



Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools

Change in Authorizer Application

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Introduction

The Minnesota Guild (Guild) encourages charter schools in search of a new authorizer to submit a change in authorizer application for potential inclusion in the Guild’s portfolio of schools. This change in authorizer process and application is based on statutory provisions in [Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 124E, Section 10, Subdivision 5](#).

Subd. 5. Mutual nonrenewal. *If the authorizer and the board of directors of a charter school serving enrolled students mutually agree not to renew the contract, or if the governing board of an approved authorizer votes to withdraw as an approved authorizer for a reason unrelated to any cause under subdivision 4, a change in authorizers is allowed. The authorizer and the school board must jointly submit a written and signed letter of their intent to the commissioner to mutually not renew the contract. The authorizer that is a party to the existing contract must inform the proposed authorizer about the fiscal, operational, and student performance status of the school, including unmet contract outcomes and other outstanding contractual obligations. The charter contract between the proposed authorizer and the school must identify and provide a plan to address any outstanding obligations from the previous contract. The proposed authorizer must submit the proposed contract at least 105 business days before the end of the existing charter contract. The commissioner has 30 business days to review and make a determination on the change in authorizer. The proposed authorizer and the school have 15 business days to respond to the determination and address any issues identified by the commissioner. The commissioner must make a final determination no later than 45 business days before the end of the current charter contract. If the commissioner does not approve a change in authorizer, the school and the current authorizer may withdraw their letter of nonrenewal and enter into a new contract. If the commissioner does not approve a change in authorizer and the current authorizer and the school do not withdraw their letter and enter into a new contract, the school must be dissolved according to applicable law and the terms of the contract.*

Application Timeline:

Upon receipt of a change in authorizer application, the Guild staff will review submitted materials and conduct a site visit to determine if the school meets the Guild’s transfer standards reflected in the review rubric at the end of this document. Should the school clearly not meet the required threshold in any area below, it will not be invited to join the Guild’s portfolio.

The Guild has established the following change in authorizer deadlines based on the timeline outlined in statute:

- September 1 – Change in authorizer application due to the Guild.
- September - Guild reviews application against requirements.
- October – Site visit conducted at application school, which includes observing a board meeting.
- November – The Guild will make an initial decision and notify the school of any negotiation items that need to be addressed before a transfer contract can be prepared.
- December – The Guild and school negotiate final transfer terms, construct a transfer contract and the Guild staff prepare a recommendation to the Guild board.
- January– The Guild board makes a final decision regarding the transfer application.
- January 31st – Deadline to submit change in authorizer request to MDE.
- Late February/Early March - MDE responds to change in authorizer request
- Late March (15 business days after MDE’s response) - Guild and school address any issues identified by MDE
- Late April - MDE makes a final determination
- May - Finalize any remaining contract components/negotiations
- June - Change in authorizer contract executed by the Guild and school
- July 1st - Contract begins

If any deadline date falls on a weekend or non-business day, the deadline moves to the following business day. Failure to meet the deadlines may result in disqualification of the application.

The Guild is committed to growing its portfolio of high quality charter schools. While the expected plan is to consider change in authorizer applications annually, the Guild board maintains the final decision regarding whether or not an

annual application process is conducted. Factors such as the number of schools undergoing their renewal process, recent new charter school approvals, current capacity, etc. may be cause to forego an annual application process for that year. This discretion is essential for the Guild to both effectively oversee its current portfolio and obligations, and make changes in authorizer decisions to promote a portfolio of high quality schools.

Step One: Complete the Change in Authorizer Form

Please submit the Change in Authorizer Form ([below on page](#)) no later than September 1st in the year before the school plans to transfer.

Step Two: Site Visit

The Guild will contact the school's current authorizer and visit the school site in October. The site visit provides an important opportunity to provide information to the school about the Guild's authorizing processes and to review and verify the information in the school's evaluations completed by the school's current authorizer. School performance and compliance information in the areas of academics, governance and finance are also reviewed so that accurate and complete information can be evaluated using the Guild's performance standards and compliance indicators and the review rubric below.

Please see the [Guild's Performance Standards and Compliance Indicators](#) as this will inform the Guild's evaluation of the change in authorizer site visit.

Step Three: Guild Board Decision

In November the Guild board will determine whether to approve the transfer using the results in the rubric below. If a school receives a "Beginning" rating, it will no longer be considered. If a school receives an "Approaching" rating, it may be further considered if the school provides additional data demonstrating increases in one or more performance areas in the review rubric below. A school that receives a "Meets" rating for all three performance areas and has no identified concerns will be considered for approval by the Guild board.



Change in Authorizer Form

Name of School:

Address:

School Leader:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Board Chair:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Current Authorizer:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Does the school currently contract with a charter management organization or company for school management or operation?

Yes

No

Date of school incorporation:	
Date when charter was first granted:	
Expiration date of current contract:	
What grades is the charter school approved for?	
What grades does the charter school currently serve?	
Number of students currently served:	
Percentage of free or reduced lunch:	
Percentage of ELL/ESL students:	
Percentage of special education students:	

Why do you want to change your authorizer?

Please note: the Guild will also contact your current authorizer.

Have you applied to any other authorizer?

Please explain your status with any other application.

Name of each individual in the board of directors and the management team (if the charter school has one- could include assistant directors, program managers, lead teachers, etc.):

Name:	Role:	Current Employment:	Does this person currently operate any other school, or are they employed by any other school? Please describe.

Identify any organizations, agencies, consultants or institutions of higher education that are partners of this charter school, along with a brief description of their role and any other resources they have contributed to the school:

In addition to the Change in Authorizer Form, please provide the following attachments:

- Resumes for lead administrator and board members
- Articles of incorporation
- Bylaws
- Current Authorizer contract
- Audited financial statements for the last 3 years
- Annual Report for the last 3 years
- Standardized student test results for the last 3 years, if not included in annual reports
- The most recent data on stakeholder satisfaction and perceptions of safety (e.g. surveys, focus groups, etc), if not included in annual reports
- Current agreement with management company (if applicable)
- The most recent contract renewal evaluation that the school's current authorizer completed
- A description of any past or pending complaints, investigations, interventions, corrective action or lawsuit

Please email the completed Change in Authorizer Form and all attachments to jim.zacchini@guildschools.org by September 1st of the year before the school plans to transfer. Upon receipt of the Change in Authorizer Form, the Guild will follow up to verify receipt and schedule a site visit within 30 days to provide information to the school about the Guild's mission, vision, beliefs, and authorizing processes and review the school's evaluations and performance in the areas of academics, governance/operations and finance compared to the Guild Performance Framework standards.



Change in Authorizer Application Review Rubric

Date:

School Name and Charter Number:

Performance Area	Beginning: Evidence clearly shows the school does not meet the Guild’s change in authorizer standards. The school will not be invited to join the Guild’s portfolio.	Approaches: Evidence is unclear. The school must provide additional information before being invited to join the Guild’s portfolio.	Meets: Evidence clearly shows the school meets the Guild’s change in authorizer standards and is invited to join the Guild’s portfolio.
Academic: A longitudinal record of demonstrated student academic performance and growth on statewide assessments under chapter 120B, on other academic assessments that measure longitudinal student performance and growth approved by the charter school's board of directors and agreed upon with your current authorizer in your charter contract.			
Guild Evaluative Analysis:			
Financial: A history of sound school finances in terms of financial management and financial health.			
Guild Evaluative Analysis:			

Operations: A history of sound school operations, governance, and compliance.			
Guild Evaluative Analysis:			
Overall Evaluation			
Strengths: Areas for Improvement: Questions:			