



Wisconsin Charter Schools: Legislative Council Special Committee on Charter Schools

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What is a Charter School?

- Charter School: A charter school is a tuition-free public school created on the basis of a contract or “charter” between the school and a local school board or other authorizer. A charter school has more freedom than a traditional public school in return for a commitment to meet higher standards of accountability. (NACSA, 2006)
- The "charter" establishing each school is a performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success. (US Charter Schools - website)

Charter School Accountability

- Charter schools are accountable to their authorizer to produce positive academic results and to adhere to the charter contract.
- The basic concept of charter schools is increased autonomy in return for accountability.

Charter School Accountability

- They are accountable for both academic results and fiscal practices to several groups:
 - the authorizer that grants them,
 - the parents who choose them,
 - and the public that funds them.

(NACSA – 2006)

Federal Definition of a Charter School

- In order to be eligible for Federal Charter School funds, charter schools must meet the definition in Sec. 5210(1) of ESEA, Part B – Charter Schools.

Lottery & Admissions

- A charter school is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that admits students on the basis of a lottery, if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated.

Wisconsin Charter School Grant Program

- Federal Requirements
- State Application Process



Federal Grants To Wisconsin

■ 1996-97	\$1,325,000
■ 1997-98	\$1,956,548
■ 1998-99	\$3,100,000
■ 1999-00	\$4,000,000
■ 2000-01	\$4,400,000
■ 2001-02	\$8,750,000
■ 2002-03	\$8,736,842
■ 2003-04	\$9,682,211
■ 2004-05	\$9,290,774
■ 2005-06	\$17,352,941
■ 2006-07	\$17,529,412

Available Wisconsin Grants

Start up Funds:

A 3-year continuous relationship

- Planning Grant (12-18 months)
- Implementation Grant Year 1 (12 months)
- Implementation Grant Year 2 (6-12 months)

Continuous Relationship

- The length of time that an applicant can be in a financial relationship with the DPI is determined by federal law.
- For example, if the charter school cannot open by the second semester of the 2007-08 school year, applicants should not request planning funds in 2006, as the “*continuous 3-year relationship*” will be broken and therefore their right to future federal charter school funds would be forfeited.

WI Charter School Program Type of Grants	Date for <i>Next</i> cycle	Award Amounts
Planning	June 1, 2006 Oct. 1, 2006	\$10,000 Supplemental \$40,000
Implementation	June 1, 2006 Oct. 1, 2006	\$150,000 Supplemental \$50,000*
Implementation Renewal	June 1, 2006 Oct. 1, 2006	\$150,000 Supplemental \$50,000*

***Additional supplemental awards may be available for charter schools developed in geographic areas where schools have been identified for improvement.**

WI Charter School Program Type of Grants	Applications Received June 2006	Applications Awarded August 2006
Planning	44	35
Implementation	16	13
Implementation Renewal	12	12

Planning Grant– Allowable Expenses

- Professional development of teachers or other staff
- Orientation and training of planning team members
- Consultation fees
- Extended teacher contracts – for the purposes of planning

Planning expenses (continued)

- Acquiring necessary educational materials for staff development
- Related costs for charter school site visits including reasonable mileage, meals and lodging
- Salaries for substitutes to cover teachers while conducting planning activities

Planning – Expenses Not Allowed

Any operational costs such as:

- Rent or Facility Leases
- Construction
- Purchase of vehicles
- No salary for grant writer, coordinator, lawyer, accountant, or counselors
- No honorariums for community or planning team members or students

Implementation Grant

Allowable expenses

- Staff development and training
- Computers/equipment, desks, chairs, tables, lockers
- Curriculum materials, books
- Reasonable travel expenses for conferences

Implementation-Allowable expenses

- Refrigerator/stove for food service
- Minor renovations to bring facility up to health and safety codes
- Extended contracts for curriculum writing/program development

Implementation Grants Expenses Not Allowed

Any operational costs such as:

- Salaries
- Rent or Leases
- Field Trips
- Construction
- Purchase of vehicles, boats, trailers
- Roof repairs, boilers
- Fees for accounting, administration or grant writing

Dissemination Grant Program



Eligibility

- The charter school must have been in operation for at least 3 consecutive years.
- The school must demonstrate overall success including substantial progress in improving student achievement.

Eligibility

- The school must document high levels of parental satisfaction.
- The school must describe the management and the leadership necessary to overcome initial start-up problems.

Dissemination Grant Guidelines

- Awarded on a single grant basis for twenty-four months duration.
- May be for a single charter school, or consortia of two or more charter schools.

Dissemination Grant Guidelines

- Funds are to be used exclusively to provide a service and/or for the development and dissemination of a product designed to improve student performance in other public schools, including charter schools.
- Sub-grants are not to be used towards the operation of the charter school.

Dissemination Grants: January

WI Charter School Program Type of Grants	Award Amounts	Total Amount Awarded Jan 2006	Number Funded Jan 2006
Dissemination	Up to \$150,000	\$1,031,552	8/8
Dissemination Renewal	Up to \$150,000	\$525,000	4/4

Dissemination Grants: August

WI Charter School Program Type of Grants	Award Amounts	Total Amount Awarded Aug 2006	Number Funded Aug 2006
Dissemination	Up to \$150,000	\$450,000	3/7
Dissemination Renewal	Up to \$150,000	n/a	n/a