

House Bill 279 - Streamlining the Charter School Petition Process

Over the past two decades, the state's process to open a new public charter school has become increasingly difficult to navigate. This bill would streamline the public charter school petition process to encourage efficiency, reduce bureaucracy, and provide predictability for schools and authorizers, without sacrificing the high standard of scrutiny for new petitions.

Key Provisions

1. Creates an application to open a new charter school so schools and authorizers have the same clear expectations.
2. Combines the State Department of Education's petition review with the authorizer's petition review.
3. Shortens the time districts may consider petitions before they're sent to the public charter school commission.
4. Provides a clear timeline for commission staff to review petitions and refer them to commissioners for determination.

Technical Questions

Q: What happened to all the language that is crossed out on pages 2 – 8?

A: Most has been moved, already exists elsewhere in code, or will be part of the application.

- The language relating to process has been replaced by new language on pages 8 – 9.
- The language relating to what is required in the content of the petition was either (i) a restatement of existing law already included elsewhere in statute, (ii) moved out of the petition section into a more appropriate section of the charter school statute, or (iii) replaced by the charter school application.
- For more information, please see the chart on the back of this page.

Q: What is new language?

A: Substantive changes are to the petition language on pages 8 and 9 and to the role of the State Department of Education on pages 14 and 15.

- Language pertaining to the petition process on page 8, ln. 26 through page 9, ln. 35.
- The term details have been changed for consistency with other dates page 10, ln. 37-39.
- Changes to the role of the State Department of Education on page 14, ln. 39 through page 15, ln. 18.

Q: Why is so much other language underlined?

A: It is existing language that has been moved out of the petition section and into a different section of the charter school statute.

- Page 9, ln. 36 through page 10, ln. 36 is existing language and is underlined only because it has been moved.
- Underlined language beginning on page 10, ln. 48 and added intermittently through page 14, ln. 36 is existing language that was in the petition section of the charter school statute, and has been copied exactly or only slightly rewritten and moved to a different section, with no change to substance.

Old I.C. § 33-5205 Petition sections

1(a)	PCSC - signed by 30 electors	Deleted at PCSC staff recommendation
	University authorizers limited to one per dist. per year	Deleted as irrelevant
	Universities - follow PCSC petition process	Changed to allow universities to set own process
(b)	District step	shortened in new I.C. 33-5205
(c)	Virtual & replication schools direct to PCSC	Same
(d)	District step	shortened in new I.C. 33-5205
(e)	Conversion schools	Same
2-2(e)	Hearing process	Substantially changed in 33-5205
3(a)	Educational program	Modified and included in 33-5205(a)
(b)	Educational standards	Modified and included in 33-5205(a)
(c)	Method for measuring standards	Modified and included in 33-5205(a)
(d)	Standardized tests	Added to 5206(13)
(e)	Accredited	Added to 5206(12) & 5210(4)
(f)	Governance	Modified and included in 33-5205(a)
(g)	Cert teachers	Added to 5206(3), (4) & 5210(4)
(h)	Health/safety (33-122)	Added to 5210(3)
(i)	Truancy, denial of attendance (33-205/6)	Added to 5210(3)
(j)	"compact and contiguous" attendance area	Added to 5206(1)
(k)	Admission procedures	Moved to 5206(11)
(l)	Audits	Already required in 5210 per ref. to 33-701 & in 5206(7)
(m)	Discipline/suspend (33-210)	Added to 5210(3)
(n)	PERSI, other benefits	Already in 5204
(o)	Conversion	Deleted as irrelevant
(p)	Transfer rights empl.	Already in 5206(2)
(q)	Collective bargaining	Moved to 5206(3)
(r)	Special Ed.	Added to 5206(1)
(s)	Dual enrollment (33-203)	Added to 5210(3)
(t)	advertising	Agreed to include in application
(u)	Transp. plan	Deleted; referenced in 5208
(v)	Termination plan	Already part of auth. job in 5212