

## The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools' 8<sup>th</sup> Annual State Charter School Laws Rankings Report

“A state’s charter school law has a major impact on the quality of its charter school movement. A strong law that promotes flexibility, accountability, and equity leads to schools that can have a tangible, positive impact on the lives of students. We are pleased to see states using our model law as a benchmark of success when crafting their own laws – as well as learning from the top states on our rankings about what best practices to implement.”

Nina Rees, President & CEO  
National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

### About the Annual State Charter School Laws Rankings Report

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*Measuring Up to the Model: A Ranking of State Charter Public School Laws* ranks the charter school laws in 43 states and the District of Columbia. Each law receives a score based on 21 essential metrics. These include metrics related to:

- Flexibility
- Accountability
- Equity

This year’s rankings are the first that measure each state’s charter school law against the National Alliance’s revised model charter school law, [A New Model Law for Supporting the Growth of High-Quality Charter Public Schools: Second Edition](#), and account for these key updates:

- **Providing more equitable support to charter school students.**  
Examples: Strengthening facilities provisions and requiring state departments of education to create an annual funding transparency report.
- **Increased attention on flexibility for charter schools.**  
Examples: Implementing an expedited charter contract renewal process for high-performing charter schools and requiring that authorizers not request duplicative data submission from their schools.
- **Strengthening accountability for charter schools and their authorizers.**  
Examples: Holding full-time virtual charter schools more accountable, better ensuring that chronically low-performing charter schools are closed, and strengthening accountability requirements for educational service providers that partner with charter schools.

## Key Findings

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- **Indiana** has the nation's strongest charter school law for the second year in a row.
- **Washington** became the newest addition to the rankings in 2017, having passed legislation that re-established its charter school law.
- The **Top 10** includes a mixture of states with more mature movements (**Indiana** at No. 1, **Minnesota** at No. 3, **Colorado** at No. 5, **New York** at No. 6, **Florida** at No. 8, and **Louisiana** at No. 9) and states with newer movements (**Alabama** at No. 2, **Washington** at No. 4, **Maine** at No. 7, and **Mississippi** at No. 10). This variety in the Top 10 speaks to the fact that many states continue to strengthen their laws based on what's working (and what's not working) and that states newer to the movement rely heavily on those lessons learned so they don't repeat the mistakes of the states that came before them.
- **Maryland** has the nation's weakest charter school law, ranking No. 44 (out of 44). While Maryland's current law does not cap charter school growth, it allows only local school district authorizers and provides little autonomy, insufficient accountability, and inequitable funding to charter schools. Rounding out the bottom five states are **Wyoming** (No. 40), **Iowa** (No. 41), **Alaska** (No. 42), and **Kansas** (No. 43).

## About the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

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The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools is the leading national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the public charter school movement. Our mission is to lead public education to unprecedented levels of academic achievement by fostering a strong charter sector.

For more information, please visit [www.publiccharters.org](http://www.publiccharters.org).