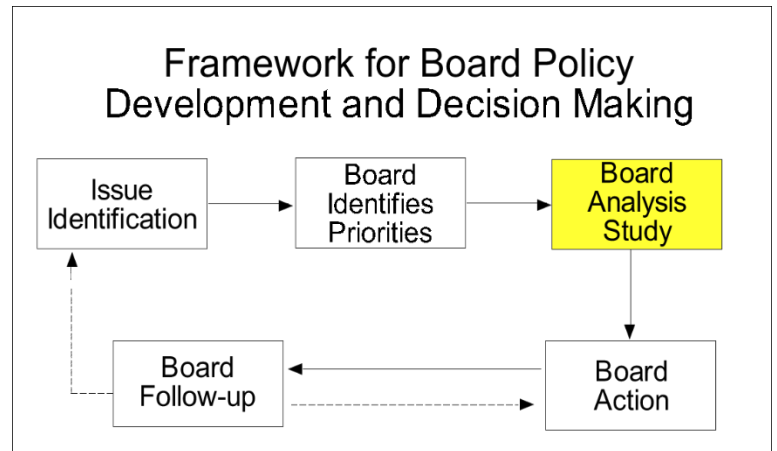


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

March 21, 2024



Agenda Item: Charter School Monitoring Update

State Board Priority: All

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Administrative Code 256E.10 requires the State Board to monitor the performance and compliance of each charter school. Monthly updates will support the State Board to follow charter progress.

Presenter(s): Tina Wahlert, Chief
Bureau of School Improvement

Barbara Ohlund, Executive Officer 4
Division of PK-12 Learning

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended the State Board review and discuss the information in the attached report.

Background: The State Board approved eight new charter schools in FFY 2023 under Iowa Administrative Code 256.E. Monthly updates provide charter implementation status for the State Board's ongoing study of charter progress.

Charter School Pre-Opening Checklist

Overview

Each Charter School is required to develop and implement a *Pre-Opening Checklist*. This checklist sets out tasks that focus efforts around effective and responsible management of school operations, and enables Charter Schools to ensure general compliance to applicable state and federal laws and regulations. The status of the *Pre-Opening Checklist* indicates the readiness of any given Charter to open for instruction. The Department of Education organizes this checklist into eight categories:

1. **Enrollment & Admissions**, which is focused on items related to recruitment of students, making target enrollment numbers, admissions policies, and so on;
2. **Governance**, that ensures a qualified board is in place, along with by-laws and at least a first meeting held;
3. **Educational Programming**, which is about establishing a school calendar that and complies with statutory and authorizer- specific requirements;
4. **Staffing**, which is focused on hiring all qualified and licensed administrators and staff needed to open for instruction, complete with background checks and checking licensure across staff;
5. **Budget and Finances** that is focused on ensuring all aspects of the budgets and finances are in place to effectively run the Charter;
6. **Facilities**, to ensure that facilities are secured, the space meets code requirements, there is a certificate of occupancy, that a safety and emergency plan is on file, so on;
7. **Other**, which is largely items across transportation, food services, insurance and making sure the final official contract is on file at the Department; and
8. **Department of Education Next Steps** that are specific to setting up the needed infrastructure for Charters, such as sending the Student Information System (SIS) to the Department, obtaining non-profit status for the National School Lunch Program, getting an A & A account and so on.

Status

There are two newly approved Charter Schools that will open Fall 2024: *Great Oaks* and *Empowering Excellence*.

- **Great Oaks** is in progress of completing their *Pre-Opening Checklist*. For this reporting period, Great Oaks is **on track** to open Fall 2024.
- **Empowering Excellence** is in progress of completing their *Pre-Opening Checklist*. For this reporting period, Empowering Excellence is **on track** to open fall 2024.

*Note: The remaining newly approved Charters will open Fall 2025