

# Charter School Newsletter

*A bulletin from the NJ Department of Education*

February 2016

Dear Charter School Leaders and Representatives,

Many New Jersey charter schools have earnestly begun the enrollment process for the 2016-2017 school year. This new enrollment season provides a fresh opportunity to remind all school leaders that charter schools are free, open-enrollment schools that, just like traditional public schools, are required by law to serve all students. In accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:36-7*, charter schools must be open to all students on a space-available basis and must not discriminate in their admission policies or practices. Additionally, within the Office of Charter Schools Performance Framework, every New Jersey charter school is to be evaluated based on the [“Guidelines for Access and Equity in New Jersey Charter Schools”](#) that was released earlier this year.

Charter schools must ensure that there are no barriers – real or perceived – to being admitted to a charter school. Every New Jersey charter school must ensure that its application process is open to all applicants, including students requiring special education services, English language learners, students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and other underserved or at-risk populations. It is imperative that charter schools clearly communicate that high-need students are welcome at their schools.

The Office of Charter Schools asks all schools to review the [“Guidelines for Access and Equity in New Jersey Charter Schools”](#) as a reminder of the legal requirements and national best practices with regard to recruitment, admission, lottery, and enrollment in charter schools. Please contact the Office of Charter Schools if you have any additional questions.

We look forward in 2016 to continuing our partnership to improve outcomes for all New Jersey students.

Regards,



Harry Lee  
Director, Office of Charter Schools

### **District-level and School-level PARCC Data Now Available**

This week the Department posted online the district-level and school-level [PARCC data](#), so you can now see how your school performed compared to your district. The Department has created specialized [toolkit materials](#) for schools to use when communicating about statewide assessments with parents and teachers. We hope you'll find these materials helpful in your communications efforts.

### **March Charter School Application Now Available**

The March charter application and training webinar are now available on the [Office of Charter Schools website](#). In the March application round, applications are due on March 31 and decisions are made by September 30 for schools that may open the following fall.

### **School Security Symposium - February 18**

The Diocese of Metuchen, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Education, is presenting a symposium on school safety and security to be held on February 18. Participants will be presented with lock-down procedures, emergency response procedures, emergency operation plan development, and preventive measures to protect students and staff during a time of school crisis. There is no fee to attend this session; online registration is required and space is limited. If you are interested in purchasing breakfast and lunch, please use this [online registration](#). If you do not want breakfast or lunch, use this [online registration](#).

### **District Broadcast Memos**

The Department posts all broadcast memos to school districts and charter schools on its [Broadcasts web page](#). Visit this link to find current and past broadcasts that apply to charter schools.

### **Subscribe to the Charter Newsletter**

We have added a "subscribe" feature to [our website](#) so anyone interested can subscribe to these emails (check the left side of the page for the subscription box). If you received this as a forward and wish to sign up, we encourage you to do so.