



Maryland Public Charter Schools Workgroup

Division of Student Support and Federal Programs

September 23, 2024

Maryland Public Charter Schools

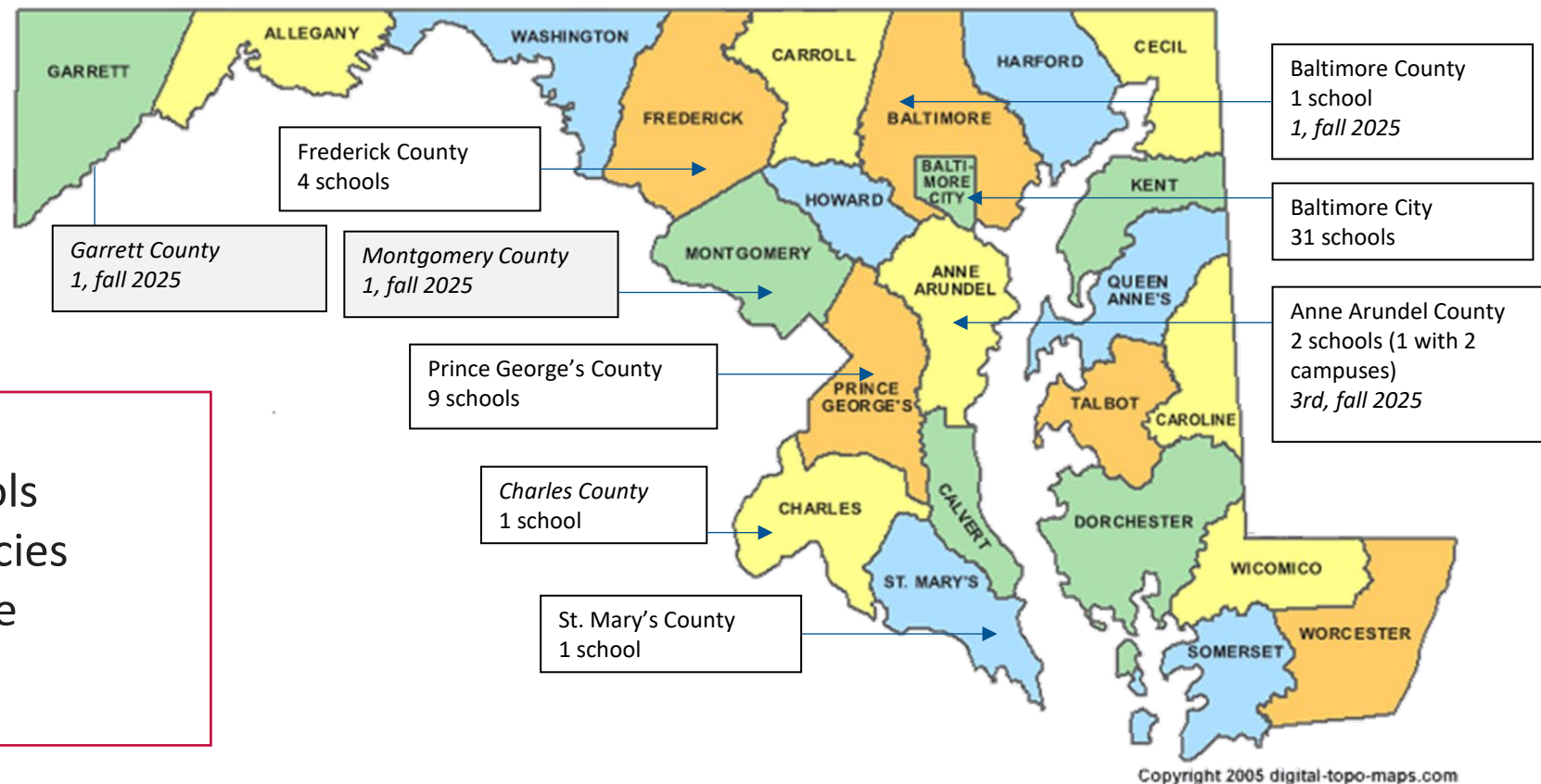
Workgroup

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Maryland Public Charter Schools Overview

- Number and location of public charter schools, 2024-2025
- Key Provisions of Maryland Law
- Roles of Public Charter Schools
- Areas of Law and Operations

Overview of Maryland Charter School Sector



2024-2025

- 49 Public Charter Schools
- 7 Local Education Agencies
- 4 Schools in the pipeline
- 24,800 Students

Key Provisions of Maryland Charter Law

Funding

Per pupil funding must be commensurate with the amount of funding disbursed to all public schools.

§ 9-109

Charter school applicants must be able to project sustainability on the per pupil budget (at capacity).

Autonomy

Key areas of increased autonomy are curriculum, governance, financial management, and selection of staff. Waivers are required from state and local regulations.

§ § 9-102(6); 9-104; 9-106(b)

LEA leaders and charter schools need to collaborate to balance autonomy and accountability.

Enrollment

Open Enrollment and admission by lottery.

§ § 9-102(3); 9-102.1,2,3

Weighted lotteries are allowed in some circumstances, subject to approval of the LEA authorizer. Some preferences, e.g. siblings, are allowed.

Key Provisions of Maryland Charter Law, continued

Authorizing

Local School Boards are the authorizers of public charter schools. The State Board hears appeals.

§ § 9-103; 9-104

Authorizing timelines vary. Applicant planning must be flexible.

Accountability

Public Charter Schools participate in the State accountability system.

§ 9-102(11)

Charter Schools take all state tests. In addition, charter schools should have interim measures to monitor progress.

Employees

Public Charter School staff are employees of the Local School System and are represented by the local bargaining units.

§ § 9-105; 9-108

Charter Schools must understand how to recruit and meet state and local requirements for hiring.

What are some roles of Charter Schools?

- Charter Schools are a part of the LEA.
- New models are added to the public school landscape
 - Montessori, Language Immersion, STEM, Environmental Education
- Community based organizations that operate charter schools consider themselves stakeholders in public education.
- Conversion charter schools serve students and families in the immediate area of the school via enrollment waivers.

Charter School Law - Areas of the Law for Review

Topic	Notes
Application § 9-103; § 9-104	Several State Board rulings address timelines, content, rubrics, decisions
Renewal and Revocation § 9-102.3(a)(2); § 9-103(c)(2); § 9-104.1(c)	The State Board has heard appeals of school closure. Timelines of appeals, responses, and deliberation of the State Board make appeals of school closure lengthy.
Lottery and Weighted Lottery § 9-102(3); § 9-102.1 § 9-102.2, § 9-102.3	A lottery is part of the definition of a charter school. The law enables weights to be proposed to provide slightly improved chances for students in certain groups. Geographic preferences for all charter and conversion charters have presented some operational challenges.

Charter School Law - Areas of the Law for Review, continued

Topic	
Commensurate Funding § 9-109	State Board established guidance in 2005. The State Board guidance allowed for local variance. Questions include compatibility of original guidance and provisions of the Blueprint.
Waivers § 9-102(11); § 9-104; § 9-104.1; § 9-106	Does charter directly apply to the State Board or through the LEA?
Eligible Charter School Provisions § 9-104.1	State Board defined 'quality charter school' for this provision. The federal definition is more rigorous. The exemptions described are generally already in place.