



## Charter Schools

A Charter School is mission-driven, de-regulated, independent public school of choice-- the most accountable form of public education. Charter Schools are tuition-free public schools that operate in South Carolina on a ten-year contract called a "charter." Charter Schools provide educators with flexibility to operate different types of public schools that focus on specific missions (such as performing arts, technology, Montessori, construction trades, college prep, international baccalaureate (IB), alternative education, project-based learning, cyber learning, and dual language instruction). Further, charter school operators and teachers have the opportunity to be much more flexible in their approach to teaching in a Public Charter School.

There are 4 charter schools in the area (1 belongs to Beaufort County, 2 are state charter within Beaufort county, and 1 a state charter in Jasper County). Note that two of the schools are adding a grade each school year.

1. Riverview Charter School's mission is to create a small, diverse learning community that actively engages students in meaningful and innovative learning experiences. Emphasizing "learning by doing," family and community involvement, and engaged citizenship, Riverview is committed to nurturing the whole child and preparing each student for a global society. RVCS serves K-8<sup>th</sup> grades. <http://riverviewcharterschool.org/>
2. Bridges Preparatory is a SC state charter school, authorized by the SC Public Charter School District. Opened in downtown Beaufort in August of 2013, the school currently serves over 650 students in grades K-10, and will add a grade level every year, ultimately becoming a K-12 institution. BPS is a STEM-infused school employing the Paideia methodology. [www.bridgesprep.org](http://www.bridgesprep.org)
3. Lowcountry Montessori School (LMS) is a free, nonprofit, state-chartered public school which opened in Beaufort County in August 2014 and provides an authentic Montessori-based program to students from Beaufort and surrounding counties. LMS serves students in Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. They also have a preschool program for 3 and 4 year olds at a cost. Because they are state-chartered, students from all counties in South Carolina are eligible to attend LMS. Their mission is to increase access to an authentic Montessori-based education in Beaufort and Jasper Counties. The staff and parents will collaborate to foster the development of independent, well-rounded, academically-prepared and responsible citizens. LMS is committed to creating an environment that inspires children to become lifelong learners and creative problem solvers for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and beyond. [www.lowcountrymontessori.com](http://www.lowcountrymontessori.com)
4. Royal Live Oaks Academy (K-12<sup>th</sup>) is tuition-free, public charter school, authorized by the South Carolina Public Charter School District and is located in Jasper County, a rural area in which 25 percent of its residents live below the poverty level. Among RLOA's student population, 88 percent are eligible for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program, with one-third black, one-third white, and one-third Hispanic. Students were selected through a lottery process. The mission of RLOA is for the faculty, staff, students, parents, and community to provide an engaged, personalized learning environment that leads to the success of each individual student, while challenging students to become life-long learners, independent thinkers, respectful individuals, and responsible citizens. <http://www.rloacs.org/>

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