

What is a Charter School ?

- ❖ Public charter schools accept students by blind lottery only—there is no selection criteria
- ❖ Charter schools charge no tuition
- ❖ Charter schools receive some public funding and privately fundraise to support innovative programs and practices

What is a public charter school?

Charter schools are public schools, open to all. Public charter schools are held accountable for the same high teaching standards as traditional public schools and are governed by an independent Board of Directors. In exchange for high levels of accountability, administrators and teachers enjoy the academic flexibility to take innovative approaches and adapt curricula to meet their students' complex learning needs.

Who oversees public charter schools?

Public charter schools are independent 501(c)3 not-for-profit organizations with their own Board of Directors. In addition, each school is held accountable for meeting high performance and operational standards by the local school district board (e.g., Chicago Public Schools) through a written charter agreement, which in Illinois is granted for a maximum of five years. School districts work with public charter schools to ensure they follow the agreements and meet the defined goals of the charter. At the end of the term, schools must apply for charter renewal. In 2009, Namaste was awarded its first five-year charter renewal.

How are students admitted to Namaste Charter School?

Any student residing within the city of Chicago may attend Namaste. Each year, Namaste admits students into two classes of Kindergarten and any open spaces within grades one through eight. If more students apply than there are spaces available, Namaste holds a blind lottery. The only preference given in the blind lottery is to siblings of current Namaste students who are automatically admitted if space allows. After the lottery, Namaste establishes a waiting list for any remaining applicants.

