

New Laws affecting Charter Schools for the 2024-25 school year

Note: This is intended as a summary of new laws only. Please review the provided statutes for specific requirements, opportunities, and obligations.

Science of Reading

- Beginning with the 2024-25 school year (“SY”), charter schools must provide reading instruction aligned with the science of reading to students in kindergarten through eighth grade. [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#).

IREAD

- Beginning with the 2024-25 SY, charter schools must administer IREAD to second grade students. [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#).
- Beginning with the 2024-25 SY, charter schools must retain third grade students if they do not pass IREAD after multiple (two: spring and summer) test administration opportunities unless a good cause exemption applies. [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#).
- Good cause exemptions include:
 - **Special Education:** A student with an intellectual disability, whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) or case conference committee has determined that promotion to the next grade level is appropriate.
 - **English Learner:** A student who is an identified English learner (EL) who has received services for fewer than two years and has an ILP committee that determines promotion to the next grade level is appropriate.
 - **Math Exceptionality:** A student who passes the ILEARN Mathematics assessment.
 - **Retained Twice & Received Intensive Intervention:** A student who was retained twice in K-2 and has already received intensive intervention for at least two years.
 - **Previously Retained:** A student who was retained once previously in third grade.
- By October 1 each year, schools must send a communication (provided by IDOE) to the parents/families of kindergarten students describing the early intervention and screening supports that will be available to their child, as well as the retention requirement if the child does not pass IREAD. [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#).
- Schools must notify a student’s parent or guardian of their universal screener and IREAD assessment results, as well as any interventions and supports that will be provided to the student. [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#).
- Charter schools must report the following items to IDOE: the literacy interventions being used currently, the literacy interventions being used prior to adoption of the plan, the number of students receiving interventions (aligned to science of reading), and the cost of providing these interventions. [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#).
- Charter schools must offer summer school reading programs for second grade students identified as “At Risk” on IREAD, as well as non-passing third grade students. The summer

school program must be aligned with the science of reading and taught by an educator with science of reading training as determined by IDOE. Students who do not attend or attend less than 90% of the summer reading program must participate in an individual reading plan the following school year if they do not pass IREAD during the summer retest. [IC 20-30-7-13](#).

ILEARN

- ILEARN is being redesigned by IDOE from a summative test to a through-year assessment that includes three checkpoints (reading and math) and a shortened summative assessment at the end of the school year. [IC 20-32-5.1-7](#). Timeline:
 - 2024-25: Schools will have the option to pilot the ILEARN checkpoints formative assessments.
 - 2025-26: The ILEARN checkpoints' three formative assessments and one shortened summative assessment will be implemented statewide.
- For more information, see IDOE's ILEARN Checkpoint Pilot [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
- Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, IDOE is required to develop a method to identify students in grades 4–8 that did not pass IREAD and are not proficient in reading as determined by ILEARN. [IC 20-32-5.1-20](#).

Literacy Coaching/Early Literacy Endorsement

- Schools with less than a 70% IREAD passage rate must hire a literacy coach trained in the Science of Reading. [IC 20-32-8.5-2](#).
- Prior to July 1, 2027, a "literacy coach" is defined as an individual whose primary responsibility is to provide literacy training and support to administrators and teachers. After July 1, 2027, a literacy coach needs to have an "early literacy endorsement." [IC 20-20-49-3.2](#).
- In addition, Indiana educators with the following licenses seeking renewal on or after July 1, 2027 need the "early literacy" endorsement for renewal:
 - Early Childhood (Pre-K-3);
 - Early Childhood Special Education Pre-K-3;
 - Elementary Education/Generalist 1-6, K-6;
 - Elementary/Primary (K-3);
 - Elementary/Intermediate (4-6); and
 - Special Education K-6, 1-6, K-12, or Pre-K-12.
- For Indiana educators to add the early literacy endorsement to their license they must do both of the following ([IC 20-28-5-19.7](#)):
 - Complete 80 hours of IDOE-approved science of reading professional development (can be done virtually).
 - Pass a content licensure test: The Praxis Teaching Reading: Elementary (5205)

- For more information on early literacy requirements , please visit IDOE’s [Literacy Development](#) website.

Curriculum

- Each charter school must include in its curriculum for students enrolled in grade 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12 instruction concerning personal financial responsibility. [IC 20-30-5-19](#).
- After June 30, 2028, each charter high school must offer at least once per school year at minimum one (1) computer science course as a separate subject in the public high school's curriculum that satisfies the computer science instruction content requirements. [IC 20-30-5-23](#).

Truancy/Chronic Absenteeism

- Each charter school must adopt a truancy prevention policy regarding absent students. An “absent student” is a student enrolled in kindergarten through sixth grade that is absent from school five days within a ten-week period without being excused, without having a doctor’s note, or other professional requesting frequent absences under a student’s individualized education plan (IEP), service plan, choice scholarship education plan, or 504 plan. [IC 20-33-2.5](#).
- A charter school superintendent, attendance officer, or school police officer is required to report a habitually truant child to a prosecuting attorney through an affidavit against the child’s parent. [IC 20-33-2-26](#).
- A charter school must have a policy regarding the participation of a habitually truant student in extracurricular and co-curricular activities. [IC 20-33-2-14](#).
- The organizer of a charter school must authorize the absence of each secondary school student who is not a habitual truant and is ordered to active duty with the armed forces of the United States, including their reserve components or the Indiana National Guard for at least 15 days in a school year. [IC 20-33-2-17](#).

Cell Phones

- Each school corporation and charter school shall adopt, implement, and post on its website, a wireless communication device policy that prohibits a student from using a wireless communication device during instructional time except as permitted by teacher authorization and in the event of an emergency. [IC 20-26-5-40.7](#).

School Safety

- A charter school's school safety plan must include violence prevention training and an armed intruder drill protocol. [IC 10-21-1-10](#).
- Armed intruder drills with “sensory components or activities” (e.g. simulations, use of prop or real firearms) may not require student participation nor take place during regular school hours if a majority of the student body is present on school property. [IC 20-34-3-27](#).
- A full-time school resource officer may now participate in the 1977 Fund (Retirement Fund) upon meeting the requirements. A school corporation or charter school is now considered an employer under the 1977 Fund (Retirement Fund). [IC 36-8-8](#).

High Schools

- The State Board of Education (SBOE) is required to create a new standard Indiana diploma to replace the current diploma that sunsets on October 1, 2028. The new diploma will apply to students graduating in the 2029 Cohort. [IC 20-19-2-21](#). For more information on the process, please visit IDOE's [Redesigning the Indiana Diploma webpage](#).
- The Commission for Higher Education (CHE), in coordination with the Department of Education (IDOE) and state educational institutions, shall maintain a list of eligible Indiana college core courses and syllabus or course outline of record for each eligible Indiana College Core course. [IC 21-42-3-7](#).
- Each Indiana high school shall do one of the following with respect to the “Indiana college core”:
 1. Beginning with the 2024 – 25 school year, offer the Indiana college core developed under [IC 21-42-3](#) in the high school's curriculum for high school students.
 2. Not later than October 1, 2024, submit an implementation plan to CHE to offer the Indiana college core developed under [IC 21-42-3](#) in the high school's curriculum for high school students by the 2025-26 school year.
 3. Not later than October 1, 2024, submit an implementation plan to CHE to offer the Indiana college core developed under [IC 21-42-3](#) in the high school's curriculum for high school students by the 2026-27 school year.
 4. Not later than October 1, 2024, submit an Indiana college core feasibility report to the commission for higher education in accordance with [IC 21-42-3-6](#) if the high school does not plan to offer the Indiana college core by the 2026-27 school year. [IC 20-30-5-25](#).
- The successful completion of an International Baccalaureate diploma program course shall count for high school credit. [IC 20-36-7](#).

- Beginning in 2029, high school students must successfully complete instruction on computer science to be eligible for graduation. [IC 20-30-5-23](#).
- A student's latest statewide assessment test results can be included on their transcript upon request of the student. [IC 20-33-2-13](#).
- The expiration date for the high school equivalency pilot program is amended from June 30, 2024 to June 30, 2026. [IC 20-26-13-10](#).
- To receive a postsecondary readiness waiver, a student must now also complete eight high school semesters. [IC 20-32-4-4.1](#).
- Graduation Examination requirements are removed for purposes of receiving a postsecondary readiness waiver. [IC 20-32-4-5](#).
- If a charter school has a course offered by an eligible institution for secondary credit, a student is entitled to secondary credit toward graduation requirements for each course the student successfully completes at the eligible institution. [IC 21-43-4-5](#).
- A student's high school transcript must reflect that the secondary credits were earned at: a state educational institution or an approved postsecondary educational institution. [IC 20-32-4-19](#).
- IDOE, in collaboration with CHE will develop an Excellence in Civic Engagement Designation earned by high school students graduating and beginning with the 2029 Cohort. IDOE shall also develop an Excellence in Civic Engagement Designation for schools. [IC 20-19-3-32.5](#).

Graduation Rate

- For purposes of determining a school's or school corporation's graduation rate, not more than the greater of one percent (1%) of a school's or school corporation's graduation cohort that receives an alternate diploma; or one (1) student; may be counted as having graduated. [IC 20-32-4-14](#).

“Cybersecurity”

- After July 1, 2027, when connection to Data Exchange, schools must have completed a cybersecurity assessment within the 3-year period before first connecting and at least once every 3 years after connecting. [IC 4-13.1-4](#).

Other

- Not later than July 1 of each year, a charter school shall post on the charter school's website information for the immediately preceding school year regarding whether there is a familial or business relationship between the organizer, owner, or operator of the charter school and the owner of the charter school's building. [IC 20-24-7-16](#).
- If the parent of a student enrolled in a charter school provides written notice, the principal shall allow the student to attend a school for religious instruction that is conducted by a church, an association of churches, or an association that is organized for religious instruction and incorporated under Indiana law. [IC 20-33-2-19](#).

Finance

- Charter schools must annually report to IDOE all student fees charged to families (collected through an IDOE form). [IC 20-40-22-8](#).
- Charter schools are no longer required to establish a separate curricular materials account for purposes of receiving the state curricular materials reimbursement distributions. Charter schools are now required to deposit these distributions in the school's "Education" fund or the same fund into which state tuition support is deposited. [IC 20-40-22-10](#).
- Charter schools must deposit any fees collected from lost or damaged books into the school's Education fund or if they do not have an Education fund, the fund in which they deposit the state tuition support distributions. [IC 20-26-12-1](#).
- Money received from the state curricular materials fund may only be used for the advancement or reimbursement of the costs of curricular materials. [IC 20-40-22-6](#).

Innovation Network Schools

- Innovation network charter agreements must now include the following:
 - a statement that the school corporation will distribute at least one hundred percent of the state tuition support dollars that the school corporation receives from student enrollment in the participating innovation network charter school. [IC 20-25.7-5-2](#).
 - the amount of money levied as property taxes that will be distributed by the school corporation to the organizer. [IC 20-25.7-5-2](#).
 - a statement that the school corporation is prohibited from setting additional goals or accountability metrics. [IC 20-25.7-5-2](#).
 - the participating innovation network charter school's enrollment and discipline policies, including defined attendance areas and enrollment zones. [IC 20-25.7-5-2](#).
 - a statement that the innovation network charter agreement shall not create an obligation that would cause the organizer to be in violation of its charter agreement. [IC 20-25.7-5-2](#).

- An innovation network charter agreement entered into between the school corporation and an organizer may not be altered without written approval from the organizer. [IC 20-25.7-5-2](#).
- A school corporation may not alter the use of the facility occupied by the participating innovation network charter school without agreement from the organizer. [IC 20-25.7-5-3](#).
- Excluding innovation network charter agreement entered into before July 1, 2024, unless a school corporation and an organizer provides otherwise, a school corporation may not charge an organizer an amount for goods and services that is greater than the amount of the operations fund property tax levy the organizer receives under IC 20-46-8-11.2 for the participating innovation network charter school. [IC 20-25.7-5-3](#).

Charter School Funding

- Virtual charter schools and adult high schools are ineligible for school corporation referendum sharing. [IC 20-26-7.1-1](#).
- The referendum notice from a school corporation to a charter school can now be responded to by the charter school via email to the superintendent of a school corporation. Requirements for the content of the notice have also been updated. [IC 20-46-9-6](#).
- The Student Learning Recovery Grant Program is no longer required to be funded through federal funds, can be used for intervention outside of the covid pandemic, will no longer require a public-school matching grant, and the program will no longer expire in October 2024. [IC 20-32-8.7](#), Effective July 1, 2024