

INDIANA

(Law passed in 2001; last amended in 2011;
3rd strongest of the nation's 42 charter laws)

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63 charters serving 20,372 students.

2 charter schools closed as of December 2011.

NOTEWORTHY

New in the Top Three— reformist Governor and legislature greatly improved state charter law in 2011.

INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - YES (4)

APPROVAL	School boards, public state universities, and the mayor of Indianapolis. In 2011, the Indiana Charter School Board was created, an independent entity that may authorize charters statewide.
APPEAL	Yes. If an application is rejected, it may be submitted to another sponsor or the state Charter School Review Panel. The Panel may approve the proposal, which is then considered conditionally approved, and upon written notice from the organizer that an eligible sponsor has agreed to serve as a sponsor for the proposal, it receives final approval from the panel.

OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	Yes. Charters are free from most rules and regulations governing traditional public schools. Virtual schools are allowed. Management contracts with ESPs are not restricted.
LOCAL	Yes. Blanket waiver provides flexibility from local district regulations.
TEACHER FREEDOM	Yes. Teachers may negotiate as a separate unit, or work independently. Each charter may participate in state's retirement system, or establish a retirement system for its employees.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

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

<p>STUDENT FUNDING</p>	<p>Funds pass from the state and district. Charters receive the same state formula aid as traditional schools (virtually receive less.) A complex formula often results in discrepancies, particularly with local funding. The law was changed for the 2012-13 school year, giving new charters their funding in the beginning of the school year, instead of January, which caused financial strain.</p> <p>“The department shall distribute to the organizer the state tuition support distribution. The department shall make a distribution under this subsection at the same time and in the same manner as the department makes a distribution of state tuition support under IC 20-43-2 to other school corporations... (b) Beginning not more than sixty (60) days after the department receives the information reported under section 2(a) [IC 20-24-7-2(a)] of this chapter, the department shall distribute to the organizer: (1) tuition support and other state funding for any purpose for students enrolled in the conversion charter school; (2) a proportionate share of state and federal funds received...(3) a proportionate share of funds received under federal or state categorical aid programs for students who are eligible for the federal or state categorical aid and are enrolled in the conversion charter school.” [Ind. Code Ann. § 20-24-7-2 and 3]</p>
<p>FACILITIES FUNDS</p>	<p>Charter school facilities assistance program to make grants and loans available to charter schools for the purpose of constructing, purchasing, renovating and maintaining facilities, in addition to paying first semester costs for new, and reducing common school fund debt for charter schools. Indiana provided \$17 million to this program in 2011. [Ind. Code Ann. § 20-24-12-4]</p>

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