

Louisiana Believes

Charter Schools in Louisiana



What is a Charter School?

Charter Schools are **independent public schools** that are free to be **more innovative** and are **held accountable** for improved student achievement.

Three basic principles of charter schools:

Choice

- Parents select the school their child attends
- Teachers and principals choose to work in the school

Autonomy

Charter school leaders and boards are free to make decisions about staffing, developing curriculum, structuring the school day, and other factors to meet the needs of their students.

Accountability

- Charter schools are held to high academic, financial, and organizational standards.
- Charter schools are closed if performance is consistently low.

What is the Difference Between a Charter School and a District-Run School?

A school that is...	Charter School	District-Run Public School
Free for students.	✓	✓
Publically funded.	✓	✓
Open admissions.	✓	✓
Required to take state assessments.	✓	✓
Graded on a scale of A-F.	✓	✓
Run by a local school district.		✓
Run by a non-profit organization.	✓	
Governed by a board of directors comprised of parents, educators and business leaders in the community.	✓	
Closed if student achievement is consistently low.	✓	

Types of Charter Schools in Louisiana

Type	What is it?	Who can attend?	Application Information
1	A new school authorized by the local school board .	Students who live in the local school district.	Type 1, 2, 3, and 4 charter schools may have mission-specific admissions requirements. These admissions requirements may NOT include race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, intelligence or achievement level, or identification as a child with an exceptionality.
2	A new school or conversion of a pre-existing school authorized by BESE .	Any student in the state. A Type 2 charter may establish residency requirements restricted to a particular parish if they choose to.	
3	Conversion of a pre-existing school authorized by the local school board .	Students living in the pre-existing schools' attendance zone have first preference, followed by students living in the local school district.	
4	A new school or a conversion of a pre-existing school authorized by BESE where the local school board is the applicant.	Students who live in the local school district, unless the district has set up attendance agreements with other school districts.	
5	Conversion of a pre-existing school that has been taken over by the Recovery School District .	Students who live in the local school district.	

Charter School Enrollment

Charter schools are open enrollment schools

- Charter schools are **not private schools**.
- If a school has more applicants than seats, charter schools hold a lottery. (This does not apply to New Orleans - OneApp schools).
- Charter schools can not utilize selective admission practices.

New Orleans

- All Type 2 & Type 5 charters in New Orleans use a common, centralized enrollment system called **OneApp**.
- Parents rank their top choice schools and students are placed accordingly. Transfers and withdrawals are tracked in a centralized system.
- Charter schools outside of New Orleans: contact each school to learn about their enrollment process.

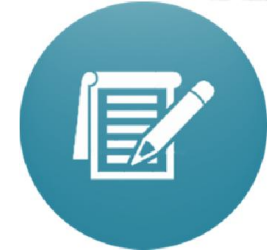
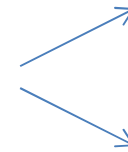
Charter School & Special Education

- **Charter schools are required by law to serve students with disabilities in the same manner as traditional public schools.**
- As public schools, charter schools must follow all laws according to **IDEA**.
- Oversight of IDEA compliance for all charter schools is performed by the Louisiana Department of Education's Office of Student Programs.

Charter School & Discipline

- Charter schools are required to follow **Louisiana state law** regarding discipline and bullying.
- Charter schools are required to report discipline outcomes to the state, as are traditional districts.
- Charter schools must follow **due process** with both suspensions and expulsions.
- Charter schools in New Orleans use a centralized Student Hearing Office and follow very specific requirements regarding expulsion.

Charter School Oversight



Step 1:

A **charter application** is approved by a charter authorizer.

Step 2:

The newly authorized charter school & the charter authorizer sign a **charter contract**, including specific requirements & a **term length**.

Step 3:

The charter authorizer performs **regular oversight** of the school to ensure compliance with all policy & laws.

Step 4:

Once the contract term has ended, a charter school receives a **renewed contract** or is **non-renewed**.