



Indiana Department of Education 2019 Legislative Priority

Ensure charter school equity through family transparency by holding authorizers accountable for academic and fiscal responsibilities

To sustain a robust charter school model, it is vital to hold charter school authorizers equally accountable by mirroring a process followed by traditional public schools. Doing so will increase transparency for parents and teachers regarding the quality of both a charter school and its authorizer, while promoting sound fiscal responsibility.

The change being sought would require the Indiana Department of Education to issue charter school authorizer-level grades based on the school grades of the charters in their portfolio. The authorizer's performance would then be used to determine future ability to authorize or renew charters.

Quick Facts

- ❑ Indiana's commitment to quality charter school programing must extend beyond the award of Federal funds and fall upon the authorizer to make responsible, fiscal, and academic charter school approvals.
- ❑ Currently, there is no formal system for evaluating authorizers, nor is there a system for communicating to parents the quality of the authorizer in an easily understood format, such as an A-F grade.
- ❑ In October 2017, Indiana received a \$60 million Charter School Program Quality Grant to increase the number of high quality charter schools. Eight Indiana charter schools were awarded a grant in Cohort One, and 16 charter schools were awarded a grant in Cohort Two.
- ❑ Responsible use of tax dollars to fund charter schools must shift the premise from "choice for choice's sake" to "quality choice for student's sake."
- ❑ Since 2010, 13 charter schools have closed with an outstanding loan balance of \$6,956,059. These dollars will not be repaid to the State.
- ❑ In total, 40 charter schools have closed since 2010.
- ❑ 88 charter schools have been established in Indiana since 2010.
- ❑ Of the 85 charter schools operated by eight authorizers, 23 received a D or F State letter grade for 2018 or 27% compared to 14% of traditional public schools.
- ❑ Of the 85 charter schools operated by eight authorizers, 38 received a D or F Federal letter grade for 2018 or 44% compared to 17% of traditional public schools.