



CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- There are 296 public charter schools in Michigan, educating about 9.4 percent of the state's students. The first charter schools opened in Michigan in the fall of 1994.
- Charter schools are popular in the state's biggest cities, where the traditional schools have struggled the most.
 - In Detroit, more than 51 percent of students attend a charter school – the second-highest percentage of any city in the country.
 - Flint, nearly 40 percent of students attend a charter school.
 - The percentage of charter school students is also extremely high in Lansing, Saginaw, Grand Rapids and Traverse City.
- Charter schools are subject to all the same rules and regulations of traditional public schools, and charter school students have to take all the same tests as other public school students.
- Teachers in charter schools are required to be state-certified.
- Charter schools **MUST** accept every student that applies. “Cherry-picking” students is illegal, and doesn't happen. If there are more applicants than a school has capacity for, a lottery is held.
- About 9 percent of charter school students in Michigan receive special education services, compared to 11 percent in traditional public schools.
- More than 50 percent of charter schools in Michigan serve high school grades.

ACHIEVEMENT

- Research released in 2013 by the respected CREDO Institute at Stanford University found that a typical charter school student in Michigan gains an additional two months of learning every year in reading and math, compared to a traditional public school student.
- In Detroit, students gain an additional three months of learning every year.
- Students enrolled in charter schools in all types of communities in Michigan learn significantly more in both reading and math compared to their peers in traditional public schools. Students in rural charter schools showed the biggest gains over their traditional peers in both reading and math.

DEMAND FOR CHARTERS AS A CHOICE

- Charter schools are extremely popular among the general public, both in Michigan and nationally. A 2014 poll in Michigan by MRG showed that 68 percent of voters have a favorable opinion of charter schools, compared to just 21.3 percent who oppose them.
- More than 1 million students nationwide are on a waiting list, showing demand for charter schools.
- Charter schools are not a partisan issue and are supported by both Democrats and Republicans
 - Since the first charter school opened in Minnesota in the early 1990s, all three U.S. Presidents (Clinton, Bush and Obama) have been strong proponents of charter schools.
 - The federal *Success and Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools Act* was recently approved with bipartisan support.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT

- Charter schools are subjected to a triple layer of oversight. Charter schools are accountable to:
 - Their authorizer – a public education institution
 - Their publicly appointed school board, and
 - The residents of Michigan.
- Charter schools are authorized by a public education institution, which could be:
 - A state university,
 - Community college,
 - Intermediate school district, or
 - Local school district.
- When a charter school is authorized, it's given a set of academic goals and other metrics that it must achieve, which are transparent and available to be viewed by the public.
- If charter schools fail to perform academically or fiscally, they can, should and have been closed. Despite poor academic performance, not a single traditional public school has been closed for academic reasons, and perpetually failing kids should not be the standard.