

Charter school

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Charter schools are primary or secondary schools that receive public money (and like other schools, may also receive private donations) but are not subject to some of the rules, regulations, and statutes that apply to other public schools in exchange for some type of accountability for producing certain results, which are set forth in each school's charter.^[1] Charter schools are opened and attended by choice.^[2] While charter schools provide an alternative to other public schools, they are part of the public education system and are not allowed to charge tuition. Where enrollment in a charter school is oversubscribed, admission is frequently allocated by lottery-based admissions. In a 2008 survey of charter schools, 59% of the schools reported that they had a waiting list, averaging 198 students.^[3] Some charter schools provide a curriculum that specializes in a certain field — e.g., arts and mathematics. Others attempt to provide a better and more efficient general education than nearby public schools.

Some charter schools are founded by teachers, parents, or activists who feel restricted by traditional public schools.^[4] State-authorized charters (schools not chartered by local school districts) are often established by non-profit groups, universities, and some government entities.^[5] Additionally, school districts sometimes permit corporations to manage chains of charter schools. The schools themselves are still non-profit, in the same way that public schools may be managed by a for-profit corporation. It does not change the status of the school. In the United States, though the percentage of students educated in charter schools varies by school district, only in the New Orleans Public Schools system are the majority of children educated within independent public charter schools.^[6]

Contents

- 1 History
- 2 Structure and characteristics
 - 2.1 Chartering authorities
 - 2.1.1 Charter school management organizations
 - 2.2 Caps on charter schools
 - 2.3 Demographics
 - 2.4 Funding
- 3 Organizing principles
- 4 Charter schools by country
 - 4.1 United States
 - 4.2 New Zealand
 - 4.3 England and Wales
 - 4.4 Canada
 - 4.5 Chile
 - 4.6 Sweden
- 5 National evaluations of charter schools
 - 5.1 Center for Research on Education Outcomes
 - 5.1.1 Criticism and debate
 - 5.2 National Bureau of Economic Research study
 - 5.3 American Federation of Teachers study