
Summary of Recommendations

Strengthen Charter School Financial Management (p. 34)

To enhance charter school administrators' and board members' capacity to manage school finances, MDE should:

- Implement a two-stage approval process that requires new charter schools to demonstrate that they have skilled personnel and financial systems in place before enrolling students;
- Modify the model charter school contract to include more detailed requirements regarding budgeting, financial reporting, and training for school administrators and board members;
- Enhance training offered to charter school board members to better meet the intent of the law; and
- To the extent possible, expand quarterly enrollment monitoring to all charter schools.

Improve Oversight (p. 35)

To improve oversight of charter school financial management:

- MDE should initiate a process to more clearly define the scope and nature of the sponsor's role regarding charter school financial management and recommend to the Legislature any needed changes to charter school law.
- The Legislature should consider amending charter school law to state that charter school contracts may be terminated for repeated failure to meet deadlines for submitting financial data and financial audit reports.
- The Legislature should consider amending charter school law to remove the requirement that teachers constitute a majority of charter school board members.

Clarify Lease Aid Policy (p. 46)

The Legislature should review and clarify, as needed, the policy on use of state funds to buy charter school buildings.