



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
 State Superintendent of Education

August 28, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EAM*
 State Superintendent of Education

RE: Conversion Charter School Process

The Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act allows conversion charter schools to be established in Alabama in accordance with the Act. The procedures for converting a non-charter school are outlined below:

Procedures for Converting a Non-Charter Public School into a Conversion Charter School

1. The Local School Board should apply to become a charter school authorizer with the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE).
2. Once approved, the Local School Board Authorizer should participate in the required annual training approved by the ALSDE.
3. The non-charter school or part of the school to be converted should be identified using the following information completed by the Local School Board Authorizer:
 - Community Engagement—Stakeholder Interest—Formation of Governing Board
 - Academic Performance Analysis
 - Financial Performance Analysis
 - Operational Performance Analysis
4. The Local School Board Authorizer should have a plan described in the request for proposal/application to be released by November 1.
5. The application can be completed by community stakeholders, the proposed governing board, and/or an approved charter operator.

Governing Board—An independent board of a proposed conversion charter school that will contract with the authorizer. Membership must have 20% as parents of students who will attend or have attended the non-charter school for one year. Other possible board members should include community members with expertise in education, finance, law, etc. A Local School Board Authorizer (board member) may also be selected to be on the conversion charter school’s governing board.

Charter Operator—An entity with which a Local School Board Authorizer has awarded a performance contract to oversee the implementation of any conversion charter school.

6. The proposed governing board should apply for 501(c)(3) status.

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7. The proposed governing board, the community stakeholders, and/or the charter operator should complete a charter school application describing the academic, financial, and operational plan for the school and submit it to the local education agency authorizer.
8. The Local School Board Authorizer or Contracted Charter Operator must release a request for proposal allowing education service providers an opportunity to apply for the selected non-charter school to be converted. If a qualified Education Service Provider applies and is approved using a rubric approved by the ALSDE, a performance contract is negotiated with the selected Education Service Provider.

Education Service Provider—An entity with which a public charter school, local board authorizer, or contracted charter operator intends to contract with for educational design, implementation, or comprehensive management.

9. The submitted applications for the selected non-charter school to be converted will be reviewed and evaluated by the Local School Board Authorizer using a process and rubric approved by the ALSDE.
10. The Local School Board Authorizer will contract with the Education Service Provider after an evaluation and review of submitted proposals using a rubric developed by the ALSDE.
11. After five years, if a Local School Board Authorizer chooses not to reapply for charter authority or its authorizer application is denied, any conversion charter schools will begin a transition period to revert to non-charter public schools.

If you have questions or want to learn more about the procedures for conversion charter schools, please contact Mrs. Logan Searcy by email at lsearcy@alsde.edu or by telephone at (334) 694-4908.

EGM/LWS

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