

**TITLE 777. STATEWIDE VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD
CHAPTER 10. STATEWIDE VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOLS**

SUBCHAPTER 3. STATEWIDE VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP

777:10-3-1. Purpose

The rules in this subchapter set forth procedures for authorization and sponsorship of statewide virtual charter schools and requirements for contracts for sponsorship of statewide virtual charter schools, including procedures for renewal and termination of contracts for sponsorship of statewide virtual charter schools.

777:10-3-3. Applications to sponsor statewide virtual charter schools; renewal and termination of contracts for sponsorship of statewide virtual charter schools.

(a) Sponsorship application cycle and timelines. To ensure that timely processing, review, and consideration of applications for sponsorship occurs within the time periods specified by 70 O.S. § 3-134, and to ensure that the application process is completed with sufficient time for new schools to comply with all statutory reporting requirements for the beginning of the next school year, (e.g., statutory state finance reporting deadlines for state aid purposes) the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board shall establish a schedule for each year's application cycle for charter school sponsorship requests. No later than September 1 of each school year, the Board shall approve a timeline for the application cycle for the following school year that sets forth deadlines for each of the following events:

- (1) Completion of charter school training required by 70 O.S. § 3-134(A);
- (2) Submission of a letter of intent to submit an application;
- (3) Submission of a full application for statewide virtual charter school sponsorship;
- (4) Public presentation of application/proposal for sponsorship;
- (5) Review of application and recommendation by State Department of Education staff;
- (6) Statewide Virtual Charter School Board decision on application for sponsorship;
- (7) Submission of an amended application;
- (8) Board decision on amended application; and
- (9) Negotiation and execution of a contract for sponsorship;

(b) Sponsorship application requirements. In addition to the requirements of 70 O.S. § 3-134, new applications to the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board for sponsorship of a statewide virtual charter school must include the following information in the sponsorship proposal:

- (1) For initial consideration for sponsorship, every applicant shall submit a set of policies and procedures governing administration and operation of the proposed statewide virtual charter school. The policies and procedures governing administration and operation of the proposed statewide virtual charter school shall be incorporated into the terms of the application of the virtual charter school;
- (2) Each applicant shall provide documentation of its school's ability to meet each of the following requirements specific to the virtual delivery of education services:
 - (A) That each statewide virtual charter school is adequately prepared to deliver services to all enrolled students on the school's first day of operation and for all required instructional hours for every school year through a stable virtual platform;

(B) That each statewide virtual charter school has consistent procedures in place governing admission, transfers, enrollment, and withdrawal of students;

(C) That each statewide virtual charter school has consistent procedures in place governing the evaluation and identification of students with disabilities, as well as applicable procedural safeguards, and policies and procedures to ensure provision of appropriate online and other services and technical support in the least restrictive environment to students with disabilities and/or other special needs by each virtual charter school provider, including:

(i) Students who require or may require individualized education programs pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);

(ii) Students who require accommodations under a plan developed in accordance with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

(iii) Students who are English Language Learners; and

(iv) Students who are gifted and talented;

(D) That each statewide virtual charter school complies with state and federal law in protection and handling of student records and data, including, but not limited to, protocols for secure storage and transmission of student data;

(E) That each statewide virtual charter school has consistent procedures and technology in place necessary to monitor and report student attendance, student participation in online school activities, and any necessary instruction in accordance with the requirements of state law;

(F) That each statewide virtual charter school has fair and consistent procedures in place to implement necessary and appropriate practices to promote student discipline that include sufficient due process protections for students facing accusations of conduct which may result in suspension and/or expulsion of a student;

(I) That each statewide virtual charter school has consistent procedures and technology in place to ensure delivery of services and that each virtual charter school provider has an adequate plan in place for communicating emergency procedures to students in the event of technical failures of equipment and/or loss of connectivity as a result of weather conditions;

(J) That each statewide virtual charter school has consistent procedures and technology in place to ensure consistent and adequate communication with parents/guardians of students and provide student progress and academic reports to parents/guardians of students; and

(K) That each statewide virtual charter school has provided a full description and explanation of the grade levels in which the provider intends to provide instruction and has sufficient resources to comply with the requirements of 70 O.S. § 11-103.6 and accompanying regulations.

(3) Each applicant shall provide a written plan for compliance with all state and federal financial recording and reporting requirements for state and federal funds that are applicable to public school districts, including, but not limited to compliance with:

(A) The School District Transparency Act at 70 O.S. § 5-135.4 et seq.;

(B) The Oklahoma Public School Audit Law at 70 O.S. §22-101 et seq.;

(C) Annual itemized expenditure budget and request for appropriated funds and estimate of revenues required by 70 O.S. § 5-128.1; and

(D) Statutes and regulations pertaining to the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS).

(4) Each application shall include a contact name, mailing address of record, phone number, and email address of the governing body at which all written notices required by 70 O.S. § 3-134 shall be served. In the event of a change in contact information occurs during the application process, the Board shall provide the Secretary of the Board with updated contact information in writing within five (5) business days of the date that the change occurs.

(c) Filing, review, approval, and denial of charter school applications for sponsorship. All applications for sponsorship shall be submitted by the governing body of the prospective charter school to the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board by filing three (3) copies of the application with the Secretary of the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board. Upon receipt of an application for sponsorship, the Secretary shall stamp the application to record the date of receipt, and shall promptly submit written confirmation of the receipt of the application to the contact name and address of record of the governing body listed on the application. In addition, the Secretary shall forward a copy to the State Department of Education Executive Director of School Choice for review and recommendation in accordance with the deadlines established pursuant to (a) of this Section.

(1) Application review and criteria. In reviewing an application for sponsorship of a statewide virtual charter school, the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board shall determine whether the applicant's proposal for sponsorship complies with the provisions of 70 O.S. § 3-134 and other applicable provisions of the Oklahoma Charter Schools Act. In addition, the Board may consider any other factors demonstrating the applicant's capacity to successfully comply with the goals set forth in its mission statement and applicable state, federal, tribal and/or local statutes and regulations. Such factors may include, but are not limited to the following:

(A) Whether the applicant can demonstrate previous experience in operation of one or more virtual charter schools;

(i) If the applicant cannot demonstrate previous experience in operation of one or more virtual charter schools, whether applicant has sufficient resources in place to ensure compliance with applicable state, federal, tribal and/or local statutes and regulations;

(ii) If the applicant can demonstrate previous experience in operation of a virtual charter school, whether applicant has a history of non-compliance with applicable state, federal, tribal and/or local statutes and regulations either in the State of Oklahoma or in other jurisdictions;

(B) Whether the applicant has provided evidence demonstrating financial stability;

(C) Whether the criteria designed to measure the effectiveness of the charter school proposed by the applicant is reasonably calculated to provide accurate benchmarks for evaluation of teacher effectiveness and student learning; and

(D) Whether the charter school has adequate human resources, facilities, systems, and structures in place as necessary to evaluate the needs of and provide services to students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and gifted and talented students.

(2) Acceptance or denial of sponsorship applications. The Statewide Virtual Charter School Board shall review and consider the application in accordance with the timeline established pursuant to (a) of this Section, provided that a final decision on the application shall be made no later than ninety (90) calendar days from the date of receipt of the

application by the Secretary of the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board. The Secretary of the Board shall promptly submit written notification of the decision of the Board to the applicant via certified mail, return receipt requested, to the contact and address of record of the governing body designated on the application.

(3) **Reconsideration of sponsorship applications.** In the event of a denial of an application for sponsorship, the applicant may submit a revised application for reconsideration in accordance with the following procedures:

(A) The application for reconsideration shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board within thirty (30) calendar days after the date of receiving notification of the rejection. The revised application shall meet all of the application requirements set forth in (b) and (c)(1) of this Section. In the event that delivery of written notification required by (2) of this subsection is refused by the applicant or returned as undeliverable due to the applicant's failure to update the contact of record in accordance with the requirements of (b)(4) of this Section, the date of receipt of notification of the rejection shall be considered the date of the meeting at which the Board took action on the proposed application.

(B) Within five (5) business days of the date of receipt of the application for reconsideration, the Secretary shall promptly set the application for consideration at a meeting of the Board and submit notification of the date, time, and place of the meeting to the applicant to the contact of record. The meeting to consider the application shall occur within thirty (30) days of the date of receipt of the application.

(C) The Statewide Virtual Charter School shall take action to accept or reject the revised application within thirty (30) days of its receipt by the Secretary of the Board.

(4) **Appeal of denial of sponsorship applications.** In the event that the governing body of the charter school elects to appeal the decision of the Board to deny the application for sponsorship in accordance with the provisions of 70 O.S. § 3-145.3, a notice of intent to appeal the decision shall be filed with the Secretary of the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board within thirty (30) days of the date of decision made by the Board. In addition, the procedures for filing appeals to the State Board of Education shall be governed by policies and rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

(d) **Requirements of the sponsorship contract.** Contracts for sponsorship between the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board and the governing body of a statewide virtual charter school shall include terms that meet all of the following requirements:

(1) The contract shall incorporate the provisions of the charter of the school in accordance with the requirements of 70 O.S. § 3-135, and the charter shall comply with the provisions of 70 O.S. § 3-136;

(2) The contract shall contain terms addressing all of the requirements set forth in 70 O.S. § 3-135;

(3) The contract shall contain terms setting forth measurable goals and objectives for student performance;

(4) The contract shall contain terms specifying standards for fiscal accounting and management that ensure the compliance of the charter school with all applicable provisions of state and federal statutes and regulations pertaining to requests for appropriations and recording and reporting receipt and expenditures of public funds, including, but not limited to:

- (A) Terms providing that the charter school shall conduct annual financial audits in accordance with the requirements of the Oklahoma Public School Audit Law;
- (B) Terms providing that the charter school shall comply with all State Department of Education deadlines necessary for budgeting, calculation of appropriations and/or disbursements of state aid and/or federal aid;
- (C) Terms providing that the charter school shall comply with all deadlines for recording and reporting of state aid revenue and expenditures;
- (D) Terms providing that the charter school shall comply with all requirements of the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS); and
- (E) Terms providing that the charter school shall comply with all provisions of the School District Transparency Act at 70 O.S. § 5-135.4 et seq.

(5) The policies and procedures governing administration and operation of the statewide virtual charter school shall be incorporated into the terms of the contract;

(6) The term of the contract shall be effective for no longer than five (5) years from the first day of operation in accordance with the provisions of 70 O.S. § 3-137;

(7) The term of the contract shall designate at least one contact name and address of record of the governing body of the charter school to which all notices required by the terms of the contract and/or this Section shall be served, including the name, title, mailing address, email address, and phone number of all individual(s) authorized to receive service of notices required by this Section and pursuant to the terms of the contract; and

(8) The contract shall contain any other terms necessary to ensure compliance with applicable provisions of state and/or federal law.

(e) **Renewals of contracts for sponsorship of statewide virtual charter schools.** Renewal of a contract with a statewide virtual charter school sponsored by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Oklahoma Charter Schools Act.

(1) **Requests for renewal of contract for sponsorship.** Requests for renewal of the contract for sponsorship shall be submitted by the governing body of the charter school in accordance with the following procedures:

(A) At least one (1) year prior to expiration of the initial contract term, but no earlier than eighteen (18) months prior to the date of expiration of the contract; the governing body of the charter school may submit a proposal for renewal of the contract to the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board by filing three (3) copies of the proposal with the Secretary of the Board.

(B) Within ten (10) calendar days of the date of receipt of the request for informal hearing, the Secretary shall schedule the request for renewal as an action item on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the Board, or at a subsequent meeting if the proposal for renewal is not received until after the agenda for the next meeting has already been set. The Secretary shall timely submit written notice of the date, time, and location of the meeting at which the proposal for renewal will be considered by regular mail to the governing body of the charter school at the address of record set forth in the sponsorship contract. In addition, the Secretary may send a courtesy copy of the notice by facsimile, and/or email.

(C) The Board shall review the proposal for renewal and take action on the request for renewal no later than eight (8) months prior to the date of expiration of the contract.

(D) The Board may base its decision to deny the charter school governing body's request for renewal upon any of the grounds for nonrenewal or termination set forth in 70 O.S. § 3-137 and/or (f)(1) of this Section.

(2) Notice of intent of non-renewal of contract for sponsorship. Notwithstanding the provisions of (1) of this subsection, the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board may elect to not renew a contract for sponsorship in accordance with the following procedures:

(A) No later than eight (8) months prior to the date of expiration of the contract. The Statewide Virtual Charter School Board shall submit written notice of its intent of non-renewal via certified mail, return receipt requested to the governing body of the charter school at the address of record set forth in the contract. The notice shall include:

(i) A statement of any and all factual and legal grounds upon which the Board's intent to non-renew the contract is based;

(ii) A statement of the date, time, and location of the meeting at which the Board intends to take action on the proposed non-renewal, which shall be held no earlier than thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the notice of intent to non-renew the contract is sent to the charter school.

(B) The Board may base its decision to non-renew the contract for sponsorship upon any of the grounds for nonrenewal or termination set forth in 70 O.S. § 3-137 and/or (f)(1) of this Section.

(C) In the event that the governing body of the charter school elects to appeal the decision of the Board to nonrenew the contract for sponsorship in accordance with the provisions of 70 O.S. § 3-145.3, a notice of intent to appeal the decision shall be filed with the Secretary of the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board within thirty (30) days of the date of decision made by the Board. In addition, the procedures for filing appeals to the State Board of Education shall be governed by policies and rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

(f) Terminations of contracts for sponsorship of statewide virtual charter schools. The Statewide Virtual Charter School Board may terminate the contract with a statewide virtual charter school in accordance with the following procedures:

(1) Grounds for termination of a contract for sponsorship: At any time during the term of the contract, the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board may terminate the contract on one or more of the following grounds:

(A) Failure to meet the requirements for student performance set forth in the terms of the contract;

(B) Failure to meet the standards of fiscal management set forth in the terms of the contract;

(C) Violations of applicable state, federal, tribal, or local laws, statutes, and/or regulations;

(D) Other good cause as established by the Board, which may include, but shall not be limited to:

(i) Failure by the governing body of the charter school, its charter school administrators, charter school personnel, and/or charter school contractors to meet reporting deadlines necessary for compliance with state or federal statutes or regulations;

- (ii) Failure by the governing body of the charter school, its charter school administrators, charter school personnel, and/or charter school contractors to accurately report student enrollment counts;
- (iii) Failure by the governing body of the charter school, its charter school administrators, charter school personnel, and/or charter school contractors to accurately report and/or classify student accountability data;
- (iv) Identification and/or designation of the charter school by the State Board of Education as consistently in need of improvement in accordance with subsection (g)(6) of Section 1003 of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), pursuant to 70 O.S. § 1210.544;
- (v) Any material breach of the terms set forth in the contract for sponsorship; and
- (vi) Any action or failure to act by the governing body of the charter school, its charter school administrators, charter school personnel, and/or charter school contractors that presents or results in an immediate and serious danger to the health, safety, and welfare of its students.

(2) **Notice of intent to terminate contract.** At least ninety (90) calendar days prior to termination of a contract for sponsorship of a statewide virtual charter school, the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board shall submit written notice of its intent to terminate the contract via certified mail, return receipt requested to the governing board of the charter school at the address of record set forth in the contract. The notice shall include:

(A) A statement of any and all factual and legal grounds upon which the Board's intent to terminate the contract is based;

(B) A statement of the date, time, and location of the meeting at which the Board intends to take final action on the proposed termination, which shall be held no earlier than forty-five (45) calendar days from the date of the notice of intent to terminate is mailed to the charter school; and

(C) A statement that the governing board of the school may request an informal hearing before the Board to present evidence in opposition to the proposed termination by delivering a written request to the Secretary of the Board within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of notice of the intent to terminate the contract that includes:

(i) A response to the factual and legal grounds for termination set forth in the notice; and

(ii) A summary of evidence that the school intends to submit in support of its response.

(D) Within ten (10) calendar days of the date of receipt of the request for informal hearing, the Secretary shall schedule an informal hearing and submit written notice of the date, time, and location of the hearing by regular mail to the charter school's address of record set forth in the sponsorship contract. The Secretary may send a courtesy copy of the notice by facsimile, and/or email.

(3) **Informal hearing on termination.** In the event that an informal hearing is requested pursuant to the provisions of (2)(D) of this subsection, the Secretary of the Board shall promptly schedule an informal hearing at which the statewide virtual charter school may present argument and/or evidence in opposition to the proposed termination. The Board shall prescribe the time allotted for oral argument and presentation of evidence. Upon completion of the hearing, the Board may consider the merits of the argument and presentation of evidence and take action on the proposed termination, or it may schedule action on the

proposed termination for a subsequent board meeting to provide the board with further opportunity for deliberation.

(4) **Appeals of termination.** In the event that the governing body of the charter school elects to appeal the decision of the Board to terminate the contract for sponsorship in accordance with the provisions of 70 O.S. § 3-145.3, a notice of intent to appeal the decision shall be filed with the Secretary of the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board within thirty (30) days of the date of decision made by the Board. In addition, the procedures for filing appeals to the State Board of Education shall be governed by policies and rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

(g) **Negotiation and execution of contracts for sponsorship.** To facilitate and/or expedite negotiations for new contracts for sponsorship, the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board may adopt a model contract for sponsorship of a statewide virtual charter school for use by the Board and potential statewide virtual charter schools sponsored by the Board. Adoption of a model contract shall not prohibit the Board from further negotiation of contract terms or addition of terms to the contract for sponsorship prior to execution of the contract so long as such terms are in compliance with applicable state, federal, local, and/or tribal law and the provisions of this Section.

(h) **Execution of the contract.** The final contract for sponsorship shall not be executed until approved by the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board at a regular or special meeting. The Board may delegate authority to the Chairman to execute the approved contract for sponsorship on behalf of the Board.