

Adopted: December 17, 2014

Revised: October 30, 2019

BLUESKY CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY No. 6.9 COMPLIANCE WITH ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND AUTHORIZER CONTRACT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the minimum expectations for BlueSky Charter School students so that they can meet the academic standards established by the Minnesota Commissioner of Education (“Commissioner”). The policy is also adopted to provide a mechanism to ensure compliance with the academic outcomes set by BlueSky Charter School’s authorizer.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of BlueSky Charter School to provide curriculum that meets the requirements contained in the academic standards and benchmarks established by the Commissioner and to ensure that students also meet the outcomes required by the contract between BlueSky Charter School and its authorizer, Innovative Quality Schools (IQS).

III. CURRICULUM

- A. The Board of BlueSky Charter School directs the Executive Director to work with the administrative team to annually review BlueSky Charter School’s curriculum to ensure that the curriculum:
 - 1. Is aligned to the academic standards established by the Commissioner;
 - 2. That BlueSky Charter School’s curriculum covers all benchmarks related to each academic standard; and
 - 3. That the curriculum provides students with an opportunity to satisfactorily complete all of the required state standards and benchmarks.

IV. PROCESS FOR REVIEWING CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- A. Definitions. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:
 - 1. "Instruction" means methods of providing learning experiences that enable a student to meet state and district academic standards and graduation requirements including applied and experiential learning.

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2. "Curriculum" means school adopted programs and written plans for providing students with learning experiences that lead to expected knowledge and skills and career and college readiness.
 3. "World's best workforce" means striving to: meet school readiness goals; have all third grade students achieve grade-level literacy; close the academic achievement gap among all racial and ethnic groups of students and between students living in poverty and students not living in poverty; have all students attain career and college readiness before graduating from high school; and have all students graduate from high school.
 4. "Experiential learning" means learning for students that includes career exploration through a specific class or course or through work-based experiences such as job shadowing, mentoring, entrepreneurship, service learning, volunteering, internships, other cooperative work experience, youth apprenticeship, or employment.
- B. Performance Measures. In order to determine BlueSky Charter School's progress in striving to create the world's best workforce, measures must include at least:
1. The size of the academic achievement gap, rigorous course taking under §120B.35, subdivision 3, paragraph (c), clause (2), and enrichment experiences by student subgroup;
 2. Student performance on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments;
 3. High school graduation rates; and
 4. Career and college readiness under §120B.30, subdivision 1.
- C. Adopting Plans and Budgets. BlueSky Charter School, at a public meeting, shall adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world's best workforce and includes:
1. Clearly defined school goals and benchmarks for instruction and student achievement for all student subgroups identified in Minn. Stat. §120B.35, subd. 3 (b)(2);
 2. A process for assessing and evaluating each student's progress toward meeting state and local academic standards, assess and identify students to participate in gifted and talented programs and accelerate their instruction, and adopt early-admission procedures consistent with §120B.15, and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of instruction in pursuit of student and school success and curriculum affecting students' progress and growth toward career and college readiness and leading to the world's best workforce;
 3. A system to periodically review and evaluate the effectiveness of all instruction and curriculum, taking into account strategies and best practices, student outcomes, school principal evaluations under §123B.147, subd. 3, students'

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access to effective teachers who are members of populations underrepresented among the licensed teachers in the district or school and who reflect the diversity of enrolled students under §120B.35, subd. 3, paragraph (b), clause (2), and teacher evaluations under §122A.40, subd. 8, or §122A.41, subd. 5;

4. Strategies for improving instruction, curriculum, and student achievement including the English and, where practicable, the native language development and the academic achievement of English learners;
5. A process to examine the equitable distribution of teachers and strategies to ensure low-income and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, ineffective, or out-of-field teachers;
6. Education effectiveness practices that integrate high-quality instruction, rigorous curriculum, technology, and a collaborative professional culture that develops and supports teacher quality, performance, and effectiveness; and
7. An annual budget for continuing to implement the BlueSky Charter School's plan.

- D. District Advisory Committee. The Board of BlueSky Charter School will establish an advisory committee to ensure active community participation in all phases of planning and improving the instruction and curriculum affecting state and district academic standards, consistent with Section IV(c) of this policy. This advisory committee, to the extent possible, shall reflect the diversity of the BlueSky Charter School, and shall include teachers, parents, support staff, students, and other community residents, and provide translation to the extent appropriate and practicable. The district advisory committee shall pursue community support to accelerate the academic and native literacy and achievement of English learners with varied needs, from young children to adults, consistent with section 124D.59, subd. 2 and 2a. The district may establish site teams as subcommittees of the district advisory committee under Section IV (D, 1). The district advisory committee shall recommend to the school board rigorous academic standards, student achievement goals and measures consistent with subdivision 1a and sections 120B.022, subd. 1a and 1b, and 120B.35, district assessments, means to improve students' equitable access to effective and more diverse teachers, and program evaluations. School sites may expand upon district evaluations of instruction, curriculum, assessments, or programs. Whenever possible, parents and other community residents shall comprise at least two-thirds of advisory committee members.
- E. Site team. A school must establish a site team to develop and implement strategies and education effectiveness practices to improve instruction, curriculum, cultural competencies, including cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication, and student achievement at the school site, consistent with Section IV (C). The site team must include an equal number of teachers and administrators and at least one parent. The site team advises the board and the advisory committee about developing the annual budget and creates an instruction and curriculum improvement plan to align curriculum, assessment of student progress, and growth in meeting state and district academic standards and instruction.
- F. Report. Consistent with requirements for school performance reports under §120B.36, subd. 1, the Board shall publish a report in the local newspaper with the largest circulation in area served by BlueSky Charter School, by mail, or by electronic means on BlueSky Charter School's website. The Board shall hold an annual public meeting to review, and revise where appropriate, student achievement goals, local assessment outcomes, plans, strategies, and practices for improving curriculum and instruction and cultural competency, and efforts to equitably distribute diverse, effective, experienced, and in-field teachers, and to review district success in realizing the previously adopted student achievement goals and related benchmarks and the improvement plans leading to the world's best workforce. The Board must transmit an electronic summary of its report to the Commissioner in the form and manner the Commissioner determines.
- G. Periodic Report. BlueSky Charter School shall periodically survey affected

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constituencies, in their native languages where appropriate and practicable, about their connection to and level of satisfaction with BlueSky Charter School. BlueSky Charter School shall include the results of this evaluation in the summary report required under Section IV(F) of this policy.

V. COMPLIANCE WITH AUTHORIZER CONTRACT

BlueSky Charter School's authorization must be in the form of a written contract signed by Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) and the board of BlueSky Charter School. The contract must be completed within 45 business days of the Commissioner's approval of the affidavit of Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) submitted to the Commissioner pursuant to Minnesota law. Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) shall submit a copy of the signed charter contract to the Commissioner within ten business days of its execution. The contract between Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) and BlueSky Charter School must be in writing and contain, at minimum, the following terms:

- A. A declaration that BlueSky Charter School will carry out the primary purpose of a charter school which is to improve pupil learning and student achievement and how BlueSky Charter School will report its implementation of the primary purpose;
- B. A declaration of the additional purpose or purposes described in Minn. Stat. §124E.01 subd. 1 that BlueSky Charter School intends to carry out and how BlueSky Charter School will report its implementation of those purposes to its authorizer;
- C. A description of BlueSky Charter School's program and the specific academic and nonacademic outcomes that pupils must achieve;
- D. A statement of BlueSky Charter School's admission policies and procedures;
- E. A governance, management, and administration plan for BlueSky Charter School;
- F. Signed agreements from BlueSky Charter School's Board Members to comply with all federal and state laws governing organizational, programmatic, and financial requirements applicable to charter schools;
- G. The criteria, processes, and procedures the authorizer will use to monitor and evaluate the fiscal, operational, and academic performance of BlueSky Charter School consistent with Minn. Stat. §124E.10, subd. 3 (a) and (b);
- H. For renewal of the contract between BlueSky Charter School and Innovative Quality Schools (IQS), the formal written performance evaluation that is a prerequisite for reviewing a charter contract under Minn. Stat. §124E.10, subd. 3;
- I. Types and amounts of insurance liability coverage to be obtained by BlueSky Charter School, consistent with Minn. Stat. §124E.03, subd. 2, paragraph (d);
- J. Consistent with Minn. Stat. §124E.09, a provision to indemnify and hold harmless Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) and its officers, agents, and employees from any suit, claim, or liability arising from any operation of BlueSky Charter School, and the Commissioner and the Minnesota Department of Education's officers, agents, and employees notwithstanding Minn. Stat. §3.736;
- K. A description of the term of the initial contract between Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) and BlueSky Charter School, which may be up to five years plus an additional preoperational planning year, and up to five years for a renewed contract or a contract with a new authorizer after a transfer of authorizers, if warranted by the BlueSky Charter School's academic, financial, and operational performance;
- L. How the Board or the Operators of BlueSky Charter School will provide special instruction and services for children with a disability under Minn. Stat. §§125A.03 to 125A.24, and 125A.65, a description of the financial parameters within which BlueSky Charter School will operate to provide the special instruction and services to children with a disability;

- M. The specific conditions for contract renewal that identify performance in improving pupil learning and student achievement as the most important factor in determining contract renewal;
- N. The purposes described in Minn. Stat. §124E.01, subd. 1, and related performance obligations under clause (7) contained in the charter contract as additional factors in determining contract renewal; and
- O. The plan for an orderly closing of BlueSky Charter School under Minn. Stat. Chap. 317A, whether the closure is a termination for cause, a voluntary termination, or a nonrenewal of the contract, that includes establishing the responsibilities of the Board of BlueSky Charter School and Innovative Quality Schools (IQS) and notifying the Commissioner, Innovative Quality Schools (IQS), school district in which BlueSky Charter School is located, and parents of enrolled students about the closure, information and assistance sufficient to enable the student to re-enroll in another school, the transfer of student records under Minn. Stat. §124E.03, subd. 5, paragraph (b), and procedures for closing financial operations.

VI. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Board of BlueSky Charter School directs the Executive Director to work with the administrative team to annually review BlueSky Charter School's graduation requirements to ensure that they meet or exceed the state graduation requirements established in law or rule.

VII. CREDITS

The Board of BlueSky Charter School directs the Executive Director to work with the registrar to review the transcript of each student who began ninth grade in the 2011-2012 school year, or later, to ensure that each student has successfully completed the high school level credits for graduation established in rule or law.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. §124E (Charter Schools)
Minn. Stat. §120B.11 (School District Process for Reviewing Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement; Striving for the World's Best Workforce)
Minn. Stat. §120B.02 (Educational Expectations and Graduation Requirements for Minnesota's Students)
Minn. Stat. §120B.024 (Credits)