

Dear Parents/Guardians,

September 5, 2019

Charter Arts receives Federal Title I funds to assist students in meeting state achievement standards, through the targeted assistance program. PDE provides the following description of Title I on their website:

“Title I is a 100% federally funded supplemental education program that provides financial assistance to local educational agencies to improve educational opportunities for educationally deprived children. Title I programs are designed to help children meet the state content and performance standards in reading, language arts, and mathematics. In buildings with 40% or more poverty, LEAs may use the funds to upgrade the entire curriculum of the school and are Schoolwide Programs. In buildings with less than 40% poverty, programs are designed to help specific children and are targeted assisted programs” (<http://www.portal.state.pa.us>).

In the federal programs administrative manual, PDE defines a Title I student as a student who is “identified as failing, or most at risk of failing, to meet the state’s challenging student academic achievement standards.” Furthermore, PDE requires school districts to define a set of objective criteria that are uniformly applied to all students at each grade level to identify students who meet this definition.

Any student who meets the school’s criteria is eligible to participate in Title I support services. A common misconception is that only students who are low-income are eligible for support. This is not true. Any student who is considered at risk of failing to meet the state’s academic standards is eligible to receive support. Any student who is identified as Title I eligible will receive a school-parent/guardian compact that outlines the expectations of all stakeholders in supporting the child. Back-to-school night includes a Title 1 meeting which provides more detail about our Title 1 program, how students are identified and qualify to receive services, how to understand PA state standards and assessments, how to monitor student progress and communicate with teachers, etc. This information can also be found in the student handbook, which all students receive the first week of school.

Because Charter Arts receives Title I federal funding, we are required to meet all regulations of the “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA) that was signed into law in December 2015 and reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1956 (ESEA). Under ESSA, parents have a right to request professional qualifications of their children’s teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s). This letter is to inform you of your right to ask for the following information about your children’s classroom teachers:

- Whether Pennsylvania has licensed the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which Pennsylvania licensing criteria have been waived.
- The teacher’s baccalaureate degree major and if applicable, the subject of any advanced degrees.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

ESSA also allows parents and family members the right to know information on policies regarding student participation in assessments and procedures for opting out, and information on required assessments that include subject matter tested, purpose of test, source of the requirement (if applicable), amount of time it takes students to complete the test, and time and format of disseminating results. As the state updates their requirements, the Charter Arts website will be updated accordingly.

If you have any questions regarding your child’s education, please reach out to your child’s teacher(s). If you have any additional questions about your child’s teachers, standardized assessments, Title I, the curriculum, and/or instruction, please do not hesitate to contact school administration. Charter Arts is fully committed to the success of your child. We appreciate your partnership in our efforts to provide the best education for your child.

Best,

Lauren Sheldon
lsheldon@charterarts.org

Assistant Principal
Federal Programs Coordinator

