

## Alaska

**Year Charter Law Enacted:** 1995

**Background:** The Alaska Legislature passed the Charter School Act in 1995. Governor Knowles signed the bill into law. House Bill 101 amended the existing Alaska statute for charter schools and was signed into law July 1, 2001. The major changes of the amendment are: length of charter was changed to a maximum of ten (10) years, total number of allowable charter schools to operate within the state set at 60, and the geographical restrictions on number of total schools per region or district was dropped.

Both the local school board and the State Board of Education must approve a charter school application before the school can begin operation. If a local school board denies an application, there is no appeal to a higher authority.

**Amendment(s):** For a full-text version of the most recent amendment, see the [Alaska State Legislature](#).

**Authorizers:** local school boards, with final approval from the State Board of Education

**Length of charter:** maximum 10 years

**Caps on number of schools:** October 2002 Amendment increased the cap from 30 to 60 total schools in operation

**Funding:** Operational funding is equivalent to "the amount generated by the students enrolled minus a portion for administrative costs." The local school board is responsible for setting the charter school's budget based on student enrollment.

*October 1, 2009*

President Obama has called upon Congress to increase funding for the charter school programs by \$52 million dollars this year, bringing total funding for the charter school programs to \$268 million. As Congress works to finish its appropriations bills, it is critical that charter advocates voice their support for increased funding, helping the President's request become law.

The federal public charter schools programs provide support at key points in the development of charter schools: helping cover the extraordinary costs of launching successful charters; disseminating their successful innovations to other public schools; and providing financial incentives to state governments and private lenders that help enable schools to build and renovate facilities.

*November 9, 2009*

The passage of the historic American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 enabled two competitive grant programs aimed at drastically improving public education in America.

Recently, the U.S. Department of Education released draft priorities and guidelines for the Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) grant competition. On behalf of over 4,900 public charter schools across the country educating over 1.5 million children, the Alliance strongly supports the U.S. Department of Education's efforts to use the i3 fund to scale significant education reforms and find the next generation of notable educational innovations. The current draft is a commendable start, but we do believe it can be improved further.

Download our comments below to read the suggestions Alliance experts offer in the spirit of positive collaboration.

In a speech earlier this year to the US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, President Obama explicitly called on states to "... reform their charter rules, and lift caps on the number of allowable charter schools, wherever such caps are in place."

### ***Eligibility for Facilities Incentive Grants***

To be eligible to receive a grant, a state must establish or enhance, and administer, a per-pupil facilities aid programs for charter schools in the state. This per-pupil facilities aid program must be specified in state law and must provide annual per-pupil financing for charter school facilities.

### **State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grant Program**

Started in 2001, this program awards matching funds to states that offer per-pupil financial assistance to public charter schools to obtain facilities. The program is intended to encourage states to develop and expand per-pupil facilities aid programs and to share the costs associated with charter schools facilities funding.