

51. Revised Application for New Charter School - Early College Charter School of Philadelphia - Added 5.27.2025/Updated 5.29.2025

Action Item - 51

Board of Education Meeting Date: 5/29/2025

Title: Revised Application for New Charter School - Early College Charter School of Philadelphia - Added 5.27.2025/Updated 5.29.2025

Description:

The Applicant for the Early College Charter School of Philadelphia submitted a revised new charter application to the Charter Schools Office of the School District of Philadelphia on April 14, 2025. In accordance with the Charter School Law, the Board of Education will vote to approve or to deny the revised application during its May 29, 2025 Action Meeting. The Charter Schools Office's evaluation report related to the revised application for the Early College Charter School of Philadelphia is linked [here](#).

**Final Action Item Attached

Office Originating Request:

Board of Education

Action Item - 51

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**Final Action Item Attached

Office Originating Request:

Board of Education

Re: Application for a New Charter School -- Early College Charter School of Philadelphia

WHEREAS, on or about November 15, 2024, the Philadelphia Middle College Foundation (“Applicant”) submitted an application (“Application”) for the Early College Charter School of Philadelphia to the Charter Schools Office of The School District of Philadelphia (“School District”) to start a charter school, and public hearings were held on the Application on December 19, 2024, and January 24, 2025; and

WHEREAS, by Action Item 27, approved on February 27, 2024, the Board of Education denied the Application and adopted an adjudication in support of the denial; and

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2025, the Applicant submitted a revised application (“Revised Application”) to the Charter Schools Office, and the Charter Schools Office evaluated the Revised Application and issued an evaluation report (“Evaluation Report”), and the Board of Education reviewed the Revised Application and the Evaluation Report; now be it

RESOLVED, that, pursuant to the representations, statements and materials contained in the Application, the Revised Application and the concluding document submitted by the Applicant, and the representations and statements made by the Applicant during the public hearings, the Board of Education hereby grants a Charter to Early College Charter School of Philadelphia (“Early College”) to operate a public charter school serving Grade 6 through Grade 12 enrolling a maximum of 784 students at scale for a five-year period commencing on July 1, 2026 and ending on June 30, 2031, effective upon the full execution of a Charter Agreement by the School District and by the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Charter School (“Charter Board”) or another member of the Charter Board duly designated by the Charter Board; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Application and the Revised Application shall be incorporated into the Charter Agreement, which is standard for charter schools in Philadelphia; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Charter Agreement for Early College will include the following terms and conditions which are standard for charter schools in Philadelphia:

1. The Board of Trustees shall ensure that all trustees, officers, administrators, and the immediate family of trustees, officers and administrators of the Charter School comply with the Charter School Law, the Pennsylvania Public Official and Employee Ethics Act (“Ethics Act”), and the Pennsylvania Nonprofit Corporation Law of 1988

("Nonprofit Law"). The Board of Trustees shall adopt a Conflicts of Interest policy that complies with the Ethics Act and the Nonprofit Law.

2. The Board of Trustees shall elect Board officers, shall hold Board members to established term lengths and limits, shall ensure that the Board has at least five (5) Board members, shall ensure that at least one (1) Board member is a parent or guardian of a child currently attending the Charter School, shall ensure that the Board has an independent audit committee, and shall fill open Board seats in a timely fashion, in accordance with the Charter School's Bylaws and the Charter School Law. The Charter School's website must include a list of all individuals serving on the Board of Trustees and include direct email addresses for each individual. On an annual basis, the Charter School shall provide to the School District an updated list of the members of the Board of Trustees either by Epicenter or any subsequent School District system.

3. The Board of Trustees shall hold regular public meetings at least six (6) times every school year. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Board of Trustees shall meet to take action in a timely manner in accordance with this Charter, Applicable Laws (as defined in the Charter), and the Charter School's Student Code of Conduct, but no less frequently than necessary to act on student discipline matters within forty-five (45) days after any infraction or hearing as required by Applicable Laws.

4. The Board of Trustees shall adopt an Admissions Policy and Process which complies with the Public School Code and Charter School Law. Additionally, the Admissions Policy and Process:

- a. shall include provisions on: (i) application deadlines; (ii) enrollment preferences, order and allocation of preferences, and methods by which preferences would be identified; (iii) student recruitment procedures and communications, including details on methods to be used to recruit students Citywide or in an applicable attendance zone, and to monitor any specified enrollment targets; (iv) lottery dates, and (v) communication of lottery results, in a form and with provisions that are acceptable to the Charter Schools Office;
- b. shall provide that the application will be made clearly and plainly available on the Charter School's website in English, Spanish, and any additional language the Charter School deems appropriate without any barriers to enrollment requiring technology;
- c. shall provide that families will have at least four (4) weeks to complete and submit enrollment packets in person or digitally after lottery acceptance; with exceptions made for extenuating circumstances for families with language barriers;
- d. shall provide that an ordered, up-to-date waitlist be continuously maintained, reflecting at any given time the next eligible student to be offered admission in each grade served by the Charter School, identifying any applicable

preference(s) for each student, and indicating the date any student is removed from the waitlist with the reason for removal;

e. shall provide that if seats open during the school year for any grade served by the school or between school years for grades served other than the initial grade, the Charter School shall accept new students from the waiting list in appropriate order for particular grades or new applicants if there are no applicants for that grade on the waiting list; and

f. shall provide that the Charter School shall provide a copy of its current waiting list at any time during the Term of the Charter within ten (10) business days after request by the Charter Schools Office.

5. The Board of Trustees shall submit to the School District by August 1st of each year during the Term of the Charter as part of the Charter School's Annual Report, or separately if not included in the Charter School's Annual Report, evidence that all professional staff providing educational services at the Charter School have all necessary licenses, certifications, qualifications and credentials required by this Charter and Applicable Laws, including without limitation the seventy-five percent (75%) certification requirement in accordance with the Charter School Law, and identify the number of all certified special education and English as a Second Language personnel with direct instruction responsibilities.

6. The Board of Trustees shall ensure that (i) all employees have required federal and state criminal and child abuse background checks during the Term of the Charter; and (ii) copies of such background checks are kept in each employee's personnel file. Preferably, the Charter School's annual financial audit will include an annual review of a sample of employee files for appropriate clearances and background checks.

7. The Board of Trustees shall ensure that required payments to the Public School Employees' Retirement System ("PSERS") are made timely. If the Charter School fails to make timely payments to PSERS and that results in a reduction of the School District's basic education subsidy, the School District shall withhold such reduction in a future monthly per-pupil payment to the Charter School. Additionally, any failure to make required PSERS payments above a threshold established by the Charter Schools Office or in any amount repeatedly shall result in the issuance of a Notice of Deficiency.

8. The Board of Trustees shall submit to the Charter Schools Office signed, complete, and accurate Statements of Financial Interest, pursuant to guidelines established by the Charter Schools Office and in compliance with Charter School Law. These documents are required by the Ethics Act and the Charter School Law to be completed annually for each Board member on the Board's roster for that calendar year and for the calendar year after the Board member leaves the Board.

9. The Board of Trustees shall ensure that the dates, times, and locations of scheduled Board meetings are posted on the Charter School's website and that any updates to the Board meeting schedule are posted timely. Furthermore, minutes from Board meetings shall be posted on the Charter School's website within two weeks of approval by the Board of Trustees, but not later than after the conclusion of a second consecutive board meeting after each meeting, and shall remain posted for a minimum of one year from the date of the Board meeting.

10. The Board of Trustees agrees that the Charter School shall participate in the School District's charter school performance framework and monitoring system ("Charter School Performance Framework"). The Charter School Performance Framework includes an annual assessment of the Charter School's academic, financial, and organizational performance as well as compliance with Applicable Laws. Organizational performance includes, but is not limited to, a review of the Charter School's admissions and enrollment policies and practices, student discipline practices, special education programming, EL programming, and Board of Trustees governance in order to assess compliance with the Charter and Applicable Laws, federal, state and local guidance, policies, and Charter Schools Office procedures. Financial performance includes, but is not limited to, a review of the Charter School's financial health and long-term sustainability, and generally accepted standards of fiscal management.

11. The Charter School agrees to provide or allow to be provided to the School District and the Charter Schools Office all records, including student level academic performance, necessary to properly assess the academic success, organizational compliance and viability, and financial health and sustainability of the Charter School under the Charter School Performance Framework, timely and pursuant to Charter Schools Office procedures.

12. The Charter School acknowledges that achieving the performance objectives identified in the Charter School Performance Framework is critical to meeting the needs of public school students in Philadelphia. The Charter School shall actively monitor its own progress towards achieving objectives identified in the Charter School Performance Framework. The Charter Schools Office may also evaluate any or all of the performance domains – academic, organizational and financial – on an annual basis formally.

13. During the Term of the Charter, changes to the Charter School Performance Framework may be made as a result of changes to Applicable Laws, changes to charter school data availability, and as a result of needed adjustments to academic, financial and organizational assessment criteria as required by the Board of Education. In the event of such changes to the Charter School Performance Framework, the Charter Schools Office will provide reasonable advance notice to charter schools and solicit feedback on the aforesaid changes prior to implementation of such change.;

And be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, in accordance with the Revised Application, the Charter School will enroll students only in Grade 6 to Grade 12 with a maximum of 784 students as set forth below during the Term of the Charter, unless the School District and the Charter School agree in writing to other terms which are agreed to by the Board of Education:

School Years	Grades Served	Maximum Authorized Enrollment
2026-27	6, 9	224
2027-28	6-7, 9-10	448
2028-29	6-11	672
2029-30	6-12	784
2030-31	6-12	784

Under no circumstances will the Charter School request payment from the School District or the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for more students than set forth above nor enroll students in different grades including Kindergarten, without Board of Education approval by action item; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Charter Agreement will include provisions outlining certain required documentation prior to the Fall 2026 opening of the charter school (“Preopening Documentation”) including, but not limited to, documentation related to: (i) adopted Charter Board policies concerning student admissions and enrollment, student code of conduct, special education, English as Second Language (“ESL”), and health services; (ii) agreements with the Community College of Philadelphia and JEVs Human Services for services to be provided to the Charter School; (iii) evidence of sufficient staffing and certification of special education and ESL staff; (iv) evidence of hiring of school principal and school nurse; (v) evidence that all employees have required background checks and clearances in compliance with Applicable Laws; (vi) evidence of compliant lottery and waitlist procedures and processes; (vii) evidence of complaint initial lottery and enrollment of students for the 2026-2027 school year; and (viii) evidence of required training for Charter Board members and compliance with Charter School Law, Sunshine Act, and Ethics Act requirements.

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