

So, You Want to Start a Public School Academy (PSA) (also known as a Charter School) in Michigan?

as of Oct. 14, 2024



[Charter Public Schools \(michigan.gov\)](https://michigan.gov)



First, develop a school concept:

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Is your development team. . .

- ☐ committed to helping students achieve?
- ☐ excited about innovative approaches to learning?
- ☐ passionate about giving families more choice in how their students are served?



Where PSA Expectations Meet Concept. . .

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Is your development team. . .

- ☐ knowledgeable about and willing to comply with the full state revised school code?
- ☐ willing to admit all students who apply without exception?
- ☐ willing to hold a lottery to decide which students get it if you have more applicants than space?



How to achieve the concept. . .

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Is your development team. . .

- ☐ ready to recruit and hire Highly Qualified teachers (as defined by ESSA)?
- ☐ prepared to accept public and state accountability responsibility for students to achieve state proficiency standards and improve academics?



Concept check continued . . .

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Is your development team. . .

- ☐ prepared to fully serve students with special needs?
- ☐ prepared to find and use a building that meets full state revised school code requirements and can earn a current Certificate of Occupancy?
(Many older school facilities do not)



If all your answers are “YES”. . .

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Welcome to the process of starting
a Public School Academy (charter school)!

As you work through this process,
barriers and challenges may be identified.



Next Step: What is a Public School Academy?

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In Michigan, a Public School Academy (commonly known as a charter school)...

- ❑ is organized under the State Revised School Code
 - ✓ as a Public School Academy [Part 6A, [MCL 380.501](#)]
 - ✓ As an Urban High School [Part 6C, [MCL 380.521](#)] (Urban High Schools can include K-8 feeder schools as well)
 - ✓ As a School of Excellence [Part 6E, [MCL 380.551](#)]
 - ✓ As a Strict Discipline Academy to serve suspended, expelled, or adjudicated youth [[MCL 380.1311b](#)]



What IS a Michigan Public School Academy?

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A Public School Academy...

- ☐ obtains a “charter” to operate from an authorizing body, which can be:
 - ✓ a state public university anywhere in the state,
 - ✓ the community college for its location,
 - ✓ the Intermediate School District for its location, or
 - ✓ the Local School District for its location.
- ☐ serves any combination of Grades Pre-K through 12 as specified in the charter contract.



What IS a Michigan Public School Academy? (Cont.)

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A Public School Academy...

- ❑ is a Michigan Non-Profit Corporation governed by an autonomous school board appointed by the authorizer and accountable under oath to act in the best interests of the children it serves.
- ❑ is required to conduct its business at open, public meetings with agendas posted in advance.



How are Public School Academies funded?

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A Public-School Academy...

- ☐ receives state aid funding of \$9608 per student attending (as of the 2024-25 school year).
- ☐ Cyber Schools or online schools receive \$9150 per student attending (as of the 2024-25 school year).
- ☐ operational funds (state aid) pay for everything needed, including facility costs.
- ☐ may qualify for additional Title I, II, III, V, and VI federal funding if the PSA serves “at-risk” students

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What IS a Michigan Public School Academy? (Cont.)

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A Public School Academy...


- ☐ may hire a management company (Education Service Provider) to operate all or any part of the school.
- ☐ has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that any management services it uses are purchased at “fair market value” and to ensure there are no conflicts of interest



NEXT STEPS

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What steps are required to get started with the process of opening a Public School Academy?



Step 1: Prepare information for application to an authorizer

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Many authorizers use a common “Phase One” application to review applicants and select those they view as ready to move to a more intensive “Phase Two” review process.

A sample Phase One application (and many other useful resources) are available at the [Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers](#) (MCCSA) webpage in the ‘Best Practices’ section



Information to Compile for Application

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- ☐ Documented evidence of need:
 - ✓ Community Analysis
 - ✓ Parent profile and preferences
- ☐ An academic vision:
 - ✓ Curriculum and educational goals
 - ✓ Instructional design decisions
- ☐ A data and evaluation design:
 - ✓ What information will tell the board whether their goals are being met?
 - ✓ How will it be collected? Reported?



More Information to Compile for Application

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- ❑ A business plan:
 - ✓ Facility plan (including obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy for the planned location and leasing costs)
 - ✓ Staffing plan (including recruitment and professional development costs)
 - ✓ Operational and Management Plan
 - ✓ Equipment and Furnishings plan
 - ✓ Budget (balanced with expected revenues)



Information to Compile for Application (Cont.)

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☐ Additional Information:

- ✓ Proposed governance structure of the school
- ✓ Plan for enrollment/admission in alignment with state law
- ✓ Proposed Calendar/Day Schedule



Step 2: Engage with an Authorizer

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- ❑ Approach an eligible authorizer that aligns with the vision of the development team.
- ❑ Access statewide authorizer websites (or the [MCCSA website](#)) to see if any are accepting new applications while reviewing deadlines and evaluation processes.



How long will it take?

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Experienced charter developers suggest that the planning and development process to successfully compete for a charter takes at least 12 to 18 months.



Help is Available

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The charter school program in Michigan has been evolving since 1994. As such, there are several experienced coaches and consultants available to assist you in your effort. MDE's Public School Academies unit has experienced charter consultants on staff who can help you navigate through the processes. You can call us at (517) 241-6960 or email us at MDEPSAGrant@michigan.gov



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WISHES
FOR YOUR
SUCCESS!**

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KIDS
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