

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS) supports full-time virtual schooling. Unfortunately, results from many of these schools show that significant problems exist within this part of the charter school movement. To help address these problems, in October 2016, the NAPCS released “A New Model Law for Supporting High-Quality Charter Public Schools: Second Edition”¹, which includes updated statutory language recommendations that build on a report from earlier this year where the NAPCS called for reform of full-time virtual charter schools.² Also, while we support making such changes in the context of a state’s charter school law, we also realize that some of these changes may not fit within that context. As such, states may need to consider governing full-time virtual schools outside of the state’s charter school law. Specific recommendations applicable to full time virtual schools include:

1. Defining virtual charter public schools:

A “full-time virtual charter public school” means a charter public school that offers educational services predominantly through an online program. A full-time virtual charter public school that serves students from more than one district may be authorized only by an authorizer with statewide chartering jurisdiction and authority. A full-time virtual charter public school that serves students from one school district may be authorized by the school board governing that school district or an authorizer with statewide chartering jurisdiction and authority.

2. Requiring Additional Charter Application Components:

A state’s charter public school law should include application requirements specific to full-time virtual charter public schools. What exactly those requirements should be depends on the sophistication of a state’s student funding, attendance, and accountability systems. In the model law, we provide a list of options for states to consider. Depending on the circumstances in each state, one or more of these provisions will be most relevant. We encourage states to adopt as many of these options as possible to increase the state’s chances of elevating the quality of full-time virtual charter public schools

In the case of a proposed charter public school that plans to establish a full-time virtual charter public school, the application shall additionally require the applicants to provide a description regarding the methods by which the school will:

- (i) Ensure adequate supports are available to the students in their homes or regions, including parent-teacher conferences and interactions; and

¹ See, <http://www.publiccharters.org/publications/model-law-supporting-high-quality-charter-public-schools/>

² See, <http://www.publiccharters.org/publications/call-action-improve-quality-full-time-virtual-charter-public-schools/>



- (ii) Monitor student outcomes and administer state-required assessments to all students in a proctored setting; *AND/OR*
- (iii) Establish and implement legally-permissible criteria and processes for enrollment based on the existence of supports needed for student success; *AND/OR*
- (iv) (iv) Provide the desired enrollment level of the school for each year of the charter contract, not to exceed [INSERT NUMBER] students in any given year, with any increases in enrollment from one year to the next based on whether the school meets its performance requirements; *AND/OR*
- (v) Provide detailed costs for the school and propose a funding level per student for the school that is based upon these detailed costs; *AND/OR*
- (vi) Provide data for oversight, funding, and renewal and closure decisions for full-time virtual charter public school-specific goals regarding student enrollment, attendance, engagement, achievement, truancy, and attrition that demonstrates the school meets agreed upon benchmarks.

3. Requiring Additional Charter Public School Contract Language:

The charter contract for a full-time virtual charter public school shall include a description and an agreement regarding the methods by which the school will:

- (i) Ensure adequate supports are available to the students in their homes or regions, including parent-teacher conferences and interactions; and
- (ii) Monitor student outcomes and administer state-required assessments to all students in a proctored setting; *AND/OR*
- (iii) Establish and implement legally-permissible criteria and processes for enrollment based on the existence of supports needed for student success; *AND/OR*
- (iv) Provide the desired enrollment level of the school for each year of the charter contract, not to exceed [INSERT NUMBER] students in any given year, with any increases in enrollment from one year to the next based on whether the school meets its performance requirements; *AND/OR*
- (v) Provide detailed costs for the school and propose a funding level per student for the school that is based upon these detailed costs; *AND/OR*
- (vi) Provide data for oversight, funding, and renewal and closure decisions for full-time virtual charter public school-specific goals regarding student enrollment, attendance, engagement, achievement, truancy, and attrition that demonstrates the school meets agreed upon benchmarks.