HOUSE BILL NO. HB0101

Education-charter schools.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Wilson, Eklund and Freeman and Senator(s) Emerich and Pappas

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to charter schools; authorizing the

2 community college commission to oversee and approve the

3 operation of charter schools; requiring training;

4 eliminating school district approval of the operation of

5 charter schools; creating an application fee; providing

6 transition for existing charter schools; providing an

7 appropriation; and providing effective dates.

8

9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

10

11 **Section 1.** W.S. 21-3-110(a)(x)(A)(I), 21-3-302(a) by

12 creating new paragraphs (iii) through (v) and by

13 renumbering (iii) through (vi) as (vi) through (ix),

 $14 \quad 21-3-303(a) \text{ and } (d), \quad 21-3-304(b), \quad (d), \quad (f), \quad (g), \quad (n) \quad and$

15 (o), 21-3-305(a), (c) through (e), 21-3-306(a), (b) and by

1

- 1 creating new subsections (d) and (e), 21-3-307(a)(intro),
- 2 (i), (viii), (xi), (xiv), (xxi), (b), (d) and by creating a
- 3 new subsection (e), 21-3-308(a), (c), (d), (e) (v) and (g),
- 4 21-3-309(a), (b), (c)(intro), (ii), (d) and (e), 21-3-310,
- 5 21-3-312, 21-3-314(c)(intro), and 21-18-202(c) by creating
- 6 a new paragraph (ix) are amended to read:

8 21-3-110. Duties of boards of trustees.

9

- 10 (a) The board of trustees in each school district
- 11 shall:

12

- 13 (x) Subject to review by the school facilities
- 14 department under W.S. 21-15-115 for any project involving
- 15 state capital construction assistance, fix the site of each
- 16 school building and facility considering the needs of the
- 17 people of each portion of the district. If the district
- 18 enters into an agreement to lease buildings and facilities
- 19 owned by the district and the buildings and facilities are
- 20 included within the statewide database maintained by the
- 21 school facilities department under W.S. 21-15-123(f)(iv),
- 22 the district shall, except as provided under W.S.
- 23 21-15-109(c)(i)(A)(II) and (III) and (B), ensure the lease

1 agreement requires sufficient payment from the lessee to 2 cover expenses necessary to adequately maintain the

3 facility or building in accordance with statewide adequacy

4 standards prescribed by the commission. If the district

5 enters into an agreement to lease buildings and facilities

6 under which the district is the lessee and the building is

7 to be used for the provision of the required educational

8 program within the district, the lease agreement shall

9 require the lessor to adequately maintain the buildings and

10 facilities in accordance with standards prescribed by the

11 commission. The district shall be reimbursed for the lease

12 payment if the square footage of the leased facility is not

13 included within the district's total square footage for

14 purposes of major maintenance computations under W.S.

15 21-15-109, subject to the following:

16

17 (A) If the lease payment is for educational

18 facilities used in the actual operation of a charter

19 school, the school facilities department shall pay the

20 district the contract amount approved by the department for

3

21 the lease payment by the charter school if:

22

```
1
                       (I) The charter is approved by the
2 district under W.S. 21-3-301 through 21-3-314;
3
        21-3-302. Definitions.
4
5
       (a) As used in this article:
 6
7
8
             (iii) "Charter school applicant" means any
    person or an organization who applies to the charter
9
10
    authorizer to establish a charter school;
11
12
             (iv) "Charter authorizer" means the Wyoming
13
    community college commission;
14
             (v) "Commission" means the Wyoming community
15
16
    college commission appointed pursuant to W.S. 21-18-201;
17
             (iii) (vi) "District board" means the board of
18
19
    trustees of a school district elected as the governing body
20
    of the school district;
21
             (iv) (vii) "New charter school" means a charter
22
```

23 school established within the district which is located in

4

15LSO-0097

23

a facility or a portion of a facility which is not 1 2 currently being operated by the district as a public 3 school; 4 5 (v) (viii) "School district" means each school district now or hereafter legally organized as a body 6 corporate pursuant to W.S. 21-3-101, et seq.; 7 8 9 (vi) (ix) "State board" means the state board of 10 education appointed pursuant to W.S. 21-2-301. 11 12 21-3-303. Charter school prohibitions. 13 (a) This article shall not prohibit any private 14 person or organization from funding or providing other 15 16 assistance for the establishment or operation of a charter school established pursuant to this article when the 17 18 district board charter authorizer determines the funding or 19 assistance is compatible with the mission of the district 20 state education system. 21 (d) No charter school shall enter into a contract 22

with an independent management company without the prior

1 written consent of the $\frac{district\ board.\ The\ school\ district}{district}$

2 shall be a third party beneficiary to any management

3 contract approved by the district board charter authorizer.

4

5 21-3-304. Charter school; requirements; authority.

6

7 (b) A charter school shall be a public school within
8 the school district that grants its charter and shall be
9 accountable to the district board charter authorizer for
10 purposes of ensuring compliance with applicable laws and
11 charter provisions and the requirements of the state

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

12

constitution.

(d) A charter school shall be administered and governed by a governing body in a manner agreed to by the charter school applicant and the school district charter authorizer. A charter school may organize as a nonprofit corporation pursuant to the Wyoming Nonprofit Corporation Act, which shall not affect its status as a public school for any purposes under Wyoming law.

21

20

22 (f) Notwithstanding the provisions of this article to 23 the contrary, a charter school and the school district

1 charter authorizer may agree to extend the length of the

2 charter beyond five (5) years for the purpose of enhancing

3 the terms of any lease or financial obligation.

4

(g) Pursuant to contract, a charter school 5 operate free from specified school district policies and 6 state regulations. Pursuant to contract, a school district 7 may waive locally imposed school district requirements, 8 without seeking approval of the state board. The state 9 10 board may waive state statutory requirements or rules 11 promulgated by the state board, except that the state board 12 shall not waive any statute or rule relating to the 13 assessments or standards required to be administered. Upon request of the charter applicant, the state board shall 14 provide summaries of such regulations and policies to use 15 16 in preparing a charter school application. The department of education shall prepare the summary of state regulations 17 18 within existing appropriations. Any waiver of state or 19 local school district regulations made pursuant to this 20 subsection shall be for the term of the charter for which 21 the waiver is made, except that a waiver of state statutes 22 or regulations by the state board shall be subject to 23 review every two (2) years by the state board and may be

7

НВ0101

1 revoked if the waiver is deemed no longer necessary by the

2 state board.

3

4 (n) All decisions regarding the planning, siting and

5 inspection of charter school facilities shall be made in

6 accordance with law and as specified by contract with the

7 district board charter authorizer.

8

9 (o) The school district in which the approved charter

10 school is located shall be the owner of all records of the

11 charter school, including student, staff and public affairs

12 records of charter school operations. Upon closure of the

13 charter school, all charter school records shall be

14 promptly delivered to the school district.

15

16 21-3-305. Charter schools; contract contents;

17 regulations.

18

19 (a) An approved charter application shall serve as

20 the basis for a contract between the charter school and the

21 school district charter authorizer.

22

(c) The contract between the charter school and the 1 2 school district charter authorizer shall reflect all 3 approved requests for release of the charter school from 4 state statutes and regulations. Within ten (10) days after the contract is approved by the school district charter 5 authorizer, any request for release from state statutes and 6 regulations shall be delivered by the school district 7 8 charter school applicant to the state board and a copy of 9 the request shall be provided to the school district in 10 which the approved charter school is located. Within forty-11 five (45) days after a request for release is received by 12 the state board, the state board shall either grant or deny 13 the request. If the state board grants the request, it may 14 orally notify the school district charter authorizer and the charter school of its decision. If the state board 15 16 denies the request, it shall notify the school district 17 charter authorizer and the charter school in writing that 18 the request is denied and specify the reasons for denial. 19 If the school district charter authorizer and the charter 20 school do not receive notice of the state board's decision 21 within forty-five (45) days after submittal of the request 22 for release, the request shall be deemed granted. If the 23 state board denies a request for release that includes

9

1 multiple state statutes or regulations, the denial shall

2 specify the state statutes and regulations for which the

3 release is denied, and the denial shall apply only to those

4 state statutes and regulations so specified.

5

6 (d) A material revision of the terms of the contract

7 shall be made only with the approval of the school district

8 charter authorizer and the governing body of the charter

9 school.

10

11 (e) The contract between the charter school and the

12 school district charter authorizer shall provide that upon

13 closure of the charter school any charter school assets

14 purchased with public funds shall become the property of

15 the school district in which the charter school is located.

16

17 21-3-306. Application for establishing charter

schools; conversion of existing schools.

19

18

20 (a) Any person or organization may apply to the

21 district board charter authorizer for the establishment of

22 a new charter school or a charter school within a school to

23 be located within the a school district.

2 (b) Administrators and teachers employed by the a 3 district, parents of students enrolled in the a district 4 and any special district advisory group comprised of 5 district residents may apply to the district board charter authorizer to convert an existing public school operating 6 within the a school district to a charter school. An 7 8 application filed under this subsection shall demonstrate 9 the support of not less than fifty percent (50%) of the 10 teachers employed by the school who teach at the school 11 proposed to be converted, and the parents of fifty percent 12 (50%) of all students attending the school proposed to be 13 converted.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

application, the applicant shall meet with the superintendent of the school district in which the charter school proposes to locate to discuss the contents of the application and any possible coordination between the applicant and the district for services. The application shall include an attestation signed by the applicant and the superintendent summarizing the topics discussed which at a minimum shall include the allocation of financial

resources under W.S. 21-3-314, student transportation, 1 2 special education services and educational facilities. 3 4 (e) An applicant shall submit the application to the charter authorizer and a copy of the application to the 5 6 superintendent and board of trustees of the school district in which the charter school proposes to operate. 7 8 9 21-3-307. Charter application; contents; phased-in 10 application process. 11 12 The charter school application shall be a (a) proposed agreement, shall be on a form prescribed by the 13 state superintendent charter authorizer pursuant to 14 15 subsection (d) of this section, and shall include: 16 17 (i) A description of the educational program of 18 the school, designed to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an educated 19 20 person in the twenty-first century and how learning best 21 occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, 22 23 competent and lifelong learners. The description shall

| 1 | identify the innovative programs and instructional methods |
|----|---|
| 2 | to be utilized and shall describe how the programs and |
| 3 | instructional methods differ from programs administered by |
| 4 | the school district in which the applicant proposes to |
| 5 | operate. The description shall specifically include |
| 6 | alternative schools, magnet programs and dual enrollment |
| 7 | programs that may be operated by the school district; |
| 8 | |
| 9 | (viii) The manner in which an annual audit of |
| 10 | the financial and programmatic operations of the school, |
| 11 | including any services provided by $\frac{1}{2}$ school district, |
| 12 | is to be conducted; |
| 13 | |
| 14 | (xi) A description of the rights of any employee |
| 15 | of the a school district upon leaving the employment of the |
| 16 | a school district to work in a charter school: and of any |
| 17 | rights upon returning to the school district after |
| 18 | employment at a charter school; |
| 19 | |
| 20 | (xiv) Evidence that the plan for the charter |
| 21 | school is economically sound: for both the charter school |
| 22 | and the school district; |
| 23 | |

1 (xxi) In accordance with this article, a 2 description of the rights of any employee of the a school 3 district upon commencing employment in a charter school; 4 and 5 (b) Upon submission of an application under W.S. 6 21-3-307(a), the superintendent of the school district 7 8 charter authorizer shall notify the applicant within thirty 9 (30) days of submission whether the application is 10 complete. If the district superintendent charter authorizer 11 determines that the application is incomplete, 12 superintendent charter authorizer shall advise the applicant of the reasons for the determination in 13 14 sufficient detail for the applicant to make changes for 15 resubmission of the application to the district 16 superintendent charter authorizer. 17 18 The state superintendent charter authorizer shall 19 through rule and regulation prescribe a uniform charter 20 school application and renewal application form to be used 21 by each district and charter school applicant for purposes of this article, and shall establish charter school 22 application review procedures, including timelines for 23

application components specified under subsection (a) of 1 2 this section. The phased application process prescribed by 3 state superintendent charter authorizer rule and regulation 4 may provide a process for mediation of disputes concerning completeness of an application between the applicant and 5 school district the charter authorizer, which would be 6 subject to W.S. 1-43-101 through 1-43-104, would allow 7 8 either party to initiate mediation and would impose costs of mediation equally upon both parties. Any mediation 9 10 process prescribed by rule shall specify professional 11 requirements for the impartial third party facilitating 12 mediation. If either party refuses to mediate, the dispute 13 may be appealed to the state board as provided in W.S. 14 21-3-310.

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

(e) The charter authorizer shall prescribe by rule and regulation an application fee in an amount not to exceed five thousand dollars (\$5000.00) that, to the extent practicable, generates a total revenue from the fees collected that approximates but does not exceed the direct and indirect costs of administering the regulatory provisions required under this article. Any fees collected

1 pursuant to this subsection shall be deposited into the

2 school foundation program account.

3

21-3-308. Hearing by charter authorizer; prohibited
5 actions; criteria; compliance with state standards; state
6 board review; contractual authority.

7

8 (a) Not later than thirty (30) days after receiving an application for any charter school which has been 9 10 determined to be complete pursuant to W.S. 21-3-307(b), the 11 district board charter authorizer shall hold a public 12 hearing on the application in the school district in which 13 the applicant proposes to operate, at which time the board 14 charter authorizer shall consider the level of community and parental support for the application if an application 15 16 for a new charter school, or the level of teacher and parental support if an application for a converted charter 17 18 school or charter school within a school. The public 19 hearing shall include the opportunity for comment by the 20 superintendent and the board of trustees of the school district in which the applicant proposes to operate. 21 22 Following review of the application and the public hearing, 23 if applicable, and in accordance with subsection (d) of

this section, the district board charter authorizer shall

1

21

22

23

is

indemnified to the

2 either approve or deny the application within sixty (60) 3 days of receipt. Approval under this article may be 4 conditioned for purposes specified under subsection (c) of this section. In addition, the board charter authorizer may 5 approve an application for the operation of a converted 6 charter school only if it determines teacher and parental 7 8 support for the conversion are established at the levels 9 required by W.S. 21-3-306(b). Prior to approving 10 application for a charter school under this section, the board charter authorizer shall approve and adopt the 11 12 content and terms of the contract as provided in W.S. 13 21-3-307. 14 15 The district board charter authorizer shall (C) 16 require the applicant to provide information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the school, 17 including but not limited to the facilities to be utilized 18 19 by the school, the manner in which administrative services 20 of the school are to be provided and a demonstration that

the school is adequately insured for liability, including

errors and omissions coverage, and that the school district

17 HB0101

fullest extent possible.

authorized under subsection (a) of this section, the 1 2 applicant may request the district board charter authorizer 3 and the **board**—charter authorizer may approve the charter 4 application subject to specified conditions which provide the applicant sufficient time to acquire necessary funding 5 for securing or otherwise finalizing arrangements for 6 facilities or equipment necessary for the operation of the 7 8 proposed school. In addition, the a school district board 9 may upon request of the applicant and approval of the 10 charter school application by the charter authorizer, make 11 available for use by the charter school any district 12 facility which is closed, not operational and otherwise 13 feasible for use as an educational building as defined under W.S. 21-15-109(a)(ii). 14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

(d) Upon the approval of any application by the district board charter authorizer, the applicant shall provide written notice of that approval including a copy of the application to the state superintendent and the superintendent and board of trustees of the school district in which the applicant proposes to operate. If the district board charter authorizer denies the application, the board charter authorizer shall not later than forty-five (45)

- 1 days following the date of its decision, notify the
- 2 applicant of the denial in writing together with its
- 3 reasons for denial.

- 5 (e) A charter school may contract for the provision
- 6 of services and property subject to the following:

7

- 8 (v) With the consent of $\frac{1}{2}$ school district,
- 9 the charter school may delegate the authority to negotiate
- 10 the contract or execute the contract, or both, to the a
- 11 school district.

12

- 13 (g) Charter schools shall at minimum meet the state
- 14 uniform educational program standards imposed upon public
- 15 schools by W.S. 21-9-101 and 21-9-102 and the uniform state
- 16 student content and performance standards prescribed by the
- 17 state board of education under W.S. 21-2-304, including
- 18 compliance with requirements under the statewide assessment
- 19 system pursuant to W.S. 21-2-304 (a) (v).

20

- 21 21-3-309. Length of operation under charter; renewal;
- 22 revocation.

23

1 (a) A charter may be granted pursuant to this article
2 for a period not to exceed five (5) years and may be
3 renewed for successive periods not to exceed five (5) years
4 for each renewal period. A material revision of the
5 provisions of a charter petition may be made only with the
6 approval of the local board charter authorizer granting the
7 charter.

8

9 (b) A charter school renewal application submitted to
10 the school district charter authorizer shall be on a form
11 prescribed by the state superintendent charter authorizer
12 pursuant to W.S. 21-3-307(d) and shall contain:

13

14 (i) A report on the progress of the charter 15 school in achieving the goals, objectives, 16 performance standards, content standards and other terms of the initial approved charter application. The report shall 17 18 include the demographics of the student population, student 19 performance information on the statewide assessment and 20 information related to the success or failure of the 21 innovative programs or instructional methods utilized; and

22

1 (ii) A financial statement that discloses the 2 costs of administration, instruction and other spending 3 categories for the charter school that is understandable to 4 the general public and that will allow comparison of such 5 costs to other schools or other comparable organizations, 6 in a format required by the state board charter authorizer. 7 8 (c) A charter may be revoked or not renewed by the 9 district board charter authorizer if the board charter 10 authorizer determines that the charter school did any of 11 the following: 12 13 (ii) Failed to meet or make reasonable progress 14 toward achievement of the content standards or pupil performance standards or failed to administer the 15 16 innovative programs or instructional methods identified in the charter application; 17 18 19 (d) A charter shall not be renewed 20 determination by the district board charter authorizer that 21 it is not in the interest of the pupils residing within the school district to continue the operation of the charter 22 school. 23

2 (e) If a <u>district board</u> the <u>charter authorizer</u>

3 revokes or does not renew a charter, the board charter

4 authorizer shall state its reasons for the revocation or

5 nonrenewal.

2015

6

7 21-3-310. Appeal; standard of review; procedures.

8

9 (a) A charter applicant or any other person who 10 wishes to appeal a decision of a district board the charter 11 authorizer concerning a charter school shall provide the state board and the district board charter authorizer with 12 13 a notice of appeal within forty-five (45) days after receiving the local board's charter authorizer's written 14 decision and reasons for denial. If the appeal is of a 15 16 denial, nonrenewal, or revocation of a charter, the person bringing the appeal shall limit the grounds of the appeal 17 18 to the grounds for denial specified by the district board charter authorizer. The notice shall include a brief 19 20 statement of the reasons the charter school applicant 21 contends the district board's charter authorizer's denial 22 was in error.

23

1 (b) If the notice of appeal, or the motion to review

2 by the state board, relates to a district board's charter

3 authorizer's decision to deny, refuse to renew, or revoke a

4 charter or to a district board's charter authorizer's

5 unilateral imposition of conditions that are unacceptable

6 to the charter school or the charter applicant, the appeal

7 and review process shall be as follows:

8

(i) Within sixty (60) days after receipt of the 9 10 notice of appeal or the making of a motion to review by the state board and after reasonable public notice, the state 11 12 board, at a public hearing which shall be held in the 13 school district in which the proposed charter school has applied for a charter, shall review the decision of the 14 district board charter authorizer and make its findings. If 15 16 the state board finds that the local board's charter authorizer's decision was contrary to the best interests of 17 the pupils, school district or community, the state board 18 19 shall remand such decision to the district board charter 20 authorizer with written instructions for reconsideration 21 thereof. The instructions shall include specific 22 recommendations concerning the matters requiring 23 reconsideration;

1 2 (ii) Within thirty (30) days following the 3 remand of a decision to the district board charter 4 authorizer and after reasonable public notice, the district 5 board charter authorizer, at a public hearing, shall reconsider its decision and make a final decision; 6 7 8 (iii) If the district board's charter 9 authorizer's final decision is still to deny, refuse to 10 renew or revoke a charter or to unilaterally impose conditions unacceptable to the charter school or the 11 12 charter applicant, a second notice of appeal may be filed 13 with the state board within thirty (30) days following such 14 final decision; 15 16 (iv) Within thirty (30) days following receipt of the second notice of appeal or the making of a motion 17 for a second review by the state board and after reasonable 18 19 public notice, the state board, at a public hearing, shall 20 determine whether the final decision of the district board 21 charter authorizer was contrary to the best interests of the pupils, school district or community. If such a finding 22

is made, the state board shall remand the final decision to

1 the local board charter authorizer with instructions to

2 approve the charter application. The decision of the state

3 board may require changes to the contract to be executed by

4 the charter school and the school district charter

5 authorizer.

6

7 21-3-312. Authorizer to report to state board.

8

9 Each district board granting a charter pursuant to this

10 article—The charter authorizer shall annually report to the

11 state board on each charter school operating within the

12 district, authorized regarding compliance with the

13 provisions of the charter <u>and outcomes of innovative</u>

14 programs and instructional methods and shall assure the

15 state board that students attending the charter school are

16 receiving an education consistent with the educational

17 opportunities available to all students within the school

18 district.

19

20 21-3-314. Students counted among district ADM;

21 determination of charter school funding.

22

| Τ | (c) As part of the charter school contract, the |
|----|---|
| 2 | charter school and the school district shall agree on |
| 3 | funding and identify any services to be provided by the |
| 4 | school district to the charter school <u>and the allocation of</u> |
| 5 | resources between a school district and the charter school |
| 6 | for funding generated by the education resource block grant |
| 7 | model for the students attending the charter school. The |
| 8 | charter school and the school district shall begin |
| 9 | discussions on the contract funding allocation using the |
| 10 | following revenue assumptions: |
| 11 | |
| 12 | 21-18-202. Powers and duties of the commission. |
| 13 | |
| 14 | (c) The commission shall perform the following |
| 15 | administrative functions: |
| 16 | |
| 17 | (ix) Serve as the charter authorizer and perform |
| 18 | the duties required under W.S. 21-3-301 through 21-3-314. |
| 19 | In administration of these duties, every member of the |
| 20 | commission shall receive at least four (4) hours of |
| 21 | professional development training during every term served |
| 22 | on the best practices for charter school operation, |
| 23 | subjects may include charter school finance and governance. |

2 **Section 2.** W.S. 21-3-305(b) and 21-3-307(c) are

3 repealed.

4

5 Section 3.

application.

6

(a) Notwithstanding sections 1 and 2 of this act, 7 8 charter schools approved prior to the effective date of 9 this act shall continue to operate under the oversight of 10 the authorizing school district until such time as a 11 renewal application is required. Upon the requirement of 12 renewal, the charter school shall submit the renewal 13 application in accordance with the Wyoming community college commission's rules and regulations and the 14 commission shall make a determination in accordance with 15 16 this act regarding the renewal of the charter school

18

17

19 (b) Upon the effective date of this act, all charter
20 school applicants shall comply with the provisions of this
21 act and submit the application to the commission for review
22 and possible approval as prescribed by this act.

23

1 Section 4.

2

3 (a) There is appropriated fifty thousand dollars 4 (\$50,000.00) from the school foundation program account to 5 Wyoming community college commission. This the appropriation shall be for the period beginning July 1, 6 2015 and ending June 30, 2016. This appropriation shall 7 8 only be expended for the purpose of administering the provisions of this act. Notwithstanding any other 9 10 provision of law, this appropriation shall not be 11 transferred or expended for any other purpose and any 12 unexpended, unobligated funds remaining from this appropriation shall revert as provided by law on June 30, 13 2016. This appropriation shall not be included in the 14 community college commission's 2017-2018 standard biennial 15

17

16

(b) Rules and regulations of the commission shall be promulgated in sufficient time to enable implementation of this act by July 1, 2015.

21

22 Section 5.

budget request.

23

1 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this

2 section this act is effective July 1, 2015.

3

4 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section,

5 Section 4(b) of this act is effective immediately upon

6 completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law

7 as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of this Wyoming

8 Constitution.

9

10 (END)