

**SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-FOURTH SESSION**

S.F. No. 879

(SENATE AUTHORS: CWODZINSKI)

DATE
02/03/2025

D-PG

Introduction and first reading
Referred to Education Policy

OFFICIAL STATUS

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education policy; requiring charter school authorizers to comply with
1.3 government data practices; amending Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124E.05,
1.4 subdivisions 2, 4.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124E.05, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

1.7 Subd. 2. **Roles, responsibilities, and requirements of authorizers.** (a) The role of an
1.8 authorizer is to ensure that a school it authorizes has the autonomy granted by statute, fulfills
1.9 the purposes of a charter school, and is accountable to the agreed upon terms of the charter
1.10 school contract in order to safeguard quality educational opportunities for students and
1.11 maintain public trust and confidence.

1.12 (b) An authorizer has the following responsibilities:

1.13 (1) to review applications for new schools, determine whether a new school is ready to
1.14 open, review applications for grade and site expansions, review applications for change in
1.15 authorizers, and determine whether to approve or deny an application based on the
1.16 authorizer's approved criteria;

1.17 (2) to negotiate and execute the performance charter contracts with the schools it
1.18 authorizes;

1.19 (3) to conduct ongoing monitoring, oversight, and evaluation of the school's academic,
1.20 operational, and financial performance during the term of the charter contract;

2.1 (4) to evaluate the academic, operational, and financial performance of the school as
 2.2 defined in the charter contract prior to the end of the contract to determine the renewal,
 2.3 nonrenewal, or termination of the contract; and

2.4 (5) to comply with authorizer requirements in chapter 124E.

2.5 (c) An authorizer must document in the authorizer annual report under section 124E.16,
 2.6 subdivision 2, paragraph (b), the annual successful completion of training of its staff members
 2.7 during the previous year relative to chartering and an authorizer's role and responsibilities.

2.8 (d) An authorizer must participate in department-approved training.

2.9 (e) An authorizer must comply with government data practices under chapter 13.

2.10 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124E.05, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

2.11 Subd. 4. **Application content.** (a) To be approved as an authorizer, an applicant must
 2.12 include in its application to the commissioner at least the following:

2.13 (1) how the organization carries out its mission by chartering schools;

2.14 (2) a description of the capacity of the organization to serve as an authorizer, including
 2.15 the positions allocated to authorizing duties, the qualifications for those positions, the
 2.16 full-time equivalencies of those positions, and the financial resources available to fund the
 2.17 positions;

2.18 (3) the application and review process the authorizer uses to decide whether to grant
 2.19 charters;

2.20 (4) the type of contract it arranges with the schools it charters to meet the provisions of
 2.21 section 124E.10;

2.22 (5) the process for overseeing the school, consistent with clause (4), to ensure that the
 2.23 schools chartered comply with applicable law and rules and the contract;

2.24 (6) the criteria and process the authorizer uses to approve applications adding grades or
 2.25 sites under section 124E.06, subdivision 5;

2.26 (7) the process for renewing or terminating the school's charter based on evidence
 2.27 showing the academic, organizational, and financial competency of the school, including
 2.28 its success in increasing student achievement and meeting the goals of the charter school
 2.29 agreement; and

2.30 (8) an assurance specifying that the organization is committed to serving as an authorizer
 2.31 until the commissioner terminates the organization's ability to authorize charter schools

3.1 under subdivision 6 or the organization formally withdraws as an approved authorizer under
3.2 subdivision 7.

3.3 (b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), an authorizer that is a school district may satisfy the
3.4 requirements of paragraph (a), clauses (1) and (2), and any requirement governing a conflict
3.5 of interest between an authorizer and its charter schools or ongoing evaluation or continuing
3.6 education of an administrator or other professional support staff by submitting to the
3.7 commissioner a written promise to comply with the requirements.

3.8 (c) An approved authorizer, including an authorizer that is not a school district, must
3.9 comply with government data practices under chapter 13.