



Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools
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Ohio charter school sponsor accountability system

2011 – H.B. 153: Sponsor provisions established

H.B. 153, the state biennial budget bill passed by the 129th General Assembly in 2011, included provisions aimed at increasing charter school sponsor accountability by prohibiting sponsors (aka authorizers) from sponsoring additional schools if they: 1) are not in compliance with sponsor reporting requirements, or 2) are ranking in the lowest 20 percent on an annual ranking of sponsors based on composite performance index scores of schools in their portfolios.

2013 – H.B. 59: Ohio Dept. of Education’s authority over sponsors is expanded

H.B. 59, passed by the 130th General Assembly in 2013, extends the Ohio Department of Education’s (ODE) authority over sponsors. Under continuing law, if at any time the State Board finds that a sponsor is no longer willing or able to comply with its duties, the State Board or its designee must conduct an administrative hearing on the matter. If the finding is confirmed, the ODE may revoke the entity’s approval to be a sponsor and may assume sponsorship of the sponsor’s schools until the earlier of the expiration of two school years or until the school secures a new sponsor.

H.B. 59 extends to ODE the option to place a sponsor on probationary status and the option to limit the sponsor’s ability to sponsor additional schools, pending satisfactory remedies, rather than outright revoke that authority.

2015 – Sponsor Performance Review (SPR) goes into effect

Later recognizing that more than one metric (composite PI score) and one requirement (compliance with reporting requirements) should be used to assess sponsor performance, the 129th General Assembly passed H.B. 555 in December 2012. Effective January 1, 2015, the act substantially revised the sponsor accountability system and resulted in the development of the Sponsor Performance Review (SPR).

Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, three components of quality authorizing will be considered in assessing sponsor performance. Under the new system, each sponsor will receive an annual “rating” based on a combination of three components:

1. The academic performance of students enrolled in charter schools that are sponsored by the entity;
2. The sponsor’s adherence to quality practices, which must be specified by ODE; and,
3. The sponsor’s compliance with applicable laws and administrative rules as measured by standards adopted by rule of the State Board of Education.

The annual ranking of all Ohio sponsors based on composite performance index scores of sponsored schools (schools with which the governing board has entered into a contract with the sponsor) remains in place until the new system is fully implemented. Over the course of the last two years, ODE has assessed all sponsors on the compliance component of the SPR during an extensive pilot. Additionally, six sponsors have piloted the full review.

To develop the measurement of compliance and quality practices components, H.B. 555 required ODE, by March 31, 2013, to consult with charter school sponsors to prescribe the compliance and quality practices to which sponsors must adhere, develop an instrument to measure the adherence to those laws and rules, as well as quality practices, and publish the process and the instrument so that they are available to sponsors prior to implementation.

ODE has worked with various stakeholders – including the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (whose standards serve as the basis for the quality practices component of the SPR), the Ohio Association of Charter School Authorizers, the Charter Authorizer Collaborative and the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools to develop and pilot the rigorous compliance and quality practices components.

Based on all three of the components, sponsors will be rated as “exemplary,” “effective” or “ineffective,” except that all entities sponsoring charter schools for the first time may be assigned the rating of “emerging” for the first two consecutive years. Under current law, each component must be weighted equally when determining the overall rating and the ratings must be published by ODE between October 1 and October 15 of each calendar year.

Sponsors receiving a rating of “ineffective” are prohibited from sponsoring additional schools.

In anticipation of implementation of the new SPR, ODE and Ohio sponsor organizations are already making changes with respect to expectations and the renewal of agreements between ODE and various sponsors. This new assessment system will significantly improve Ohio sponsor performance.