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How Charter School Governance in Pennsylvania and Philadelphia Measures Up

Charter schools are tuition-free, taxpayer-supported institutions that are granted the right to operate without many of the rules that govern traditional public schools. Most hold classes in buildings, but some, known as cyber or virtual charters, operate online. Questions surrounding the way charters are authorized, regulated, renewed, and shut down are a major component of the debate about public education in Pennsylvania, particularly in the School District of Philadelphia. Over half of the state's roughly 160 brick-and-mortar charters are located in the district, and the city's charter school population—more than 60,000, accounting for about 30 percent of its public school students—is the nation's third-largest, behind the districts serving Los Angeles and New York City. Only four large districts—New Orleans, Detroit, the District of Columbia, and Cleveland—have higher percentages of students in charters than does Philadelphia.¹

To gain perspective on charter school governance in the School District of Philadelphia and the state, The Pew Charitable Trusts compared the rules under which charters operate in Pennsylvania with those in 15 other states, all of which have at least one major urban school district with a substantial number or percentage of its students in charters. The states are California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. Nationally, 43 states and the District of Columbia permit charters.²

The comparison showed that although regulation varies among states, Pennsylvania's approach is similar to what a number of other states are doing. But there are differences, too, including the low percentage of charters it has closed in recent years and the high percentage of noncertified teachers it allows charters to employ. Among the additional findings:

- In Pennsylvania, the authority to create brick-and-mortar charter schools rests with the governing body of each local district, which in Philadelphia is the School Reform Commission. Similar authorization processes are in place in five of the other 15 states studied. In two states, the state education department has sole responsibility to create charters. The other eight have multiple entities that can authorize them, including local school boards, mayors, the state, and universities.
- Oversight responsibility, which includes decisions about opening and closing charter schools, almost always rests with the authorizing body or bodies, as it does in Pennsylvania. The states' accountability requirements for schools are similar.
- Charters in most of the states, including Pennsylvania, are granted blanket waivers from the rules governing traditional public schools. Uncertified teachers are permitted to make up as much as 25 percent of a charter's teaching staff in Pennsylvania, a higher percentage than is allowed in most of the other states.
- In recent years, Pennsylvania has been among the states least likely to open or close charter schools. On average, it increased the number of charters in the state by 7.5 percent per year; the median for the states studied was 9.4 percent. Closings decreased the number of charters in Pennsylvania by 1.3 percent; the median was 3.4 percent. In most of the states examined, including Pennsylvania, charters were usually closed for financial mismanagement and, on occasion, suspected fraud, although poor academic performance also led to closures.
- Relative to the other states studied, Pennsylvania has a high percentage of charter students enrolled in state-based cybercharters. Across the country, seven states bar charters of any kind, and 11 others do not allow cybercharters.

Authorizing charters

Charter school governance involves a number of elements, including the creation of schools, oversight efforts, waivers from various regulations, and shutting down individual charters. In addition, there are separate issues related to cybercharters.

A central part of the public conversation surrounding charter schools has been deciding who is authorized to create a school. Many advocates for charters prefer systems in which multiple agencies and organizations have such power, a framework that can lead to the creation of more charter schools and a variety of educational approaches. Critics of such a system tend to favor limiting the power to the governing body of the local district, arguing that multiple authorizers make it more difficult to develop a cohesive local school system.

In Pennsylvania, there is one authorizer for each type of charter. A brick-and-mortar school must secure approval from the local governing body (or bodies, if it is serving more than one district), as 10 charters in the state did in the 2014-15 school year. In Philadelphia, this power rests with the School Reform Commission, a state-created five-member panel that has run the district in place of a local school board since 2001. Cybercharters, which may draw students from anywhere in the state, must seek approval from the state Department of Education. In Pennsylvania as elsewhere, the agency that has the authority to create a charter also has the authority to close it.

Five of the 15 other states studied—California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, and Maryland—are like Pennsylvania in that authorization power is vested primarily in local education agencies, although state law in California limits the ability of those agencies to reject charter applications.³ In Massachusetts and New Jersey, the power rests solely with the state. The eight other states allow multiple authorizers—including some universities that have teachers colleges and education departments—creating a system that looks and operates quite differently from Pennsylvania’s. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1
How Charter Schools Are Authorized in Selected States

State	By local/county governing body	By state-level education body	By other entities	Appeal process
Pennsylvania	Yes*	Yes, for cybercharters	No	Yes
California	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Colorado	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Florida	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Georgia	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Illinois	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Indiana	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Maryland	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Massachusetts	No	Yes	No	No
Michigan	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Minnesota	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
New Jersey	No	Yes	No	Yes
New York	No	Yes	Yes	No
Ohio	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Texas	Yes	Yes	No	No
Wisconsin	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Note: As this table shows, state processes for authorizing charter schools vary widely. The category of “other entities” consists mostly of colleges and universities. In New York, local school boards could authorize charters until 2010 but no longer have such power. In some states, including Illinois and Maryland, the authorizing power of state-level bodies has rarely been used.

* In Philadelphia, a majority of the School Reform Commission, the body governing the local district, is appointed by the governor of Pennsylvania.

Sources: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, *The Health of the Public Charter School Movement: A State-by-State Analysis*; Education Commission of the States, *50-State Reports on Charter School Policies*

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In Minnesota, where the national charter school movement began in the early 1990s, 17 school boards, 16 colleges and universities, and 14 nonprofit groups have authorized charter schools. In Michigan, the authorizers include 19 school boards and 11 colleges and universities.⁴

In Indiana, authorizers include three school boards, the state charter school board, the mayor of Indianapolis, and four institutions of higher learning. As of the 2013-14 school year, one of those institutions, Ball State University, had authorized 45 of the state's 77 charters.⁵

New York currently allows only the state Board of Regents and the State University of New York to approve charters, although individual districts had the ability to authorize until 2010.⁶ The Board of Regents also has the power to revoke charters issued by other authorizers.

In Pennsylvania, rejections of charter school applications at the local level may be appealed to the state's Charter Schools Appeals Board, although Philadelphia was exempt from that provision until this year. The board has seven members appointed by the governor and is chaired by the secretary of education. Appeals are also permitted in 11 of the 15 other states.

Many states, including Pennsylvania, do not cap the number of charters permitted or the number of students enrolled in individual schools. Among the states examined in this report, California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and Texas have some limits, which are related more to the number of schools than to the number of students.⁷ In Philadelphia, the School Reform Commission has at times attempted to cap enrollment in existing charter schools, but Pennsylvania's Commonwealth Court, citing the state charter law, ruled in August 2015 that the commission could not do so.⁸

How Comparison Cities and States Were Selected

For this study, Pew looked at the state rules governing charters in Philadelphia and 15 other cities, each of which has a substantial number and/or share of its students in charter schools. That share ranged from 55 percent in Detroit to 7 percent in New York City; the New York City school system is so large, though, that the 7 percent share produces the second-largest charter school population in the country. (See Figure 2.) In every state studied, the percentage of students attending charters in the selected urban district was higher—usually much higher—than in the state as a whole.

Two big-city districts with high percentages of students in charters were not included in this report because their situations are so atypical. One is New Orleans, which consists almost entirely of charter schools. The other is Washington, which does not share managerial responsibilities with a separate state government.

Figure 2

Percentage of Students Attending Charter Schools in Selected Urban School Districts and States

State	District	Total district public school enrollment	Percentage of public school students attending charter schools in district	Percentage of public school students attending charter schools in state
Michigan	Detroit	106,805	55%	9%
Ohio	Cleveland	47,432	39%	7%
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	198,059	30%	7%
Indiana	Indianapolis	43,727	30%	3%
Minnesota	St. Paul	48,378	22%	5%
New Jersey	Newark	45,003	22%	2%
California	Los Angeles Unified	652,421	21%	8%
Texas	Houston	242,740	21%	5%
Wisconsin	Milwaukee	86,485	21%	5%
Colorado	Denver	86,043	16%	11%
Florida	Miami-Dade	356,238	15%	8%
Maryland	Baltimore	84,747	15%	3%
Massachusetts	Boston	63,958	15%	3%
Illinois	Chicago	397,972	14%	3%
Georgia	Atlanta	51,694	13%	4%
New York	New York City	1,052,772	7%	3%

Note: All numbers are for the 2013-14 school year.

Sources: District data from *A Growing Movement: America's Largest Charter School Communities, Ninth Annual Edition, December 2014*, published by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools; state data on percentage of students attending charters from *The Health of the Public Charter School Movement: A State-by-State Analysis*, published by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

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Oversight

In most of the states studied, charter schools are required to report annually to the authorizing entity and/or the state education department. The extent of the reporting required is roughly equivalent to that mandated for traditional public schools and generally entails providing information on finances, enrollment, student achievement, and compliance with applicable state regulations.⁹ Pennsylvania's grounds for termination or nonrenewal are typical, covering such matters as violations of law and failure to live up to the provisions of the school's written charter, including those related to student performance. Around the nation, the intensity of the oversight effort varies, as does the amount of money and personnel devoted to it.

Among the districts studied in this report, Los Angeles Unified, which serves the city of Los Angeles and several adjoining communities, appears to have one of the more vigorous and proactive operations. Its Charter Schools Division employs a staff of 40 to oversee 264 schools. Oversight activities include making annual site visits, ensuring that charters comply with reporting requirements, and monitoring the fiscal condition of the schools. On several occasions, the division has taken steps that led to denial of a school's renewal.¹⁰

New Jersey's 87 charter schools, 37 of which are in Newark, must submit annual reports to the state's eight-member Office of Charter Schools. Each is then evaluated on the basis of the office's Performance Framework, a detailed set of criteria covering student achievement, financial performance, governance, school culture, facilities, financial management, and compliance with reporting requirements. From 2012 through 2015, 11 charter schools in the state were closed and 28 others placed on probation for academic, fiscal, or operational reasons.¹¹

In the Cleveland Municipal School District, and in Ohio generally, the situation is quite different. An official of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers was quoted in 2014 as saying that the state is "more broken than the Wild West"; he cited the large number of groups permitted to authorize schools and the relatively modest oversight efforts.¹² Cleveland alone has 11 different authorizers overseeing 71 schools. This year, the state's Department of Education began mandating reviews of authorizers based on the academic performance of their schools, compliance with state law, and adherence to a set of quality standards, and the state enacted legislation to strengthen the oversight process.

In Philadelphia, a nine-person Charter Schools Office oversees 83 schools, including 20 Renaissance Schools, which are neighborhood schools managed by charter operators. All charter schools in the city are required to submit annual reports to Pennsylvania's Department of Education, with copies to the Charter Schools Office. As of the fall of 2015, the School District of Philadelphia was finishing the design of an additional annual report on each charter school's academic, operational, and financial performance. In addition, the Charter Schools Office was working to reaffirm and revise standards and add new ones, primarily for financial performance, to the annual evaluation and renewal process for charter schools in the city. This is part of the district's Authorizing Quality Initiative.¹³

Waivers

Among the major distinctions of charter schools are the waivers they receive from the rules governing public schools, including those related to collective bargaining. In Pennsylvania, charters are given "blanket waivers," which allow them to set their own processes and operational rules while following state standards for overall academic performance and financial integrity. Most of the other states examined do the same. The exceptions are Maryland, Michigan, and New Jersey, where waivers are granted on a case-by-case basis, and Massachusetts, where charters have more limited autonomy.¹⁴

Pennsylvania is unusual in that it allows charters to employ a relatively high number of teachers who lack state certification—up to 25 percent of a school’s faculty.¹⁵ Seven of the other states studied—Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Ohio—require all charter school teachers to have certifications, and several others allow small percentages of uncertified teachers under various circumstances. New York permits five teachers or 30 percent of a school’s faculty, whichever is smaller, to be uncertified, although such teachers must have previously worked as instructors or offer “exceptional experience” in business, a profession, the arts, athletics, or the military.¹⁶

On the other hand, Texas does not require state certification for any charter school teachers, except for those teaching special education students or English language learners. Illinois allows a higher percentage of uncertified teachers in some schools than does Pennsylvania; for charters established in Chicago after April 2003, up to 50 percent of instructors are permitted to be uncertified.¹⁷

Advocates of allowing charters to hire some uncertified teachers say that doing so gives schools the freedom to be innovative in filling some positions. But critics of this policy say that certified teachers ensure a measure of quality.

Openings and closings

Part of the original concept behind the charter school movement was that the schools, freed from many of the rules under which traditional public schools operate, would experiment with new instructional methods and ways of working with hard-to-reach students. The assumption was that some charters would succeed and others would fail, meaning that schools would come and go. New charters were given initial runs of three to seven years—five years in Pennsylvania—with the expectation that renewal would not be automatic.

In Pennsylvania in recent years, the roster of charter schools has shown less fluidity than in other states, with fewer openings and closings relative to the number of charters.¹⁸ From 2010 to 2014, on average, the number of charters that opened in Pennsylvania was equal to 7.5 percent of the total number of charters in operation statewide. This was one of the lowest percentages among the states studied; only Minnesota and Massachusetts had lower rates, and six states had opening rates of 10 percent or more. (See Figure 3.)

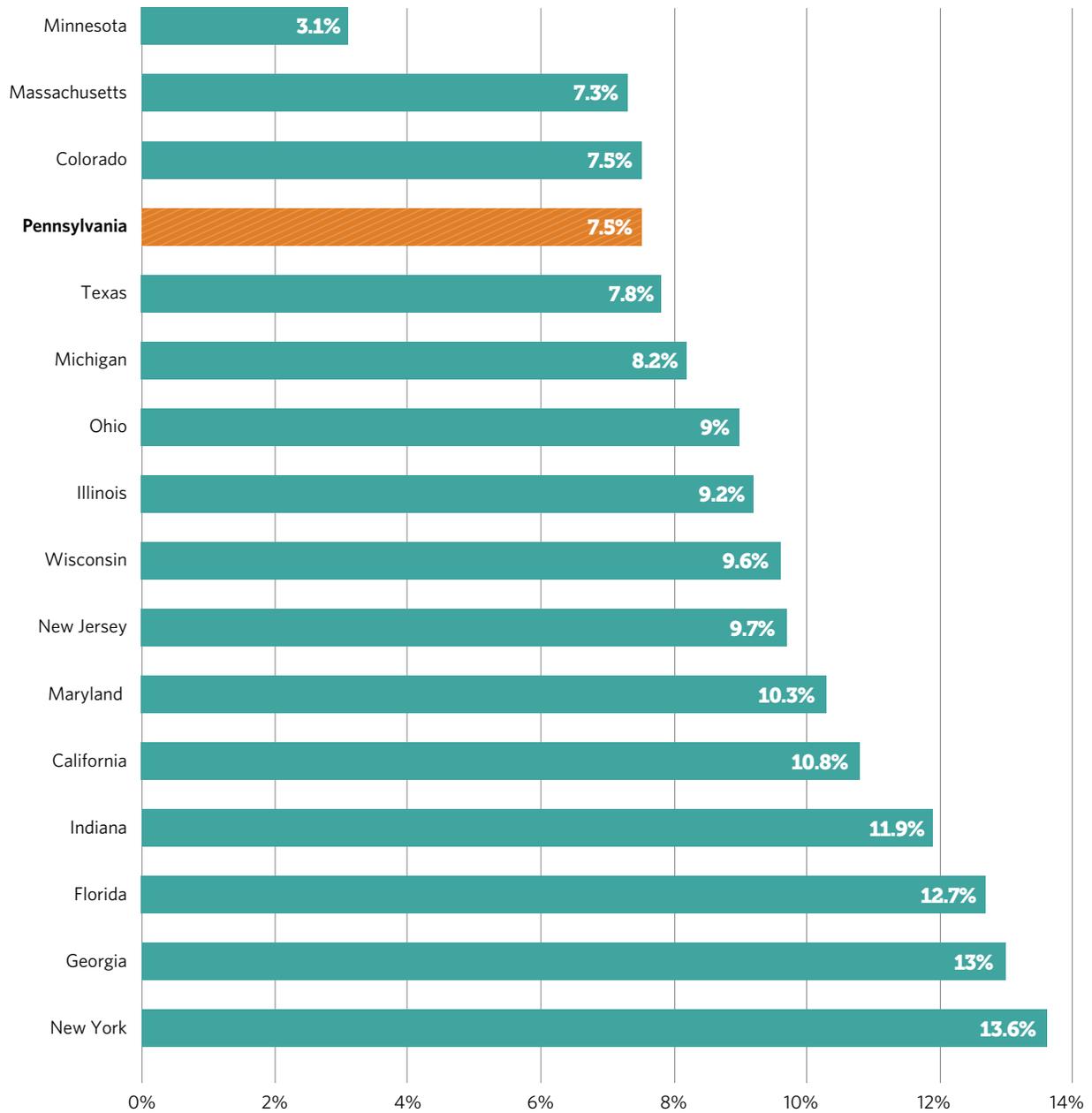
At the same time, Pennsylvania’s average annual closing rate, 1.3 percent of the charters operating in the state, was among the lowest. Only New York had a lower rate. (See Figure 4.)

There does not appear to be any correlation between the method of authorizing charters and the rates of openings and closings. Five states—California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, and Maryland—are similar to Pennsylvania in giving local districts the primary power to open and close brick-and-mortar charters. Four of them had substantially higher opening rates in the period studied; the fifth, Colorado, was identical. And all five had higher closing rates.

Charters are generally closed because of financial challenges, general mismanagement, or poor academic performance. In most states, closings are often due to a mixture of those factors: Poor academic performance can lead to decreased enrollment, which in turn results in less revenue, and both financial challenges and general mismanagement can have a negative impact on academic results.

Figure 3

Average Annual Charter School Opening Rate in Selected States, 2010-14



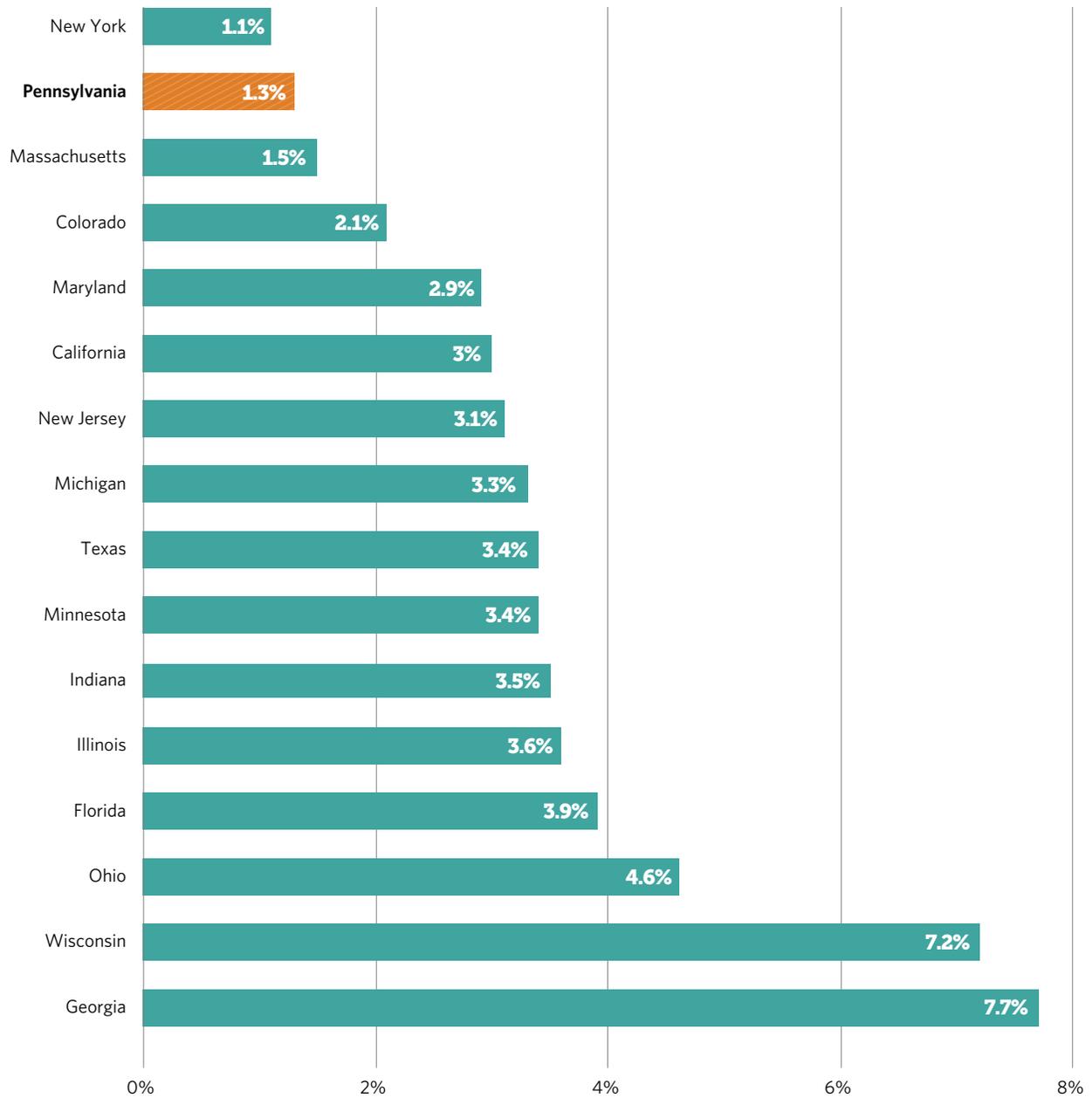
Note: The opening rate is the number of charters opened in a year divided by the total number of charters operating in the previous year.

Source: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, *The Health of the Public Charter School Movement: A State-by-State Analysis*

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Figure 4

Average Annual Charter School Closing Rate in Selected States, 2009-13



Note: The closing rate is the number of charters shut down in a year divided by the total number of charters operating that year.

Sources: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, *The Health of the Public Charter School Movement: A State-by-State Analysis*, and websites of individual state education departments and charter school organizations

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Minnesota takes the approach that charters should not be closed for academic reasons if there are any schools in the area with lower levels of performance.¹⁹ As a result, most of the closings there have been due to financial challenges or mismanagement. But in New York, nearly all charter school closings have been for academic reasons. The philosophy there and in other states is that charters must perform well in terms of test scores, or at least outperform the neighboring traditional schools.²⁰ In the 2014-15 school year, a period not covered by the data in this report, the Philadelphia School Reform Commission shut down four charter schools in the city, with district officials citing a variety of factors, including management issues and academic performance. Two other schools closed on their own, primarily for financial reasons. In February 2015, the commission approved five new charters, most of which are scheduled to open in 2016.

Cybercharters

Online charters, also known as cyber or virtual charters, are permitted in about three-fourths of the states that allow charter schools. Although Pennsylvania's Department of Education has not authorized any new cybercharters since three opened in July 2012, the state had 14 such schools in the 2014-15 school year.²¹ That makes it a leader in cybercharter school enrollment. In 2014, Pennsylvania had the second-highest percentage nationally of charter school students enrolled in cybercharters, at 28 percent—trailing only Ohio, at 33 percent.²² Among the 16 states in this study, four of them—Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York—do not permit cybercharters.²³ (See Figure 5.)

Cybercharters have generated controversy in Pennsylvania: Their state performance scores have been low, with the highest-rated cybercharter getting a score of 66 in 2014 at a time when 72 percent of all public schools scored 70 or higher.²⁴ (The performance scores, compiled by the state Department of Education on a scale of 0 to 100, are based on several factors, including attendance and graduation rates, test scores, and other indicators of academic performance.)

Funding of cybercharters has also come under scrutiny. They receive the same per-student funding as brick-and-mortar charters, and critics of this arrangement, including Governor Tom Wolf (D), say that per-student funding should be lower for cybercharters, arguing that they have lower costs than conventional schools. Advocates counter that although cybercharters have lower costs in some areas, they have high costs for technology and electronic curricula.

Nationally, 16 of the 31 states that permit cybercharters, plus the District of Columbia, fund the schools as Pennsylvania does, with the same per-student level as their brick-and-mortar counterparts. Another 10 fund the virtual schools at lower levels. Funding varies in the other states.

Figure 5
Cybercharter Schools in Selected States, 2014

State	Cybercharters allowed	Number of cybercharters	Percentage of charter students in cybercharters
Ohio	Yes	24	33%
Pennsylvania	Yes	14	28%
Georgia	Yes	3	19%
Indiana	Yes	4	18%
Wisconsin	Yes	30	17%
Colorado	Yes	7	11%
Michigan	Yes	2	5%
California	Yes	40	4%
Minnesota	Yes	5	3%
Texas	Yes	1	3%
Florida	Yes	2	1%
Illinois	Yes	1	<1%
Maryland	No	0	0%
Massachusetts	No	0	0%
New Jersey	No	0	0%
New York	No	0	0%

Note: Pennsylvania has one of the largest cybercharter sectors in the country. Cybercharters are schools that operate online, with students doing most of their schoolwork from their homes.

Sources: Joe Nathan, *Summary of State Virtual Charter Public School Funding Policies*, Center for School Change, October 2013; National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, *The Health of the Public Charter School Movement: A State-by-State Analysis*; updates from individual states

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Conclusion

With a few exceptions, the governance of Pennsylvania's charter school system is in the mainstream of state systems. The exceptions include its policy toward unaccredited teachers, its relatively high number of cybercharter students, and its relatively low percentage of charter openings and closings. Numerous policy questions surround the operation of these schools across the state and particularly in the city of Philadelphia, including how much per-student funding they should receive for both general and special education.²⁵ Legislators, administrators, parents, and others concerned about K-12 education will continue to grapple with these issues in years to come.

About this brief

This brief was written by Larry Eichel, director of The Pew Charitable Trusts' Philadelphia research initiative, based on information gathered and analyzed by Gary Ritter, professor of education and public policy at the University of Arkansas, and supplemented by Pew staff. It was edited by Frazierita Klasen, senior director of Pew's Philadelphia program, along with Jennifer Stavrakos, Elizabeth Lowe, Daniel LeDuc, and Bernard Ohanian. Bailey Farnsworth was the designer, and Katy Martens coordinated the photographs.

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About the Philadelphia research initiative

Pew's Philadelphia research initiative provides timely, impartial research and analysis on key issues facing Philadelphia for the benefit of the city's residents and leaders.

Endnotes

- 1 National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, *A Growing Movement: America's Largest Charter School Communities, Ninth Annual Edition, December 2014*, p. 3, http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/2014_Enrollment_Share_FINAL.pdf.
- 2 Washington is included among the 43 states that allow charters despite a Washington State Supreme Court ruling in September 2015 that charters, as currently structured, are not eligible for state education funding. See John Higgins, "State Supreme Court: Charter Schools Are Unconstitutional," *Seattle Times*, Sept. 4, 2015, <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/education/state-supreme-court-charter-schools-are-unconstitutional/>.
- 3 In California, a local agency must grant a charter application unless the applicant fails to meet one of five specific conditions, and denial of an application must be accompanied by written factual findings. See California Education Code §47605, <http://codes.findlaw.com/ca/education-code/edc-sect-47605.html>.
- 4 National Association of Charter School Authorizers, Authorizer Listings, 2014. To get results for a specific state, such as Michigan, go to <https://www.qualitycharters.org/authorizer-comparison/state-by-state-overviews-michigan.html>.
- 5 National Association of Charter School Authorizers, Authorizer Listings, 2014.
- 6 New York City Charter School Center, "Applying for a Charter," <http://www.nyccharterschools.org/applying>.
- 7 National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, "Measuring Up," accessed Aug. 5, 2015, <http://www.publiccharters.org/law-database/caps/>.
- 8 Kristen A. Graham, "Commonwealth Court Hands Major Victory to Charter Schools," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Aug. 29, 2015, http://www.philly.com/philly/education/20150828_Commonwealth_Court_hands_major_victory_to_charter_schools.html.
- 9 The National Association of Charter School Authorizers lists "12 essential practices" that make up an effective oversight regime. Using an external panel of experts to examine charter applications and requiring or examining annual independent financial audits of schools are among those practices. See <http://www.qualitycharters.org/for-authorizers/12-essential-practices/>.
- 10 Los Angeles Unified School District, "About the Charter Schools Division," accessed Aug. 12, 2015, <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/1817>.
- 11 Email from Harold Lee, director, Office of Charter Schools, New Jersey Department of Education, Aug. 3, 2015.
- 12 Patrick O'Donnell, "Ohio Is the 'Wild, Wild West' of Charter Schools, Says National Group Promoting Charter Standards," *The Plain Dealer*, July 28, 2014, http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2014/07/ohio_is_the_wild_wild_west_of.html.
- 13 Email from DawnLynne Kacer, executive director, Charter Schools Office, School District of Philadelphia, Oct. 7, 2015.
- 14 Education Commission of the States, Charter Schools Database, accessed Aug. 20, 2015, http://www.ecs.org/html/educationIssues/CharterSchools/CHDB_intro.asp.
- 15 Teacher certification in various states generally involves tests, coursework, and fieldwork.
- 16 Caryl Cohen, Nicole Daniel, and David Frank, "Teacher Certification 101," New York City Charter School Center, April 23, 2014, slide 23, <http://www.nyccharterschools.org/sites/default/files/resources/Teacher%20Certification%20101%20-%20Spring%202014.pdf>.
- 17 National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, "Measuring Up."
- 18 Having fewer openings and closings can be the result of different factors. For instance, experts note, fewer closings in a particular period could mean that charter authorizers were reluctant to close schools once they were open; that they had closed low-performing schools in previous years; or that they had done an effective job of screening out problematic school operators in the first place.
- 19 Data compiled by the Center for Education Reform lists poor academic performance as one of the causes of two of 37 charter closings in Minnesota from 1998 to 2011, https://www.edreform.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/CER_FINALClosedSchools2011-1.pdf. Conclusion also based on interview by Gary Ritter with Joe Nathan, senior fellow, Center for School Change in St. Paul, MN.
- 20 Data compiled by the Center for Education Reform lists poor academic performance as the cause of 10 of 13 charter closings in New York from 2002 to 2011, https://www.edreform.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/CER_FINALClosedSchools2011-1.pdf. Conclusion also based on interview by Gary Ritter with James Merriman, chief executive officer of the New York City Charter School Center.
- 21 List of cybercharters available from the Pennsylvania Department of Education at http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/charter_schools/7356.
- 22 National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, *The Health of the Public Charter School Movement: A State-by-State Analysis* (October 2014), <http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/health-of-the-movement-2014.pdf>.

- 23 For several reasons, the totals of how many states permit virtual charter schools vary from one source to another. Some states have laws allowing virtual schools but have not let any of them open. Others do not mention cybercharters in their regulations but permit them to exist. And the landscape keeps changing. The numbers used here are based on our reading of the data presented by several sources: Joe Nathan, *Summary of State Virtual Charter Public School Funding Policies*, Center for School Change (October 2013); Education Commission of the States, Charter Schools Database; and National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, "Measuring Up."
- 24 Eleanor Chute and Mary Niederberger, "Pennsylvania Public Schools Get Their Report Cards," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Nov. 6, 2014, <http://www.post-gazette.com/news/education/2014/11/06/State-releases-school-performance-profiles/stories/201411060308>.
- 25 For more on the funding of charter schools, see The Pew Charitable Trusts, *A School Funding Formula for Philadelphia: Lessons From Urban Districts Across the United States* (January 2015), <http://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/Assets/2015/01/PhiladelphiaSchoolFundingReportJanuary2015.pdf>.

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