

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

Charter Actions Requiring a Vote

- Approve a Charter Application
- Approve a Charter Renewal (15 yrs.)
- Approve Charter Continuance (5 or 10 yrs.)
- Approve a Charter Amendment Request
- Approve a Charter Agreement
- Give a Charter Notice of Concern
- Lift the Charter Notice of Concern
- Commence Charter Revocation Proceedings
- Revoke a Charter
- Board Action, Other _____

Non-Voting Board Items

- Public Hearing Item
- Discussion Item
- Read into Record

Policies

- Open a New Policy or Changes to a Policy for Public Comment
- Approve a New Policy
- Approve Revisions to an Existing Policy

PREPARED BY: Rashida Young—Director, Equity and Fidelity Team

SUBJECT: School Transparency Policy

DATE: December 17, 2018

Proposal

The DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) staff recommends its Board vote to open for public comment the School Transparency Policy (Attachment A). DC PCSB is scheduled to hold a public hearing on this matter on January 28, 2019 and will close the public comment period after the hearing is held. The Board will vote on the proposed policy on February 25, 2019.

Written comments may be submitted until 5:30 p.m. January 28, 2019 by mail or email to:

DC Public Charter School Board
3333 14th Street NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20010
public.comment@dcpcsb.org

Summary of Policy

This policy describes the documents DC PCSB will require schools to post on their websites beginning in school year 2019-20 and the process for doing so. The following documents are included in the policy:

- Charter school board of trustees meeting calendar
- High school course offerings and graduation requirements
- School calendar
- Student handbook
- At-risk funding plans
- Annual report
- Title IX coordinator contact information
- Lottery procedures (schools not participating in My School DC)
- Student application (schools not participating in My School DC)
- Student enrollment form

The policy also outlines consequences for late submission to DC PCSB of website links, non-submission of website links, failure to fix broken links, and failure to notify DC PCSB of updated website content. Consequences could include an Early Warning, Out of Compliance Notice, or Notice of Concern.

Background

We believe families should have access to all the information they need to be informed and active in their student’s education. To that end, we have historically posted school documents on our website. However, we believe that this is not the most effective way to communicate with families for three reasons: 1) at times content changes, making the content on DC PCSB’s website out of date; 2) parents are more likely to visit a school’s website for school-specific information than to visit DC PCSB’s website; and 3) many schools already post these documents on their websites. Therefore, we will require local education agencies to post these documents on their websites beginning in school year 2019-20.

DC PCSB staff first informed schools of this initiative during the September 25, 2018 Charter School Leaders Meeting. Staff then shared a draft of the School Transparency Policy with school leaders at a meeting held on November 9, 2018. The initial version of the policy was revised based on school leader feedback.

Attachment

Attachment A: School Transparency Policy

<p>Date: _____</p> <p>DC PCSB Action: _____Approved _____Approved with Changes _____Rejected</p> <p>Changes to the Original Proposal:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Signature: _____</p>
--

Attachment A

POLICY TITLE: DRAFT School Transparency Policy	
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY UPDATED: December 17, 2018

PURPOSE

The DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) posts several school documents on its own website.¹ However, when schools make material changes to these documents mid-year, the posted version becomes outdated. DC PCSB seeks to provide the public with more accurate information on public charter schools and, to this end, will require that schools publicly post certain documents to their websites. The goal is that school policies and procedures will be easily accessible to parents and other stakeholders. Further, schools will be able to make corrections to documents on their website as needed, whereas before errors remained on documents posted to DC PCSB's website.

POLICY

Beginning in school year 2019-20, schools will be required to post the following documents publicly on their websites:

1. Charter school board of trustees meeting calendar
2. High school course offerings and graduation requirements
3. School calendar
4. Student handbook
5. At-risk funding plans
6. Annual report
7. Title IX coordinator contact information
8. Lottery procedures (schools not participating in My School DC)
9. Student application (schools not participating in My School DC)
10. Student enrollment form

For more information on the requirements for each of these items, please refer to the following Guidance Document: <https://dcpcsb.egnyte.com/dl/ivUI5qasH2>

If DC PCSB anticipates updates to the list of items required to be posted, staff will commit to holding a meeting with school leaders to solicit feedback. Any final updates to the list will be shared with schools no later than June of each year.

Process: To be compliant with the School Transparency Policy, schools must submit each document listed above to DC PCSB for review by the due date on

¹ Schools currently submit documents to Epicenter based on what is listed on DC PCSB's Annual Compliance Calendar.

DC PCSB's Annual Compliance Calendar. Each document must be submitted via Epicenter (or other DC PCSB system that is being used for document collection).

The school must submit a document listing the website links for each item from this policy publicly posted on its website by the date listed on the Compliance Calendar. The school is responsible for maintaining its website with accurate, up-to-date content, compliant with applicable law. DC PCSB staff will check these links periodically, and if at any time a link is broken, or the document is found to no longer be posted, the school will be notified and required to remedy the issue within ten business days. If the school wishes to make a material change to a publicly posted document after it has already been approved by DC PCSB, the school must notify DC PCSB via the Notifications email address (notification@dcpcsb.org)² within ten business days of making the change. If the material change is found to be in violation of applicable law or of the school's Charter Agreement, DC PCSB will notify the school that the change is not approved.

Consequences for Late Submission of Website Links, Non-Submission of Website Links, Failure to Fix Broken Website Links, Failure to Keep Content Posted, or Material Changes to Content That Violate Applicable Law or the Charter Agreement.

Early Warning

An Early Warning is an email sent to the head of school by DC PCSB staff and is clearly labeled "early warning." The Early Warning will provide a deadline for submitting the required website link, fixing the broken link, reposting a mandatory item that was removed from the website, or updating content before an Out of Compliance notice is issued.

Out of Compliance Notice

An Out of Compliance notice is an email specifically labeled "Out of Compliance" sent by DC PCSB's executive director, deputy director, directors, or senior managers to the head of school for failure to take required action within the timeframe provided in an Early Warning email. The Out of Compliance notice will provide a deadline for submitting the website link, fixing the broken link, reposting a mandatory item that was removed from the website, or updating content before a Notice of Concern is considered.

Notice of Concern

If a school fails to take required action within the timeframe provided in an Out of Compliance notice, the DC PCSB Board may vote to issue a Notice of Concern. Notices of Concern are taken into consideration during each school's five- and

² The Notifications email address is used as the mechanism for schools to provide notifications to DC PCSB staff per DC PCSB's [Mandatory School Notification Policy](#). Note that a school may not change its graduation requirements without amending its charter agreement. Updates to any school document that violate applicable law or the terms of a school's charter agreement will not be accepted and may result in an Out of Compliance Notice.

ten-year charter reviews and during the charter renewal process, as well as when evaluating enrollment ceiling increase requests. The Notice of Concern will provide a timeframe for curing the issue before further Board action is considered.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Rick Cruz
DC PCSB Board Chair

Disclaimer: This publication is designed to provide information on the subject matter covered. It is distributed with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting or other professional services. Readers will be responsible for obtaining independent advice before acting on any information contained in or in connection with this policy.