

§1
C.18A:36A-3.1
and Note to
C.18A:36C-1
and 18A:36C-7
§5
C.18A:36-19b
§6
C.18A:36A-9.1
§7
C.18A:36A-16.1
§8
C.18A:36A-6.1
§9
C.18A:36A-8.1
§10
Note

P.L. 2025, CHAPTER 276, *approved January 16, 2026*
Assembly, No. 5935 (*First Reprint*)

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

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 P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8), a charter school **【may】** shall not
2 establish **【reasonable】** criteria to evaluate prospective students
3 **【which shall be outlined in the school's charter】** and shall not
4 impose qualifications for enrollment on a student selected through a
5 random selection process established pursuant to section 8 of
6 P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8). Nothing in this subsection shall be
7 construed to prohibit use of a weighted admission lottery in
8 furtherance of a charter school seeking the enrollment of a cross
9 section of the community's school age population pursuant to
10 subsection e. of section 8 of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8).

11 ¹**【b.A charter school shall make its student application available**
12 **in the seven most common non-English languages spoken by**
13 **individuals with limited-English proficiency in the school district in**
14 **which the charter school is located, based on United States Census**
15 **Bureau American Community Survey data.】¹**

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

17
18 ¹**【2.】** ^{3.1} Section 8 of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-8) is
19 amended to read as follows:

20 8. a. Preference for enrollment in a charter school shall be
21 given to students who reside in the school district in which the
22 charter school is located. If there are more applications to enroll in
23 the charter school than there are spaces available, the charter school
24 shall select students to attend using a random selection process. A
25 charter school shall not charge tuition to students who reside in the
26 district.

27 b. A charter school shall allow any student who was enrolled in
28 the school in the immediately preceding school year to ¹**【enroll】**
29 remain enrolled¹ in the charter school in the appropriate grade
30 unless the appropriate grade is not offered at the charter school.

31 c. A charter school may give enrollment priority to:
32 (1) a sibling of a student enrolled in the charter school; and
33 (2) regardless of residence, the children of teaching staff
34 members of the charter school.

35 d. ¹**【(1)】¹** If available space permits, a charter school may
36 enroll **【non-resident】** ¹non-resident¹ students ¹**【who do not reside**
37 **in the school district in which the charter school is located,**
38 **provided that the commissioner approves the enrollment of these**
39 **students in accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.】¹**. The
40 terms and **【condition】** conditions of the enrollment shall be outlined
41 in the school's charter and approved by the commissioner.

42 ¹**【(2)_____** The commissioner shall establish a procedure for the
43 enrollment of students who do not reside in the school district in
44 which the charter school is located. The procedure shall require the
45 commissioner to evaluate the following criteria:

- 1 (a) the fiscal impact on the student's district of residence;
 2 (b) the impact on student population diversity in the student's
 3 district of residence;
 4 (c) the degree to which student attendance at a charter school
 5 located outside of the school district of residence will promote or
 6 reduce educational quality in the school district of residence and the
 7 charter school; and
 8 (d) any other criteria the commissioner deems necessary.】¹

9 e. The admission policy of the charter school shall, to the
 10 maximum extent practicable, seek the enrollment of a cross section
 11 of the community's school age population including racial and
 12 academic factors.
 13 (cf: P.L.1995, c.426, s.8)

14
 15 ¹**【3.】 4.**¹ Section 9 of P.L.1995, c.426 (C.18A:36A-9) is
 16 amended to read as follows:

17 9. a. A student may withdraw from a charter school at any
 18 time; however, a charter school, or any employee or representative
 19 thereof, shall not counsel or advise a student, or a student's parent
 20 or guardian, to withdraw from the charter school. Nothing in this
 21 subsection shall be construed as prohibiting a charter school's child
 22 study team from considering, with the full participation of a
 23 student's parent or guardian, a program or placement option for a
 24 student with a disability that includes placement in another setting
 25 in accordance with the provisions of the "Individuals with
 26 Disabilities Education Act," 20 U.S.C. s.1400 et seq., chapter 46 of
 27 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, or regulations promulgated
 28 thereto.

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

37
 38 ¹**【4.】 5.**¹ (New section) a. ¹**【The Commissioner of Education**
 39 shall establish minimum qualification standards and training
 40 requirements for the position of student placement liaison.

41 b. ¹**】** The chief school administrator or lead person of a public
 42 school ¹**], including a charter school,**¹ shall designate a staff member
 43 ¹**【who meets the qualification standards established by the**
 44 **commissioner】**¹ to serve as a student placement liaison.

45 ¹**【c.】 b.**¹ It shall be the responsibility of the student placement
 46 liaison to:

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

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

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

12
13 ¹**[5.] 6.**¹ (New section) In addition to the responsibilities
14 required pursuant to subsection c. of section ¹**[4] 5**¹ of P.L. , c.
15 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), a charter
16 school's student placement liaison shall, to the greatest extent
17 practicable, conduct an exit interview for any student who exits the
18 charter school for a reason other than graduation. When conducting
19 an exit interview, the student placement liaison shall identify the
20 reasons contributing to the decision to exit the school.

21
22 ¹**[6.] 7.**¹ (New section) a. Each charter school shall¹**[**, based
23 on exit reporting criteria developed by the Commissioner of
24 Education, annually report to the commissioner and to each school
25 district served by the charter school¹**]** include information on¹ the
26 number of students exiting the charter school in the preceding
27 school year ¹in the annual report submitted by the charter school to
28 the commissioner pursuant to section 16 of P.L.1995, c.426
29 (C.18A:36A-16)¹.

30 b. The ¹**[report]** information¹ shall include last dates of
31 attendance, reasons for exiting the charter school, and subsequent
32 educational placements. The ¹**[report]** information¹ shall not
33 include the personal identifying information of an individual or any
34 information that would otherwise violate the privacy rights of a
35 student.

36 c. The commissioner shall establish a comprehensive list of
37 reasons for exiting a charter school that a charter school shall select
38 from when reporting exit data pursuant to the provisions of this
39 section.

40
41 ¹**[7.** (New section) The Commissioner of Education shall post
42 on the Department of Education's Internet website, the report card
43 information of a charter school required pursuant to section 3 of
44 P.L.1995, c.235 (C.18A:7E-3). If a charter school operates more
45 than one charter school facility, the information shall be posted
46 separately for each charter school facility.¹**]**¹

1 8. (New section) a. A charter school that offers interscholastic
2 athletics shall join one or more voluntary associations that regulate
3 the conduct of student activities between and among their members,
4 whose membership may include private and public schools.
5 Membership in the voluntary association shall be by resolution of
6 the board of trustees, adopted annually. A voluntary association
7 shall not be operative without approval of its charter, constitution,
8 bylaws, and rules and regulations by the Commissioner. Upon the
9 adoption of the resolution, the board, its faculty, and students shall
10 be governed by the rules and regulations of that association. The
11 rules and regulations of the association shall be deemed to be the
12 policy of the board of trustees and enforced first by the internal
13 procedures of the association. In matters involving only public
14 schools and students, faculty, administrators and boards thereof,
15 appeals shall be to the commissioner and thereafter the Superior
16 Court. In all other matters, appeals shall be made directly to the
17 Superior Court. The commissioner shall have the authority to direct
18 the association to conduct an inquiry by hearing or otherwise on a
19 particular matter or alternatively, direct that particular matter be
20 heard directly by the commissioner. The association shall be a
21 party to any proceeding before the commissioner or in any court.

22 b. The rules and regulations of the voluntary association shall
23 only apply to association sanctioned activities offered by the charter
24 school.
25

26 9. (New section) a. A non-resident student enrolled at a
27 charter school shall meet the following requirements to participate
28 in interscholastic athletics at the school:

29 (1) the student shall reside within a 20-mile radius of the charter
30 school;

31 (2) if the student initially enrolls in the charter school in grade
32 11, the student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics for
33 one year following the date of enrollment; and

34 (3) if the student initially enrolls in the charter school in grade
35 12, the student shall not participate in interscholastic athletics.

36 b. The commissioner may authorize a waiver of the provisions
37 of subsection a. of this section if the school district of residence of
38 the non-resident student does not offer the interscholastic athletic
39 activity in which the non-resident student participates.

40 c. The provisions of subsection a. of this section shall not
41 apply to any student enrolled in a charter school on the effective
42 date of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
43 bill).
44

45 10. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first apply to
46 the first full school year next following the date of enactment.

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2
3 Concerns charter school enrollment, student placements,
4 reporting, and athletics.