# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

**October 15, 2026**

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| **Agenda Item:** | Charter Response Overview |
| **State Board Goal:** | Goal 5 |
| **State Board Role/Authority:** | Per Iowa Code subsection 256E.1(4) and Iowa Code section 256E.10, the State Board is a charter school authorizer that monitors performance and compliance and decides on contract renewal (up to five years). |
| **Presenter(s):** | Barbara Ohlund, Program Manager 4<br>Division of PK-12 Learning |
| **Attachment(s):** | One |
| **Recommendation:** | It is recommended that the State Board hear and discuss this information. |
| **Background:** | The State Board shall monitor the performance and compliance of each charter school including collecting and analyzing data according to the charter school contract. The Department has developed the renewal process and performance assessment to provide a consistent, evidence-based approach for evaluating charter school performance. |

# Charter Response Overview

**Presented to the Iowa State Board of Education**
**October 15, 2026**

IOWA Department of Education

# Overview

1. Renewal Process
2. Technical Assistance
3. State Board Authority

# 1. Renewal Process

| March | April | May-June [June 30] | July-August [August 30] | Sept-October [October 1] | Nov-December [December 1] |
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| **Step 1: Performance Assessment** | **Step 2: Site Visit** | **Step 3: Renewal Performance Report** | **Step 4: Charter Response** | **Step 5: Charter Renewal Application** | **Step 6: State Board Decision** |
| ***Purpose***: Evaluate the school's academic, operational and financial performance to identify strengths, concerns, and areas for improvement that inform renewal decisions.<br><br>***Activities***: Collect and analyze performance assessment data to inform site visit questions and each school's Renewal Performance Report issued by the State Board. | ***Purpose:*** Gather qualitative evidence and assess how the school implements its mission and operations in practice.<br><br>***Activities***: Conduct site visits for schools up for renewal, including observations, focus groups, interviews and document reviews to inform each school's Renewal Performance Report issued by the State Board. | ***Purpose:*** Synthesize performance assessment data and site visit findings into a clear review of strengths, concerns and key evidence for renewal decision-making.<br><br>***Activities***: Review and approve each school's Renewal Performance Report issued by the State Board. | ***Purpose:*** Require the school to submit a written response addressing its individual Renewal Performance Report issued by the State Board.<br><br>***Activities***: Complete the Charter School Response within the Charter School Annual Report due October 1. | ***Purpose:*** Require the school to submit a renewal application that includes its response to the individual Renewal Performance Report issued by the State Board.<br><br>***Activities***: Complete and submit the Charter School Annual Report, including the embedded response to the Renewal Performance Report issued by the State Board. | ***Purpose:*** Determine whether to renew, renew with corrective action or revoke the charter contract based on the evidence presented.<br><br>***Activities***: Review Charter School Renewal Applications to inform final renewal decisions. |

**Charter schools approved for renewal submit contracts for review and approval at the February State Board Meeting for final signature.*

# 1. Renewal Process: Report and Response

## Report

- Annually, the State Board provides renewal performance reports based on the performance framework within each charter contract to all charter schools up for renewal.
- The purpose of the report is to synthesize performance assessment data and site visit findings into a clear review of strengths, concerns and key evidence for renewal decision-making.
- Providing the report in June prior to the October renewal application deadline offers charters feedback on what might need to be addressed to increase their chances of renewal at the November State Board meeting.

## Response

All renewal charters may:

- Respond to the report by August 30.
- Present responses to the State Board in October.

# 2. Technical Assistance

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| **March** | Provided webinars and ongoing individual renewal charter readiness meetings for site visits. |
| **April** | Implemented individual renewal charter site visits in partnership with renewal charter schools and the site visit team. |
| **May 26-27** | Provided Final Report Reviews to each renewal charter school, as well as an overview of the June State Board structure. |
| **June 26** | Submitted Final Report to each renewal charter school. |
| **July-August** | Provided individualized support to renewal charter schools regarding optional charter response. |

# 3. State Board Authority: Charter Responses

Considers charter school responses to the June Renewal Performance Report:

- Determine any revisions needed to the report as indicated by the school's response.
- All State Board-approved revisions will be presented at the November Board meeting as part of renewal presentations and final decisions.

# 3. State Board Authority: Renewal Process

## Review

- Evidence-based review, aligned to Iowa Code section 256E.10(8-10).
- Grounded in charter performance frameworks and renewal application materials.

## Decisions

- Final authority to approve, approve with conditions, or deny charter renewal by State Board resolution for terms up to five years, based on performance and compliance.
- Provides an expedited renewal pathway for eligible high-performing schools meeting statutory criteria and compliance requirements.

**Note: The State Board may revoke or decline renewal at any time for material violations, inadequate performance, fiscal mismanagement or legal noncompliance*