

FundEd: Charters

A Detailed Look at Colorado's Charter Funding Policies



Colorado

Funding Basics

Authorizer

Charter funding policies and reporting practices within each state may vary depending on the entity that authorized the charter school. Charter schools in Colorado may be authorized by local school districts or the State Charter School Institute.

Funding Formula

Funding for charter schools in Colorado is calculated based on local school district revenue.

Charter schools authorized by local school districts receive from those districts the per student revenue for their authorizing district, including both state funding and the districts' expected local contribution. They also receive a share of program-specific allocations on a per student basis, including one for English-language learners. Charter schools authorized by the state authorizer are funded based on the characteristics of all state-authorized charter schools as a whole.

Funding Distribution

Funding Distribution

Some charter schools in Colorado receive all funding directly from the state, while others receive all funding through local school districts.

Charter schools authorized by the state receive all funding directly from the statewide charter school authorizer. Meanwhile, charter schools authorized by a local school district receive funding through the local school district.

Withholdings

Charter schools in Colorado will have a share of their funding withheld, with the maximum set by state law.

The statewide charter school authorizer may withhold up to 3% of funding from the schools they authorize to cover the cost of operation. The Colorado Department of Education may further withhold 1% from these schools. Any funding that is unused by the authorizer is returned to the charter. Local school districts that authorize charter schools may withhold up to 5% of charter funding for administrative services.

Local Taxes

Some charter schools in Colorado receive a share of local tax revenue, while other charter schools receive state funding which may be meant to replace local funding.

Charter schools authorized by local school districts receive the per pupil revenue for their authorizing district, including both state funding and the portion that local school districts would be expected to raise. Charter schools authorized by the state receive additional state funding in that the state provides a charter school's full allocation, including the funding that districts would have been expected to raise.

Colorado state law also directs local school districts to adopt a plan to distribute to charter schools a share of local revenue raised above the expected local contribution. The state also provides an annual appropriation for state-authorized districts located in districts that raise funding above the expected local contribution.

Data and Reporting

Legal Status

Charter schools in Colorado are part of local education agencies.

Student Count

Charter school students in Colorado are counted as students of the school district in which the charter school is located for state reporting purposes.

Funding

State funding for charter schools in Colorado is reported as part of state funding for the school district where the charter school is located.

For charter schools authorized by local school districts, state funding is reported as part of funding for that district. For charter schools authorized by the State Charter School Institute, state funding is reported as part of funding for the institute.

Expenditures

Charter school expenditures in Colorado are reported as part of expenditures of the school district where the charter school is located.

Charter schools in Colorado report expenditures to the entity through which they are authorized, which may be a local school district or the Colorado Charter School Institute.

For a complete list of primary sources, please see the appropriate state page at charters.funded.edbuild.org

