

DIRECTORY

OF NEW YORK CITY CHARTER SCHOOLS 2013-2014

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**Department of
Education**

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Translated versions of this Directory will be available on our website this summer: <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

سوف تتوفر نسخ مترجمة من هذا الدليل على موقعنا الالكتروني خلال هذا الصيف:
<http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

এ বছর গ্রীষ্মে এই ডিরেক্টরির অনূদিত সংস্করণগুলো আমাদের নিচের ওয়েবসাইট-এ পাওয়া যাবে: <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

我們將在今年夏天將本指南的翻譯版本刊登在我們的網站上，網址是: <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

Les versions traduites de cet annuaire seront disponibles sur notre site Internet d'ici l'été à : <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

Vèsyon Anyè sa a ki tradui nan lòt lang ap disponib sou sitwèb nou an pou ete a: <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

안내서의 번역본은 여름 중 다음 웹사이트에 게시됩니다:
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Переводы этого справочника будут помещены этим летом на сайте:
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Las versiones traducidas de este Directorio estarán disponibles en nuestro sitio web este verano: <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

اس ڈائریکٹری کی ترجمہ شدہ اشاعت ان گرمیوں میں ہماری ویب سائٹ پر دستیاب ہوگی: <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>

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Go Green!

In an effort to help create a cleaner and healthier New York City, please take only one copy of this Directory home with you. Remember that all of the information found in this publication can also be found online!

Visit <http://nyc.gov/schools/charters>

GETTING STARTED

As of September 2013, there are more than 180 public charter schools in New York City's five boroughs. Charter schools have the freedom to innovate in their classroom structures, curriculum, teaching methods, and other programs, with the goal of providing a high-quality education and new models for all public schools. Because of this, charter schools offer unique choices to parents as they look for the school that best fits their child.

This guide provides information for parents and guardians who are considering enrolling their children in a New York City public charter school. You will find helpful information on public charter schools, how they operate, and how you can enroll your children. You will also find profiles of the New York City public charter schools currently operating in all five boroughs.

Please note that new charter schools were scheduled to open in the Fall of 2013 at the time of this directory printing, and their specific information may have changed since that time. Please check the New York City Department of Education Charter Schools website for more information: <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Each section of this guide will help you explore your choices and understand the things you'll need to think about when considering charter schools as an option for your child.

SECTION 1: LEARN ABOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS

Read about the characteristics of charter schools and how they differ from district-run public schools.

SECTION 2: DISCOVER THE DIRECTORY

Get to know the directory and its contents.

SECTION 3: APPLY TO A CHARTER SCHOOL

Find out about the application process for charter schools.

SECTION 4: RESEARCH SPECIFIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Learn tips to help you research specific charter schools.

SECTION 1: LEARN ABOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS

CHARTER SCHOOLS...

- are public schools that operate independently according to the terms of a performance contract, or “charter,” that can last up to five years.
- are free; they do not charge tuition.
- commit to meeting or exceeding specific goals for academic performance.
- are governed by non-profit Boards of Trustees. These are mainly comprised of unpaid volunteers and are responsible for such actions as establishing school policies, ensuring compliance with state and federal law, overseeing the school budget, and evaluating the school’s leader.
- are reviewed regularly by their authorizers (state-sanctioned bodies with the power to create or renew charter schools).
- can be granted a renewal for up to five more years by their authorizers upon meeting or exceeding agreed-upon academic and operational goals. This process repeats itself in cycles that depend on the length of each school’s most recent renewal.

WHY ENROLL YOUR CHILD IN A CHARTER SCHOOL?

Each charter school is independent, so it is difficult to generalize about schools’ curricula and teaching philosophies. However, here are some charter school characteristics that may help you decide whether a charter school would be a good fit for your child:

- Most charter schools focus on preparing their students for the rigors of higher education and college.
- Many charters hold longer school days and a longer school year; some even provide tutoring on Saturdays. This allows schools to spend extra time making sure that students understand important concepts.
- Charter schools tend to have low student-teacher ratios, offering personal attention for your child.

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS VERSUS NON-CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Charter schools share many characteristics with other public schools in New York City. However, charter schools also differ from other public schools in New York City in several ways. A summary of these differences can be found in the chart below.

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS	PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS	NON-CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Open to all New York City students regardless of ability or income level.	✓	✓
Publicly funded and must administer all City and State exams.	✓	✓
Must meet or exceed state and federal academic performance standards.	✓	✓
Must comply with federal and state teacher certification requirements.	✓	✓
Must meet New York State Board of Regents requirements and state laws for health, safety and student assessment.	✓	✓

Cannot discriminate in their admissions policies on the basis of ethnicity, gender, national origin, or disability or any other ground that would be unlawful if carried out by a school ¹ ; they must accept all student applications, and all students who they have seats for, regardless of students' ability or income.	✓	✓
Operate independently because they are governed by not-for-profit Boards of Trustees. These Boards are held accountable for ensuring that schools meet or exceed all academic and operational goals established in their charters.	✓	
Must undergo regular reviews and audits of finances and management by their authorizers.	✓	
Held strictly accountable by their authorizers for meeting academic goals. If they fail to do so, they risk losing their ability to operate.	✓	
Set their own discipline codes, promotion criteria, and other policies, some of which may be strict but still comply with state and federal law. In rare cases, a child can be expelled for chronically failing to comply with school rules.	✓	

CHARTER SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

REGULATION

New York State currently has three charter school authorizers, or state-sanctioned bodies with the power to oversee and renew charter schools. These are the NYC DOE, the State University of New York Charter Schools Institute (SUNY CSI), and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Charter School Office. The NYSED and SUNY CSI also have the power to create new charter schools. The Board of Regents and the NYSED provide ultimate oversight of charter schools, while all charter authorizers have the authority to oversee a school's academic, operational and financial records. Charter schools also receive the following regulation:

- Annual oversight and compliance visits from their authorizers
- Annual mandatory School Report Cards from NYSED
- Independent audits by an independent Certified Public Accountant

SHARED BUILDING SPACE

More than two-thirds of the City's charter schools currently share space with other schools in DOE buildings. In shared buildings also known as campuses, schools and/or programs sharing space each occupy one or more floors and share certain common spaces, such as the cafeteria, gymnasium, auditorium, library and playground. For the most part, space-sharing arrangements among schools and/or programs are cooperative and offer an opportunity for co-existing schools to share best practices and collaborate on programs. For more information, ask an individual school about its campus culture and about the interaction among students and staff in different schools.

FUNDING

Every New York City charter school receives both state and local funding administered by the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE). In addition to a per-pupil allocation, charters may receive state and federal grants, and they can raise funds from private sources as well. Charter schools do not receive any city, state, or federal funding for school buildings or facilities.

CHARTER SCHOOL SERVICES

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) PROGRAMS

¹ It is, however, permissible to establish single-sex charter schools and charter schools designed to provide expanded learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure or students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

Charter schools must serve students with disabilities including but not limited to learning, behavioral, or physical disabilities, as well as students who are learning English. While every school must provide supports and programs for ELL students, a charter school may choose the type of programs it provides, which may include structured immersion, bilingual, or dual-language programs. Parents of students with disabilities should ask about the range of services that a particular charter school provides.

TRANSPORTATION

Some charter schools provide private bus services while others choose to use the DOE pupil transportation options that are available to all public school students in New York City. These options for eligible students include full-fare/half-fare Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) MetroCards or yellow bus service. Parents should contact a specific school for information.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

The majority of charter school teaching staffers must be certified. Each New York charter school is permitted to hire a very small number of teachers (no more than 30 percent of its total teaching staff or 5 teachers, whichever number is less) who have not yet completed the requirements for teacher certification. The law also permits charter school teachers who are certified in one area to teach in another subject area or level as long as they can demonstrate that they are “Highly Qualified” for each teaching assignment. In New York, a Highly Qualified teacher must: a) have a bachelor’s degree or higher; b) be deemed fit for the teaching assignment; and c) demonstrate subject matter competency for the subject.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Many charter schools emphasize parent engagement and participation. Expectations for student, parent, and teacher participation are often outlined in a school’s family and/or student handbook. This may include standards for dress, behavior, and involvement in school activities.

Charter schools also recruit parents to serve on their boards, play an active role in school governance, and support fundraising efforts. Additionally, charter schools located in New York City are required to have Parent Associations that enable parents to offer feedback on school policies and decisions. Some charter schools have created parent coordinator positions within the school structure to ensure regular, proactive communications with parents.

SCHOOL-BASED CONCERNS

Parents should take questions or concerns to a principal or school leader. If they are not satisfied with the outcome, they can ask a school’s Board of Trustees to address their concerns. A school’s inquiry procedures are often outlined in a school’s family and/or student handbook.

Boards must provide advance notice of their monthly meetings, hold them in public, and abide by the Open Meetings Law with respect to public comment. Although the Board has responsibility for the overall operation of a school, day-to-day decisions around curriculum, instruction and hiring are generally made by the principal or school leader. Parents dissatisfied with responses to their complaints at the Board level can also take their complaint to the school’s authorizer, and then to the State Education Department (NYSED).

SECTION 2: DISCOVER THE DIRECTORY

The charter school directory is divided into sections by borough. Each section includes the profile of every charter school located in that borough, in alphabetical order. Here are the explanations of the information you will find on each charter school page:

SCHOOL MISSION

A brief description that explains each school's mission and approach to learning.

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Located at the left side of each directory page, this section identifies the address, phone number, school leader email (if provided), fax number and other important information.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Located at the bottom left corner of each directory page, this section highlights the charter school's community school district, whether the school is housed in a private facility or one owned by the DOE, the charter school authorizer, the year the school opened, and its school year start and end dates for the previous year.

ENROLLMENT

This section is located at the top right side of the directory page. The information found under Enrollment focuses on the application deadline, current and expected grade span as well as current and proposed total enrollment. It also names a school's additional enrollment preferences. Every charter school is required to give preference in admission to children residing in the community school district (CSD) in which the school is located, and siblings of students who are already enrolled are also given preference. However, charter schools may also have additional enrollment preferences such as ones for students at risk of academic failure, English Language Learners, and/or students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This section is located in the middle right side of the directory page, and covers additional information that parents may find helpful when researching charter schools. This includes yes-or-no information regarding whether or not a school offers: a uniform dress code, bus service, MetroCards, an extended school year, an extended school day, or extracurricular activities. Please contact a charter school individually if you would like more information on any of these additional offerings.

ACCOUNTABILITY DATA

This table provides information on several accountability measures used by the NYC DOE. The first measures, when applicable, are the percentages of students who scored at or above proficient on New York State English Language Arts (ELA) and Math tests for the years 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012.

This table also provides NYC Progress Report grades, where applicable, for the years 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012. Progress Reports provide information to parents, teachers, principals, and school communities about schools' strengths and weaknesses, emphasizing how far students have come in the past year. Progress Report grades, which range from A to F, are based on multiple sections: student progress, student performance, school environment and (for high schools only) college and career readiness. In each section, a school's results are compared to the results of other schools serving similar students and to all schools citywide. You can use the Progress Report to compare schools, highlight areas in which your child's school is performing well, and identify ways your child's school can improve. Each

school also receives a Progress Report Overview that summarizes the key points of the report. You can find more information on the Progress Report, as well as individual schools' Progress Reports, at <http://schools.nyc.gov/progressreport>.

This table also provides graduation rates for schools where this accountability measure is applicable. The graduation rate is represented by a percentage. Graduation rates for a given year indicate the percentage of students who entered ninth grade four years earlier who earned either a Local or Regents diploma by the end of their fourth year, including August graduates (e.g., the graduation rate for the 2011-2012 school year is based on students who entered ninth grade in the 2008-2009 school year). Graduation rates reported here match those reported in a school's Progress Report.

CURRENT GRADES SERVED

The table at the top right corner of each directory page is a visual representation of the grades served at the school in school year 2012-2013, unless the school is starting to operate in school year 2013-14. Please note that charter schools may not accept applications for each grade that they serve, so it is important to contact each school and determine this information before applying.

SECTION 3: APPLY TO A CHARTER SCHOOL

ELIGIBILITY

If your child qualifies for admission to a New York City public school, he or she also qualifies for admission to a public charter school. Your child must be:

1. A resident of New York City;
2. Five years old by December 31 of the year he or she first enrolls, if enrolling in Kindergarten; or according to the individual school's policy.
3. Under 21 years old and cannot have received a high school diploma.

Every charter school has its own application and lottery. It is your right to apply to as many charter schools as you want. Contact each school individually to learn more about application procedures and deadlines.

APPLICATION

Charter schools generally accept applications for the following school year until April 1 at the earliest, and most schools conduct admissions lotteries during the month of April.

You should contact each school individually to obtain an application. You can do this by phone or in person and many schools also post applications on their websites. Additionally, most—but not all—charter schools use the New York City Charter School Center's Common Online Charter School Application, which allows parents to apply to multiple charter schools at one time. Parents can access this application via the Charter School Center's website at www.nyccharterschools.org.

While filling out an application, parents are not required to give information about their child's special education needs or whether he or she is an English Language Learner, although some schools that offer lottery preferences to these students may give parents the chance to volunteer this information. Once a child has been accepted into a charter school, parents can expect questions from school officials that help them evaluate the student's needs.

LOTTERY

If the number of school applications exceeds the number of seats available in any grade for which it accepts applications, a charter school is required to hold a lottery or other random selection process. During a lottery, charter schools randomly draw student names until all seats are filled. Once all the seats are filled, students who are not accepted are added to a waiting list in the order their names are drawn. Parents are notified if their child has been admitted or placed on the school's waiting list. To ensure impartiality, charter schools sometimes invite public officials to oversee lotteries, or hire an auditing firm or outside legal entity to conduct the lottery.

ENROLLMENT

After your child has been accepted, you must notify your child's old school that you will be transferring him or her to a charter school. The charter school will send you any forms you need to fill out in order to complete the registration process. Necessary documents for registration include your child's birth certificate or passport; immunization records; and proof of address. Please keep in mind that enrollment procedures may vary among charter schools.

SECTION 4: RESEARCH SPECIFIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Even before reviewing test performance or other academic indicators, you should first take the time to understand a particular school's philosophy and culture. By talking with students, principals, teachers and parents, and asking questions about everything from academic goals to discipline policies, parents can make an informed decision about whether a school will be a good fit for their child. Below is a list of questions that might help inform your decision to apply to a given school:

1. Is this school a good fit for my child's individual needs?
2. What are the latest test scores on the state-wide examinations in English and Math?
3. How are art, music, and extracurricular activities part of the school day?
4. What strategies does the school use to help children who are not performing on grade level?
5. How long are the school day and the school year?
6. How are children assessed, and how is their progress measured?
7. What type of transportation services, if any, does the school provide?
8. How can parents become involved in school decision-making?
9. What is the role of the board of trustees, and how can a parent contact board members?
10. What is the school's discipline policy? How is it enforced?
11. What are the school's promotion and retention standards?
12. Does the charter school share space with another school and/or organization, and if so, what is the interaction with the other school and/or organization like?
13. Does the school offer an after-school program?
14. What types of resources are available to English Language Learners and students with special needs?
15. For elementary schools only: Where do your students go to middle school?
16. For middle schools only: Where do your students go to high school?
17. For high schools only: How many 9 th graders graduate? How many go to college?
18. May I speak with 2-3 parents in the school?
19. May I observe a classroom?
20. How much time do students typically spend on homework?

OPEN HOUSES

Most charter schools offer open houses in advance of the application period and lottery. Open houses, which are normally publicized on school Web sites, allow parents to tour a school, talk with staff, and learn more about the curriculum and programs offered by the school. Contact schools directly to determine their particular visiting policies.

SCHOOL SEARCH WEBSITE

Visitors to the New York City Department of Education School Search website can search for charter schools by inputting the name of the school in the search bar. In the search results, you will find search options for nearby subway and bus stops, driving directions, and school-level information including: address, currently served grades, school website, statistics, and more.

SCHOOL SEARCH WEBSITE

Visit the school search website and the Charter School Directory to learn more about the charter schools you find interesting.

<http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolsearch>