Public charter and contract schools developed within AACPS represent a choice for parents and the community to provide innovative learning opportunities for students. These schools strive for high academic standards and are accountable for student performance outcomes. Further, the AACPS Office of Charter and Contract Schools is committed to providing an authorizing environment that is committed to accountability and autonomy, while supporting these schools to produce positive outcomes for students and families of Anne Arundel County.

Charter Schools became a reality within AACPS back in 2005 with the opening of the Chesapeake Science Point Public Charter School (CSP) and then again in 2009 with the opening of The Monarch Academy Public Charter School. Additionally, AACPS expanded its portfolio of choice options by approving the county’s first public contract school, Monarch Global Academy, which opened in the fall of 2014. A second contract school, Monarch Annapolis, opened in the fall of 2017. Currently, AACPS has two charter schools and two contract schools in operation, serving close to 2,600 students in grades K–12.

The AACPS Charter and Contract School’s Office falls under the school system’s Alternative Education Division. This arrangement follows the AACPS belief that charter and contract school options provide an alternative pathway for many families in the county.

Our philosophy is that there is not a “one size fits all” approach to education, resulting in a portfolio of alternative educational options for our families.

In order to guide our charter and contract school work, we have become aligned with the National Association of Charter School Authorizer’s (NACSA), Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing. Aligning our work with these principals and standards, help ensure that we are creating an effective authorizing environment, conducive to high quality charter schools.