

**Los Angeles Independent Charters
Will Remain Open During a UTLA Strike
FAQs January 2019**

Q: Will independent charter schools be open to students if a strike occurs?

YES. In the event of a strike, independent charter schools will continue operating without staffing interruptions and providing safe and secure, positive, learning environments. District-union negotiations do not impact the ability of independent charter schools to serve students and families. UTLA's contract and the district's budget are completely separate from independent charter schools.

Q: What is the difference between independent and affiliated charter schools?

All independent (autonomous) charter schools in Los Angeles operate as nonprofit organizations and are separate from, but closely overseen by the Los Angeles Unified School District, and are not part of the current contract collective bargaining negotiations.

Affiliated charter schools (non-autonomous) are directly operated and governed by the school district, LAUSD. Affiliated charter school teachers are a part of the bargaining unit currently negotiating with LAUSD for a new contract.

Q: Will affiliated charter schools be open in the event of a strike?

Affiliated charter schools are directly operated and governed by LAUSD. While the district has communicated that these schools will be open, their staffing will likely be interrupted in the event of a strike. For questions or more information, please contact LAUSD.

Q: Are charter schools unionized?

Charter schools, like all public schools, are subject to the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA) and the state's collective bargaining laws. The decision to unionize is made at the school level involving schools and their employees on a case by case basis.

Q: What percentage of charter schools in California are unionized?

CCSA estimates that approximately 30 percent of charter schools in California have some form of a collective bargaining agreement or representation.

Q: How many charter schools in LAUSD are unionized?

All district-affiliated charter schools are directly operated and governed by LAUSD, and their teachers are a part of the bargaining unit currently negotiating with LAUSD for a new contract. Additionally, there are 37 independent charter schools in LAUSD that are unionized. Some of these schools are represented by UTLA, and some of them are represented by the California Teachers Association. But, their collective bargaining agreements are negotiated with the charter school and not the school district, and are not part of the bargaining covered by the media.

Q: How many charter schools are co-located in LAUSD?

There are 74 charter schools co-located across 82 LAUSD sites as of the 2018-19 school year.

Q: Will a strike impact access to charter school facilities on co-located sites?

UTLA's leadership publicly opposes co-location and the sharing of facilities and resources with charter school students, and has made bargaining demands related to charter co-locations. Students, families and staff have a legal right to access their school site. UTLA's demands cannot impact access to public school facilities, which is protected by law. However, it is likely that UTLA protests will occur in front of charter public schools.

Q: What is CCSA's position on UTLA calling for a cap on charter schools in LAUSD?

A cap on charter schools won't solve the financial challenges before L.A. Unified. It will hurt the hundreds of thousands of kids who need great public schools the most, and the families who historically have struggled to access a free education that will help lift them up beyond their challenges and opens the doors of opportunity.

Sacrificing their futures to deflect from the serious issues confronting public education financing at the core of UTLA's demands is the wrong argument in the wrong venue. Let's work together to solve problems big and small to ensure every child in California has a great public school.

Our independent charter schools in Los Angeles serve students who are 88% Latinx and Black, 82% low-income, and 11% are students with disabilities, and they are learning more and attending college at higher rates. We must continue to support and invest in every public school that serves students well and hold schools accountable when they don't.

Q: Will independent charter schools be a part of a UTLA-LAUSD contract settlement?

Both UTLA and LAUSD have correctly stated that charter policy is not legally bargainable in the current contract negotiations. This includes any changes to Proposition 39 co-location policies that impact independent charter schools; as a voter-approved ballot measure, Prop 39 policy is not eligible to be changed through bargaining. We expect that the District and UTLA will comply with the law.

Q: What is the focus of charter schools during a UTLA strike?

In the event of a strike by United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) members of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), all independent charter schools operating within the boundaries of LAUSD will remain open to ensure kids and teachers have safe places to learn and work. For the sake of all Los Angeles families who will be affected each day a strike occurs, we urge UTLA and LAUSD to resolve contract negotiations and reach an agreement quickly.

Q: Will independent charter schools accept new students in the event of a strike?

In the event of a strike we recommend charter schools remain focused on student safety and operations, not proactive student recruitment. Under the law, if a parent independently decides to enroll their student in a charter school, the charter school must enroll that student if they have space. Charter schools do not have special eligibility or entrance requirements. If there are more students who want to attend than there are seats available (as stated in their charter petition), charter schools will use a process to randomly select students.