

What Are ...Maryland Public Charter Schools?

Charter Schools Are ... Tuition Free, Nonsectarian, Nonprofit Schools

The Maryland General Assembly passed the Charter School Act of 2003 "...to establish an alternative means within the existing public school system in order to provide innovative learning opportunities and creative educational approaches to improve the education of students." Authorizers, local Boards of Education, grant charters to independent operators to run public schools after they have completed a rigorous application process that the board manages and controls. Charter school operators are highly accountable for academic outcomes and fiscal practices in exchange for increased autonomy to operate according to their authorized school design. Using curricula aligned with the Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum, they are accountable to: the authorizer that grants the charter, the public that funds them, and the parents who choose to send their children.

Charter Schools Are ... Open to All, with No Admission Testing or Screening

- 2006/07 - 23 Charter Schools Operating - serving nearly 6,000 students
 - Anne Arundel County – 2 schools, 296 students
 - Baltimore City – 16 schools, 4,777 students
 - Frederick County – 1 school, 283 students
 - Harford County – 1 school, 26 students
 - Prince George's County – 3 schools, 553 students
- Approved Charter Schools
 - Baltimore City – 6 opening 2007, 1 opening 2008
 - Prince George's County – 2 opening 2007
 - St. Mary's County – 1 opening 2007
- Counties with Pending Applications
 - Anne Arundel County – 1
 - Baltimore County – 1
 - Harford County – 1
 - Somerset County – 1
- Additional Counties with Developing Charter Schools
 - Calvert, Garrett, Washington, and Wicomico Counties

Charter Schools Serve the Same Population as Other Public Schools:

67% of Maryland charter school students qualify for Free and Reduced Meal programs.

By Ethnicity:

73% African American
20% White
5% Hispanic
1% American Indian
1% Asian

Charter Schools Are ... Public Schools of Choice

- All charter school teachers are public school employees with the full rights granted under the collective bargaining agreement.
- Charters must administer all statewide assessments required for other public schools.
- Charter schools must hire highly qualified staff.
- Charter schools must receive funding commensurate to other public schools.

Charter Schools Are ... Succeeding in Maryland

- KIPP Ujima Village Academy Charter School and The Crossroads School are the two top performing middle schools in Baltimore.
- Rosemont Elementary School, operated by Coppin State University, 80% of all students are performing at or above grade level on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), including a 100% pass rate on the MSA by special education students, which was the highest in the state.
- Midtown Academy's students bettered the statewide average for the percent of students performing at or above grade level on MSA. It has consistently been a top performer in Baltimore City, ranking at the top or in the top five in student performance for each grade tested.

Charter Schools Are ... the Other Public Schools!

