

VIRGINIA

(Law passed in 1998; 2nd weakest of the nation's 43 charter laws)

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Virginia has continually had one of the weakest charter school laws in the country, allowing all chartering power to rest solely in the hands of school boards. Despite the continued animosity of these boards to charters, the state's elected leaders have failed to make meaningful changes to the charter law, and the results have been very few opportunities in a surprisingly diverse state when it comes to its student population.

INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - NO

APPROVAL	School boards are the only authorizer following the State Board of Education's review and approval of charter school applications. If one or more school boards initiate an application, it can bypass the state board review process.
APPEAL	None

OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	No. Charter schools must ask the State Board of Education for waivers from state rules and regulations. Law does not allow virtual schools. Charters are allowed to contract with management companies without restriction.
LOCAL	No. Charters must request rules and regulation waivers from the local district. Charter schools are run by a management committee (parents, teachers and community representatives) that manages the school to the satisfaction of both the charter applicant and the school board. School boards are in full control of charter school operations. Charter schools remain part of the school district LEA.
TEACHER FREEDOM	No. All employment rules apply unless specified by local board authorizer. Charter schools must participate in state's retirement system.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

CAP	No legal limit on number of schools that may be approved.
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VIRGINIA

(Continued)

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EQUITY

STUDENT FUNDING	Funds pass through district at discretion of the school district. “For the purposes of this article, students enrolled in a public charter school shall be included in the average daily membership of the relevant school division and shall be reported in fall membership for purposes of calculating the state and local shares required to fund the Standards of Quality. B. Insofar as constitutionally valid, a local school board or, in the case of a regional public charter school, the relevant school boards may establish by contract an agreement stating the conditions for funding the public charter school, including funding for the educational program to be provided by a residential charter school for at-risk students.” [Va. Code Ann. § 22.1-212.14]
FACILITIES FUNDS	No Additional Funds.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

- 3	Three points are deducted because the state has imposed a de facto cap by not encouraging or working to improve charter environment.
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[LINK TO THE VIRGINIA CHARTER SCHOOL LAW](#)