

PENNSYLVANIA

CHARTER SCHOOL LAW ENACTED IN 1997

MODEL LAW STATE RANKINGS

35th

OUT OF 45

131

TOTAL POINTS

RECOMMENDATIONS

While Pennsylvania’s law does not contain a cap on public charter school growth and provides adequate autonomy to charter schools, it primarily allows district authorizers and provides insufficient accountability and inadequate funding to charter schools.

Pennsylvania’s law needs improvement in several areas, including prohibiting district-mandated restrictions on growth, expanding authorizer options, ensuring authorizer accountability, providing authorizer funding, beefing up the law in relation to the model law’s four quality-control components (Components #6 through #9), allowing multi-school charter contracts or multi-contract governing boards, ensuring equitable operational funding and equitable access to capital funding and facilities, ensuring transparency regarding educational service providers, and strengthening accountability for full-time virtual charter schools.

STATE CHARTER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS (2018-19 SCHOOL YEAR)	
Number of Students	143,201
Public School Student Enrollment Share	9%
Student Demographics	
White	32%
Black	43%
Hispanic	17%
Asian	3%
Other	5%
FRPL Participation Rate	69%
CHARTER SCHOOLS (2018-19 SCHOOL YEAR)	
Number of Schools	186
Public School Share	6%
School Openings	3

MODEL LAW COMPONENT SCORE

COMPONENT	RATING x WEIGHT		TOTAL
1 No Caps	3	3	9
2 A Variety of Charter Schools Allowed	4	2	8
3 Non-district Authorizers Available	3	3	9
4 Authorizer and Overall Program Accountability System Required	1	3	3
5 Adequate Authorizer Funding	0	2	0
6 Transparent Charter Application, Review, and Decisionmaking Processes	2	4	8
7 Performance-based Charter Contracts Required	2	4	8
8 Comprehensive Charter School Monitoring and Data Collection Processes	2	4	8
9 Clear Processes for Renewal, Nonrenewal, and Revocation Decisions	2	4	8
10 Transparency Regarding Educational Service Providers	2	2	4
11 Fiscally and Legally Autonomous Schools with Independent Charter School Boards	4	3	12
12 Clear Student Enrollment and Lottery Procedures	3	2	6
13 Automatic Exemptions from Many State and District Laws and Regulations	2	3	6
14 Automatic Collective Bargaining Exemption	4	3	12
15 Multischool Charter Contracts and/or Multicharter Contract Boards Allowed	0	2	0
16 Extracurricular and Interscholastic Activities Eligibility and Access	3	1	3
17 Clear Identification of Special Education Responsibilities	4	2	8
18 Equitable Operational Funding and Equal Access to All State and Federal Categorical Funding	0	4	0
19 Equitable Access to Capital Funding and Facilities	2	4	8
20 Access to Relevant Employee Retirement Systems	4	2	8
21 Full-time Virtual Charter School Provisions	1	3	3
TOTAL SCORE			131