

ILLINOIS

(Law passed in 1996; 13th weakest of the nation's 43 charter laws)



INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - NO

APPROVAL	School boards. The State Charter School Commission was created to approve schools but functions in practice as an appeals board rather than an actual independent board (the state board oversees the Commission.) Additionally, local boards, whenever petitioned by five percent of voters, can be mandated to put approved charter proposals up for district vote.
APPEAL	Yes. Applications denied by the school board may be appealed to the State Board of Education, which becomes the school's sponsor upon approval. After being denied at the local school board level, charters can also apply to the State Charter School Commission.

OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	Yes. Blanket waiver provides exemptions from most state regulations governing traditional public schools. Virtual schools are allowed. Management contracts with ESPs are not restricted.
LOCAL	Limited. All proposed schools must meet certain guidelines and gather a certain level of approval from the community to be considered. Charter schools in Chicago have to follow many rules of the city, including teacher certification minimums.
TEACHER FREEDOM	Limited. Teachers are considered employees of the charter school, unless a collective bargaining agreement or charter contract provides otherwise. Charter schools must participate in state's retirement system.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

CAP	Yes. One hundred twenty total schools allowed, with a total of 70 permitted in Chicago (five of these for dropout recovery) and 45 reserved for the remainder of the state. Charters approved before July 2009 are permitted to open additional campuses, those after may not.
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ILLINOIS

(Continued)



EQUITY

STUDENT FUNDING

Funds pass through the district. Per pupil funding is negotiated with the district and specified in the charter. Impact aid reimbursements “reward” districts that lose students – 90 percent in the first year, 65 percent the next year, and 35 percent the third year. Charters may receive as little as 75 percent of conventional public school funding.

“Except for a charter school established by referendum under Section 27A-6.5 [105 ILCS 5/27A-6.5], as part of a charter school contract, the charter school and the local school board shall agree on funding and any services to be provided by the school district to the charter school. Agreed funding that a charter school is to receive from the local school board for a school year shall be paid in equal quarterly installments with the payment of the installment for the first quarter being made not later than July 1, unless the charter establishes a different payment schedule...In no event shall the funding be less than 75% or more than 125% of the school district’s per capita student tuition multiplied by the number of students residing in the district who are enrolled in the charter school.” [105 ILCS 5/27A-11(b)]

FACILITIES FUNDS

Charter Schools Revolving Loan Fund provides interest free-loans that cannot exceed \$250 per student. [105 ILCS 5/27-A11.5 (3)]

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