

Overview of Chartering

The Big Picture: Chartering in Hawaii 2014
Hawaii's Legal Framework for Charter Schooling



The Big Picture: Chartering in Hawaii 2014

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History

- * 1994: DOE schools can convert to “Student-Centered Schools”
- * 1999: “New Century Charter Schools” – including start-ups
- * 2001: Charter School Review Panel established as authorizer
- * 2003: Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO) established
- * 2010: Act 144 imposes new accountability requirements

History (continued)

- * 2011: Act 130 (of 2011) creates Task Force on Charter School Governance, Accountability, and Authority
- * 2011: Legislative Auditor Performance Audit of the Hawaii Public Charter School System
 - * No outside oversight
 - * Unethical and illegal spending of public funds
- * 2012: Legislative Task Force Report issued
 - * Sets in motion Act 130 (of 2012)

History (continued)

- * 2012: Act 130 passes
 - * Charter School Review Panel replaced by Commission
 - * CSAO set to sunset June 30, 2013
 - * Commission staff to focus primarily on authorizer role
 - * Law mandates charter school performance contracts
 - * Law sets forth performance framework
 - * Law requires charter applications to address elements of performance framework

History (continued)

- * 2013: Commission completes application cycle inherited from Charter School Review Panel
- * 2013: CSAO transitions to Commission staff and sunsets
- * 2013: Existing charter schools enter into 1-yr charter contracts
- * 2013: Commission adopts new calendar for application cycle
- * 2014: Commission executes first full application cycle
- * 2014: Existing charters enter into new charter contracts

This Moment

- * Accountability and rigor are themes of the day
- * Emphasis on rigor on the front end
- * High expectations for high-performing schools
- * Governance expectations
- * Leadership expectations
- * Staffing expectations
- * KEY: Application is not just a “bar” but a helpful tool

Some Unique Features

- * Creating new state agencies (not 501 (c)(3)s with contracts)
- * Hawaii's statewide SEA/LEA
- * Employees not only unionized but in same bargaining units—and under same master collective bargaining agreements—as DOE employees
 - * Charter school supplemental agreements
- * Two official state languages
- * Conversion schools that retain attendance districts
- * Direct provision of some services (SPED), funding (benefits)

Continuing Challenges

- * Funding
- * Facilities needs for start-ups
- * Need for collective system supports / capacity augmentation not the function of the authorizer
- * Longstanding unresolved system questions

Opportunity

- * Increasing confidence in charter school system
- * Improved BOE/DOE - charter school relations
- * Need and desire for system-wide improvement, educational options—and some notable progress
- * Huge potential for charter schools to make more constructive contributions to Hawaii's public education system
- * Opportunities for new schools

Some Big Picture Questions

- * How will our proposed school contribute to the public school system as a whole?
 - * Address recognized system needs or challenges?
 - * Communities with gap between enrollment and school capacity
 - * Urban version
 - * Rural version

Some Big Picture Questions (continued)

- * Student populations the system has struggled to serve
 - * Micronesian populations
 - * Male students (address learning styles, middle school)
- * Workforce opportunities and challenges
 - * “Pipeline” issues, growth areas for high-skill employment
 - * STEM, high-skill trades
 - * Note: opportunities for strategic partnerships

Some Big Picture Questions (continued)

- * Where parental confidence could be stronger
 - * Middle schools?
- * Have we thoughtfully considered high school?
- * What is our perspective on questions of socioeconomic diversity?
- * What can we learn from other jurisdictions?
- * What do we need to learn about Hawaii?
- * What skill sets does our founding group need?

Hawaii's Legal Framework for Charter Schooling

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The Performance Contract

- * The charter contract protects a school's autonomy while holding it accountable for results.
- * Act 130: Requires that charter schools enter into a performance contract with the Commission and requires the Commission to establish a performance framework.
- * Contracts are almost identical for each school, with some exceptions that recognize the unique missions of individual schools.

Performance Frameworks

- * The contract establishes the expectations of the school in three frameworks: academic, financial, and organizational.
- * These frameworks set clear expectations for schools and help define the rights and responsibilities for both the school and the Commission.
- * Schools receive ratings (such as meets or does not meet) on indicators within each framework.

Academic Performance Framework

Is the educational program successful?

- * Indicators look at student academic proficiency; achievement gaps in proficiency; growth; and other measures.
- * The framework encompasses both statewide and school-specific measures.
- * Both the state accountability system and the charter contract recognize there are multiple ways of determining success.

Financial Performance Framework

Is the school financially viable?

- * The purpose of this framework is to evaluate a school's near term and sustainable financial health.
- * Examples of indicators: Total margin ratio (whether you have more money than you spend); current ratio (total current assets divided by total current liabilities).
- * Charters need an annual external audit and must submit quarterly financial statements.

Organizational Performance Framework

Is the organization effective and accountable?

- * Charter schools have responsibilities to students, but also to the State, and ultimately, the public at large.
- * This framework ensures that schools are in compliance by meeting applicable legal obligations and that they are good stewards of public resources.
- * Indicators include governance and reporting; education program; students and employees; and school environment.

Organizational Performance Framework (continued)

- * The Organizational Performance Framework often intersects with the academic and financial frameworks but looks more at process and less at outputs.
- * For example, this framework looks at whether the school has its policies and procedures on its website—it does not evaluate or approve the policies (except Admissions).
- * This framework also is something of a “catch all” for the other terms in the contract.

The Three Frameworks

Academic

Is the
educational
program
successful?

Financial

Is the school
financially
viable?

Organizational

Is the
organization
effective
and
accountable
?

How the Frameworks are Used

The frameworks provide the foundation for the Commission's work, from **monitoring** to **intervention** to **renewal decisions**.

Monitoring

- * State law requires the Commission to continually monitor performance and legal compliance.
- * The Commission must provide an annual report to the Legislature, which must include a performance report on each charter school based on the performance frameworks.
- * Each school must submit an annual report to the Commission to help it compile the annual report.

Intervention

- * If a school's performance or legal compliance appears unsatisfactory, the Commissioner shall notify the school and provide a chance for the school to respond and/or remedy the problem.
- * Most deficiencies will be readily addressed.
- * Drastic concerns may prompt drastic measures, ranging from the school adopting an interim restructuring plan to revocation.

Renewal Decisions

- * Ratings in each of the three framework will help the Commission make high-stakes decisions about whether to renew, non-renew, or revoke a charter contract.
- * There is no rigid formula—a school that does not perform well in one framework may still be renewed. But a school that does poorly on one indicator may also be non-renewed.

Questions?

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