

BILL SUMMARY
1st Session of the 59th Legislature

Bill No.:	SB 516
Version:	ENGR
Request Number:	
Author:	Rep. Echols
Date:	4/10/2023
Impact:	No Impact

Research Analysis

The engrossed version of SB 516 abolishes the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board and transfers its powers and duties to a newly created Statewide Charter School Board which will have the sole authority to sponsor statewide virtual charter schools and may also sponsor brick and mortar charter schools. Once established, the Statewide Charter School Board will assume sponsorship of all existing virtual charter schools, and any charter school sponsored by the State Board of Education, for the remainder of their contracts.

The Board will be comprised of nine members:

3 appointed by the Governor;
2 appointed by the Senate Pro Tem;
2 appointed by the House Speaker;
The State Superintendent; and
The state auditor

Any brick and mortar charter school applicant must first seek sponsorship from their local school district. If denied twice, they can submit an application to any other eligible sponsor, including the Statewide Charter School Board. A virtual charter school applicant may only seek sponsorship from the Statewide Charter School Board.

Any initial charter contract will be effective for five years, and may be renewed for up to 10-year terms. Prior to renewal, a sponsor may require a charter school to develop a corrective action plan if it finds weaknesses or concerns within the school. If the school does not meet the requirements of the corrective plan, the sponsor may revoke or not renew the charter contract.

Further, the measure:

- Allows accredited private colleges and universities to sponsor charter schools;
- Removes the authority of a CareerTech to sponsor a charter school;
- Limits the Statewide Charter School Board to sponsoring no more than five new charter school each year in counties with fewer than 500,000 people;
- Removes the requirement for community support;
- Requires any charter school application to include a copy of the proposed contract between the governing board of a charter school and the educational management organization, if there is one;
- Authorizes sponsors to approve or deny contracts between a charter school governing board and an educational management organization;
- Requires any new or renewed sponsor to complete a training on sponsorship duties;

- Authorizes the Board to request an audit of any charter school it oversees from the State Auditor;
- Requires the governing boards of all charter schools to meet monthly;
- Requires any charter school governing board to notify its sponsor within 10 days in the instance of any significant adverse actions or material finding of noncompliance;
- Requires any charter school contract to include a performance framework that a sponsor shall use to annually evaluate the school. The sponsor may develop a separate performance framework to evaluate a charter school designated as an alternative education program. The framework shall serve as the minimum requirement for performance evaluation and shall include an assessment of academic proficiency, growth, attendance, recurrent enrollment, audit findings or deficiencies, and accreditation and timely reporting, among other things.
- Prohibits a charter school governing board from combining the accounting, budgeting, enrollment, admissions, recordkeeping and operational decisions of more than one charter school;
- Prohibits a charter school from entering into an employment contract with a teacher until a sponsorship contract has been established;
- Allows the governing board of the charter sponsor to establish reasonable preopening requirements to monitor the start-up progress of newly approved charter schools;
- Prohibits students enrolled in full-time virtual charters from participating in any OSSAA Activities;
- Prohibits the Statewide Charter School Board from charging an administrative fee to any schools it sponsors;
- Requires other charter sponsors to use administrative fees for providing oversight of the school; and
- Subjects charter schools to the same administrative spending caps that public schools are subject to. The measure requires payment for an education management organization to be included in administrative costs.

Lastly, the measure repeals these sections of law:

[Section 3-135 - Sponsor Contract Guidelines](#)

[Section 3-145.1 - Statewide Virtual Charter School Board](#)

[Section 3-145.2 - Meetings - Quorum - Reimbursement](#)

[Section 3-145.3 - Powers and Duties](#)

[Section 3-145.4 - Authority to Promulgate Rules](#)

Prepared By: Emily Byrne

Fiscal Analysis

As written, the measure is not anticipated to result in a negative fiscal impact on the budget or state appropriations.

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Other Considerations

None.

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