

POLICY 8: DEFAULT CLOSURE

State	Default Closure Score
Alabama	6
Florida	6
Indiana	6
Mississippi	6
Missouri	4
Nevada	6
Ohio	6
Oklahoma	6
South Carolina	6
Tennessee	6
Texas	6
FULL CREDIT:	10 STATES
PARTIAL CREDIT:	1 STATES
TOTAL:	11 STATES

What:

NACSA supports policy requiring the state to establish a threshold of minimally acceptable academic performance for charter schools. Schools performing below this threshold at the time of renewal, or that remain below this level for a certain period of time, face closure as the default—or expected—consequence. In some situations, the authorizer or state may decide to keep a school open based on special circumstances, such as an alternative school serving a specific high-risk population, known as alternative education campuses (AECs).⁹ A default closure mechanism should allow these exceptions. If a school falls below the minimally acceptable performance threshold, the expectation is that the school will be closed, but performance above that “floor” does not guarantee a right to stay open. A default closure policy should not be used to prevent authorizers from establishing and enforcing higher academic performance standards for the schools they oversee.

Why:

Default closure provisions address the “worst-of-the-worst” schools. Barring special circumstances, it should be accepted and expected that charter schools that fail to meet a minimal threshold of performance will be closed. Schools can still be subject to closure for failure to meet any higher expectations established by authorizers and agreed to in their charter contracts, but at a minimum, closure is expected when schools fall below a state’s default closure threshold.

This policy receives double weight in NACSA’s rubric because it can safeguard other elements of authorizer practice. In essence, there can be no ultimate charter school accountability if state law allows the worst-of-the-worst schools to continue operating.

Rubric:

6/6: The default consequence under state law provides that charter schools that fail to meet statutorily specified and enforceable performance standards for a defined period, or at the time of renewal, will lose their charter unless there are extenuating circumstances.

4/6: The default consequence under state law provides that charter schools that fail to meet unspecified standards for a defined period, or at the time of renewal, will lose their charter unless there are extenuating circumstances.

2/6: Charter schools with a renewal term of 10 or more years and that fail to meet performance standards will be closed at the time of renewal.

0/3: The default consequence under state law provides that schools will retain their charters despite failing to meet minimum academic standards.