutive or cumulative years of failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management 	<p>a comprehensive support and improvement plan (T.C.A. § 49-13-122)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision by the Board of Education to commence revocation proceedings <p>The following MNPS individuals will be cc'd on all communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Director of Schools -Chief of Innovation -Chief of Staff -Director of BOE Relations - Board of Education Chair -Director of Charter Schools
Level 5: Recommendation for Revocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five consecutive or cumulative years of failure to comply with or meet performance targets (state accountability, charter contract, or performance frameworks) • Five consecutive or cumulative years of achieving “falls far below standard” on the performance frameworks in the same category • Failure to successfully address the terms of the Reconstitution Plan • Failure to successfully address the comprehensive support and improvement plan • Inclusion on the TDOE’s Priority School List excluding SY 21-22 and SY 22-23 (T.C.A. § 49-13-122) 	<p>Recommendation to revoke the charter contract</p> <p>Letter stating reasons for proposed revocation to governing board</p> <p>The following MNPS individuals will be cc'd on all communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Director of Schools -Chief of Innovation -Chief of Staff -Director of BOE Relations - Board of Education Chair -Director of Charter Schools

MNPS Action Plan for Charter School Closure


Purpose

A charter agreement may be revoked at any time by the authorizer in an emergency situation without the authorizer first having to implement the progressive intervention policy. An emergency situation includes, but is not limited to, instances of fraud; misappropriation of funds; flagrant violation of health and safety laws, rules, and regulations; flagrant disregard of the charter agreement; or similar misconduct. When it becomes evident that a school must be closed for any reason, the process and timeline can be found in the next section.

Process and Timeline

The framework and timelines in Table S will be followed as it applies to the closure of any charter school. Some tasks will not apply depending on the particular school being closed. Except in the cases of fraud, misappropriation of funds, flagrant disregard of the charter agreement, or similar misconduct, a decision to revoke shall become effective at the close of the academic year (T.C.A. § 49-13-122). The MNPS Charter Schools Office will work closely with the school's governing board prior to the beginning of closure proceedings to agree on which tasks are necessary and outline how the MNPS Charter Schools Office intends to supervise the closure. Responsible parties and completion dates will be agreed upon to ensure a transparent and smooth closure, and the MNPS Charter Schools Office will attend parent and community meetings to explain not only the mechanics of the closure process but exactly why the school is being closed.

Table S: TDOE Closure Guidance

Link	QR Code
TDOE Closure Guidance	

Appendix A – MNPS Board Policy 1.900 – Charter School Applications

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to sponsors and potential sponsors of newly created public charter schools. It shall not apply to public charter schools converted from existing public schools pursuant to T.C.A. 49-13-106.

DEFINITION

A charter school shall be a public, nonsectarian, non-religious school which operates within a public school district. It shall be subject to all state and federal laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry or need for special education services.

The purposes of charter schools are to:

- 1) Improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students;
- 2) Provide options for parents to meet educational needs of students in high priority schools;
- 3) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods, and provide greater decision-making authority to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance;
- 4) Measure performance of pupils and faculty, and ensure that children have the opportunity to reach proficiency on state academic assessments;
- 5) Create new professional opportunities for teachers; and
- 6) Afford parents substantial meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.

NEW START APPLICATION PROCESS¹

The charter school application process shall comply with the requirements of Tenn. Code. Ann. § 49-13-107, the rules of the Tennessee State Board of Education, the rules of the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission (the Commission), and the MNPS Charter School Authorization Handbook. A prospective charter school sponsor shall send the MNPS Charter School Office and the Tennessee Department of

Education notice of its intent at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to February 1 of the

year preceding the year in which the proposed charter school plans to begin operation as a public charter school. Applications must be submitted to the MNPS Charter School Office on or before February 1 of the year preceding the year in which the proposed charter school plans to begin operation as a public charter school. If the 1st of February falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday on which the school district offices are closed, applications will be accepted on the next business day. Late applications will not be accepted, without exception. The sponsor shall pay an application fee of \$2,500.00.²

A sponsor seeking board approval of an initial charter school application must complete the form provided by the Tennessee Department of Education. In the application, the sponsor must demonstrate that the proposed charter school meets the purpose prescribed by law for the formation of a charter school and the proposed charter school will be able to implement a viable program of quality education for its students.³

REVIEW PROCESS

The MNPS Charter School Office shall make recommendations to the board with respect to all charter school applicants that include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each chart application. Recommendations shall be compliant with the board's vision for the use of charter schools as a district component of meeting district goals.

APPROVAL OR DENIAL OF NEW START APPLICATION⁴

The board shall rule by resolution on the approval or denial of a charter application within ninety (90) calendar days of receipt of the completed application or the application shall be deemed approved by law.

Approval

The sponsor of a public charter school that is approved by the board shall enter into a written agreement with the board, which shall be binding on the charter school's governing body. This agreement, known as the charter agreement, shall be in writing signed by the sponsor and the board.

All charter agreements shall comply with Tenn. Code. Ann. § 49-13-110 and shall include provisions requiring that:

1. members of the charter school governing body, as well as the charter school administrators and any employees with contracting or purchasing authority, complete statements of disclosure of interest reports (consistent with forms filed by members of the board and certain MNPS administrators) and provide them to the board on an annual basis;
2. the charter school comply with all applicable local, state, and federal law and policy, including the Tennessee Open Meetings Act, Tennessee Public Records Act, and with Tenn. Code. Ann. §12-4-101, which prohibits conflicts of interest in contracting;
3. the charter school disclose to MNPS all vendor or service contracts upon request and, for contracts over \$10,000, submit for publication on the MNPS website; and
4. the charter school comply with the Annenberg standards.

Denial

Upon receipt of the grounds for denial of a new start application, the sponsor shall have thirty (30) calendar days within which to submit an amended application to correct the deficiencies. The board shall have sixty (60) calendar days from receipt of the amended application to deny or to approve the amended application or the application shall be deemed approved by law.⁵

A denial by the board of an amended application to establish a public charter school may be appealed by the sponsor, no later than ten (10) calendar days after the date of the final decision to deny to the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission. If the charter school is authorized by the Commission, it shall remain under the oversight of the Commission. The board shall not exercise its legal option to become an authorizer of such a charter.

CHARTER AMENDMENTS⁶

The charter amendment process shall comply with the requirements of Tenn. Code. Ann. § 49-13-110, the rules of the Tennessee State Board of Education, the rules of the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission, and the MNPS Charter School Authorization Handbook. The governing body of the public charter school may petition the board to amend the original charter agreement. An amendment to the original charter agreement shall be required for any material modification to the provisions of a charter school's charter agreement and shall be made in accordance with applicable law and the charter agreement.

The governing body of a charter school seeking to apply for a material modification to the charter agreement shall file an amendment petition letter of intent and an amended application with the MNPS Charter Office. The governing body must file the letter of intent and amendment application with MNPS by either the Fall deadline or the Spring deadline set by Tennessee Public Charter School Commission Rule 1185-01-01-.04.

The board shall rule by resolution, at a regular or special-called meeting, on the approval or denial of an amendment application within sixty (60) calendar days of the application due date. The governing body of a charter school may appeal a decision by the board to deny an amendment to the charter agreement to the Commission within ten (10) calendar days of the board's vote to deny the amendment application.

Emergency Amendment Applications

If the governing body of a charter school determines that, due to unanticipated or extraordinary circumstances, good cause exists for the emergency amendment application to be submitted, it shall make a finding by resolution at a regular or special called meeting of the board. The governing body shall include with the emergency amendment application a written explanation of the unanticipated or extraordinary circumstances giving rise to the emergency amendment application.

The board shall rule by resolution, at a regular or special-called meeting, on the approval or denial of an emergency amendment application within sixty (60) calendar days of the date the completed emergency amendment application was submitted. The governing body may appeal a decision to deny an emergency amendment to the Commission within ten (10) calendar days of the board's vote to deny the emergency amendment application.

RENEWAL PROCESS⁷

The charter renewal process shall comply with the requirements of Tenn. Code. Ann. § 49-13-121, the rules of the Tennessee State Board of Education, the rules of the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission, and the MNPS Charter School Authorization Handbook. No later than April 1 of the year prior to the year in which the charter agreement expires, the governing body of a public charter school shall submit a renewal application to the board.

On or before the February 1 of the year in which the charter expires, the board shall rule by resolution to approve or deny the public charter school's renewal application. The board shall consider the renewal application, the annual progress reports required under Tenn. Code. Ann. § 49-13-120, and the renewal performance report required by

Tenn. Code. Ann. § 49-13-121(b) when deciding whether to approve or deny the public charter school's renewal application.

A denial of a renewal application by the board may be appealed by the sponsor to the Tennessee Charter School Commission no later than ten (10) calendar days after the board's denial. If the charter school is authorized by the Commission, it shall remain under the oversight of the Commission. The board shall not exercise its legal option to become an authorizer of such a charter.

Legal References Cross References

1. T.C.A. 49-13-107; TCA 1-3-102; T.C.A. 49-13-108;

TRR/MS 0520-14-01

2. T.C.A. 49-13-107(f)

3. T.C.A. 49-13-107; TRR/MSS 0520-14-01

4. T.C.A. 49-13-108

5. T.C.A. 49-13-108(b)(3)

6. T.C.A. 49-13-110(d); TRR/MSS 1185-01-01-.04

7. T.C.A. 49-13-121

Appendix B – MNPS Board Policy 1.901 – Charter School Oversight

All MNPS authorized charter schools shall comply with the requirements of applicable federal law, Tenn. Code. Ann. Title 49, Chapter 13, the rules of the Tennessee State Board of Education, the rules of the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission, MNPS Board of Education Policy 1.900-1.901, and the MNPS Charter School Authorization Handbook.

The MNPS director of schools or designee shall:

1. Allow charter agreements to be recommended for revocation if fiscal jeopardy to MNPS is likely or if there is failure by the charter school to make consistent progress towards the charter school's stated objectives.
2. Ensure existing charter schools operate in a manner that does not jeopardize the learning or wellbeing of their students.
3. Require charter schools to submit annual performance reports, participate in annual on-site visits conducted by the MNPS Charter Office, and participate in annual end-of-the-year review meetings with the MNPS Charter Office, in addition to an interim review in the fifth year of the charter agreement that measures, among other factors, the progress of the charter school towards achieving the goals outlined in its charter agreement.
4. Require charter schools to submit the annual financial report school required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-111, 120 and 127 for analysis and require each charter school to post such report to its website within 30 days of submission to the comptroller of treasury.
5. Ensure the governing body of an approved public charter school makes a written report to the board of education annually by September 1. This reporting requirement shall begin in the year after the year in which the public charter school begins operation. This annual report shall include: a report on the progress of the school in achieving its goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards, and all other terms of the charter agreement; and a financial statement disclosing the financial health of the school including the costs of the administration, instruction, and other spending categories of the school.
6. Annually provide the board of education with student achievement data from each charter school.

7. Ensure compliance with the charter agreement.
8. Take action to correct sub-standard performance of a charter school and/or charter school non-compliance and provide documentation of such action to: the charter school administration

and/or governing board, as outlined in the MNPS Authorization Handbook, and as requested or as required, to the board of education.
9. Make all reasonable efforts to finalize charter agreements before the end of the current fiscal year.
10. Assure, in any new or renewed charter agreements, that the MNPS Payroll Department is not used to provide payroll services for the charter school, except as required by law.
11. Ensure the following is published on the charter school's website: the charter school's original application, charter agreement, any charter agreement amendments, a full list of the charter school's governing board members and officers with work affiliation and contact information, minutes of charter school governing board meetings, the charter school's policies, and charter school staff member names and contact information.
12. Review a charter school's contract(s) to ensure compliance with Tenn. Code. Ann. §§12-4-101 and 12-4-102, if requested by the board of education due to concerns regarding conflicts of interest of as outlined in Tenn. Code. Ann. §§12-4-101 and 12-4-102.
13. Ensure that complaints about charter schools are handled in accordance with each school's charter agreement and in accordance with applicable state and federal law.
14. Require that governance of charter schools is consistent with local, state, and federal law.
15. Ensure all charter schools that include high schools (grades 9-12) are regionally accredited. It is expected that the candidate school status for accreditation will be received during the first year of the charter school operation.
16. Ensure charter schools approved by the board of education implement their charter application as submitted and approved.
17. Ensure that MNPS is not required to provide services (e.g., transportation, nutrition, or waste management services) to charter schools that are not requested

during the application process or specified in the charter agreement, except for those services that are required under state or federal law.

18. Ensure new charter schools, conversion schools, and all renewals of charter agreements are approved for ten-year periods. However, following the fifth year of a charter school's initial period of operation or the fifth year of any renewal of a charter school agreement, MNPS shall conduct an interim review of the charter school according to the guidelines developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

ANNENBERG STANDARD

The MNPS board of education adopts the following Annenberg standards and the MNPS director of schools or designee shall ensure compliance with these standards.

1. Traditional schools and charter schools should work together to ensure a coordinated approach that serves all children.

The director or designee shall develop and regularly update a citywide multiyear school plan that includes projected demographic changes, criteria for new school openings or closings, and equitable geographic distribution of schools and students to ensure that all students have access to schools in their communities and a range of specialized programs. The development and reevaluation of this unified school plan shall be subject to robust public input to ensure equity and transparency across the district.

Charter schools shall report on their websites and in enrollment materials the full range of academic, enrichment, and extracurricular offerings that they provide.

2. School governance should be representative and transparent.

Each charter school's original application and charter agreement shall be made available online on the charter school's website.

Members of charter school governing boards are required to file full financial disclosure reports and identify any potential conflicts of interest, relationships with management companies, or other business dealings with the charter school, its management company, or other charter schools. These documents shall be available online through the charter school's website.

Governing bodies of charter schools shall hold all meetings within MNPS, subject to the exceptions of Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-111(h). All meetings are to be open to the public and publicized in advance in accordance with applicable state law.

Charter schools shall post on their website minutes from school governing board meetings, the school's policies, information about staff, instructional strategies, curriculum, school rules and behavior codes, school budgets, and information about management companies or other large contracts.

Charter schools shall comply with applicable state laws regarding freedom of information, public records, and public meetings.

Complete contracts for management services are required to be electronically posted on the charter school's websites within thirty days of approval of the charter amendment application. The posting shall include detailed information about the services to be provided by the management company and all financial commitments and compensation, as well as all fees and bonuses to be provided to the management company.

The director or designee shall require full public financial disclosure by all charter schools of their expenditures and net revenues related to the operation of each school they serve. Charter schools are prohibited from allowing anyone with a financial relationship to a management

organization or the staff of any authorizing agency from serving on the governing board of any charter school.

3. Charter schools shall ensure equal access to interested students and prohibit practices that discourage enrollment or disproportionately push enrolled students out of the school.

Charter schools are prohibited from utilizing enrollment and registration procedures that directly or indirectly exclude or discourage certain students from enrolling at the school. Certain schools, such as academic magnets and performing arts schools, shall be exempted.

All new charter applications are required to include detailed plans for the school's enrollment and registration procedures to ensure that they will not result in unlawful selectivity. Enrollment forms and requirements are to be posted on the charter schools' websites in the district's major languages.

The director or designee shall monitor charter school enrollment and retention practices through uniform and consistent data requirements to ensure that charter schools are enrolling a proportionate share of students across subgroups.

Parents wishing to challenge or appeal enrollment, classification (e.g., special education), or withdrawal decisions by a charter school may notify the MNPS Charter Office, which has the authority to take remedial actions that are compliant with state or federal law and/or the charter agreement.

The director or designee shall establish a cross-sector student identification system that allows the district to track student mobility during the course of the school year.

The director or designee shall require public documentation and reporting of student attrition throughout the school year, including date, reason, and disposition (i.e., where the student ends up). This shall include all disciplinary actions, including both in- and out-of-school suspensions and referrals to law enforcement, and “voluntary” and “involuntary” exits. It shall be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, age, grade level, free/reduced meal status, disability status, and English proficiency status.

Before any student withdraws from a charter school, the parent or guardian (or a non-minor student), and charter school personnel shall sign a document stating that the student is withdrawing voluntarily and that charter school personnel have not prohibited, discouraged, or attempted to discourage the student from continued enrollment in the charter school.

Per pupil funding, provided to charter schools based on their enrollment, shall be adjusted throughout the school year, pursuant to state law or regulations, to accommodate changes in enrollment due to mobility.

4. Charter school discipline policies shall be fair and transparent.

The director or designee shall ensure that all charter school discipline policies and practices are promulgated and implemented to avoid discriminatory and/or disproportionate punishments of students based on race, gender, or other characteristics and are consistent with state and federal school discipline laws and guidance.

Every charter school shall make its school discipline policy publicly available on the school’s website, so that parents can thoroughly review the policy before enrolling their child. All charter discipline policies should include explicit provisions regarding due process for students, including the right to a hearing before long-term removal,

suspension, expulsion, disciplinary or safety transfers, or alternative school placements, as well as parental appeals and notification rights.

All charter schools are required to report to MNPS annually on all disciplinary actions and withdrawals from the school, including the reason for the student's departure, suspension, or other action and the statement that documentation of due process rights was available. These data shall be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, age, grade level, free/reduced meal status, disability status, and English proficiency status.

The director or designee shall establish standards, not inconsistent with federal or state law, for disciplinary codes, expressly identifying and defining inappropriate strategies and barring their use.

5. All students deserve equitable and adequate school facilities. Traditional schools and charter schools should work together to ensure that facilities arrangements do not disadvantage students in either sector.

For non-ASD schools, the director or designee shall require that parents, educators, and community members from both traditional public schools and charter schools be consulted and engaged in any decision to co-locate a charter school within an existing public school facility.

The director or designee shall establish strong guidelines for co-location, including the criteria on available space for administrative and educational functions and equitable arrangements for access to the building's gym, cafeteria, and other common spaces.

The director or designee shall require yearly impact reports from co-located facilities, providing administrators, educators, school staff, students, and parents from both schools the opportunity to reflect on how the co-location is working and what challenges have arisen, so these challenges can be addressed.

The director or designee shall require annual, detailed reports of capital improvements in co-located charter schools to be posted online.

6. Strong monitoring and oversight of charter schools are critical to protect the public interest.

The director or designee shall establish policies and procedures to adequately monitor all charter schools.

The director or designee shall annually conduct on-site visits to charter schools. MNPS/Director shall provide intensive support and intervention, if necessary, to improve school management.

The director or designee shall ensure that the annual financial report required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-111, 120 and 127 is posted to each charter school's website within 30 days of submission to the comptroller of treasury.

The director or designee shall require the MNPS Charter School Office to submit an annual authorizer fee report as required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-128(f).