

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

July 16, 2025

Agenda Item: Charter School Contract Amendment Request,
Opportunity Education Network (OEN)- Des Moines Prep

**State Board
Goal:** Goal 5

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

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

Attachment(s): Two

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve the
amendment requests for OEN-Des Moines Prep.

Background: After authorization, “an enforceable and renewable
charter school contract shall be executed between the
founding group and the state board setting forth the
academic and operational performance expectations and
measures by which the charter school will be evaluated”
pursuant to Sections 256E.9 and 256E.10 and the other
rights and duties of the parties 256E.6(1). As the
authorizing agent for the State Board, the Department of
Education has reviewed the charter school contract
amendment request and provides a recommendation.

OEN-Des Moines Prep has submitted contract
amendment language, rationale, desired outcome,
governing board approval and evidence of a public
meeting.

Iowa Charter School Amendment Request Form

Exhibit 1

The **Iowa Charter School Amendment Request Form** is completed by an authorized Charter School that requests consideration of a proposed contract amendment to the State Board of Education. To submit this document, make a copy and submit the completed form to charters@iowa.gov labeled: **Amendment Request Form_2025_OEN - Des Moines Prep**.

1. Requested Amendment

A. Cite existing contract language to be amended.	B. Provide specific proposed amended language.
<p>1) The incorporated name of the school is now "OEN - Des Moines Prep"; a change from the legal name "Quest Forward Charter School - Des Moines"</p> <p>2) No language change is needed; but there is a reference to the application here: 2.5. Charter Contract. This Contract is a legally binding document and consists of this signed Contract, additional terms and assurances incorporated in attached Exhibits, the Application, which is incorporated herein by reference, submitted by the Applicant..."</p> <p>The application cites grade levels that have changed since. See chart at the bottom of this page.</p>	<p>1) We're not sure we need to change language elsewhere since the contract already refers to the school as Des Moines Prep, but if we want to clarify the entity's name change for consistency, we could include:</p> <p>1) Clarification Note (Non-substantive): The incorporated name of the school entity has changed from Quest Forward Charter School – Des Moines to OEN – Des Moines Prep. No amendments to language are necessary, as the school is consistently referred to in the contract as "Des Moines Prep."</p> <p>2) 2.5. Charter Contract (Amended). This Contract is a legally binding document and consists of this signed Contract, additional terms and assurances incorporated in attached Exhibits, and the Application, which is incorporated herein by reference, submitted by the Applicant.</p> <p>Notwithstanding any grade levels or enrollment figures referenced in the Application, for the purposes of implementation and compliance, the School shall operate according to the enrollment plan outlined in the Updated Enrollment Chart – Des Moines Prep below. This chart supersedes any enrollment projections previously submitted in the original application:</p> <p><i>(at bottom of this page)</i></p>

2. **Rationale** Describe the rationale for the language revision from 1A to 1B. Provide sufficient detail to explain the need for the amendment.

The proposed amendment reflects two key updates to ensure alignment between the school's charter and its actual implementation: (1) a revision to the initial grade levels served, and (2) a formal update to the school's incorporated name.

Grade Level Revision:

The original application proposed launching Des Moines Prep with grades 6 and 9. After further engagement with prospective families, review of facility readiness, and financial modeling, the school determined that beginning with grades 8 and 9 would better support a strong, sustainable launch.

- **Family Demand:** Community engagement and enrollment interest data showed much stronger demand for 8th and 9th grade entry points. Families indicated a desire for early high school exposure and a smoother transition into high school-level coursework and expectations.
- **Facility Constraints:** The current building layout does not yet accommodate a full middle school configuration. Delaying the addition of younger middle grades ensures the school can offer an appropriate and developmentally aligned environment.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Focusing enrollment in a narrower band of grades during the school's foundational years supports efficient staffing and resource allocation, contributing to long-term financial health.

Name Change:

The school's legal name has been changed from *Quest Forward Charter School – Des Moines* to *OEN – Des Moines Prep* to ensure consistency with its public-facing identity (DBA: Des Moines Prep). The inclusion of "OEN" in the formal name reflects the school's affiliation with Opportunity Education Network. This change makes clear that Des Moines Prep is part of a broader mission-aligned network focused on shared values, goals, and results across all affiliated schools.

Together, these updates ensure the charter reflects the school's actual program design, strategic approach, and organizational alignment.

3. **Desired Outcome** Describe the desired outcome of the amendment.

The desired outcome of this amendment is to align the school's charter contract with the actual, approved implementation plan for Des Moines Prep. Specifically, this amendment ensures that:

1. **Enrollment expectations** reflect the grade levels the school will serve in its opening years (8th and 9th grade), allowing for effective oversight, appropriate funding, and accurate performance evaluation by the Authorizer;
2. **Organizational naming** is consistent across all legal, public, and operational documentation, strengthening transparency and reinforcing the school's connection to Opportunity Education Network (OEN).

By formally updating the contract to match the school's operating reality, this amendment supports a strong launch, accurate compliance reporting, and a shared understanding among stakeholders

regarding the school's identity, scope, and growth trajectory.

4. **Best Practices** Describe how previous practices that led to the established contract language (1A) will change to support the current amended language (1B). How will the charter ensure effective implementation of the proposed amendment?

The original contract language (1A) proposed launching with grades 6 and 9 to establish a full secondary pipeline. However, through planning, community engagement, and facilities assessment, the school determined that a more focused launch with grades 8 and 9 (1B) would better support student success and operational sustainability.

What will change:

- The school is shifting from an early broad middle school model to a more concentrated upper-middle and high school transition model.
- Planning, programming, and staffing will center around building a cohesive experience between 8th and 9th grade rather than stretching resources across younger middle grades.
- Enrollment strategies and marketing have been refined to focus on 8th and 9th grade families, aligning with demonstrated demand.

How the school will ensure effective implementation:

- **Hiring practices** have been adjusted to recruit staff with experience and expertise in grades 8 - 9. Teachers and support staff are being selected for their ability to support early adolescent transitions and foster strong academic growth and school culture.
- **Instructional planning** emphasizes vertical alignment between 8th and 9th grade, ensuring readiness for high school-level work and coherence in expectations and support.
- **Facilities usage** has been designed specifically to support older students, allowing for age-appropriate environments and space allocation.
- **Operational plans**, including budgets, staffing models, and student supports, have been updated to reflect the adjusted enrollment pattern.
- **Ongoing monitoring** of student outcomes, family engagement, and school operations will guide continuous improvement and ensure alignment with the school's mission.

This revised approach reflects a best-practice orientation toward phased growth, sustainable operations, and a strong launch experience for students and families.

5. **Documentation**

- a. The amendment is approved by the charter school governing board (meeting agenda and minutes reflecting approval of the amendment request - attachment labeled ***GBAmendment Approval***)

- b. A public meeting with stakeholders addressing the proposed change/s to the charter contract (attachment labeled **PMAmendment**). Note that a designated public comment specific to the amendment on the governing board agenda may fulfill the public meeting requirement. Include names and roles of each individual that participated in public comment and a summary of their input.

The school is still in pre-opening and this is a modification ahead of the first board meeting. Please see the OEN - Des Moines Prep Articles of Amendment FILED STAMPED documentation for the name change.

Updated Enrollment Chart - Des Moines Prep

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Grade 6	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 50 Max: 125	Min: 0 Planned: 50 Max: 125
Grade 7	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 125	Min: 0 Planned: 50 Max: 125
Grade 8	Min: 25 Planned: 30 Max: 100	Min: 25 Planned: 55 Max: 100	Min: 25 Planned: 30 Max: 100	Min: 25 Planned: 30 Max: 150	Min: 25 Planned: 30 Max: 150
Grade 9	Min: 25 Planned: 100 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 150 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 175 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 180 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 180 Max: 200
Grade 10	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 25 Planned: 115 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 140 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 165 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 175 Max: 200
Grade 11	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 25 Planned: 105 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 130 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 155 Max: 200
Grade 12	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 0 Planned: 0 Max: 0	Min: 25 Planned: 100 Max: 200	Min: 25 Planned: 125 Max: 200

IOWA

No: W01404003
Date: 04/01/2025

SECRETARY OF STATE

504RDN-775702
OEN - DES MOINES PREP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF DOCUMENT FILED

The Secretary of State acknowledges receipt of the following document:

Articles of Amendment

The document was filed on Mar 25 2025 9:26AM, to be effective as of Mar 25 2025 9:26AM.

The amount of \$10.00 was received in full payment of the filing fee.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Pate".

PAUL D. PATE SECRETARY OF STATE



Printed on
Recycled Paper

775702

ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT
OF
QUEST FORWARD CHARTER SCHOOL – DES MOINES

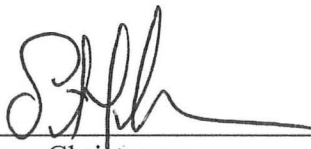
Pursuant to Revised Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act §504.1005, the undersigned corporation submits for filing the following articles of amendment to its articles of incorporation:

1. The name of the corporation is Quest Forward Charter School – Des Moines (the “Corporation”).
2. The first article of the articles of incorporation is hereby amended and restated as follows:

FIRST: Name. The name of this corporation is OEN – Des Moines Prep (“Corporation”).

3. The amendment was adopted on March 18, 2025.
4. The Corporation does not have members and member approval was not required.
5. The amendment was adopted by the board of directors of the Corporation in accordance with Iowa Code §504.1001-1004 and with the consent of QFCS LLC, as required by the Corporation’s bylaws.

QUEST FORWARD CHARTER SCHOOL – DES
MOINES

By: 
Steve Christensen
Secretary and General Counsel

Person to contact about this filing:

Steve Christensen

Daytime Telephone:

303-962-0025

FILED
IOWA
SECRETARY OF STATE

3-25-25

9:26 AM

W01404003

2025 MAR 25 AM 9:26

1143417 AMEN \$10.00 KATHY 2 36125