

HB 581 -- CHARTER SCHOOLS

SPONSOR: Roeber

This bill changes provisions relating to charter schools.

The bill restricts a political subdivision from targeting a charter school with an ordinance or policy that limits the acquisition or use of property by a charter school or for educational purposes (Section 67.139, RSMo).

This bill expands where a charter school may be established to include;

- (1) Any county with a charter form of government;
- (2) Any city with a population greater than 30,000; or
- (3) Any school district accredited without provisions.

Currently, a charter school is authorized to operate in a school district that has been classified as provisionally accredited. This bill allows any school district to establish a charter school with community support, as long as the school board of the district approves and agrees to act as the sponsor.

If the school board denies a proposal, the charter school may appeal to the Missouri Charter Public School Commission which may approve and sponsor the charter school if sufficient community support exists.

The bill removes provisions relating to "workplace charter schools."

Any sponsor of a charter school that fails to receive renewal of its charter after the three-year term shall not sponsor any new charter schools until the State Board of Education has determined that the sponsor was in compliance for any charter school it sponsored at the time a charter school failed to receive renewal (Section 160.400).

This bill states that an underperforming school includes those in which the percentage of the charter school's students who perform proficient and advanced on the annual statewide system of assessments in English language arts and mathematics is lower than the average percentage of grade-level-equivalent students in district in which it is located who perform proficient and advanced in English language arts and mathematics.

A charter school is not considered underperforming if the average rate of growth in English language arts and mathematics on the annual statewide assessment is higher than the average rate of growth for grade-level-equivalent students in the school district or is comprised of high risk students of which 50% or more were previously considered dropouts (Section 160.404).

This bill allows a charter school to renew for a five-year term. A sponsor's renewal process for a charter school, other than one in which 50% or more of the school's students were previously considered dropouts, shall consider if the school met the performance standard in two of the three consecutive years immediately before the renewal decision is made.

If the charter school did not meet the standard in that period, any renewal granted shall be for only a three-year term. If the school again fails to meet the standard for two years of the three-year term, the school's charter shall not be renewed (Section 160.405).

This bill provides that a nonresident student may enroll in a charter school, but may not cause a resident student to be denied admission.

The bill also specifies information that a charter school must publish on its website (Section 160.410).

This bill distinguishes the funding for a charter school that is not declared a local educational agency from those that are. The bill further changes the law regarding how state aid and tuition are determined for each, as specified in the bill (Section 160.415).