Start·a·School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Maryland

Charter Schools

Maryland charter schools are public schools operated by independent nonprofit organizations. The local board of education awards the charter, granting the school more operational autonomy than non-charter (traditional) public schools. Public charter schools are tuition-free and open to all students. The Maryland State Department of Education provides support and guidance to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) engaged in authorizing public charter schools and charter school operators.

Review the Maryland Alliance of Public Charter Schools website.

Review the September 23, 2024 workgroup meeting presentation.

Steps to Start a Charter School

The first step in creating a charter school is to register as a corporation. This is usually a non-profit LLC. Register with your state's Division of Corporations.

If you are planning to operate as a non-profit, you will need to obtain your IRS Non-Profit status by submitting IRS Form 1023.

Maryland Charter Law

Local Education Agency Charter School Liaisons

In Maryland, LEAs authorize charter schools. LEAs manage the application, renewal, and revocation/closure processes in a similar manner to traditional nonpublic schools, while honoring the autonomy in the respective charter agreements. Visit our Liaison page for details.

Contact:
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Charter Applications per LEA

Application

- Application Guide

New Charter School Application Packages by LEA

Anne Arundel	Frederick	Prince George's
Baltimore City	Garrett	St. Mary's
Baltimore County	Harford	Queen Anne's
Carroll	Howard	Washington
Cecil	Montgomery	Wicomico
Charles		

Examples

- National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Core Resources
    - Application Process and Decision-Making
    - Charter School Application
    - Application Evaluation Criteria
    - Charter School Applicant Interviewer Guidance

Statues and Rules

- Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) includes the 13A - State Board of Education
- Maryland State Statutes
- COMAR 13A.02.10
- §9-102: Definition of Charter School
- §9-102.1: Lottery Military Waiver
- §9-102.2: Lottery Provisions
- §9-102.3: Converted Charter School Waiver
- §9-104: Application Submittal
- §9-104.1: Eligible Public Charter School

- §9-105: Staff Certifications
- §9-106; Waivers
- §9-107: Public Chartering Authority
- §9-108; Employees
- §9-109: Commensurate Funding

Resources

Law & Policy

- Maryland State Board of Education Decisions and Waivers
- Maryland Charter Law
- Eligibility for Exemptions from Local Policy, Ed. Art 9-104.1, December 2016
- Charter School Program – Policy of the Maryland State Board of Education (2010)
- U.S. Department of Education Charter Schools Non-Regulatory Guidance (2011)

Reports & Publications

- Promising Practices in Maryland Charter Schools
- Maryland Report to General Assembly - December 2023
- Report on the Condition of Public Charter School Facilities in Maryland by the Interagency Commission on School Construction in consultation with the Maryland Alliance of Public Charter Schools
- Charter School Performance in Maryland 2019, Center for the Research on Education Outcomes
- 2014 Report on Maryland Charter Schools by University of Baltimore
- Study of Funding Provided to Public Schools and Public Charter Schools In Maryland, December 2016

Contacts for Local School Systems

- Local School System Charter Contacts

MSDE Guidance

- Application Guide
- Renewal Guide

- Authorizer Resources page

MSDE Subgrantee Resources

- Grant Forms

Technical Assistance

- Maryland Alliance of Public Charter Schools
- MSDE Guide to Charter Renewal

National Links and Reports

- Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center at WestEd, Identifying Promising Practices in Charter Schools: A Framework for an Evidence-Based Approach
- National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
- National Association of Charter School Authorizers
- National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools
- National Charter Schools Institute
- National Charter School Resource Center
- National Network for District Authorizing
- US Department of Education