

Charter School Policies - State Profile

October 2010

Maintenance of this database is a collective effort between ECS and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Please contact Molly Ryan, 303.299.3614 or mryan@ecs.org with questions or comments about the database.

Arizona

Charter School Basics

Does the state have a charter school law?	Yes
Does the state allow existing public schools to convert to charter schools?	Yes
Does the state allow for the creation of start-up charter schools?	Yes
Is a charter school part of a local education agency (LEA) or its own LEA?	A charter school is its own LEA.
Does the state specify the charter schools or the students that may be given preference?	Yes. A charter school must give enrollment preference to pupils returning to the charter school in the 2nd or any subsequent year of its operation and to siblings of pupils already enrolled in the charter school. A charter school that is sponsored by a local school board must give enrollment preference to eligible pupils who reside within the boundaries of the school district where the charter school is physically located.
Does the state have any caps on the number of charter schools?	No
Who can approve charter schools?	The local school board, the state board of education or the state board for charter schools
Does the state specify who may apply to open a charter school?	Yes. A public body, private person or private organization may apply to open a charter school.
Is there an appeals process in place for charter applicants?	No. Petition may be submitted to an alternative chartering authority, however.

Does the state provide technical assistance to charter schools?	Yes. Technical assistance is offered through a local school board, the state board of education or the state board for charter schools. Also, charter schools are included in the technical assistance that the state provides to all school districts in the following areas: use of student data, staff development, curriculum, technology to improve student performance and grants compliance and management.
Charter School Finance	
Through whom does a charter school receive its funding?	Funding for charter schools authorized by local school boards flows from the state department of education to the county to the school district to the charter school. Funding for other charter schools flows from the state department of education to the state treasurer to the charter school.
How is the funding for a charter school determined?	In addition to a base support level from the state, charter schools receive state program grants. Charter schools do not have access to local revenue from property taxes and bond measures, however, the state provides charters with "additional assistance" funds to make up for the lack of local revenues.
Does the state provide start-up and/or planning grants to charter schools?	No. Although authorizing legislation for a charter school stimulus fund remains in place, it is currently not funded.
Does the state provide facilities funds or other facilities assistance to charter schools?	Yes. Charter schools receive a per-pupil allocation called additional assistance. These monies can be used for anything from teacher salaries to transportation to facility construction. The amount of additional assistance is currently \$1,405 per pupil in grades K-8 and \$1,644 per pupil in grades 9-12. Non-profit charter schools may apply for bond financing from industrial development authorities. The state department of education must annually publish a list of vacant and unused portions of buildings that are owned by the state or by school districts and that may be suitable for the operation of a charter school. Although authorizing legislation for a charter school stimulus fund remains in place, it is currently not funded.
Does the state specify who must provide transportation to charter school students?	No
Charter School Autonomy	

Are the state's standards and assessments applied to charter schools?	Yes
What rules are waived for charter schools?	Except as provided in the state's charter school law and in a charter school's charter, a charter school is exempt from all statutes and rules relating to schools, governing boards and school districts.
Charter School Teachers	
Do teachers in a charter school have to be certified?	No
What sets teacher salaries?	The charter school
Does the state require school districts to grant teachers a leave of absence to teach in a charter school?	No. However, a teacher who is employed at a charter school who was previously employed at a school district will not lose any right of certification, retirement or salary status or any other benefits by law or rules due to teaching at a charter and on return to the district.
Do teachers in each of a state's charter schools have equal access to the public school teachers' retirement system?	Yes
Are charter schools bound by school district collective bargaining agreements?	No
Charter School Accountability	
Does the state require charter schools to submit annual reports?	Yes. Charter schools must prepare an annual report card and undergo an annual financial audit.
Does the state list grounds for terminating a school's charter?	Yes. A charter school authorizer may deny a charter school's request for renewal if, in its judgment, the charter school has failed to complete the obligations of the contract or has failed to comply with the state's charter school law. Also, a charter school authorizer may revoke a charter at any time if the charter school breaches one or more provisions of its charter.
Does the state provide an appeals process in the charter school renewal process?	Yes. A charter school may appeal a charter school authorizer's decision to a state superior court.
Does the state require the state education agency or another entity to report on the effectiveness of charter schools?	No

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