

All staff votes for converting a traditional public school to a public charter school should be transparent and fair and should accurately represent the opinion of school staff.

To this end, the Department has developed the following model process that districts may assign to all groups interested in applying for a Type 3 charter school. The model process respects the fact that every community is different and that local groups should be empowered to customize the process in a way that works for their community, assuming it meets the basic criteria for a fair and open process.

The Department has also developed a model ballot for districts, which can be found [here](#).

Model Standards for All Conversion Processes

Voters free from intimidation, harassment, and other forms of interference

Votes should not take place in a public space where individual voters are not given the privacy to vote their conscience, but an independent third party should be able to monitor the process so as to ensure its overall integrity.

Unbiased voting process:

- The date of the vote should be approved by the district and publicized
- The voting process should be managed by an applicant-appointed, district-approved third party
- Process management includes the counting of votes

Anonymity:

Ballots must be secret

Steps to conducting a process

The conversion process must be initiated by a local group seeking to charter a school. Groups interested in applying for a Type 3 charter should communicate to the primary charter contact listed on the district’s website how they propose to run the process in accordance with the requirements in law and the standards listed above.

1. The district approves each proposed plan for running the process and supervises its implementation. Votes conducted without district approval will not count towards the conversion process.
2. The district should also be empowered to assess the validity of any challenge to the process.

Process Timeline

The timeline should ensure that all parties receive adequate notification before a vote.

Date	Event
Three weeks before vote	Charter group notifies the district of proposed vote date and third party
Two weeks before vote	District approves vote date and the third party
One week before vote	Voters notified of vote date
Vote date *	Staff vote

* Vote should occur at least one day prior to the charter application deadline and after the October 1 count date

Absentee Voting

The absentee voting process should meet all three standards described above. On voting day, after all votes have been collected but before any votes have been counted, absentee votes should be mixed randomly into the pool of votes.

Lodging Complaints about the voting process

A complaint may be filed by a voter or the charter group. The complaint should take the form of a letter emailed to the primary charter contact listed on the district's website within one week of the vote. The letter should identify at least one of the three standards that has been violated or one of the following legal requirements, as described on the voting form:

- No person shall:
- Forge the signature of another or sign the ballot using a false name;
 - Damage, destroy, or alter a ballot that a non-profit is attempting to circulate or a faculty or staff member is attempting to sign;
 - Harass, threaten, deceive, or intimidate faculty or staff members related to signing a ballot; or
 - Offer or give anything of value to a faculty or staff member in exchange for signing or not signing this ballot.

The burden is on the complainant to provide evidence that one of the four criteria or one of the four legal requirements has been violated. All complaints will be evaluated by the district. If a complaint is found to be valid and the violation could have been reasonably expected to change the outcome of the vote, the district will have the authority to nullify the results of the initial vote and authorize a new vote at the school, even if it is in the same school year.