
STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE



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TO: Charter Schools

FROM: Jason Cockerill, Commissioner

RE: Charter School Budgets, Capital Projects Plans, & Bus Replacement Plans

DATE: August 5, 2025

The Department of Local Government Finance (“Department”) issues this memorandum to inform charter schools that receive property tax distributions in Lake County, Marion County, St. Joseph County, and Vanderburgh County about reporting requirements under Ind. Code § 20-46-8-11.2.

This memorandum is for informative purposes only and is not a substitute for reading the law or consulting with local counsel.

I. Operations Fund Levy Distribution to Charter Schools

Indiana Code § 20-46-8-11.2, amended by Senate Enrolled Act 1-2025 (“SEA 1”), initially enacted by House Enrolled Act 1001-2023 (“HEA 1001”), requires distributions of revenue collected from an operations fund levy to charter schools from a school corporation located in Lake, Marion, St. Joseph, and Vanderburgh counties. Please also reference the Department’s previously released guidance on June 13, 2025, [Legislation Affecting School Operations Fund Distribution to Charter Schools under Ind. Code § 20-46-8-11.2](#).

In order for an eligible charter school to receive a distribution in calendar year 2026, the charter school governing body must take the following actions in order to receive a distribution for that year:

- (1) Adopt a budget no later than **October 15**. The budget to be adopted is the budget for the current school year. This will be the October 15 before the calendar year in which the distribution would be made.
- (2) Not later than ten (10) days before budget adoption, the budget must be fixed and presented to the charter board in a public meeting in the county where the charter school is incorporated. Therefore, the public meeting must take place no later than **October 5**.
- (3) After the budget is adopted, and no later than **November 1**, the charter school’s governing body must submit the following to the charter authorizer and to the Department through Gateway:
 - a. The adopted budget.
 - b. The dates on which each of the above actions were met.

- c. A statement attesting to the following two (2) things (an attestation template has been attached to this memo):
 - i. Those dates are true and accurate.
 - ii. The budget was properly adopted.

Budgets adopted by eligible charter schools should be uploaded to the Gateway File Transmission Application, as outlined in Section III of this memo.

All dates stated above are in reference to the calendar year before the calendar year that the distribution is made.

For example, a charter school holds a public hearing on October 3, 2025, regarding a budget for the 2025-2026 school year in order to receive an operations fund distribution in calendar year 2026. The budget is then adopted on October 15, 2025, and submitted to the charter authorizer and uploaded onto Gateway on November 1, 2025. The charter school must then upload an attestation and state on Gateway that the public hearing was held on October 3, 2025, and the budget was adopted on October 15, 2025. The attestation must state that the budget was properly adopted, and the dates wherein the public hearing and budget adoption occurred are true and accurate.

Indiana Code § 20-46-8-11.2(i) provides that for distributions made in calendar years 2026 and 2027 only, the Department shall determine whether the charter school timely submitted the adopted budget and attestation statement under Ind. Code § 20-46-8-11.2(h). If the Department determines that the charter school did not timely submit both documents, the charter school will be deemed ineligible, and the amount determined under Ind. Code § 20-46-8-11.2(d) and (f) that would otherwise be distributed to the charter school will be withheld. The withheld amount will be distributed to the school corporation and the eligible charter schools under Ind. Code 20-46-8-11.2(f) as described in the Department's previously released guidance: [Legislation Affecting School Operations Fund Distribution to Charter Schools under Ind. Code § 20-46-8-11.2](#).

II. Charter School Operations Fund, Capital Projects Plans, and Bus Replacement Plans

Sections 185 and 186 of HEA 1001 amended Ind. Code § 20-40-18-1 and Ind. Code § 20-40-18-2, respectively, to provide that the governing body of a charter school must establish an operations fund if the charter school is receiving a distribution of a school corporation's operations fund levy. The charter school's operations fund is to be used after December 31, 2024.

Section 187 of HEA 1001 added Ind. Code § 20-40-18-10.5 as a new section to specify that a charter school may use its operations fund only for the following purposes:

- (1) Carry out a capital projects plan.
- (2) Pay transportation costs.
- (3) Carry out a school bus replacement plan.
- (4) Pay expenses that are allocated to overhead and operational expenses.
- (5) Establish, maintain, and equip a public playground.

Additionally, Ind. Code § 20-40-18-10.5 outlines the requirements for a capital projects plan and school bus replacement plan. Among other things, these plans must be prescribed by the Department, and templates for each plan have been attached to this memo. The charter school must also hold a public hearing on the proposed plan and make the proposed plan available to the public prior to the hearing. After adopting the plan, the charter school must submit the plan to the Department through the Gateway File Transmission application. This section also places conditions on using the fund for transportation costs.

These provisions under HEA 1001 are effective July 1, 2024, and thereafter. Please also reference the Department's previously released guidance on July 10 and 16, 2025, respectively, [Bus Replacement Plan](#) and [Capital Projects Plan](#).

III. Plans and Adopted Budget Upload Instructions

Local officials with the eligible charter schools in Lake County, Marion County, St. Joseph County, and Vanderburgh County will need to [establish a user account](#) and log in to Gateway at: <https://gateway.ifionline.org/login.aspx>.

After logging into Gateway, the local official will select the File Transmission application as highlighted below:

Welcome to the Indiana Gateway for Government Units

As an authorized user, you will have at least one application to use. Each of these applications enables a local unit to submit its required forms, reports or files to the appropriate state agency. Agencies currently include Department of Local Government Finance, State Board of Accounts, Indiana Education Employment Relations Board and Indiana Gaming Commission.

Select Application

Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF)	Deadline	State Board of Accounts (SBOA)	Deadline
Additional Appropriations	Details	100R	Jan 31
Abstract	Details	Annual Financial Report	Details
Assessor Reports	Jan 15	Monthly and Annual Engagement Uploads	Details
Budgets	Details	E-1 Entity Annual Report	60 days after entity's fiscal year ends
Data Entry for CNAV and Form 22	Details	ECA Risk Report	Aug 29
Debt Management	Details	Conflict of Interest Disclosure	15 days after final action on the contract or purchase
Economic Development Reporting	Sep 30		
File Transmission	Details		

After selecting the File Transmission application, the user will need to select the applicable unit.

The screenshot shows the 'Select Unit' page of the Indiana Gateway for government units. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Home, About, Account Settings, Help, and Logout. The page title is 'Select Unit'. Below the title, it indicates the 'Reporting Year: 2023' and provides a note: 'Reporting year is only applicable to certain file submissions. The Contracts Upload will not be affected by the year selection.' A table lists available units with columns for Unit Code, Unit Name, Unit Type, Unit County, and User Role. The first row, '9101 DLGF Charter School 1', is highlighted with a red box. A blue 'All Units' button is located in the top right corner.

Unit Code	Unit Name	Unit Type	Unit County	User Role
9101	DLGF Charter School 1	Charter School	Gateway1	Submit
9102	DLGF Charter School 2	Charter School	Gateway1	Submit

Then select “School Fiscal Plans”.

The screenshot shows the 'File Transmission Menu' page. The header is identical to the previous page. The breadcrumb trail reads 'Select Unit > File Transmission Menu'. The page title is 'File Transmission Menu'. Below the title, it specifies the selected unit: 'Gateway1 County - DlGF Charter School 1'. A 'Select Destination' dropdown menu is shown with four options: 'Local Government Contracts', 'School Fiscal Plans' (highlighted with a red box), 'TIF Spending Plans', and 'View File History'.

The user will then select “+ Upload Plan” to upload the Capital Project Expenditure Plan, the Bus Replacement Plan, or the adopted budget.

The screenshot shows the Gateway for government units web application. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Home, About, Account Settings, Help, and Logout. The breadcrumb trail indicates the user is in the Department of Local Government Finance - File Transmission section, specifically in the Capital Project Expenditure & Bus Replacement Plans Upload area for Dlgf Charter School 1 - Gateway1 County. The main heading is "Capital Project Expenditure & Bus Replacement Plans Upload". Below this, there is a section for "Uploaded Plans" with a "+ Upload Plan" button highlighted by a red box. A table lists the uploaded plans with columns for Plan ID, Year, File Name, Description, Type of Plan, Date Submitted, Submitter, Download, and DELETE.

Plan ID	Year	File Name	Description	Type of Plan	Date Submitted	Submitter	Download	DELETE
5026	2024	Parke test	test		5/14/2024 10:31:19 AM	pdieckmeyer@dlgfin.gov	Download	Delete

After selecting “+ Upload Plan”, the user will select the appropriate Budget Year and select the Type of Plan from the drop-down menu.

The screenshot shows the "Upload Plan" modal form. It contains the following fields and options:

- * Budget Year:** A dropdown menu with the option "Select a Year".
- * Type of Plan:** A dropdown menu with options "Capital Expenditure Plan" (selected) and "Bus Replacement Plan".
- * File Name:** A text input field with the value "Charter School Budget".
- * File Description:** A large text area for describing the file.
- * Add Plan:** A section with a "Choose File" button and the text "No file chosen".
- Buttons:** "Upload Plan" and "Clear Plan" buttons at the bottom right.

If you have any questions about uploading the Capital Project Expenditure Plan, the Bus Replacement Plan, or the adopted charter school budget, please contact the [Budget Field Representative](#) assigned to the applicable county.