

WHAT IS A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL?

Charter schools are unique public schools.

Charter schools are unique public schools that have the freedom to be more innovative while being held accountable for improving student achievement. They were created more than 20 years ago to find ways to improve our nation's public schools and close the achievement gap. As a result, they raise the bar for what is possible in public education.

Charter schools, while operating independent of a school district, are public schools. Just like traditional public schools, charter schools are funded by local, state and federal tax dollars based on student enrollment. They are free, do not have special entrance requirements and do not charge tuition. Charter schools are not religious and cannot discriminate against students on any basis.

Free and open to All students.

Partnership Between Teachers, Parents, and Students.

Charter schools foster a partnership between parents, teachers and students to create an environment in which parents can be more involved, teachers are given the freedom to innovate and students are provided the structure they need to learn. This holds all groups accountable for the most important goal: improving student achievement.

By giving teachers the freedom to innovate and try new ways to improve student achievement, charter schools can be more responsive and create an environment tailored to the needs of individual students, while still being held accountable for student learning. Charter schools are able to make changes more quickly than traditional public schools because they don't have to get permission from the school board. So, if they need to adjust the school calendar or schedule, or change how they are teaching to make sure students are learning, they can.

Responsive to Student Needs.

Some of the Top Performing Schools in the Country.

More than a quarter of the Best High Schools in America, according to *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report*, are charter schools. And a higher percentage of children who attend charter schools graduate from high school and are accepted into a college or university. There are many charter schools where 100 percent of the students graduate from high school, and 100 percent of those graduates are accepted into college.

By giving teachers and school leaders the freedom to innovate and try new ways to improve student learning, charter schools are developing successful new teaching models and classroom set-ups that work. Charter schools are sharing these successes with other public schools so that more children benefit.

Making All Schools Better.

Charter Schools are Accountable.

Charter schools are held accountable to state and federal academic standards, ensuring a high-quality education for their students.

CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Sixteen independent studies have been published on charter school performance since 2010, four national studies and 12 regional studies from throughout the country. Fifteen of the 16 found that students in charter schools do better in school than their traditional school peers. One study found mixed results. The most recent of those studies, by the Center for Research on Educational Outcomes at Stanford University, found that charter schools do a better job teaching low income students, minority students, and students who are still learning English than traditional schools.

Students
Do Better
in School.

Students
Learn
More Each
School
Year.

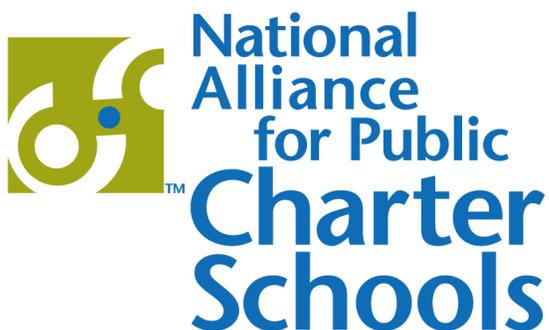
In 32 schools districts around the country, more than 20 percent of all schoolchildren attend a public charter school. New Orleans has a higher percentage of children in charter schools than anywhere else in the country. Students attending public charter schools in New Orleans learn four months of reading and five months of math more than their peers attending traditional public schools. Statewide, students attending public charter schools in Louisiana learned 50 days more reading and 65 days more math compared to their peers attending traditional public schools.

At one charter school in Arizona, BASIS, students scored higher on an international test called the PISA than students from anywhere in the world. At the Success Academy charter school in Harlem, every fourth grader passed the state's science exam. In 2012, every high school senior at an Uncommon charter school took the SAT exam, and on average scored 20 points higher the College Board's benchmark for college readiness.

Prepared for
College
and the
Workforce.

Open
Nationwide.

Forty-two states and the District of Columbia allow charter schools. Nationwide, nearly 6,500 charter schools are teaching 2.5 million children.



Learn more at PublicCharters.org