

FY 2026 Charter School Annual Budget Forms

Submission and Publication Information

Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §§15-183(E)(6) and 15-905 require schools to prepare and submit a budget in electronic format containing the information and in the form the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) provides. A.R.S. §15-903(A) requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction in conjunction with the Arizona Auditor General to prescribe the budget format to be used by charter schools. The Arizona Auditor General and ADE developed the budget format in Excel to incorporate the information schools are statutorily required to include in their annual budget. This format will help schools comply with budget preparation and submission requirements. In accordance with A.R.S. §15-183(E)(6), charters that have received an exemption to the Uniform System of Financial Records for Arizona Charter Schools (USFRCS) must maintain an accounting system that ensures proper financial data reporting within the forms using USFRCS revenue and expense codes. Helpful hints for using the budget forms are included at the end of this document.

Preliminary and final budget form options

Since the FY 2026 State budget has not passed, ADE School Finance and the Auditor General's Office published preliminary budget forms to allow charters to plan budget preparation processes and governing board meetings. The preliminary budget forms do not include routine annual changes such as inflation and do not anticipate any other changes to State law. Final budget forms will be published shortly after final changes in State law are known. Charters have the following options to choose from when proposing and adopting their FY 2026 budgets:

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Propose using preliminary budget forms.	Propose using final budget forms.	Propose using preliminary budget forms
Adopt using preliminary budget forms.	Adopt using final budget forms.	Repropose using final budget forms
Revise using final budget forms by September 15.	Revise using final budget forms, if needed.	Adopt using final budget forms
		Revise using final budget forms, if needed

Proposed budget

Each charter school is statutorily required to annually prepare a proposed budget no later than July 5. A copy of the proposed budget must be kept on file at the school and made available to the public upon request. **The governing-board-approved proposed budget and a notice of public hearing and governing board meeting to adopt a budget must also be uploaded through the School Finance Budget System for posting on ADE's website no later than 10 days prior to the meeting to adopt.** Schools must use the enclosed BudgetAdoptionHearingNotification26.xlsx file for uploading the notice to ADE. In accordance with A.R.S. §15-185(M), schools that maintain

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their own website must post a copy of the proposed budget or budget summary and hearing notification on the school's website. A self-populating budget summary is included in the Excel file. Schools should paste a clickable link on the Cover tab to their school web page where the proposed budget or budget summary was posted. For audit purposes, the school should retain a screenshot of the page on its website. Schools **should not** send the screenshot to ADE.

In addition, A.R.S. §15-189.05 requires each school to prominently post average teacher salary information on its website homepage separately from its budget. Schools can meet this requirement by posting a screenshot of the average teacher salary information from the budget cover or by separately posting the following information as reported on their budget cover:

- The average salary of all teachers the school employed in the budget year.
- The average salary of all teachers the school employed in the prior year.
- The dollar increase in the average salary of all teachers the school employed from the prior year.
- The percentage increase in the average salary of all teachers the school employed from the prior year.

As the statute does not provide a definition of a teacher, each school should be consistent in the type of salary information reported from year to year.

Budget adoption

Schools must adopt a budget no later than July 15 and electronically upload it via the **School Finance Budget System** to the Superintendent of Public Instruction no later than July 18.

Budget revisions

If a school governing board adopts a budget using the preliminary budget forms published by the Arizona Auditor General and ADE School Finance, schools may revise their adopted budgets by September 15 to include items authorized by law.

Schools may revise their adopted budgets during the fiscal year provided all revisions are completed and approved at a governing board meeting before May 15. If a school overestimated its budgeted student count, it **must** revise its budget before May 15 in accordance with A.R.S. §15-185 (B)(2). If a school underestimated its student count or State equalization assistance or received federal or State grants or other miscellaneous receipts that were not included in its adopted budget, the school may choose to revise its budget before May 15 to include any additional monies received or expected to be received for the fiscal year.

Schools should use the most recent recalculated 100th-day student count reports in revising their budget. Schools that revise their budget must upload fully completed budget forms to ADE School Finance by May 18 through the **School Finance Budget System**. The school must submit

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an adopted budget and have it successfully processed by ADE before submitting a revised budget. If a school submits any budget revisions throughout the year, it should ensure that the average teacher salary information is updated on its budget forms and website.

Budget submission

ADE will only accept FY 2026 budget forms submitted electronically using the Excel forms with a 2025 revision date. Schools may download a copy of the Excel forms from the Auditor General's website at <https://www.azauditor.gov/reports-publications/charter-schools/forms>.

Schools must upload the completed forms through the School Finance Budget System on ADE's website at <https://adeconnect.azed.gov/>. Schools may upload files to the School Finance Budget System starting on June 15, 2025. If the Budget System is able to accept forms before that date, ADE will post a Hot Topic to alert schools. ADE cannot submit the files on behalf of the school. For password information or help, please contact ADE's Support Center at (602) 542-7378 [outside the Phoenix area call (866) 577-9636] or adesupport@azed.gov. After uploading files, schools should check their file submission page (<https://adeconnect.azed.gov>) to verify the files have processed. If a file did not process, follow the instructions contained in the error message and upload the corrected file(s). If you are unable to correct an error, please contact the ADE Budget Team at SFBudgetTeam@azed.gov.

Each time the school submits forms electronically to ADE, it should record the date in the space provided on the cover page. Schools should print the cover and have the **Governing Board and 2 school officials sign the cover page where indicated**. Within 5 days of the electronic submission to ADE, the school should scan the signed cover page and upload the pdf to the Budget System. ADE will accept only electronic/scanned copies of the cover page.

Helpful hints for using the budget forms

Changes from the previous year's budget forms have been highlighted light yellow throughout the Excel file.

Schools should complete the data entry page first. Round amounts on all sheets to the nearest dollar. Schools do not need to enter any information on the calculations or BSA55 pages. These pages are automatically completed based on information entered on the data entry page. Detailed instructions for preparing the forms are included on an instructions tab in the Excel file. The instructions page also includes a column "Summary of significant changes" to explain changes from the previous year's budget forms. Instructions for preparing the data entry page have been included within the sheet itself.

Grid lines have been turned off to make the forms easier to read. Users may turn the grid lines back on without affecting the calculations or printing.

The charter school name, county, and CTDS number should be entered on the budget forms' cover page. This information will be automatically transferred to the other sheets in the file.

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The spreadsheets will automatically perform mathematical calculations and bring forward certain amounts from one sheet to another. **Therefore, users can and should enter information only in unprotected cells.** Users can move from one unprotected cell to another on a sheet by using the Tab key. Schools should not change or delete formulas unless our Office or ADE specifically instructs it to do so.

To ensure ADE can properly process the school's data, do not add or delete rows and columns, do not copy and paste information from the prior year's forms, do not rename sheet tabs, and do not change the file format. Submit Excel files in the Excel 2007 and later format (.xlsx).

Printing

The budget forms, including the data entry page and calculations page, have been formatted to print on legal-size paper. The BSA55 has been formatted to print on letter-size paper. Since the minimum margin setting for printers may differ from what was used to set up these files, users may need to experiment to get each sheet to print on 1 page. Users should try changing the "scaling" under page setup.

If you have any questions, please call the Arizona Auditor General, Accountability Services Division, at (602) 977-2796, or ADE School Finance at (602) 542-5695. Refer questions regarding electronically submitting the budget forms to ADE.