

## Introduction | Charter school formal complaints

**Charter schools** are publicly funded schools that are open to all students through a non-discriminatory admissions lottery. Each charter school is governed by a not-for-profit board of trustees that may include educators, community members, and leaders from the private sector. Charters have the freedom to establish their own policies, design their own educational program, and manage their human and financial resources.

**Charter school authorizers** are responsible for making sure that each charter school executes, and performs within, the guidelines, standards and goals set forth in its charter agreement. New York City currently has three authorizers: the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) Charter Schools Office, the State University of New York Charter Schools Institute (SUNY), and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Charter Schools Office. To find out which authorizer oversees your child's school, please refer to pages 3-8 of this document.

Although all New York City charter schools reside within the city's five boroughs, they are independent Local Educational Agencies and are not subject to the New York City Chancellor's Regulations, but rather to Article 56 of New York State Education Law (the [NYS Charter Schools Act of 1998](#)) as well as [New York State Charter School Regulations](#). Section 2855 (4) of the [NYS Charter Schools Act](#) provides that a parent (as well as any other individual) who believes that a charter school has violated a term of its charter or the law may complain formally to the school and seek relief. The school is required to provide you promptly with their complaint policy in writing upon request, and that complaint policy should specify how and to whom you should direct your complaint. The law gives the power to hear those complaints to the school's Board of Trustees in the first instance (though the Board of Trustees often delegates that power to, for example, the principal or a committee of the board or a neutral third party). Please check with your child's charter school to determine its specific complaint procedures and which parties they involve.

## Process for formal complaints

### **Step 1: Familiarize yourself with the school's guidelines and contact the school's leadership.**

Begin by contacting school leadership to try to resolve any violations, issues or complaints. Before doing so, we encourage you to familiarize yourself with the school's policies, guidelines, and reference materials. Such items include, but are not limited to, parent handbooks, student discipline policies related to your concern, dress code pamphlets, and school-issued memorandums. Determine whether or not the school's actions related to your complaint fall within the school's policies.

### **Step 2: Appeal to the school's Board of Trustees.**

If after contacting the school's leadership you are not satisfied with the outcome or decision pertaining to the complaint, you may appeal to the school's Board of Trustees. The Board meets publicly on a regular basis. Parents are encouraged to either contact the Board directly to schedule items on the meeting agenda or contact the school/parent committee that deals with such matters.

### **Step 3: Appeal to the school's authorizer.**

If after your appeal you are not satisfied with the Board of Trustees' decision, and if your complaint involves a violation of either the school's policies or its charter, you may submit a formal complaint to the school's authorizer. If the school is not an NYC DOE-authorized school, please contact your school's authorizer for more information.

- For **SUNY-authorized** schools, contact (518) 433-8277, x.2051 or visit: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/contact>.
- For **NYSED-authorized** schools, contact (518) 474-1762 or visit <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/complaint.html>.
- For **NYCDOE-authorized** schools, contact (212) 374-5419 and fill out the NYC DOE-Authorized Charter School Complaint Form on pages 5-7 of this document.

It is very important that before you escalate your complaint to the school’s authorizer level you determine it constitutes a formal complaint involving a violation of the school’s charter or of state charter law. **Informal complaints that do not violate either the school’s charter or state charter law should be resolved between the parent and the school’s leadership.**

Complaint Example	Does this constitute a formal complaint?	How can the parent proceed with this complaint?
<i>My child’s teacher often disciplines my child for what seem to be small infractions. It seems that the teacher is targeting my child.</i>	This complaint as reported here likely would not qualify as a formal complaint because it likely does not involve a violation of the school’s charter or of state charter law. As such, it will probably not qualify as something that the school’s authorizer can take formal action on.	<p>The parent should check the school’s charter and discipline policies to ensure that the complaint does not constitute a charter or policy violation. If the infractions and discipline measures fall under the school’s charter and policy guidelines, then the parent should work with the school leadership and Board to resolve this issue. In that case, the complaint would likely remain informal.</p> <p>However, if the parent finds that the infractions and discipline measures do fall outside of the school’s charter and discipline policies, and if the parent has tried to address this issue with the school’s leadership and Board without a satisfactory result, a formal complaint can and should be filed with the school’s authorizer.</p>
<i>My child is not receiving his/her mandated IEP services during school hours. I attempted to resolve this issue with the school’s principal and then the Board, but received an inadequate or unsatisfactory response.</i>	This complaint likely does qualify as a formal complaint, as the provision of IEP services is mandated under federal and state education laws. Additionally, the parent is unsatisfied with the outcome of his/her previous attempts to informally resolve this complaint at the school level.	The parent should contact the school’s authorizer to determine its procedures for submitting a formal complaint. He or she should be able to document the attempts to resolve the issue at the school level.

**Step 4: Appeal to the New York State Board of Regents**

If after going through the first three levels of the complaint process you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you may write to the New York State Board of Regents (New York State Education Department, Charter School Office, Room 465 EBA, 89 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12234), call them at (518) 474-1762; or send an email to [charterschools@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:charterschools@mail.nysed.gov) (subject line should include the name of the school and the word “complaint”).

## NYC DOE Authorized Charter Schools

Academic Leadership Charter School  
Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School  
Achievement First East New York Charter School  
Achievement First Endeavor Charter School  
Bedford Stuyvesant New Beginnings Charter School  
Beginning With Children Charter School  
Bronx Academy of Promise Charter School  
Bronx Community Charter School  
Bronx Global Learning Institute for Girls Charter School  
Bronx Lighthouse Charter School  
Brooklyn Ascend Charter School  
Brooklyn Charter School  
Brooklyn Scholars Charter School  
Brownsville Ascend Charter School  
Bushwick Ascend Charter School  
Challenge Preparatory Charter School  
Community Roots Charter School  
Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School  
Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek  
Democracy Prep Charter School  
Democracy Prep Harlem Charter School  
Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health and Science Charter School  
Dream Charter School  
Equality Charter School  
Explore Charter School  
Explore Empower Charter School  
Fahari Academy Charter School  
Future Leaders Institute Charter School  
Growing Up Green Charter School  
Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy I Charter School  
Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy II Charter School  
Hebrew Language Academy Charter School  
Hellenic Classical Charter School  
Hyde Leadership Charter School  
Hyde Leadership Charter School - Brooklyn  
Imagine Me Leadership Charter School  
International Leadership Charter School  
Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School  
John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School  
John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School  
KIPP Academy Charter School  
KIPP AMP Charter School

KIPP Infinity Charter School  
Lefferts Gardens Charter School  
Manhattan Charter School  
Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School  
Mott Haven Academy Charter School  
New Heights Academy Charter School  
New York Center for Autism Charter School  
New York French American Charter School  
NYC Charter High School for Architecture, Engineering and Construction Industries (AECI)  
Opportunity Charter School  
PAVE Academy Charter School  
Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School  
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation  
Renaissance Charter School  
Riverton Street Charter School  
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School  
South Bronx Charter School for International Cultures and the Arts  
South Bronx Classical Charter School  
St. Hope Leadership Academy Charter School  
Staten Island Community Charter School  
Summit Academy Charter School  
Teaching Firms of America-Professional Preparatory Charter School  
The Equity Project Charter School  
The Ethical Community Charter School (TECCS)  
VOICE Charter School of New York  
Williamsburg Charter High School  
Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School

## **SUNY CSI-Authorized Charter Schools in New York City**

Academy of the City Charter School  
Achievement First Apollo Charter School  
Achievement First Aspire Charter School  
Achievement First Brownsville Charter School  
Achievement First Bushwick Charter School  
Achievement First Linden Elementary School  
Achievement First North Brooklyn Prep Charter School  
Amber Charter School  
Bedford Stuyvesant Collegiate Charter School  
Beginning With Children Charter School II  
Boys Preparatory Charter School of New York  
Bronx Charter School for Better Learning

Bronx Charter School for Excellence  
Bronx Preparatory Charter School  
Brooklyn Dreams Charter School  
Brooklyn East Collegiate Charter School  
Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School  
Brooklyn Prospect Charter School  
Broome Street Academy Charter School  
Brownsville Collegiate Charter School  
Canarsie Ascend Charter School  
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School (Williamsburg Ascend)  
Central Queens Academy Charter School  
Children's Aid College Prep Charter School  
Citizens of the World Charter School 1 Williamsburg  
Citizens of the World Charter School New York 2 Crown Heights  
Community Partnership Charter School  
East Harlem Scholars Academy Charter School  
East Harlem Scholars Academy Charter School II  
Excellence Boys Charter School  
Excellence Girls Charter School  
Explore Exceed Charter School  
Explore Excel Charter School  
Family Life Academy Charter School  
Family Life Academy Charter School II  
Family Life Academy Charter School III  
Girls Preparatory Charter School of New York  
Girls Preparatory Charter School of the Bronx  
Grand Concourse Academy Charter School  
Harbor Science and Arts Charter School  
Harlem Link Charter School  
Harlem Prep Charter School  
Harlem Village Academy Charter School  
Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School  
Heketi Community Charter School  
Icahn Charter School  
Icahn Charter School 2  
Icahn Charter School 3  
Icahn Charter School 4  
Icahn Charter School 5  
Icahn Charter School 6  
Icahn Charter School 7  
Innovate Manhattan Charter School  
Invictus Preparatory Charter School  
Kings Collegiate Charter School  
Leadership Prep Bedford Stuyvesant Charter School

Leadership Prep Brownsville Charter School  
Leadership Prep Canarsie Charter School  
Leadership Prep Ocean Hill Charter School  
Manhattan Charter School 2  
Merrick Academy - Queens Public Charter School  
Middle Village Prep Charter School  
New Hope Academy Charter School  
New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science  
New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities  
New World Preparatory Charter School  
Ocean Hill Collegiate Charter School  
Our World Neighborhood Charter School  
ROADS Charter School I  
ROADS Charter School II  
Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem  
Success Academy Charter School - Bed-Stuy 1  
Success Academy Charter School - Bed-Stuy 2  
Success Academy Charter School - Bensonhurst  
Success Academy Charter School - Bergen Beach  
Success Academy Charter School - Bronx 1  
Success Academy Charter School - Bronx 2  
Success Academy Charter School - Bronx 3  
Success Academy Charter School - Bronx 4  
Success Academy Charter School - Cobble Hill  
Success Academy Charter School - Crown Heights  
Success Academy Charter School - Ft. Greene  
Success Academy Charter School - Harlem 1  
Success Academy Charter School - Harlem 2  
Success Academy Charter School - Harlem 3  
Success Academy Charter School - Harlem 4  
Success Academy Charter School - Harlem 5  
Success Academy Charter School - Hell's Kitchen  
Success Academy Charter School - Prospect Heights  
Success Academy Charter School - Rosedale  
Success Academy Charter School - Springfield Gardens  
Success Academy Charter School - Union Square  
Success Academy Charter School - Upper West  
Success Academy Charter School - Washington Heights  
Success Academy Charter School - Williamsburg  
Tech International Charter School  
UFT Charter School  
University Prep Charter High School  
Achievement First Charter School 10  
Achievement First Charter School 12

Amber Charter School II  
Atmosphere Charter School  
Bronx Charter School for Better Learning II  
Brooklyn Prospect Charter School Downtown  
Storefront Academy Charter School  
The International Charter School of New York

## **NYSED-Authorized Charter Schools in New York City**

American Dream Charter School  
Brilla College Prep Charter School  
Bronx Charter School for the Arts  
Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School  
Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School  
Compass Charter School  
Democracy Prep Endurance Charter School  
Global Community Charter School  
Great Oaks Charter School  
Harlem Hebrew Language Academy Charter School  
Harriet Tubman Charter School  
KIPP STAR College Prep Charter School  
KIPP Washington Heights Middle School  
La Cima Charter School  
Launch Expeditionary Learning Charter School  
Math, Engineering, and Science Academy Charter High School  
Mott Hall Charter School  
Neighborhood Charter School of Harlem  
New Dawn Charter High School  
New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II  
New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science III  
New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II  
New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities III  
New York City Montessori Charter School  
Northside Charter High School  
South Bronx Classical Charter School II  
The Bronx Charter School for Children  
The New American Academy Charter School  
Unity Prep Charter School  
Urban Dove Charter School  
Capital Preparatory (CP) Harlem Charter School  
Charter High School for Law and Social Justice

Collegiate Academy for Math and Personal Awareness Charter School  
New Ventures Charter School  
New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science IV  
New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities IV  
Rosalyn Yalow Charter School  
South Bronx Classical Charter School III  
South Bronx Early College Academy Charter School



## NYC DOE-Authorized Charter School Complaint Form

Directions: Please complete the following three pages and submit them with any attachments to:

Office of School Design & Charter Partnerships  
New York City Department of Education  
52 Chambers St, Room 213  
New York, NY 10007

Or via email to:

[charterschools@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:charterschools@schools.nyc.gov)

Or via fax to:

(212) 374-5761

Today's Date	
Name of Person Bringing Complaint	
Address	
Telephone Number	
E-mail Address	
Name of Charter School	
Name of Student(s) Involved	
Grade of Student(s) Involved	
Date of Incident	



STEP 2: MEETING WITH THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Have you met with school's Board of Trustees?	
Date of meeting	

1. Please **attach a copy** of the written outcome decided upon by the Board of Trustees.
2. Please **write a brief summary** of your reason for appealing the Board's decision.
3. Please **describe the action or relief** you are seeking. (Attach extra pages if necessary.)

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