

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

July 16, 2025

Agenda Item: Charter School Progress Report – History of Charter School Amendments

State Board Goal: Goal 5

State Board Role/Authority: The State Board of Education is the sole authorizer of Iowa charter schools according to Iowa Code chapter 256E.1(4).

Presenter(s): Barbara Ohlund, Executive Officer 4
Division of PK-12 Learning

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board hear and discuss this information.

Background: All charter schools have an option of a one-year delay in opening, which may be entered into at the time of authorization, or requested at a later date through a contract amendment request to the State Board. There are other circumstances where a charter school may need to amend a contract such as a change in location, phasing model, and increase in enrollment. As the authorizing agent, once the State Board reviews the request, they can approve, approve with conditions, or deny such requests as outlined in Iowa Code chapters 256F and 256E. A history of current charter school amendment requests is provided at the request of the State Board.

Charter School Amendment History

256E.6(2) An initial charter school contract shall be granted for a term of five school budget years. The charter school contract shall include the beginning and ending dates of the charter school contract term. An approved charter school may delay its opening for a period of time not to exceed one school year in order to plan and prepare for the charter school's opening. If the charter school requires an opening delay of more than one school year, the charter school may request an extension from the state board.

Current Contract Amendment Requests

1. **Red Barn Schoolhouse (no previous requests)**
 - Approved January 2025, original intent to open August 2025
 - Now requesting: Usage of the afforded one-year delay to move opening to August 2026
2. **CIVICA_Cedar Rapids and Des Moines (no previous requests)**
 - Approved January 2024, original intent to open August 2025
 - Now requesting:
 - An additional year delay for Cedar Rapids.
 - Withdraw contract for Des Moines location to apply for Ankeny location
3. **OEN_Cedar Rapids and Des Moines (one previous request)**
 - Approved January 2024, original intent to open August 2025 and opening August 2025.
 - Now requesting: Name change and a change to their grade-phases outlined in their enrollment chart

Past Contract Amendment Requests

1. **Horizon Science Academy - Davenport**
 - Request in June 2025 to change the address listed in the contract due to facilities change
2. **Empowering Excellence**
 - Request in January 2025 to clarify previous Offer and Teach waiver, waive food services, change maximum enrollment, and change location
3. **OEN_Cedar Rapids and Des Moines**
 - Request in November 2024 for Offer and Teach to allow them to implement the grade-phases as outlined in their contract
4. **Scholarship Prep_Des Moines elementary and middle**
 - Request in November 2024 to terminate their contracts
5. **Choice Charter**
 - Request in March 2024 to waive Offer and Teach, remove an Educational Service Provider, and to add grades 7-8

No Contract Amendment Requests

1. Distinctive Innovation Academy
2. Great Oaks HS and Career Center_Des Moines
3. Great Oaks HS and Career Center_Davenport
4. Great Oaks HS and Career Center_South Des Moines
5. Hamburg Charter School
6. Horizon Science Academy_Des Moines
7. Storm Lake Charter School
8. West Central Charter School