

MISSOURI

(Law passed in 1998; 12th strongest of the nation's 43 charter laws)



Missouri's charter school law improved when charters were expanded beyond St. Louis and Kansas City, although there are still limitations on which entities can authorize. In 2014, the legislature passed a charter improvement bill, but the governor vetoed it. However, momentum seems to be shifting with the opening of more schools and possibly another chance at introducing charter-friendly legislation.

INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - YES (4)

APPROVAL	<p>In the Kansas City school district, St. Louis school district and unaccredited districts, the following can be authorizers: a school board; the Missouri Charter Public School Commission, a statewide independent entity; a special administrative board created by the state board of education to operate Kansas City and St. Louis districts; community colleges within the district the charter will be located; a four-year public college or university with an approved teacher education program that meets regional or national standards of accreditation; a four-year private college or university with an enrollment of at least 1,000 students, its primary campus in Missouri, and an approved teacher preparation program; and a two-year accredited private nonprofit technical school.</p> <p>School boards are the sole authorizers in accredited districts. In a provisionally accredited district, school boards and any authorizer that has met the standards of accountability and performance as determined by the state department of education can be authorizers.</p>
APPEAL	<p>If any authorizer rejects an application, the applicant can submit it to the State Board of Education, which would serve as the authorizer if it approves the application.</p>

OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	<p>Yes. Charter schools are exempt from most state rules and regulations, except those that explicitly apply to charters (criminal background checks of personnel, minimum attendance requirements, and minimum educational standards, for example). Virtual schools are not addressed in law and therefore not explicitly banned. Management contracts with ESPs are not restricted, however a charter applicant must include additional details for the ESP within their application including academic evidence, conflicts of interest, compensation structure, division of labor between charter and management, and financial stability.</p>
LOCAL	<p>Limited. Charters are exempt from most district rules and regulations. However, for charter schools that are not their own local education agency (LEA), their autonomy is more limited.</p>
TEACHER FREEDOM	<p>Yes. Teachers may choose to remain covered by district collective bargaining agreement or may work independently. Charter school employees must participate in the retirement system of their school district.</p>

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

CAP	<p>No cap on the number of charter schools that can open, except in accredited districts with at least 1,500 students, no more than 35 percent of students can be in charters. Charter schools can only open in metropolitan school districts, urban districts with a population greater than 350,000 (i.e. Kansas City & St. Louis school district), unaccredited districts, and provisionally accredited districts.</p>
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EQUITY

<p>STUDENT FUNDING</p>	<p>Funds pass through the state for LEAs and through district for others. The law states that school districts are required to pay charter schools per-pupil funding in accordance with the state funding formula and also send any federal and state aid to charters. LEA charter schools receive all funding streams and categories. The state department of education retains one and five-tenths percent of a charter’s state and local funding for administrative fees and gives to the authorizers.</p> <p>“A charter school that has declared itself as a local educational agency shall receive from the department of elementary and secondary education an annual amount equal to the product of the charter school’s weighted average daily attendance and the state adequacy target, multiplied by the dollar value modifier for the district, plus local tax revenues per weighted average daily attendance from the incidental and teachers funds in excess of the performance levy as defined in section 163.011, RSMo, plus all other state aid attributable to such pupils. If a charter school declares itself as a local education agency, the department of elementary and secondary education shall, upon notice of the declaration, reduce the payment made to the school district by the amount specified in this subsection and pay directly to the charter school the annual amount reduced from the school district’s payment.” Mo. Ann. Stat. § 160.415 (West).</p>
<p>FACILITIES FUNDS</p>	<p>No Additional Funds.</p>

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