

Telling Your Public Charter School Story

30th Anniversary of Charter Public Schools | 2021-2022

This guide includes the Top 4 Actions You Can Take Now to Help Tell the Charter School Story. Download our research-based [charter school Messaging Guide](#) for more helpful tips on telling your story, at www.charterlibrary.org/30th-anniversary-of-chartering.

1. Make Communications a Priority for All Members of Your Community

Start by sharing the importance of telling your charter school story to raise awareness, grow support for charter schools, push back on misinformation, and respond in advance of potential negative actions by legislators (e.g., moratorium or funding cuts).

- Ensure that all your materials have consistent language and help tell the charter school story broadly in positive ways. Ensure you flag these messages and materials for your school community.
- Use research-based messages like “*Charter schools are tuition-free, nonprofit public schools open to all students. (For schools: Our school was started in response to our community needs or is led by teachers and leaders from our community) designed to meet individual needs of each student. Meeting the needs of students strengthens families, our community and the public school system.*” Reinforcing these messages consistently will help the charter movement more broadly.
- Create opportunities for your community to be storytellers, such as committing to tell three new people in their network about their charter school experience or to write a post on social media about their experience every month.
- Support such efforts year-round so that when key moments happen (e.g., a crisis, legislative session) the public, community leaders and elected officials have a better understanding of and connection to charter schools in their communities.

2. Identify Storytellers in Your Community

Engage as many members of your school community as possible in communications activities.

- Identify a member or two of your community (e.g., teacher, charter school alumni) willing to share their story in a positive opinion piece (e.g., why I teach at my school,



what I loved about attending a charter school) that can be published with a local media outlet, on your blog or social media feeds.

- Identify school board members, volunteers or other supporters (e.g., funders) who would be willing to tell their story (e.g., why they support charter schools, the difference they believe charter schools make for students and the community).
- Identify members of the school community willing to respond to media pieces that do not accurately reflect the story at your school.
- Identify community members willing to tell their story on video, post on social media, and share in newsletters and/or emails.

3. Create Buzz on Social Media about Charter Schools

Social media is a powerful tool to tell the charter school story and you don't need to be an expert. By creating a presence and following other schools and partner organizations, you can fill your feed with positive and interesting stories.

- Establish a presence on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube).
- Follow and like all charter school social media feeds in your community and/or state, the state association and other education partners.
- Ask your school community members (teachers, staff, students, families, board members, funders, supporters, partners) to like/follow your feeds with a flyer, in your newsletters, email signature and emails, at events, and with icons on your website.
- Share, like and comment on stories charter schools and partner organizations post on their feeds. Sharing content from other schools is an easy way to populate your feeds.
- Tag your elected officials when you post amazing stories about charter schools.

4. Build Relationships with Community and Business Organizations to Share your Charter School Story

You can expose more people to charter schools by engaging with community, social justice, business and other local organizations. Sharing your story with organization leaders and via their communications platforms can be a powerful way to grow the number of people who hear a positive story about charter schools.

- Identify community, business, faith-based and other local organizations with whom you could connect (or are already connected) and seek a meeting or conversation. Ask if you can share a positive charter school story in their newsletter, blog or on their website. Ask them to follow your social media feed and do the same in return.
- Seek out community, business and faith-based leaders and do the same as above.



- For schools specifically: Think about how you might engage neighbors regarding your physical school building. Deliver flyers or letters to them telling your charter school story. Invite them to your open house or other community celebrations.
- Know your elected officials – local, state and federal – and include them on any newsletter, press release or other community-related communications you undertake. Follow them on social media and tag them when you post positive stories.
- Know your local media publications and reporters. Follow them on social media (and ask they do the same) and invite them to your events and include them on your newsletter distribution list.
- Identify local awards in your community and nominate or submit teachers, volunteers, and other supporters to highlight the leaders within your school community.