

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RULES GOVERNING LIMITED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS
October 12, 2009

1.00 Regulatory Authority

- 1.01 These rules shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Limited Public Charter Schools.
- 1.02 The State Board of Education enacted these rules pursuant to its authority under Arkansas Code Annotated §§6-11-105, 6-23-206, and 6-23-201 et seq.

2.00 Purpose of Regulations

- 2.01 The purposes of these rules are to implement §6-23-601, and to establish the requirements and procedures for the application of a limited public charter school and for monitoring a school once it has been granted a limited charter by the State Board of Education.

3.00 Definitions

For the purpose of these rules:

- 3.01 “Limited Public Charter School” is defined as a public school operating under the terms of a charter approved by the State Board of Education for the purposes of implementing an alternative comprehensive staffing and compensation program designed to enhance student and teacher performance and improve employee salaries, opportunities, and incentives.
- 3.02 “Application” is defined as the proposal for obtaining conversion public charter school status, open-enrollment public charter school status, or limited public charter school status presented to the State Board of Education requesting to enter into a charter that describes the school and provides all of the information required by law and the Arkansas Department of Education, in the form prescribed by the Charter School Office. The term application shall be synonymous with the term petition, and the terms are interchangeable throughout these rules. The application, in addition to any conditions or requirements agreed upon by the State Board, will serve as the terms and conditions of the charter.
- 3.03 “Letter of Intent” is defined as a written notice submitted to the Department of Education Charter School Office that a public school district intends to file a limited public charter school application. Such letter of intent shall be submitted on forms provided by the Department of Education.

4.00 Observance of Anti-Discrimination Laws

- 4.01 All limited charter schools shall observe and comply with all anti-discrimination laws, both federal and state.
- 4.02 For the purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and these rules, all limited public charter schools are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA are met.
- 4.03 For the purposes of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and these rules, all limited public charter schools are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of Section 504 are met.

5.00 Application Process, Schedule, Forms and Technical Assistance

- 5.01 A procedure for establishing a limited public charter school shall be published by the Department of Education, as approved by the State Board of Education. All dates and requirements in the procedures for establishing a limited public charter school shall be strictly followed by the charter applicant.
- 5.02 Application forms and other documents needed for the limited public charter school application process shall be provided by the Department of Education.
- 5.03 Any requests for technical assistance by a charter applicant shall be made to the Department of Education Charter School Office.

6.00 Limited Public Charter School – Application Approval Procedures

- 6.01 Each limited public charter applicant must submit, by certified mail on or before the established deadline, to the Department of Education Charter School Office a letter of intent signed by the school board president.
- 6.02 Each limited charter applicant shall prepare an application that describes the elements of the applicant's plan for establishing a limited public charter school. The application shall be on a form provided by the Department of Education. Technical assistance in preparing the application may be requested from the Department of Education Charter School Office.
- 6.03 The application shall be reviewed by the local board of the public school district as a regular agenda item at their local board meeting. The local board shall vote to approve or disapprove the application. If approved, the local board shall forward the application with sufficient written proof of the local boards' approval of the application to the State Board of Education.

7.00 Responsibilities of the State Board of Education – Limited Public Charter Schools

- 7.01 The State Board shall not approve a limited public charter school application that has not been approved by the district’s local board.
- 7.02 The Department of Education shall review the application and present to the State Board a written evaluation of the application. A copy of the evaluation shall be sent to the applicant. The applicant will be allowed to submit a written response to the evaluation by an established deadline. The applicant will not be allowed to supplement the original application with additional documents or new information prior to the State Board review.
- 7.03 The State Board shall review the applications for proposed limited public charter schools. The State Board shall vote whether or not to award charters to approved applications. The State Board may place conditions on the charters it awards.
- 7.04 The State Board of Education may defer the vote to approve or disapprove a limited charter application in order to allow a limited charter applicant to make modifications or receive technical assistance to correct deficiencies in the application.
- 7.05 The decision of the State Board of Education shall be final.

8.00 Content of Application and Charter

- 8.01 The limited public charter school application shall include, but is not limited to the following:
 - 8.01.01 identification of the rules and the provisions of Title 6 of the Arkansas Code, if any, to be waived, with rationale for waiver request as allowed by Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-601 (b) (1);
 - 8.01.02 description of a plan for school improvement that addresses how the school will improve student learning and meet the state education goals;
 - 8.01.03 description of how the certified employees at the limited public charter school will be involved developing and implementing the school improvement plan and in identifying performance criteria; and
 - 8.01.04 description of the performance criteria that will be used during the initial period of the charter to measure the progress of the limited

public charter school in improving student learning and meeting or exceeding the state education goals.

8.02 In addition to the requirements identified in section 8.01, an application for a limited public charter school shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

8.02.01 description of admission, enrollment criteria and student selection processes, including a provision for a random, anonymous student selection method if more eligible students apply for a first-time admission than the limited public charter school is able to accept, except as allowed for in Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-306;

8.02.02 a statement that the school district will not discriminate in admission on the basis of gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic or athletic eligibility, although the charter may provide for the exclusion of a student who has been expelled from another public school district;

8.02.03 A limited public charter school located in a school district under court ordered desegregation may use a weighted lottery in the student selection process in accordance with Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-306; and

8.02.04 a statement that the school district will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, or disability in employment decisions including hiring and retention of administrators, teachers, and other employees.

9.00 Enrollment

9.01 Enrollment for a limited public charter school will be determined in the manner similar to the enrollment procedures for the school district in which the limited public charter school is located.

9.02 If more eligible students apply for admission than the limited public charter school is able to accept, then the limited public charter school shall create an enrollment process based upon a random anonymous student selection method, except as allowed for in Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-306.

10.00 Funding

10.01 A limited public charter school shall receive funds equal to the amount apportioned by the district from state and local revenue per average daily membership.

- 10.02 The Department of Education shall establish procedures to ensure that every limited public charter school receives the Federal funds for which the limited public charter school is eligible.
- 10.03 The submission of an annual certified audit as required by Arkansas Code Annotated §6-23-101 et seq. shall be made according to Arkansas Law and to the Department of Education fiscal regulations and time lines. Failure to submit such audit in a timely manner would result in suspension of state aid payments until such audit is received by the Department of Education. The school's fiscal year shall run from July 1 through June 30.

11.00 Evaluation, Monitoring and Reporting Requirements of Limited Public Charter Schools

- 11.01 The Arkansas Department of Education shall conduct an annual evaluation of all limited public charter schools, which shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of the following:
- 11.01.01 student scores on assessment instruments; and
 - 11.01.02 other terms of the school's charter.
- 11.02 As a condition of its charter, each limited public charter school is required to provide an annual report to parents, the community, and the State Board that details its progress in meeting its academic performance objectives.
- 11.03 Each limited public charter school will participate in the Arkansas Public School Computer Network reporting requirements.
- 11.04 Each limited public charter school shall provide to the Department of Education the same data required of other public schools, unless such data requirement is waived by the terms of the charter.

12.00 Basis and Procedure for Charter Modification, or Limited Public Charter School Probation, Revocation, or Denial of Renewal.

- 12.01 The State Board may modify the charter of a limited public charter school or it may place a limited public charter school on probation or revoke its charter or deny renewal of its charter at any time the Board deems it necessary to do so.
- 12.02 The State Board shall notify the superintendent of the sponsoring school district of the alleged violation of the school's charter or of the offense in question. The notice shall include the State Board's proposed action. The notice shall be delivered by certified mail to the superintendent of the school district where the limited public charter school is located.

- 12.03 The superintendent of the school district where the limited public charter school is located, on behalf of the limited public charter school, may request, in writing, a hearing before the State Board.
- 12.04 The State Board shall hold a hearing, if requested, within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt of the hearing request.
- 12.05 The hearing shall be held at the facility at which the limited public charter school is located.
 - 12.05.01 Notice of the hearing shall be provided to the superintendent and the president of the local school board of the school district where the limited public charter school is located.
 - 12.05.02 The hearing shall be open to the public.
- 12.06 The decision of the State Board shall be final.

13.00 Impact on Desegregation Efforts

- 13.01 The petitioners of each application for a proposed limited public charter school must include a written evaluation describing the potential impact on the efforts of a public school district or districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools.
- 13.02 The local board shall also prepare a written evaluation of the potential impact the proposed limited public charter school will have on the efforts of the school district or districts to comply with court orders and statutory obligations to create and maintain a unitary system of desegregated public schools. This evaluation shall be forwarded to the State Board.
- 13.03 Each application for a proposed limited public charter school shall be examined for its effect on the minority and majority percentages of student enrollment in the public school districts within the limited public charter school's proposed population outreach.