

EMPOWER MISSISSIPPI



CHARTER SCHOOLS



WHAT ARE CHARTER SCHOOLS?

Charter schools are independent public schools of choice. They exist in 44 states and Washington, D.C., and serve approximately 3.2 million students. While charter schools look different, they always have this in common: they are tuition-free and open to all students in the areas they serve.

Mississippi's charter schools are authorized by the [Mississippi Charter Authorizer Board](#) at which time they enter into a performance agreement which must be renewed every 5 years. They are non-profits, governed by independent school boards.

CHARTER SCHOOLS IN OUR STATE MUST

- Only open in districts rated "D" or "F" (without local school board approval).
- Accept students who reside in the district or in districts rated "C", "D", or "F" at the time the school is authorized or the student enrolls.
- Enroll all students who wish to attend and hold a lottery if interest exceeds capacity.
- Have a student body that reflects 80% of the "underserved students" of all ages in the district (underserved = special education and low-income), but may not otherwise limit admission in any way.

CHARTER SCHOOLS IN OUR STATE MAY

- Be limited to a given age group or grade level.
- Be organized around a special emphasis, theme, or concept.
- Focus on serving students with special needs, students of the same gender, students with severe disciplinary problems, or students at risk of academic failure.
- Exempt up to 25% of teachers from state licensure requirements (though they must gain licensure within 3 years of employment).

Though charter schools are exempt from accreditation requirements, they must follow certain minimum

requirements. For example, they are subject to the same state testing and accountability system applicable to traditional public schools. They also must adhere to certain school year, staffing, and graduation requirements.

Charter schools receive the same per pupil funding as traditional public schools, though they must secure and pay for their own facilities.

CHARTER SCHOOLS APPROVED 2014-2019

To date, nine charter schools are approved to open in Jackson, Clarksdale, and Greenwood:

CURRENTLY OPERATING CHARTER SCHOOLS

	<i>Location</i>	<i>Grades Served</i>	<i>Year Opened</i>
Midtown Public Charter School	Jackson	5-8	2015
Reimagine Prep	Jackson	5-8	2015
Smilow Prep	Jackson	5-8	2016
Smilow Collegiate	Jackson	K-8	2018
Clarksdale Collegiate Public Charter School	Clarksdale	K-8	2018
Ambition Preparatory Charter School	Jackson	K-8	2019

APPROVED TO OPEN CHARTER SCHOOLS

	<i>Location</i>	<i>Grades Served</i>	<i>Year Opened</i>
Republic High School	Jackson	9-12	TBD
Revive Prep	Jackson	K-8	TBD
Leflore Legacy Academy	Greenwood	5-8	2020