

MAINE

(Law passed in 2011; 16th weakest of the nation's 43 charter laws)



INDEPENDENT OR MULTIPLE AUTHORIZERS - "TECHNICALLY" YES (2)

APPROVAL	School boards and the State Charter School Commission, which consists of members that are all appointed by the state board with legislative input, and is not independent from state board oversight. Only the commission can approve virtual school applications.
APPEAL	None. The only course of action is to revise and re-submit application for reconsideration.

OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY

STATE	Yes. Blanket waiver from most rules and regulations governing traditional public schools. The Department of Education oversees the commission and manages charter processes, which may create conflict. Virtual schools are allowed. ESPs are only allowed to manage virtual schools, and their role in other charters' operations is highly prescribed and limited.
LOCAL	Limited. Free from many local, traditional rules and regulations.
TEACHER FREEDOM	Yes. Charter teachers in new starts have the right to work independently, or to bargain collectively, though not as part of the district bargaining agreement. Teachers in conversions can choose to stay with their collective bargaining agreement or choose other representation. Charter schools are not required to participate in state's retirement system.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ALLOWED

CAP	Yes on the number of schools and enrollment. The commission may open ten schools in ten years; districts have no cap. Charters cannot enroll more than ten percent of the total of district students for the first three years of operation.
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EQUITY

<p>STUDENT FUNDING</p>	<p>Funds pass from state and district to school. Law states that per pupil funding (minus administrative fees) will pass to the charter schools, but unclear if that will hold once law is in practice. Three percent authorizer fee in addition to one percent fee that can be retained by district.</p> <p>“All state and local operating funds follow each student to the public charter school attended by the student, except that the school administrative unit of the student’s residence may retain up to 1% of the per pupil allocation described in this subsection to cover associated administrative costs...(2) For students attending public charter schools, the school administrative unit of residence shall forward the per-pupil allocations described in subparagraph (i) directly to the public charter school attended. These per-pupil allocations must be forwarded to each public charter school on a quarterly basis, as follows” [Sec.1. 5 MRSA § 2413]</p>
<p>FACILITIES FUNDS</p>	<p>No Additional Funds.</p>

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

<p>- 1</p>	<p>One point is deducted because the commission is arbitrarily rejecting charter applications.</p>
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[LINK TO THE MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL LAW](#)