

# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

June 18, 2026

**Agenda Item:** Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids Amendment

**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):** None (Consent Agenda)

**Attachment(s):** One

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board approve the amendment request for Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids.

**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.

Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids has submitted contract amendment language, rationale, desired outcome and evidence of a public meeting.

# Iowa Charter School Amendment Request Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids

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>Multiple sections throughout the contract reference a fall 2026 opening that will need to be updated to a fall 2027 opening. These sections include:</p> <p><b>2.3 – Opening Date:</b> "For purposes of this Contract, the opening date of the School shall be the 2026-2027 school year."</p> <p><b>7.7 – School Year, School Days and Hours of Operation:</b> "Instruction shall commence in the 2026-2027 school year and subsequent school years on dates established by the School, provided that the beginning date of instruction shall be no earlier than August 1 and no later than September 15 of each school year"</p>	<p>Multiple sections throughout the contract reference a fall 2026 opening that will need to be updated to a fall 2027 opening. The updated sections should read:</p> <p><b>2.3 – Opening Date:</b> "For purposes of this Contract, the opening date of the School shall be the 2027-2028 school year."</p> <p><b>7.7 – School Year, School Days and Hours of Operation:</b> "Instruction shall commence in the 2027-2028 school year and subsequent school years on dates established by the School, provided that the beginning date of instruction shall be no earlier than August 1 and no later than September 15 of each school year."</p>

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

Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids (HSA Cedar Rapids) respectfully requests an amendment to its charter contract to delay the school's opening from the 2026-2027 school year to the 2027-2028 school year.

Following charter approval, HSA Cedar Rapids worked diligently to secure a facility and satisfy all pre-opening requirements. The school entered into a Letter of Intent with Radiant Church and pursued facility planning, enrollment, staffing, permitting and operational readiness activities for a fall 2026 opening. However, on June 2, 2026, Radiant Church notified Concept Schools that it would not proceed with a lease agreement and requested termination of the previously executed Letter of Intent.

As a result, HSA Cedar Rapids no longer has a viable facility for the 2026-2027 school year. While Concept Schools remains fully committed to establishing HSA Cedar Rapids, opening without a suitable long-term facility would not be in the best interest of students, families or the state of Iowa.

The requested amendment will provide sufficient time to identify and secure an appropriate facility, complete any required planning and permitting activities, continue community engagement and enrollment development efforts and ensure the school opens successfully and sustainably in August 2027.

The proposed amendment does not alter the school's mission, educational program, governance structure, service area or commitment to serving Cedar Rapid's families. The amendment only adjusts the timeline for implementation.

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

Approval of this amendment will allow HSA Cedar Rapids to maintain its charter authorization while extending the planning and implementation period through the 2026-2027 school year.

This additional planning year will enable the school to secure a suitable facility, continue community outreach and enrollment efforts, finalize operational readiness activities and open a high-quality public charter school serving Cedar Rapids students beginning in the 2027-2028 school year.

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 circumstances necessitating this amendment are the result of an unforeseen facility development and not a change in the school's mission, capacity or commitment to opening.

During the additional planning year, Concept Schools and the HSA Cedar Rapids Governing Board will:

- Identify and secure a permanent or long-term facility within the Cedar Rapids metropolitan area.
- Continue engagement with families, community organizations, local leaders and potential partners.
- Maintain compliance with all authorizer reporting and governance requirements.
- Continue staffing, operational and financial planning activities aligned with a fall 2027 opening.
- Work collaboratively with the Iowa Department of Education to ensure all pre-opening conditions are satisfied prior to the revised opening date.

These actions will position HSA Cedar Rapids for a successful launch in fall 2027 and long-term sustainability while preserving the intent and objectives of the approved charter application.

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.

The HSA Cedar Rapids Governing Board discussed and approved an amendment to its charter contract to delay the school's opening from the 2026-2027 school year to the 2027-2028 school year at an emergency board meeting on June 3, 2026.

Supporting materials included with this submission:

[GBAmendment Approval](#)

[PMAmendment](#)