

**FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING
FOR
NEW JERSEY CHARTER SCHOOLS**

THE AUDIT PROGRAM

2010-11

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF FINANCE & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE
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SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FOR 2010-11

- Health Cost withholding from employees whose contracts were negotiated after May 22, 2010
- Optional Treasurer Law.....
- Revised terminology for fund balance classification to implement GASB 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions*

OTHER CHANGES / UPDATES FOR 2010-11

The following is a summary of changes / updates:

1. General changes are found throughout the document and include:
 - Code references have been updated where appropriate.
2. Specific changes are found in the following sections/chapters:

Introduction

- Updated the submission date of the reporting package to the statutory submission date which is the fifth day after five months (P.L.2010, c.49.) after the end of the school fiscal year. The deadline for submission of June 30 audits is Monday, December 5, 2011
- Clarified that because the federal due date is later than the statutory submission date for filing the reporting package with New Jersey, the Federal Data Collection Form (SF-SAC) may be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education within 30 days after the audit report is filed with the charter school. Accordingly, the CD-ROMs of audit items submitted may be submitted on time without including the archived copy of the SF-SAC which then must be submitted under separate cover
- C-1(b) of the CAFR Outline is used to identify and report Education Jobs Fund Program – Budget and Actual replacing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)- Budget and Actual

Section I-1

Section I-2

- Added to the list of charter school policies that where the charter school elects not to appoint a treasurer of school moneys, the board shall identify the board secretary as the charter school employee responsible for the receipt and disbursement of school moneys and reporting thereon (P.L. 2010, c.39 effective July 2, 2010)

Section I-3

- Added the WIDA Model Test to the list of English language proficiency tests

- Added the WIDA Model Test criteria for program entry and exit
- Added audiology to the list of related reimbursable services provided as part of a school-based Medicaid reimbursement program
- Clarified that a charter school may submit and receive approval for an alternative SEMI revenue projection.
- Updated SEMI reimbursement rates. Charter schools receive \$298.02 for eligible IEP meetings and \$10.33 per date of eligible related services.

Section I-4

Section I-5

- Added reference to Local Finance Notice LFN-2011-16 *The Qualified Purchasing Agent Law and Boards of Education* which provides that the maximum bid threshold for contracting under the Public Schools Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2) is \$26,000 effective July 1, 2010
- Added that where the charter school has appointed a QPA the bid threshold pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3(a)* and *18A:18A-3(a)*, may be increased to \$36,000 as of July 1, 2010
- Added reference and link to Local Finance Notices 2009-28 and 2011-1 for current guidance and a 2010-2011 Table of Bid Holiday Acceptance Dates.
- Deleted reference to *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-42(j)* which was removed by P.L. 2009, c.4; an act authorizing public entities to implement an energy savings improvement program and deleted reference to *N.J.S.A. 18A:20-4.2(f)* which provides general law for lease purchase agreements

Section I-6

Section I-8

- Added link to Encumbrance Hotline maintained on DOE website
- Deleted reference to ARRA ESF and ARRA GSF

Section II-10

- Added P.L. 2010, c.39, effective July 2, 2010, makes the position of treasurer of school moneys optional and:
 - Establishes *N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9.2* which requires that in a charter school which does not have a treasurer of school moneys, the board secretary shall keep a record of the sums received and paid out by him in accordance with the uniform system of bookkeeping prescribed by the State board
 - Amends *N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9(a)* to require the board secretary's report to provide year to date cash receipts and obligation, cash and appropriation balances for each account and fund, and the reconciled bank account balances
 - Amends *N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9* to provide that the chief school administrator or board designee other than the secretary must prepare the monthly reconciliations of all bank accounts prior to the completion of the secretary's monthly report.
 - Establishes *N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9.1* which provides that in a charter school that does not maintain the position of treasurer of school moneys, the board secretary will receive and hold in trust all school moneys belonging to the charter school from whatever source derived free of any control by the governing body of any municipality comprised in that district, except any moneys derived from athletic events or other activities of pupil organizations of the charter school.

- Amends *N.J.S.A.* 18A:19-9 to require that payrolls must be certified by the president and secretary of the board and the chief school administrator. In a charter school which maintains the treasurer of school moneys, the payrolls shall be delivered to the treasurer of school moneys with a warrant made to his order for the full amount of each payroll
- Amends *N.J.S.A.* 18A:19-10 to require charter schools to maintain separate bank accounts for net payroll and for payroll deductions and associated board contributions. Authorized signatories on the payroll account must include the secretary and board designee
- Amends *N.J.S.A.* 18A:19-10 to provide that in a charter school that does not maintain the position of treasurer, the secretary shall draw and deposit the warrants. Where the charter school maintains the position of treasurer, the treasurer shall deposit the warrants.
- Clarified that amendments to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:19-9 and 18A:19-10 also are effective for charter schools that elect to process payroll using a third party disbursement agent
- Clarified the process for calculating 2010-11 extraordinary aid (ExAid) and that applications are submitted for each individual student
- Added Travel Regulations Circular No. 11-05-OMB effective December 16, 2010 supersedes 08-19-OMB
- Added Entertainment, Meals, and Refreshments Circular No. 11-09-OMB effective January 5, 2011 supersedes 06-14-OMB
- Added reference to page II-90.1 of this Audit Program for audit guidance regarding employee health insurance withholding
- Added reporting guidance pursuant to Governmental Accounting Standards Series (GASB) Statement No. 54 *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions* effective for periods beginning after June 15, 2010

Section II-20

- Emphasized that the cost of pensions, group life insurance, and social security incurred by the charter school for positions of TPAF members funded by the federal Education Jobs Fund (Fund 18) shall be reimbursed to the State of New Jersey
- Clarified that the FICA wage limit for 2010 and 2011 is \$106,800
- Clarified that the 2010-11 estimated TPAF rate of 7.05% has been used for illustration purposes in the sample TPAF/FICA Reimbursement Schedule. Charter schools must use the actual rate

Section II-30

Section II-40

Section II-50

- No Change

Section II-60

- Clarified that food service funds must remain under the control of the treasurer of school moneys or school business administrator/board secretary in a charter school that elects to not maintain the position of treasurer of school moneys
- Clarified that when the charter school participates in any federally funded Child Nutrition Program, the contract for the services of a food service management company must meet federal standards and procurement requirements

- Clarified that where a charter school is rebidding their FSMC contract and the charter school participates in any federally funded Child Nutrition Program(s), rebidding must be pursuant to 7 CFR 3016.36.
- Clarified that for 2010-11, either a Type I or a Type 2 report on the FSMC's internal controls is acceptable
- Provided that SAS 70 has been split into two related but separate standards. Clarified that SSAE No. 16 for service auditors is effective for periods ending on or after June 15, 2011 and the new SAS for financial statement auditors is effective for periods ending on or after December 15, 2012
- Clarified that direct certification matching against updated Food Stamp/TANF data may be performed up to four times during the school year
- Added that beginning with 2010-11, the Verification Summary Report is transmitted electronically
- Deleted base year contract guidance that was applicable to 2009-10, but not 2010-11
- Updated link to program handbook for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Updated listing of memorandums and attachments for school year 2010-11

Section II-70

- No Change

Section II-80

- No Change

Section II-90

- Added reference to accounting and budgeting guidance provided to charter schools implementing 1.5% withholding for health benefits health benefit cost

Section II-SA

- Added reference to May 2011 Acting Commissioner letter to charter schools regarding ARRA Title 1 obligations and reimbursement requests
- Added reference to AICPA Statement on Auditing Standards (SAS) No. 117, *Compliance Audits* (supersedes SAS No. 74 *Compliance Auditing Considerations in Audits of Government Entities and Recipients of Governmental Financial Assistance*)
- Clarified that where the charter school has received funds paid in excess of expenditures, that amount is brought forward into a separate line in EWEG marked "Overpayment" in the Allocation section of the subsequent year grant application. At this point, if the subsequent year application has final NJDOE approval, the charter school must submit an amendment application to budget the prior year carryover and overpayment funds.
- Clarified that where a charter school has determined that unexpended and unpaid funds will not be claimed, and the charter school has agreed to release the charter school's right to such funds, the amount released should be presented on Schedule A, in the column entitled "Adjustments"
- Deleted section on required testing for the payment of penalty and interest costs or the failure to take full advantage of allowable discounts for prompt payment.
- Updated the guidance for the reporting of encumbrances on the D-1 for GASBS No. 54
- Deleted reporting guidance for restricted formula aids Demonstrably Effective Program Aid (DEPA), Instructional Supplement Aid (ISA) and Targeted At-Risk Aid (TARA)
- Updated CFDA and State account numbers

- Updated sample Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs to include language presented in the AICPA's April 2011 revisions to the Illustrative Auditor's Reports Under Circular A-133

Section III-1

- Updated the CD-ROM filing requirements for changes to the FY11 Single Audit Summary
- The requirement to file an Audit Reporting Package with the NJ Department of Agriculture has been changed to require submission only if the LEA received total combined funding in excess of \$100,000 from State Child Nutrition Programs and/or USDA Foods
- Clarified that because the federal due date is later than the statutory submission date for filing the reporting package with New Jersey, the Federal Data Collection Form (SF-SAC) may be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education within 30 days after the audit report is filed with the charter school. Accordingly, the CD-ROMs of audit items submitted may be submitted on time without including the archived copy of the SF-SAC which then must be submitted under separate cover
- Updated reference and link to Illustrative Auditor's Report Under OMB Circular A-133, Example 13-6, *Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs*, which has been revised for SAS No. 117

Section III-2

- Updated reference and link to sample schedule of findings and questioned costs to include April 2011 illustrations which incorporate SAS No. 117
- Updated references and links to sample auditor's reports (14-1 to 14-7 and 13-1 to 13-6) to include April 2011 illustrations

Section III-3

- Updated sample Post-Retirement footnote for information obtained from the June 2010 NJ State CAFR
- Added reference to GASBS No. 54 for required fund balance disclosures including the prohibition on the reporting of negative residual restricted, committed, or assigned amounts in the general fund

Section III-4

- Added guidance for surety bond coverage for the board secretary where the charter school does not maintain the position of treasurer
- Added to the condition of records review, that where the charter school does not maintain the treasurer's position, the review should include the records of other charter school personnel that have been assigned the duties formerly performed by the treasurer
- Replaced (excess surplus) unreserved/undesignated fund balance with unassigned fund balance
- Updated link to the AICPA's illustrative Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs updated for SAS 117
- Revised the AMR review of financial planning, accounting, and reporting to include obligations of federal grant awards and requests for reimbursement of expenditures against those federal grant awards
- Revised the AMR review of the treasurer's records to applicable only where the charter school has a treasurer. Alternatively, where the charter school does not maintain the treasurer's position, records and reports prepared and maintained by

other charter school personnel should be reviewed (e.g. bank reconciliations prepared by the chief school administrator or board designee other than the secretary as required by N.J.S.A. 18A:17-9)

- Revised sample AMR for:
 - Where the charter school does not maintain the treasurer’s position, name the position(s) of other appropriate personnel responsible for those records
 - Surety bond for board secretary where no treasurer of school moneys
 - Added chief school administrator to employee’s responsible for certification of payrolls
 - Added health benefits withholding transmissions from the agency account to the general fund
 - Clarified payroll responsibility where the charter school maintains, and does not maintain, the position of the treasurer of school moneys position
 - Revised sample findings for optional treasurer’s position and added sample finding for appointment of ineligible individual to treasurer’s position
 - Deleted “other admin (290)”
 - Revised sample bank reconciliation finding for optional treasurer
 - Revised sample energy services LPA finding for new maximum lease term
 - Revised fund balance terminology to conform with GASBS No. 54

Section III-5

- Added GASBS No. 54 is required FY 6/30/11. Minimal changes have been made to the titles for reserved (now restricted) fund balance. Reserve for encumbrances must continue to be reported in Audsum. In Audsum, revised account title from Reserve For Encumbrances to Year End Encumbrances – Committed and Assigned (10020)

Section III-6

- Added “optional” to treasurer’s report references

Section III-7

- No change

Section III-8

- Updated questions for GASBS 54 (Fund Balance) terminology (where appropriate)
- Updated question 20 terminology - Report on Compliance with Requirements That Could Have a Direct and Material Effect on Each Major Program and on Internal Control over Compliance

OVERVIEW

Financial Accounting for New Jersey School Charter Schools (The Audit Program) is updated annually and includes instructions for both charter school personnel and public school accountants regarding preparing for and performing the annual audit. The full text of *The Audit Program* is available on the web site <http://www.nj.gov/njded/finance/fp/audit/>.

The *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report* (CAFR) is the basis for the annual audit. New Jersey state law and administrative code (*N.J.S.A.18A:4-14* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16*) require charter schools to follow generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). These principles are augmented with the release of statements from the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The Outline for Comprehensive Annual Financial Report section at the end of this introduction provides additional information on the CAFR.

Reference Materials

Reference materials published by outside organizations are available to provide guidance in report preparation. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) publishes *Governmental Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting*, commonly known as the "blue book" that is used nationwide as a reference tool for CAFR preparation. The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) issues *Checklist and Illustrative Financial Statements for State and Local Governmental Units* that is a recommended reference for disclosure requirements. The Association of School Business Officials International offers a Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting by School Systems Program that awards certificates to those annual reports that fully meet the requirements established by GAAP and publishes a self-evaluation worksheet that may also be used as a tool in report preparation.

Responsibility/Government Auditing Standards

N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(i) requires the issuance of a CAFR by every charter school, along with interim financial statements to facilitate management control of financial operations. Financial statements are the responsibility of the charter school's management and are its representation of the financial position at a given point in time and the operations of the charter school during a period of time.

The federal Single Audit Act requires that organizations that expend \$500,000 or more in federal financial assistance have an audit conducted in accordance with guidance provided in the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133. NJ Circular Letter 04-04-OMB requires that New Jersey charter schools that expend \$500,000 or more in State and/or federal financial assistance in their fiscal year have an annual single audit performed in accordance with the Single Audit Act, OMB Circular A-133 and State policy. *Government Auditing Standards July 2007 Revision*, commonly referred to as the "Yellow Book", established generally accepted government audit standards (GAGAS) and is available through the website: <http://www.gao.gov/govaud/ybk01.htm>.

Submission/Reporting Package

The Department of Education requires the submission of the reports described below on or before the statutory deadline. The statutory submission date is the fifth day after five months (P.L.2010, c.49.) after the end of the school fiscal year. Accordingly, the deadline for submission of June 30 audits is Monday, December 5, 2011. The Commissioner has statutory authority (N.J.S.A. 18A:23-6) to appoint auditors for charter schools failing to meet the statutory due date or invoke other administrative actions but the Commissioner does not have discretion to change a statutory requirement, such as the due date. N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-55 includes late submission of the annual audit as one of the conditions for appointment of a state monitor.

1. The CAFR

The CAFR is the charter school's official annual report. It should include all funds of the charter school. It is organized into three primary sections: 1) an introductory section, 2) a financial section, and 3) statistical section. If a charter school falls under the reporting requirements of the Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended by the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and the revised OMB Circular 133, and/or the reporting requirements under NJOMB Treasury Circular Letter 04-04, the CAFR will also contain a single audit section. The CAFR will strictly adhere to the Outline of the CAFR located at the end of this introduction. The report must include all sections, letters and exhibits in the applicable sample CAFR as they apply to each charter school as well as any additional statements, schedules, and disclosures required under the circumstances of the charter school. The report must also include all applicable single audit opinion letters prepared by the charter school's auditor in the single audit section. Links to sample single audit letters and New Jersey specific reference are provided in Section III – Chapter 2 of *The Audit Program*.

2. The Auditor's Management Report on Administrative Findings, Financial, Compliance and Performance (AMR)

This separate report will serve as the auditor's report to management. This report must be submitted together with the CAFR to the Department of Education in order to comply with Finance Policy Bulletin 200-1. A sample Auditor's Management Report is located in Section III – Chapter 4.

3. Audit Summary Worksheet

The Audit Summary Worksheet (Audsum) diskette is to be completed by the auditor and given to the charter school board secretary/business administrator. The board secretary/business administrator is responsible for carefully reviewing the reports generated by the Audsum diskette and signing off on the transmittal letter as to the accuracy of the information. The board secretary/business administrator is responsible for the transmission of the Audsum data via the DOENET to the Department of Education by the same due date as the CAFR. This information is used by the Department of Education for a variety of purposes, including downloading into the actual column of the budget software issued by the department. **It is very important that auditors and charter school personnel pay particular attention to the accuracy of the data to avoid having to resubmit the data. If data is resubmitted due to an error in the CAFR, revised pages of the CAFR must be sent.**

The procedure for submission of the CAFR and the AMR was adopted by the Department of Education to conform to the common practice for CAFR presentation followed by other school districts/charter schools throughout the country. The two reports have separate, distinct purposes. The CAFR is the financial report presented to the board for conformance with GAAP. The AMR

is the auditor's report to the charter school of his/her findings and recommendations as a result of the audit. In accordance with OMB Circular A-133, the CAFR will also be submitted to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse as part of the reporting package along with the data collection form in cases where a federal single audit of the charter school is required. In conformity with the federal due date, the Federal Data Collection Form (SF-SAC) may be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education within 30 days after the audit report is filed with the charter school. Accordingly, the CD-ROMs of audit items submitted may be submitted on time without including the archived copy of the SF-SAC which then must be submitted under separate cover.

USOMB Circular A-133 and NJOMB Circular Letter 04-04 require that the Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs contain, but not be limited to, significant deficiencies in internal control over major programs, material non-compliance with the provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, or grant agreements related to a major program, and known questioned costs which meet the threshold as defined in Circular A-133. *N.J.S.A.* 18A:23-9 states that the auditor "...report any error, omission, irregularity, violation of law, together with recommendations, to the board of education of each school (or charter school)." Accordingly, the AMR must include **all** findings, including any items contained in the Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs.

OUTLINE FOR COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (CAFR)

New Jersey statute (*N.J.S.A.18A:4-14*) requires that charter schools maintain bookkeeping consistent with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The financial reporting requirements of GAAP include the issuance of a CAFR.

The financial statements are the responsibility of the charter school's management. The General Accounting Office (GAO) *Government Auditing Standards* (see the Introduction to this *Audit Program*) provide that an auditor may not audit financial statements prepared by that same auditor.

Charter schools should reference the NJ Department of Education (NJDOE) website at www.state.nj.us/njded/finance/fp (click on CAFR) for selected sample statements, including the basic financial statements and budgetary comparisons which are in excel files that can be downloaded by charter school staff. Information on Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) requirements is also available at that web site to assist auditors and charter school staff. **The illustrative statements and schedules are not intended to be boilerplate nor inclusive of every situation.**

The NJDOE requires that each governmental fund be treated as a major fund in the fund statements for GASB 34 presentation. Questions relating to the preparation of NJ school charter school CAFRs may be emailed to doecafr@doe.state.nj.us.

The format of the CAFR should adhere to the Outline and numbering of the exhibits as shown on the following pages. If a section or exhibit is not applicable to the charter school, the notation "N/A" should be indicated against that item in the Table of Contents.

The CAFR includes the Introduction, Financial, Statistical, and Single Audit Sections. The contents of each section are as follows:

Introductory Section – Although not required by GAAP, this section is used by the GFOA “Blue Book” and is intended to familiarize the reader with the organizational structure of the charter school and information useful to the reader to evaluate the charter school's financial condition. It is important that the letter of transmittal avoid duplicating information already provided in detail elsewhere in the CAFR.

Financial Section – This section includes the: 1) independent auditor's report, 2) MD&A, 3) basic financial statements including the charter school-wide statements (accrual basis for governmental and business-type activities), fund statements (modified accrual basis for governmental funds, accrual basis for proprietary funds and for fiduciary funds), and notes to financial statements, 4) Required Supplementary Information (RSI) other than MD&A including budgetary comparison schedules, 5) Other Supplementary Information including combining and individual fund statements, and additional schedules. Certain combining schedules may not be applicable. For example, if a charter school has only two programs in the Proprietary Fund, a combining schedule would not be necessary.

Statistical Section – This section is intended to provide CAFR users with a broader and complete understanding of the charter school and its financial matters than is possible from the financial statements and supporting schedules included in the financial section. GASB Statement No. 44 (GASB 44) revised the statistical schedules effective for the June 30, 2006 CAFRs. Sample schedules and guidance for preparing the schedules can be found on the

NJDOE web site www.state.nj.us/njded/finance/fp (click on CAFR). The Outline of the CAFR reflects these revisions. Statistical information to assist charter schools and auditors in preparing this section is posted on that web site (click on Audit Information, and then 2010-11 Audit Program).

Single Audit Section – This section includes independent auditor’s reports on compliance and internal control, schedules of expenditures for federal and state grants, notes to the schedules of expenditures of federal and state grants, schedule of findings and questioned costs, and a summary schedule of prior audit findings. This information is required by OMB Circular A-133 and New Jersey OMB Circular Letter 04-04.

OUTLINE OF CAFR

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- Organizational Chart
- Roster of Officials
- Consultants and Advisors

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Independent Auditor's Report

**Required Supplementary Information – Part I
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A. Charter School-Wide Financial Statements:

- A-1 Statement of Net Assets
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B. Fund Financial Statements:

Governmental Funds:

- B-1 Balance Sheet
- B-2 Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances
- B-3 Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds to the Statement of Activities

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- B-4 Statement of Net Assets
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- B-7 Statement of Fiduciary Net Assets
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C. Budgetary Comparison Schedules:

- C-1 Budgetary Comparison Schedule – General Fund
- C-1a Combining Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance – Budget and Actual (**if applicable**)
- C-2 Budgetary Comparison Schedule – Special Revenue Fund

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- C-3 Budget-to-GAAP Reconciliation

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Other Supplementary Information

- D. Not Applicable

- E. Special Revenue Fund:
 - E-1 Combining Schedule of Program Revenues and Expenditures – Budgetary Basis
 - E-2 Preschool Education Aid Schedule(s) of Expenditures – Budgetary Basis

- F. Capital Projects Fund:
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- G. Proprietary Funds:
 - Enterprise Fund:
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- H. Fiduciary Funds:
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- I. Long-Term Debt:
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- J-1 Net Assets by Component
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- J-4 Changes in Fund Balances – Governmental Funds
- J-5 General Fund Other Local Revenue by Source

Revenue Capacity

- J-6-J9 Not Applicable

Debt Capacity

- J-10 Ratios of Outstanding Debt by Type
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Demographic and Economic Information

- J-14 Demographic and Economic Statistics
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Operating Information

- J-16 Full-time Equivalent Charter School Employees by Function/Program
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- J-18 School Building Information
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by School Facility
- J-20 Insurance Schedule

*Private citizens should be listed as Individual Taxpayer 1, Individual Taxpayer 2, etc.

SINGLE AUDIT SECTION

- K-1 Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance With *Government Auditing Standards*
- K-2 Report on Compliance with Requirements Applicable to Each Major Program and on Internal Control Over Compliance in Accordance with OMB Circular A-133 and New Jersey OMB Circular Letter 04-04
- K-3 Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards, Schedule A
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- K-5 Notes to the Schedules of Awards and Financial Assistance
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SECTION I – GENERAL COMPLIANCE
CHAPTER 1

APPOINTMENT, SCOPE AND DECLARATION

Appointment of Auditor

N.J.S.A. 18A:23-8 requires that an audit of the accounts of a charter school be made only by a registered municipal accountant or a certified public accountant of New Jersey who holds an uncanceled registration license as a public school accountant for New Jersey.

A charter school board of trustees should refer to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:23A-16.2(i)(1), for regulations on obtaining audit firm peer reviews <http://www.nj.gov/education/code/current/title6a/chap23a.pdf>. The code requires that charter schools engage only licensed public school accountants who have had a peer review performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards, (Yellow Book)* and that charter schools obtain a copy of the audit firm's peer review and letter of comment. The charter school board of trustees is required to review the report prior to the engagement of the annual audit, and to acknowledge its review of the report in the minutes that authorizes the engagement of the public school accountant. Generally when a request for proposal (RFP) is issued for annual audit services, audit firms will submit their peer review with the RFP. A returning audit firm will generally submit their peer review with the engagement letter.

Government Auditing Standards July 2007 Revision (The Yellow Book) updates the quality control and peer review sections in Chapter 3 and is applicable for financial audits of periods beginning on or after January 1, 2008. Earlier implementation is permitted and encouraged. *The Yellow Book* is available in electronic format at the Government Accountability Office (GAO) website <http://www.gao.gov/govaud/ybk01.htm>. The website also contains a link to a summary of major changes. Printed versions of the July 2007 Yellow Book can be ordered through the Government Printing Office (GPO) online or by calling 202-512-1800 or 1-866-512-1800 toll free. Guidelines for audits of federal awards include the requirement that generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) be followed when a Single Audit is required (See Section II-SA of this Audit Program for further information on Single Audits).

Rules of Professional Conduct

The public school auditor must follow the rules of professional conduct required by *N.J.A.C.* 13:29-3 et seq. and promulgated by the Board of Accountancy, Department of Law and Public Safety.

Cooperation with the Auditor

Because the compensation of the auditor is determined by the amount of time required to complete the audit, the auditor should not perform routine office work. Charter school personnel are expected to perform certain actions and have certain documents ready in advance of the audit. See Section III-6 for a copy of the Board Secretary/Treasurer Checklist. The Auditor Questionnaire incorporates those actions and documents listed in the Board Secretary/Treasurer Questionnaire. Irregularities shown by answers given to questions in the Auditor Questionnaire must be covered by a comment and recommendation in the Auditor's Management Report.

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CHAPTER I

Scope of Audit

The audit shall include an audit of the books, accounts, and moneys and a verification of all cash and bank balances of the charter schools, and of any officer or employee thereof, and of any organization of public school pupils conducted under the auspices of the charter schools.

1. General Fund
2. Special Revenue Funds
3. Capital Projects Funds
4. Debt Service Funds
5. Permanent Funds
6. Enterprise Funds and Internal Service Funds
7. Private Purpose Trust and Agency Funds
8. Student Activity Funds

GASB Statement No. 39, *Determining Whether Certain Organizations are Component Units*. Auditors should consider the materiality of closely related organizations such as an education foundation or booster club, when determining whether to discretely present the statements of that organization in the charter school's CAFR as a component unit. Paragraph 6 of GASB 39 states, "It is a matter of professional judgment to determine whether the nature and the significance of a potential component unit's relationship with the primary government warrant inclusion in the reporting entity."

The areas of responsibility concerning completion of the audit and timely submission of the CAFR, the Auditor's Management Report, the Data Collection Form (if applicable) and the Audit Summary Worksheet diskette are as follows:

Responsibility for the preparation of the CAFR rests with the charter school. A sample CAFR is available on the website <http://www.nj.gov/education/finance/fp/cafr/>.

Responsibility for the completion of the Audit Summary Worksheet (Audsum) diskette rests with the auditor. The charter school is responsible for the transmission of Audsum to the DOE. The board secretary/business administrator is responsible for carefully reviewing the reports generated by the diskette and signing off on the transmittal letter as to the accuracy of the information. Signatures of both the auditor and School Board Secretary/Business Administrator are required.

The auditor's responsibility is to perform an audit for the purpose of rendering an opinion on the fairness of the basic financial statements. The audit is to be performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; the Single Audit Act of 1984 as amended by the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996; USOMB Circular A-133, NJOMB Circular Letter 04-04, and audit requirements as prescribed by the Division of Finance, Department of Education, State of New Jersey. The auditor is also responsible for reviewing the unaudited sections of the CAFR. Adjustments required as a result of the audit procedures performed should be reflected in the CAFR issued by the charter school. See Section II-SA for required submission of reports.

Risk Assessment/Internal Controls

The AICPA's Statement on Auditing Standards (SAS) No. 105 *Amendment to Statement on Auditing Standards No. 95, Generally Accepted Auditing Standards* supercedes SAS No. 1 section 150. This has been codified as AU 150.02 and states that an auditor "must adequately plan the work and must properly

SECTION I – GENERAL COMPLIANCE
CHAPTER I

supervise any assistants. The auditor must obtain a sufficient understanding of the entity and its environment, including its internal control, to assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to error or fraud, and to design the nature, timing, and extent of further audit procedures.” SAS No. 99 established standards and provides guidance to auditors in fulfilling that responsibility, as it relates to fraud, in an audit of financial statements conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Guidance includes additional inquiries of management, not just the business office, additional documentation of the auditor’s work in consideration of fraud, and identifying and assessing risks of fraud –incentives/pressures, opportunities, and attitudes/rationalizations.

The AICPA issued eight risk assessment standards SAS 104 through SAS 111; collectively known as the Risk Assessment Standards, in March 2006. These standards are first effective for June 30, 2008 school charter school audits.

According to the AICPA, “the primary objective of these Statements is to enhance auditors’ application of the audit risk model in practice by specifying, among other things:

- More in-depth understanding of the entity and its environment, including its internal control, to identify the risks of material misstatement in the financial statements and what the entity is doing to mitigate them.
- More rigorous assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements based on that understanding.
- Improved linkage between the assessed risks and the nature, timing, and extent of audit procedures performed in response to those risks.”

Charter schools that expend \$500,000 or more in federal financial assistance or state financial assistance are required to have an annual single audit performed in accordance with the federal Single Audit Act and the OMB Circular No. A-133 and state policy. Charter schools that expend \$100,000 or more in state and/or federal financial assistance must have either a financial statement audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards (Yellow Book)* or a program-specific audit performed in accordance with the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133 and state policy.

The federal Circular A-133 has included guidance for single audits and defines internal control as a process, affected by an entity’s management and other personnel, designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives in the following categories:

- (1) Effectiveness and efficiency of operations,
- (2) Reliability of financial reporting, and
- (3) Compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Section -500(c) of Circular A-133 under “Scope of Audit” states (1) “In addition to the requirements of GAGAS [generally accepted government auditing standards] the auditor shall perform procedures to obtain an understanding of internal control over federal programs sufficient to plan the audit to support a low assessed level of control risk for major programs.”

The Circular A-133 further states at (d)(1)- “In addition to the requirements of GAGAS - the auditor shall determine whether the auditee has complied with laws, regulations, and the provisions of contracts or grant agreements that may have a direct and material effect on each of its major programs” and at (d) (4) “The compliance testing shall include tests of transactions and such other auditing procedures necessary to provide the auditor sufficient evidence to support an opinion on compliance.”

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CHAPTER I

Significant deficiencies or material weaknesses must be communicated to the charter schools and must be followed up with a corrective action plan prepared by the board. The increased understanding of the audited charter school's internal controls will also enhance management's efficiency and effectiveness.

The Yellow Book requires that when an opinion or disclaimer is expressed on financial statements, auditors must also report on internal control over financial reporting and on compliance with laws, regulations and provisions of contracts or grant agreements.

In October 2008, the AICPA Auditing Standards Board (ASB) issued Statement on Auditing Standards (SAS) No. 115, *Communicating Internal Control Related Matters Identified in an Audit*, which supersedes SAS No. 112 of the same title. This SAS is effective for audits of financial statements for periods ending on or after December 15, 2009. SAS No. 115 amends SAS No. 112 and was issued by the Auditing Standards Board to provide guidance to auditors with respect to what should be communicated to management and those charged with governance in an organization. The key differences between SAS No. 115 and SAS No. 112 are revisions to the definitions of material weaknesses and significant deficiencies to better align them with PCAOB Auditing Standard No. 5; with the most significant change being to the definition of significant deficiencies. Guidance for making the determination as to whether a deficiency is a material weakness or significant deficiency has also been updated. SAS No. 115 requires the auditor make communications, in writing, to management and those charged with governance regarding significant deficiencies and material weaknesses in internal controls that you note in your audits.

<http://www.aicpa.org/Research/Standards/AuditAttest/DownloadableDocuments/AU-00325.pdf>

During December 2009, the AICPA Auditing Standards Board (ASB) issued Statement on Auditing Standard (SAS) No. 117, *Compliance Audits*. SAS No. 117 supersedes SAS No. 74, *Compliance Auditing Considerations in Audits of Governmental Entities and Recipients of Governmental Financial Assistance*. It applies to single audits and other similar compliance audits for fiscal periods ending on or after June 15, 2010. The SAS was developed in response to findings in a federal study on single audit quality that showed improvements were needed in many areas. SAS No. 117 is available from the AICPA.

Fiscal Accountability Legislation

Legislation enacted during 2007 provides measures that must be taken to ensure fiscal accountability. Charter schools are required to adhere to the travel guidelines and additional guidelines pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-22 to ensure fiscal accountability and efficiency of charter schools. These regulations can be reviewed at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/>.

Declaration of Accountant

N.J.S.A. 18A:23-9. Declaration of Accountant. "No person shall undertake the auditing of the accounts of any school charter school unless he shall have qualified as a public school accountant for New Jersey upon proof that he is either a registered municipal accountant or a certified public accountant, of New Jersey, and by subscribing to the following declaration:

- a. That he is fully acquainted with the laws governing the fiscal affairs of charter schools of New Jersey and is a competent and experienced auditor; and
- b. That he will honestly and faithfully audit the books and accounts of any charter school when engaged to do so, and report any error, omission, irregularity, violation of law, discrepancy or other nonconformity to the law, together with recommendations, to the board of trustees of such charter school."

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CHAPTER 2

MEETINGS AND MINUTES

Meetings of Public Bodies - The Sunshine Law

In enacting the Open Public Meetings Act, the legislature declared that secrecy in public affairs undermines public faith in government and that the right of the public to witness in full detail all phases of the deliberation, policy formulation and decision-making of public bodies is vital to the proper functioning of the democratic process. (*N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*)

In general, the statute requires that the public be given advance notice of and the right to attend meetings of public bodies and that all discussions and official actions, unless specifically exempted, take place in public.

Minutes must be kept of all meetings, which at a minimum must include the announcement of the presiding person at the commencement of the meeting, the time and place of the meeting, and the names of the members present, the subjects considered, the actions taken and the vote of each member on any items voted upon. The following should be detailed in the minutes.

- a. A list of all employees, salaries and wages approved by the board.
- b. The final approved budget upon.
- c. Details of the annual organization meeting of the board
- d. Lists of claims approved for payment by the board.
- e. Summary of monthly financial statements of the secretary and the treasurer (if the charter school has a treasurer).
- f. Authorization for advertising for bids, with summary of the bids received and subsequent award of same.
- g. Full detail of budget transfers, including affirmative vote by two thirds of board for applicable transfers.
- h. Capital Improvement Authorizations, Proposals and/or Adoptions.
- i. Loan Agreements.
- j. Required Board of Trustees Policies:
 - Travel and expense reimbursement
 - Public Relations and Professional Services
 - Nepotism
 - Contributions and Contracts Awards
 - Policy on Exceeding Purchase Order Amounts

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CHAPTER 2

Minute Records

The proceedings of the meeting of the board of trustees should be recorded in a bound or an acceptable loose-leaf type minute book and signed by the secretary. The minutes should be reviewed by the auditor. This procedure is necessary to check on the actions of the board of trustees, particularly with respect to the proceedings of the annual or special meetings the submission of monthly financial reports, the approval of claims, adoption of the budget, budget amendments, advertisements for bids and other financial matters of importance to the auditor. Minutes must include as a minimum the requirements of the “Sunshine Law” per *N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.*

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CHAPTER 3

CHARTER SCHOOL AID

CHARTER SCHOOL AID

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:36A-12(b), the school district of residence shall pay directly to the charter school for each student enrolled in the charter school who resides in the district an amount equal to 90% of the sum of the budget year equalization aid per pupil and the prebudget year general fund tax levy per pupil inflated by the CPI rate most recent to the calculation. In addition, the school district of residence shall pay directly to the charter school the security categorical aid attributable to the student and a percentage of the district's special education categorical aid equal to the percentage of the district's special education students enrolled in the charter school and, if applicable, 100% of preschool education aid.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:36A-12(d), first year charter school students who attended non-public schools and students that were home schooled last year are funded by the state with direct payments to the charter school.

A sample of the charter school aid payment schedule is included in Appendix A.

School Register

The school district of residence must enroll charter school students in the school register and treat them as resident students for purposes of state aid. The charter school's responsibility is to ensure the attendance of those students enrolled in their school in accordance with *N.J.A.C.* 6A:23A-15. A student who has been absent 10 days for an unknown reason must be reported as a dropout and the charter school must immediately notify the school district of this condition in writing.

All copies of source documents related to the determination of state aid (i.e. Application for Free and Reduced Meals and Free Milk, workpapers listing bilingual education students) must be maintained in both the school district of residence and the charter school.

The auditor is required to review the charter school's registers, workpapers and supporting documentation for all registered students for accuracy.

Enrollment Counts

Pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:23A-15 charter schools are required to conduct enrollment counts on October 15 and the last day of the school year. A charter school shall submit each count through the live web-based Charter School Enrollment System, available through the NJ Homeroom website, for the purposes of determining average daily enrollment. Accurate maintenance of the enrollment system is vital so that the resident districts can rely on the accuracy of the payment schedules.

The requirements for the auditors will be to conduct an audit of the two enrollment counts. The importance of these counts was discussed previously concerning the fact that the school register is the source document for which revenue is derived in a charter school.

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The Schedule of Audited Enrollments is included in the Auditors' Management Report as a supplementary schedule and is subjected to the same auditing procedures applied in the examination of the charter school's basic financial statements.

Charter schools must complete the enrollment count submission, which documents the compilation of register data for the purposes of charter school aid calculation and provides an audit trail for the auditor to use as a basis for testing. Charter schools are required to prepare written internal procedures, which should provide a description of the count process for the two required enrollment counts. The procedures should describe how the count was taken, who was responsible for compiling the data, completing the enrollment count submission, and detail the various assigned responsibilities for collection of the data and the follow-up procedures to identify student information to be corrected in the subsequent count. The workpapers, original supporting documentation and internal procedures should be maintained on file for a period of seven years.

Sampling Methods/Sizes - Audit Procedure

Testing should include samples from each of the enrollment count dates, i.e. October 15, 2010, and the last day of school 2011. The sample selected for the enrollment submission will result in testing all the specifics to the student selected in that sample. The two enrollment submissions are based on actual enrollment into the charter school; therefore, the audit of both counts sampled will be verification of the number of days enrolled and agreement to the school register.

The auditor must audit 100% of the records over the two enrollment counts utilizing a “sampling without replacement” method. This means that once a student record is randomly selected for testing, that record is excluded from the sample pool for the subsequent counts. Utilizing this “non-replacement” method ensures that the auditor examines 100% of the student records. For example, if total charter school enrollment is 500 students, the October 15 sample is 250 out of the 500 records. The last day of school count sample is the remaining 250 students. The auditor should pay particular attention to students that have either enrolled into or transferred out of the charter school during the school year to ensure that they are included in the testing and that the enrolled days are accurate.

Note: Since student enrollment is the source data for charter school funding, auditors are advised to be diligent in verifying the accuracy of the information. Any discrepancies are to be documented and reconciled. Enrollment Count Submission (See Appendix B)

On Roll -

Samples from each enrollment count must be tested to verify that the number of pupils enrolled agrees with the associated number reflected on the charter school's workpapers. The auditor will attest to the number of days that the child was enrolled.

Through review of transfer cards, the auditor will verify that the enrolled students are in the appropriate district of residence to ensure that the proper school district is reflected in the payment schedule.

For students in grades 9 to 12, auditors are required to inquire as the status of any students enrolled in a county vocational program and verify that the final enrollment count reflects the corresponding reduction in Average Daily Enrollment

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Special Ed/ Bilingual -

For each student tested where there was a submission of Special Ed/ Bilingual, the auditor must verify the documentation to support the classification and verify the numbers of days the services were rendered to that child.

Auditors are required to inquire as to the status of any special education student in outside placements. **NOTE: If a charter school student has been placed in a Private School for the Disabled, the auditor must:**

- 1. Verify that the IEP requires the private placement;**
- 2. Verify that the student recording the Charter School Enrollment System (CHE) is coded as “Attending a Private School” and that the Average Daily Enrollment (ADE) is zero.**

The financial costs for educating these students are borne by the school district of residence.

Low Income Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students (kindergarten through 12)

For each student tested where there was a submission of Low Income LEP, the auditor must verify the documentation to support the classification and verify the number of days the services were rendered to that child.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students (not low income-kindergarten through 12)

For each student tested where there was a submission of LEP not low-income, the auditor must verify the documentation to support the classification and verify the number of days the services were rendered to that child.

Special Education Tiers No Longer Applicable

Prior to October 15, 2008 educationally disabled students were reported by tiers. Subsequent to October 15, 2008, they are reported by grade groupings – elementary, middle school, or high school. The IEP should be reviewed to determine that the student has been classified as special education, but subsequent to October 15, 2008 auditors no longer need to review for classification in tiers.

Auditor’s Note – In respect of the confidentiality provision involving a student’s IEP, we recommend that the auditor not make photocopies of IEP’s chosen as part of the test sample. The auditor may suggest that a representative of the charter school be present to ensure compliance with the aforementioned provision. Additionally, the charter school may require the auditor to sign the pupil access record to document the disclosure of this information.

SECTION I – GENERAL COMPLIANCE
CHAPTER 3

Educationally disabled students who are graded (Resource Center) are reported based on the following grade level table:

<u>Grade Level (as of 10/15/10)</u>	<u>School</u>
preK-5	Elementary School
6-8	Middle School
9-12	High School

Educationally disabled students who are un-graded (Self-Contained) are reported based on the following age based table:

<u>Age (as of 6/30/11)</u>	<u>School</u>
11 and under	Elementary School
12-14	Middle School
15-21	High School

Private School for the Disabled

Pursuant to N.J.S.A.18A:36A-11(b) A charter school shall comply with the provisions of chapter 46 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes concerning the provision of services to handicapped students; except that the fiscal responsibility for any student currently enrolled in or determined to require a private day or residential school shall remain with the district of residence.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.18A:36A-11(c)* Within 15 days of the signing of the individualized education plan, a charter school shall provide notice to the resident district of any individualized education plan which results in a private day or residential placement. The resident district may challenge the placement within 30 days in accordance with the procedures established by law.

Auditors are required to inquire as to the status of any special education student in outside placements. If a charter school student has been placed in a Private School for the Disabled or a residential program, the auditor must: 1. Verify that the IEP requires the private placement 2. Verify that the student record in the Charter School Enrollment System is coded as “Attending a Private School” and that the related Average Daily Enrollment (ADE) is zero. The costs for educating these students are borne by the school district of residence.

Auditor’s Note – In respect of the confidentiality provision involving a student’s IEP, we recommend that the auditor not make photocopies of IEPs. The auditor may suggest that a representative of the charter school be present to ensure compliance with the aforementioned provision. Additionally, the charter school may require the auditor to sign the pupil access record to document the disclosure of this information.

County Vocational School Students

For students in grades 9 to 12, auditors are required to inquire as the status of any students also enrolled in a county vocational program part-time and verify that the final enrollment count reflects the corresponding reduction in Average Daily Enrollment (ADE). The Charter School Enrollment System record of students who were enrolled in the charter school for the entire school year, and who were also attending a vocational program, should reflect an ADE of 0.5. This ADE would be prorated accordingly for students who were only enrolled in the charter school for part of the school year. This reduction should be reflected on the 2010-2011 Final Enrollment Count. Any exceptions should be noted in the Schedule of Audited Enrollments.

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CHAPTER 3

Low-Income Enrollment on Roll – Full Time and Shared Time

Obtain the low-income workpapers prepared by the charter school and reconcile total low-income eligible students listed to the low-income eligible students reported on the Charter School Enrollment System. Low-income eligible students are students eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk, and are part of the charter school's enrollment. Students eligible for free or reduced price meals or free milk are those students who have been determined to be eligible under the National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act as of the last school day prior to October 16, (October 15, 2010).

The district and charter school should have the documentation on file for free or reduced lunch information. The paperwork should be filed in the charter school and the district. **It is the responsibility of the charter school to provide the district with the necessary documentation for purposes of state aid and submission of ASSA to the state.**

Errors detected in income classifications during the testing of applications for the school child nutrition program which impact the free classifications should be applied to the low-income count when applicable. The verified count reported on the Schedule of Audited Enrollments must reflect all adjustments discovered during the above procedures. If the workpapers do not agree with the State Aid Reports, those variances must be reported on the Schedule of Audited Enrollments as well.

Bilingual Education -- Bilingual education programs are provided to students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) to help them develop academic skills while acquiring English language skills. There are currently three programs as follows:

- Bilingual programs with content area instruction in the native language provided when there are 20 or more LEP students of a single language group in a charter school.
- ESL-only (ESL) programs are provided when there are 10 or more LEP students in a charter school.
- English Language Services (ELS) programs are provided when there is at least 1, but fewer than 10, LEP students in a charter school.

Program plans for Bilingual, ESL-only and ELS programs are submitted every three years. The current three-year cycle began in July 2008, and will end in 2011. All programs operate from September to June.

Bilingual, ESL or ELS programs are provided to students identified as LEP by a state established standard on an English language proficiency test. The following students who are enrolled in the charters school as of October 15, 2010 are eligible to be reported:

- Resident and nonresident students identified as LEP, in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.3(c)*, who are participating in an approved bilingual, ESL, or ELS program and
- Students who continue to need and participate in bilingual, ESL or ELS program services on the basis of multiple indicators as per *N.J.A.C.6A:15-1.10(b)*.

The number of eligible students must be supported by a listing by school which includes each student's name and the number of the register on which they are enrolled. Beginning with the October 15, 2008 ASSA, LEP students with an IEP counted in bilingual education are also permitted to be counted as special education students.

Based on the total LEP students reported, the auditor should use the table on page **I-3.2** to determine an appropriate sample size. Trace the LEP students selected to the registers to ensure that the

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students were on roll as of October 15, 2010. The results of the LEP testing are reported in the Schedule of Audited Enrollments that is required to be included in the Auditors' Management Report.

The auditor should also verify that the charter school submitted a Bilingual, ESL or ELS plan which included the year ending June 30, 2011 to the department that received approval.

LEP Placement Criteria:

The bilingual education code (*N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.10*) states that the process to determine the readiness or inability of the individual student to function successfully in an English only program shall be initiated by the student's level of English proficiency as measured by a department established standard on one of the accepted English language proficiency tests listed below. The readiness of the student shall be further assessed on the basis of the multiple indicators, also listed below. Thus, students may be retained for program services even though their language proficiency test scores on the LAS, LAS – Links, IPT, MACII, ACCESS for ELLs, CELLA, W-APT are at the standard. Charter schools may continue to report these students as LEP if other indicators support the decision to continue language assistance program services. Testing of each LEP student reported on the Enrollment Count must be documented as part of enrollment count supporting documentation.

2010-11 English Language Proficiency Tests:

- Language Assessment Scales (LAS), published by CTB/McGraw Hill
- Language Assessment Scales Links (LAS-Links) published by CTB/McGraw Hill
- IDEA Proficiency Test, published by Ballard & Tighe Publishing Company
- MAC II Test of English Language Proficiency, published by Touchstone Applied Science Associates.
- WIDA ACCESS for ELLS Placement Test (W-APT)
- Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs™)
- Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA), published by Accountability Works, Inc.
- WIDA MODEL TEST

The standards for these are outlined below. Additional information for the tests above is on the website: www.nj.gov/education/bilingual/resources/prof_tests.htm.

Using Multiple Criteria for Program Entry and Exit

Charter schools must use multiple indicators, as specified in code (*N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.3(b)* and *6A:15-1.10(b)*) to determine which students need English as a Second Language (ESL) and/or bilingual program support and which students can function independently in a monolingual English classroom. These indicators must be used for both identification of LEP students and for determining readiness to exit from bilingual/ESL/ELS program services. Use of the multiple indicators is particularly important when a student's test score is close to a cut point (as determined by the standard error of measurement (SEM). These other indicators include:

- Reading level;
- Previous academic (classroom) performance;
- Achievement on standardized tests in English; and
- Teacher judgment.

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Language Assessment Scales (LAS) - CTB/McGraw Hill Publishers

Use the LAS Language Proficiency Index (LPI) to determine program placement.

LPI (RW/O)	Category	Description
1/2 1/3	LEPa	low-level R and W skills mid-level (limited) L and S skills
1/4 1/5	LEPb	low-level R and W skills high-level (proficient) L and S skills
2/2 2/3	LEPc	mid-level R and W skills mid-level (limited) L and S skills
2/4 2/5	LEPd	mid-level R and W skills high-level (proficient) L and S skills
3/2 3/3	LEPe	high-level R and W skills mid-level (limited) L and S skills
3/4	FEP	high-level R and W skills high-level (proficient) L and S skills

Standard

Any student that places below the FEP (Full-English Proficient) category and has at least one other indicator as per *N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.3(c)* is limited English proficient.

LAS Links Language Assessment System- CTB McGraw-Hill Publishers

For each grade, there are score ranges for each language domain and for each language proficiency level.

Grade (e.g., 5)	1 Beginning	2 Early Intermediate	3 Intermediate	4 Proficient	5 Above Proficient
Overall					
Listening					
Speaking					
Reading					
Writing					

Standard: Any student that scores below the proficient range on the **Overall** score and has at least one other indicator (listed above) as per *N.J.A.C. 6A:15 1.3(b)* is limited English proficient.

The *LAS Links* Student Profile Sheet can be used for placement of students, and is available in an electronic version and a printed version. If the student’s score is below the Proficient range (e.g., Beginning, Early Intermediate, or Intermediate), they are considered LEP.

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IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) - Ballard and Tighe Publishers

Use the IPT designations to determine program placement.

- Oral Tests
 - Non-English Speaker
 - Limited-English Speaker
 - Fluent-English Speaker

- Reading Tests
 - Non-English Reader
 - Limited-English Reader
 - Competent-English Reader

- Writing Tests
 - Non-English Writer
 - Limited-English Writer
 - Competent-English Writer

Standard

Any student who falls in the “limited” category or below, in any of the tests, oral, reading, or writing and has at least one other indicator (listed above) as per *N.J.A.C. 6A:15 1.3(b)* is limited English proficient.

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MACII Test of English Language Proficiency -Touchstone Applied Science Associates Publishers

Use the Standard Score Cut Points to determine program placement.

Standard Score Cut Points*				
Test Level	Grade	Fall	Spring	SEM**
Red	K	210	220	8
	1	566	588	14
Blue	2	548	564	12
	3	558	574	12
Orange	4	543	559	10
	5	556	569	11
Ivory	6	545	557	10
	7	551	562	10
	8	555	567	10
Tan	9	549	560	10
	10	558	570	11
	11	568	583	11
	12	580	593	11

*For grades 1-12, cut points are set for Total Battery scores. For grade K, cut points are set in terms of total Speaking and Listening scores.

**The standard error of measurement (SEM) of a test is a measure of reliability that represents the amount by which a score may vary due to errors of measurement. Thus, the larger the SEM the greater the likelihood that a student might be misclassified. The SEM can be used to establish a band within which errors are most probable. For students whose scores fall within the band defined by the cut score plus or minus one SEM (e.g., 539 to 559 for Fall, 9th grade), additional data should be used to corroborate the placements.

WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT)

The WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT)TM is an adaptive test that can gauge students' proficiency up to and beyond level 5 of the WIDA ELP Standards. Like ACCESS for ELLs®, there are five grade level clusters (Kindergarten, 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12). Unlike the ACCESS for ELLS®, all scoring of the W-APT is completed on site by the test administrator. All sections of the test are scored as the test is administered. After completion of the Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing, the Test Administrator will use the instructions on the scoring sheet to calculate the students' overall Proficiency Level.

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Grades 1-12

The regulation mandating the use of multiple criteria for identifying and exiting students from language assistance programs services is still required. For students in grades 1 through 12, a W-APT proficiency level of **4.5** or higher is recommended for exiting a program if multiple criteria support the decision.

Kindergarten

The Kindergarten test is organized into parts (A through E), each progressively more difficult. If the student successfully completes a part (e.g., A) they move on to the next part. The score sheet indicates the criteria for successful completion and will indicate how far the student progresses in the adaptive administration. For example to successfully complete part D of the Listening and Speaking exam, a student must answer at least 3 questions correctly in Part A, 3 questions correctly in Part B, 3 questions correctly in Part C, and 4 questions correctly in Part D.

The W-APT may be used to help determine eligibility of a kindergarten student for language assistance or to help identify when a student is able to exit a language assistance program. Eligibility may be determined at any time during the school year. However, the Reading and Writing sections of the W-APT test are only appropriate during the second half of the Kindergarten year.

For example, eligibility for language assistance program services for a student tested in September is contingent on students NOT successfully completing any Parts A, B, and C of the Listening and Speaking Test. If a student is tested in February, the student will take the Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing tests. If the student does not successfully complete the appropriate parts in any one of the three tests, the student is eligible for language assistance. Charter schools should consider other indicators in making their placement decision.

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To exit language assistance program a student is expected to meet the criteria in all three test sections. The following chart demonstrates the standards for program entry and exit in kindergarten:

	Eligibility for Language Assistance Kindergarten		Exit Language Assistance
Test Section	Administered Before January 1 of the School Year	Administered After January 1 of the School Year	Administered at the End of Kindergarten
Listening and Speaking	Does not successfully complete parts A, B, C, and D	Does not successfully complete parts A, B, C, and D OR	Successfully complete parts A, B, C, and D AND answer at least 3 questions correctly in Part E AND
Reading		Does not successfully complete parts A, B, and C OR	Successfully complete parts A, B, C, and D AND
Writing		Does not successfully complete parts A, B, and C	Successfully complete parts A, B, C, and D

Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs™)

The ACCESS for ELLs English Language Proficiency test is required to be administered annually to all LEP students to measure progress in the English language. The test is administered during a six-week window each spring and scored by an outside vendor. Charter schools receive score reports during the summer, and can make tentative placement decisions based on other indicators until the score reports are received. For more information on the ACCESS for ELLS go to the website: http://www.nj.gov/education/bilingual/ells/score/entry_exit.htm

Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA)

CELLA Proficiency Levels

A student scoring below English Proficient and has at least one other indicator as per N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.3(c) is considered limited English proficient.

Listening and Speaking Proficiency Levels

Beginning students speak in English and understand spoken English that is below grade level and require continuous support.

Low Intermediate students speak in English and understand spoken English that is at or below grade level and require some support.

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High Intermediate students, with minimal support, speak in English and understand spoken English that is at grade level.

English Proficient students speak in English and understand spoken English at grade level in a manner similar to non-ELL students.

Reading Proficiency Levels

Beginning students read below grade level text and require continuous support.

Low Intermediate students read at or below grade level text and require some support.

High Intermediate students read at grade level text with minimal support.

English Proficient students read at grade level text in a manner similar to non-ELLs.

Writing Proficiency Levels

Beginning students write below grade level and require continuous support.

Low Intermediate students write at or below grade level and require some support.

High Intermediate students write at grade level with minimal support.

English Proficient students write at grade level in a manner similar to non-ELLs.

WIDA MODEL TEST

The WIDA Model for Kindergarten has two main purposes:

- To identify students who may be candidates for ESL and/or bilingual services; and
- To determine the academic English language proficiency level of students new to a school or to the U.S. school system in order to decide appropriate levels and amounts of instructional services.

For either purpose, the WIDA Model should be considered one of several elements in the decision-making process regarding ELL identification and placement in instructional services. The Listening and Speaking components of the WIDA MODEL provide an Oral Proficiency score, which can be used to determine the level and extent of services appropriate for each student. The results of the Reading and Writing (literacy) components provide diagnostic information that may be used as additional criteria to guide instruction and service delivery.

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The WIDA MODEL for Kindergarten is one of New Jersey’s approved language proficiency tests for identifying students for language assistance programs. This test is designed for children entering Kindergarten. Prior to January 1 of the Kindergarten school year, Kindergarten students can be administered only the listening and speaking sections of the WIDA MODEL for Kindergarten.

N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.3(c) mandates the use of multiple indicators for identifying and exiting limited English proficient students from language assistance programs. For students taking the Kindergarten MODEL test **prior to January 1**, the standard for the oral proficiency level score (listening and speaking sections only) is a **5.0 oral language proficiency level and at least one other indicator**.

For students taking the Kindergarten MODEL **after January 1**, the standard is a **4.5 overall composite proficiency level and multiple indicators** as per N.J.A.C.6A15:1.10(c). This score is based on the student taking all parts (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) of the K MODEL.

ADDITIONAL AUDIT PROCEDURES ON THE ENROLLMENT COUNT

In addition to the testing of enrollment reported, the public school accountant must also verify that the charter school maintains written internal procedures which provide a description of the enrollment count process.

These written procedures must include the following information:

- 1) How the count was taken,
- 2) Who was responsible for compiling the data and completing the enrollment count,
- 3) The various personnel assigned responsibilities for collecting the data
- 4) Procedures for verification of student registration with the local school district prior to enrollment in the charter school.
- 5) Procedures to ensure that all source documents such as signed registration forms, student transfer cards, “application for free or reduced lunch”, verification for eligibility of bilingual services or IEPs are included in student files and provided to the district for the ASSA submission.
- 6) Student attendance procedures, including the use of the school register.
- 7) A procedure to ensure that the budget is revised to reflect changes in the charter school revenue.
- 8) Procedures for conducting the two enrollment counts, student additions and deletions, security procedures, location of Charter School Enrollment manual, location of DOE final reports, reporting of information to the district and appropriate follow-up.
- 9) Follow-up procedures to identify student information to be corrected in the subsequent count.
- 10) The various personnel assigned responsibilities for collecting the data.

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The auditor is required to document any enrollment system findings/deficiencies in the Auditor's Management Report. If the charter school did not use the sample workpapers or develop an alternative audit trail, the auditor shall include a comment that the necessary verifications and sampling could not be performed and a recommendation that the workpapers be used or an alternative audit trail (which is acceptable to the auditor) be established for future audits. The auditor should include a comment and recommendation for any differences noted on the Schedule of Audited Enrollments. If the errors result in an overclaim of charter school aid, the auditor is required to post an adjustment.

A memo was distributed to all school districts regarding the necessary records that were required to be maintained to support the data included in the October 15, 2010 ASSA. **Charter schools should use this memo as a guide to ensure that all necessary records to support the data included in the enrollment count are on file at the charter school and also provided to the district, since all charter school students are reported on the districts' ASSA.** Copies of the suggested sample formats for supporting workpapers were distributed with the memo. As noted in the memo, the data reported on the ASSA must be clearly documented and should be on file at the district and charter school. The memo, instructions, and a Q & A document may be obtained from the website: http://www.nj.gov/njded/finance/sf/stateaid_app.shtml.

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BUDGET & TRANSFERS

The Budget

Preparation of the budget is one of the most important functions of the charter school board of trustees. The approved budget should be detailed on the 108 line item budget summary form prescribed by the Department of Education in the New Jersey Charter School Application. All revenue data and expenditure data items and their classifications are explained in a narrative description with the budget summary in the charter school application.

The approved detailed budget must appear in the official minutes as a matter of record.

Budget Transfers

Line-item transfers must be made whenever the line item is in danger of going into a deficit condition. A charter school board of trustees may not approve encumbrances or expenditures that will create deficits in line items. A board of trustees may transfer amounts necessary to effectuate the approval of encumbrances or expenditures from line item accounts with available appropriation balances and pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.3*. A board of trustees may by resolution, designate the chief school administrator to approve transfers between meetings of the board. Transfers approved by the chief school administrator shall be reported to the board, ratified, and duly recorded in the minutes at a subsequent meeting of the board but not less than monthly.

Transfers to food service fund

In situations where a charter school charges for meals or receives state or federal meal subsidies, the activity of its food service operations must be accounted for in an enterprise fund. Charter schools have been provided accounting guidance in Chapter 14 of the *GAAP Technical Systems Manual*. All costs related to the program must be shown in the enterprise fund. Any board contribution, including the payment of certain salaries or other identified specific expenditures should be budgeted and expended as a transfer to cover deficit in account 11-000-310-930. A separate line has been provided in the audsum diskette for this account. For CAFR presentation, the budgeted and actual transfer should be presented as a general fund operating transfer.

No transfers should be made from the general fund to the special revenue fund for expenditures in excess of the grant budget. In this instance, the Board's contribution to the program should be coded to the applicable general fund expenditure account, with the exception of benefits.

No transfer may be made under *N.J.S.A 18A:22-8.2* from appropriations or surplus accounts for:

- (a) Capital Reserve Fund
- (b) Items classified as current expenses
- (c) Items classified as capital projects
- (d) Interest and debt redemption charges
- (e) Items classified as general fund except to other items so classified.

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Transfers from appropriations or surplus accounts may be made within the general fund. When specifically approved by the Commissioner, transfers of surplus may be made at any time by board resolution and may be made within the original annual budget. Transfers of appropriations may be made by board resolution at any time during the fiscal year.

Interfund balances

Charter school-wide statements (accrual basis)

GASB 34, paragraph 58 requires eliminations of interfund receivables and payables in the *Statement of Net Assets* except for the net residual amounts due between governmental and business-type activities, which should be presented as internal balances. Amounts reported in the funds as receivable from or payable to fiduciary funds should be included in the *Statement of Net Assets* as receivable from and payable to external parties rather than as internal balances. Paragraph 59 requires eliminations in the *Statement of Activities* to remove the “doubling-up” effect of internal service fund activity.

Funds statements (modified accrual basis)

For governmental funds, interfund transfers should be reported as other financing uses in the funds making the transfers and as other financing sources in the funds receiving transfers. In proprietary funds, revenues from transfers should be reported separately after non-operating revenues and expenses. (GASB 34 Paragraph 112).

Interfund Note disclosures

GASB Statement No. 38, *Certain Financial Statement Note Disclosures*, Paragraphs 14 and 15 require specific disclosures on interfund balances and transfers.

“Governments should disclose in the notes to the financial statements the following details about interfund balances reported in the fund financial statements:

- a. Amounts due from other funds by individual major fund, non-major governmental funds in the aggregate, non-major enterprise funds in the aggregate, internal service funds in the aggregate, and fiduciary fund type
- b. The purpose for interfund balances
- c. Interfund balances that are not expected to be repaid within one year from the date of the financial statements

Governments should disclose in the notes to the financial statements the following details about interfund transfers reported in the fund financial statements:

- a. Amounts transferred from other funds by individual major fund, non-major governmental funds in the aggregate, non-major enterprise funds in the aggregate, internal service funds in the aggregate, and fiduciary fund type
- b. A general description of the principal purposes of the government’s interfund transfers
- c. The intended purpose and the amount of significant transfers that meet either or both of the following criteria:
 - Do not occur on a routine basis – for example, a transfer to a wastewater enterprise fund for the local match of a federal pollution control grant
 - Are inconsistent with the activities of the fund making the transfer – for example, a transfer from a capital projects fund to the general fund.”

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BIDS & CONTRACTS/PURCHASING

Bids & Contracts

Local Finance Notice LFN-2011-16 *The Qualified Purchasing Agent Law and Boards of Education*, issued by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) May 5, 2011 corrects previous guidance issued to charter schools concerning bid thresholds. Charter schools without a QPA may continue to operate under the \$26,000 base amount of the two-tier bid threshold as described in LFN 2010-13 *Adjustment of Public Bidding Threshold July 1, 2010* and provides that the maximum bid threshold for contracting under the Public Schools Contracts Law (*N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2*) is \$26,000 effective July 1, 2010. Also effective July 1, 2010, the maximum threshold for quotations is \$3,900. Contracting units that have appointed a QPA pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-9(b)* and take advantage of a higher bid threshold pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3(a)* and *18A:18A-3(a)*, have their maximum bid threshold increased to \$36,000 as of July 1, 2010 and their maximum threshold for quotations is \$5,400 as of July 1, 2010.

Local Finance Notice LFN-2010-3, *Guidance on Current Issues in Local Government and Board of Education Procurement*, was issued during January 2010 by the DCA and provides guidance related to public procurement practices and law. Matters specific to Public School Contracts Law include:

- Political Contribution Disclosure Regulations for Charter Schools. To facilitate the disclosure of contributions to board members by vendors, charter schools are required to update their contracting procedures to adapt the Business Entity Disclosure Certification (BED-C) or extend the use of the Political Contribution Disclosure form to all contracts by including one of the forms in all bid specifications, RFPs and RFQs. (*N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-6.3*)
- Competitive Contracting for School and Professional Development Services (*N.J.A.C. 5:34-4.4*)
- Clarified Board of Education Procurement Rules for Professional Services (*N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.2(a)*)
- Boards of Education Federal Procurement Requirements

P.L. 2009, c. 292, effective May 1, 2010, provides for base and alternate bids for public works contracts over \$500,000. While the law does not amend the Public School Contracts Law, charter schools are urged to follow its requirements to provide a higher level of contract award integrity by specifying the procedure for contracting units to select the lowest responsible bidder in instances where alternates or base bids with options are used for public works projects. It requires the bid specification to set out clear criteria or a procedure the governing body will use to select the lowest responsible bidder, given the amount of funds available for the project. P.L. 2009, c. 292 applies only to projects with a value of more than \$500,000.

Local Finance Notice LFN 2008-9 was issued in April 2008 by the DCA and provides updated information and instructions regarding the use of online auctions to sell personal surplus property. Since the introduction of the pilot program pursuant to P.L. 2001, c.30, DCA's Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) has approved several internet-based vendors for such online auctions. For more detailed information regarding this process, please read the LFN which is available at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/lgs/lfns/08lfns/2008-9.doc>.

P.L. 2007, c.42, effective July 1, 2007, amended *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5* to eliminate the requirement for specific reporting to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in those instances in which a charter school has determined not to take advantage of a state contract for the purchase of an item

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because the board can purchase that item at a price which is at least 10 percent below that available under the state contract. Rather, the bill provides that the purchase order relating to the contract must include a notation that the item was purchased at least 10 percent below the state contract price. Also, the board of trustee will make available to the director, upon his request, any documents relating to the solicitation and award of the contract.

The charter schools received LFN 2007-12 with updated information regarding prevailing wage laws (see Page 2): <http://www.nj.gov/dca/lgs/lfns/07lfns/2007-12.pdf> P.L. 2009, c.249 is effective January 12, 2010 and extends prevailing wage requirements to contracts for “maintenance-related projects” over \$50,000.

P.L. 2006, c.96 (Prompt Payment Law) was signed by the Governor on September 9, 2006. This law concerns the prompt payment of construction contracts and affects construction-related contracts of charter schools that took effect after September 1, 2006. The law is codified as *N.J.S.A. 2A:30A-1 et seq.* and affects all contracts for “improvements” regardless of dollar amount. Further guidance is available through Local Finance Notice 2006-21 at <http://www.state.nj.us/dca/lgs/lfns/06lfns/2006-21.doc>

P.L. 2005, c. 271 (Pay-to Play Law) was signed into law on January 5, 2006. A key element of this law allows board of trustees to adopt their own pay-to play laws (*N.J.S.A. 40A:11-51*). A second, equally important element requires a new disclosure for certain purchases over \$17,500 that are not publicly bid (*N.J.S.A. 19A:44A-20.26*). Local Finance Notices 2006-3 and 2007-11 provide guidance to assist boards of trustees and their legal counsel in complying with the law. That notice, and other pay-to-play documents are posted on the DLGS Pay-to-Play website at: www.nj.gov/dca/lgs/p2p. The requirement to seek the approval of the State Treasurer prior to completing an emergency purchase for goods or services in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.12* is not applicable to charter schools.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq. (Public School Contracts Law) was amended by P.L.1999, c.440. The associated rules were drafted and promulgated by the DCA, with consultation from the Commissioner of Education. A copy of the law along with additional materials on the revisions to the law and the associated rules can be found at www.state.nj.us/njded/pscl.

Highlights of *N.J.S.A.18A:18A* (Public School Contracts Law)

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-2 contains definitions for terms used throughout *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq.* It includes as subsection (p) the term ‘competitive contracting,’ which is defined as “the method described in *N.J.S.A.18A:18A-4.1* through *18A:18A-4.5* and in rules promulgated by DCA at *N.J.A.C. 5:34-4* of contracting for specialized goods and services in which formal proposals are solicited from vendors; formal proposals are evaluated by the purchasing agent or counsel or school business administrator; and the charter school awards a contract to a vendor or vendors from among the formal proposals received.” Also, subsection (aa) defines the term ‘concession’ to exclude vending machines.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(a) sets forth the bid threshold and requires award by board resolution. There is a higher threshold when there is a “Qualified Purchasing Agent” (QPA) in the charter school as defined at *N.J.A.C. 5:34-1.1* and certified upon approval of an application submitted to DCA. Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(b)*, the bid threshold may be adjusted by the Governor, in consultation with the Department of Treasury, every five years.

Effective July 1, 2010 the bid threshold for charter schools without a QPA was \$26,000.

For charter school that have a QPA, the bid threshold is \$36,000 as of July 1, 2010.

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“When the cost or price of any contract awarded by the purchasing agent in the aggregate does not exceed in a contract year the total sum of \$17,500 [\$26,000 effective July 1, 2010] the contract may be awarded by a purchasing agent when so authorized by resolution of the board of trustee without public advertising for bids and bidding therefore, except that the board of trustee may adopt a resolution to set a lower threshold for the receipt of public bids or the solicitation of competitive quotations.”

“If the purchasing agent is qualified pursuant to subsection b. of section 9 of P.L.1971, c.198 (C.40A:11-9), the board of trustees may establish that the bid threshold may be up to \$25,000 [\$36,000 effective July 1, 2010]. Such authorization may be granted for each contract or by a general delegation of the power to negotiate and award such contracts pursuant to this section.”

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-3(b) – provides for the base contract period.

“Any contract made pursuant to this section may be awarded for a period of 24 consecutive months, except that contracts for professional services pursuant to paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of *N.J.S.A.* 18A:18A-5 may be awarded for a period not exceeding 12 consecutive months.”

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4 sets forth the requirement for advertising, and was amended to address the disqualification of a vendor. This statute permits a board of trustees to disqualify a low bidder if any board or, in the case of a contract for a school facilities project, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority has had a “prior negative experience” with the bidder.

“Every contract for the provision or performance of any goods or services, the cost of which in the aggregate exceeds the bid threshold, shall be awarded only by resolution of the board of trustees to the lowest responsible bidder after public advertising for bids and bidding therefore, except as is provided otherwise in this chapter or specifically by any other law.

The board of trustees may, by resolution approved by a majority of the board of trustees and subject to subsections (b) and (c) of this section, disqualify a bidder who would otherwise be determined to be the lowest responsible bidder, if the board of trustees finds that any board or, in the case of a contract for a school facilities project, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, has had prior negative experience with the bidder within the past 10 years, as reported in a contractor evaluation submitted pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:18A-15 or in a school facilities project performance evaluation submitted pursuant to regulations of the Department of the Treasury or section 62 of P.L. 2000, c. 72 (C.18A:7G-36), as appropriate.”

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4.1 provides charter schools the ability to use competitive contracting in lieu of public bidding for the procurement of specialized goods and services above the bid threshold for the following purposes:

- proprietary computer software;
- hiring of a non-profit entity or not-for-profit entity under Title 15A;
- services performed by an energy services company;
- telecommunications transmission or switching services;
- specialized machinery or equipment of a technical nature;
- food services.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4.4 provides boards of trustees the authority to pass a resolution authorizing the use of competitive contracting. “In order to initiate competitive contracting, the charter school shall pass a resolution authorizing the use of competitive contracting each time specialized goods or services enumerated in section 45 of .L. 1999, c.440 are desired to be contracted.”

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N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5 contains exceptions to the requirement for advertising and includes the below exceptions; this section should be referenced by the auditor for more details on these and other changes.

- expenses for travel/conferences;
- support/maintenance of proprietary computer software/hardware;
- purchase of goods/services at rates set by Universal Service Fund – FCC;
- student funded and benefited projects, e.g. yearbooks, class rings, class gift;
- food services pursuant to procedures established by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture; and
- vending machines for food and drink;
- Goods/services for which the lowest of three quotes is at least 10 percent less than the state contract price (see subsection (e) for award requirements).

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-7 addresses emergency contracts that exceed the bid threshold, and requires the person in charge of the facility where the emergency occurs to notify the purchasing agent in writing of the circumstances and the need to invoke such action. Pursuant to this statute, charter schools must also comply with the implementing regulations at *N.J.A.C. 5:34-6.1* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:26-3.16*.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-10 permits the use of state contracts, and requires a board resolution for authorization for a charter school to do so.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-15 addresses general specifications for goods/services and was amended by P.L. 1999 c.440 primarily in the following areas:

- establishes the requirement for a prospective bidder to challenge bid specifications in writing no less than three business days prior to bid opening.
- subsection (c) defines the discrimination clause to include creed, color, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, etc.
- allows that goods/services purchased by funds from a bequest, legacy or gift that specifies a manufacturer or vendor may be treated as an exception to the bidding requirement.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-21 addresses the requirements for advertising bids and sets forth requirements for notification of revisions or addenda to advertisements or bid documents. P.L. 2005, c.191 amended *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-21* and makes uniform the period of notice for revisions or addenda to advertisements for bids for certain contracts. The law provides that notices of revisions or addenda shall be published no later than seven days, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays excepted, prior to the date for acceptance of bids. P.L. 2007, c. 4 (No-Bid Monday Law) prohibits the receipt of bids on Mondays or any day following a state or federal holiday. The law was signed on January 17, 2007 and amended *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-21(a)*. Auditors and charter school administrators should review Local Finance Notices 2009-28 and 2011-1 at <http://www.state.nj.us/dca/lgs/lfns/lfnmenu.shtml> for current guidance and a 2010-2011 Table of Bid Holiday Acceptance Dates.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-22 establishes a list of criteria as bases on which a board of trustees may reject all bids.

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-37 describes the awarding of contracts below the bid threshold. Subsection (a) describes the requirements for awarding contracts below the bid threshold.

“For all contracts that in the aggregate are less than the bid threshold but 15 percent or more of that amount, and for those contracts that are for subject matter enumerated in subsection (a) of *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5*, except for paragraph (1) of that subsection concerning professional services and paragraph (3) of that subsection concerning work by employees of the charter schools, the

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purchasing agent shall award the contract after soliciting at least two competitive quotations, if practicable.”

Subsection (c) describes the requirements for small purchases.

“If authorized by the board of trustees by resolution, all contracts that are in the aggregate less than 15 percent of the bid threshold may be awarded by the purchasing agent without soliciting competitive quotations.” This section should be referenced by the auditor for more details on these and other changes.

Charter schools must comply with *N.J.S.A.* 18A:18A-37 and 42.1 and 7 CFR. 210.16 when entering into School Food Service Management Company Contracts.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:39-3, the threshold for bidding of transportation contracts is \$17,200. 18A:18A:49.1 states “the provisions of this chapter shall not apply to contracts for the transportation of pupils to and from school, which contracts are regulated by Chapter 39 of this Title.”

N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-42 allows contracts of 3 years or less to include extension provisions for no more than one two-year or two one-year extensions, provided the charter school board of trustees adopts a resolution complying with a set of conditions. The cost increase in extended contracts is limited to index rate percentages as posted by DCA at www.state.nj.us/njded/pscl. No contract can be extended so that it runs more than a total of five consecutive years.

The following are basic categories of such extensions with the corresponding aggregate terms. The statute should be referenced for specific limitations and restrictions.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>AGGREGATE TERMS (YEARS)</u>
(1) Fuel for Heating	3
(2) Fuel/Oil for Vehicles	3
(3) Thermal Energy (Approved by Board of Public Utilities)	40
(4) Removal of Snow and Ice	3
(5) Garbage Collection	3
(6) Data Processing Services	7
(7) Insurance	3
(8) Leasing of equipment in accordance with rules and regulations of the State Board of Education	5
(9) Sale and lease-back of textbooks and non-consumable instructional materials	5
(10) Voice, Data, Transmission and Switching Services	5
(11) Driver Education	3
(12) Goods and Services for the purpose of conserving energy	15
(13) Any single project for construction, reconstruction or rehabilitation of any public building for length of time authorized for completion of actual construction.	Length of Time Authorized
(14) Laundry Service	3
(15) Purchases under contract awarded by Division of Purchase and Property in Treasury	Term not to exceed term of Contract

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N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-45 addresses manner and method of sale of personal property, and requires, in addition to the board resolution, a sealed bid or public auction process; it also provides that if the estimated value exceeds 15 percent of the bid threshold, it must be sold at public auction. The auditor should refer to this section for additional information and changes.

Energy Service Contracts

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:18A-4.1c and the implementing regulations at *N.J.A.C.* 5:34-4.5, charter schools can use the competitive contracting process to obtain the services performed by an energy services company (ESC), which includes the design, measurement, financing and maintenance of energy savings equipment or renovations. (*N.J.A.C.* 5:34-4.5(a) lists the types of projects for the provision or performance of physical improvements where the competitive contracting process cannot be used.)

Review of Purchase Orders

All public school accountants are required to give utmost consideration to encumbrances on the school charter school's books at year end through a thorough review and analysis of open purchase orders.

As discussed in Section I, Chapter 8, "Year-End Procedures", charter schools should have ready for the auditor a listing of each type of order:

- 1) Those that represent orders for which the goods have been received or the services have been rendered at June 30 but that have not been paid (accounts payable);
- 2) Those that represent orders which will be honored in the subsequent year;
- 3) All others

Orders in category 1 must be charged against the current year budget, the related encumbrances reversed, and a liability (accounts payable) established. Orders in category 2 will be rolled over into the next fiscal year and will be shown in the June 30 general fund balance sheet as a reserve for encumbrances. As a general rule, for other than construction contracts, the liquidation of these orders should be within 60-90 days of year end. In most cases, any other orders should be canceled.

As documentation of the review, charter schools must provide the auditor with separate listings of the category 1 orders and category 2 orders for each governmental fund. The total of each category 1 list must agree with the June 30 balance in the general ledger balance sheet account for accounts payable of the applicable fund. The total of each category 2 list must agree with the June 30 balance in the general ledger balance sheet account for the reserve for encumbrances of the applicable fund. Charter school auditors must review the lists and their related documentation and challenge the propriety of the charter school's classifications. Particular attention must be given to the subsequent liquidation of the orders to determine if an audit adjustment is necessary for additional orders that should be canceled.

(Note: Additional entries are necessary for outstanding special revenue fund purchase orders as explained in Section I, Chapter 8. Also, for CAFR presentation, in the special revenue fund, the reserve for encumbrances is grouped with deferred revenue in the GAAP balance sheet.)

A purchase order represents a commitment against an appropriation. Purchase orders should not be issued without an underlying contract or actual order of goods or services. Blanket purchase orders should not be issued. The auditor's review of orders for blanket purchase orders should not be limited to purchase orders outstanding at June 30. The issuance of a blanket purchase order at any time during the year should be reported as an audit finding and recommendation in the Auditors' Management Report.

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Credit Cards

Neither boards of trustees nor charter school officials may use credit cards for the purchase of goods and services. Statutory requirements direct how boards of trustees may purchase goods and services and establish the procedures to follow in paying for the purchase of goods and services. Purchases made by boards of trustees must comply with *N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq.*, the Public School Contracts Law. The payment of claims by a charter schools must also comply with *N.J.S.A. 18A:19-1 et seq.*, “Expenditure of Funds; Audit and Payment of Claims.” These regulations are intended to ensure that competitive bidding procedures are followed and certifications regarding the authenticity of claims are received. Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:19-13* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.8*, a charter school may establish a petty cash fund on July 1 of each year, or as needed, for the purpose of making immediate payments of comparatively small amounts. Large purchases should be made through the contractual order system.

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CHART OF ACCOUNTS/EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

Prescribed System of Double-Entry, GAAP Reporting and Bookkeeping Records

New Jersey statute (*N.J.S.A.* 18A:4-14) requires that New Jersey charter schools maintain bookkeeping consistent with the financial accounting and classifications established by the National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES) and with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), which includes a double-entry, self balancing set of accounts and records. The New Jersey Administrative Code, *N.J.A.C.* 6A:23A, Subchapter 16 prescribes further regulation regarding the accounting.

N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(f) requires that the charter school board of trustees adopt a chart of accounts that is prepared in conformity with the guidelines established by the Department of Education consistent with NCES reporting requirements. The minimum level of detail (minimum outline) for expenditure accounts to be maintained in the chart of accounts for compliance with Department of Education and federal reporting requirements is presented in Appendix A of *The Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts for New Jersey Public Schools (2008 Edition)*. This updated Chart of Accounts (COA) can be found on the website <http://www.nj.gov/njded/finance/fp/af/coa/> and was effective July 1, 2009.

As in the past, the budget statement contains summarized information related to special projects/grants. The detail reflected in the minimum outline for the special revenue fund (fund 20) must be maintained in the accounting records of the charter school for these summarized special projects. If a charter school opts to expand beyond the minimum outline in its chart of accounts, there must be a clear trail from the internal accounting records to the information summarized in the format of the minimum outline reflected in the budget statement. In addition, *N.J.A.C.* 6:23A-16.2(f)2 states that when a charter school board of trustees adopts an expanded chart of accounts, the board shall adopt a policy concerning the controls over appropriations for line item accounts which exceed the level of detail required under the minimum outline. If a charter school fails to adopt such a policy, the restrictions regarding overexpenditure of funds apply to line item accounts that exceed the minimum level of detail.

The Department of Education publication entitled *GAAP for New Jersey School Districts, A Technical Systems Manual* must be utilized in the evaluation of a charter school's maintenance of the double-entry system of accounting in accordance with *N.J.S.A.* 18A:4-14. The Department of Education does not prescribe a standard format for the ledgers and journals used to maintain the accounting records, but instead gives general descriptions of each in the manual. Charter school auditors must be adequately familiar with the publication to perform the annual audit.

Additional references for GAAP accounting include the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) *Governmental Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting*, commonly known as the "Blue Book" and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) statements and pronouncements.

N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.6 requires that charter school board of trustees which contract for electronic data processing bookkeeping services shall annually have an audit prepared or obtain a copy of an audit of the internal controls of the service company. Such audit shall be as prescribed by *Statement of Auditing Standards No. 70 (SAS 70)*, as amended by SAS 88, of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

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Expenditure Classifications and Reporting

Expenditures must be reported in the proper fund in the minimum outline format.

Under GASB 34, the *Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance* (Exhibit B-2) reflects the governmental funds (including the general fund and the special revenue fund) revenues and expenditures on the GAAP modified accrual basis.

The *General Fund Budgetary Comparison Schedule* (Exhibit C-1) reflects the GAAP modified accrual basis for revenues.

The *Special Revenue Budgetary Comparison Schedule* (Exhibit C-2) reflects revenues and expenditures on a budgetary basis where encumbrances at fiscal year-end are recorded as expenditures and corresponding revenue is recognized.

The original budget as well as the final approved budget as of June 30 must be reported in the budgetary comparison schedules. The variance is required by NJDOE, as is the transfer column between the original and the final.

Expenditures must be checked and verified, properly authorized by the board and recorded in the minutes. Expenditure classifications must be in accordance with *The Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts for New Jersey Public Schools (2008 Edition) [Chart of Accounts]*, and the terms and conditions of the grant award. New accounts were added to the *Chart of Accounts* effective for July 1, 2009, but charter schools were given the option to adopt the new coding in 2008-09. Auditors should refer to Appendix F “Minimum Chart of Accounts Descriptions by Budgeting Line Item under Each Program/Function” in the *2010-11 Budget Guidelines* and use it as a reference tool in the coding of expenditures. Also included in the *2010-11 Budget Guidelines* is the section “Detailed Appropriations Grid” and it should also be used as a reference tool.

The auditor’s procedures should include tests of the appropriate classification of expenditures in accordance with the prescribed chart of accounts and supporting guidance (e.g. Appendix F of the *2010-11 Budget Guidelines*). Improper coding of expenditures is considered noncompliance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(f)* and noted instances must be reported in the Auditor’s Management Report. Auditors are directed to test the proper coding of expenditures during their review of the charter school’s internal controls and the application of standard testing methods, as well as during compliance testing and the performance of single audit procedures. That is, each general fund or special revenue fund expenditure transaction tested for those procedures must also be tested for propriety of classification. Exceptions should not be reported for instances where the department has not given specific coding guidance in the aforementioned documents. The sample should be expanded if significant coding problems are noted.

Classification of Administrative Expenditures

Expenditures must be reported in the proper fund in the minimum outline format.

Under GASB 34, the *Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance* (B-2) reflects the governmental funds (including the general fund and the special revenue fund) revenues and expenditures on the GAAP modified accrual basis.

The General Fund Budgetary Comparison Schedule (C-1) reflects the GAAP modified accrual basis for revenues.

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The Special Revenue Budgetary Comparison Schedule (C-2) reflects revenues and expenditures on a budgetary basis where encumbrances at fiscal year-end are recorded as expenditures and corresponding revenue is recognized.

The original budget as well as the final approved budget as of June 30th must be reported in the budgetary comparison schedules. The variance is required by NJ DOE as is the transfer column between the original and the final.

Expenditures must be checked and verified, properly authorized by the board and recorded in the minutes. Expenditure classifications must be in accordance with *The Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts for New Jersey Public Schools (2003 Edition)* and the terms and conditions of the grant award. New accounts were added to the *Chart of Accounts* effective for July 1, 2009, but charter schools were given the option to adopt the new coding in 2008-2009. Auditors should refer to Appendix F “Minimum Chart of Accounts Descriptions by Budgeting Line Item under Each Program/Function” in the *2009-10 Budget Guidelines* and use it as a reference tool in the coding of expenditures. Also included in the *2009-10 Budget Guidelines* in the section “Detailed Appropriations Grid” and it should also be used as a reference tool.

The auditors’ procedures should include tests of the appropriate classification of expenditures in accordance with the prescribed chart of accounts and supporting guidance (e.g. Appendix F of the *2009-10 Budget Guidelines*). Improper coding of expenditures is considered noncompliance with *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(f)* and noted instances must be reported in the Auditor’s Management Report. Auditors are directed to test the proper coding of expenditures during their review of the charter school’s internal controls and the application of standard testing methods, as well as during compliance testing and the performance of single audit procedures. That is, each general fund or special revenue fund expenditure transaction tested for those procedures must also be tested for propriety of classification. Exceptions should not be reported for instances where the department has not given specific coding guidance in the aforementioned documents. The sample should be expanded if significant coding problems are noted.

Charter school auditors should include as part of their tests of compliance with laws and regulations, an examination of payroll and certain other costs for potential miscoding in administrative expenditures.

As highlighted in section III-6 of this audit program under “Checklist for Annual Audit”, the board secretary/business administrator is required to provide the auditor with a salary schedule detailing all staff whose position requires a school administrative, principal or school business administrator certificate pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-12.3*. Such positions should include lead person, school business administrator, director, principal, assistant/vice principal. The format should include the title, salary, general ledger account code(s), and if all or part of each salary is not coded to a general ledger administrative function (230, 240, or 25X), provide an explanation for the deviation from administration, including any allocation methodology used. This listing is intended to assist auditors in testing for miscoding of administrative expenditures. If a similar schedule already exists, this may be expanded to include any additional needed information.

Pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-1.1*, administrative expenditures are defined by the department’s Comparative Spending Guide and include general administration (function 230), school administration (function 240), and central services (function 25X). The coding of costs within those functions follows NJ statute (*N.J.S.A. 18A:4-14*) which requires all charter schools to follow NJ’s classification system (minimum chart of accounts or NJCOA) and other reporting directives and guidelines (e.g. Appendix F in the annual budget guidelines) which must be consistent with GAAP and NCES reporting requirements. Additional coding requirements are included in the regulations (*N.J.A.C. 6A:23A*) implementing *N.J.S.A.*

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18A:7F-5(c); these regulations are available at the website <http://www.nj.gov/education/code/current/title6a/chap23a.pdf>

The following bullets and table provide a summary of the detailed descriptions as found in NCES, NJCOA, *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A*, and Appendix F.

- Administrative staff (positions that require an administrator certificate and their staff support), should be recorded in administration (function 230, 240, 25X), with the exception of positions that require a supervisory certificate. Per NCES and NJCOA, the positions of “supervisors of instruction” (which require a supervisory certificate) may be recorded in function 221, “Improvement of Instruction” as detailed in the below bullet, and are therefore, not considered administration.
- School level staff with the responsibility of supervising operations, evaluating/monitoring school staff, and coordinating school level activities are considered school administration (function 240). This includes the activities performed by the lead person, principal, assistant/vice principals, head teacher acting as a principal, director and other assistants performing these activities. An exception is the performance of monitoring and evaluation of staff as part of a supervisor of instruction function and if so, the full salary of the supervisor of instruction can be accounted for in function 221. However, if the majority of the supervisor of instruction position is performing administrative duties such as monitoring, supervising and evaluation, hiring, and budget preparation, then all or that majority portion of the position should be recorded in school administration. Per NCES and NJCOA, evaluation and monitoring of staff is considered school administration unless performed by a supervisor of instruction, and cannot be allocated to improvement of instruction.
- Administrative staff time dedicated to direct instruction as part of the regular curriculum (i.e. teaching classes on a day-to-day basis) may be allocated to the applicable direct instruction function with the appropriate supporting documentation (e.g. schedules and class rosters).
- Lead Persons, Business Administrators, and Principals/Vice Principals should not be allocated to support functions. Other administrative positions are deemed to be administration unless it can be demonstrated that the position is clearly dedicated to a specific service area; appropriate documentation should be available to support an allocation, such as case load information for allocation to guidance/counseling, function 218, “other support services – regular.”
- Full time department chairpersons should be recorded in school administration and any stipends received by teachers to perform chairperson duties part time should also be recorded in school administration. Department directors are considered school administration and per NJCOA, directors for special education/student services, guidance and athletics should be recorded in school administration.
- Work of staff that supports administration should be recorded in administration. In accordance with NCES and NJCOA, this includes all central office, school office, business and administrative technology non-certificated staff, as well as clerical staff that support teaching duties.

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The following table provides general guidance for classification of administrative certificated staff.

Any administrative salary may be allocated to direct classroom instruction if the position is part of the regular teaching curriculum of the charter school, except for the principal function 1. Proper documentation must be maintained to support the allocation, such as a formal teaching roster, schedule or similar document.

Function	Description	
General Administration	Used to record costs associated with establishing and administering policy.	
Account	Title	Coding Guidance
11-000-230-100	Lead Person	Record full salary here unless performing principal function.
11-000-230-100	Assistant Lead Person	Record full salary here unless function dedicated to a specific support area. May be allocated to specific support function with proper documentation.
Function	Description	
School Administration	Used to record costs associated with supervision of school operations, evaluation of staff and supervision and maintenance of school records.	
Account	Title	Coding Guidance
11-000-240-103	Principal/Vice Principal	Record full salary here unless performing superintendent function.
11-000-240-104	F/T Department Chairs	Record full salary here.
Function	Description	
Central Services	Used to record costs associated with the business function and costs that support research and development, planning, evaluation, information services, data processing services and staff services.	
Account	Title	Coding Guidance
11-000-251-100	Business Administrator	Record full salary here.

Reclassification of Miscoding

Auditors are required to include a comment about expenditure coding in the Auditor’s Management Report summarizing their sample selection process, conclusions reached and additional procedures performed, if any. Auditors are also required to include a summary of expenditure classification test results in the Audit Questionnaire indicating the dollar value of items tested, dollar value of exceptions noted and the error rate.

When a coding error is noted by the auditor, the expenditure must be reclassified for financial statement presentation, even if the reclassification will put the proper line item account into a deficit position and regardless of materiality of the error. The appropriation would not be reclassified with the expenditure unless there is a clear indication that the charter school misbudgeted the appropriation. In cases where it is clearly supported by charter school budget development workpapers that a budgeting error was made, the appropriation should be reclassified to the proper line item account. Accordingly, if the

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reclassification creates a line item deficit, the auditor's finding in the Auditor's Management Report must include an explanation that the deficit was not due to intentional overspending of the line item, but rather was generated due to a reclassification of expenditures to the proper line item account. In cases where there clearly was a miscoding in the development of the budget as well as the expenditure, the finding must include an explanation that the expenditure was miscoded and misbudgeted, and the appropriate entries were made to reclassify both to the proper line item account. Board action is not required. The rationale for and documentation of procedures performed and conclusions reached should be included in the auditor's workpapers and available for review by the department.

In addition, special revenue fund coding errors are not considered questioned costs if the expenditures are approved under the terms and conditions of the grant award. The miscoding must be reported in the Auditor's Management Report in the expenditure coding comment. The comment must clearly state that the expenditures were consistent with the approved award and the changes were the result of miscoding. Charter school final grant close-out reports should reflect the corrected coding of expenditures, including reclassifications of the original budgeted figures, if it was determined that the approved budget was based on the miscoding and the reclassification was made by the auditor in the CAFR. Charter school should submit with the grant closeout report a copy of the auditors' expenditure coding comment to support the propriety of the reclassification in the closeout report. The charter school does not need grantor approval for the reclassifications made by the auditor. However, if the auditor determines that any expenditure was not consistent with the approved grant award the cost must be included in the Auditor's Management Report, and if the finding meets the audit finding criteria as defined in USOMB Circular A-133 and/or NJOMB Circular Letter 04-04, as applicable, it must be included in the Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs in the Single Audit Section of the CAFR. Such miscoding will thus appear in two places in the Auditor's Management Report.

Specific to the charter schools, the Budget Summary statement was designed to keep financial reporting requirements at a minimum, while at the same time, enabling charter schools to be in compliance with monitoring standards and maintain comparability to public school financial data. All revenue data and expenditure data items and their classifications are explained in the Budget Summary Key of the Charter School Application. There are four major expenditure categories to be reported in the general fund: Instruction, Administration, Support Services, and Capital Outlay. These four categories are required in reporting expenditures in the budget form and the CAFR. For additional references, refer to the State Department of Education's publication entitled *The Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts for New Jersey Public Schools*, which is available from the publication office. The charter school is encouraged to use the account structures and codes referenced in this publication, but it is not considered mandatory. What is mandatory is the reporting of costs in the detail as prescribed in the 108 line item budget summary.

The activity related to each restricted grant, from either local, state or federal sources must be accounted for in the special revenue fund in the minimum outline format. Summarized information related to all state and federal grants and entitlements must be reported in the schedules of expenditures of federal awards and state financial assistance.

The auditor's procedures should include tests of the appropriate classification of expenditures in accordance with the prescribed budget summary. Expenditure coding errors noted will be reclassified for financial statement presentation in accordance with the guidance provided under Section V - Conducting the School Audit. Auditors are required to include a comment about expenditure coding in the Auditors' Management Report.

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N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 Overexpenditure of Funds

Auditors should refer to *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10* for detailed controls that charter school boards of trustee must implement over budgeted revenue and appropriations.

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YEAR-END PROCEDURES – CLOSING OUT FOR GAAP

Closing Out for GAAP

Based on the suggested accounting procedures illustrated in the *GAAP for New Jersey School Districts, A Technical Systems Manual (Technical Systems Manual)*, throughout the year charter schools record transactions on a cash basis, with the exception of recording revenues for formula state aid and local taxes. Other revenues are recognized upon the receipt of cash, and expenditures are recognized when the invoice is paid. Certain adjustments are necessary to convert the records to the modified accrual basis and to the accrual basis for reporting under GASB 34, for inclusion in the charter schools annual report, the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The public school accountant as part of the audit procedures will review these adjustments.

Various reference materials are available to assist charter schools in making the required adjusting and closing entries. Sample adjusting and closing entries for each fund are contained in the *Technical Systems Manual*. This *Audit Program* includes a discussion of general procedures that should be followed for all funds, standard adjusting and closing entries, as well as the additional entries required in the special revenue fund. Applicable pages of the *Technical Systems Manual* are referenced for more specific examples of entries to be made. *The Audit Program* is not meant to be all-inclusive. Charter schools should reference the aforementioned materials for the specific entries that must be made in other funds. Charter schools should also consult their software vendors to determine how the illustrated entries are entered into their system.

It should be noted that the closing entries for the general fund as shown in the *Technical Systems Manual* on Page 5.16 were revised in Q.153 of the June 11, 1993 questions and answers papers. The revised entries close the actual revenues against the budgeted revenues and the actual expenditures against the budgeted appropriations.

General Procedures for All Funds (Other than Special Revenue)

1) Review the Status of Purchase Orders Open at Year-End:

All prior year purchase orders should be closed or canceled as of June 30. Only under extreme extenuating circumstances should any balance be remaining in account XX-754 "Reserve for Encumbrances - Prior Year" which was used to track the liquidation of purchase orders from the prior fiscal year that were rolled over to the current fiscal year. Under GAAP accounting the differences between the purchase order and the actual invoice amounts are flowed through the expenditure account where the order was originally recorded, increasing or decreasing the available balance in that appropriation account.

Under normal circumstances, the amounts reflected in the "Reserve for Encumbrances - Current Year" account should represent orders that are expected to be liquidated within a reasonable period. Open purchase orders must be reviewed to determine their status.

The first step is to identify those purchase orders for which the goods/services have been received/rendered yet payment has not been made prior to year-end. These items must be charged as expenditure against the current year budget and established as an accounts payable at June 30. The accounts payable is recorded at the invoice amount. If the invoice has not been received the amount must

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be estimated. When payment is made in the subsequent year, the accounts payable account will be charged rather than the expenditure account. The next step is to review any remaining purchase orders to identify those orders which will be honored the following year (i.e.- the goods/services are still necessary) and which will be canceled (i.e.- the goods/services are no longer necessary). As a general rule, for other than construction contracts, the liquidation of these orders should be within 60 to 90 days of year-end. All purchase orders that are no longer considered necessary and/or will not be honored within that time frame in the subsequent year must be canceled. No entries are necessary to carry open purchase orders as encumbrances in the current fiscal year. The entries to adjust the subsequent year's budget will be made in that year. The charter school should have ready for the auditor a listing of each type of order - 1) those that represent accounts payable and 2) those that represent orders that will be honored in the following year. Auditors are urged to perform a thorough review and analysis of open purchase orders in conformity with the Year-End Encumbrance Hotline issued September 16, 2003. The Hotline is available on the DOE website at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/finance/fp/audit/0304/po.pdf>

2) Accrue Any Revenues That Have Been Earned and Not Collected:

Charter schools are instructed to accrue revenues and establish receivables at the beginning of the fiscal year for those revenues whose collection amounts are known. Charter schools may also have established accounts receivable balances in the prior year for items that should have been collected by June 30. At year-end entries must be made to accrue revenues and establish receivables for any revenues that have been earned but are uncollected as of June 30 in order to bring the accounting records into accordance with GAAP. An example would be interest earned on investments. No accrual is made for such adjustments. The payments of adjustments for special education pupils are made in accordance with the terms of the original contract. Charter schools must also determine the collectability of any uncollected accounts receivable balances as of June 30.

Uncollected balances for charter school aid should be investigated.

3) Analyze Balance Sheet Account Balances:

Charter schools must be able to provide their auditors with the detail of what comprises each balance sheet account at June 30. In other words, for each asset and liability account, the Charter school should prepare a schedule (list) of what individual amounts comprise the total balance shown in the general ledger account. Accounts receivable amounts should be detailed by what is owed to the charter school, by whom and for what; each investment should be listed along with the identity of the trustee(s) or Institution(s) holding such assets. Accounts payable amounts should be detailed by amount and vendor, etc. During the preparation of these analyses, the charter school should address the propriety of the amounts being included on the schedules, taking into consideration such things as which accounts should have debit balances and which accounts should have credit balances. If an account balance cannot be supported it should be investigated and adjusted appropriately. Part of the public school accountant's audit will be to examine and test these detailed schedules (lists).

The presentation of prior period adjustments under GAAP is not made directly to fund balance. The correction of immaterial errors is recorded as miscellaneous income or expenditures of the current year. The correction of material errors is shown in the balance sheet as a prior period adjustment, with a restatement of the opening July 1 fund balance. The use of prior year's surplus in the current year budget is tracked in the recapitulation of balances section of the board secretary's report. No adjustment is made to fund balance for the estimated use of surplus. The actual use of surplus is adjusted to fund balance as part of the year-end closing entries. As such, the preliminary (preclosing) June 30 balance in the fund balance account should equal the June 30 balance per the prior year audit.

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Included in the Board Secretary’s audit checklist of documents to have available for the audit, Chapter III-6 of this *Audit Program*, is a schedule of capital assets to support the amount reported on the line “Capital Assets, net” (cost of the assets less accumulated depreciation) in the governmental funds and the business like activities columns of the *Statement of Net Assets* (Exhibit A-1). Similarly, the charter school staff is required to maintain a schedule of long-term debt. The schedule of long-term debt supports the balance presented for the current and noncurrent portions of long-term debt on the *Statement of Net Assets* (Exhibit A-1).

Charter school staff will need to prepare a conversion from the modified accrual fund balance presentation in the *Governmental Funds Balance Sheet* (B-1) to Net Assets presentation in the *Statement of Net Assets* (A-1)

Standard Adjusting Entries

To Establish Accounts Payable:

(*Note:* The reversal of the encumbrance and reserve is made in the amount of the original order; the accounts payable is recorded in the amount of the invoice, which may differ.)

Dr. Reserve for Encumbrances (XX-753)
 Cr. Encumbrances (XX-603)
 Reverse Encumbrance (with appropriate reversals made in the expenditure subsidiary ledger)

Dr. Expenditures (XX-602)
 Cr. Accounts Payable (XX-421)
 Establish Payable (with appropriate entries made in the expenditure subsidiary ledger)

To Cancel Purchase Orders:

Dr. Reserve for Encumbrances (XX-753)
 Cr. Encumbrances (XX-603)
 Reverse Encumbrance (with appropriate reversals made in the expenditure subsidiary ledger)

To Accrue Revenues:

Dr. Applicable Accounts Receivable (XX-1XX)
 Cr. Revenues (XX-302)
 Record Revenue (with appropriate entries made in the revenue subsidiary ledger)

Closing Entries

Closing Budgetary Accounts

Two entries are needed to close the temporary budgetary accounts to fund balance:

- Estimated revenues, budgeted fund balance, and actual revenues are reversed, with the difference being recorded as an increase or decrease in unreserved fund balance.

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- Budgeted appropriations, expenditures, and encumbrances are reversed, with the difference being recorded as an increase or decrease in unreserved fund balance.

An example, after the adjusting entries have been recorded, of the general fund trial balance would appear as follows:

<u>A/C</u>	<u>DEBIT</u>	<u>CREDIT</u>
101 Cash in Bank	\$117,000	
106 Cash Equivalents	1,134,576	
111 Investments	570,600	
114 Interest Receivable on Investments	25,400	
142 Intergovernmental A/R - Federal	65,000	
301 Estimated Revenues	49,929,100	
302 Revenues		\$49,911,100

<u>A/C</u>	<u>DEBIT</u>	<u>CREDIT</u>
303 Budgeted Fund Balance	568,300	
421 Accounts Payable		60,000
601 Appropriations		50,497,400
602 Expenditures	49,893,100	
603 Encumbrances	65,000	
753 Reserve for Encumbrances - Current Year		65,000
770 Unreserved Fund Balance		1,834,576

Each year the budgetary accounts are closed with these entries. The opening balances of those accounts in the subsequent year are always zero. The other balance sheet accounts are not zeroed. No journal entry is needed to open the books. The unaudited ending balances from the prior fiscal year will be carried forward and used as opening balances. If necessary, these amounts will be adjusted for the result of findings of the audit when the CAFR is issued.

Other Issues/Entries

Internal Accounting Records

The June board secretary's report may be prepared using preliminary amounts. Charter schools do not have to include final adjusting and closing entries in the report. The report should include normal monthly adjusting entries. Charter schools must remember to run final reports, ledgers, journals, etc. prior to posting the closing entries for the year.

Capital Assets and Long Term-Debt

Charter schools should refer to the *Codification of Governmental Accounting and Financial Reporting Standards* (GASB Codification), Section 1400 (Reporting Capital Assets), Section 1500 (Reporting Liabilities) and Section C60 (Compensated Absences) for guidance on reporting these. The following is a brief overview and is not intended to address the conversion at the end of the year:

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- School wide Financial Statements (Accrual Basis) - the balance for capital (fixed) assets net of accumulated depreciation is reported in the charter school *Statement of Net Assets* (Exhibit A-1). Depreciation is reported in the *Statement of Activities* (Exhibit A-2). Liabilities whose average maturities are greater than one year should be reported in two components – the amount due within one year and the amount due in more than one year. This includes compensated absences. Charter schools and auditors should refer to GASB Codification C60 for guidance on calculating the liability for compensated absences and reporting the amount due within one year separately from the amount due in more than one year in the *Statement of Net Assets*.
- Fund Financial Statements (Modified Accrual Basis) - charter schools will continue to report capital outlay in the governmental fund statements. Liabilities for compensated absences are normally liquidated with expendable available financial resources, and a governmental fund liability and expenditure should be recognized as payments come due each period upon the occurrence of relevant events, such as employee resignations and retirements. Charter schools and auditors should refer to GASB Codification C60 for additional guidance on reporting in the governmental funds statements.

Opening Balances

At the beginning of each year, the approved budget amounts are adjusted for the outstanding purchase orders from the prior year that will be honored in the subsequent year. This is done by making the following entries on July 1:

Dr. Encumbrances (XX-603)
 Cr. Appropriations (XX-601)

Dr. Reserve for Encumbrances - Current Year (XX-753)
 Cr. Reserve for Encumbrances - Prior Year (XX-754)
(With the appropriate entries being made in the expenditure subsidiary ledger.)

These entries increase the budgeted appropriations, reestablish the encumbrances as a restriction of the adjusted current year appropriations, and transfer the reserve for encumbrances balance from the current year account into the prior year account. The entries have no impact on the available balance and there is no need to issue new purchase orders for these prior year items.

Reference Materials

The below listed pages in the *Technical Systems Manual* should be referenced for specific examples of adjusting and closing entries in the various funds. As previously noted, the closing entries for the general fund as shown in the *Technical Systems Manual* on Page 5.16 were revised in Q.153 of the June 11, 1993 questions and answers papers. The sample entries on Pages I-8.4 and I-8.5 of this Audit Program reflect the revised entries.

General Fund	pp. 5.14 to 5.16, 5.18, 5.20 to 5.21, 5.23 to 5.24
Special Revenue Fund	pp. 9.12 to 9.13
Capital Projects Fund	pp. 11.8 to 11.10
Debt Service Fund	p. 10.3
Enterprise / Internal Service Fund	pp. 14.12 and 14.15
Trust and Agency Funds	pp. 15.2 to 15.4, 15.7 and 15.10

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Special Revenue Fund

When doing the year-end adjusting and closing entries, the following points should be noted:

- The special revenue fund is unique as the accounting records are maintained on the budgetary basis rather than on the GAAP basis. The budgetary basis differs from GAAP in that the budgetary basis recognizes encumbrances as expenditures in the year an order is placed, whereas the GAAP basis does not.
- Budgetary revenues must equal expenditures as funds are not considered earned until they are obligated.

The accounting treatment for expenditures in excess of the grant award differs from the manner explained on page 9.1 of the *Technical Systems Manual*. **There are no transfers from the general fund to the special revenue fund for excess expenditures.** The appropriate account in the general fund budget should be charged for the excess.

Throughout the year charter schools record grant revenue on a cash basis. As such, in addition to the standard accruals for revenues and expenditures at year end, additional entries are needed to adjust the revenues recorded when the cash was received for any amounts that are deferred to the next fiscal year and any amounts that are due back to the grantor. Entries may also be necessary to establish receivables for grants where the expenditures have been funded through interfund loans and reimbursement has not been received from the grantor. Examples of the calculation of these amounts are included in Chapter 9 of the *Technical Systems Manual* systems manual and should be carefully reviewed.

Charter schools must perform the year-end review of special revenue fund purchase orders that was discussed earlier in this chapter and make the necessary entries as illustrated on Page I-8.7 to cancel any unnecessary orders and to reverse the reserve for encumbrances and record the expenditures and the accounts payable related to the unpaid orders for which the charter school has received goods and services as of June 30. An additional entry will be needed to record the orders that will be honored in the following year as current year budgetary basis expenditures. Remember that under the budgetary basis used in the special revenue fund, an item is chargeable to the grant and considered expenditure when it becomes an obligation.

GAAP expenditures are calculated as budgetary expenditures plus 6/30 prior year encumbrances less 6/30 current year encumbrances. (Note: this calculation must be done separately for each of the three expenditure categories included in the *Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances*: instruction, undistributed expenditures, and capital outlay.) The balance sheet figures are GAAP. No reserve for encumbrances is shown. Any balance in that account should be grouped with deferred revenue for CAFR presentation. The final general ledger balances are budgetary basis amounts. Entries are not made to the general ledger to derive GAAP amounts. Again, the examples contained in Chapter 9 of the *Technical Systems Manual* should be reviewed.

The school wide *Statement of Net Assets* and the *Statement of Activities* (accrual basis) include the special revenue fund in the governmental activities column. The modified accrual basis special revenue fund is included in the governmental funds *Balance Sheet* and *Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances*. The *Budgetary Comparison Schedule – Special Revenue Fund* will reflect the revenues and expenditures of this fund on the budgetary basis.

When analyzing balance sheet accounts in the special revenue fund it should be noted that for budgetary basis there is no fund balance in the special revenue fund. Any excess of cash received over expenditures

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is either deferred revenue, due to grantor, or an interfund payable. Charter schools and auditors should refer to Section II-20 of this Audit Program for further guidance on the carryover of certain restricted state aids which should be reported as an interfund payable. Adjustments should have been made to the certified budget to spend the July 1 deferred revenue and the deferred revenue subsequently recognized as revenue during the year. An example of the journal entries necessary to budget and recognize the deferred revenue is provided in Chapter 9 of the *Technical Systems Manual* and should be carefully reviewed.

A credit balance appearing in the cash account must be investigated to determine if interfund loans need to be recorded. Charter schools should also ensure that certificates of debit and credit have been properly recorded during the year. It should be ascertained that any necessary adjustments have been recorded.

Special Revenue Fund Adjusting Entries

The following entries assume that grant revenue was recorded on a cash basis throughout the year.

Assuming that the cash received exceeds the total of the expenditures and the encumbrances, the entry would be as follows:

- If carryover is allowed:

Dr. Revenue (20-302)
 Cr. Deferred Revenue (20-481)

- If carryover is not allowed:

Dr. Revenue (20-302)
 Cr. Intergovernmental Accounts Payable (20-41X)

(With the appropriate entries being made in the revenue subsidiary ledger.)

In situations where the total of the expenditures and encumbrances exceeds the cash received, the entry would be:

Dr. Intergovernmental Accounts Receivable (20-14X)
 Cr. Revenue (20-302)

(With the appropriate entries being made in the revenue subsidiary ledger.)

In addition to the entries necessary to establish the accounts payable for the goods/services that were received as of June 30, an entry is also needed to recognize the encumbrances outstanding at June 30 as expenditures for the preparation of budgetary-basis financial statements:

Dr. Expenditures (20-602)
 Cr. Encumbrances (20-603)

(With the appropriate entries being made in the expenditure subsidiary ledger.)

Special Revenue Fund Closing Entries

The general ledger will be closed based on preliminary amounts. Adjustments which arise as a result of the liquidation of the June 30 encumbrances during applicable close-out periods will be reflected in the CAFR, however, the adjusting entry will be recorded in the subsequent year's general ledger. The

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Technical Systems Manual should be referenced for examples of the liquidation of encumbrances during the closeout period. The closing entries to be recorded in the special revenue fund are as follows:

Dr. Appropriations (20-601)
 Cr. Estimated Revenues (20-301)

Dr. Revenues (20-302)
 Cr. Expenditures (20-602)

(With the appropriate entries being made in the revenue and expenditure subsidiary ledgers.)

Special Revenue Fund - Other Issues/Entries

As mentioned earlier, when preparing GAAP financial statements, the reserve for encumbrances does not appear in the balance sheet, but instead is grouped with (added to) the deferred revenue amount and appears on that line of the GAAP modified accrual basis *Balance Sheet* and accrual basis *Statement of Net Assets* in the basic financial statements section of the CAFR.

Opening Balances

On July 1, an entry is required to transfer the reserve for encumbrances balance from the current year to the prior year account as illustrated below. The reserve for encumbrances - prior year (20-754) account is used to track the liquidation of the prior year encumbrances that were outstanding as of June 30, acting similar to accounts payable. The rollover of these orders does not require an adjustment to the subsequent year's certified budget since the orders were charged as expenditures during the current year under the budgetary basis.

To transfer the reserve for encumbrances balance from the current year to the prior year account the entry would be:

Dr. Reserve for Encumbrances - Current Year (20-753)
 Cr. Reserve for Encumbrances - Prior Year (20-754)

Grant Year

Grant revenues and expenditures must be identifiable based on award year and as to original, summer, or carryover allocation. The chart of accounts is structured to allow for unique program codes to be assigned to the various grant allocations that may be running simultaneously. Although specific program codes are not listed for summer programs, charter schools must select a program code from the ranges provided to account for the summer portion of grants that overlap fiscal years. During the year, charter schools should remember to budget and account for grant activity in the appropriate program codes, making adjustments to the revenue and expenditure subsidiary ledgers to account for budget revisions necessary as a result of the shift of funds between the original, summer, and carryover allocations. This information is necessary for the completion of the Schedules of Financial Assistance included in the Single Audit Section of the CAFR. Chapter 9 of the *Technical Systems Manual* provides an illustration of the shift of funds into a carryover period. The same entries apply to the shift of funds to a summer program.

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All Funds

In summary, charter schools should make the appropriate adjusting and closing entries. The public school accountant may suggest changes to the amounts reflected in the charter school's figures based on the results of his/her audit. In those instances, the auditor should provide the district with the necessary post-closing adjusting entries to correct the July 1 opening balances. Charter schools are reminded that the entries shown above represent what should be recorded in the accounting records. How those entries are actually made differ from software system to software system. It is advised that charter schools have a clear understanding of how to key those adjusting and closing entries into their accounting software package.

Existing state and federal regulations may conflict with GAAP reporting. If a conflict exists between GAAP and any legal/contractual requirement, *N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.3* requires every charter school to develop budgets and maintain an accounting system on the legal/contractual basis, such that sufficient records exist to enable reporting in conformity with GAAP at year end.

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