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## **30 Years In the Making: New Jersey Modernizes Charter School Laws**

### **Comprehensive Charter School Reforms Increase Transparency, Ban For-Profit and Virtual Schools, and Authorize 10-Year Renewals For High Performing Schools**

**HAMILTON, NJ – January 16, 2026** – Today, Governor Murphy signed two charter school reform bills, [A5935 / S4716](#) and [A5936 / S4713](#), that include comprehensive changes to the Charter School Program Act of 1995. This legislation will strengthen transparency and accountability, while enacting important policy updates that benefit New Jersey’s public charter schools, including 10-year renewal periods for high performing schools and the ability for charter schools to consolidate and share essential services.

“For 30 years, public charter schools have been changing lives for countless students and families. It has been heartening to see that all stakeholders in this legislative process recognized the incredible value that public charter schools provide in New Jersey’s public education system,” **said Harry Lee, President and CEO of the New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association (NJPCSA)**. “These bills are important because they appreciate the transformational role that charter schools play in our public education system and strike the right balance. They increase transparency and accountability while preserving key charter autonomies including the ability for high performing schools to earn 10-year renewals. We sincerely thank Senate Education Chair Vin Gopal for his strong and thoughtful leadership to get these bills across the finish line with near unanimous, bipartisan support.”

New Jersey’s 84 public charter schools currently serve 64,000 students across the Garden State. A vast majority of public charter school students are students of color and 76% of charter school students come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Over the last 30 years, charter schools have grown to serve one in five students in New Jersey’s 31 former Abbott districts, communities that have been traditionally underserved. [Black, Latino and economically disadvantaged charter students are making outsized gains in both reading and math](#) and excellent public charter schools are providing life-changing opportunities for students and families throughout the State.

The charter school reform bills include the following provisions to increase transparency and to align with national best practices:

- Creation of charter school user-friendly budgets to align with district requirements;
- Requirement to publicly notice and submit charter school budgets and school leader, school business administrator, and charter management organization contracts;
- Additional qualification, residency and training requirements for charter school board of trustees

members;

- Submission of compensation studies for the charter school leaders;
- Residency requirements for high school sports teams;
- Ban on future for-profit charter operators and virtual charter schools;
- Development of an NJDOE website of extensive charter school information including new school applications, renewal applications and charter school budgets;
- 10-year renewals for high performing charter schools; and
- Ability for charter schools to consolidate within contiguous school districts

“Public charter schools are already the most accountable public schools in the State and our school leaders and boards welcome these comprehensive updates to the charter law to ensure all schools are following best practices when it comes to finance and operations,” said **Danielle West-August, CEO at Queen City Academy Charter School and Board Chair of NJPCSA**. “As a charter school educator and school leader for the last 15 years, implementing these important reforms will allow us to focus our attention back on what we have always done, which is deliver a top notch education to students and families throughout the Garden State.”

#### **About the New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association**

The New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association (NJPCSA) is the non-profit membership association that represents the state’s charter school community and, by extension, charter school students and their parents. There are currently 84 charter schools in New Jersey serving 64,000 students. We are committed to advancing quality public education for New Jersey’s children through the cultivation of excellent public charter schools. The Association seeks to influence legislative and policy environments, leverage collective advocacy, and provide resources to support our members in developing and operating high quality, public charter schools.