

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 5935

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 24, 2025

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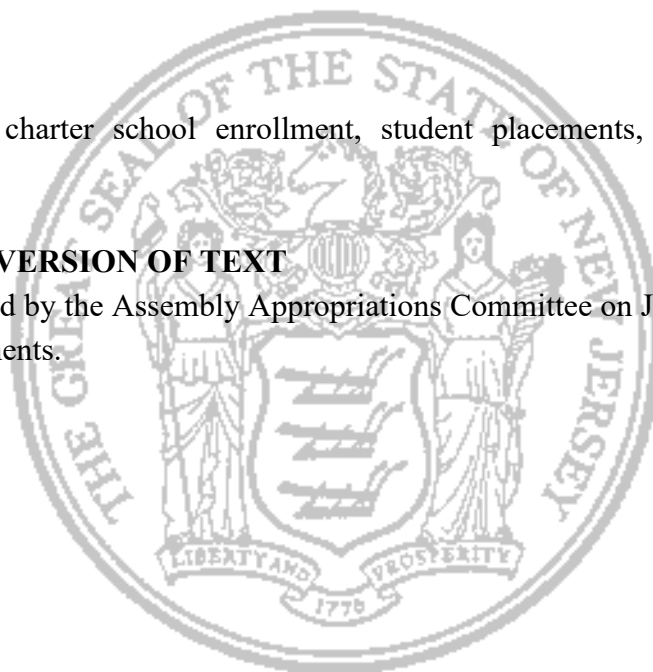
**Assemblymen Verrelli, Rodriguez, Danielsen, Assemblywoman Donlon,
Senators Turner, McKnight and Diegnan**

SYNOPSIS

Concerns charter school enrollment, student placements, reporting, and athletics.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Appropriations Committee on January 8, 2026, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/12/2026)

1 AN ACT concerning charter schools, amending and supplementing
2 P.L.1995, c.426, and supplementing P.L.1986, c.160 (18A:36-
3 19a).

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 ¹1. (New section) Unless the context clearly indicates otherwise,
9 the provisions of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-1 et seq.) shall not
10 be construed as applying to renaissance school projects approved
11 pursuant to the provisions of the “Urban Hope Act,” P.L.2011,
12 c.176 (C.18A:36C-1 et seq.).¹

13
14 ¹**[1.] 2.**¹ Section 7 of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-7) is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 7. ¹**[a.]**¹ A charter school shall be open to all students on a
17 space available basis and shall not discriminate in its admission
18 policies or practices on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability,
19 measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a
20 disability, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis
21 that would be illegal if used by a school district; however, a charter
22 school may limit admission to a particular grade level or to areas of
23 concentration of the school, such as mathematics, science, or the
24 arts. **[A]** Except as otherwise permitted pursuant to section 8 of
25 P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8), a charter school **[may]** shall not
26 establish **[reasonable]** criteria to evaluate prospective students
27 **[which shall be outlined in the school's charter]** and shall not
28 impose qualifications for enrollment on a student selected through a
29 random selection process established pursuant to section 8 of
30 P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8). Nothing in this subsection shall be
31 construed to prohibit use of a weighted admission lottery in
32 furtherance of a charter school seeking the enrollment of a cross
33 section of the community’s school age population pursuant to
34 subsection e. of section 8 of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8).

35 ¹**[b.]** A charter school shall make its student application available
36 in the seven most common non-English languages spoken by
37 individuals with limited-English proficiency in the school district in
38 which the charter school is located, based on United States Census
39 Bureau American Community Survey data.¹

40 (cf: P.L.2017, c.131, s.26)

41
42 ¹**[2.] 3.**¹ Section 8 of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8) is
43 amended to read as follows:

44 8. a. Preference for enrollment in a charter school shall be
45 given to students who reside in the school district in which the

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AAP committee amendments adopted January 8, 2026.

1 charter school is located. If there are more applications to enroll in
2 the charter school than there are spaces available, the charter school
3 shall select students to attend using a random selection process. A
4 charter school shall not charge tuition to students who reside in the
5 district.

6 b. A charter school shall allow any student who was enrolled in
7 the school in the immediately preceding school year to ¹**[enroll]**
8 remain enrolled¹ in the charter school in the appropriate grade
9 unless the appropriate grade is not offered at the charter school.

10 c. A charter school may give enrollment priority to:

11 (1) a sibling of a student enrolled in the charter school; and

12 (2) regardless of residence, the children of teaching staff
13 members of the charter school.

14 d. ¹**[(1)]**¹ If available space permits, a charter school may
15 enroll **[non-resident]** ¹non-resident¹ students ¹**[who do not reside**
16 in the school district in which the charter school is located,
17 provided that the commissioner approves the enrollment of these
18 students in accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.]¹. The
19 terms and **[condition]** conditions of the enrollment shall be outlined
20 in the school's charter and approved by the commissioner.

21 ¹**[(2)]** The commissioner shall establish a procedure for the
22 enrollment of students who do not reside in the school district in
23 which the charter school is located. The procedure shall require the
24 commissioner to evaluate the following criteria:

25 (a) the fiscal impact on the student's district of residence;

26 (b) the impact on student population diversity in the student's
27 district of residence;

28 (c) the degree to which student attendance at a charter school
29 located outside of the school district of residence will promote or
30 reduce educational quality in the school district of residence and the
31 charter school; and

32 (d) any other criteria the commissioner deems necessary.]¹

33 e. The admission policy of the charter school shall, to the
34 maximum extent practicable, seek the enrollment of a cross section
35 of the community's school age population including racial and
36 academic factors.

37 (cf: P.L.1995, c.426, s.8)

38

39 ¹**[3.] 4.**¹ Section 9 of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-9) is
40 amended to read as follows:

41 9. a. A student may withdraw from a charter school at any
42 time; however, a charter school, or any employee or representative
43 thereof, shall not counsel or advise a student, or a student's parent
44 or guardian, to withdraw from the charter school. Nothing in this
45 subsection shall be construed as prohibiting a charter school's child
46 study team from considering, with the full participation of a
47 student's parent or guardian, a program or placement option for a

1 student with a disability that includes placement in another setting
2 in accordance with the provisions of the “Individuals with
3 Disabilities Education Act,” 20 U.S.C. s.1400 et seq., chapter 46 of
4 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, or regulations promulgated
5 thereto.

6 b. Except as otherwise provided in section 1 of P.L.2016, c.45
7 (C.18A:37-2a), a student may be expelled from a charter school
8 based on criteria determined by the board of trustees, which are
9 consistent with the provisions of N.J.S.18A:37-2, and approved by
10 the commissioner as part of the school's charter. Any expulsion
11 shall be made upon the recommendation of the charter school
12 principal, in consultation with the student's teachers.
13 (cf: P.L.2016, c.45, s.3)

14
15 ¹**[4.] 5.**¹ (New section) a. ¹**[The Commissioner of Education**
16 **shall establish minimum qualification standards and training**
17 **requirements for the position of student placement liaison.**

18 ¹**b.]**¹ The chief school administrator or lead person of a public
19 school ¹**, including a charter school,**¹ shall designate a staff member
20 ¹**[who meets the qualification standards established by the**
21 **commissioner]**¹ to serve as a student placement liaison.

22 ¹**[c.] b.**¹ It shall be the responsibility of the student placement
23 liaison to:

24 (1) coordinate with a new student's school of last attendance
25 and the parent or guardian of a new student to ensure the successful
26 transition of the student;

27 (2) coordinate with an exiting student's subsequent educational
28 placement, including when placement occurs at an alternative
29 education program, and the student's parent or guardian to ensure
30 the successful transition of the student; and

31 (3) regularly track and maintain student enrollment data,
32 including information on student transfers into or out of the public
33 school, to ensure State school aid is provided in accordance with
34 State law and regulation.

35
36 ¹**[5.] 6.**¹ (New section) In addition to the responsibilities
37 required pursuant to subsection c. of section ¹**[4] 5**¹ of P.L. , c.
38 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), a charter
39 school's student placement liaison shall, to the greatest extent
40 practicable, conduct an exit interview for any student who exits the
41 charter school for a reason other than graduation. When conducting
42 an exit interview, the student placement liaison shall identify the
43 reasons contributing to the decision to exit the school.

44
45 ¹**[6.] 7.**¹ (New section) a. Each charter school shall¹**[**, based
46 on exit reporting criteria developed by the Commissioner of
47 Education, annually report to the commissioner and to each school

1 district served by the charter school] include information on¹ the
2 number of students exiting the charter school in the preceding
3 school year in the annual report submitted by the charter school to
4 the commissioner pursuant to section 16 of P.L.1995, c.426
5 (C.18A:36A-16)¹.

6 b. The '[report] information'¹ shall include last dates of
7 attendance, reasons for exiting the charter school, and subsequent
8 educational placements. The '[report] information'¹ shall not
9 include the personal identifying information of an individual or any
10 information that would otherwise violate the privacy rights of a
11 student.

12 c. The commissioner shall establish a comprehensive list of
13 reasons for exiting a charter school that a charter school shall select
14 from when reporting exit data pursuant to the provisions of this
15 section.

16

17 ¹[7. (New section) The Commissioner of Education shall post
18 on the Department of Education's Internet website, the report card
19 information of a charter school required pursuant to section 3 of
20 P.L.1995, c.235 (C.18A:7E-3). If a charter school operates more
21 than one charter school facility, the information shall be posted
22 separately for each charter school facility.]¹

23

24 8. (New section) a. A charter school that offers interscholastic
25 athletics shall join one or more voluntary associations that regulate
26 the conduct of student activities between and among their members,
27 whose membership may include private and public schools.
28 Membership in the voluntary association shall be by resolution of
29 the board of trustees, adopted annually. A voluntary association
30 shall not be operative without approval of its charter, constitution,
31 bylaws, and rules and regulations by the Commissioner. Upon the
32 adoption of the resolution, the board, its faculty, and students shall
33 be governed by the rules and regulations of that association. The
34 rules and regulations of the association shall be deemed to be the
35 policy of the board of trustees and enforced first by the internal
36 procedures of the association. In matters involving only public
37 schools and students, faculty, administrators and boards thereof,
38 appeals shall be to the commissioner and thereafter the Superior
39 Court. In all other matters, appeals shall be made directly to the
40 Superior Court. The commissioner shall have the authority to direct
41 the association to conduct an inquiry by hearing or otherwise on a
42 particular matter or alternatively, direct that particular matter be
43 heard directly by the commissioner. The association shall be a
44 party to any proceeding before the commissioner or in any court.

45 b. The rules and regulations of the voluntary association shall
46 only apply to association sanctioned activities offered by the charter
47 school.

- 1 9. (New section) a. A non-resident student enrolled at a
2 charter school shall meet the following requirements to participate
3 in interscholastic athletics at the school:
- 4 (1) the student shall reside within a 20-mile radius of the charter
5 school;
- 6 (2) if the student initially enrolls in the charter school in grade
7 11, the student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics for
8 one year following the date of enrollment; and
- 9 (3) if the student initially enrolls in the charter school in grade
10 12, the student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics.
- 11 b. The commissioner may authorize a waiver of the provisions
12 of subsection a. of this section if the school district of residence of
13 the non-resident student does not offer the interscholastic athletic
14 activity in which the non-resident student participates.
- 15 c. The provisions of subsection a. of this section shall not
16 apply to any student enrolled in a charter school on the effective
17 date of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
18 bill).
- 19
- 20 10. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
21 the first full school year next following the date of enactment.