

# AN INTRODUCTION TO CHARTER SCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA

## ABOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools of choice that are independently run by a nonprofit community board and authorized by an elected board, either a local school board or the state board of elementary and secondary education. Charter schools are different from traditional district schools in three ways:

### CHOICE

Parents select the school their child attends, instead of being assigned to a school based on where they live. Teachers and principals choose to work in the school.

### AUTONOMY

Charter schools are free to make timely decisions about developing curricula, structuring the school day, and hiring teachers and staff who meet the needs of their students.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

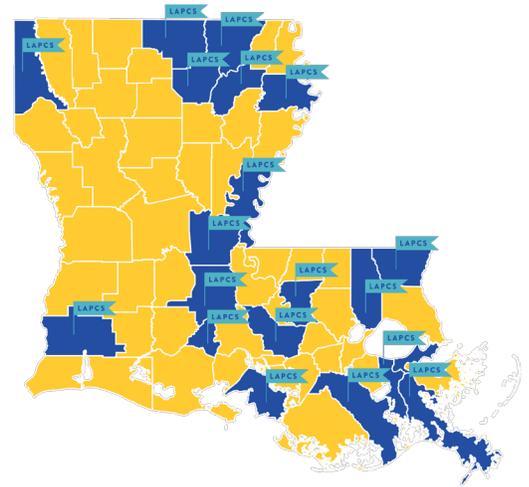
Charter schools are governed by a nonprofit community board and are held to high academic, financial, and organizational standards. Charter schools are held accountable for improved student achievement and closed if performance is consistently low.

**139** charter schools in 2015-16

**21** parishes with charters

**74,000** students enrolled in charters

**4,300** teachers in charters



## WHO ATTENDS CHARTERS?

Charter school students have similar demographic characteristics to students in all public schools in Louisiana, but serve a larger percentage of economically disadvantaged students and black students.

	Economically Disadvantaged	Special Ed	English Learners	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multiracial
Charters	78%	11%	6%	1%	72%	5%	20%	1%
State	69%	13%	<5%	1%	44%	6%	45%	2%

## HOW ARE CHARTER SCHOOLS FUNDED?

Charter schools, as public schools, receive their funding via the Minimum Foundation program, the method by which the state equitably distributes public funds to all K-12 public school programs on a per-pupil basis.

## HOW ARE CHARTER SCHOOLS HELD ACCOUNTABLE?

Charter schools, like other public schools, must comply with state laws governing public entities, including the Code of Ethics, Open Meetings Law, Local Government Budget Act, Public Records Act, and Public Bid Law. Charter schools must also comply with policies set by their authorizer. Like other public schools in Louisiana, charter schools receive letter grades through the state accountability system and take the same high-stakes state tests. Unlike other public schools, however, a charter school may be closed by its authorizers if it does not meet its academic, financial, and operational obligations by the end of its charter contract (usually 5 years).



For more information on charter schools in Louisiana, visit [lcharterschools.org](http://lcharterschools.org).

Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools • [lcharterschools.org](http://lcharterschools.org) • [info@lcharterschools.org](mailto:info@lcharterschools.org) • 504.274.3651