

HB 842 -- Charter Schools

Sponsor: Brooks

This bill allows any four-year college with an approved teacher preparation program to sponsor a charter school if approved by the State Board of Education. Charter school governing board members are considered to be decision-making public servants for financial disclosure purposes and must live in the metropolitan area in which the charter school is located. Companies managing charter schools are to be considered quasi-public governmental bodies subject to the Sunshine Law. Nonprofit corporations managing charter schools must maintain a surety bond in an amount no less than the total school aid funds to be received during the year.

The bill clarifies what items must be submitted in the charter application process and on what timetable. The sponsor must provide a monitoring plan for evaluating the school's academic performance. The state board may deny a charter based on the sponsor's prior failure to exercise its responsibilities, and charters may be reviewed when the operation or management is transferred to another entity. Charter schools must publish financial reports and school report cards. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is given rule-making authority in order to administer the charter school law.

No charter school may employ a teacher whose certificate has been revoked or suspended. An employee of an entity providing service to a charter school may elect to participate in the retirement plan of the employer.