

ARKANSAS

(Law passed in 1995; last amended in 2011;
12th weakest of the nation's 42 charter laws)

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37 charters serving 11,605 students.

10 charter schools closed as of December 2011.

NOTEWORTHY

KIPP Delta Public Schools provide a college-ready experience to disadvantaged students and enjoy unique freedoms that other charters do not.

INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - NO

APPROVAL	State Board of Education is the only authorizer following school board approval.
APPEAL	No binding appeal. If the school board rejects the application, the charter may continue the application process with a written notice of appeal to the state board.

OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	Limited. Waiver requests considered on a case-by-case basis. The State Board of Education promulgates rules and regulations. Virtual schools are allowed. Management contracts with ESPs are permitted.
LOCAL	No. Charters are heavily regulated by the local board.
TEACHER FREEDOM	Yes for open-enrollment schools; teachers are exempt from district work rules and negotiated agreements. No for conversions. Teachers remain covered by district contracts but may request a waiver from certain provisions. All certified staff in charter schools (open-enrollment and conversions) must participate in state's retirement system.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

CAP	Yes. The cap on the total number of open-enrollment schools increases by five whenever the current number of schools is two under the limit; currently set at 25. Only one campus per charter contract is allowed, except for those with "demonstrated educational accountability" (e.g. KIPP Delta Charter Schools.) These schools may apply directly to the state board for additional licenses to open other schools after receiving their initial charter. Unlimited conversion schools.
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EQUITY

<p>STUDENT FUNDING</p>	<p>For new starts, funds pass through the state and for conversion schools, funds pass through the district. Funding is not guaranteed or codified in law, but instead is determined annually by the General Assembly. Appropriations for 2012-13 are approximately \$6,300.</p> <p>“An open-enrollment public charter school shall receive funds equal to the amount that a public school would receive under § 6-20-2305(a) and (b) as well as any other funding that a public charter school is entitled to receive under law or under rules promulgated by the State Board of Education. (2) (A) For the first year of operation and for the first year the open-enrollment public charter school adds a new grade, the foundation funding and enhanced educational funding for an open-enrollment public charter school is determined as follows: (i) The initial funding estimate for each school year shall be based on enrollment as of July 30 preceding the school year in which the students are to attend; (ii) In December, funding will be adjusted based on the first-quarter average daily membership. (iii) A final adjustment will be made after the current three-quarter average daily membership is established. (B) For the second year and each school year thereafter, the previous year’s average daily membership will be used to calculate foundation funding and any enhanced education funding amounts” [A.C.A. 6-23-501(et al)]</p>
<p>FACILITIES FUNDS</p>	<p>No Additional Funds.</p>

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