

Missouri Charter Public School Commission	
Transfer Schools	2.04

Policy

This policy governs the transfer of sponsorship of a charter school from one Missouri sponsor to the Commission, prior to the expiration of the school's current performance contract with the other Missouri sponsor.

The Commission may assume sponsorship of a charter school currently operating under a contract with another sponsor under the following circumstances:

1. When the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) or the State Board of Education (SBOE) removes the sponsoring authority of the school's current sponsor;
2. When the school's current sponsor voluntarily relinquishes sponsorship of the school; or
3. When the school unilaterally seeks a different sponsor.

Any school notified of closure by its sponsor will not be eligible to transfer to the Commission. The school may submit a new application to be considered for sponsorship.

At the time of transfer, or before agreeing to assume sponsorship, the Commission or its designee(s) will evaluate each school. The Commission may contract with external reviewers to evaluate and report on the academic, financial, and operational strength of the school, as well as the governance of the school.

At a minimum, the evaluation will include a review of the following materials:

- The school's current performance contract,
- Past annual reports,
- Academic and financial data over the life of the charter,
- All organizational, legal and assurance documents, and
- Any documents related to performance concerns such as intervention, remediation, or probation.

Based on that review, and using the school's existing performance contract and the Commission's standards, the school is given one of the three designations: "meeting expectations," "partially meeting expectations," or "does not meet expectations."

In addition to the performance review, the Commission will apply its intervention and renewal policies and procedures to the transferring schools and take the following steps depending on the circumstances.

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Sponsoring authority relinquished or removed

If a sponsor wishes to relinquish their responsibilities for a specific school or its entire portfolio of schools, the sponsor works with the Commission to accept the school(s).

If, pursuant to RSMo 160.400, DESE removes a sponsor’s authority (or the SBOE removes the authority following a hearing requested by the sponsor), the Commission immediately assumes sponsorship of all schools sponsored by the now ineligible entity.

Schools will remain on their existing performance contract or enter a new performance contract, at the Commission’s discretion.

- A school meeting expectations may propose amendments to the current contract.
- A school partially meeting expectations must provide the Commission with specific plans for improvement/turnaround. Once accepted by the Commission, the plans will be incorporated into a new or revised performance contract.
- A school not meeting expectations will be asked to submit an intervention plan. Once accepted by the Commission, the plan will be incorporated into a new or revised performance contract for the duration of the existing term.

School seeks a new sponsor

An existing school may decide to transfer sponsorship from an eligible sponsor to the Commission before the time of renewal. If the school seeks Commission sponsorship at the end of its current charter term, it must apply for a new charter with the Commission pursuant to Commission policy 2.02 New Sponsor Applications. If the school is applying for transfer prior to renewal, the Commission and school will adhere to the requirements of Rule 5 CSR 20-100.275 Transfer of Charter Sponsorship Secondary Education (DESE) of the Department of Elementary and the following procedure.

- The Executive Director invites the school to submit a letter of intent (LOI), which has been adopted by the school’s Board of Directors. The letter of intent must include evidence the current sponsor was notified of the LOI and that the notification and input requirements of 5 CSR 20-100.275 have been fulfilled. This includes providing notice to and soliciting input from students, parents/guardians, and staff at least four (4) months prior to approaching the Commission regarding a potential transfer.
- The school and the Commission sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding the transfer process, including responsibility for the costs of any required evaluation.
- The Commission or its designee(s) evaluate the school. The significance and scope of any evaluation will be informed by the school’s performance. The evaluation may include a review of academic, financial, and operational performance, as well as the school’s governance.

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- The Commission staff provide a recommendation to the Commission.
- The Commission interviews the school's board and votes on the transfer.
- If the Commission approves the transfer, the school and the prior sponsor will submit a joint application to the State Board of Education (SBOE) as prescribed by 5 CSR 20-100.275.

If the joint application is approved by the SBOE, the Commission the performance contract may be modified based on the designation:

- A school meeting expectations may propose amendments to the current contract.
- A school partially meeting expectations must provide the Commission with specific plans for improvement/turnaround. Once accepted by the Commission, the plans will be incorporated into a new or revised performance contract.
- A school not meeting expectations will be asked to submit an intervention plan. Once accepted by the Commission, the plan will be incorporated into a new or revised performance contract for the duration of the existing term.

Definitions

High-risk student: Pursuant to RSMo 160.405, at least one-third of schools sponsored by the Commission "shall be to schools that actively recruit dropouts or high-risk students as their student body and address the needs of dropouts or high-risk students through their proposed mission, curriculum, teaching methods, and services."

New school application: An application to the Commission for sponsorship of a new charter public school.

New sponsor application: An application for Commission sponsorship of an existing charter public school at the end of its performance contract with another Missouri sponsor.

Performance contract: The "charter" is established through a performance contract executed by the Commission and the governing body of the approved school. It includes the original charter application.

Renewal application: An application to renew the current performance contract between the Commission and a charter public school.

Transfer charter: An existing charter public school applying to transfer sponsorship to the Commission from another Missouri sponsor, prior to the expiration of the school's current performance contract with the other Missouri sponsor.

Designations

Meeting Expectations: The school generally meets the standards of the Commission, is performing well, is meeting expectations for performance, and/or may have minor concerns.

Partially meeting expectations: The school meets some aspects of the standards of the Commission, but not others and/or there are moderate concerns.

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Does not meet expectations: The school falls far below the standards of the Commission, and/or there are significant concerns. The failures are material and significant to the viability to the school.

PROBATION

A condition imposed on a school for violations of law or

- Failure to comply with the action plan from a contract breach;
- Failure to make significant progress;
- Significant health, governance, safety, financial, and/or building issues occurred unexpectedly; and/or
- Transfers from another sponsor and is not meeting the conditions of its performance contract.

Placing a school on probation signals concern about the school's viability and permits the Commission to suspend a school's charter immediately if the school fails to remedy the causes of its probation.

INTERVENTION

When performance levels are not met, it is the responsibility of the sponsor to intervene. The level of intervention is based on the severity and magnitude of the situation. The Commission’s interventions are: Letter of Concern, Breach of Contract Letter, Probation or Revocation. Interventions must be clear, direct and provide an opportunity for the school to make the necessary modifications to assure compliance. Interventions must provide the school with the required outcomes necessary, but not the prescribed path to achieve these outcomes.