

### Public Charter School Talking Points

#### **What are Charter Schools?**

Charter Schools are public, non-religious, tuition free schools open to all children in Wisconsin. These schools bring innovation to Wisconsin public schools and are working to revitalize public education in our state.

In exchange for more flexibility to develop innovative curriculums, Wisconsin charter schools have greater accountability than traditional (non-charter) public schools for student performance, financial matters, and effective school operations. Charter school students take the state tests required of other public school students and teachers must hold the same credentials as a traditional public school teacher.

#### **Are Charter Schools private? Can they be?**

No, all Wisconsin charter schools are and must be public schools. They are all tuition-free.

#### **How do Charter Schools provide a benefit to students who do not attend them?**

Charter schools bring new and innovative educational models to Wisconsin public education. As these models are modified and improved into highly successful curriculums, they can be rolled out to traditional (non-charter) schools. In the long-run, *all* Wisconsin students will benefit from the innovative methods found in the state's Charter Schools.

#### **Are Wisconsin Charter Schools expensive?**

Charter schools are funded through the same state public education fund as traditional public schools. The money is simply moved from one provider of public education (the district), to another (the charter school). Charter schools often bring new resources into a community's public school system through foundation, state, and federal government grants.

#### **How are teachers impacted by Charter Schools?**

Most Charter Schools in Wisconsin are part of their school districts, and these teachers are employees of the district and retain all of their benefits. In the select areas of the state where Charter Schools do not remain a part of their school district, teachers are employees of the Charter School. All charter school teachers must have the same credentials as traditional public school teachers.

#### **Can any child in the state attend a Charter School?**

Yes, any child can attend a charter school. Some charter schools are at capacity and have waiting lists; in these situations a lottery system is used to determine which students can attend.

#### **What types of Charter Schools exist in Wisconsin?**

A wide variety of charter schools exist in our state. They include schools with a focus on:

- Arts/Culture
- Technology
- Math/Science
- Environmental/Green
- Project-based learning
- At-risk students
- Language studies
- Montessori philosophy
- Virtual studies
- Core Knowledge
- Direct Instruction

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list of charter school types, and new charter schools with innovative focus areas are continuously being developed.