

■ Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is a Regional Education Service Center (RESA)?**

A RESA is a group of school districts assembled by region that work together to provide high-quality, cost-effective educational services for each other, as well as for other organizations and entities.

CREC is one of six RESAs in the state of Connecticut that were established more than 30 years ago by legislative mandate. For more information, visit: <http://www.resalliance.org>

2. **What services does CREC provide?**

Magnet schools usually come to mind when someone mentions CREC, but managing high-quality magnet schools is only a piece of what CREC does. CREC has more than 10 divisions that each offer specialized services to school districts, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and professionals in and outside of Connecticut, including:

- Professional development workshops for educators
- High-quality educational programs for students in preschool through grade 12 at 16 interdistrict magnet schools
- Adult education classes, including GED and ELL classes
- Preschool and care programs for infants and their families
- Specialized educational programs and facilities for students with hearing impairments, special needs, and a variety of other physical and behavioral challenges
- Customized educational programming for schools and school districts
- Curriculum and assessment development and training
- Construction management, operations, and facilities services
- Cooperative purchasing and other business services
- Innovative partnership programs that help adults develop job-ready skills
- On-site technology services for schools and towns
- Transportation services

For a list of CREC divisions and the services they offer, visit: <http://www.crec.org/about/divisions>

3. **How do I apply for a job at CREC?**

Visit our Careers page to view our available employment opportunities and for access to our online employment application: <http://www.crec.org/careers/index>

4. **How do I enroll my son or daughter in a CREC school?**

Families who wish to apply to a CREC magnet school must go through a lottery process managed by the State Department of Education's Regional School Choice Office (RSCO). To apply for the lottery, visit www.choiceeducation.org

5. **Which schools and programs does the RSCO lottery include?**

The RSCO lottery includes the Hartford Region Open Choice Program and approximately 45 interdistrict magnet schools, including 16 CREC schools.

6. How does the lottery system work?

Families submit a lottery application in the fall for up to five magnet schools and/or the Hartford Region Open Choice Program. In the spring, RSCO randomly selects Hartford and suburban applicants for placement. Students who do not receive an initial placement offer are waitlisted and may receive an offer through the end of September.

7. Who is eligible to apply?

Students who reside in Connecticut are eligible. A Connecticut address (not a P.O. Box) is required to complete the RSCO lottery application.

8. What is the Hartford Region Open Choice Program (Open Choice)?

Formerly known as Project Concern, Open Choice offers students from Hartford an opportunity to attend a school in a suburban school district and suburban students an opportunity to attend certain neighborhood schools in Hartford. Once accepted into the program, students attend schools in a suburban school district or Hartford through high school.

9. How do Open Choice students get to school?

CREC, on behalf of the Regional School Choice Office, provides transportation to and from school.

10. How is CREC funded?

CREC funds come primarily from two sources: (a) government funds, which include federal and state grants, tuition, and contracts; and, (b) business funds, which CREC receives in return for services and products provided to the public, corporations, and other governmental agencies.

A third source of funding comes from local school districts that join CREC with an annual fee of 20 cents per pupil.

11. What is the difference between a charter school and a magnet school?

Both charter schools and magnet schools are schools of choice, meaning that families choose to apply for their child to attend these schools. They are both public schools that receive a portion of their funding from the State of Connecticut.

Charter schools operate under a different set of rules and regulations that vary by state. In Connecticut, charter schools receive public funds, but function as autonomous public schools. The rules, structure, and charter authorization for charter schools in Connecticut are established and monitored by the State Department of Education. The state must approve the school's "charter," in which it lays out its mission, achievement goals and methods of teaching and assessment. Charter schools can be managed and/or funded by a variety of institutions. Admissions standards vary from school to school, and most charter schools manage their own enrollment process and lottery.

Magnet schools are public schools that focus on a particular theme such as the arts, science and technology, liberal arts, etc., with the goal of enrolling a racially diverse student body. Some magnet schools are set up by single districts and only enroll students from that town/city, while others may be set up by regional entities and/or state government and typically serve students from a variety of towns. Magnet schools have integration targets set and monitored by the State of Connecticut. The admissions process at CREC magnet schools is through a lottery managed by the State Department of Education's Regional School Choice Office. Other magnet schools in Connecticut may have different admissions process.