

MASSACHUSETTS

RANK 24, SCORE 15/33



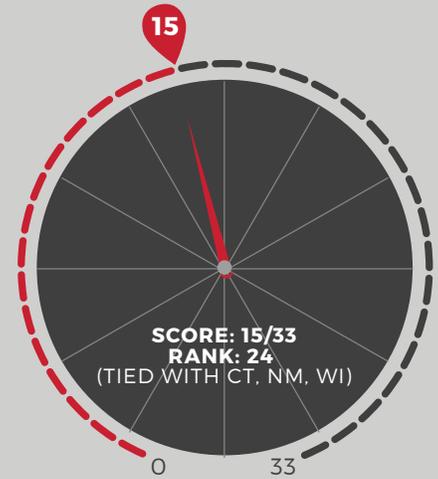
STATE WITH SOME CHARTERS (25-99)
80 CHARTER SCHOOLS
 BELOW AVERAGE % OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (0-4%)



STATE WITH FEW AUTHORIZERS
1 AUTHORIZER
100% OF SCHOOLS AUTHORIZED BY THE STATE BOARD OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



YEAR LAW ESTABLISHED: **1993**



YEARLY COMPARISON

	1. Who Authorizes (6 points)	2. Standards (3 points)	3. Evaluations (3 points)	4. Sanctions (3 points)	5. Reports (3 points)	6. PMR (3 points)	7. Renewals (6 points)	8. Default Closure (6 points)	Total (33 points)
2016	4	0	0	0	2	3	6	0	15/33
2015	4	0	0	0	2	3	6	0	15/33

STRONG SECTOR SHOULD MAKE ROOM TO GROW

Massachusetts has one of the highest-performing charter sectors in the country, but its charter law severely restricts future charter school growth and expansion. Policies must be changed to allow new, high-quality schools to grow where they are needed.

NACSA RECOMMENDS

- **Remove or significantly reform the charter school cap system.** Though a 2016 ballot initiative to allow new charter school growth was unsuccessful, policymakers should revisit the charter cap issue next session.
- **Require all charter school annual reports to be published in one location on a consolidated website, such as the Department of Education's charter school website.** Currently, these reports are available on individual school websites and also available to the public by request to the Department of Education, but they are not easily accessible in a single, consolidated location. This minor change would make it easier to access performance information for every charter school and would qualify for full points.
- **Codify the expectation that the authorizer follows professional standards for authorizing.** In practice, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education uses practices consistent with much of NACSA's *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*. However, nothing in state policy ensures it will continue to do so in perpetuity.

THE SCORE

POLICY	POINTS	DETAILS & CONTEXT
AUTHORIZER QUALITY		
Who Authorizes	4/6	SEA only. The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is the only authorizer. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides the necessary professional staff. Massachusetts classifies two different types of charter schools (Commonwealth charters and Horace Mann charters) that have different approval requirements. The state has various charter school caps relating to the total number of each type of charter school in the state, the performance level of the home district, and the home district population size. There is also a statutory limit on the amount of charter school tuition funds that can be transferred to charter schools from any one district. There are some exemptions to these restrictions for charter schools in the lowest-performing districts, but they are still subject to a statutory limit on the amount of funds they can receive from any one district, which under current law will reach 18% in fiscal year 2017.
Authorizer Standards	0/3	State law does not adopt, provide, or endorse quality standards for authorizers. The sole authorizer voluntarily engages in many practices that are consistent with best practices in charter school authorizing.
Authorizer Evaluations	0/3	State law does not require or provide for the evaluation of authorizers based on standards for quality authorizing.
Authorizer Sanctions	0/3	State law does not provide for authorizer sanctions that restrict the granting of new charters by the authorizer, remove schools from the authorizer's portfolio, or remove authorizing authority.
SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY		
Reports on Performance	2/3	State law requires each charter school to submit an annual report on its performance. These reports are made available to the public on the schools' individual websites and can be requested through the Department of Education, but they are not required to be accessible to the public in a single, consolidated location.
Performance Management and Replication	3/3	State regulations require a charter contract and a separate accountability plan, which is structurally the same as performance frameworks. Regulations allow multiple campuses under a single charter and provide successful school operators exclusive access to specified jurisdictions. ¹
Renewal Standard	6/6	State law allows "progress made in student achievement" to be sufficient for a charter to be renewed. However, state regulations and Department guidance provide further renewal requirements. In order to grant renewal, BESE must find affirmative evidence of academic success, linked to a school's performance goals. By using the regulatory process to, in essence, define "progress" as fulfilling charter school goals, Massachusetts is able to create a strong renewal standard.
Default Closure	0/6	State law does not provide for default closure for failure to meet minimum academic standards.

TOTAL POINTS: 15/33, RANK 24 (TIED WITH CT, NM, WI)

¹ Those wishing to seek proven provider status submit additional information to the Commissioner at the time they submit their initial or renewal charter application. Approved proven providers can then submit applications to school districts performing in the lowest 10% statewide and in which the 9% net school spending is or would be exceeded. Proven providers are the only applicants that can apply to operate charter schools in these jurisdictions.