

Introduced by Senator Cannella

February 15, 2013

An act to amend Section 47605 of the Education Code, relating to charter schools.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 302, as introduced, Cannella. Charter schools.

The Charter Schools Act of 1992 permits teachers and parents to petition the governing board of a school district to approve a charter school to operate independently from the existing school district structure as a method of accomplishing, among other things, improved pupil learning. Existing law establishes the procedures for the submission of a charter school petition to the governing board of a school district.

This bill would make various nonsubstantive changes to those provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 47605 of the Education Code is amended
2 to read:
3 47605. (a) (1) Except as set forth in paragraph (2), a petition
4 for the establishment of a charter school within a school district
5 may be circulated by one or more persons seeking to establish the
6 charter school. A petition for the establishment of a charter school
7 shall identify a single charter school that will operate within the
8 geographic boundaries of that school district. A charter school

1 may propose to operate at multiple sites within the school district,
2 as long as each location is identified in the charter school petition.
3 The petition may be submitted to the governing board of the school
4 district for review after either of the following conditions is met:

5 (A) The petition is signed by a number of parents or legal
6 guardians of pupils that is equivalent to at least one-half of the
7 number of pupils that the charter school estimates will enroll in
8 the school for its first year of operation.

9 (B) The petition is signed by a number of teachers that is
10 equivalent to at least one-half of the number of teachers that the
11 charter school estimates will be employed at the school during its
12 first year of operation.

13 (2) A petition that proposes to convert an existing public school
14 to a charter school that would not be eligible for a loan pursuant
15 to subdivision (b) of Section 41365 may be circulated by one or
16 more persons seeking to establish the charter school. The petition
17 may be submitted to the governing board of the school district for
18 review after the petition is signed by not less than 50 percent of
19 the permanent status teachers currently employed at the public
20 school to be converted.

21 (3) A petition shall include a prominent statement that a
22 signature on the petition means that the parent or legal guardian
23 is meaningfully interested in having his or her child or ward attend
24 the charter school, or in the case of a teacher's signature, means
25 that the teacher is meaningfully interested in teaching at the charter
26 school. The proposed charter shall be attached to the petition.

27 (4) After receiving approval of its petition, a charter school that
28 proposes to establish operations at one or more additional sites
29 shall request a material revision to its charter and shall notify the
30 authority that granted its charter of those additional locations. The
31 authority that granted its charter shall consider whether to approve
32 those additional locations at an open, public meeting. If the
33 additional locations are approved, they shall be a material revision
34 to the charter school's charter.

35 (5) A charter school that is unable to locate within the
36 jurisdiction of the chartering school district may establish one site
37 outside the boundaries of the school district, but within the county
38 in which that school district is located, if the school district within
39 the jurisdiction of which the charter school proposes to operate is
40 notified in advance of the charter petition approval, the county

1 superintendent of schools and the Superintendent are notified of
2 the location of the charter school before it commences operations,
3 and either of the following circumstances exists:

4 (A) The school has attempted to locate a single site or facility
5 to house the entire program, but a site or facility is unavailable in
6 the area in which the school chooses to locate.

7 (B) The site is needed for temporary use during a construction
8 or expansion project.

9 (6) Commencing January 1, 2003, a petition to establish a charter
10 school ~~may~~ *shall* not be approved to serve pupils in a grade level
11 that is not served by the school district of the governing board
12 considering the petition, unless the petition proposes to serve pupils
13 in all of the grade levels served by that school district.

14 (b) No later than 30 days after receiving a petition, in accordance
15 with subdivision (a), the governing board of the school district
16 shall hold a public hearing on the provisions of the charter, at
17 which time the governing board of the school district shall consider
18 the level of support for the petition by teachers employed by the
19 district, other employees of the district, and parents. Following
20 review of the petition and the public hearing, the governing board
21 of the school district shall either grant or deny the charter within
22 60 days of receipt of the petition, provided, however, that the date
23 may be extended by an additional 30 days if both parties agree to
24 the extension. In reviewing petitions for the establishment of
25 charter schools pursuant to this section, the chartering authority
26 shall be guided by the intent of the Legislature that charter schools
27 are and should become an integral part of the California educational
28 system and that establishment of charter schools should be
29 encouraged. The governing board of the school district shall grant
30 a charter for the operation of a school under this part if it is satisfied
31 that granting the charter is consistent with sound educational
32 practice. The governing board of the school district shall not deny
33 a petition for the establishment of a charter school unless it makes
34 written factual findings, specific to the particular petition, setting
35 forth specific facts to support one or more of the following
36 findings:

37 (1) The charter school presents an unsound educational program
38 for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school.

39 (2) The petitioners are demonstrably unlikely to successfully
40 implement the program set forth in the petition.

1 (3) The petition does not contain the number of signatures
2 required by subdivision (a).

3 (4) The petition does not contain an affirmation of each of the
4 conditions described in subdivision (d).

5 (5) The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive
6 descriptions of all of the following:

7 (A) (i) A description of the educational program of the school,
8 designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school
9 is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person”
10 in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals
11 identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling
12 pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.

13 (ii) If the proposed school will serve high school pupils, a
14 description of the manner in which the charter school will inform
15 parents about the transferability of courses to other public high
16 schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance
17 requirements. Courses offered by the charter school that are
18 accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges
19 may be considered transferable and courses approved by the
20 University of California or the California State University as
21 creditable under the “A” to “G” admissions criteria may be
22 considered to meet college entrance requirements.

23 (B) The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the
24 charter school. “Pupil outcomes,” for purposes of this part, means
25 the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they
26 have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals
27 in the school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include
28 outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement
29 both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter
30 school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph
31 (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607.

32 (C) The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil
33 outcomes is to be measured.

34 (D) The governance structure of the school, including, but not
35 limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure
36 parental involvement.

37 (E) The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed
38 by the school.

39 (F) The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the
40 health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include

1 the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school
2 with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237.

3 (G) The means by which the school will achieve a racial and
4 ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general
5 population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school
6 district to which the charter petition is submitted.

7 (H) Admission requirements, if applicable.

8 (I) The manner in which annual, independent financial audits
9 shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted
10 accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions
11 and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the
12 chartering authority.

13 (J) The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or
14 expelled.

15 (K) The manner by which staff members of the charter schools
16 will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the
17 Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security.

18 (L) The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing
19 within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools.

20 (M) A description of the rights of ~~any~~ *an* employee of the school
21 district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work
22 in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district
23 after employment at a charter school.

24 (N) The procedures to be followed by the charter school and
25 the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to
26 provisions of the charter.

27 (O) A declaration *of* whether or not the charter school shall be
28 deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of
29 the charter school for purposes of Chapter 10.7 (commencing with
30 Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

31 (P) A description of the procedures to be used if the charter
32 school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the
33 school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of
34 the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets
35 and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records.

36 (c) (1) Charter schools shall meet all statewide standards and
37 conduct the pupil assessments required pursuant to Sections 60605
38 and 60851 and any other statewide standards authorized in statute
39 or pupil assessments applicable to pupils in noncharter public
40 schools.

1 (2) Charter schools ~~shall~~, on a regular basis, *shall* consult with
2 ~~their~~ parents, legal guardians, and teachers *of pupils attending the*
3 *school* regarding the school's educational programs.

4 (d) (1) In addition to any other requirement imposed under this
5 part, a charter school shall be nonsectarian in its programs,
6 admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations,
7 shall not charge tuition, and shall not discriminate against ~~any a~~
8 pupil on the basis of the characteristics listed in Section 220. Except
9 as provided in paragraph (2), admission to a charter school shall
10 not be determined according to the place of residence of the pupil,
11 or of his or her parent or legal guardian, within this state, except
12 that an existing public school converting partially or entirely to a
13 charter school under this part shall adopt and maintain a policy
14 giving admission preference to pupils who reside within the former
15 attendance area of that public school.

16 (2) (A) A charter school shall admit all pupils who wish to
17 attend the school.

18 (B) If the number of pupils who wish to attend the charter school
19 exceeds the school's capacity, attendance, except for existing pupils
20 of the charter school, shall be determined by a public random
21 drawing. Preference shall be extended to pupils currently attending
22 the charter school and pupils who reside in the district except as
23 provided for in Section 47614.5. Other preferences may be
24 permitted by the chartering authority on an individual school basis
25 and only if consistent with the law.

26 (C) In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall
27 make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the charter
28 school and in no event shall take any action to impede the charter
29 school from expanding enrollment to meet pupil demand.

30 (3) If a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without
31 graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the charter
32 school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the
33 pupil's last known address within 30 days, and ~~shall~~, upon request,
34 *shall* provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative
35 record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card,
36 and health information. This paragraph applies only to pupils
37 subject to compulsory full-time education pursuant to Section
38 48200.

1 (e) The governing board of a school district shall not require
2 ~~any~~ *an* employee of the school district to be employed in a charter
3 school.

4 (f) The governing board of a school district shall not require
5 ~~any~~ *a* pupil enrolled in the school district to attend a charter school.

6 (g) The governing board of a school district shall require that
7 the petitioner or petitioners provide information regarding the
8 proposed operation and potential effects of the school, including,
9 but not limited to, the facilities to be used by the school, the manner
10 in which administrative services of the school are to be provided,
11 and potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and
12 upon the school district. The description of the facilities to be used
13 by the charter school shall specify where the school intends to
14 locate. The petitioner or petitioners ~~shall~~ also *shall* be required to
15 provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year
16 operational budget, including startup costs, and cashflow and
17 financial projections for the first three years of operation.

18 (h) In reviewing petitions for the establishment of charter
19 schools within the school district, the governing board of the school
20 district shall give preference to petitions that demonstrate the
21 capability to provide comprehensive learning experiences to pupils
22 identified by the petitioner or petitioners as academically low
23 achieving pursuant to the standards established by the department
24 under Section 54032, as it read before July 19, 2006.

25 (i) Upon the approval of the petition by the governing board of
26 the school district, the petitioner or petitioners shall provide written
27 notice of that approval, including a copy of the petition, to the
28 applicable county superintendent of schools, the department, and
29 the state board.

30 (j) (1) If the governing board of a school district denies a
31 petition, the petitioner may elect to submit the petition for the
32 establishment of a charter school to the county board of education.
33 The county board of education shall review the petition pursuant
34 to subdivision (b). If the petitioner elects to submit a petition for
35 establishment of a charter school to the county board of education
36 and the county board of education denies the petition, the petitioner
37 may file a petition for establishment of a charter school with the
38 state board, and the state board may approve the petition, in
39 accordance with subdivision (b). A charter school that receives
40 approval of its petition from a county board of education or from

1 the state board on appeal shall be subject to the same requirements
2 concerning geographic location to which it would otherwise be
3 subject if it received approval from the entity to which it originally
4 submitted its petition. A charter petition that is submitted to either
5 a county board of education or to the state board shall meet all
6 otherwise applicable petition requirements, including the
7 identification of the proposed site or sites where the charter school
8 will operate.

9 (2) In assuming its role as a chartering agency, the state board
10 shall develop criteria to be used for the review and approval of
11 charter school petitions presented to the state board. The criteria
12 shall address all elements required for charter approval, as
13 identified in subdivision (b) and shall define “reasonably
14 comprehensive” as used in paragraph (5) of subdivision (b) in a
15 way that is consistent with the intent of this part. Upon satisfactory
16 completion of the criteria, the state board shall adopt the criteria
17 on or before June 30, 2001.

18 (3) A charter school for which a charter is granted by either the
19 county board of education or the state board based on an appeal
20 pursuant to this subdivision shall qualify fully as a charter school
21 for all funding and other purposes of this part.

22 (4) If either the county board of education or the state board
23 fails to act on a petition within 120 days of receipt, the decision
24 of the governing board of the school district to deny a petition
25 shall, ~~thereafter,~~ be subject to judicial review.

26 (5) The state board shall adopt regulations implementing this
27 subdivision.

28 (6) Upon the approval of the petition by the county board of
29 education, the petitioner or petitioners shall provide written notice
30 of that approval, including a copy of the petition to the department
31 and the state board.

32 (k) (1) The state board ~~may,~~ by mutual agreement, *may*
33 designate its supervisory and oversight responsibilities for a
34 charter school approved by the state board to ~~any~~ a local
35 educational agency in the county in which the charter school is
36 located or to the governing board of the school district that first
37 denied the petition.

38 (2) The designated local educational agency shall have all
39 monitoring and supervising authority of a chartering agency,
40 including, but not limited to, powers and duties set forth in Section

1 47607, except the power of revocation, which shall remain with
2 the state board.

3 (3) A charter school that is granted its charter through an appeal
4 to the state board and elects to seek renewal of its charter shall,
5 before expiration of the charter, submit its petition for renewal to
6 the governing board of the school district that initially denied the
7 charter. If the governing board of the school district denies the
8 school's petition for renewal, the school may petition the state
9 board for renewal of its charter.

10 (l) Teachers in charter schools shall hold a Commission on
11 Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document
12 equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would
13 be required to hold. These documents shall be maintained on file
14 at the charter school and are subject to periodic inspection by the
15 chartering authority. It is the intent of the Legislature that charter
16 schools be given flexibility with regard to noncore, noncollege
17 preparatory courses.

18 (m) A charter school shall transmit a copy of its annual,
19 independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year, as
20 described in subparagraph (I) of paragraph (5) of subdivision (b),
21 to its chartering entity, the Controller, the county superintendent
22 of schools of the county in which the charter school is sited, unless
23 the county board of education of the county in which the charter
24 school is sited is the chartering entity, and the department by
25 December 15 of each year. This subdivision does not apply if the
26 audit of the charter school is encompassed in the audit of the
27 chartering entity pursuant to Section 41020.

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