

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

A Public School Option Missing in South Dakota

What is a Public Charter School?

Public charter schools are an important part of America's public education system and have been meeting the unique needs of students for more than 30 years. Public charter schools are given flexibility and autonomy to design classroom instruction to best serve their community's needs in exchange for rigorous accountability to the state.

Quick Facts

Public charter schools are:

- Free, public, and open to all
- Held accountable for results
- Required to follow state academic standards and assessments
- Operated independently from district bureaucracy
- Designed by educators to meet community needs
- Opened only where there is demand from families

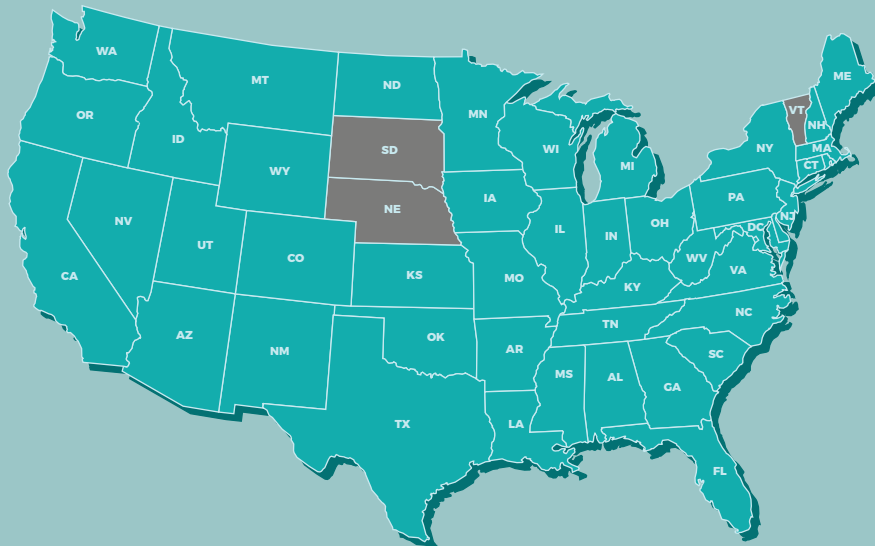
74%
of parents

would consider sending
their child to a charter
school if one was available
in their area

Source: The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

Did You Know?

South Dakota is one of only three states without a law allowing charter schools to open.



**South Dakota
Charter Schools**

MORE OPTIONS. STRONGER PUBLIC SCHOOLS.
southdakotacharters.org

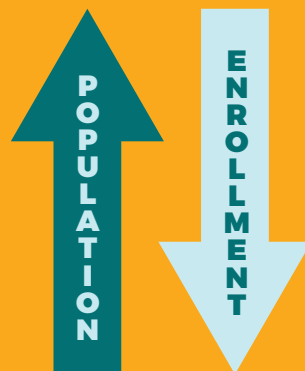
WHY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE NEEDED IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Families across South Dakota – including rural and tribal communities – deserve more choices within public education. A charter school law would **support students, empower communities,** and **strengthen public education** across South Dakota.

SUPPORT STUDENTS

South Dakota families want more school options, and many are leaving public education to find it.

Why Charter Schools Work: Some students need a different learning environment to succeed. Charter schools offer innovative models that expand learning opportunities and improve outcomes across public education.



Despite a growing population of school-age children in South Dakota over the last five years, public school enrollment is declining.

Sources: The Annie E. Casey Kids Count Data Center (population) and the South Dakota Department of Education (enrollment)

EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

School options in South Dakota should reflect the needs of individual communities.

Why Charter Schools Work: Charter schools give communities the flexibility to open schools that serve local priorities – whether that’s a school grounded in Native language and culture, a career and technical education program, or another community-driven model.

Public charter school models in other states:

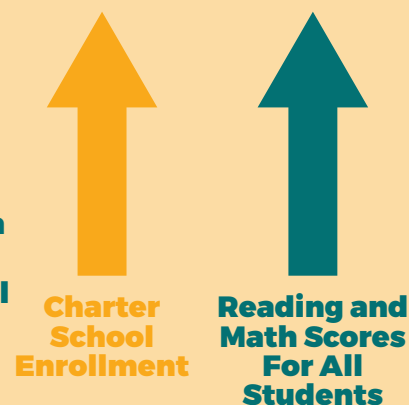
- Classical education models
- Career and technical education models
- Dropout recovery schools to support at-risk youth
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) focused schools
- Schools for students with specific disabilities, such as dyslexia or autism
- Keeping public schools available in rural communities

STRENGTHEN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Research shows communities with charter schools see improved outcomes for all public school students, not just those attending charters.

Why Charter Schools Work: Holding charter schools accountable for their results helps raise expectations, encourage innovation, and improve student outcomes across all of public education.

A 2025 study shows that increasing charter enrollment in a school district has a positive effect on reading and math achievement for all publicly enrolled students.



Source: Thomas B. Fordham Institute