

# Pointers For Parents

## 10 Things You Should Know About Charter Schools

(NAPS)—The number of charter schools continues to grow. Today, more than a million children attend over 3,600 charter schools in 40 states and the District of Columbia. While such schools can serve a real need in the community, many people are still unsure what a charter school really is.

Here are the facts:

1. Charter schools are independent public schools that are open to all students, regardless of income, gender, race or religion.

2. Charter schools are schools of choice that provide a high-quality option to families who are dissatisfied with their traditional district school.

3. Charter schools exist under a contract with an authoritative public body, such as a state or local school board, that holds the charter school accountable for results.

The “charter” is a legal contract that outlines the school’s mission, program, goals, students served and ways to measure success.

4. Charter schools run independently of traditional school districts, yet since they are public schools they are funded by taxpayer money. Charter schools have their own school boards.

5. As self-governing entities, charter schools have the autonomy to make quick, effective changes to meet students’ specific needs, which helps improve student achievement.

6. Charter schools hold students, teachers and parents accountable for improving student achievement.



**More than a million families have chosen charter schools to provide the quality education their children need and cannot find elsewhere.**

7. Charter schools have the freedom to reward teachers with higher pay when the teachers have met the needs of their students. They also have the freedom to release those who do not.

8. Fifty-eight percent of charter school students are minority and 52 percent are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.

9. Charter schools can be created by parents, a team of teachers, a community organization or a university.

10. Many charter schools are helping to close the achievement gap for low-income and minority students.

For many students and parents, charter schools are providing quality options and raising the bar in public education. To learn more about charter schools, you can visit [www.publiccharters.org](http://www.publiccharters.org).