

ISBE Charter School Certification Overview

Contents

- ☐ General Certification Overview
- ☐ Certification Process
- ☐ Legal
- ☐ Special Education
- ☐ English Learners Services
- ☐ Financial Schedule and Narrative
- ☐ Questions

Contact Information

Charter Schools:

Jamie Fitzgerald; JFITZGER@isbe.net

Meghan Waller; MWALLER@isbe.net

Department email; charter@isbe.net

Special Education:

Rocio Casillas; RCASILLA@isbe.net

Multilingual/Language Development:

Amanda Abuali; AMABUALI@isbe.net

School Business Services:

Christina Morgan; CMORGAN@isbe.net

Alexandria Alvey; AALVEY@isbe.net

ISBE Certification Overview

- ❑ Ensures charter agreements and terms are in congruence with Illinois Charter Law ([105 ILCS 5/27A](#)) and Ill. Admin. Code [Section 650.30](#) and [Section 650.40](#).
- ❑ Certification is required by statute ([105 ILCS 5/27A-6](#)).
- ❑ Certification consists of four areas of review:
 1. Legal
 2. Special Education
 3. English Learners Services
 4. Financial

Certification Process

Charter school renewal or initial term is approved by authorizer board.

Authorizer sends notification of board approval within seven days of vote.

Certification documents and items for review are submitted via email to charter@isbe.net. Charter schools authorized by Chicago Public Schools should submit documents and items for review via Epicenter.

ISBE reviews materials and sends any requests for clarification or correction directly back to the school or district.

Certification Process continued

Once all items needed for certification are received, ISBE has 30 days to complete a review and certify the charter.

Please note: Any items that need to be corrected and resubmitted reset the 30-day timeline for ISBE to certify.

An official certification letter and certificate will be sent to the charter school and authorizer upon approval.

Additional information can be found on the [ISBE Charter School Certification webpage](#).

Legal

Items needed to complete Legal review:

- ☐ Charter agreement executed by both parties.
- ☐ Certificate of Compliance executed by both parties.
- ☐ Approved bullying policy on file with ISBE. (Information can be found on the [ISBE Bullying Prevention webpage](#).)
- ☐ Narrative portion of renewal application submitted to authorizer.

Special Education

Key items to include or be aware of:

- ☐ Be sure to check all boxes and provide detailed explanations and examples.
- ☐ Save the form in the original fillable PDF format before submitting.
- ☐ Make sure electronic signature on page 15 is complete.
- ☐ The [application](#) can be found on ISBE's website.

English Learners Services

Key items to include or be aware of:

- ☐ Make sure to indicate if you follow the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Bilingual handbook or if you have your own handbook.
- ☐ Save forms in the original fillable PDF format before submitting.
- ☐ Provide a template of the following documents, along with any translated copies.
 1. Home Language Survey
 2. 1-3 years EL program notification letter and program description
 3. 3-plus years EL program continuation letter and program description
 4. EL progress report
 5. Report card
 6. Exit letter with English proficiency scores included
- ☐ The [application](#) can be found on ISBE's website.

Financial Schedule and Narrative

Key items to include or be aware of:

Current financial schedule is unprotected.

- ☐ Can add line for either revenue and/or expenditure, if needed.
- ☐ Can add tab with additional back-up detail.

Submit both a PDF version and original Excel version of the form

- ☐ The PDF version must be fully executed by both parties. The form can be found on [ISBE's Charter Certification website](#).

Submit audit and Form 990 to both your authorizer and ISBE.

- ☐ This is a statutory requirement.
- ☐ Charter schools are required to submit directly to ISBE by Dec. 1.
- ☐ Submit to ISBE at finance1@isbe.net.



Questions?