

NORTH CAROLINA

(Law passed in 1996; 21st weakest of the nation's 43 charter laws)



North Carolina took a step forward in removing the cap on the number of schools allowed in 2011, but a step backward in 2013 by removing language that would allow universities and school boards to be charter authorizers. The new Charter Schools Advisory Board has been overly political and has slowed down the growth of charter schools in the Tar Heel State, with only 15 percent of applications being approved recently, one of the lowest approval rates in the state's history. The process of opening charters continues to remain restrictive and the state's leadership has not been strong advocates for opening more charter schools.

INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - NO

APPROVAL	The new North Carolina Charter Schools Advisory Board, a quasi-independent board with strong ties to the state department of education, reviews applications and makes recommendations to the State Board of Education, who makes the final decision.
APPEAL	None

OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	Yes. Charters do receive a blanket waiver from most state rules and regulations governing traditional public schools. Virtual schools are allowed and recently two pilot programs were approved. Management contracts with ESPs are not restricted, but the application does require evidence of student performance, governance stability and financial viability in addition to discussing potential conflicts of interest.
LOCAL	Limited. School boards impose various requirements, but by law charters are seen as fiscally and legally autonomous entities, and are exempt from many local rules and regulations.
TEACHER FREEDOM	Yes. Teachers are exempt from district work rules and negotiated agreements. Teachers have the option to participate in the state retirement system but it is not a requirement.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

CAP	There is no legal limit on the number of charter schools that may be approved.
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NORTH CAROLINA

(Continued)



EQUITY

STUDENT FUNDING	<p>Funds pass through the state and district. Funding allocation is supposed to be equal to the average per-pupil allocation for average daily membership from the local district where the charter is located, with an additional sum for students with special needs or ELL, but local funds have often been withheld. There is an application fee for initial and renewal charter applications, which has to be at least \$500.</p> <p>“The State Board of Education shall allocate to each charter school: (1) An amount equal to the average per pupil allocation for average daily membership from the local school administrative unit allotments in which the charter school is located for each child attending the charter school except for the allocation for children with disabilities and for the allocation for children with limited English proficiency; (2) An additional amount for each child attending the charter school who is a child with disabilities; and (3) An additional amount for children with limited English proficiency attending the charter school, based on a formula adopted by the State Board.” [N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-218.105]</p>
FACILITIES FUNDS	No Additional Funds.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

- 2	Two points are deducted because the Charter Advisory Board, due to politics and in-fighting, have hindered the approval and opening of charter schools with the lowest approval rate in years.
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[LINK TO THE NORTH CAROLINA CHARTER SCHOOL LAW](#)