

Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

March 13, 2026

Agenda Item: Charter School Contract Amendment Request – Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South

State Board Goal: Goal 5

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

Presenter(s): Tom Bredfield, Education Program Consultant
Bureau of School Improvement

Cris Gulacy-Worrel, Vice President
Oakmont Education

Jerry Farley, Vice President, Career Technical Education
Oakmont Education

Kris Byam, Executive Director – Iowa
Oakmont Education

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve the amendment request for Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South.

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 Iowa Code sections 256E.9 and 256E.10 and the other rights and duties of the parties of Iowa Code subsection 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.

Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South has submitted contract amendment language, rationale, desired outcome and a plan for formal governing board action once the campus enters operational phase.

Iowa Charter School Amendment Request Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines - South

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.

1. Requested Amendment

A. Cite existing contract language to be amended.	B. Provide specific proposed amended language.
<p>The current charter contract includes multiple references indicating that Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South campus will open for operation in the 2026–2027 academic year. These references appear throughout the contract and associated exhibits for the approved opening year, implementation timeline and campus launch.</p>	<p>Revise all applicable sections of the charter contract and associated exhibits that reference a 2026–2027 opening to instead reflect that the Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South campus will open for operation in the 2027–2028 academic year. No other elements of the approved charter, including the educational program, mission or enrollment model, are proposed to change.</p>

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

As Great Oaks High School and Career Center advances its expansion efforts, the organization has identified that the Davenport campus launch requires substantially more time, resources and technical coordination than originally projected.

Specifically, facility modifications related to storm shelter and safety requirements have proven to be more intensive than anticipated. Ensuring full compliance with these requirements is essential to student safety and community trust and demands focused attention and capacity.

By deferring the opening of Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South campus by one-year, Great Oaks High School and Career Center can concentrate organizational, operational and financial resources on successfully launching the Davenport campus, while preserving the quality, compliance and student-centered design that define the Great Oaks High School and Career Center model.

This adjustment allows Great Oaks High School and Career Center to proceed thoughtfully and responsibly, rather than overextending capacity across multiple simultaneous launches.

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

The desired outcome of this amendment is to:

- Successfully launch the Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Davenport campus with full compliance, safety and instructional integrity
- Ensure that the Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South campus opens in 2027 with the same high standards of quality, readiness and community alignment

- Maintain strong operational stability and long-term sustainability across all Great Oaks High School and Career Center campuses
- Continue expanding high-quality educational access for at-promise students across Iowa without compromising program fidelity

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?

Previously, the charter timeline assumed that multiple campus launches could proceed concurrently without significant facility or compliance-related delays.

Moving forward, Great Oaks High School and Career Center will:

- Sequence campus openings to align with realistic facility readiness, regulatory requirements and staffing capacity
- Conduct more detailed pre-launch facility and compliance assessments earlier in the planning process
- Allocate dedicated leadership and operational resources to each campus launch to ensure fidelity to the Great Oaks High School and Career Center instructional and student support model

This revised approach will support effective implementation of the amended timeline and strengthen long-term outcomes for students, staff and community partners.

5. **Documentation**

- a. The amendment is approved by the charter school governing board (meeting agenda and minutes reflecting approval of the amendment request).
- b. A public meeting with stakeholders addressing the proposed change/s to the charter contract. 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.

A. Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South campus remains in a pre-operational phase. This amendment reflects a timeline adjustment prior to the establishment of campus-specific governance and prior to enrollment, staffing or operational launch.

The amendment request is being submitted by Great Oaks High School and Career Center as the authorized charter holder to ensure alignment between the approved charter contract and the school's implementation timeline. Formal governing board action related to Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South campus will occur once the campus enters its operational phase.

B. Because Great Oaks High School and Career Center – Des Moines – South campus has not yet opened and no students, families or staff are currently enrolled or employed, a public meeting specific to this amendment was not held.

This amendment represents a deferral of the opening timeline only and does not alter the approved educational program, enrollment model or mission of the school. Great Oaks High School and Career Center remains committed to transparency and will continue to communicate with the Iowa Department of Education and relevant stakeholders as planning progresses toward a 2027 opening.