

SAMPLE: REAUTHORIZATION LETTER

October 13, 2016

RE: <Authorizer> – Reauthorization Process

Dear Academy Board:

The Charter Contract (“Contract”) between <Academy Name> (“Academy”) and the <University Name> (“University”) Board of Trustees is set to expire on <Date>. The Center’s recommendation to the University Board is based on a holistic assessment of the Academy according to the terms and conditions of the Contract and will include a thorough review of the Academy’s performance, successes, and challenges. The University is committed to ensuring that the schools it authorizes are preparing students academically for success in college, work and life. The Academy’s future relationship with the University will be guided by the following three core questions:

Recaps the Exepectations

1. Is the academic program successful?
2. Is the organization viable?
3. Is the Academy demonstrating good faith in following the terms of its Contract and all applicable law?

Academic Performance Report

According to the Academy’s <School Year> Academic Performance Report, <Number>% of students enrolled three or more years achieved the college-readiness targets in reading, a decline from <Number>% in <School Year> and <Number>% in <School Year>. In math, <Number>% of students enrolled three or more years achieved the college-readiness targets in <School Year>; demonstrating a decline from <Number>% in <School Year> and <Number>% in <School Year>. On the most recent Top to Bottom list issued by the <State Name> Department of Education in <Year>, the Academy ranked at the <Number> percentile. <Authorizer Name> provided feedback to the Academy on the implementation of the Educational Program via a School Support Visit conducted on <Date>.

Indicates the Relevant Support and Feedback

Fiscal Performance Report

The Academy’s declining enrollment raises significant concerns regarding the continued viability of the Academy. The Academy’s fall <Year> enrollment was reported at <Number> students; this represents a <Number>% reduction from <School Year> when the Academy reported <Number> students. The Academy’s average enrollment since <School Year> is <Number> students. During the last Contract, the Academy required concessions from both the landlord and the ESP in order to avert a deficit. The Academy Board will be required to demonstrate that it has the ability to meet its financial obligations and provide a sustainable, high-quality educational program.

Required Intervention

The <Authorizer>-created resource, the *Charter Contract Reauthorization Checklist* (“Checklist”), provides boards and administration with clear, concise and consistent expectations regarding the reauthorization process. A copy of the Checklist was previously distributed; an electronic version is available on the Center’s website. This letter serves as the Academy’s official correspondence as discussed in Step 1 of the Checklist.

Step 2 of the Checklist discusses various on-site reviews that could occur during the Academy's reauthorization process, and although the Center will perform a staff review and site and facility review, as discussed further in this letter, the Center will not conduct a formal Educational Program Review at this time. The Academy, however, will be asked to review and revise, as appropriate, its Educational Program description and Curriculum documents. Submission requirements for these documents are addressed below.

Step 3 of the Checklist details the various submission requirements necessary in order to complete the Academy's reauthorized Contract. In an effort to streamline the submission process, the <Authorizer> is requesting that the items detailed below be submitted electronically in either a Microsoft Word or Excel format (unless otherwise noted), and submitted via Epicenter on or before <Date>.

Submission Requirements:

- Fiscal Viability Plan. The <Authorizer> is requesting that the Academy Board submit a detailed short and long-term Fiscal Viability Plan, including projected annual budgets for the next <Number> years, based on the minimum enrollment that will allow the Academy to provide a quality educational program and establish a reasonable fund balance without concessions from the Academy's management or landlord. The Plan should also include the Academy's strategies for increasing enrollment.
- Educational Service Provider ("ESP") Agreement. The Academy Board's current ESP Agreement will expire concurrently with its Contract on <Date>; pursuant to the <Authorizer's> ESP Policies, any proposed ESP Agreements are required to be submitted to the <Authorizer> in draft form and include a completed ESP Information Sheet as well as a draft legal opinion from the Academy's legal counsel. Templates are available from the Center's website: <Website Address>.
- Facility Agreement. The Academy Board's facility lease agreement for the <Address> site is also set to expire concurrently with its Contract on <Date>; the <Authorizer> is requesting that the Academy Board submit a new lease agreement to the <Authorizer> for review at least 30-days prior to execution. The draft lease agreement is required to include: (1) language causing the immediate termination of the lease agreement without penalty to the Academy Board upon termination of the charter contract; (2) the facility address(es); and (3) all referenced exhibits or attachments.
- Position Descriptions. The <Authorizer> is requesting that the Academy Board designate an individual (and provide his/her contact information) to verify the accuracy of position descriptions currently contained in the Contract and provide changes, as necessary.
- Physical Plant Description. The <Authorizer> is requesting that the Academy Board designate an individual (and provide his/her contact information) to verify the accuracy of the information currently contained in Schedule 6 of the Contract and provide changes, as necessary.

We conduct staff reviews and site and facility reviews once every contract term or every three years, whichever comes first.

Based on a case-by-case basis. This school is meeting academic expectations, so an EPR is not conducted at this time.

Intervention specific to this school. The following apply generally to all schools.

According to our policies, a management agreement cannot extend beyond the length of the charter contract.

According to our policies, leases must contain a clause that ends the lease when the contract ends.

- Age, Grade Range and Maximum Enrollment. The <Authorizer> is requesting that the Academy Board review and confirm the accuracy of the grade ranges and the maximum enrollment number of <Number> which is currently included in Schedules 7f and 7h of the Contract.
- Educational Program. The <Authorizer> is requesting that the Academy Board review its educational program description and submit appropriate changes to ensure that it is clearly written and outlines the instructional methods being used by the Academy to implement the curriculum contained with the Contract. Requirements for the educational program submission, if necessary, are detailed in the Checklist provided. The <Authorizer> is also requesting that the Academy Board designate an individual (and provide his/her contact information) for any necessary follow-up.
- Curriculum. The <Authorizer> is requesting that the Academy Board review its curriculum and submit appropriate changes to ensure that it is a detailed written curriculum by grade or level covering each subject/course to be taught. At a minimum, the subjects shall include English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and health as required by law. The curriculum is required to explicitly indicate alignment to the <State Name> Academic Standards, the <State Name> Curriculum Framework standards and benchmarks and the Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs). If state standards are not available for a given subject, alignment to national or international standards should be considered and referenced within the document. If curriculum is web-based, all necessary login and password information is required to be provided such that a representative of the <Authorizer> may review the curriculum in its entirety.

The Academy is required to provide a spreadsheet summary listing the courses along with an Academy contact that the <Authorizer> can utilize for all curriculum-related questions. The Academy's curriculum is required to be submitted in separate files, following a consistent format, clearly identified by academy name, course title and grade or level. Resources are available on the <Authorizer's> website <Website Address>, and in the Checklist previously provided.

- School Calendar and School Day Schedule. The Academy Board is required to submit a proposed <School Year> School Calendar that complies with the Revised School Code as well as the minimum requirements set forth in the State School Aid Act of 1979. In addition, the Academy Board is required to submit a proposed <School Year> School Day Schedule that complies with the required number of instructional days and hours.
- Board Policies. Schedule 4, Section 2.02a of the Contract requires the Academy Board adopt and properly maintain board policies in accordance with applicable law. The Academy Board shall, at a minimum, adopt by resolution all legally-required board policies and shall establish a schedule to regularly review and update its policies. <Authorizer> is currently funding the Academy Board's Bi-Annual Board Policy Update Service provided by the National Charter Schools Institute ("Institute"). Based on information provided by the Institute on <Date>, only the Fall <Year> Board Policy Update remains outstanding and requires formal Board action to finalize.

The charter contract requires the academy board to adopt and maintain board policies. We pay for this service. This Board is behind, and reauthorization is an opportunity to motivate boards to get this done.

- Early Childhood Education Questionnaire. The Academy Board is required to **review, sign and submit** an Early Childhood Education Questionnaire along with any necessary supporting documentation. This document will be distributed electronically to the Academy's administration for preparation for Board review and approval.
- Reauthorization Questionnaire. The Academy Board is required to **review, sign and submit** a Reauthorization Questionnaire along with any necessary supporting documentation. This document will be distributed electronically to the Academy's administration for preparation for Board review and approval.

As discussed above, <Authorizer> will conduct two (2) on-site reviews as a component of the reauthorization process:

1. Site and Facilities Review. While all schools must undergo local and state health and safety inspections, the Center conducts additional reviews to ensure that facilities are conducive to learning. A school's learning environment includes both the interior and exterior of its facility. A proactive approach has been established by <Authorizer> setting standards that assure students are learning in safe and healthy environments. On <Date>, a review was completed at the Academy. The checklist used for this review was is available to the Academy via the <Authorizer> website at <Website Address>. Separate correspondence will be issued to the Academy regarding any findings identified during the review.
2. Staff Review. On <Date>, <Authorizer> conducted a review of the Academy's records to ensure compliance with applicable law. The scope of the review includes teacher/administrator certification, compliance with No Child Left Behind Highly Qualified requirements, criminal background checks (state and federal) and unprofessional conduct disclosure requirements. Separate correspondence will be issued to the Academy regarding any findings identified during the review.

As the reauthorization process continues, <Authorizer> may require the Academy Board to submit additional documentation. As always, I appreciate the time and energy you so freely give through your service on the Academy Board. If you have specific questions regarding the reauthorization process, please contact <Name>, <Title>, at <Phone Number> (or via email at <Email Address>) for further clarification.

Sincerely,

<Name>
<Title>

Enclosure