

# Academy for Science and Design Charter School

## FAQ

### **Suggestions:**

**Number the questions and make the testing one last.**

#### **Question:**

Will there be criteria/entrance exams to attend the charter school? I know if there are excessive applicants then it will be by lottery, but can there be a standard?

#### **Answer:**

There are criteria but no entrance exams. Interested students will go through an application process. During that time the student will need to demonstrate his/her interest in science, math or engineering. No test will be given to qualify for admittance. Upper grade students will provide letters of recommendation.

#### **Question:**

What are the requirements for the teachers--as some charter schools do not have certified teachers?

#### **Answer:**

All teachers must be and will be highly qualified. 50% of the teachers must be certified.

#### **Question:**

Will there be parental requirements--volunteer time, support?

#### **Answer:**

The school will have a well-defined parent involvement initiative. This is a consistent feature of charter schools and schools find manageable and varied ways for parents to participate. The school will require all parents home support for student studies.

#### **Question:**

The focus is math and science, but what about foreign language, music, art and other optional courses?

#### **Answer:**

The school's program of studies is well-rounded and integrated. Without exception, founders are interested in humanities and well-rounded, healthy students. Two foreign languages are proposed with provisions for students to find and take other languages, if they choose, for example.

#### **Question:**

Question: How have you responded to Education Commissioner Tracey's "Follow the Child" initiative?

#### **Answer**

This was not discussed during the charter's development. In fact, the entire school is based on meeting needs of each student and assuring each student succeeds.

**Question:**

Where do you think the school will be located?

**Answer:**

If approved, we will search multiple options along the I-93 corridor, Concord to Nashua. Given the school's stated goal of linking to college programs and business endeavors, being on or near a college or corporate campus is the location goal.

**Question:**

Is there enough funding to provide at least what a regular (high) school would in terms of books, library, etc.?

**Answer:**

The current reality is that chartered public schools in New Hampshire have less funding than other public schools. This school will have a professional development initiative. There surely will be funding for the program essentials. Initially the school will not have a complete on-campus library unless the school is based on a college or other school campus.

**Question:**

What kinds of extra curricular offerings will there be? (clubs, sports) Will there be local partnerships in this area due to the anticipated low numbers of students? Could a student participate on sports teams in their local districts

**Answer:**

Extra curricular activities will be decided by students and staff based on interests, time, numbers, and resources. Surely partnership arrangements will be welcomed. Typically, high school students in charter school who are in orchestras or on teams continue if their resident school allows this and most do. The NHIAA, which governs interscholastic school sports allows charter school students to continue on their home teams.

**Question:**

Does the school have a daily time schedule yet? Will it be a traditional schedule?

**Answer:**

The schedule of the Academy for Science and Design will be determined by its Board of Trustees which includes two parents. There typically are constraints to total scheduling flexibility but otherwise the school will strive to make decisions that work well for students and families.

**Question:**

Do you already have statements of commitment or partnerships with local engineers, etc., to implement the mentor/intern programs mentioned on your website?

**Answer:**

At this time, we are focused on obtaining a charter and then having 15 months to plan and prepare. We know from hundreds of supportive comments, letters, and calls that professional support will be there.

**Question:**

Have you consulted/surveyed post secondary institutions (not just in NH) to make sure you are meeting their admission needs?

**Answer:**

We looked at many top institutions throughout the country to set our graduation requirements. Our design team included professors from UNH and MIT schools of engineering and others experienced in college entrance requirements. The school will adapt over time to be sure requirements are met for top schools.

**Question:**

Will there be GPAs and ranks?

**Answer:**

The school's program is based on mastery of content, portfolio of accomplishments, individual research, and early connectedness to colleges. The grading system has not been discussed. Nationally-recognized assessments are part of the academic program.

**Question:**

Is there data/research from similar charter school models; will you make that available to prospective parents?

**Answer:**

Several specialty high schools for science, mathematics, and engineering were used as models, administered under charter and other structural models, all with high expectations.

**Question:**

Do you have a preliminary course of studies for the incoming 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders?

**Answer:**

There is a preliminary course structure for 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade students and a commitment to begin physics and algebra in grade 7. These details and important discussions will take place with staff at a later date.

**Question:**

Funding after three years? Explain that issue.

**Answer:**

Funding public schools in New Hampshire is a puzzle at this moment. State-authorized charter school funding keeps changing but is intended to have a state aid component and a corresponding "state grant fund" component. "Federal" start-up grants are not for operational costs and are limited to 36 months. Charter schools need strategic financial plans to cover expenses provided under start-up grants when the school is running and no longer starting up.

Question:

When is a good time for interested parents or teachers to become involved.

Answer:

Now, for parents and others truly interested in a New Hampshire middle/high school for science, mathematics, and engineering, connected to colleges and business professionals. The planning and promoting takes lots of energy. This is pioneering work, and is how all current great schools once started...from scratch.