

The Director shall: Require in each charter agreement that charter schools comply with the Annenberg Standards and Policy Recommendations as adopted and approved by the Metro BOE. The Director shall also apply the Annenberg standards to traditional schools, as specified below.

Annenberg Standards and Policy Recommendations:

Standard #1: Traditional districts and charter schools should work together to ensure a coordinated approach that serves all children.

Policy Recommendations under Standard #1:

1.1 MNPS/Director shall develop and regularly update a citywide multiyear school plan that includes projected demographic changes, criteria for new school openings or closings, and equitable geographic distribution of schools and students to ensure that all students have access to schools in their communities and a range of specialized programs. The development and reevaluation of this unified school plan should be subject to robust public input to ensure equity and transparency across the district.

1.2 MNPS/Director, in coordination with this unified school plan (see previous recommendation), shall prepare an impact statement to be provided to the Metro BOE before approving any new charter school application. The statement should assess the school's impact on the unified school plan and identify the role that the charter intends to fill within the overall system.

1.4 All MNPS schools are required to report on their websites and in enrollment and marketing materials the full range of academic, enrichment, and extracurricular offerings that they provide.

Standard #2: School governance should be representative and transparent.

Policy Recommendations under Standard #2:

2.1 Each charter school's original application and charter agreement shall be made available online on the websites of both the individual school and MNPS.

2.3 Members of charter school governing boards are required to file full financial disclosure reports and identify any potential conflicts of interest, relationships with management companies, or other business dealings with the school, its management company, or other charter schools. These documents should be available online through MNPS' website.

2.4 Governing boards of charter schools are required to hold all meetings in the district in which their school or schools operate. All meetings are to be open to the public and publicized in advance in accordance with applicable state law.

2.5 All MNPS schools shall provide online access to minutes from school governing board meetings, the school's policies, information about staff, instructional strategies, curriculum,

school rules and behavior codes, school budgets, and information about management companies or other large contracts.

2.7 Charter schools and MNPS are subject to state laws regarding freedom of information, public records, and public meetings.

2.9 Complete contracts for management services are required to be electronically posted on the schools' websites within ten days of execution. The posting should include detailed information about the services to be provided by the management company and all financial commitments and compensation, as well as all fees and bonuses to be provided to the management company.

2.10 MNPS/Director shall require full public financial disclosure by all MNPS schools of their expenditures and net revenues related to the operation of each school they serve.

2.11 Charter schools are prohibited from allowing anyone with a financial relationship to a management organization or the staff of any authorizing agency from serving on the governing board of any charter school.

Standard #3: Charter schools should ensure equal access to interested students and prohibit practices that discourage enrollment or disproportionately push enrolled students out of the school.

Policy Recommendations under Standard #3:

3.1 Charter schools and traditional schools are prohibited from utilizing enrollment and registration procedures that directly or indirectly exclude or discourage certain students from enrolling at the school. Certain schools, such as academic magnets and performing arts schools, shall be exempted.

3.2 All new charter applications are required to include detailed plans for the school's enrollment and registration procedures to ensure that they will not result in [unlawful] selectivity. Enrollment forms and requirements are to be posted on the schools' websites in the district's major languages.

3.3 MNPS/Director shall monitor all MNPS schools enrollment and retention practices through uniform and consistent data requirements to ensure that charter schools are enrolling a proportionate share of students across subgroups.

3.4 MNPS/Director shall create an independent ombudsman office to whom parents can challenge or appeal enrollment, classification (as special education), or withdrawal decisions by all MNPS schools. The ombudsman's office shall be given the authority to take certain actions that are compliant with state law or to report to the authorizer any school found to be in violation of the law.

3.5 MNPS/Director shall establish a cross-sector student identification system that allows the district to track student mobility during the course of the school year.

3.6 MNPS/Director shall require public documentation and reporting of student attrition throughout the school year, including date, reason, and disposition (where the student ends up). This should include all disciplinary actions, including both in- and out-of-school suspensions and referrals to law enforcement, and “voluntary” and “involuntary” exits. It should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, age, grade level, free/reduced meal status, disability status, and English proficiency status.

3.7 Before any student withdraws from a MNPS school, the student, his or her parent or guardian, and charter school personnel sign a document stating that the student is withdrawing voluntarily and that charter school personnel have not prohibited, discouraged, or attempted to discourage the student from continued enrollment in the charter school.

3.8 Per pupil funding, provided to schools based on their enrollment, should be adjusted throughout the school year, pursuant to state law or regulations, to accommodate changes in enrollment due to mobility.

Standard #4: Charter school discipline policy should be fair and transparent.

Policy Recommendations under Standard #4:

4.1 MNPS/Director shall ensure that all MNPS schools discipline policies and practices are promulgated and implemented to avoid discriminatory and/or disproportionate punishments of students based on race, gender, or other characteristics and are consistent with federal school discipline laws and guidance.

4.2 Every MNPS school shall make its school discipline policy publicly available on the school’s website, so that parents can thoroughly review the policy before enrolling their child. All charter discipline policies should include explicit provisions regarding due process for students, including the right to a hearing before long-term removal, suspension, expulsion, disciplinary or safety transfers, or alternative school placements, as well as parental appeals and notification rights.

4.3 All MNPS schools are required to report annually on all disciplinary actions and withdrawals from the school, including the reason for the student’s departure, suspension, or other action and the statement that documentation of due process rights was available. These data should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, age, grade level, free/reduced meal status, disability status, and English proficiency status.

4.4 MNPS/Director shall establish standards, not inconsistent with federal or state law, for disciplinary codes, expressly identifying and defining inappropriate strategies and barring their use.

Standard #5: All students deserve equitable and adequate school facilities. Districts and charter schools should work together to ensure that facilities arrangements do not disadvantage students in either sector.

Policy Recommendations under Standard #5:

5.1 For non-ASD schools, MNPS/Director shall require that parents, educators, and community members from both traditional public schools and charter schools be consulted and engaged in any decision to co-locate a charter school within an existing public school facility.

5.2 MNPS/Director shall establish strong guidelines for co-location, including the criteria on available space for administrative and educational functions and equitable arrangements for access to the building's gym, cafeteria, and other common spaces.

5.3 MNPS/Director shall require yearly impact reports from co-located facilities, providing administrators, educators, school staff, students, and parents from both schools the opportunity to reflect on how the co-location is working and what challenges have arisen, so these challenges can be addressed.

5.4 MNPS/Director shall require annual, detailed reports of capital improvements in co-located charter schools to be posted online.

Standard #7: Monitoring and oversight of charter schools are critical to protect the public interest. They should be strong.

Policy Recommendations under Standard #7:

7.6 MNPS/Director shall establish minimum capacities to adequately monitor all MNPS schools.

7.7 MNPS/Director shall conduct on-site visits to the school every one to three years. MNPS/Director shall provide intensive support and intervention, if necessary, to improve school management.

7.10 MNPS/Director shall ensure that all MNPS school documents financial documents be made available to the public annually on the websites of the school, the authorizer, and any management company. These documents should include a comprehensive statement of revenues, financial and in-kind donations, state and local funding, New Market Tax Credits, bond issuances, and any and all additional funds or debt service connected to the operation of the school and/or network of schools.

7.11 MNPS/Director shall require all MNPS schools to report on administrative expenses as well as funds paid to the authorizer for authorizing and oversight services. Schools and networks should also publish reports on expenses incurred for student recruitment and marketing.

7.12 MNPS/Director shall document and publicly disclose the owners of any non-public property used to house a charter school, along with documentation of the amount of rent being paid for the facility and to whom payments are being made and verification that there are no conflicts of interest between the school and the holder of the property.

7.13 MNPS/Director shall publish all vendor or service contracts over \$10,000 at any MNPS school as public information on the MNPS website.

7.14 Governing board members, administrators, parents, students, educators, school staff, and community members are protected from retaliation for whistleblowing in accordance with federal and state law.

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