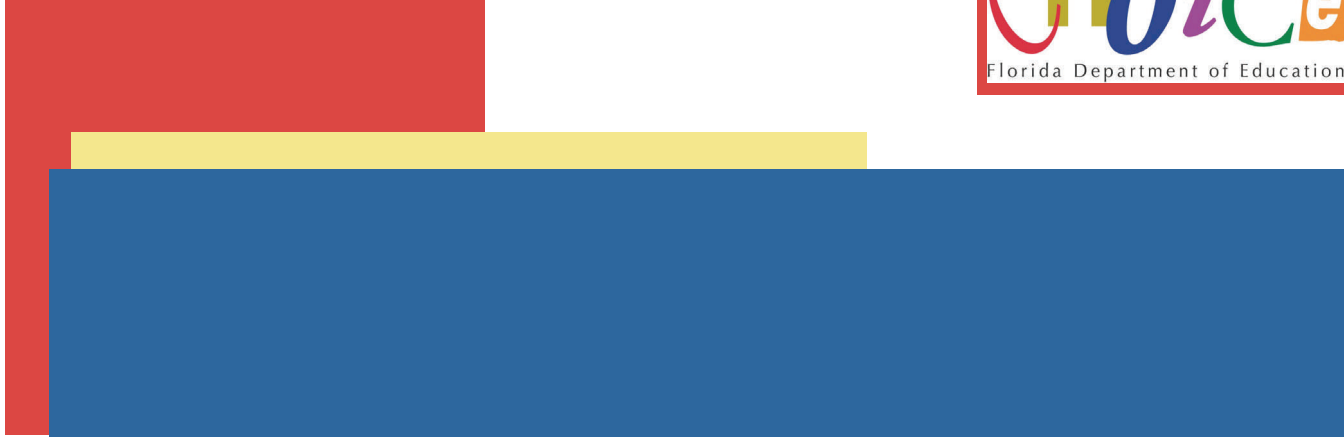
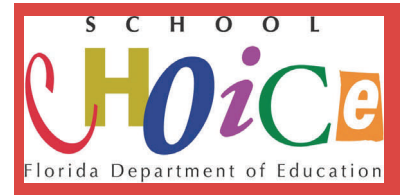


Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice

“Improving K-12 Educational Choice Options”



Charter schools were created to meet high standards of student achievement while increasing parental choice.

Charter Schools are independent, non-sectarian public schools that operate under a performance contract or “charter” which frees them from many of the regulations for traditional public schools.

Like traditional public schools, teachers in charter schools must hold Florida teacher certification, students must take the FCAT and must meet state graduation requirements, and the school must comply with state and local health and safety regulations.

Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools are free to determine their own curriculum, instructional strategies and educational focus. Charter schools are overseen by a governing board and must be organized as, or operated by, a nonprofit organization.

Things to Consider

When considering a school, ask some basic questions:

- What is the goal or mission of the school?
- How does the school seek to make every child successful?
- Is the school’s approach a good fit for your child?
- How does the school’s performance compare to other schools?
- What do other parents say about the school?

Adapted from *Know Your Choices*, Center for Education Reform, <http://www.edreform.com/toolkit/parents.pdf>

Accountability and Quality

Charter schools are evaluated and assigned a school grade using the same standards as traditional public schools. In addition, the charter school must submit a monthly financial report to the sponsor as well as a more extensive annual report on financial and academic performance, which is forwarded to the Florida Commissioner of Education.

Locating a Charter School for Your Child

To find out about charter schools in your area, you may contact your school district, or go online to www.floridaschoolchoice.org and click on **Charter Schools**. Select the **Charter Schools Directory** to locate schools and to view school grades and accountability information. Contact the school directly for more information, and to complete an application for enrollment.

For more information, please visit www.floridaschoolchoice.org or call 800-447-1636.

