



# REAUTHORIZATION

## Recognized Best Practices

### Regulatory Framework

Pursuant to the Revised School Code, the authorizer is not required to issue a contract to a charter public school as the decision “is solely within the discretion of the authorizing body.” Consequently, reauthorization of a charter contract is not required.

[MCL 380.503\(6\)](#) states, “A contract issued to organize and administer a public school academy shall contain at least all of the following: ... (h) The term of the contract and a description of the process and standards for renewal of the contract at the end of the term. The standards for renewal shall include increases in academic achievement for all groups of pupils as measured by assessments and other objective criteria as the most important factor in the decision of whether or not to renew the contract...”

### MCCSA Guiding Principles and Standards

MCCSA has adopted Principles and Standards (Standards) that guide members as they develop strong authorizing practices. Focusing on performance and accountability ensures that student success remains paramount to authorizing decisions. MCCSA Standards include Reauthorizing a Charter Public School and states “Excellence in authorizing means establishing and implementing a consistent and comprehensive charter reauthorization process, guided by the following core questions:

- Is the charter public school achieving its academic goals as stated in the charter contract?
- Is the charter public school organizationally, educationally, and financially viable?
- Is the charter public school demonstrating good faith compliance in following the terms of its charter contract and applicable law?

The authorizer shall base reauthorization decisions on the data and information gathered public school is not making adequate progress towards meeting its performance goals, as defined in the charter contract, the authorizer may decide not to renew the charter contract.”

### What is Reauthorization?

The reauthorization of the charter public school is a significant milestone in the life cycle of a charter public school. Reauthorization is the process that provides an opportunity for an authorizer to evaluate the performance of the charter public school against expectations required by applicable law and the charter contract and determine if a new charter contract will be offered. The evaluation of a charter public school focuses on answering the following questions:

- Is the charter public school achieving its academic goals as stated in the charter contract? All groups of pupils should be considered?
- Is the charter public school organizationally, educationally, and financially viable?
- Is the charter public school demonstrating good faith compliance in following the terms of its charter contract and applicable law?

The reauthorization process will likely involve site visits, data and information verification and review related to the performance of the charter public school. Once the decision to reauthorize a charter public school is made, the authorizer will work with the charter public school to create and execute a new charter contract. The authorizer will then submit the charter contract to the Michigan Department of Education.

## Why is Reauthorization important?

Reauthorization is important because it provides accountability. It is also the mechanism for the authorizer to comply with the renewal requirements in the law and allows the authorizer and charter public school to reflect upon the progress the charter public school is making. It provides the authorizer the opportunity to make an assessment as to whether a new contract will be provided.

Practically speaking, the charter contract is a fixed term contract with an ending date, therefore, a new contract must be issued for the charter public school to continue.

## What is the difference between Reauthorization and Contract Extension?

Reauthorization is the process that is legally required as explained above to assess the performance of a school and offer a new contract. A contract extension is an amendment to the term of the *existing contract*. A contract extension (change in length of term) may be used to provide an opportunity for the authorizer to collect additional data and information. The number of years of the term extension should be realistic (maximum 3 years) and only used once. After the extension, the authorizer would invoke the reauthorization process and determine if a new contract will be offered.

## Reauthorization Process Best Practices

Reauthorization is a process that starts the day a contract is signed. The authorizer will use data and information gathered through their oversight procedures to build evidence to support a charter public school contract reauthorization. The evidence may include but not be limited to:

- Review of Academic Performance Data
- Review of Board Governance Commitment and Compliance
- Review of Financial Viability
- Review of Operational Systems
- Site visits – Academic and Operational (Site and Facilities, Teacher and Staff Certification)
- Reauthorization Application submitted by the charter public school
- Assessment of Relationship with the Authorizer

## Reflective Questions

What is the objective of reauthorization?

When does a charter public school go through reauthorization and when does a charter contract amendment occur?

## Resources

[Reauthorization Process - Example 1](#)

[Reauthorization Process – Example 2](#)

[Reauthorization Timeline](#)