

Public Charter Schools: What Do I Need to Know?

1. How do charter schools stack up?

Charter schools in New York typically outperform traditional public schools. In fact, charter school students significantly exceed traditional public school students in proficiency rates.

2. Do charter schools cost more?

No. Charter schools cost taxpayers a fraction as much as traditional public schools, per pupil. Like all public schools, charter schools do not charge tuition.

3. Who do charter schools serve?

Public charter schools are open to all New York students, often serving students who need the most help—80 percent of charter school students come from economically disadvantaged households. New York charter schools also boast high diversity: 49 percent of students are Black, and 41 percent are Latino.

4. How many charter schools are there?

Approximately 174,000 students are enrolled in New York public charter schools. Another 50,000 students are on waitlists, largely due to statutory limits on the number of charter schools that can operate in the state—460 statewide, 290 of which can be in New York City.

5. Are charter schools public schools?

Charter schools are public schools, open to any student eligible to attend traditional public schools—**any child between the ages of six and 16 who lives in a New York school district**. Charter schools are funded with local, state and federal dollars.

6. What makes a charter school different?

With more freedom than traditional public schools to innovate, design their own educational program, and manage their operations, charter schools can take unique approaches that cater to individual student needs. Many primarily focus on specific groups of students such as those with learning disabilities or students seeking vocational studies. Because of the cap on charter schools, seats are limited, so admissions are granted through a non-discriminatory lottery.

Charter school students significantly exceed traditional public school students in proficiency rates!

MATH

59.5%

42.6%

LITERACY

57.3%

46.7.6%

In Harlem and the South Bronx, there are about three applicants for each open charter seat.

Charter schools have existed under New York law since 1998!

