

# How to Start a Charter School in Minnesota

Getting Started	Locate an Authorizer	Complete Application with Authorizing Organization	Submission to Minnesota Department of Education/Timeline	Charter School Contract/Charter Number	Federal Charter School Program Grant	Readiness to Open
<p>It is important for charter school developers to review and have a full understanding of <a href="#">Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 124E</a>, Charter Schools; specifically Minnesota Statutes, section 124E. 06, Formation of a School.</p>	<p>Before a Minnesota charter school may be formed, the charter school developer must find a State approved authorizer whose mission aligns with the proposed school's mission. <a href="#">A list of State approved authorizers may be found on Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) website.</a></p>	<p>Once charter school developers have located a potential authorizer, their next step is to complete the authorizer's new charter school application process being cognizant of timelines. Each authorizer has its own set of timelines and expectations for submissions of proposed charter schools, so charter school developers should contact authorizers directly for that information.</p>	<p>Once an authorizer has approved a new charter school's application, the authorizer submits a new school affidavit to MDE.</p> <p>An authorizer must file an affidavit at least 14 months before July 1 of the year the new charter school plans to serve students.</p>	<p>Once the affidavit is approved, an authorizer must execute a statutorily compliant contract with the school within 45 business days and send the contract to MDE within 10 business days of signing/execution.</p> <p>If the executed contract is not statutorily compliant, the authorizer will need to address the deficiencies. Once the authorizer's contract is verified to be statutorily compliant, it will be accepted by MDE. The charter school will then be issued a charter number.</p>	<p>A charter school is eligible to apply for a Federal Charter School Program Grant once the affidavit is approved.</p> <p>There are typically two grant competitions held each year. MDE staff will communicate directly with eligible schools regarding the available round opportunities. <a href="#">More information is available on the website.</a> These grants provide funds for up to one planning year and two years of implementation. Most new charter schools find this source of revenue to be very valuable.</p>	<p>The authorizer will determine the school's readiness to open based on the authorizer standards. In the event the school does not meet the authorizer's ready to open standards, the authorizer may postpone the school's opening.</p> <p>Charter school leaders are expected to participate in MDE training in the months prior to serving students. School leaders will receive communication from MDE and their authorizer regarding these training sessions.</p>

# Additional Resources

- Minnesota Charter School Law, [Minnesota Chapter 124E](#), may be found on the Office of the Revisor of Statutes' website.
- A list of approved [charter school authorizers](#) and their contact information may be found on MDE's website. Additional information pertaining to [authorizer performance](#) may be found on MDE's website.
- Additional information pertaining to the [Federal Charter School Program Grant](#) may be found on MDE's website.
- Additional information pertaining to Minnesota charter schools may be found on the [Charter Center](#) page of MDE's website.
- When developing the charter school budget for the authorizer application, the [Interactive Projection Models](#) within Data and Analytics (Home > Data Center > Data Reports and Analytics > School Finance Spreadsheets > Charter Schools: Category "Charter Schools", Subcategory "Interactive Projection Models") may be a helpful tool.
- Additional information and the [lease aid application](#) for operational charter schools to request lease aid may be found on MDE's [School Finance Division](#) website.
- An additional resource that is not related to MDE resources, but may be helpful for new charter school developers, is the [Minnesota Association of Charter Schools](#) (MACS).