

Co-Location: How Public Schools Share Space in New York City

2012
2013

What is school co-location?

New York City's public schools are mostly small, but its public school *buildings* are mostly large. As a result, most public schools – including charter schools – are “co-located” with at least one other in a shared building. Each school is assigned a segment of classrooms and hallways to use as its own space, while major amenities such as gyms and libraries are shared.

Is co-location a “charter school thing”?

No. It's a New York City thing. Over 900 (58%) of all NYC public schools are co-located (district and charter), and only 8% of co-located schools are charter schools.

Why do charter schools need co-location?

Charter schools are public schools, but unlike district schools they do not receive public funding for facilities. This poses a severe challenge in the costly real estate market of New York City, so the NYC Department of Education allows charter schools to use space in under-utilized buildings. Co-location is one way to provide it. It's important to note, charter schools students are public school students and deserve a publicly funded facility as much as any student.

When did co-location begin in New York City?

Co-location has been around for a long time. An 1898 book about NYC schools noted that there were “in many cases two or even three district school organizations or departments, each having its own principal, in one building.” Co-location became more common under Chancellor Joel Klein, who pushed for smaller schools and more school choices.

Does co-location cause overcrowding?

No. City data show that school buildings with co-locations tend to be less crowded than single-school buildings. Overcrowding is an important issue, but co-location is not its primary cause. Are there special rules for charter school co-location? Yes. When a charter school is considered for co-location, additional plans and public hearings are required. Once a charter school moves in, a “Shared Space Committee” is formed with a principal, teacher and parent from each school in the building.

Does co-location cause unfair disparities?

No. City data show that charter schools tend to be located in the more crowded portions of a co-located building. In addition, if a co-located charter school makes building improvements of at least \$5,000 in value, a matching amount is provided to each school in the same building.

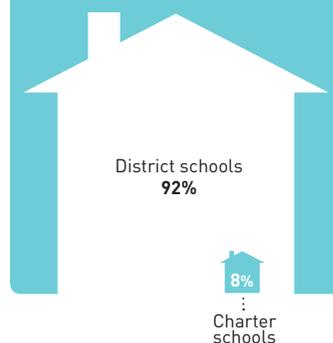
Does co-location work?

Co-location works every day in buildings across New York City, but always differently. Some co-located schools achieve joint victories, for example by working together to build a new playground or hosting a building-wide art show. Other co-locations, including those between district schools, grapple with issues that sharing space can cause. All schools might prefer to have more room, but by and large they find ways to share, compromise and stay focused on students' learning.

Collaboration Initiatives

New initiatives such as NYC Collaborates — launched as a result of New York City's District-Charter Collaboration Compact — seek to define and facilitate opportunities for charter and district schools to come together to dispel myths, share information and collaborate. NYC Collaborates documents active collaborations between district and charter schools and organizes school tours and other events to engage educators to share their work and best practices.

MOST NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CO-LOCATED



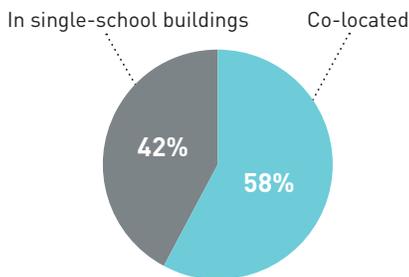
Co-Location by the Numbers

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When it comes to co-location, charter schools are a very small piece of the pie.

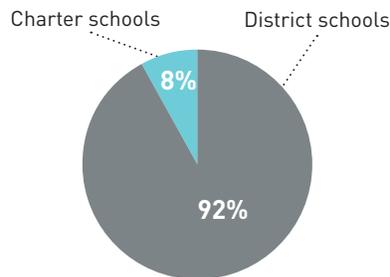
All figures reflect the 2011-12 school year.

MOST NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CO-LOCATED.



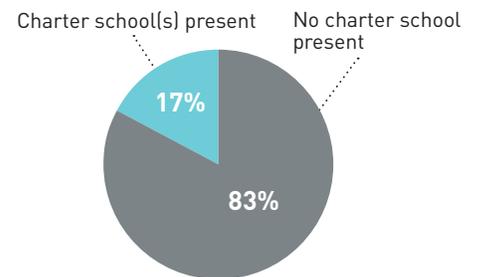
All public schools in NYC

MOST CO-LOCATED SCHOOLS ARE NOT CHARTER SCHOOLS.



All co-located public schools in NYC

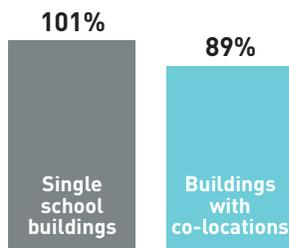
AT MOST BUILDINGS WITH CO-LOCATIONS, THERE IS NO CHARTER SCHOOL PRESENT.



All co-locations

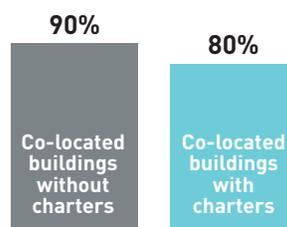
Charter schools don't cause overcrowding at district schools.

BUILDINGS WITHOUT CO-LOCATIONS TEND TO BE MORE CROWDED.



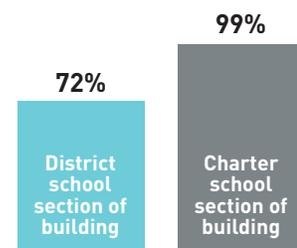
Total building usage

CO-LOCATIONS WITHOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS TEND TO BE MORE CROWDED.



Building usage with co-locations

IN CO-LOCATIONS WITH A CHARTER SCHOOL, THE CHARTER SECTION OF THE BUILDING TENDS TO BE MORE CROWDED.



Building usage housing charter school co-locations

Source: NYC Department of Education building utilization data, Charter Center analysis