

Charter school teachers are highly qualified, well trained, and most are certified like district public school teachers.

Here are the facts:

State and federal laws set out specific training and certification requirements for charter school teachers.

Federal law: All teachers in public schools, including charter public schools, must be highly qualified teachers in the core academic subjects (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography). The United States Department of Education has specifically defined the requirements that teachers in charter schools must meet in order to be considered highly qualified: they must hold a four-year college degree and must demonstrate competence in the subject areas in which they teach.

Massachusetts State law: Teachers hired to work in charter schools after August 10, 2000 must, within their first year of employment, take and pass the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (“MTEL”) or be certified to teach in Massachusetts. All teachers in charter schools must also meet the federal requirements described above, which includes a four year college degree and demonstrated proficiency in their subject area.

Charter public schools have some of the best academic outcomes of any public school in Massachusetts. How could that be possible if charter school teachers were not highly qualified and effective? Consider just some of the outcomes data on charter public schools:

- According to a March 2015 report from the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University, Boston charter students are learning at double the rate of Boston district students, achieving two years of academic progress in English and math for every year they’re enrolled in a charter.ⁱ
- State MCAS data show that charter school students in Boston, Lawrence, and other urban areas, where charters serve a mostly poor and minority student population, rank among the highest in the state – not just among charters but all public schools.ⁱⁱ

Bottom line: Since 2000, all newly hired charter school teachers in Massachusetts have been required to meet the same qualifications and standards as other public school teachers. Student outcomes clearly demonstrate that the quality of education in charter schools is exemplary. The non-unionized status of teachers in charter schools enables schools to base hiring and firing on performance rather than tenure, building in accountability for teacher quality.

ⁱ Stanford University’s Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) Massachusetts Charter Public Schools Study. March 2015. This study compared the annual academic growth of students enrolled in MA charter public schools to demographically similar students enrolled in traditional public schools over six years (2006-2012).

ⁱⁱ Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education