Public Charter School Job Search Guide

Advice from the Boston College Career Center

- What is a charter public school?
- Why work in a charter school?
- Potential downsides of charter schools.
- Hiring calendar.
- What jobs are available?
- Teaching fellowships for applicants starting out
- Resources and charter school groups.

WHAT IS A CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL?

Charter schools are public schools, authorized by the state department of education and operating tuition free for students in that state. Founders are generally parents, community members, and/or members of the general public, who come together and write a proposal for a school. Often charter public schools are organized around a specific mission, theme, or curricular focus. Many charter schools are founded to bridge the achievement gap of students from urban areas.

In exchange for specific freedoms (in organizational structure, mission, and academic program), charter public schools are held to high levels of accountability; they must successfully manage school finances and operations, and they must demonstrate student achievement; if they don't, the school is closed.

An example of the core values around which a charter school may be built.

WHY WORK IN A CHARTER SCHOOL?

1. Charter schools are mission-driven. Often, this mission is to close the "achievement gap" found in a particular urban community.
2. Since charter schools are mission-driven, they tend to attract teachers and administrators who believe in that vision and are excited to work together as a team to realize that vision.
3. Charter school faculty and administrators have greater freedom to set the goals of the school, plan its operation, and create the curriculum.
4. Many charter schools offer superior mentoring and supervision of new teachers.
5. There are many job openings at charter schools, and they like to hire recent graduates. When many charter schools are founded, they start with just a few grade levels and add one grade per year. Some charter school groups add one or more schools each year.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL DOWNSIDES OF CHARTER SCHOOLS?

1. As if your first year of teaching wasn't going to be challenging enough, charters often need their teachers to work longer school days and be heavily involved in the life and management of the school. New teachers may find this exhilarating, or they may burn out quickly.
2. Charter schools are generally not bound by the terms of union-negotiated contracts, so pay at charter schools *can* be 10%-15% below that for teachers with comparable experience in the local public schools. However, many charter schools make an effort to match the salary levels of the public schools in their city.

HIRING CALENDAR

Because many charter schools are expanding each year, **they often start their search for teachers and tutors during the fall semester and continue through the spring and summer.**

WHAT JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?

- In addition to regular classroom teacher and special education roles, some schools hire Associate Teachers or offer **teacher training programs**. For students in a teacher education program that includes state certification, you would usually start with your own classroom but receive significant mentoring and guidance in your first year. For students graduating without teacher certification, you may start as a classroom aide, receive weekly training and professional development, and take graduate coursework that would result in your teacher licensure.
- Some charter schools have established **tutor/mentor programs**, where you would be assigned a group of 6-12 students and would meet and tutor each student at least twice each week.
- Most charter schools do their own hiring, independent of the school district they serve, so there are many jobs in **human resources and recruiting**.
- Some of the larger charter school groups also have jobs in **community engagement** (working to establish and nurture relationships with key elected and community leaders); **data analytics; grant writing and development; and communications/marketing**.
- ***Where do you find these jobs?*** Mostly on the schools' websites, though some are listed on SchoolSpring.com

TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS FOR APPLICANTS STARTING OUT

Teaching Fellowships provide opportunities for new or aspiring teachers to gain hands-on teaching experience in a classroom, often supervised by a master teacher.

- Some programs do not require any previous teacher training.
- At some fellowship programs, there is a cohort of fellows who learn together and receive professional development workshops during their year.

See this comprehensive list of the teaching fellowship programs in public, public charter, independent and Catholic schools.

A few Boston-area fellowship programs:

- KIPP MA Teaching Fellows - general web page (Elementary School: Teaching Fellow - Boston, MA (2024-2025) - detailed listing for next year's role)

- Brooke Charter Schools
- New Teachers Collaborative - located in Devens, Massachusetts, NTC is a one-year program that allows candidates to secure full teacher licensure in Massachusetts and achieve one full-year of teaching experience.
- Match Education
    - The Match Associate Teacher Program prepares candidates with 1-2 years of prior student-facing experience to serve as highly effective first year teachers in charter schools and turnarounds.

    - Match Corps is a one-year urban education fellowship. Match Corps Members tutor small groups of students in grades 6-12 and partner closely with families. Tutors are integral members of high-performing school teams in some of the best schools in America and discover what it takes to change the lives of kids. For more information about Match Corps, click here.

RESOURCES and CHARTER SCHOOL GROUPS

- Massachusetts Charter Public School Association –list of all MA charter schools, and a job database.
- Success Academy Charter Schools –NYC; as of May, 2015, there were 16 BC alumni working for Success.
- Uncommon Schools - NY and NJ – recruits at Boston College.
- Achievement First - runs charter schools in NY and CT.
- KIPP Schools - runs charter schools in a number of states around the country, including one in Lynn, MA.
- Match Education – runs 3 schools in Massachusetts – recruits at Boston College.
- *Other charter schools that have attended our education career fair* - Atlantis Charter School (Fall River, MA); Boston Collegiate Charter School; Bridge Boston Charter School; Community Charter School of Cambridge; Conservatory Lab Charter School (Boston); Brooke Charter Schools (Boston); Lowell Community Charter Public School; Mystic Valley Regional Charter School (Malden, MA).