



More of What's Working for Our Students: *Horace Mann Charter Schools*

Charter schools are independently run public schools that don't charge tuition and are open to everyone. They are based on the basic premise of increased autonomy in exchange for greater accountability—and have the freedom to lengthen their school day and year, establish their own educational culture, hire and fire teachers for performance and tie teacher pay to performance. If charter schools do not demonstrate significant student achievement during the five years for which they are chartered, they can and will be closed.

Horace Mann Charter Schools are one type of charter school. Unlike Commonwealth charters, which operate independently of local school districts, Horace Mann charters are schools that are created with the approval of the local school committee and, in most cases, the teachers' union. (The exception is 14 Horace Mann charters established by the 2010 *Act Relevant to the Achievement Gap*—these have an expedited approval process.) Horace Mann teachers typically are members of the local collective bargaining unit and are paid according to the district scale. All charter schools must hold a lottery if the number of applications exceeds the available openings. Right now, state law allows a total of 120 charter schools in Massachusetts; no more than 48 of these can be Horace Mann charters. Ten of the Commonwealth's 77 operating charter schools are Horace Mann schools.

An Act to Further Narrow the Achievement Gap would remove the statewide cap on Horace Mann charters and would allow unlimited numbers of these schools to be established in the lowest 10 percent performing districts without the approval of the local collective bargaining unit. In addition, the charters for Horace Mann schools already in existence in those districts could be renewed without the local bargaining unit's approval.

Which Schools are Horace Mann Charters?

Amesbury

Amesbury Academy (high school)

Boston

Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (Pre-K to 1)

Boston Green Academy (high school)

Boston Day and Evening Academy (high school)

Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers
(high school)

UP Academy (6-8)

Barnstable

Barnstable Community Horace Mann Charter Public
School, Hyannis (K-3)

Haverhill

Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter School (K-5)

Salem

Salem Academy Charter School (6-12)

Springfield

New Leadership Charter School (high school)

How Are the Horace Mann Schools Doing?

Data from the 2012 MCAS math and English tests show that students in Horace Mann charters generally performed better—in some cases, dramatically better—than children in traditional public schools in the local school district.

The Composite Performance Index rating (a measure of how much progress the students are making toward 100 percent proficiency) for these schools was also generally at least as high—but often higher—than the CPI for the local district. However, one school, New Leadership Charter, is closing because of poor performance.

Another characteristic of Horace Mann charters is that they sometimes have highly specialized missions. The Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, for example, prepares Boston youth for careers in the health professions. The Boston Day and Evening Academy in Roxbury targets city teens who have dropped out or who are overage for high school. It doesn't use traditional grades or grade levels and offers different schedules for day, evening and distance learners.

For more information, please see www.racetothetopcoalition.org