

With a restrictive cap on the number of charters that could open each year removed, and universities being allowed to authorize, the Gem State is poised to become one of the most robust charter movements in the country. The above-average charter law gives schools a large amount of autonomy regarding operations and teachers, but severely shortchanges schools when it comes to funding, especially in Boise, which is close to 43 percent. Idaho charters are embracing new innovations in learning that will surely prove to become a model for most states, including serving rural students in new and path-breaking ways with a focus on online and blended modalities.

## INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - YES (3)

APPROVAL	School boards may approve both new charters and conversion schools. The Public Charter School Commission (PCSC), a quasi-independent chartering agency, may only approve previously rejected applications and virtual schools. As of 2013, state public colleges, community colleges, and private, nonprofit, state-based nonsectarian colleges that are accredited by the same organization that accredits state public colleges can serve as authorizers but have yet to do so.
APPEAL	Yes. Applications denied by a school board or the PCSC may be appealed to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The state superintendent selects a hearing officer to review the process and make a recommendation. The recommendation is non-binding and subject to judicial review. If the state board decides to authorize the charter, the PCSC becomes its sponsor.

## OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	Yes, charter schools receive an automatic waiver from most state laws and regulations. However, laws passed in 2011 regarding teacher and administrator evaluations and classroom technology do not fall under that waiver, diminishing some charter authority. Virtual schools are allowed. Management contracts with ESPs are not restricted, although the law does prohibit most conflicts of interest. Performance certificates are newly required agreements between the charter school and authorizer, which outline a framework for monitoring academic and operational metrics.
LOCAL	Charters do receive an automatic waiver from most district rules and regulations, but they are not exempt from some evaluation, budgeting or technology laws. Charter schools not authorized by school boards are LEAs, and district-authorized charters have the opportunity to become their own LEA as well. Fiscal autonomy depends on the school board.
TEACHER FREEDOM	Yes. Teachers are exempt from district work rules and negotiated agreements unless otherwise agreed to in district-awarded charter. Charters must participate in state's retirement system.

## NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

CAP	No legal limit on number of schools that may be approved by school boards or the state charter school commission. University authorizers can only approve one new charter school each year within a school district.
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## EQUITY

<p>STUDENT FUNDING</p>	<p>Funds pass through the district in a similar way to other public schools. Charter school funding comes from state sources and federal money that the schools are qualified to receive, and they do not receive any local tax revenues or supplemental funds. Because of not receiving local funds, charter schools are at a severe disadvantage financially compared to traditional public schools.</p> <p>“Per student support. Computation of support units for each public charter school shall be calculated as if it were a separate school according to the schedules in section 33-1002(4), Idaho Code, except that public charter schools with fewer than one hundred (100) secondary ADA shall use a divisor of twelve (12) and the minimum units shall not apply, and no public charter school shall receive an increase in support units that exceeds the support units it received in the prior year by more than thirty (30). Funding from the state educational support program shall be equal to the total distribution factor, plus the salary-based apportionment provided in chapter 10, title 33, Idaho Code. Provided however, any public charter school that is formed by the conversion of an existing traditional public school shall be assigned divisors, pursuant to section 33-1002, Idaho Code, that are no lower than the divisors of the school district in which the traditional public school is located, for each category of pupils listed.” [Idaho Code § 33-5208]</p>
<p>FACILITIES FUNDS</p>	<p>The State Department of Education distributes per-pupil facilities funds to charters for each enrolled student that spends a majority of their time in a charter school facility. In 2014, 20 percent of the statewide average amount of bond and plant facility funds will be calculated, increasing each year. Charters that don’t receive these funds are allowed to submit a reimbursement claim to the state department of education. Idaho Code Ann. § 33-5208 (West).</p>

[LINK TO THE IDAHO CHARTER SCHOOL LAW](#)