Overview

Gives charter schools greater flexibility by expanding the list of entities that may sponsor a charter school, permitting a school board to convert existing schools to charter schools if a majority, instead of 90 percent, of teachers approve the conversion, allowing the state board of education to waive the requirement that licensed teachers comprise the majority of the members of the board of directors, and permitting nonlicensed teachers to provide 20 percent of the instructional services at a charter school if the licensed teachers employed at the school approve the arrangement.

Attempts to streamline the application process by establishing a charter school appeals board to oversee applications and waivers and to assist sponsors, requiring a sponsor's governing board to vote on a charter school application within 60 days, striking the requirement that at least two members of a sponsor's board must vote to sponsor the charter school in order for a charter school applicant to appeal to the state board of education the local board's decision not to sponsor the school, and requiring a contract authorizing a charter school to be completed within 45 days.

Increases charter school funding by qualifying the charter school for referendum revenue, integration revenue, and by increasing the charter school lease aid.

1 Sponsor; grant. (a) Includes an education cooperative board and a town or city governing entity among the list of governmental units and educational institutions authorized to sponsor a charter school.

(b) Permits a sponsor to receive a maximum annual grant of $2,500 for each charter school it sponsors.

2 Charter school appeals board. Directs the commissioner to appoint a nine-member charter school appeals board to review and approve or disapprove charter school applications and requests for waivers. Requires the board to provide outreach and technical assistance to sponsors.

3 Formation of school. (a) Requires a sponsor's board to vote on a charter school application within 60
days. Permits an applicant to apply to the state board of education after 60 days. Strikes language making an affirmative vote by two members of a sponsor's board a condition for appealing to the state board of education a local board's decision not to sponsor a charter school.

(c) Permits the state board of education to waive the requirement that licensed teachers employed at a charter school constitute a majority of the members of the board of directors for the charter school.

4 **Conversion of existing schools.** Permits a school board to convert one or more of its existing schools to charter schools if the majority, instead of 90 percent, of the full-time teachers at the school petition for the conversion.

5 **Contract.** Requires a contract authorizing the charter school to be completed within 45 days of when the state board of education authorizes a sponsor's proposal to act as sponsor to the charter school.

6 **Employment and other operating matters.** Permits nonlicensed teachers who are supervised by a licensed teacher to provide up to 20 percent of a charter school's full time equivalent for instructional services if the majority of licensed teachers employed in the charter school agree to the arrangement.

7 **Referendum revenue.** Requires referendum revenue earned by resident pupils who attend charter schools to follow the pupil to the charter school.

8 **Building lease aid.** Increases building lease aid from the lesser of 80 percent of a charter school's actual lease cost or the statewide average revenue for capital and debt service (currently about $465 per pupil unit) to the lesser of 90 percent of the district's actual lease costs or $1,200 per pupil unit.

9 **Start-up costs.** Requires the department of children, families and learning to pay 90 percent of charter school start-up aid to charter schools within 45 days after the first day of student attendance (current law meters the payments of start-up cost aid to charter schools).

10 **Integration revenue.** Authorizes charter schools to receive integration revenue equal to the number of pupils served by the charter school times the integration revenue allowance for the district within which the charter school is located.

11 **Property leased to school districts.** Extends to charter schools the school district property tax exemption for property leased or rented to school districts.

12 **Revisor instruction.** Changes references from the state board of education to the charter school appeals board.

13 **Appropriations.** Appropriates unspecified amounts for the charter school funding proposals contained in this bill draft.

14 **Effective date.** Makes section 2 effective December 31, 1999.