



Initial Considerations for Parents of Students with Disabilities: Choosing a Charter School – Parent Checklist

Parents report that there are many unknowns when choosing a charter school. For example, you may want to know how long the school has been open, if the staff is appropriately licensed, and if their child will receive the necessary learning supports to succeed. Think about your child’s specific needs and how they learn best. It will help you make the decision whether to enroll your child in a charter school, and consider whether the charter school program is a good fit for your child.

When using this checklist

1. Mark the questions that are important to you.
2. Check the charter school’s website for information.
3. Contact the school to set up an appointment.

General information

You can find charter school information and links on the following websites:

- Association of Minnesota Charter Schools
<http://www.mncharterschools.org/directories>
- Minnesota Department of Education
education.state.mn.us

Charter school information

Name of school: _____

Phone number: _____ Email: _____

Name of authorizer: _____

Year the school opened: _____ Website: _____ Grade levels covered: _____

Special focus of the school: _____

Location: _____

Who do I call or contact to set up a tour of the school? _____

Student information

- Total enrollment: _____
- Student ratio (girls/boys): _____
- Staff/student ratio: _____
- Average class size: _____

Questions to ask when meeting with the school

School Policies and Practices

- Does your school have an active parent group?
- Are there any extracurricular programs available to my child?
- What would a typical daily schedule look like in your school?
- I would like to review your school's policy manual and student handbook. Where can I get a copy?
- Is school discipline in your school based on positive behavior interventions, e.g., Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS)?
- Is there a school-wide behavior plan?
- What disciplinary methods are used in the school?
 - Suspension _____
 - Time-out _____
 - Limited free time _____
 - Limited electronic device time _____
 - Other _____
 - Used when? _____
- Is transportation provided to your school? Is there an additional cost?
- How are credits toward graduation calculated and recorded?

Special education information

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Case Manager or on-site special education coordinator

Name: _____

Contact Information: _____

- Will my child's current IEP be implemented immediately in the school? Yes ___ No ___
- Will my child's IEP need to be changed? Yes ___ No ___

How: _____

- Are appropriately licensed personnel delivering special education and related services? Yes ___ No ___
- My child has difficulty with _____
 - If so, are there any general education programs in your school that address this need?

- Are there clear student and school goals?
- How does the school accommodate the needs of students with disabilities who are not in special education (students with a 504 Plan)?

Where can I find the following information?

- A copy of the school’s performance on the most recent Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)
 - What are the MCA scores in math, reading, and science in my child’s grade?
 - Can you provide any other achievement data for your school?
 - What is your graduation rate (if applicable)?

Make a note of other questions you may have:
