Minnesota Department of Education

Opening Checklist for New Charter Schools

This list provides deadlines and instructions for new charter schools planning to open in the fall of 2012 to access necessary resources and revenue from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to support a new school's operations. While some steps may have already been undertaken, approved authorizers should verify with their pre-operational school(s) the status of each section outlined below.

Direct Deposit Authorization for Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

The the State of Minnesota needs to be authorized to make electronic funds transfer (EFT) payments to a charter school's bank account and the first step is to register for a vendor number. Here are some tips to complete the process:

MMB Vendor Number

1. Every company or organization, including a charter school receiving payments from the state is considered a vendor.
2. In order to receive or view payments, every vendor will need to register online with state of Minnesota's administrative agency, known as Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB).
3. Vendors will use the state's accounting and procurement system, called Statewide Integrated Financial Tools (SWIFT) through the SWIFT Supplier portal.
4. The vendor registration link on the SWIFT Supplier homepage is the navigation point for all new vendor registration requests: http://www.mmb.state.mn.us/vendor-ids/new-vendors.
5. Select the hyperlink to the Supplier portal at http://supplier.swift.state.mn.us
6. New vendors must receive a vendor ID number by completing the new vendor registration process on the SWIFT Supplier Portal login page. Select the following icon below the blue "Sign In" button and follow the nine registration steps: Vendor Registration Link (https://supplier.swift.state.mn.us/psp/fmssupap_1/SUPPLIER/ERP/c/PORTAL_COMPONENTS_AU.AUC_LOGIN.GBL)

NOTE: In order to complete the nine step registration process, your school must already have:

- A Minnesota Tax ID Number from the Minnesota Department of Revenue; and
- A Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) from the Internal Revenue Service;

7. At the end of the nine step registration process, you will be requested to enter bank routing information. Please have that information available as it takes MMB a few weeks to enter and test your information before your school becomes fully EFT active.

District and School Site Verification for FY 2013

Each year, information regarding schools and districts is updated in the MDE master database to validate district/schools for all major MDE reporting systems such as MARSS, STAR, SERVS Financial, UFARS, AYP, etc. New charter schools must submit a *Site Change Request Form* **to activate a site for the FY 2013 school year**, update contact/address information with MDE and establish log-in access with MDE's School and District Information Verification System. The *Site Change Request Form* is located at:
http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/DataSubLogin/SiteVerif/

- ☐ Complete the *Site Change Request Form* and **email completed form by July 1st** to mde.school-verify@state.mn.us.

For questions regarding MDE's District and School Site Verification System, please contact Mary Pat Olsen at (651) 582-8624 or mde.school-verify@state.mn.us.

Enrollment Projection Reports

The data reported on the *Enrollment Projections Report for Charter Schools* is used for the calculation of estimated 2012-2013 general education revenue, charter school lease aid, special education aid, and LEP aid. For first year charter schools, the free/reduced lunch counts are used to calculate compensatory revenue. The new school must dedicate someone as the ADM/LEP Enrollment Projections updater.

The *2012-13 Enrollment Projections Report – Charter Schools* form must be completed by due dates as outlined below:

- ☐ June 10, 2012 (or as soon thereafter as possible to generate the first state aid payment);
- ☐ September 30, 2012;
- ☐ January 2, 2013; and
- ☐ April 5, 2013.

Enrollment projections should only include students:

1) whose parent(s) or guardian(s) have officially been offered and accepted a position for their child to attend your school; **and**
2) for whom you have already requested student records from their current school (except those enrolling into Kindergarten).

Information regarding enrollment projections for charter schools in their first three years of operation is available at:
http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/SchFin/MARSSStuAcc/AvgDailyMemb/index.html.
The *Enrollment Projections Report 2012-13* is available at:
http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/SchFin/CharterSch/index.html.

School Calendars

Charter schools must submit a copy of their 2012-13 school calendar to MDE. The calendar must include the number of student instructional days per month and per year. Charter schools must also indicate the board meeting date when the calendar was officially adopted. There is a line on the *2012-13 Enrollment Projections Report – Charter Schools* (see previous section) on which charter schools can report the date.

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.11, subdivision 9, paragraph (f) provides in part that:

> *In order to receive state aid payments under this subdivision, a charter school in its first three years of operation must submit a school calendar in the form and manner requested by the department and a quarterly report to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). The report must list each student by grade, show the student's start and end dates, if any, with the charter school, and for any student participating in a learning year program, the report must list the hours and times of learning year activities. The report must be submitted not more than two weeks after the end of the calendar quarter to the department.*

Enrollment projection and school calendar questions should be directed to Jeanne Krile at jeanne.krile@state.mn.us or (651) 582-8637.

Charter School Building Lease Aid

All Minnesota charter schools must apply for lease aid on an annual basis. The lease aid entitlement is not included in the metered IDEAS payment report until a charter school has applied and its application has been approved by MDE.

Charter school lease aid applications **should be submitted as soon as possible**. Every effort will be made to have the entitlements loaded to IDEAS for the July 15 payment for those applications received by April 15. Complete application materials and instructions are available on the MDE website at http://www.education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/SchFin/CharterSch/index.html under the heading of *FY 2013 Charter School Lease Aid Requirements*.

Questions should be directed to Greg Hein in Program Finance at greg.hein@state.mn.us or (651) 582-8460.

Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS)

- ☐ Send the name of the school's MARSS Coordinator to marss@state.mn.us **as soon as one is designated**.
- ☐ The MARSS Coordinator needs to set up a security account so that the school will start receiving email notices about upcoming MARSS activity. Navigate to the MARSS-Student Accounting website at https://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/SchFin/MARSSStuAcc/MARSSRepInst/index.html. On the right side of the screen under Related MDE Resources, select MARSS Web Edit System. On the following screen select "Log into the MARSS Web Edit System (WES)" and under Create new MDE-Account select "click here." Follow the prompts to set up an account.
- ☐ Attend the MARSS 101 workshop on **Thursday, August 2, 2012** at MDE.
- ☐ First MARSS submission is due **Tuesday, September 25, 2012.** The MARSS Coordinator will receive an email response when the file is successfully loaded.
- ☐ An authorizer may request from the school a copy of the local MARSS WES report called *MARSS 12 Compensatory Revenue Report* which shows the preliminary October 1 enrollment.

A copy of the FY 2013 Timeline and other MARSS' resources are available on the MARSS – Student Reporting page of MDE's website:

https://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/SchFin/MARSSStuAcc/index.html. Questions regarding MARSS should be directed to marss@state.mn.us.

Student Transportation

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, subdivision 16, provides that a charter school must notify the school district in which it is located and MDE on whether it will provide its own transportation services or use the district's transportation services. MDE needs this information in order to ensure that the transportation aid is sent to the correct district/school.

- ☐ The *Charter School Transportation Survey Form* **is due July 1** for new charter schools opening in the fall and March 1 for existing charter schools: http://education.state.mn.us/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dDocName=005688&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary.
- ☐ Charter schools and authorizers should verify their submission by checking the school's *General Education Revenue for Charter Schools Report* on the Minnesota Funding Reports (MFR) System.

Questions regarding the *Charter School Transportation Survey* should be directed to Kelly Wosika at kelly.wosika@state.mn.us or (651) 582-8855.

Special Education

Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, subdivision 12 states: "***Pupils with a disability****. A charter school must comply with sections 125A.02, 125A.03 to 125A.24, and 125A.65 and rules relating to the education of pupils with a disability as though it were a district."* Further, Minnesota Rule 3525.2405, subpart 1 states: "***Directors requirement****. The school board in every district shall employ, either singly or cooperatively, a director of special education to be responsible for program development, coordination, and evaluation; in-service training; and general special education supervision and administration in the district's total special education system. Cooperative employment of a director may be through a host district, joint powers agreement, or a service cooperative. A director may not be assigned direct instructional duties."*

- ☐ New charter schools must employ an appropriately-licensed special education director **before** the school begins operations.

Once a licensed special education director is secured, the special education director should immediately contact Michelle Jones at michelle.jones@state.mn.us to initiate the school's special education application process. The application process for charter schools in their **first** year of operation will include:

- ☐ The *Statement of Assurances* (Form ED-01350-XX) must be signed by the licensed director of special education and either the Superintendent or Clerk of the School Board and submitted to the department;
- ☐ *State and Federal Cover Sheets* (Form ED-01558-XX) must be signed by the director of special education and submitted to the department; and
- ☐ A paper copy of the proposed new fiscal year special education budget for state special education aid that includes: 1) expenditures for personnel and contracted services; and 2) expenditures for instructional supplies and equipment must be submitted to the department.
- ☐ The school's director of special education would receive an official approval memo from MDE for the state portion of the process, which could be forwarded to the authorizer to verify approval.

Note: In order to start receiving State and Federal Special Education Funds, you must enter all of your expenditures on the Electronic Data Reporting System (EDRS). Contact Jeanne Krile at jeanne.krile@state.mn.us to set up a required Static IP address. To receive your password and to access EDRS via the Internet, contact Mike Matlock at mike.matlock@state.mn.us. Detailed information regarding the application process can be found in the May 1, 2012 memo, *State Fiscal Year (SFY) Special Education Application Materials and Eligibility for Program Approval and Maintenance of Effort (MOE)* (available at http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/SchFin/SpecEd/index.html).

Questions regarding the State and Federal Special Education Application process should be directed to Michelle Jones at michelle.jones@state.mn.us or (651) 582-8577.

In addition, MDE developed a special education resource, *"Special Education Primer for Charter Schools,"* that new charters and authorizers may find helpful. **An updated version of the primer is in the works**, but the current version may still be helpful for developing schools. The primer is available at: http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/SpecEdComp/, see the link at the bottom of the web page.

Food and Nutrition

MDE's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers school and community nutrition programs for over 700,000 Minnesota children and adults through over 1,000 local schools, child and adult care facilities and summer food program sites. New charter schools wishing to operate a school nutrition program must complete the following:

- ☐ Determine student meal service needs, (e.g., milk-only, breakfast, lunch, a la carte).
- ☐ Determine facility resources for meal service.
- ☐ **By July 1**, request bids for a catering service or cooperative agreement with a neighboring school district to provide school meals if the charter school will not be preparing meals on-site. Information on bid proposals and contracted meals is available here: http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/FNS/SNP/ProcCont/index.html
- ☐ **By August 1**, complete the *Application Agreement* with MDE; select "Application Instructions: New Sponsors" at: http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/FNS/SNP/AppSpon/index.html
- ☐ **By September 1,** complete training. School nutrition supervisors and employees must register and attend training before the application to operate a school nutrition program will be approved. Training workshops are offered in August at MDE, and include "Essentials 101," "Meal Service Basics" and "Approving Free/Reduced Meal Applications and Counting and Claiming." New charter schools employees must, *at a minimum,* take the "Essentials 101" class. Contact MDE Food and Nutrition Service for training dates and locations at (651) 582-8526 or (800) 366-8922

Questions should be directed to Deb Lukkonen, Supervisor of School Nutrition Programs, at debra.j.lukkonen@state.mn.us.

Federal Title Programs

Eligibility and preliminary allocations for charter schools opening for the first time are based on projected enrollment data that the school submits to MDE in June, before the school opens, to the Division of Program Finance (see Enrollment Projections above). The projected total enrollment, free and reduced priced lunch and English Language Learner student data are then

used to determine preliminary eligibility and to calculate preliminary allocations for Titles I Part A, II, and III.

- ☐ Notification of the charter school's preliminary eligibility and allocations based on the projected data is mailed to each individual school **in late September or early October**.
- ☐ **In mid-October**, these charter schools are required to attend a training session that walks them through the application process. At this training, new charter schools are asked to provide the data submitted through the October 1 Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) data submission. The data are then used to determine the actual eligibility status and allocations for Titles I Part A, II and III.
- ☐ Applications for these federal funds for charter schools opening for the first time **are due in November**.

Questions regarding Federal Title Programs should be directed to: John Moorse at john.moorse@state.mn.us or (651) 582-8649.

SERVS

MDE's State Educational Record View and Submission (SERVS) system was designed to simplify, consolidate and automate data collection processes. SERVS Financial helps districts, charter schools and other eligible entities apply for Formula or Competitive funding opportunities, and for Formula grants, submit reimbursement requests and track budgets. In order to access the system and apply for those opportunities, districts and schools must designate the staff members/representatives able to access this password protected system.

- ☐ Submit the school's *SERVS Financial Access Authorization Instructions and Form* to designate school representatives as "Authorized Users": http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/DataSubLogin/SERVS/.
- ☐ Individuals named as Authorized Users for the school must then log-in to SERVS Financial at: https://education.state.mn.us/MIDMS/login.jsf?AppId=SFIN to register for an MDE-Account.
- ☐ MDE issues email confirmation when an individual is registered. This should be sent to the authorizer to verify initial SERVS registration.

Please visit the SERVS page of MDE's website for additional information: http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/DataSubLogin/SERVS/.

For questions, please email MDE.ServsFinancial@state.mn.us or call (651) 582-8500.

The following information must be entered in SERVS to receive federal funds and is also needed by School Finance to make payments:

- Federal Tax ID number;
- State Tax ID number;
- DUNS number; and
- CCR registration.

DUNS Number

A Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-character number that identifies your organization from Dun and Bradstreet (D&B). The DUNS number will be used to track how the federal grant money is allocated. To receive a DUNS number visit:
http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/ and http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/org_step1.jsp.

Central Contractor Registration (CCR)

- Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is a federal requirement under the ARRA. As a part of the application process for ARRA funds in 2009, all school districts and charters schools were required to create and/or validate existing CCR. As ARRA reporting continues please ensure that your Central Contractor Registration is up to date.
- The CCR is a web-enabled, government-wide application that collects, validates, stores, and disseminates business information about the federal government's trading partners in support of the contract award, grants, and the electronic payment process.
- This information must be loaded into SFIN and kept current for federal funds, including ARRA, and beyond.

Applying for and Maintaining your CCR Registration

- Register with CCR by phone (1-888-227-2423) or online at http://www.ccr.gov/.
- If your organization is already registered, take note of who is listed as your E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC). For applications being submitted through http://grants.gov/, this person will be responsible for authorizing who within your organization has the responsibility to submit applications.
- The following information will be needed to register in CCR:
  - The same address your organization has on record with MDE (available in Directories on the MDE Website or from your Site Verification Coordinator);
  - DUNS number;
  - Tax identification number (TIN) and name used in federal tax matters; and
  - Electronic Funds Transfer information for payment of invoices.
- The SERVS information for registration looked correct as well as the District and School Site Verification.

FY 2012 Financial Reporting (only for new charters that received public funds in FY 2012)

Minnesota charter schools are required by law to prepare financial reports and annual budgets. The Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) is an integral part of the accounting and reporting process for school districts.

- ☐ New Charter Schools are strongly encouraged to attend UFARS training; no sessions have been scheduled at this time, but will be listed on the Calendar on the MDE website: view http://education.state.mn.us/WebsiteContent/Calendar.jsp

New schools that received state or federal revenue in FY 2012 (including current federal CSP grantees) are required to submit financial data to MDE for FY 2012 per Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.77, subdivisions 2 and 3:

- ☐ FY 2012 Unaudited Preliminary UFARS data is **due September 15**; since the 15th falls on a Saturday in 2012, the deadline is moved to September 17.
- ☐ FY 2012 Audited Final UFARS data is **due November 30, 2012**.
- ☐ FY 2012 Compliance Table (audit data and UFARS) is **due November 30, 2012**.
- ☐ FY 2012 Audit Report is **due on December 31, 2012**. If the audit is mailed, it must be postmarked on or before December 31, 2012.

Every charter school is strongly encouraged to annually notify the public of its revenue, expenditures, fund balances, and other relevant budget information by posting the information on the school's official Web site. Charter schools are not statutorily required but are strongly

encouraged to comply with Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.10, subdivision 1, which requires the school's board to:

- ☐ Publish the school's revenue and expenditure budgets for the current year (FY 2013) and the actual revenues, expenditures, fund balances for the prior year (FY 2012) in a form prescribed by the commissioner (ED-00110-34), by November 30, 2012, or within one week of the board's acceptance of the school's final audit for FY 2012, whichever is earlier.

Questions regarding UFARS and audit report submissions or budget publication requirements should be directed to the MDE Accounting HelpDesk at mde.ufars-accounting@state.mn.us.

MDE List Serves

The department has four List Serves to which SERVS and other messages are sent. To receive information for Special Ed, Title ESEA Programs, Business Managers or Superintendent/Directors, charter schools should submit name(s) to the following MDE contacts:

- Superintendents – Contact Cynthia.Heitman@state.mn.us in Communications
- Special Education Directors – Contact Glenda.Meixell@state.mn.us in Special Education Finance
- Business Managers – Contact Teri.Kostelecky@state.mn.us in School Finance
- Title I Directors – Contact Patricia.Olsen@state.mn.us in ESEA Programs

For more information, visit the MDE website at http://education.state.mn.us.