



COLORADO
Department of Education

State of Charter Schools Report 2024-2025

Submitted to:

Governor Jared Polis

House of Representatives Education Committee

Senate Education Committee

By:

Bill Kottenstette, Colorado Department of Education

Janyse Skalla, Colorado Department of Education

October 2025

School Quality and Support Division, Schools of Choice Unit, Charter Schools Office
201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203
SOC@cde.state.co.us



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	Page 4
Highlights and Notable Trends	
Introduction	Page 7
Purpose	
Methodology	
Part One: Colorado Charter School Context and History	Page 8
History	
Charter Schools and Charter Enrollment	
Charter Authorizers	
Part Two: Characteristics of Colorado Charter Schools	Page 17
Education Model	
Geographic Location	
Governance Type	
Size	
Grade Level Configuration	
Part Three: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Authorizers	Page 25
Authorizing Districts	
Charter School Application Processes	
Charter Appeals	
Charter Renewals	
Annual Evaluations	
Charter School and Authorizer Partnerships	
The Colorado Charter School Institute	
Exclusive Chartering Authority	
Authorizing Best Practices	
Part Four: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Students	Page 33
Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	
Students of Color	
Multilingual Learners	
Students with an IEP	
Student Mobility	
Attendance	

Part Five: Colorado Charter School Academic Performance**Page 40****Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) and PSAT/SAT Background****CMAS Performance****Levels and Cut Scores****English Language and Arts and Math Performance -Overall and by Grade and Year****Participation****CMAS English Language and Arts Performance- Disaggregated Results****CMAS Math Performance- Disaggregated Results****PSAT and SAT Performance****Levels and Cut Scores****Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Performance- Overall and by Grade and Year****Math Performance-Overall and by Grade and Year****Participation****Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Performance- Disaggregated Results****Math Performance- Disaggregated Results****School Performance Frameworks**

Part Six: Charter School Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness Performance**Page 65****Graduation Rate****Matriculation Rate**

Part Seven: Educator Workforce**Page 70****Teacher Salaries****Teaching Experience****Teacher Turnover****Student-Teacher Ratio****Teacher Licensure and In Field/Out of Field Status****Teacher Diversity**

Part Eight: Colorado State Actions Concerning Charter Schools**Page 77****Legislative Action****Legislation Related to Charter School Finance****Other Important Legislation****Other Important State Initiatives****Waivers from State Statute****Automatic Waivers****Non-Automatic Waivers****Prohibited Waivers****Colorado Department of Education Charter School Support and Research****Recommendations for Future Actions**

Appendix A: List of Colorado Charter Schools**Page 82**

Executive Summary

This report was created in accordance with §22-30.5-113, C.R.S. which specifies that information be reported about the progress of charter schools, including comparison information about school performance disaggregated by student group. The statute requires that this report include information regarding charter school oversight and support, analysis of the waivers granted by the Colorado State Board of Education (state board) to charter schools, and “any suggested changes in state law necessary to strengthen or change the charter school program.”

This report presents data and descriptive information from the 2023 and 2024 school years. This report is written on an annual basis and will present information and analysis in the following areas:

- Charter School Context and History
- Characteristics of Charter Schools
- Characteristics of Charter School Authorizers
- Characteristics of Charter School Students
- Charter School Academic Performance
- Charter School Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness Performance
- Charter School Attendance
- Human Resources Information
- Colorado State Actions Concerning Charter Schools

In this report, charter schools will be compared to non-charter schools for descriptive purposes. Furthermore, this report analyzes student outcomes in charter schools disaggregated by free and reduced lunch eligibility, race and ethnicity, multilingual learner status, and IEP status.

Highlights and Notable Trends

Part One: Colorado Charter School Context and History

- In the 2023-24 school year there were 261 charter schools throughout the state of Colorado. Overall, 16 charter schools closed or converted to a district run school, while eight opened. Of the 16 closed or converted charter school closures, 8 of those were charter school codes associated with the Byers School District. All eight of these charter schools were not closed but rather converted into district run schools. This conversion also resulted in a shift of 5,149 students who were enrolled in these schools during the 2022-23 school year. In the 2024-25 school year, the number of charter schools increased by one school (now up to 262 schools). Within the single count increase, there were six new schools opened/codes created, and five schools closed/codes retired.
- Charter school enrollment in 2023-24 declined for the first time, from 137,722 students in 2022-23 down to 135,233 students in 2023-24. For 2024-25, charter school enrollment increased again - to 136,218 students. In 2024-25, charter school enrollment represents 15.5% of the total state public school enrollment.
- In the 2023-24 school year, charter schools experienced their first-ever decline in enrollment, dropping by 2,499 students. At the same time, non-charter schools saw an increase in enrollment. This shift was largely due to a change in how online schools in the Byers School District were coded, which moved more than 5,000 students from being reported as charter school students to non-charter school students. In the following year, 2024-25, this trend reversed—charter school enrollment increased, while non-charter school enrollment declined.

Part Two: Characteristics of Charter Schools

- Colorado charter schools have a broad range of education models. The most common program models among charter schools are Core Knowledge, classical, and college prep.
- Charter school sizes range from below 100 students to over 2,000 students. The average enrollment is 518 students for 2023-24 and 520 for 2024-25. Charters are more likely to serve multi-level schools.

Part Three: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Authorizers

- According to the authorizer data collection, authorizers received nine new charter applications during the 2023-24 school year. Of these applications, seven were approved, zero were denied, one was released to the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI), and one applicant withdrew their submission prior to the authorizer board voting on the application.
- 45 charter schools underwent a contract renewal during 2023-24 school year, and all were approved.

Part Four: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Students

- Charter schools are similar demographically to students in non-charter schools, except for the percentage of students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and students eligible for a free and reduced lunch (FRL), which have both been about five percentage points lower in charter schools than in non-charter schools.
- Students in charter schools have seen a steady decrease in mobility rates with a decrease of 3.1% from 2021-22 to 2023-24. Non-charter schools have remained relatively stable and witnessed a 12.2% mobility rate compared to charters at 8.6% in 2023-24. Rates for charter schools have followed patterns similar to the statewide rates. Charter schools did show higher attendance rates and lower chronically absent rates in comparison to non-charter schools in the past three school years. Both charter and non-charter schools have seen improvement in these indicators as the state sees continued improvement from the low rates of the pandemic and its immediate aftermath.

Part Five: Colorado Charter School Academic Performance

- Charter schools continued to exhibit higher Math and English Language Arts (ELA) CMAS participation rates at each grade level in the 2023-24 school year.
- Charter schools earned a higher Mean Scale Score (MSS) on the ELA and Math CMAS assessments than non-charter schools in each grade level (3-8) and for each year presented in this report.
- When disaggregating MSS ELA and Math CMAS scores, students based on race and ethnicity, multilingual status, FRL eligibility, and students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) at charter schools earned higher MSS scores than non-charter schools for all groups except for students not FRL eligible.
- Charters displayed lower Math and ELA CMAS achievement gaps between all student groups than non-charter schools, except for a slightly higher gap for students with an IEP.
- Charter schools have a higher participation rate on PSAT/SAT EBRW and Math assessments in grades 9 and 10 than non-charter schools.
- Charter school students earned a higher MSS score on the EBRW at each grade level in 2023-24.
- On the PSAT/SAT Math assessment, MSS scores were higher among grades nine and ten among charter schools, however, grade 11 MSS scores higher than charter schools. This is a trend seen for the previous two years and is attributed to higher Alternative Education Campuses (AEC) for charter school students in grades 11 and 12.
- PSAT/SAT EBRW and Math assessment results were higher, and achievement gaps were lower among charter schools in all populations with an exception for FRL students and students of color on the EBRW.

- Multilingual students within charter schools earned an MSS of 23 points higher than non-charter schools on the PSAT/SAT EBRW assessment
- On the PSAT/SAT Math assessment in charter schools, ML students earned 24.5 points and students of color earned 12.9 points higher than non-charter school students.
- Charter and non-charter schools both saw an increase in School Performance Ratings at the Performance level. 75.60% (an increase of 8.93% from prior year) of charter schools and 66.53% (an increase of 5.59% of non-charters earned a Performance rating.

Part Six: Colorado Charter School Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness Performance

- The percentage high school students enrolled in non-charter AEC high school were 2.1% in 2023-24 and 2.0% in 2024-25, while AEC charter high schools' enrollment was 6.6% in 2023-24 and increased to 7.1% in 2024-25.
- Graduation rates among charter schools were lower than non-charter schools in 2022-23 and 2023-24. Both charter and non-charter saw an increase in the percentage of graduation rates in 2023-24 and the gap between the two groups is narrowing for each of the four graduation cohorts.
- When analyzing graduation rates of AEC charter and AEC non-charter schools, charter schools demonstrated a lower graduation rate for 2022-23 and 2023-24; however, the 6- and 7-year cohorts saw a narrowing percentage gap.
- In 2023-24, non-AEC charter schools saw an increase in the percentage in graduation rates among all cohorts. Additionally, non-AEC charter schools displayed a higher percentage in graduation rates than non-AEC, non-charter schools.

Part Seven: Human Resources

- The average teacher salary for charter school teachers in the 2023-24 school year is \$52,659, which is \$18,744 less than non-charter school teachers. The gap in salaries for charter and non-charter teachers has been increasing.
- Charter school teachers have less experience than non-charter school teachers. In 2023-24, the average years of teaching experience for charter school was 6.4 years, whereas non-charter school teachers had 10.5 years of experience.
- Charters see a turnover rate of 30% and non-charter schools see a turnover rate of 23%.
- The average student to teacher ratio in charter schools is 17:1 compared to non-charter schools with 16:1.
- 63.81% of charter school teachers hold a teacher license compared to 92.73% among non-charter schools.

Introduction

Purpose

This report was created in accordance with §22-30.5-113, C.R.S., which requires reporting to the Governor and to the House and Senate Committees on Education on the state of charter schools in Colorado. Following the passage of S.B. 23-287, the report is now submitted annually. The timing of the release of this report this year has been adjusted slightly to incorporate updated enrollment data from the January pupil membership release. Moving forward, the Department plans to finalize the annual report after receiving updated enrollment information coming from the annual January data release.

This report includes data and information from the 2024 school year. Within the report includes updates for enrollment and demographic data for school years 2023-24 and for academic performance data for school year 2023-24.

Methodology

The analyses in this report provide information about the charter school sector in Colorado in alignment with the requirements of the statute. All data utilized for quantitative analyses are gathered from data maintained by CDE. All data sources, except for Table 6 (education program models) were provided by the Authorizer Data Collection. The report relies on the following publicly available data sets:

- Graduation Rates: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/gradratecurrent>
- Mobility: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/mobility-stabilitycurrent>
- School/District Staff Statistics: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/staffcurrent>
- College Enrollment Rates: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/rvpostsec>
- Pupil Counts: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/pupilcurrent>
- Attendance Information: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/truancystatistics>
- School Directory: https://www.cde.state.co.us/datapipeline/yr_directory

Other data sources utilized for the report were either provided by the Accountability Analytics office of CDE, the waiver tracking database maintained by the Schools of Choice unit, or from the charter authorizer collection administered by the Schools of Choice unit.

Part One: Colorado Charter School Context and History

History

In 1993, Colorado established itself as the third state in the United States to enact a charter school law. As of the 2024-2025 school year, Colorado has over three decades of experience and 262 charter schools serving 15.5% of public-school students in the state. Charter schools have opened in many parts of the state – from the Eastern Plains to the Front Range, across many mountain communities, along the Western Slope and in southern Colorado.

Among the charter schools in the state, there are an assortment of educational models and philosophies tied to the missions and visions of the schools as well as to students and families who often have diverse, but also deeply held, beliefs about their aspirations for education. As such, there are few observations that will be true across the charter sector.

Charter schools have consistently experienced upward trends in student enrollment and the overall number of charter schools year after year with the exception of 2023-24. This isolated shift can be attributed to the Byers School District converting their 8 charter schools to district schools. In 2023-24 the enrollment of these eight schools was over 5,000 students. Due to this change the enrollment declined among charter schools and increased in non-charter schools.

Charter Schools and Charter Enrollment

The following section outlines data on the number and type of charter schools in Colorado over the past three decades and illustrates the enrollment trends since 1993.

Tables 1 and 2, along with Figure 1, show the number of charter schools operating in Colorado over the years. The data show consistent growth, with the single, decline in 2023-24. As noted above, this decline is due to eight charter schools in Byers School District converting to district run schools. In 2024-25, charter schools saw a slight increase in the number of charter schools in operation. Figure 3 illustrates the enrollment comparisons for charter and non-charter schools over time.

In 2023-24, 261 charter schools operated across the state, serving 135,223 students spanning Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. In 2024-25, the charter sector experienced a slight increase to 262 charter schools serving 136,218 students. This enrollment represented 15.3% in 2023-24 and 15.5% in 2024-25 of public-school students throughout Colorado. To put this in perspective, if all these charter schools were consolidated into a single district, it would be more than 1.5 times the size of the largest district in the state.

TABLE 1: The Number of Charter Schools Operating in Colorado by School Year¹

School Year	Charter Schools Opened	Charter Schools Closed	Net change from Previous Year	Number of Charter Schools Operating
1993-1994	2	0	+2	2
1994-1995	12	0	+12	14
1995-1996	11	0	+11	25
1996-1997	9	0	+9	34
1997-1998	20	3	+17	51
1998-1999	8	0	+8	59
1999-2000	8	1	+7	66
2000-2001	13	1	+12	78
2001-2002	10	1	+9	87
2002-2003	7	1	+6	93
2003-2004	6	1	+5	98
2004-2005	16	2	+14	112
2005-2006	13	3	+10	122
2006-2007	20	5	+15	137
2007-2008	12	6	+6	143
2008-2009	11	4	+7	150
2009-2010	14	3	+11	161
2010-2011	17	5	+12	173
2011-2012	12	2	+10	183
2012-2013	11	3	+8	191
2013-2014	16	5	+11	202
2014-2015	13	1	+12	214
2015-2016	15	3	+12	226
2016-2017	13	1	+12	238
2017-2018	15	3	+12	250
2018-2019	13	8	+5	255
2019-2020	10	5	+5	260
2020-2021	8	6	+2	262
2021-2022	6	3	+3	265
2022-2023	7	3	+4	269
2023-2024	8	16	-8	261
2024-2025	6	5	+1	262

¹ The number of schools is based on the number of CDE School Codes flagged as charter schools. The count would not change when one charter operator takes over an existing charter school, but the count would change when a charter operator takes over an existing non-charter school. Openings also include when a single school splits into multiple school codes by education level.

TABLE 2: Charter School Openings and Closures

2023-24	
Open	Close
American Legacy Academy	American Indian Academy of Denver
Ascent Classical Academy of Northern Denver	Astravo Online Academy Elementary School ²
Ascent Classical Academy of Grand Junction	Astravo Online Academy High School ²
Early Learning Center at New Legacy Charter	Astravo Online Academy Middle School ²
Mesa Valley Enrichment Program	Colorado Online High School ²
Pleasant View Charter School	Colorado Online Middle School ²
Sky Ranch Academy	Colorado Virtual Academy ²
Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado	Colorado Virtual Academy High School ²
	Colorado Virtual Academy Middle School ²
	Coperni 2
	Early Colleges Arvada
	Empower Community High School
	Great Work Montessori
	Paradox Valley Charter School
	Strive Prep- Kepner
	Strive Prep- Lake
2024-25	
Open	Close
James Irwin Elementary- Canada Drive	Colorado Early Colleges Homeschool Academy ³
Jefferson Academy Coal Creek Canyon	Colorado Connections Academy at Durango
Orton Academy	GLOBE
Summit Academy	HOPE Online Learning Academy Middle School ³
University Prep- Commerce City	Vision Charter Academy K-8 ³
Wildflower Grand Valley	

² In School Year 2023-24, Byers School District converted 8 charter schools (Astravo Online Academy Elementary School, Astravo Online Academy High School, Astravo Online Middle School, Colorado Online High School, Colorado Online Middle School, Colorado Virtual Academy, Colorado Virtual Academy High School, and Colorado Virtual Academy Middle School) to district schools

³ In 2024-25, Colorado Early Colleges Homeschool Academy, HOPE Online Learning Academy Middle School, and Vision Charter Academy K-8 consolidated with another school.

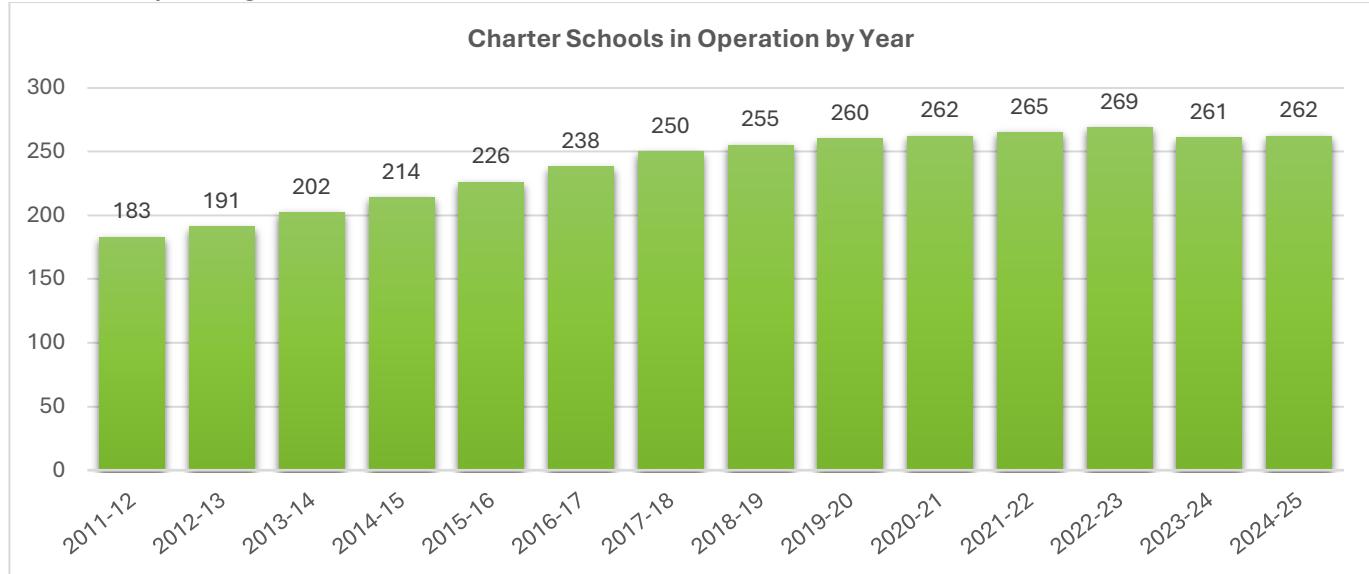
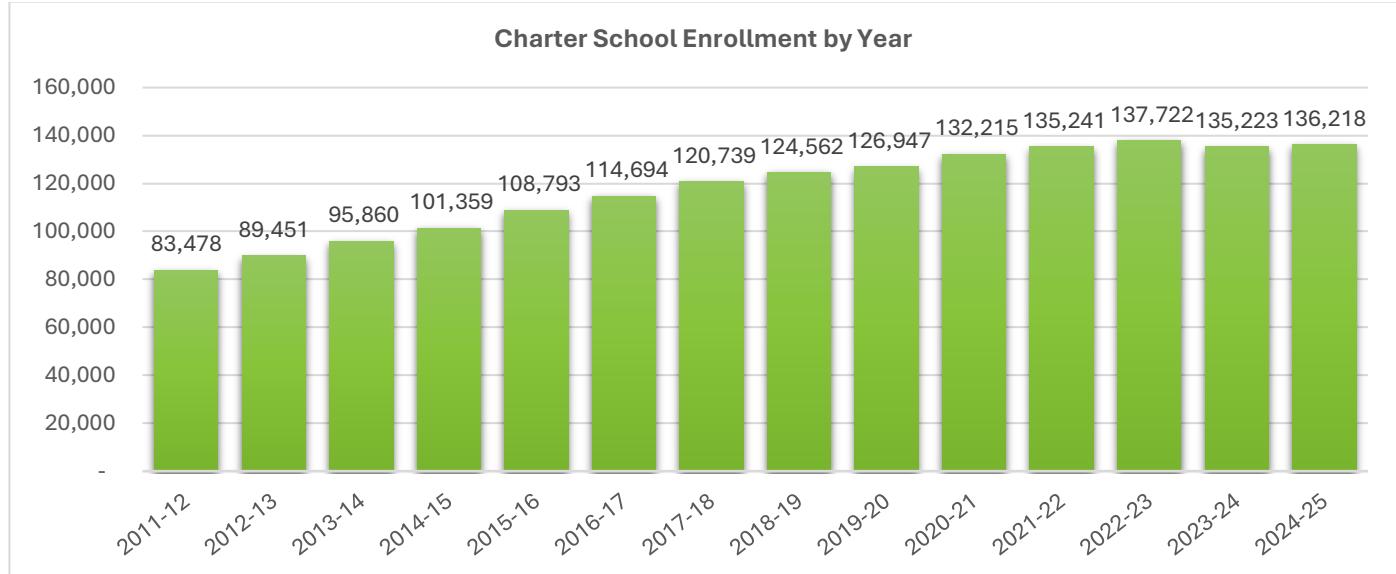
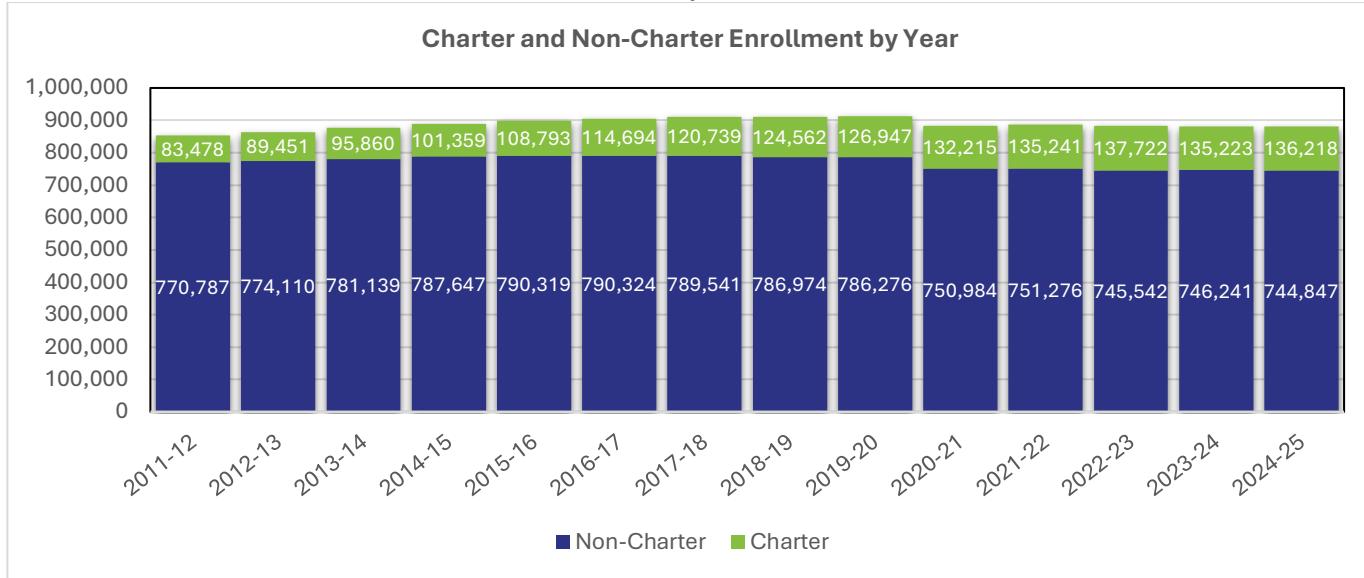
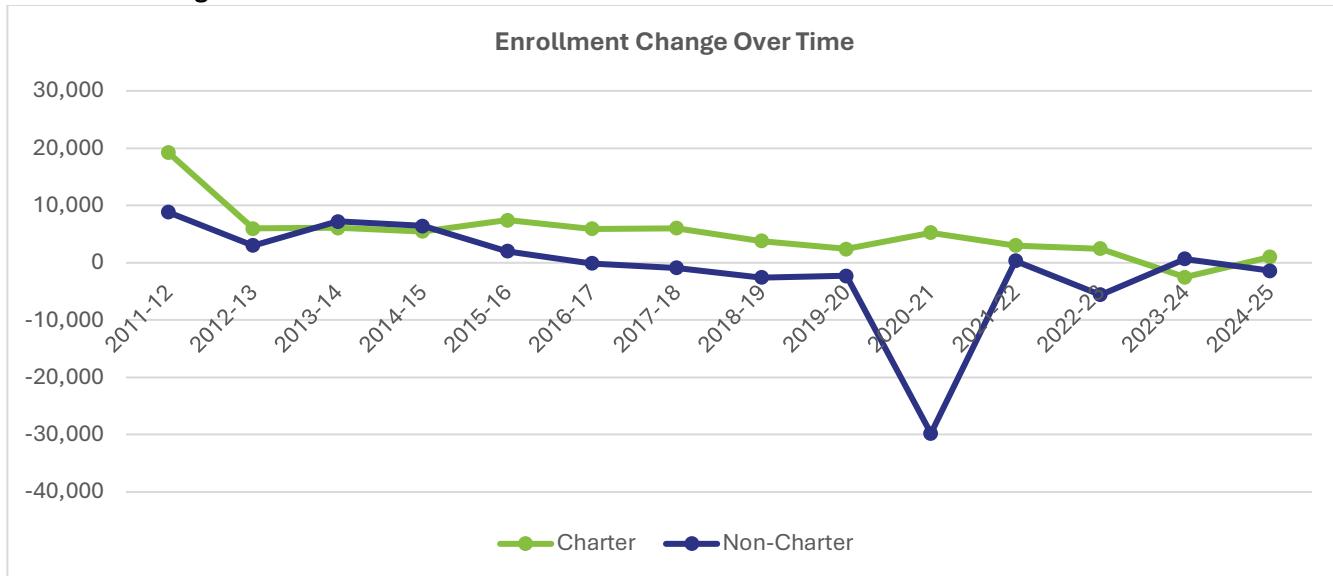
FIGURE 1: Operating Charter Schools Over Time

FIGURE 2: Charter School Enrollment by Year


FIGURE 3: Non-Charter and Charter School Enrollment by Year


The speed of growth in charter school enrollment, as illustrated in Figure 4, has generally slowed since 2011-12. Nonetheless, enrollment continued to grow until 2023-24. Non-charter growth began to slow in 2014-15 and enrollment in non-charters began to decline in 2016-17. Non-charter schools have experienced declines every year since then, except for an uptick in 2021-22 and again in 2023-24. When the Byers School District converted all eight of their multi-district online charter schools to non-charter contract schools, this resulted in a non-charter enrollment shift of over 5,000 students in 2023-24. If this shift did not occur, charter schools would have seen an increase in enrollment of over 2,000 students and non-charter schools would have shown a decrease in enrollment of over 4,000 students. Charter school enrollment increased most recently in 2024-25 while non-charter enrollment declined.

FIGURE 4: Change in Enrollment from Previous Year Over Time


Charter Authorizers

When the Charter Schools Act was initially enacted in 1993 in Colorado, the exclusive authority for authorizing charter schools rested with school districts. Thus, all charter schools were authorized by their geographic district for many years. However, in 2004, the legislature created the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) to “provide an alternative mode of authorizing charter schools as a means to assist school districts in utilizing best practices for chartering schools and to approve and oversee charter schools in school districts not desiring to do so themselves.”⁴ As part of this legislative revision, school districts were allowed to request an “Exclusive Chartering Authority” (ECA) status, which would mean that any charter school seeking to operate a school in their district would first apply to the school district for consideration. ECA is a status granted to school districts when the school district commits to providing fair and equitable treatment to its charter schools. In Colorado, most school districts have sought ECA status, and most have been granted and retain this status. Additional details on the characteristics of Colorado charter school authorizers are found in Part Three of this report.

In 2023-24 and 2024-25, 45 school districts in Colorado authorized charter schools along with CSI as the sole state authorizer. Of these authorizers, 17 are responsible for only a single charter school, while seven authorizers oversee two charter schools. Table 3 shows charter school counts and enrollment information for these authorizers. Table 4 shows charter enrollment information for the remaining 21 authorizers that oversee three or more charter schools.

TABLE 3: Student Enrollment for Authorizers with One or Two Charter Schools

Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Count in 2023-24	District Enrollment Count in 2023-24	Charter Enrollment Count in 2024-25	District Enrollment Count in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Percent in 2024-25
Archuleta County 50 Jt	1	106	1,604	111	1,588	7.0%
Aspen 1	1	137	1,554	135	1,692	8.0%
Bennett 29J	1	365	1,645	495	1,793	27.6%
Canon City RE-1	1	247	3,177	250	3,195	7.8%
Clear Creek RE-1	1	85	652	78	634	12.3%
Delta County 50(J)	2	411	4,614	430	4,524	9.5%
Durango 9-R	1	169	5,267	171	4,492	3.8%
Eagle County RE 50	1	360	6,497	360	6,312	5.7%
Elizabeth School District	1	516	2,614	553	2,667	20.7%
Gunnison Watershed RE1J	1	45	2,066	34	2,096	1.6%
Huerfano Re-1	1	86	478	82	443	18.5%
Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2	562	3,976	552	4,055	13.6%
Lamar Re-2	1	135	1,522	133	1,397	9.5%
Lewis-Palmer 38	2	1,165	6,545	1,183	6,534	18.1%
Littleton 6	2	974	13,251	953	13,110	7.3%
Moffat 2	1	87	189	120	240	50.0%

⁴ §22-30.5-501(2)(b), C.R.S.

Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Count in 2023-24	District Enrollment Count in 2023-24	Charter Enrollment Count in 2024-25	District Enrollment Count in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Percent in 2024-25
Montrose County RE-1J	1	177	6,038	188	5,991	3.1%
Park County RE-2	2	159	576	152	576	26.4%
Roaring Fork RE-1	2	525	5,846	533	5,842	9.1%
Steamboat Springs RE-2	1	83	2,575	89	2,517	3.5%
Thompson R-1	2	2,013	15,039	2,037	14,751	13.8%
Weld County School District RE-3J	1	180	2,715	182	2,666	6.8%
Widefield 3	1	104	9,377	72	9,292	0.8%
Woodland Park Re-2	1	436	2,015	504	1,844	27.3%

Of districts authorizing one or two charter schools in 2024-25, Moffat 2 has the highest percentage of students in charter schools, at 50%.

In 2024-25, of authorizers overseeing 3 or more charter schools, Denver Public Schools (Denver County 1) authorizes the most charter schools, with 53 schools under its purview, followed closely behind by CSI with 46 schools. Although Denver authorizes the most charter schools, District 49 is the school district with the highest percentage of students in district-authorized charter schools, at 47.4%. Historically, Byers School District held the highest percentage of students in a district-authorized charter school; however, as noted previously, their schools relinquished their charter status.

TABLE 4: Student Enrollment for Authorizers with Three or More Charter Schools

Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Count in 2023-24	District Enrollment Count in 2023-24	Charter School Enrollment in 2024-25	District Enrollment in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Percent in 2024-25
Academy 20	5	4,337	26,607	4,446	26,569	16.7%
Adams 12 Five Star	4	3,814	34,998	3,780	34,466	11.0%
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	10	6,530	39,148	5,984	39,813	15.0%
Boulder Valley Re 2	5	2,392	28,362	2,393	27,991	8.6%
Charter School Institute	45	23,013	23,013	21,122	21,122	100%
Cherry Creek 5	2	1,197	52,419	1,133	52,672	2.2%
Colorado Springs 11	8	1,574	22,744	2,519	22,265	11.3%
Denver County 1	53	20,206	88,235	20,691	89,485	23.1%
District 49	10	11,750	25,799	12,625	26,649	47.4%
Douglas County Re 1	17	15,622	61,964	16,445	61,851	26.6%
Greeley 6	6	4,994	22,648	5,092	23,124	22.0%
Harrison 2	9	4,134	12,386	4,134	12,301	33.6%
Jefferson County R-1	20	9,150	76,172	9,236	75,495	12.2%



Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Count in 2023-24	District Enrollment Count in 2023-24	Charter School Enrollment in 2024-25	District Enrollment in 2024-25	Charter Enrollment Percent in 2024-25
Mesa County Valley 51	4	1,188	20,208	1,196	19,900	6.0%
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	4	409	2,517	390	2,386	16.4%
Poudre R-1	5	2,945	29,914	2,983	29,544	10.1%
Pueblo City 60	3	1,640	14,549	1,509	14,089	10.7%
Pueblo County 70	5	1,672	10,655	1,546	10,392	14.9%
School District 27J	6	4,279	23,108	4,268	24,014	17.8%
St Vrain Valley RE1J	6	3,308	32,506	3,292	32,414	10.2%
Weld RE-4	4	1,942	8,459	2,031	8,733	23.3%

Table 5 shows the changes in charter school enrollment among larger authorizers, including the decline seen in 2023-24 enrollment due to Byers School District converting eight charter schools to district school which lead to an increase in non-charter enrollment by over 5,000 students. Of note, about 13 of these authorizers saw increased charter enrollment, while nine experienced a decrease from 2022-23 to 2024-25.

TABLE 5: Change in Enrollment for Authorizers with Three or More Charter Schools

Authorizer	2022-23 Charter Schools	2022-23 Charter Enrollment	2023-24 Charter Schools	2023-24 Charter Enrollment	2024-25 Charter Schools	2024-25 Charter Enrollment	Change in Enrollment
Academy 20	5	4,255	5	4,337	5	4,446	191
Adams 12 Five Star Schools	4	3,784	4	3,814	4	3,780	-4
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	12	6,505	11	6,530	10	5,984	-521
Boulder Valley RE-2	5	2,378	5	2,392	5	2,393	15
Byers 32J	8	5,149	0	0	0	0	-5,149
Charter School Institute	43	22,003	44	23,013	46	21,122	-881
Cherry Creek	3	1,228	3	1,197	2	1,133	-95
Colorado Springs 11	6	1,264	7	1,574	8	2,519	1,255
Denver County 1	56	20,110	53	20,206	53	20,691	581
District 49	9	11,309	9	11,750	10	12,625	1,316
Douglas County RE-1	18	15,787	18	15,622	17	16,445	658
Greeley 6	6	5,073	6	4,994	6	5,092	19
Harrison 2	9	4,224	9	4,134	9	4,134	-90
Jefferson County R-1	19	9,215	18	9,150	20	9,236	21
Mesa County Valley 51	3	1,215	4	1,188	4	1,196	-19
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	3	350	4	409	4	390	40
Poudre R-1	5	2,816	5	2,945	5	2,983	167
Pueblo City 60	3	1,819	3	1,640	3	1,509	-310



Authorizer	2022-23 Charter Schools	2022-23 Charter Enrollment	2023-24 Charter Schools	2023-24 Charter Enrollment	2024-25 Charter Schools	2024-25 Charter Enrollment	Change in Enrollment
Pueblo County 70	6	1,685	6	1,672	5	1,546	-139
School District 27J	6	4,112	6	4,279	6	4,268	156
St. Vrain Valley RE 1J	6	3,284	6	3,308	6	3,292	8
Weld RE-4	3	1,536	4	1,942	4	2,031	495

Part Two: Characteristics of Colorado Charter Schools

The following section centers on the key characteristics of Colorado charter schools and their service to students and families. The 2023-24 data below provides an overview of charter school programs.

Charter schools have the autonomy to choose an educational model that meets their mission and vision for educating students. These models can encompass Core Knowledge, STEM, Montessori, and more, while their geographic setting spans from rural, urban, and other types. Furthermore, their governance structures can be Single Site, Charter Management Organization, Education Management Organization, and Network. Enrollment sizes and grade configurations vary greatly throughout Colorado.

Education Model

An education model is recognized as a guiding educational philosophy for a school that helps build consistency and coherence for the programs offered at the school. Typically, education models are based on beliefs about how children learn and the role of schools in supporting student learning. Through the annual authorizer's data collection, Education Models for each charter were required by authorizers and is seen in Table 6.

TABLE 6: Charter School Program Models

Educational Model	Number of Schools
Alternative Education	13
Arts Integration	8
Career and Technical Education	3
Classical	31
College Prep	26
Community School	9
Core Knowledge	59
Dual Language/Language Immersion	8
Early College	12
Expeditionary	12
Experiential	3
Gifted and Talented	2
Health and Wellness	2
Montessori	15
Online	5
Other (Gifted/Academic Challenged, Military)	3
Personalized Learning	15
Project Based	13
STEAM/STEM	15
Traditional	3
Waldorf	4

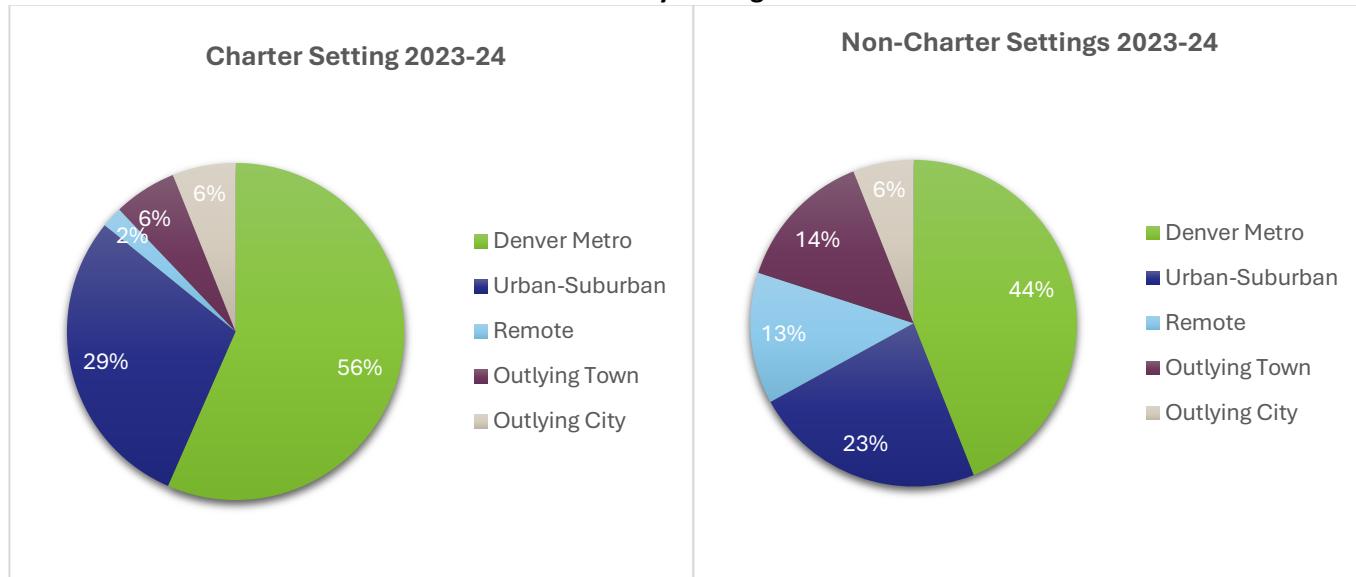
Education models range from schools that hold a belief that students need to be taught a foundation of knowledge in a structured way to contribute meaningfully to society (classical, core knowledge, etc.) to models that are guided by a belief that children construct their own knowledge and that the school's role is to provide opportunities for students to gain understanding through hands-on activities (Montessori, expeditionary learning, etc.). Another education model may be driven by a more targeted focus around student needs or skill-driven focus, such as STEM, performing arts, or post-secondary and workforce readiness. Also, charter schools operate many of the state's Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) as well as a few of the state's multi-district online schools.

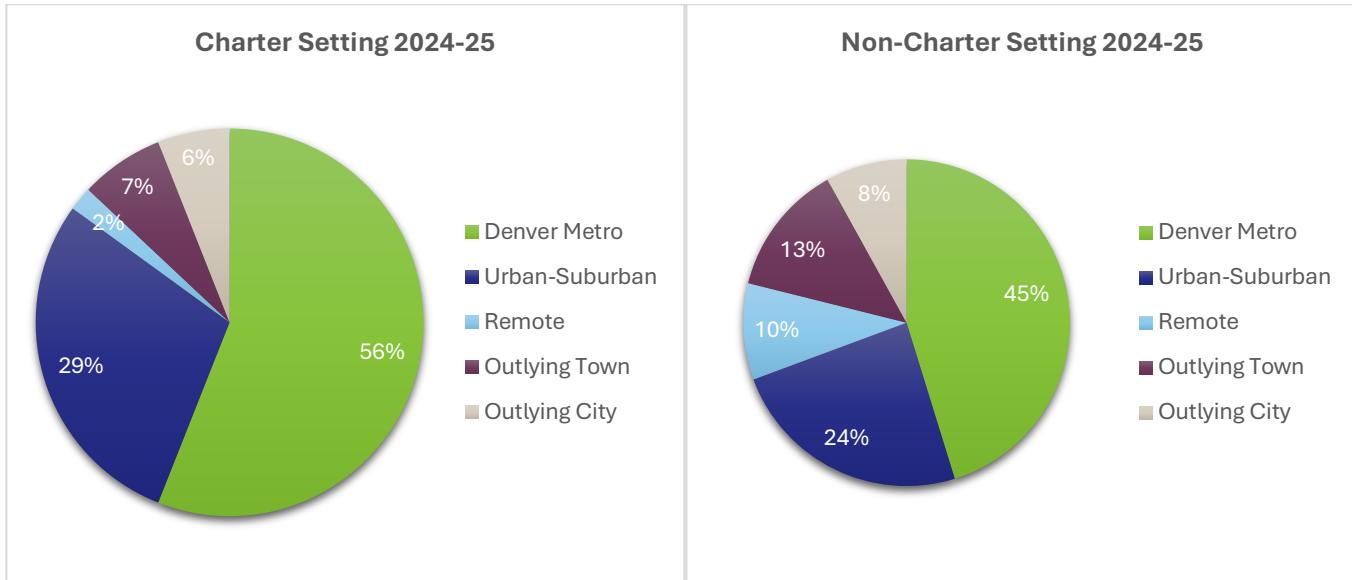
Geographic Location

CDE classifies school districts, Boards of Cooperative Services (BOCES), and schools in Colorado into five main categories: Denver Metro, Urban- Suburban, Outlying City, Outlying Town, and Remote. Both district-managed schools and charter-managed schools have substantial presence in each geographical location; however, the distributions between each vary.

Figure 5 displays the distribution of charter schools and charter enrollment across locations in Colorado for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. More than half of charter schools in the state are in the Denver Metro region, with the next highest concentration found in Urban-Suburban regions. Both settings also have a higher relative share of charter schools than non-charter schools. These trends are generally consistent with prior years.

FIGURE 5: Charter Schools and Non-Charter Schools by Setting





Charter schools are less likely to be established in outlying towns and remote regions of the state as compared to non-charter schools. Various factors may contribute to this trend, including challenges associated with operating small schools, the overall size of the school district, and the limited concentration of educational supports and resources available to sustain the ongoing operation of diverse models. Although less common when compared to non-charter distributions, Colorado is recognized nationally for its diverse representation of charter schools across different geographic areas, and there are numerous instances of successful charter schools operating in remote regions, often through intentional collaboration with communities and school districts.

Governance Type

In accordance with state law, all charter schools in Colorado are public schools and are required to be nonprofit organizations under the governance of an independent governing board. While a significant portion of charter schools in the state operate as single site schools, often referred to as “independent charter schools” or “mom and pop charter schools,” many charter schools have affiliations with a larger organization that provide support for the management of multiple schools. The terminology used to describe these relationships can vary and may include:

- Charter Management Organization (CMO) - This is a widely used term, often referring to a non-profit organization that provides central management support to schools. In many cases, public stakeholders would not view a CMO as distinct from the school as many CMOs evolved from the replication and/or expansion of high-performing single-site schools; however, the CMO can operate as a separate legal entity. In such cases, a charter school’s board retains the authority to terminate or modify a contract with a CMO if they choose to do so.
- Charter Network - This term has specific statutory relevance in Colorado. A network resembles a CMO but it is unique in that network law allows a single entity, typically represented by a single non-profit board, to directly manage multiple schools under a single network contract. In Colorado, many of the historical CMOs now operate under network contracts, although it is important to note that this transition is not obligatory.
- Collaborative - In Colorado statute, this term pertains to the establishment of an organization that combines resources from multiple charter schools. This legal structure allows for the creation of shared services, such as the operation of a School Food Authority (SFA), among other possibilities. A comparable legal structure for

district collaboration would be a BOCES. In limited instances, like a BOCES, a charter collaborative can be used to operate one or more schools.

- External Management Organization (EMO) - This widely used national term often refers to a for-profit organization that provides varying levels of central management support to schools. EMOs are typically separate legal entities and may provide support for a group of schools that may or may not have similar educational models. Since charter schools in Colorado must be governed by a non-profit board of directors, a for-profit EMO is not a governance type but would instead be treated as an Education Service Provider (ESP) where the school's non-profit board of directors would retain the authority to retain or terminate services with the EMO as they see fit.
- Other, less formal structures - It is not uncommon for an organization to maintain charter contracts for two or more schools (or school codes) without formally designating itself as a CMO or network. This scenario often pertains to a high performing single site charter school that establishes a second campus, expands grade levels through a new contract or authorization, or replicates another school.

Table 7 provides information regarding organizations in Colorado that manage one or more school codes (please note that a single charter contract may have multiple school codes, such as one for elementary grades, one for middle grades, and one for high school grades). The table includes an identifier to distinguish between national management organizations and local, Colorado-based organizations. In limited circumstances, some organizations have affiliations with larger national entities but operate in Colorado with a significant degree of local autonomy. These organizations are described in the table as "Local/National Management".

TABLE 7: Organizations with Management Responsibilities in 2024-25 for One or More Charter Schools

Organization Name	Organization Type	Number of Schools in Colorado
Accel Schools Colorado LLC	National Management	1 ⁵
Addenbrooke Classical Academy	Local Management	2
Ascent Classical Academies	Local/National Management	4
Atlas Preparatory School	Local Management	3
Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy	Local Management	3
CIVICA Education Foundation	Local/National Management	1
Colorado Early Colleges	Local Management	4
Colorado High School Charter, Inc.	Local Management	2
Community Leadership Academy	Local Management	3
Compass Montessori Schools	Local Management	2
Compass for Lifelong Discovery	Local Management	2

⁵ Indicates that Organization Type is non-profit.

Organization Name	Organization Type	Number of Schools in Colorado
Denver School of Science and Technology, Inc.	Local Management	14
Global Village Collaborative	Local Management	3
Highline Academy Schools	Local Management	2
Hope Online Learning Academy CO-OP	Local Management	1
ILEAD Schools Development	Local/National Management	1
James Irwin Schools	Local Management	6
Jefferson Academy	Local Management	3
KIPP Colorado Schools	Local/National Management	6
Monument Academy	Local Management	2
National Heritage Academies	National Management	4
New America School	Local/National Management	3 ⁵
New Legacy Charter Schools	Local Management	2
Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences	Local Management	3
Rite of Passage, Inc.	National Management	1
Rocky Mountain Schools	Local Management	12 ⁶
Swallows Charter	Local Management	2
The Classical Academy	Local Management	4
The Doral Academy Inc.	Local/National Management	1
The Girls Athletic Leadership Schools of Denver	Local Management	2
Third Future Schools	Local/National Management	2
Union Colony Schools	Local Management	2
University Preparatory Schools	Local Management	3
Vanguard Classical School, Inc.	Local Management	2
Villa Bella Expeditionary School	Local Management	2

⁶ In July 2023, STRIVE Prep School and Rocky Mountain Preparatory Schools merged under a new charter network; Rocky Mountain Schools.

Organization Name	Organization Type	Number of Schools in Colorado
Vision Home & Community, Inc.	Local Management	2
Windsor Charter Academy	Local Management	3

Out of the 262 charter schools in the 2024-25 school year, 90.8% are locally managed (91 through a local management organization and 147 as single-site schools). Additionally, 2.3% of Colorado charter schools, or six schools, are under national management. There is also a hybrid category, where 18 schools or 6.9% of charter, are managed by a Colorado entity but that entity also has ties to a national organization or is a local organization that also supports schools in other states.

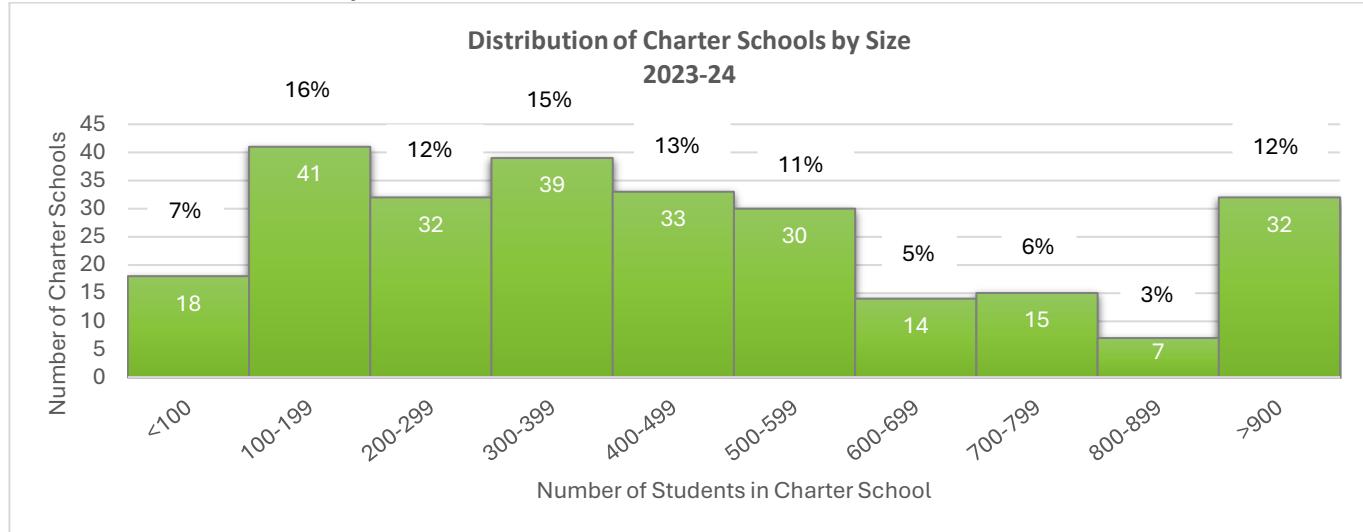
Size

Colorado charter schools exhibit significant variation in terms of size, ranging from schools serving fewer than 100 students to schools with over 2,000 students. Figure 6 provides an overview of the distribution of charter schools based on their total enrollment for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years.

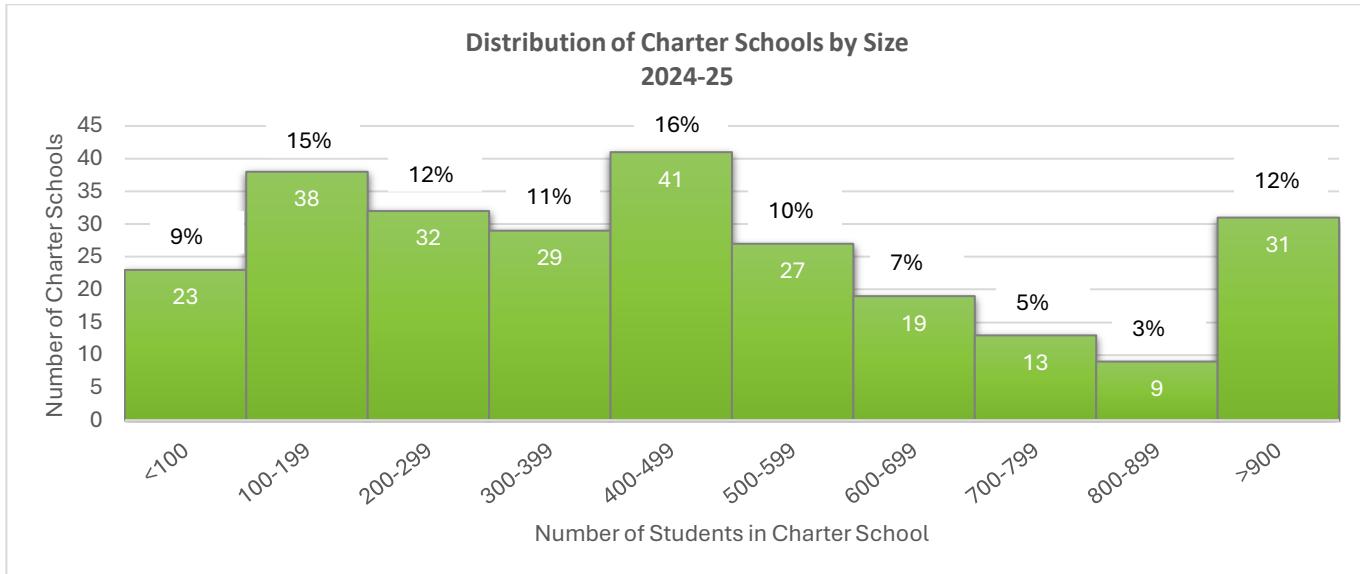
The average enrollment for charter schools was 518 students in 2023-24 and 520 in 2024-25, while the median was 399 students in 2023-24 and 432 in 2024-25.

Average enrollment has steadily increased over time. In the mid-1990's, over 70% of charter schools served fewer than 200 students.⁷ By 2024-25, this percentage had dropped to 24%. Meanwhile, only 4% of charter schools had enrollments exceeding 600 students in 2006, but this figure has grown to 27% in 2024-25.

FIGURE 6: Charter Schools by Size



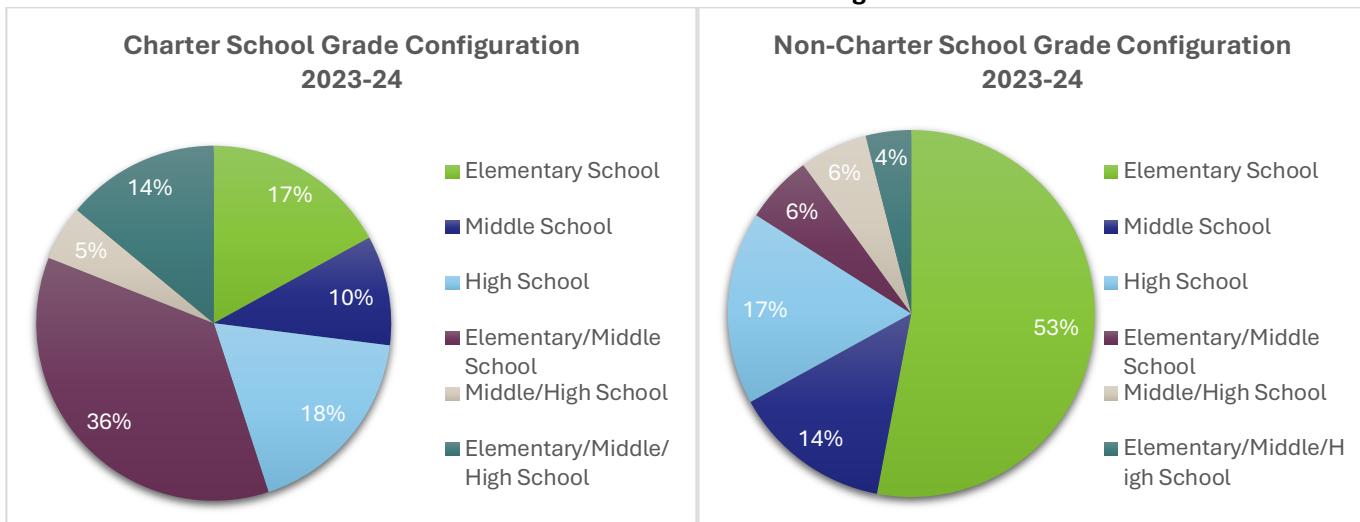
⁷ See page 32 of the 2016 Charter Schools Report, which can be found at this link: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/20160719stateofcharterupdated>



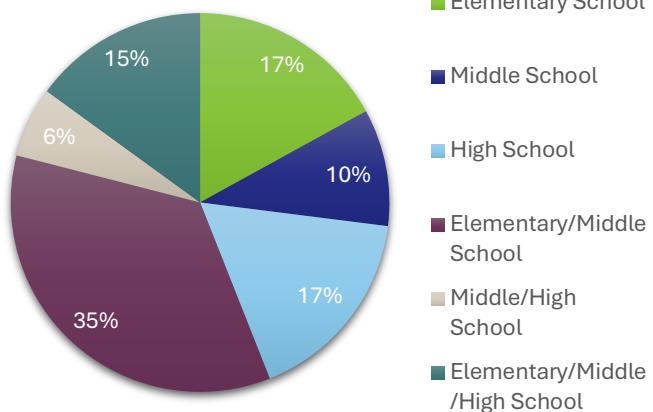
Grade Level Configuration

Charter schools operate with a wide range of grade configurations. In the 2023-24 school year, over half of charter schools, specifically 55%, served students across more than one traditional education level. For instance, these schools may encompass elementary and middle school grades or middle and high school grades, or all three levels. In contrast, only 16% of non-charter schools serve multi-level configurations. Grade level configurations for the 2024-25 school year are similar to the 2023-24 school year. The distribution across these levels is illustrated in Figure 7.

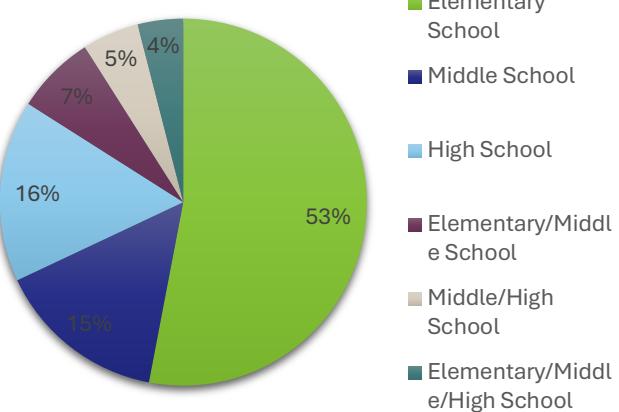
FIGURE 7: Charter School and Non-Charter School Grade Level Offering



**Charter School Grade Configuration
2024-25**



**Non-Charter School Grade Configuration
2024-25**



Part Three: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Authorizers

While the primary focus of this report is charter schools, charter school authorizers play a vital role within the Colorado charter school ecosystem. A charter school authorizer is the entity responsible for granting approval and monitoring charter schools, and the authorizer's governing board is responsible for the maintenance and renewals of the contract with the charter school. In Colorado, all school districts are eligible to serve as charter school authorizers and CSI serves as a statewide authorizer in limited circumstances.⁸ Additional details regarding Exclusive Chartering Authority, authorizing districts, and best practices will be presented in the following sections.⁹

Authorizing Districts

As described in Tables 3 and 4 within Part 1, during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years, charter schools were authorized by 45 different school districts and CSI.

Best Practices of Charter School Authorizing

Because charter school authorizers hold the contract and are responsible for oversight of the charter school, they play a critical role with ensuring a high-quality charter school sector. High-quality charter school authorizers not only hold the charters they authorize accountable for fulfilling contract requirements, but they also hold themselves accountable for meeting authorizer best practices. Some of the commonly held best practices in charter school authorizing, as noted by state board rule 1 CCR 301-88, include:

- **Agency Commitment and Capacity:** To be a strong authorizer, organizations must have dedicated staff who have been trained in the best practices of authorizing. The size of this staff is determined by the number of schools overseen, but even for the smallest authorizers is a critical component.
- **Application Process and Decision Making:** Authorizers should annually run a comprehensive application process that includes clear application questions and guidance; follows fair, transparent procedures and rigorous criteria; and grants charters only to applicants who demonstrate strong capacity to establish and operate a quality charter school. This process should also be agnostic of program model, honoring autonomy, and be grounded in state statute; it should not take the interest of district-managed schools into consideration as a reason to deny a high-quality applicant.
- **Performance Contracting:** A core function of authorizers is to execute contracts with charter schools that articulate the rights and responsibilities of each party regarding school autonomy, funding, administration and oversight, outcomes, measures for evaluating success or failure, performance consequences, and other material terms. The contract is an essential document, separate from the charter application, that establishes the legally binding agreement and terms under which the school will operate and be held accountable.
- **Ongoing Oversight and Evaluation:** Authorizers should conduct contract oversight on a regular basis that competently evaluates performance and monitors compliance; ensures schools' legally entitled autonomy; protects student rights; informs intervention, revocation, and renewal decisions; and provides annual public reports on school performance.
- **6 Revocation and Renewal Decision Making:** A quality authorizer designs and implements a transparent and rigorous process that uses comprehensive academic, financial, and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions, and revokes charters when necessary to protect student and public interests.

⁸ CSI can only authorize schools with the host district's consent or in any district without ECA.

⁹ Most information included in this section comes from an annual charter school authorizer collection administered by CDE.



- Upholding School Autonomy: Across all processes and interactions with charter schools, authorizers must ensure compliance with relevant statutes and protection of student interests but beyond that should not interfere with charter school programming. Charter schools have autonomy to make key decisions, including around budget, staffing and educational program, and authorizers must respect these decisions while focusing on assessing the outcomes a charter school is achieving for its students.
- Focus on Equity: Authorizers must continually have an equity lens. This includes evaluating how charters are serving all students, including special education students and English Language Learners. It also must include self-reflection on how they are providing equitable resources to charter schools and charter school students when compared to other schools and students. This includes funding, facilities, transportation and other key resources.

Charter School Application Processes

Based on the most recent authorizer data collection, 98% of authorizers indicated that the district has a defined process, generally set in board policy for reviewing new charter applications, while 2% reported the absence of such a process or the response was left blank. Per statute, when a new charter application is submitted to a district, the local District Accountability Committee (DAC) has a responsibility to review the charter application before the local board takes action on the application. The way in which a DAC completes its review is left to local decisions; however, approximately two-thirds of Colorado authorizers reported that their DAC has set procedures for their reviews.

In 2023-24, authorizers received a total of nine charter applications. Among these, seven applications were granted approval, zero were denied, one was released to CSI, and one applicant withdrew their submission prior to the authorizer board voting on the application.

Charter Appeals

A charter school applicant seeking to establish a charter school within a school district can challenge the local school board's decision by appealing to the Colorado State Board of Education. Table 9 provides a comprehensive breakdown of all such appeals and their outcomes in 2023 and 2024. No appeals were brought to the State Board of Education in 2024.

TABLE 9: Charter School Appeals

Case No.	Appeal Type	Parties Involved with Link to Board Documents	Nature of Appeal	Prevailing Side
23-CS-01	2nd Appeal	University Preparatory School vs. Adams 14 School District	School District failed to take action in response to the State Board's Order	Charter Applicant- Remanded back to district for reconsideration
23-CS-01A&B	1st Appeal	Alexander School of Innovation and John Dewey vs. Douglas County School District R-1	Denial of Charter Applications	District - Denial decisions found not to be contrary to the "best interest" standard
23-CS-02A&B	1st Appeal	Alexandria School of Innovation and John Dewey Institute vs. Jefferson County School District R-1	Denial of Charter Applications	District - Denial decisions found not to be contrary to the "best interest" standard



Charter Renewals

The agreement between the charter school and the authorizer specifies various terms, including the duration of the contract. While the most prevalent term length is typically five years, contract terms vary. Based on information from the most recent data collection from authorizers, 45 schools underwent a contract renewal in the school year 2023-24. All charter school renewals were approved. The schools that closed during the 2023-24 school year reported low enrollment of staffing as the primary reason for the closure.

TABLE 8: Authorizers, Openings/Closures

Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools Opened in 2023-24	Number of Charter Schools Closed in 2023-24	Number of Charter Schools Opened in 2024-25	Number of Charter Schools Closed in 2024-25
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	0	1	0	0
Bennett	1	0	0	0
Byers 32J	0	8 ¹⁰	0	0
Charter School Institute	4	2	2	1 ¹¹
Colorado Springs 11	0	0	1	1
Delta County 50(J)	0	0	0	1 ¹⁰
Denver County 1	0	3	0	0
District 49	0	0	1	0
Douglas County	0	0	0	1 ¹⁰
Durango 9-R	0	0	0	1
Jefferson County	0	1	2	0
Mesa County 51	1	0	0	0
Montezuma Cortez	1	0	0	0
Weld RE-4	1	0	0	0
West End RE-2	0	1	0	0

Annual Evaluations

As outlined in §22-30.5-110(1)(b), C.R.S., in addition to a comprehensive renewal process, authorizers are also responsible for completing an annual evaluation for all their operating charter schools.

At a minimum, the review is to include a review of the charter school's progress in meeting the objectives identified in their Unified Improvement Plan (pursuant to section 22-11-210, C.R.S.), and the results of the charter school's most recent annual financial audit. The school district shall provide to the charter school written feedback

¹⁰ In the 2023-24 school year, Byers School District converted 8 charter schools (Astravo Online Academy Elementary School, Astravo Online Academy High School, Astravo Online Middle School, Colorado Online High School, Colorado Online Middle School, Colorado Virtual Academy, Colorado Virtual Academy High School, and Colorado Virtual Academy Middle School) to district schools.

¹¹ In 2024-25 several schools consolidated which are displaying as a closure. These schools consolidated to other schools within the same network. These schools are Colorado Early Colleges Homeschool Academy, HOPE Online Learning Academy Middle School, and Vision Charter Academy K-8.

from the review and shall include the results of the charter school's annual review in the body of evidence that the local board of education takes into account in deciding whether to renew or revoke the charter and that supports the renegotiation of the charter contract.

According to data gathered from authorizers, 64% of charter schools received an annual evaluation, 30% did not receive an evaluation at the time of the collection, and 6% did not have information reported.

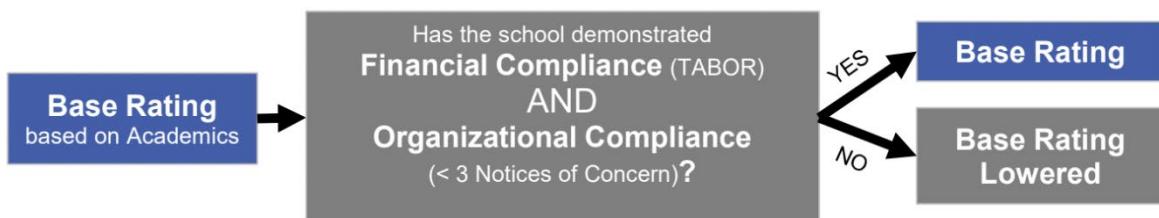
Example of Implementation:

One example of annual reporting is the CSI Annual Review of Schools (CARS) used annually to review and accredit CSI schools. CARS builds off the state's accountability system by adding more academic indicators. Additionally, the tool measures financial and organizational performance; the flow chart below shows how these are integrated into an overall rating. CSI publishes these on their website for all stakeholders as well as sharing with schools. These reports also drive decision making at times such as renewal. More information on the CARS process is available on the CSI website.

What is the CSI Performance Framework?

The CSI Performance Framework is the basis for the CSI Annual Review of Schools (CARS). The Performance Framework defines measures by which CSI holds its schools accountable. The Framework establishes expectations, guides practice, assesses progress, and informs decision-making. The frameworks ask a fundamental question: how did the school perform last year?

The following provide the complete Academic, Financial, and Organizational Performance Frameworks:



Charter School and Authorizer Partnerships

- **Enrollment:** Every charter school is given a degree of independence in managing its enrollment procedures. In cases where a charter school has reached its enrollment limit for a particular grade level, a lottery system is often employed to ensure a fair distribution of enrollment slots. According to recent data gathered from authorizers, 43% of charter schools were reported as conducting their own lottery processes, while 37% participated in a centrally managed lottery process overseen by the authorizer. The remaining 20% employ some form of agreed-upon non-lottery enrollment method (such as first-come, first-served).

There are several districts across Colorado where charter schools are fully integrated into unified school choice and share consistent information with families regardless of governance type. In Denver and Jefferson County School Districts, for example, charter schools are included in District enrollment materials and families can select from charter and non-charter schools in a single application. Boulder Valley School District also manages the lottery process for its charter schools.



- **Special Education:** One of the more complex collaborations between charter schools and authorizers relates to services for students with an IEP. Often, there are expenses borne by a district for which a charter school pays a proportional rate (e.g., center-based programs or district-wide specialists). Other times, an authorizer may offer services that a school may decide to purchase and access. Of the responses received in the authorizer's collection, 57% of charter schools were reported as paying a negotiated fee related to special education services. The remaining 43% of charters either do not pay a fee or information was not provided within the collection.
- **Negotiated Services and Fee Schedules:** Often, schools and authorizers may find other services provided by the authorizer that are available to a charter school for a reasonable fee (with calculations based on the actual cost of providing such service). Based on recent reporting, 87% of schools were reported as purchasing optional services from their authorizers such as legal support, professional development, communications support, mental health supports, enhanced course access opportunities for students, food services, transportation support, and financial services.
- **Land and Facilities:** Statute encourages authorizers to make available to charter schools unused or underutilized facility space. Based on our 2024 collection, authorizers reported that 45% of charter schools receive some level of land or facility support from the authorizer. The reported arrangements vary, but may include some type of lease agreement, access to land, partial access to facilities, or some type of district financing support.
- **School Food Authorities:** Due to the varied types of facilities charter schools operate out of and the complexity of administering a stand-alone food program that qualifies for federal meal reimbursement, charter schools are often required to find ways to collaborate on a creative solution. As reported in the recent authorizer collection, in school year 2023-24, 62% of charter schools provide food to students by collaborating with their authorizer's School Food Authority (SFA). 27% provide food through a separate SFA, 5% operate their own SFA, and 6% do not provide food through an organized program.

Many districts, including [Colorado Springs District 11](#), [School District 27J](#), and [Bennett School District 29J](#) maintain websites with key dates and application materials for both new schools and charter schools seeking renewal, as well as other relevant documents such as a menu of options for purchased services. This helps current and prospective charter leaders, as well as the broader community, understand the full context.

The Colorado Charter School Institute

CSI, a state authorizing body established in statute, serves as an alternative authorizing charter school entity. CSI currently authorizes 45 charter schools throughout Colorado. Among these schools, nine are situated in two school districts (Poudre and Adams 14), which are districts that are currently without what is known as "Exclusive Chartering Authority" or "ECA." The remainder of the schools operate in districts that currently retain ECA. Thus,

for most CSI-authorized charter schools, these schools first applied to their geographic district and then were later voluntarily “released” to CSI for long-term authorization. CSI schools are located within various regions of Colorado, as indicated in the table below.

TABLE 10: CSI School Geographical Distribution

Geographical District	Authorizer Status	Number of Schools Authorized
Adam 12 Five Star	Has ECA	3
Adams County 14	Does Not Have ECA	4
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	Has ECA	7
Cherry Creek School District	Has ECA	1
Colorado Springs 11	Has ECA	6
Douglas County	Has ECA	2
Durango 9-R	Has ECA	2
Eagle County RE 50	Has ECA	1
Jefferson County R-1	Has ECA	2
Mesa County Valley 51	Has ECA	4
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	Has ECA	1
Poudre R-1	Does Not Have ECA	5
Roaring Fork RE-1	Has ECA	1
Salida R-32	Has ECA	1
School District 27J	Has ECA	2
Steamboat Springs RE-2	Has ECA	1
Westminster Public Schools	Has ECA	2

Exclusive Chartering Authority

ECA was created in Colorado as an incentive for districts to meet quality authorizing practices in compliance with state statute and State Board of Education rules. Under current statute, districts with under 3,000 students are automatically granted ECA – so long as they request it. Districts with over 3,000 students would have received ECA from the State Board through a one-time application process. Statute states that “the State Board shall grant to a local board of education exclusive authority to authorize charter schools within the geographic boundaries of the school district if the State Board determines, after adequate notice and in a public hearing and after receiving input from any charter schools authorized by the local board of education, that the local board can show a recent pattern of providing fair and equitable treatment to its charter schools.” Once a district receives ECA, they retain such authority unless it is later revoked by the State Board of Education. Below is a list of districts currently **without** ECA.

TABLE 11: Districts Without Exclusive Chartering Authority

Districts under 3,000 Students	Districts over 3,000 Students
Cheyenne County RE-5	Fort Morgan RE-3
Julesburg RE-1	Poudre R-1
Sierra Grande R-30	Adams County 14

For the purpose of ECA decisions, compliance with the Charter Schools Act is defined as the following:

- “Compliance with full and accurate accounting practices and charges for central administrative overhead costs;
- Compliance with sections 22-30.5-112, C.R.S. and 22-30.5-112.1, C.R.S., which permit a charter school to purchase, at its discretion, certain services or a combination of services;
- The absence of a school district moratorium regarding charter schools or the absence of any district-wide charter school enrollment limits; and
- Compliance with valid orders of the state board; and
- Any combination of the following:
 - The distribution to charter schools authorized by the local board of a pro rata share of mill levy overrides, except for any mill levied for a particular purpose that by its express terms is intended to benefit a grade, a program, or a school and, as a result, is not available to be offered to any charter school that did not participate in the mill levy proceeds;
 - The provision of assistance to charter schools to meet their facilities needs, by including those needs in local bond issues or otherwise providing available land and facilities that are comparable to those provided to other public school students in the same grade levels within the school district;
 - The distribution to charter schools authorized by the local board of a pro rata share of federal and state grants received by the school district, except for any grant received for a particular purpose that by its express terms is intended to benefit a student population not able to be served by, or a program not able to be offered at, a charter school which did not receive a proportionate share of such grant proceeds;
 - The provision of adequate staff and other resources to serve charter schools authorized by the local board, which services are provided by the school district at a cost to the charter schools that does not exceed their actual cost to the school district, or, in the case of federally required educational services, the amount specified in section 22-30.5-112(2)(a.8);
 - The lack of a policy or practice of imposing individual charter school enrollment limits, except as otherwise provided in article 36 of this title; or the provision of an adequate number of educational choice programs to serve students exercising their rights to transfer pursuant to the “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001”; and
 - A history of charter school approval that encourages programs that serve at-risk student populations.” (22-30-5-504 (5)(a))

School districts that retain ECA have the right to compel all charter applications to be authorized by the school district; however, they also have the right to allow a new charter school applicant to apply to CSI or to transfer an existing school to CSI. This is known as “releasing” a school to CSI. It is important to note that all such requests must also submit an application to CSI and receive approval from the CSI board through a public process as well.

Authorizing Best Practices

Nationally established best practices for charter school authorizers have been defined by the National Association of Charter Authorizers (NACSA). In Colorado, these practices were adopted by the State Board of Education as the [Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers](#).¹² Statewide professional learning for authorizers is ongoing and supported through various initiatives at CDE, as well as funded programs of the Federal Charter School Program Grant including authorizer dissemination projects awarded to the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers (CACSA) and the National Network for District Authorizing (NN4DA), both of which operate in

¹² See 1 CCR 301-88: *Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers*



Colorado. Many authorizers have demonstrated their commitment to applying the standards in their work and remain actively involved in professional learning communities supported by CDE, the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers, and the Colorado League of Charter Schools.

Part Four: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Students

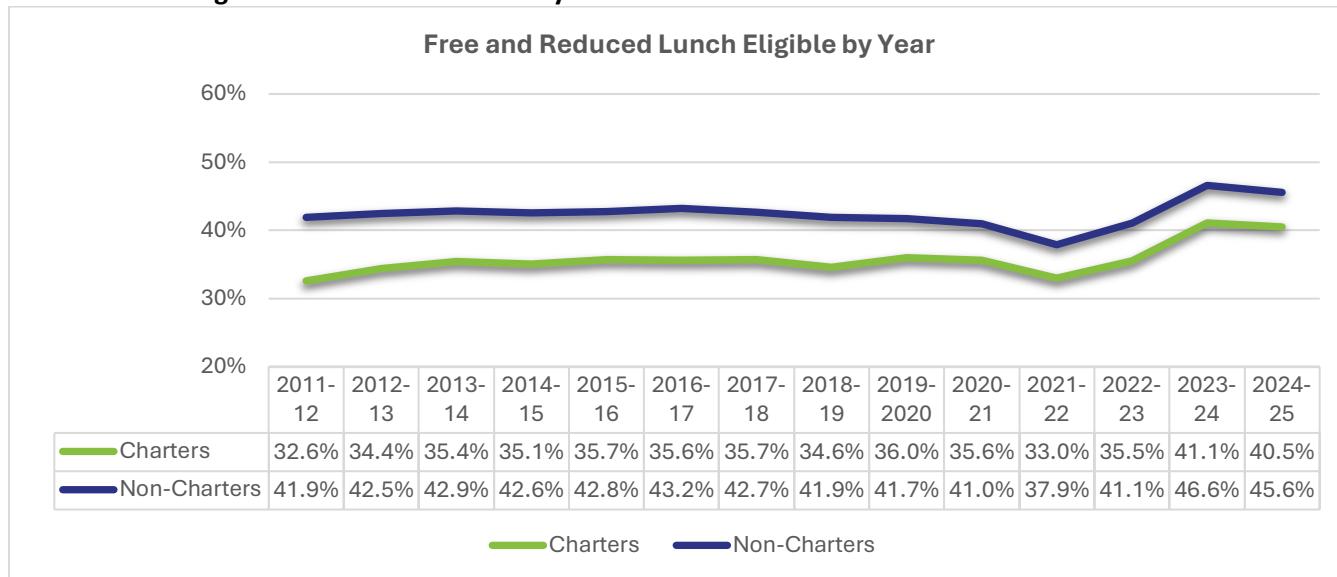
In this section, demographic and other descriptive statistics about students attending Colorado charter schools are compared with the student population in non-charter schools across the state. Overall, charter school students are very similar demographically to students in other Colorado public schools, except for the proportion of students identified with a disability (with an Individualized Education Plan) and students eligible for free or reduced lunch (FRL), which have both been consistently about five percentage points lower in charter schools than they are in non-charters. Mobility rates are similar between charters and non-charters and attendance is slightly higher in charter schools, with less students chronically absent than in non-charters. More details are provided below.

Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

FRL eligibility serves as the most widely used and accessible indicator of a student's household income level. It is important to acknowledge that when interpreting FRL eligibility data, there are certain limitations to consider. Notably, FRL eligibility may potentially underestimate the number of students who qualify if the school they attend does not act as a School Food Authority (SFA) or administer the National School Lunch Program. Additionally, in Colorado the state has changed some criteria for determining eligibility, which has resulted in greater fluctuation in overall numbers in recent years.

During the 2023-24 school year, 41.1% of charter school students were identified as FRL eligible, which was up 5.6% from 2022-23. The percentage decreased slightly to 40.5% in 2024-25 but also resulted in a narrower gap with non-charter schools. Non-charters witnessed a 5.5 percentage point increase in 2023-24, and a 1.0 percentage point decrease in FRL eligible students in 2024-25. Charter schools have historically served a lower proportion of students eligible for FRL compared to non-charter schools, and this trend holds true for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years.

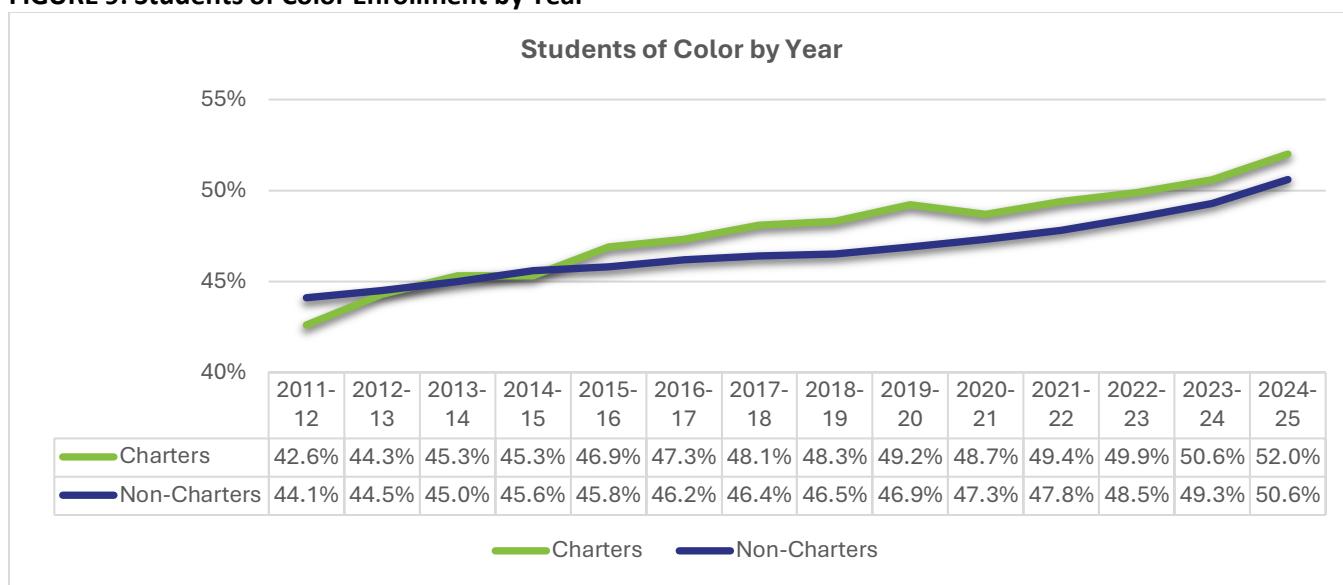
FIGURE 8: FRL-Eligible Students Enrollment by Year



Students of Color

As illustrated in Figure 9, charter schools during the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years served a slightly higher percentage of students of color when compared to the non-charter student population. In the 2024-25 school year, the percentage of students of color enrolled in charter schools was at 52.0%, compared to 50.6% for non-charter schools. Over the past decade, charter schools have witnessed growth in enrollment of students of color, outpacing the rate of increase observed in non-charter schools. In 2012-13, charter schools went from serving a slightly lower percentage of students of color than non-charters to now serving a slightly higher percentage of them than non-charters.

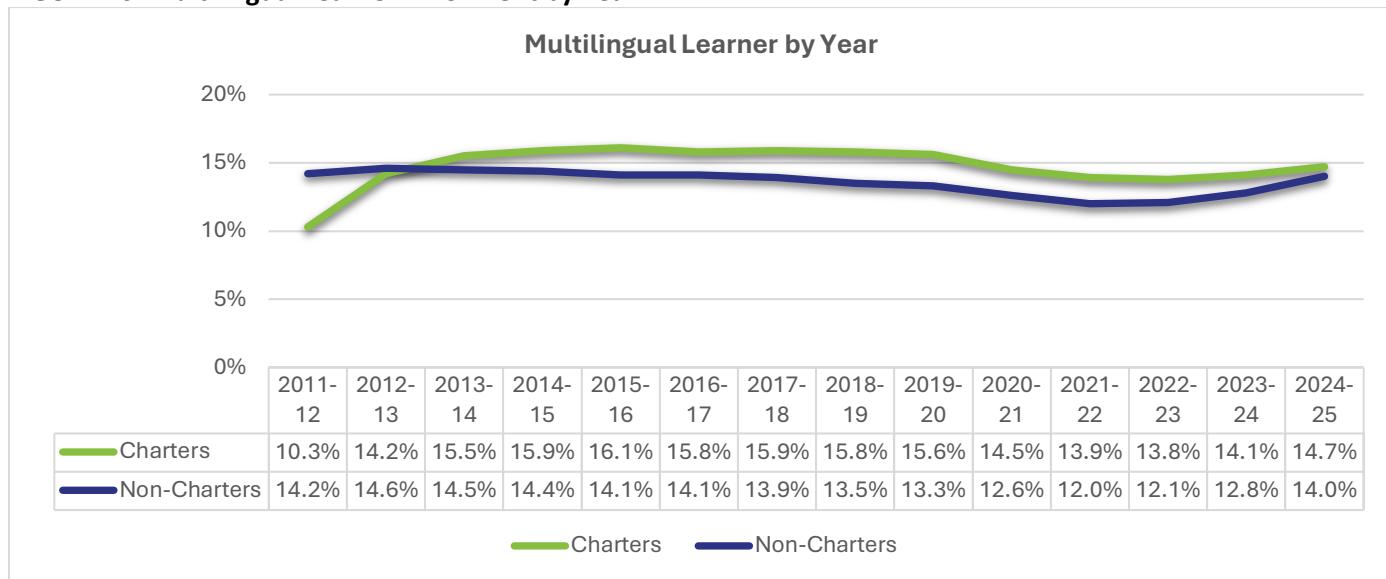
FIGURE 9: Students of Color Enrollment by Year



Multilingual Learners

Since 2010, charter schools have experienced a notable increase in the percentage of multilingual learner (ML) students they serve, as illustrated in Figure 10. In 2013-2014, charter schools began serving greater shares of ML students as compared to non-charter schools statewide.

During the 2018-19 school year, both charter schools and non-charter schools experienced a decrease in ML enrollment, and this trend continued in the subsequent years until the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years. Charter schools saw an increase in enrollment for MLs by 0.6% and non-charter schools saw an increase of 1.2% percentage points in 2024-25.

FIGURE 10: Multilingual Learner Enrollment by Year¹³


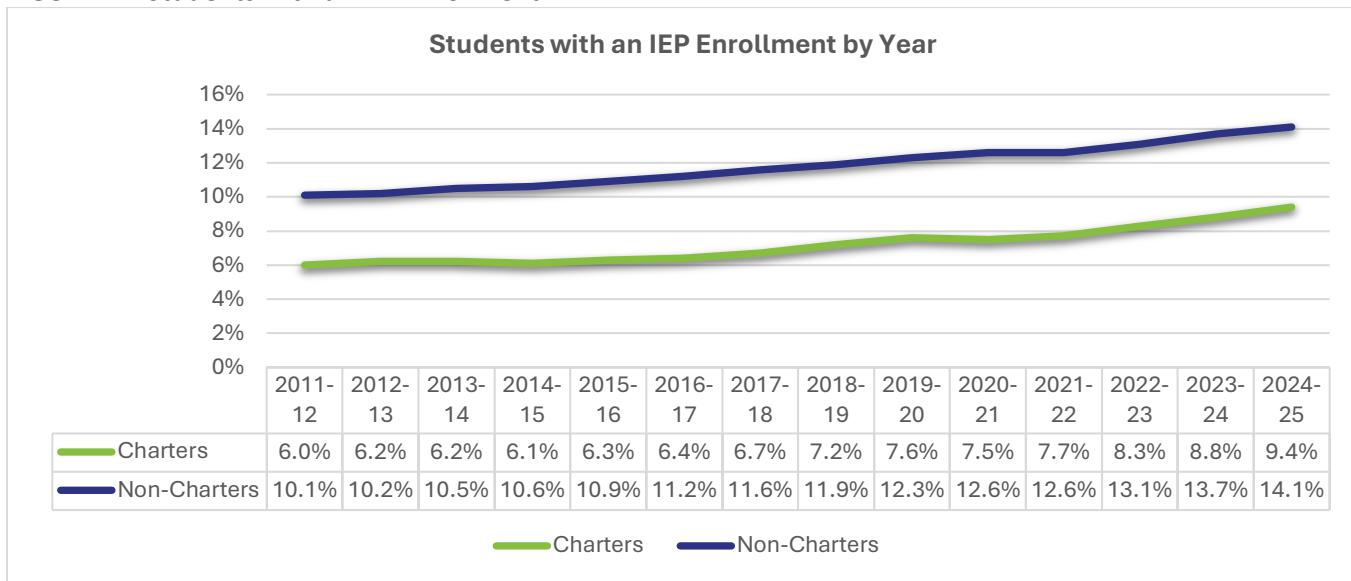
Students with an IEP

The data presented in Figure 11 encompasses all students classified with a disability, including those who do not need special education services (such as students with a 504 plan), and those students with an IEP in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years.

Charter schools have experienced increases in the percentage of students with an IEP enrolled every year since 2020-21. This percentage rose from 7.5% in 2020-21 school year to 9.4% in 2024-25 (a 1.9 percentage point increase). Non-charter schools saw a similar increase from 12.6% of students in 2020-21 school year to 14.1% in the 2024-25 school year (a 1.5 percentage point increase). Charter schools continue serving a smaller proportion of students with an IEP when compared to non-charter schools statewide; however, this gap has closed slightly since 2020-21.

In recent years, various efforts have been made to close enrollment gaps between charter schools and non-charter schools for students with an IEP. While there has been a marked increase in the percentage of students served, the gap has only closed slightly.

¹³ For enrollment figures in this report, the term multilingual learner is inclusive of the following categories: NEP, LEP, and FEP Monitor Year 1 and Monitor Year 2. Reported numbers align to multilingual learner figures found on the CDE pupil membership page.

FIGURE 11: Students with an IEP Enrollment


Student Mobility

The mobility rate is an indicator of turnover in the student population within a given school year. A student is considered mobile when he or she enters or exits a school or district in a manner that is different from a typical progression. A typical progression includes moving from elementary to middle to high school or graduating. The following types of events would be included in a mobility calculation:

- Students who transfer into (or from) a district or charter school or transfer within a school district;
- Students who transfer into or from a nonpublic school, private school, or home-based education program (i.e., home school);
- Students who transfer into or from a High School Equivalency (GED) program, vocational education program, licensed eligible facility, state-operated program, detention center, or other educational program operated by the Division of Youth Services or Department of Corrections; and
- Students who have been expelled, have dropped out or exited to an unknown educational setting.

Mobility Rate

Student mobility rates are calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{(\text{Unduplicated count of K - 12 students who moved into or out of a school in year } X)}{(\text{Number of students that are part of a school at any point within year } X)}$$

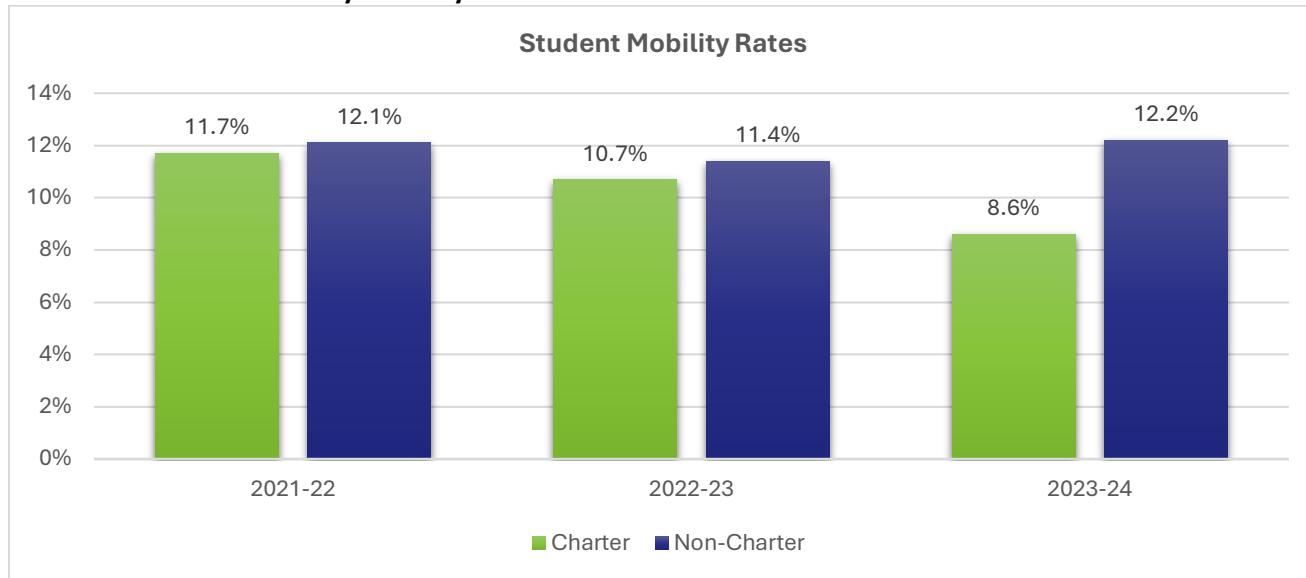
Once a student is classified as mobile for a specific school, that student will not be included in the student mobility rate again within the same school year. Figure 12 displays the student mobility rates for charter schools during 2021-22 through 2022-23 school years with the 2022-23 data being the updated data point since last year's report.

Prior to the 2017-18 school year, the Student Mobility Rate was calculated year-round. The 2017-18 school year was the initiation of new rules surrounding mobility rates. The new rules, included in *1 CCR 301-1 Rules for Administration of Accreditation of School Districts*, direct mobility rates to be calculated between the Student Pupil

Count Date (October 1) and the end of the school year. Moves over the summer or at the very beginning of the school year are now seen as more routine and not counted in the mobility rate.

As illustrated in Figure 12, students in charter schools have seen a steady decrease in mobility rates with a decrease of 3.1 percentage points from 2021-22 to 2023-24. Non-charter schools have remained relatively stable and witnessed a 12.2% mobility rate compared to charters at 8.6% in 2023-24.

FIGURE 12: Student Mobility Rates by Year

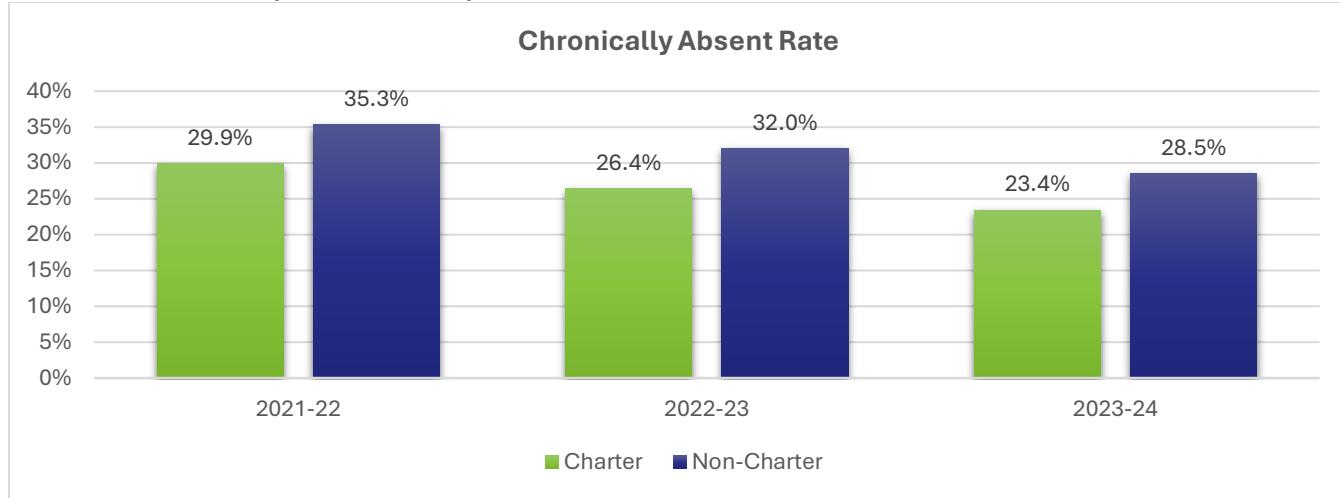
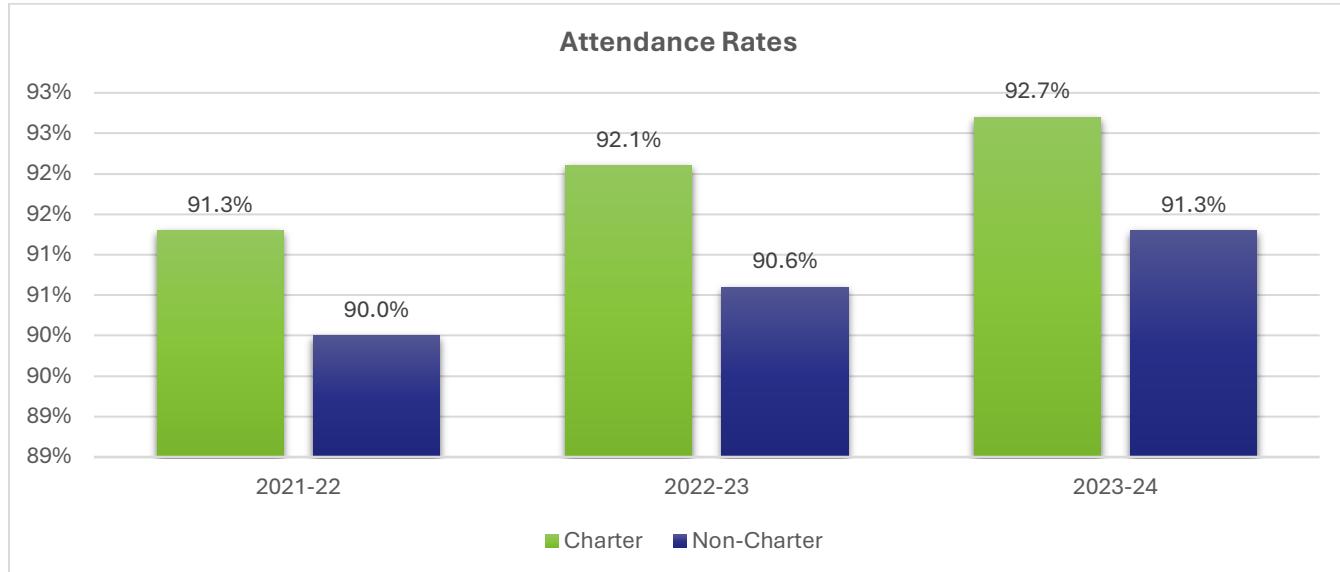


Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

CDE collects and reports attendance data in several metrics. These rates provide a general measure of student engagement in learning (attendance rate) and consistency of engagement (chronic absenteeism). Attendance rates and rates of chronic absenteeism improved in the 2023-24 school year compared to the two previous years.

A student is considered chronically absent if they are absent for 10% or more of the days within a school year through unexcused, excused, and/or suspensions. The chronically absent rate is determined by the percentage of the students enrolled who are chronically absent. The attendance rate is calculated by the total days attended divided by the total days of possible attendance.

Figures 13 and 14 provide data on chronically absent rates and attendance rates for both charter and non-charter schools in the 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 school years. Charter schools show noticeably lower chronically absent rates and higher attendance rates in comparison to non-charter schools in all three school years. Both charter and non-charter schools have seen improvement in these indicators from 2021-22 through 2023-24 as the state sees continued improvement from the low rates of the pandemic and its immediate aftermath.

FIGURE 13: Chronically Absent Rate by Year

FIGURE 14: Attendance Rate


Part Five: Colorado Charter School Academic Performance

The following section provides an overview of student performance on state assessments in charter schools and non-charter schools statewide. The data presented in this report focuses on the school years 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24.

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) and PSAT/SAT Background

Colorado's statewide assessment system is designed around the Colorado Academic Standards, which define knowledge and skills students should have acquired by the conclusion of each grade level. To gain understanding of student mastery of these standards, the following assessment framework is employed for Math and English Language Arts (ELA):

- Third through eighth grades: Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessment
- Ninth and tenth grades: PSAT
- Eleventh grade: SAT

This assessment structure has remained consistent, except for pandemic disruptions. Table 12 provides a detailed list of the statewide assessments administered to students at each grade level for the years presented in this report. Science assessments are also administered to students in 5th, 8th, and 11th grade; however, such results are not included within this report. Additionally, third and fourth grade students who meet the eligibility criteria participate in the Colorado Spanish Language Arts (CSLA), the accommodated form of the CMAS English Language Arts (ELA) assessment.

TABLE 12: Assessment List

Test	Grades	Content Area
CMAS	3 rd through 8 th	English Language Arts
	3 rd through 8 th	Mathematics
Colorado PSAT	9 th and 10 th	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
	9 th and 10 th	Mathematics
Colorado SAT	11 th	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
	11 th	Mathematics

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Performance

Levels and Cut Scores

Performance levels are used to measure how well students align with the expectations for their respective grade levels. As shown in Table 13, there are five performance levels for the CMAS English ELA and Math assessments, while the CMAS Science and Social Studies assessments include just four performance levels. Students who achieve “Met Expectations” or “Exceeded Expectations” ratings are considered to be on a trajectory for college and career readiness in the content areas of language arts and math.

On the CMAS assessment students can earn an overall scale score and percentile ranking. During the standards-setting process, score ranges are set that define each performance level.

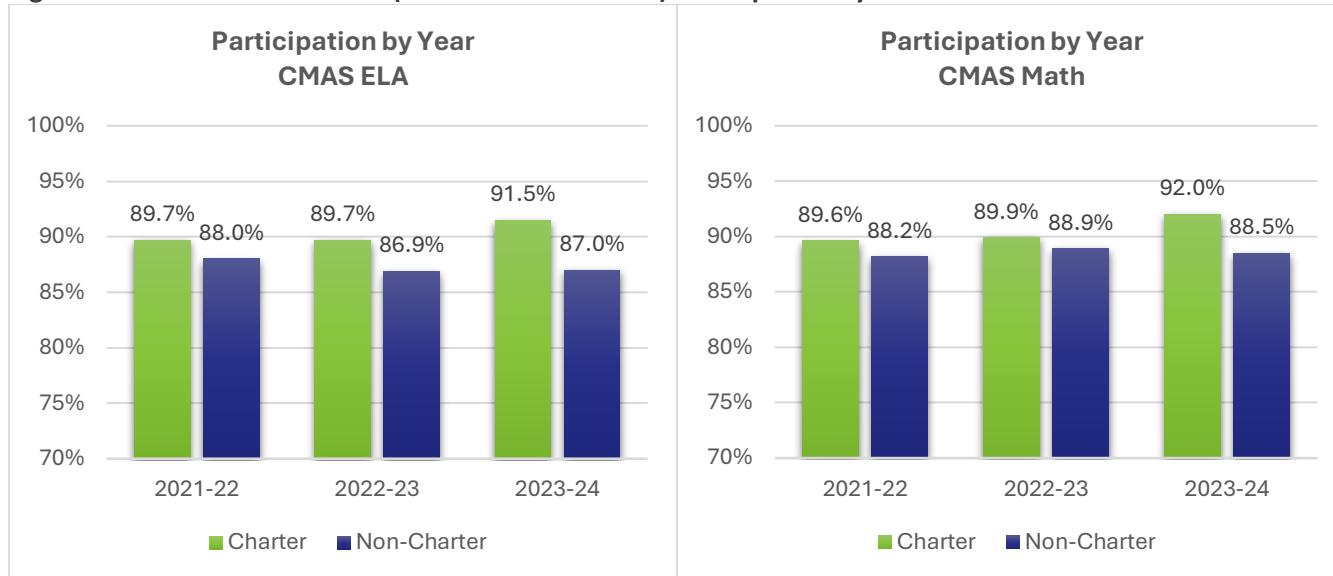
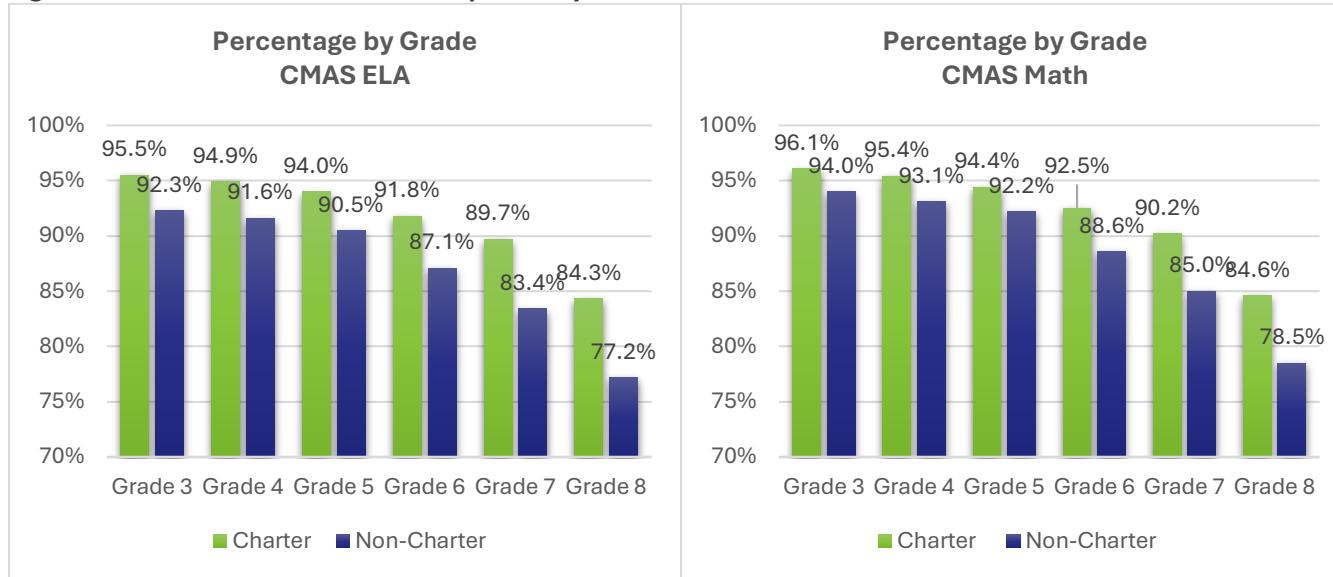
TABLE 13: CMAS Cut Scores

Grade Level/Content	Does Not Yet Meet Expectations (Level 1)	Partially Met Expectations (Level 2)	Approached Expectations (Level 3)	Met Expectations (Level 4)	Exceeded Expectations (Level 5)
Mathematics					
Grade 3	650-699	700-724	725-749	750-789	790-850
Grade 4				750-795	796-850
Grade 5				750-789	790-850
Grade 6				750-787	788-850
Grade 7				750-785	786-850
Grade 8				750-800	801-850
English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy					
Grade 3	650-699	700-724	725-749	750-809	810-850
Grade 4				750-789	790-850
Grade 5				750-798	799-850
Grade 6				750-789	790-850
Grade 7				750-784	785-850
Grade 8				750-793	794-850
Colorado Spanish Language Arts					
Grade 3	650-699	700-724	725-749	750-778	779-850
Grade 4				750-771	772-850

CMAS Participation

Figures 15 and 16 present CMAS participation rates by year and grade level. During the 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 school years participation rates remain higher among charter schools. Participation rates at charters increased during the 2023-24 school year and are nearing pre-pandemic levels.

In the 2023-24 school year, grade-level participation was highest in the early grades and gradually decreased through middle school. A consistent trend of declining participation as grades progressed was observed in both charter and non-charter schools; however, charter schools consistently exhibit higher participation rates at each grade level.

Figure 15: CMAS ELA and Math (Grades 3-8 combined) Participation by Year

Figure 16: CMAS ELA and Math Participation by Grade Level 2023-24


ELA and Math Performance – Overall and by Grade and Year

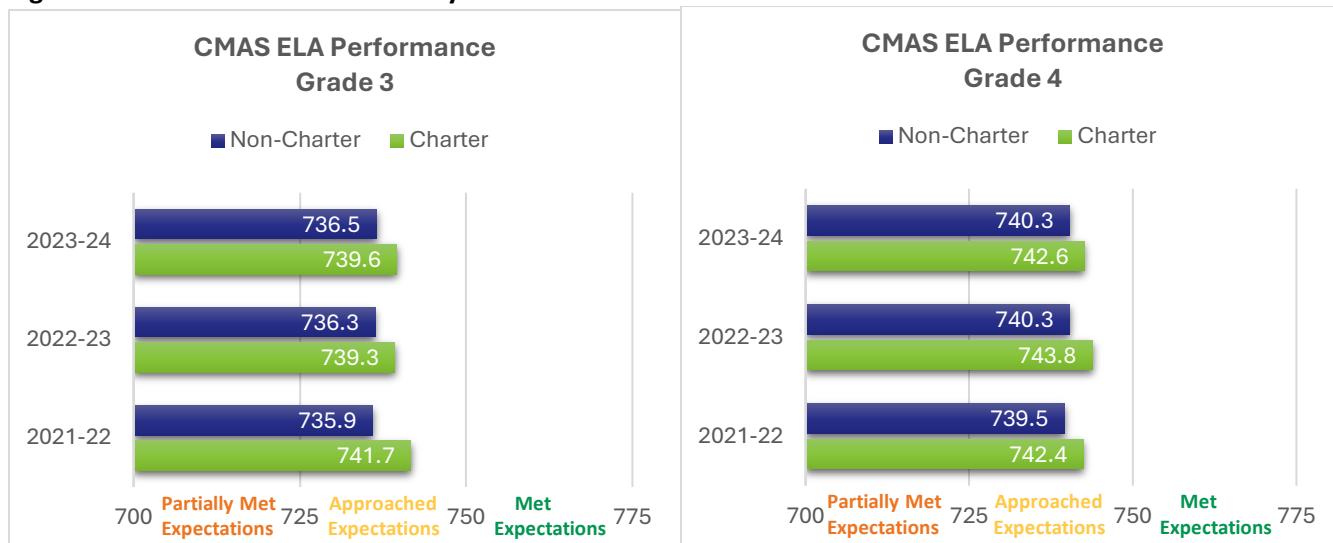
When analyzing the CMAS ELA and Math Mean Scale Scores (MSS) for charter schools and non-charter schools in the 2023-24 school year across grades 3rd- 8th, MSS scores for charter schools were higher than non-charter schools across all grades. Charter and non-charter schools' average MSS for grades 3-8 all fall within the Approaching Expectations range of 725-749. Further analysis of MSS scores for charter and non-charter schools for school years 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 can be seen in Figures 17 and 18 below.

TABLE 14: CMAS ELA Performance 2023-24 by grade level

Grade Level	Charter Mean Scale Score	Charter Participation Rate	Non-Charter Mean Scale Score	Non-Charter Participation Rate	Scale Score Difference
Grade 3	739.6	95.5%	736.5	92.3%	3.1
Grade 4	742.6	94.9%	740.3	91.6%	2.3
Grade 5	748.5	94.0%	746.6	90.5%	1.9
Grade 6	745.1	91.8%	742.5	87.1%	2.6
Grade 7	749.1	89.7%	745.0	83.4%	4.1
Grade 8	743.5	84.3%	739.4	77.2%	4.1

TABLE 15: CMAS Math Performance 2023-24 by Grade Level

Grade Level	Charter Mean Scale Score	Charter Participation Rate	Non-Charter Mean Scale Score	Non-Charter Participation Rate	Scale Score Difference
Grade 3	742.4	96.1%	739.7	94.0%	2.7
Grade 4	736.4	95.4%	734.4	93.1%	2.0
Grade 5	739.9	94.4%	738.2	92.2%	1.7
Grade 6	733.2	92.5%	731.0	88.6%	2.2
Grade 7	736.4	90.2%	732.3	85.0%	4.1
Grade 8	735.5	84.6%	730.2	78.5%	5.3

Figure 17: CMAS ELA Performance by Year and Grade Level


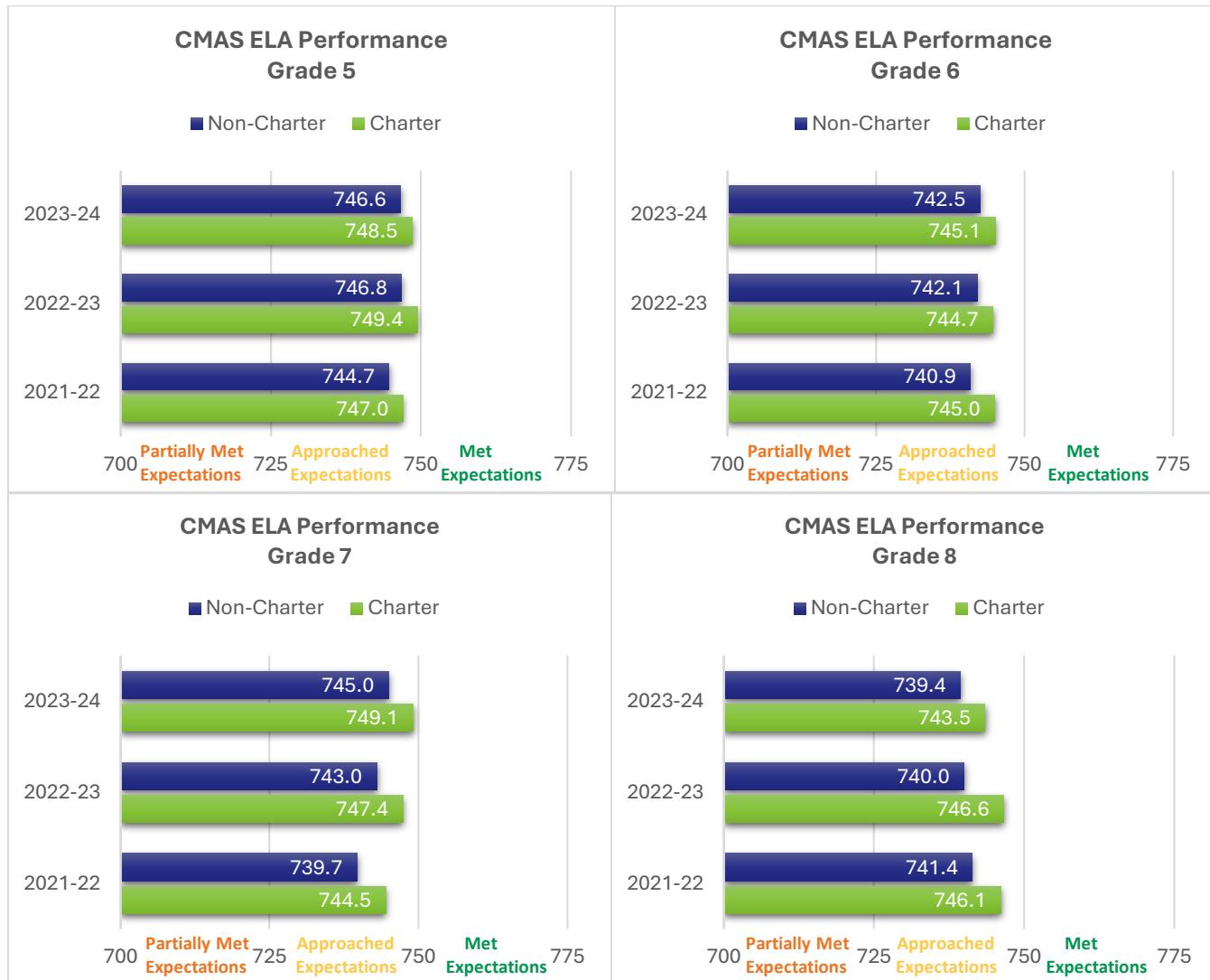


FIGURE 18: CMAS Math Performance by Year and Grade Level


CMAS English Language Arts Performance – Disaggregated Results

In 2023, disaggregated results for students based on race and ethnicity, multilingual status¹⁴, Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility, and students with an IEP show that charter schools have higher scores than non-charter schools on the CMAS ELA assessment for all available groups except for students not FRL eligible, as depicted in Table 16. Charters also demonstrated narrower achievement gaps between most student groups than non-charter schools - except for a slightly larger gap for students with an IEP. A detailed breakdown of the disaggregated results can be found in Figures 19 through 22.

TABLE 16: 2023-24 CMAS ELA Performance by School Type and Disaggregated Student Group

Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible		Not Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS
Charter	729.8	Approached Expectations	754.5
Non-Charter	726.3	Approached Expectations	755.3
Difference	3.5		-0.8
Students of Color		White Students	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS
Charter	735.9	Approached Expectations	754.0
Non-Charter	729.8	Approached Expectations	753.2
Difference	6.1		0.8
Multilingual Learners		Non-Multilingual Learners	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS
Charter	724.7	Partially Met Expectations	749.7
Non-Charter	717.0	Partially Met Expectations	746.9
Difference	7.7		2.8
Students with an IEP		Students without an IEP	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS
Charter	708.5	Partially Met Expectations	748.6
Non-Charter	707.8	Partially Met Expectations	747.0
Difference	0.7		1.6

Figures 19-22 focus on the gap in CMAS assessment results between various disaggregated student groups in both charter and non-charter schools in English Language Arts.

¹⁴ For assessment purposes Multilingual students are considered ML if they are designated as NEP, LEP and FEP Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2 and FEP Exit Year 1, and Exit Year 2.

Figure 19 displays the ELA CMAS results for FRL eligible students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 4.3-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students FRL eligible and students who are not eligible.

FIGURE 19: CMAS ELA Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility 2023-24

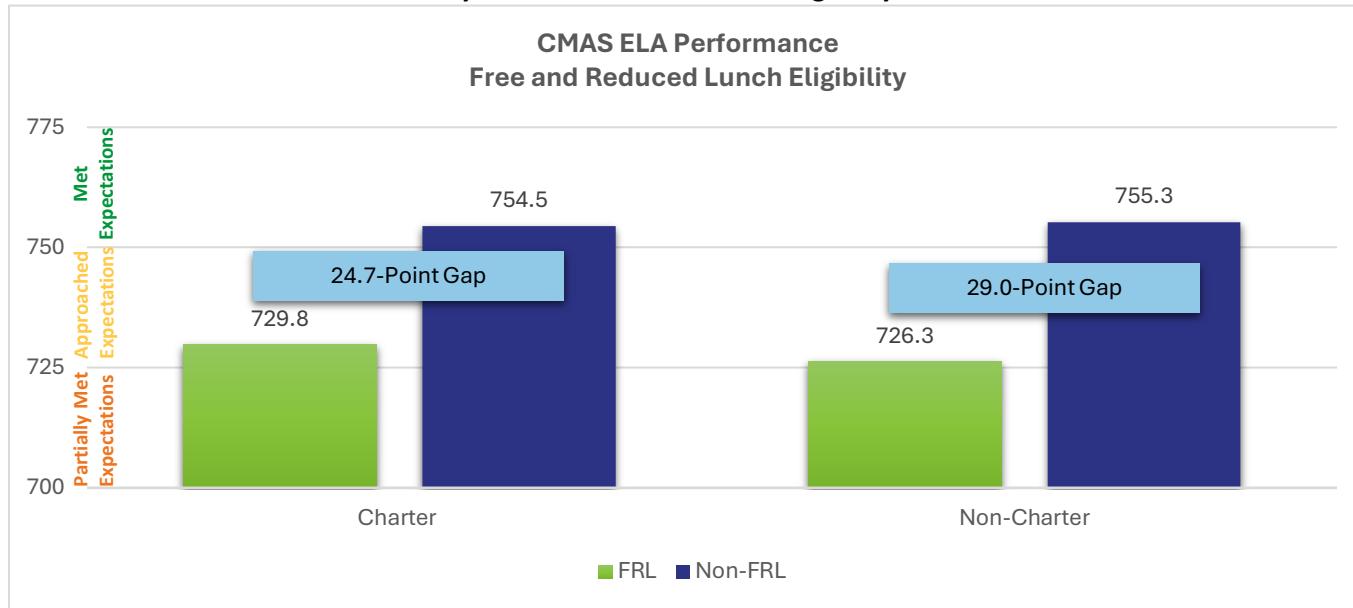


Figure 20 displays the ELA CMAS results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 5.3-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students of colors and white students.

FIGURE 20: CMAS ELA Performance by Race and Ethnicity 2023-24

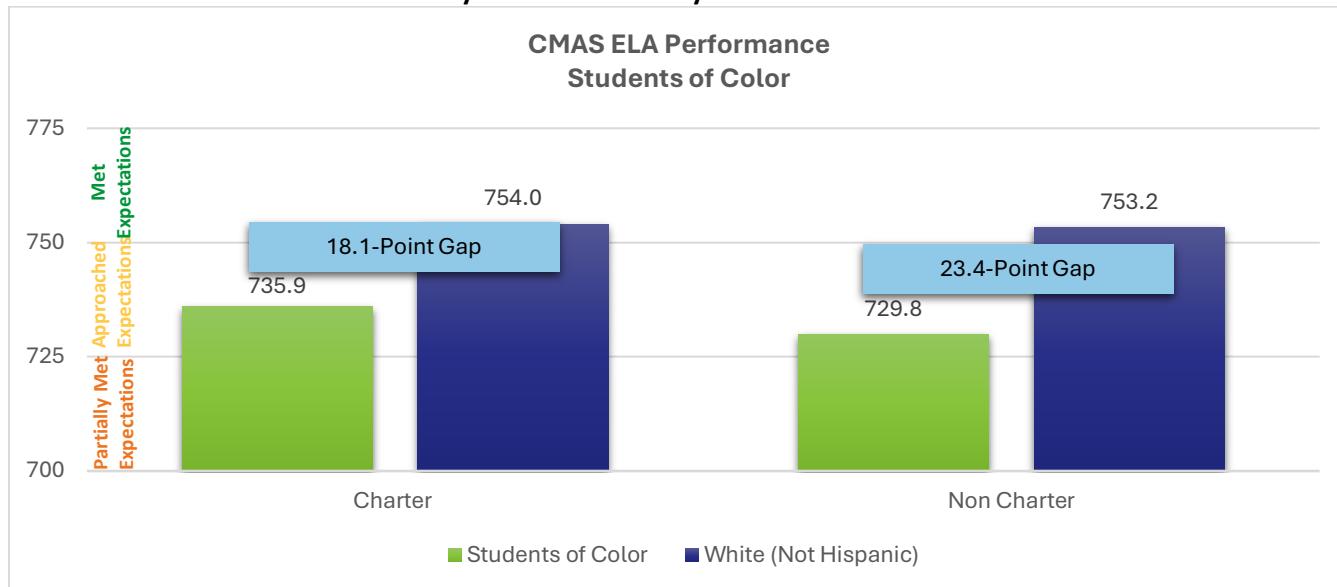


Figure 21 displays the ELA CMAS results for ML students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 4.9-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between ML and Non-ML students.

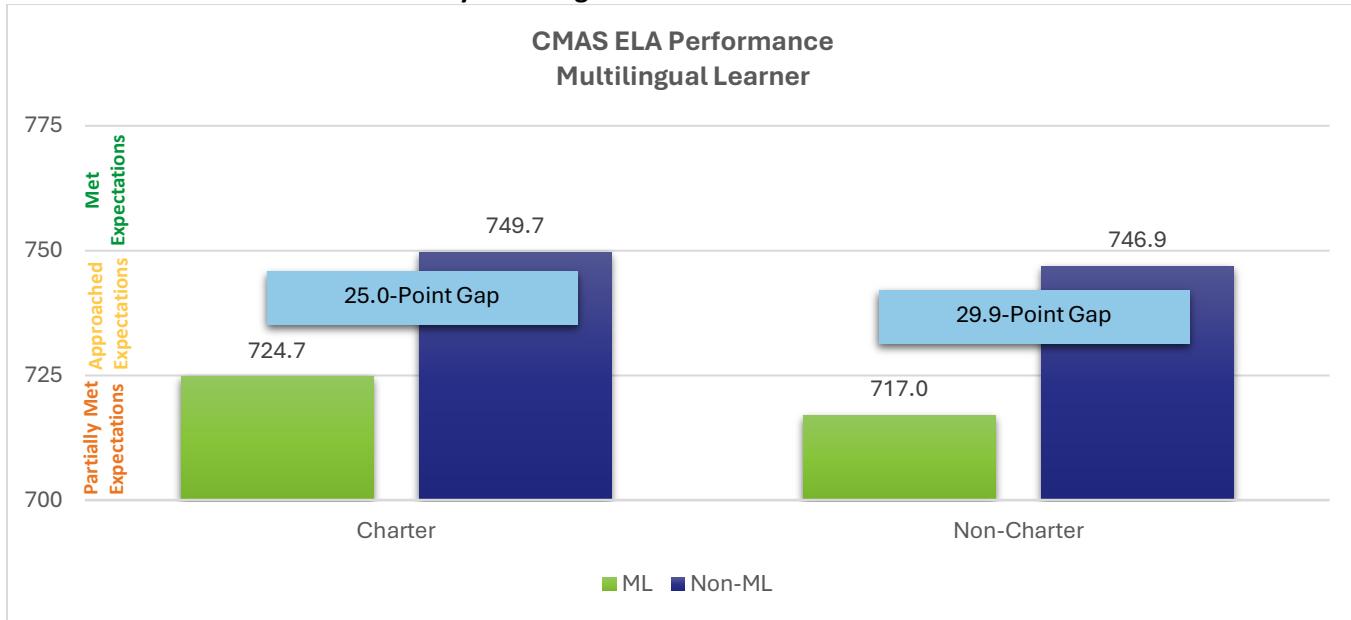
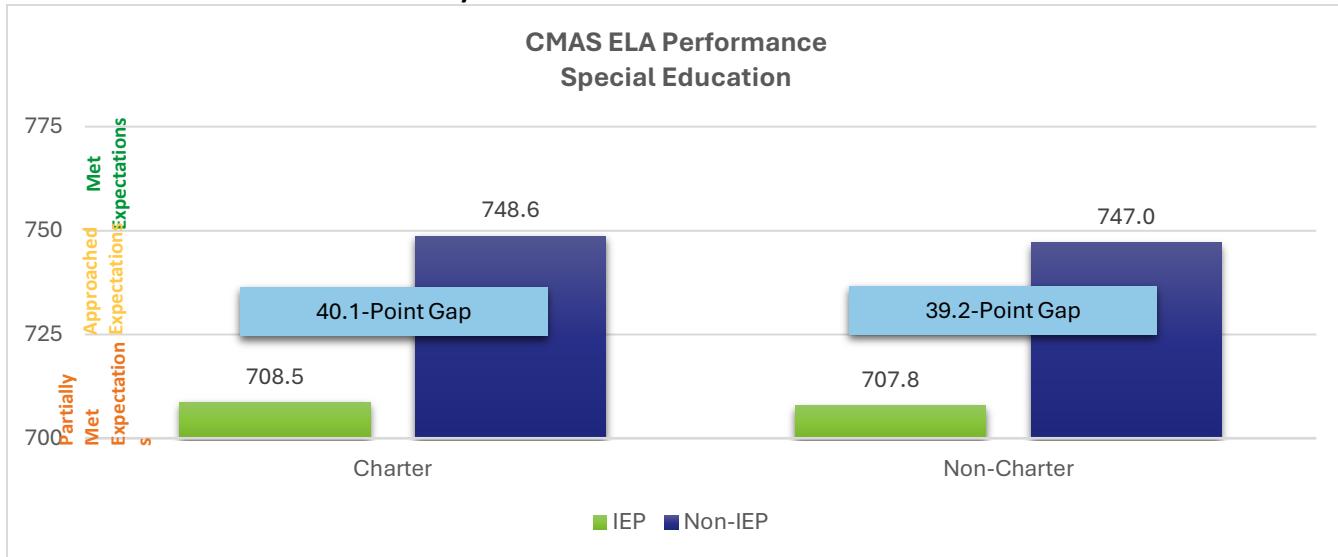
FIGURE 21: CMAS ELA Performance by Multilingual Learner Status 2023-24


Figure 22 displays the ELA CMAS results for students with an IEP in both charter and non-charter schools. Although students with an IEP in charter schools have slightly higher MSS when compared to non-charter students. Charter schools do have a 0.9-point higher achievement gap.

FIGURE 22: CMAS ELA Performance by Students with an IEP 2023-24


CMAS Math Performance – Disaggregated Results

In 2024, disaggregated results for students based on race and ethnicity, ML status, FRL eligibility, and students with an IEP, show that students in charter schools tended to achieve higher outcomes than students in non-charter schools on the CMAS Math assessment. The only performance exception is for students who are not eligible for free or reduced-price lunch as depicted on Table 17. This finding is consistent with the ELA results. Charters

consistently demonstrated narrower achievement gaps between these student groups as well – except for a slightly larger gap for students with an IEP. A detailed breakdown of the disaggregated results can be found in Figures 23 through 26.

TABLE 17: CMAS Math Performance by School Type and Disaggregated Student Group 2023-24

Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible		Not Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible		
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
Charter	722.3	Partially Met Expectations	746.8	Approached Expectations
Non-Charter	720.0	Partially Met Expectations	747.2	Approached Expectations
Difference	2.3		-0.4	
<hr/>				
Students of Color		White Students (non-Hispanic)		
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
Charter	728.6	Approached Expectations	746.2	Approached Expectations
Non-Charter	723.2	Approached Expectations	745.6	Approached Expectations
Difference	5.4		0.6	
<hr/>				
Multilingual Learners		Non-Multilingual Learners		
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
Charter	719.7	Partially Met Expectations	741.5	Approached Expectations
Non-Charter	713.7	Partially Met Expectations	739.2	Approached Expectations
Difference	6.0		2.3	
<hr/>				
Students with an IEP		Students without an IEP		
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
Charter	708.9	Partially Met Expectations	740.1	Approached Expectations
Non-Charter	708.0	Partially Met Expectations	738.6	Approached Expectations
Difference	0.9		1.5	

Figure 23 displays the math CMAS results for FRL eligible students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 2.7-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between FRL eligible and students not FRL eligible.

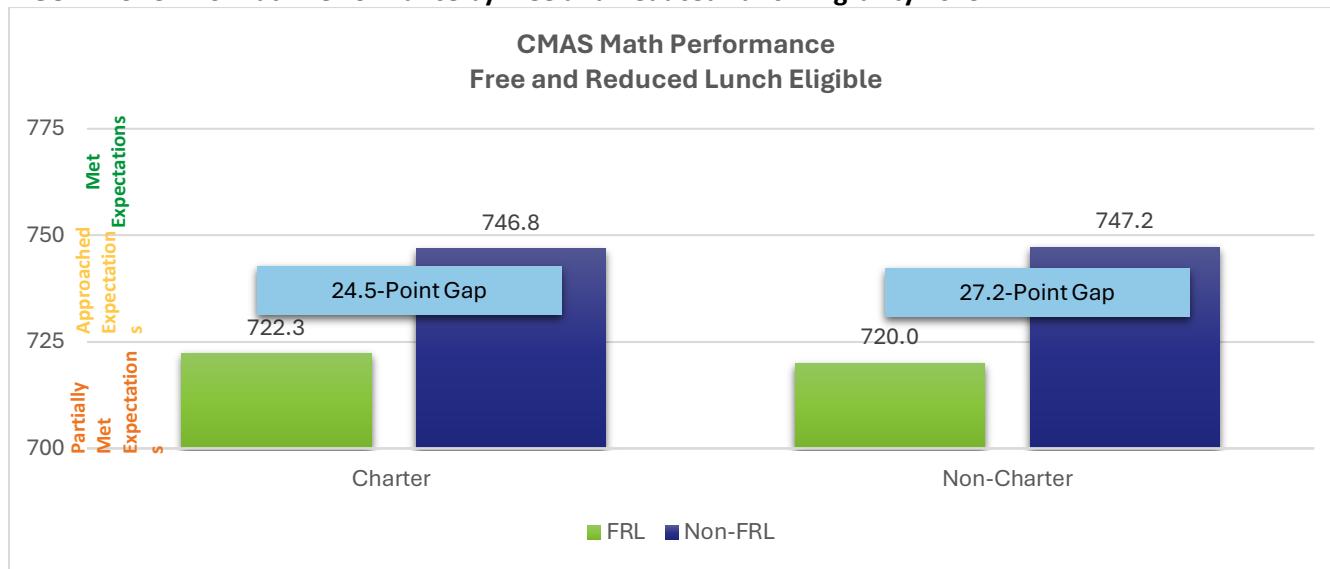
FIGURE 23: CMAS Math Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility 2023-24


Figure 24 displays the math CMAS results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 4.8-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students of color and white (non-Hispanic) students.

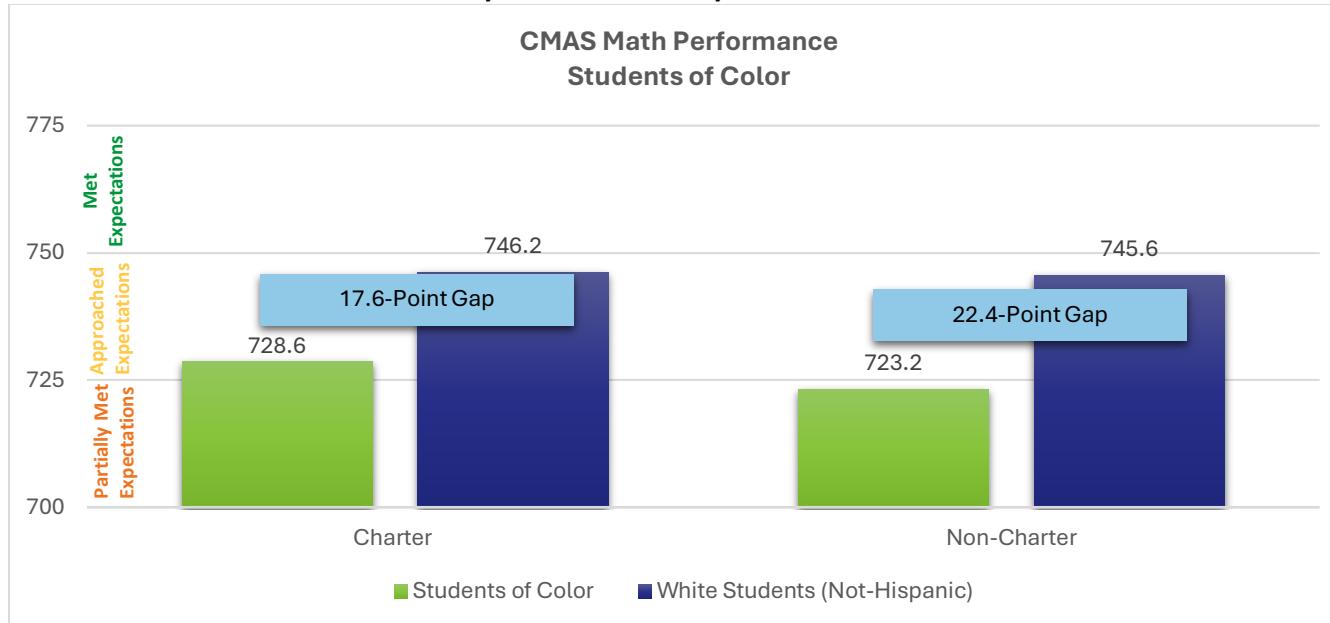
FIGURE 24: CMAS Math Performance by Race and Ethnicity 2023-24


Figure 25 displays the math CMAS results for ML students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 3.7-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between ML and Non-ML students.

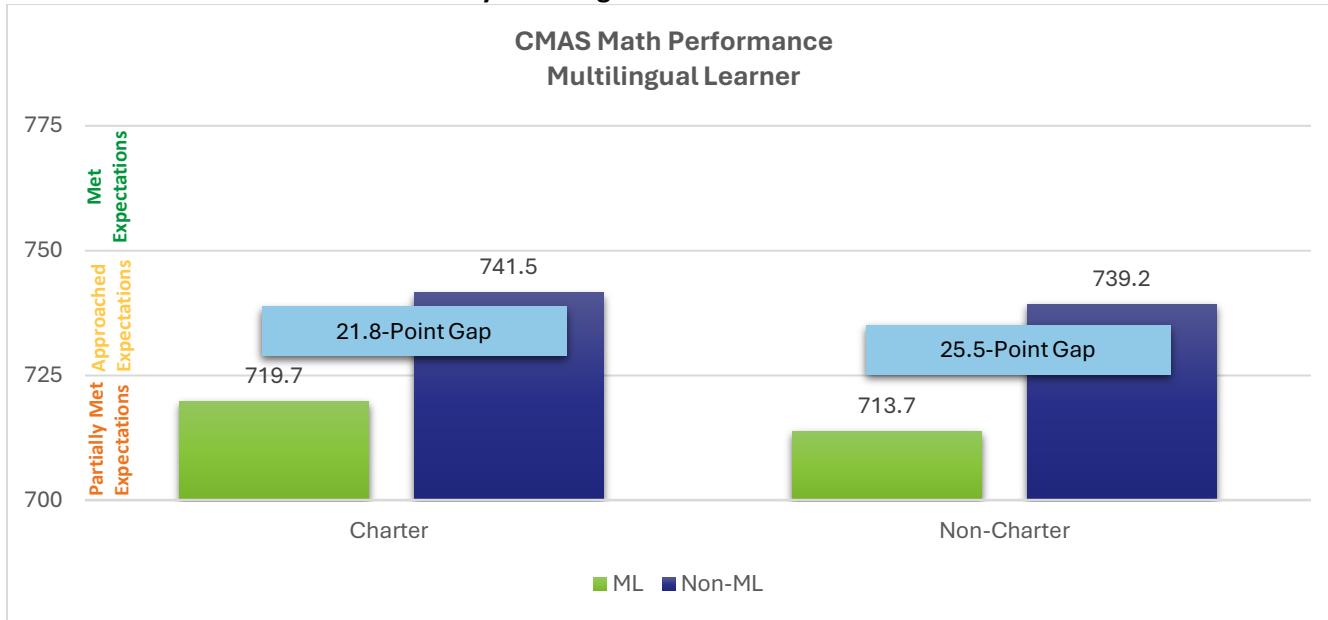
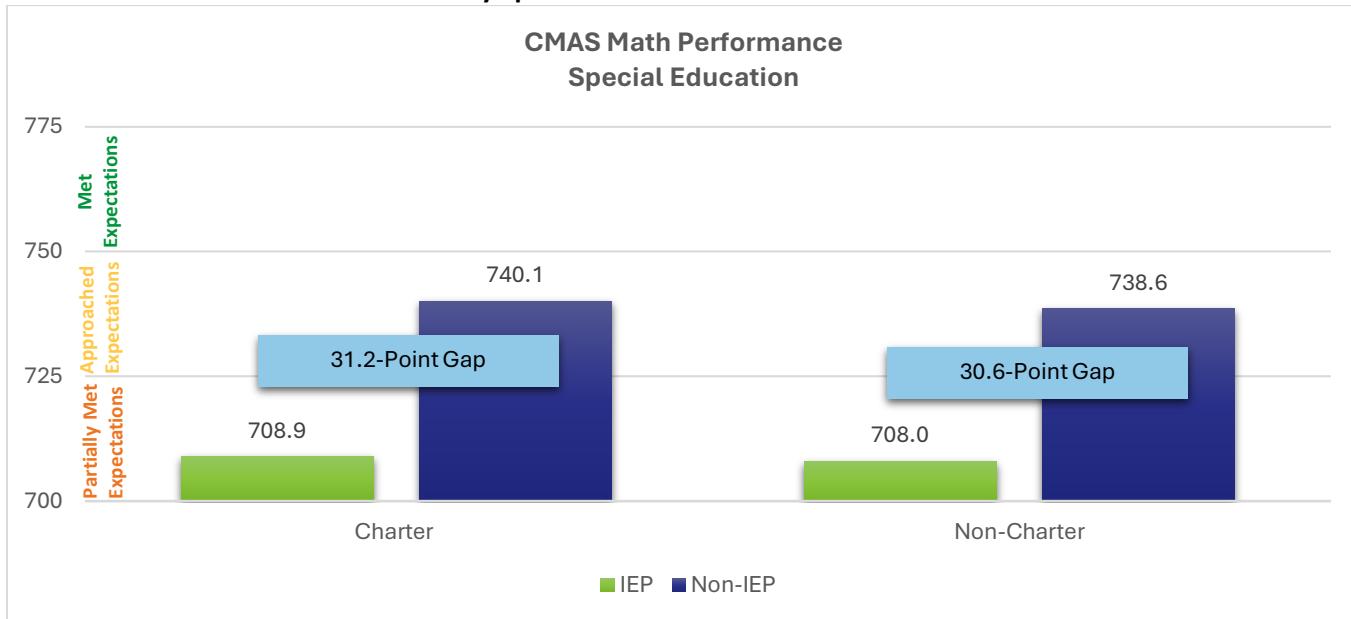
FIGURE 25: CMAS Math Performance by Multilingual Learner Status 2023-24


Figure 26 displays the math CMAS results for students with an IEP who have an IEP in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 0.6-point higher achievement gap than non-charter schools.

FIGURE 26: CMAS Math Performance by Special Education Status 2023-24


PSAT and SAT Performance

Levels and Cut Scores

Performance levels are used to measure how well a student meets academic expectations and the level of college readiness. As shown in Table 18, there are four performance levels for the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) PSAT and SAT assessments. Table 19 displays the four performance levels for the Math PSAT and SAT assessments and the associated scale score cuts.

TABLE 18: PSAT and SAT EBRW Cut Scores

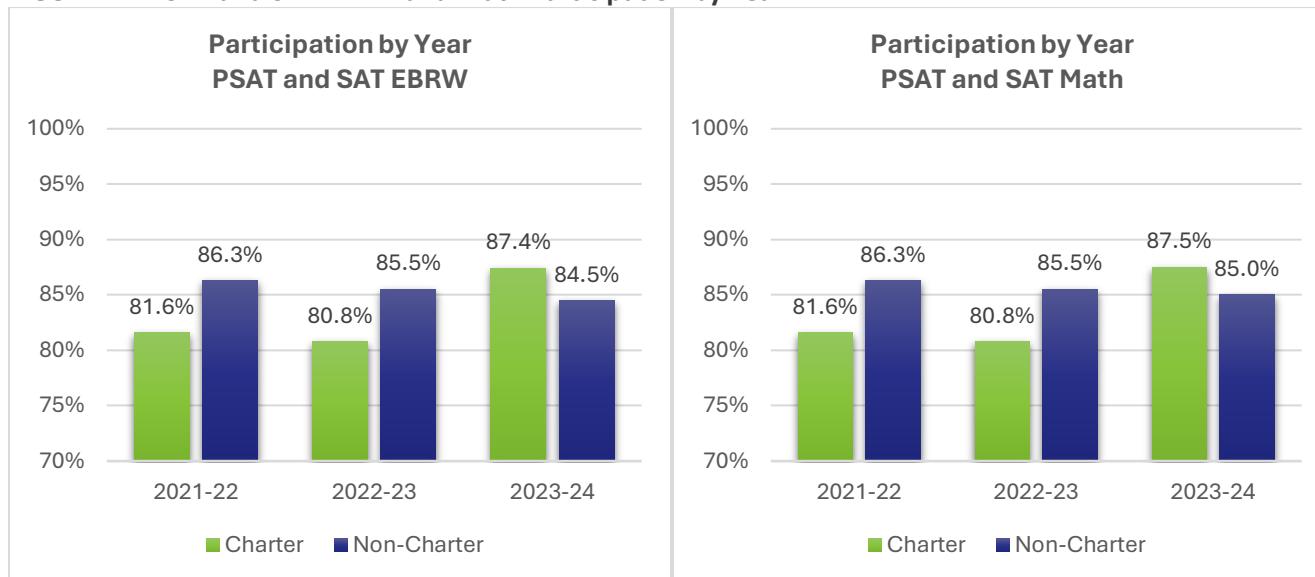
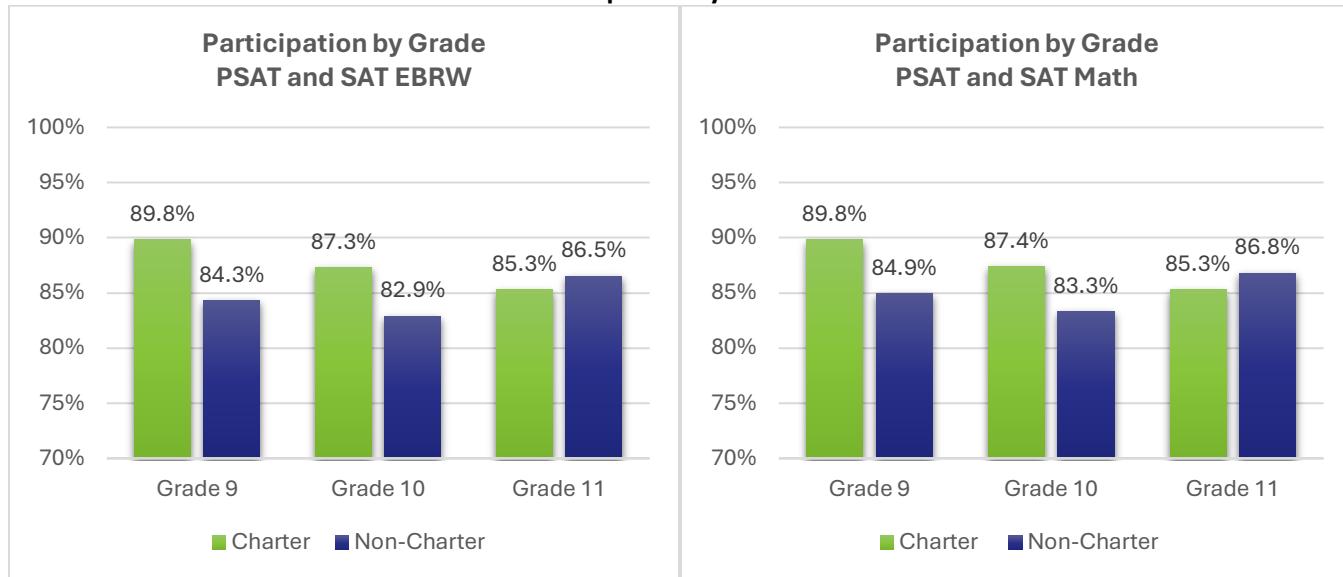
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing	Level 1 Did Not Yet Meet Expectations	Level 2 Approached Expectations	Level 3 Met Expectations	Level 4 Exceeded Expectations
SAT	200-430	440-470	480-630	640-800
PSAT 10	160-380	390-420	430-590	600-760
PSAT 9	120-360	370-400	410-560	570-720

TABLE 19: PSAT and SAT Math Cut Scores

Math	Level 1 Did Not Yet Meet Expectations	Level 2 Approached Expectations	Level 3 Met Expectations	Level 4 Exceeded Expectations
SAT	200-450	460-520	530-650	660-800
PSAT 10	160-420	430-470	480-580	590-760
PSAT 9	120-400	410-440	450-550	560-720

PSAT and SAT Participation

In addition to evaluating EBRW and math performance, CDE examined grade-level participation rates by year and grade level, as presented in Figures 27 and 28 below. When examining grade-level participation, charter schools exhibited a higher participation rate compared to non-charter schools during the 2023-24 school year in grades 9 and 10. Charter schools are approaching pre-pandemic levels and fall short by 3.1 percentage points, whereas non-charter schools fall 8.1 percentage points short of pre-pandemic levels. There is a decline in participation among both charter and non-charter school students as they progress through grade levels nine through 10; however, there was increased participation among students in grade 11.

FIGURE 27: PSAT and SAT EBRW and Math Participation by Year

FIGURE 28: PSAT and SAT EBRW and Math Participation by Grade 2023-24


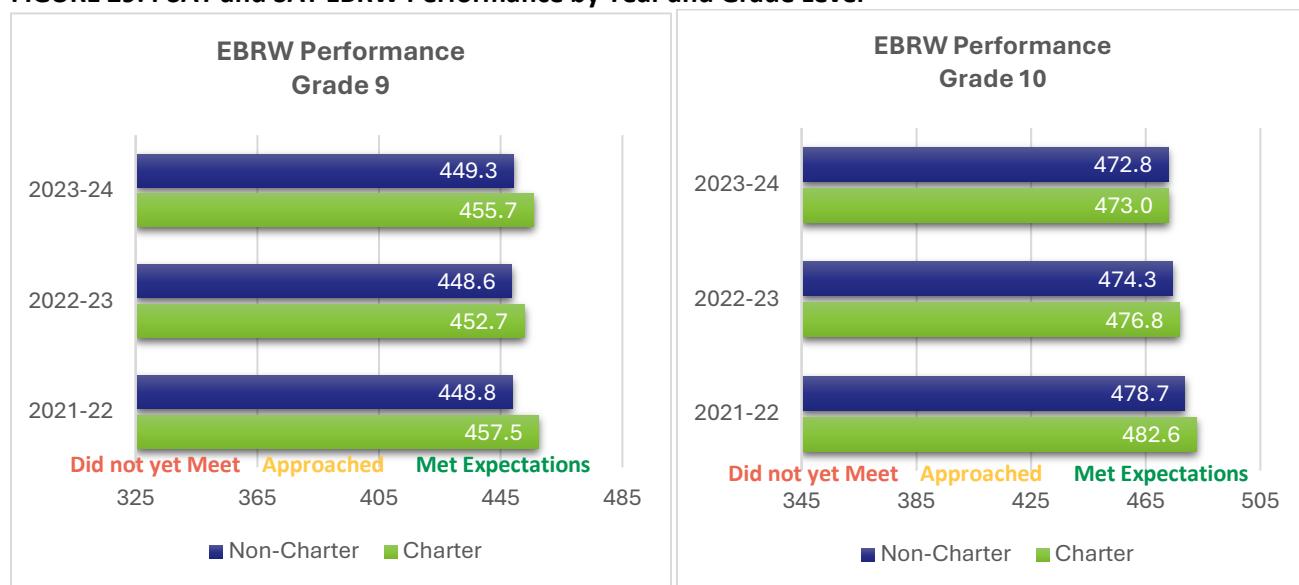
Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) Performance – Overall and by Grade and Year

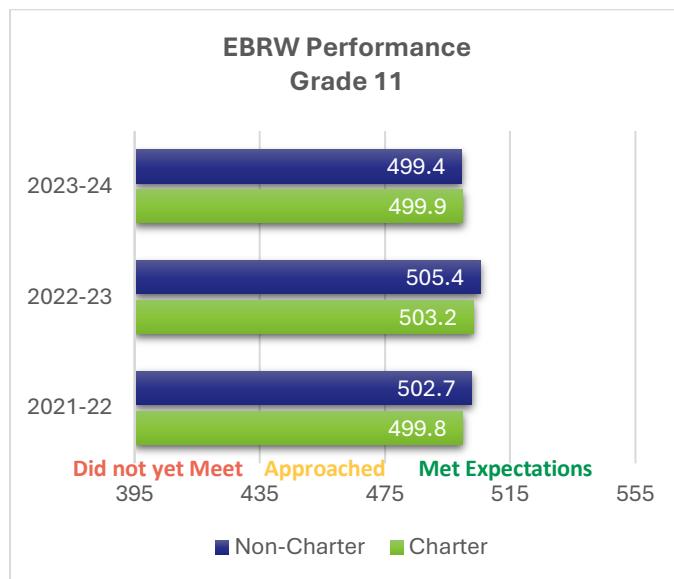
Table 20 displays the 2023-24 average MSS and the associated rating for each grade level within charter and non-charter schools on the EBRW assessment. In 2023-24 charter school students in grades 9, 10, and 11 earned higher MSSs on average than their non-charter peers. Charter schools and non-charter schools met expectations.

TABLE 20: 2023-24 PSAT and SAT EBRW Mean Scale Score and Rating

Grade Level	Charter Mean Scale Score	Rating	Charter Participation Rate	Non-Charter Mean Scale Score	Rating	Non-Charter Participation Rate	Mean Scale Score Difference
Grade 9	455.7	Met	89.8%	449.3	Met	84.3%	6.4
Grade 10	473.0	Met	87.3%	472.8	Met	82.9%	0.2
Grade 11	499.9	Met	85.3%	499.4	Met	86.5%	0.5

As depicted in Figure 29, charter schools demonstrated higher average MSS compared to non-charter schools on the EBRW assessment for grade 9 and 10 in the 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24. In grade 11, charter schools earned a higher MSS than non-charter schools in 2023-24, which changes the historical pattern, where non-charter school students have scored higher than their charter school peers.

FIGURE 29: PSAT and SAT EBRW Performance by Year and Grade Level




Math Performance – Overall and by Grade and Year

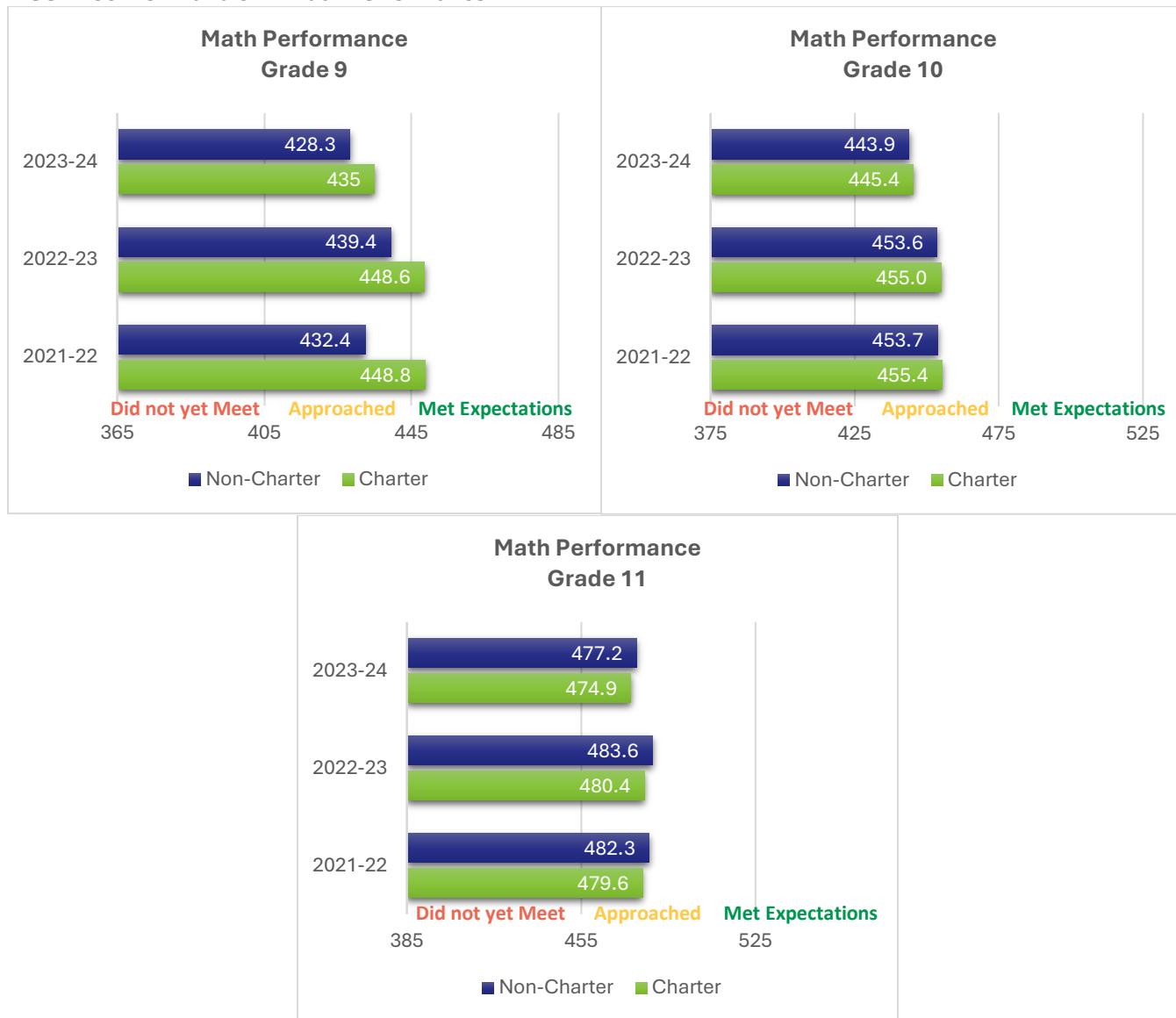
Math performance mirrored the trends seen on the EBRW assessment. Students in charter schools outperformed students in non-charter schools, except for the 11th grade in the 2023-24 school year.

Table 21 displays the 2023-34 MSS and the rating for each grade level within charter and non-charter schools on the math assessment. In 2023-24, students in grades 9 and 10 in charter schools earned higher MSSs than non-charter students, while 11th grade students in non-charter schools scored higher by 2.3 points, which mirrored the pattern seen in EBRW assessments. In charter and non-charter schools all assessed grades approached expectations.

TABLE 21: 2023-24 PSAT and SAT Math Mean Scale Score and Rating

Grade Level	Charter Mean Scale Score	Rating	Charter Participation Rate	Non-Charter Mean Scale Score	Rating	Non-Charter Participation Rate	Mean Scale Score Difference
Grade 9	435.0	Approached	89.8%	428.3	Approached	84.9%	6.7
Grade 10	445.4	Approached	87.4%	443.9	Approached	83.3%	1.5
Grade 11	474.9	Approached	85.3%	477.2	Approached	86.8%	-2.3

As depicted in Figure 30, charter schools demonstrated higher average MSSs compared to non-charter schools on the Math assessment for 9th and 10th grades in the 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 school years. For 11th graders, average scores lagged in charter schools in 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24.

FIGURE 30: PSAT and SAT Math Performance


Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Performance – Disaggregated Results

As shown in Table 22, during the 2023-24 school year, disaggregated average achievement results were higher at charter schools for all student populations. Achievement gaps between student groups were also smaller at charter schools compared to non-charter schools, as illustrated in Figures 29 through 32, except the gap between students of color and white non-Hispanic students, which was smaller in non-charter schools, as shown in Figure 32.

TABLE 22: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Student Group 2023-24

	FRL	Non-FRL	Students of Color	White Students	ML	Non-ML	IEP	Non-IEP
Charter	431.6	517.7	445.1	520.2	381.4	496.0	376.5	485.7
Non-Charter	424.3	506.4	435.2	508.8	358.4	488.2	372.9	484.0
Difference	7.3	11.3	9.9	11.4	23.0	7.8	3.6	1.7

Figure 31 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for students FRL eligible in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools and non-charter schools had a 4.0-point larger gap than non-charter schools between students eligible for FRL eligible lunches and students who are not FRL eligible.

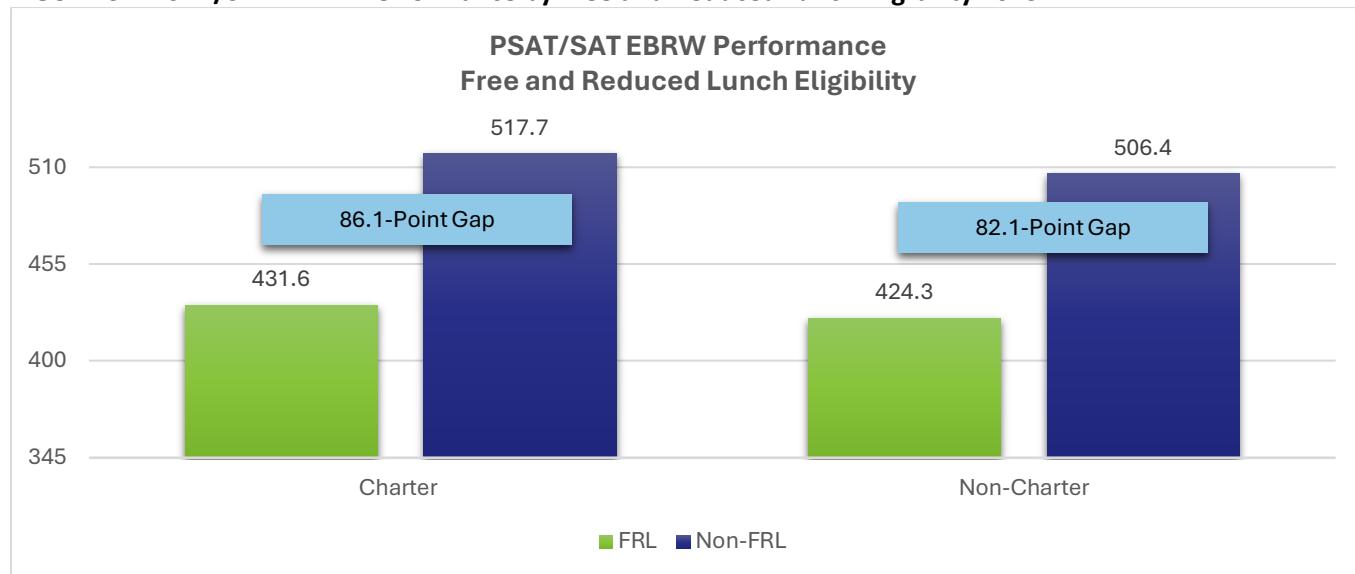
FIGURE 31: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility 2023-24


Figure 32 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 1.5-point larger gap than non-charter schools between students of colors and white (non-Hispanic) students.

FIGURE 32: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Race and Ethnicity 2023-24

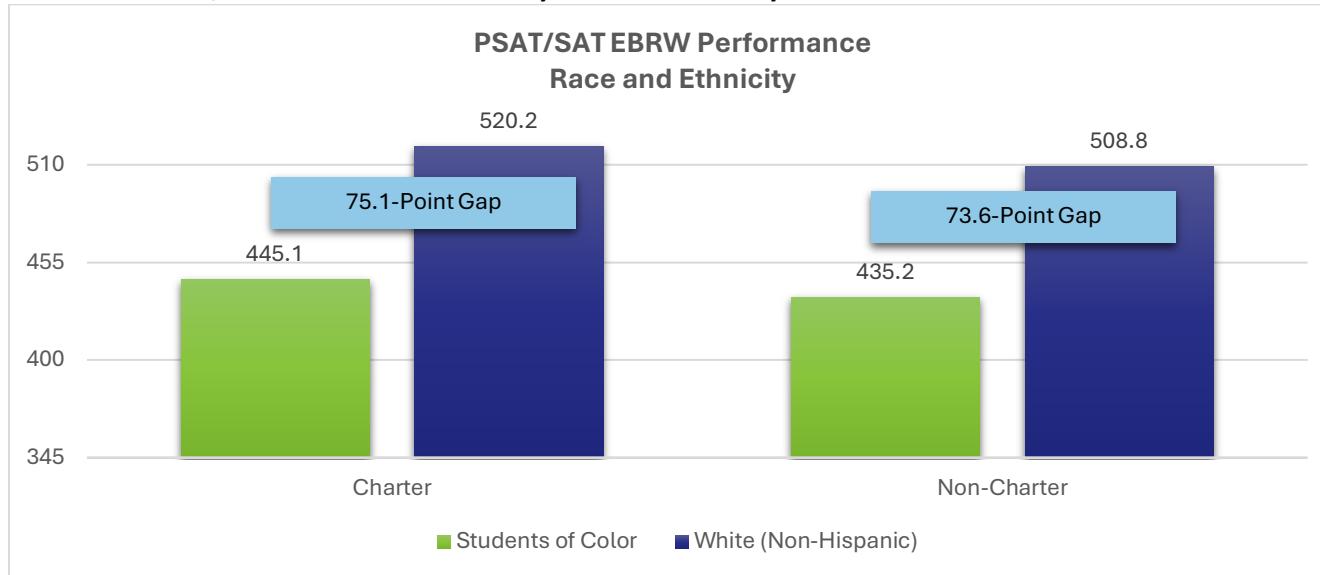


Figure 33 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for ML students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 15.2-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between ML and non-ML students.

FIGURE 33: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Multilingual Learner Status 2023-24

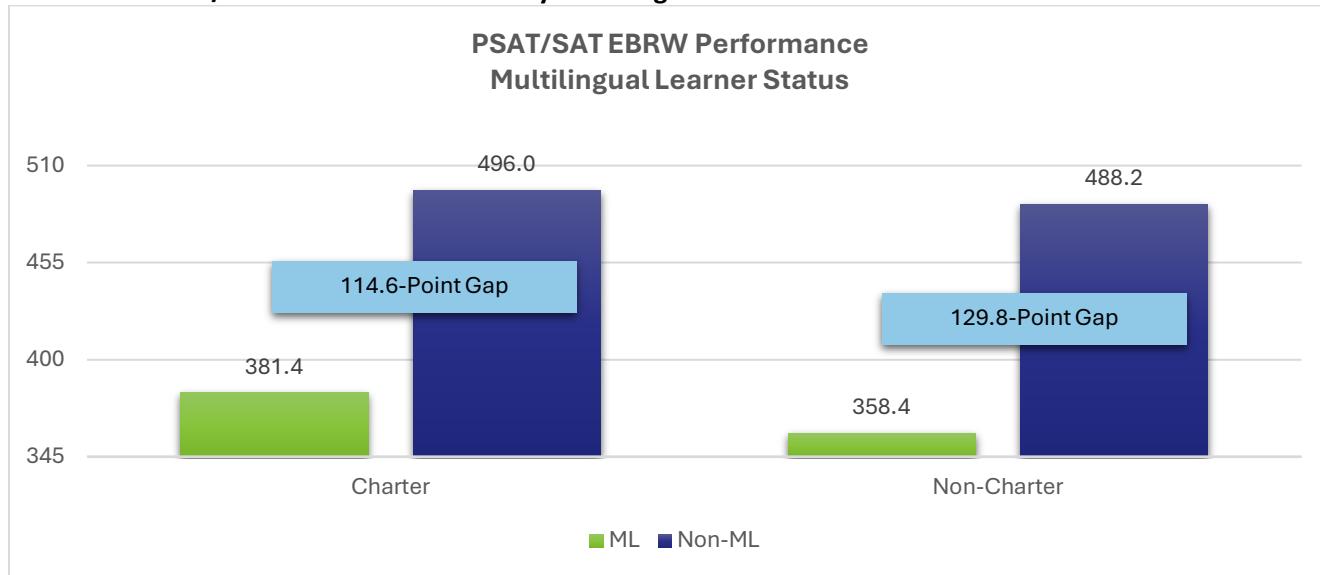
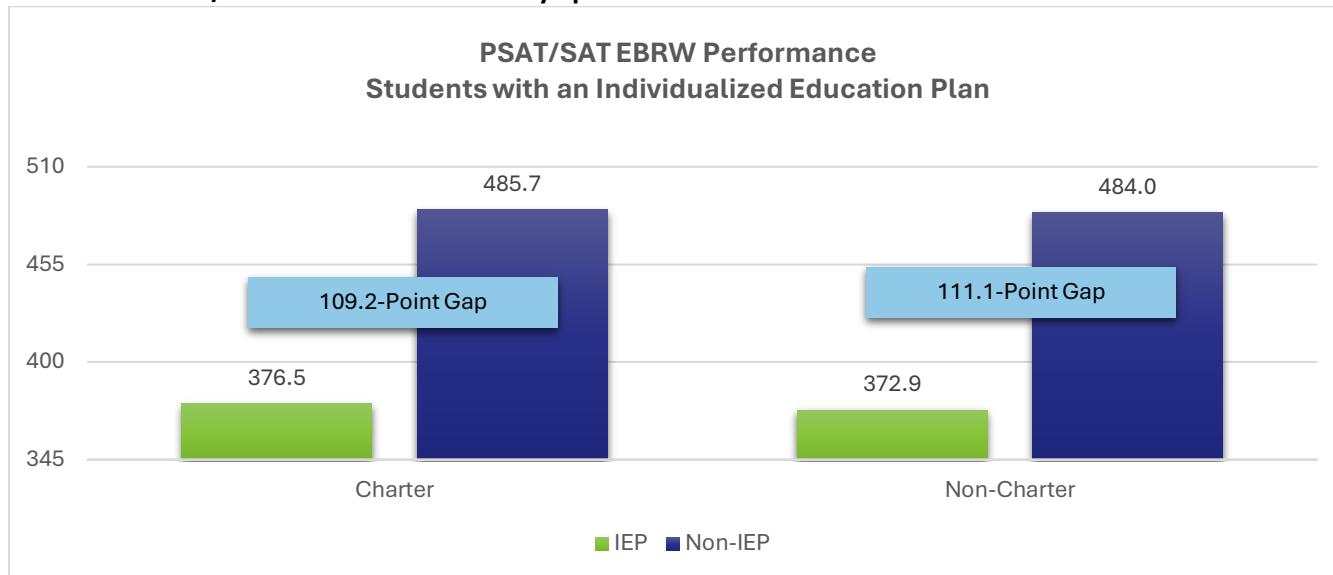


Figure 34 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for students with an IEP in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 1.9-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students in Special Education programs and students who are not.

FIGURE 34: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Special Education Status 2023-24



PSAT/SAT Math Performance – Disaggregated Results

As indicated in Table 23, the disaggregated results during the 2023-24 academic year were higher at charter schools on the Colorado PSAT/SAT Math exam for all student groups. In looking at score differences between student groups, charter schools showed narrower gaps for all groups. A summary of these scores and analyses can be found in Figures 33-36.

TABLE 23: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Subgroup

	FRL	Non-FRL	Students of Color	White Students	ML	Non-ML	IEP	Non-IEP
Charter	415.2	485.8	428.8	484.1	383.0	466.1	359.4	460.5
Non-Charter	402.9	480.6	415.9	480.8	358.5	461.7	354.6	459.3
Difference	12.3	5.2	12.9	3.3	24.5	4.4	4.8	1.2

Figure 35 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for students eligible for FRL in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 7.1-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students FRL eligible and students who are not.

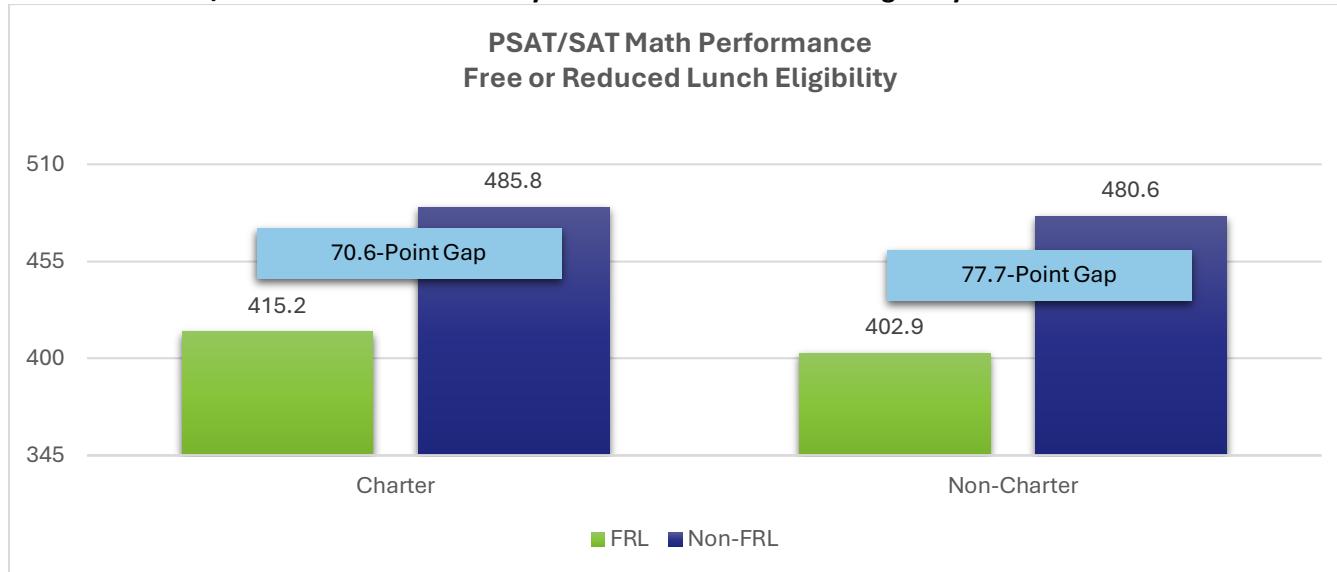
FIGURE 35: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility 2023-24


Figure 36 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 9.6-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students of colors and white non-Hispanic students.

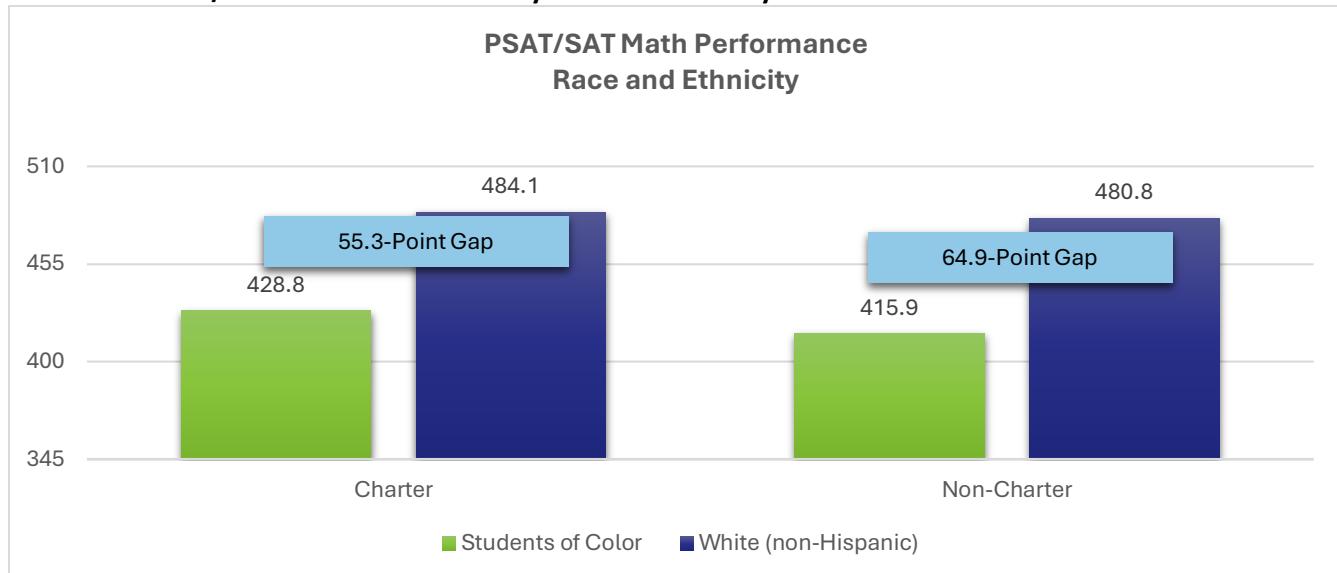
FIGURE 36: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Race and Ethnicity 2023-24


Figure 37 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for ML students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 20.1-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between ML and non-ML students.

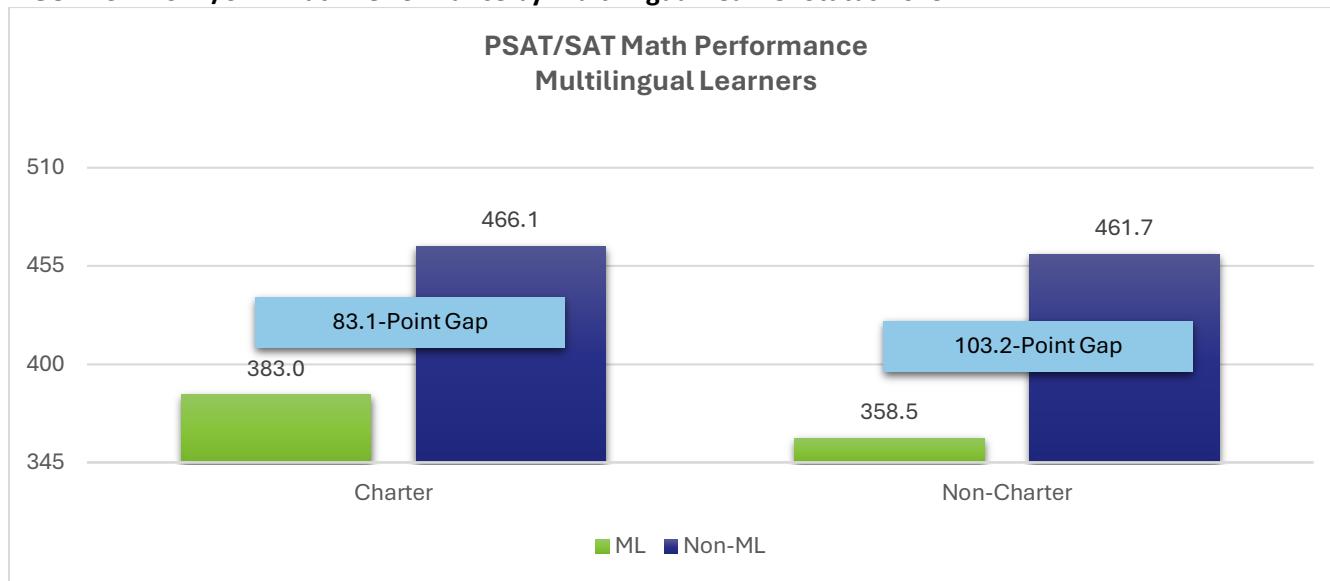
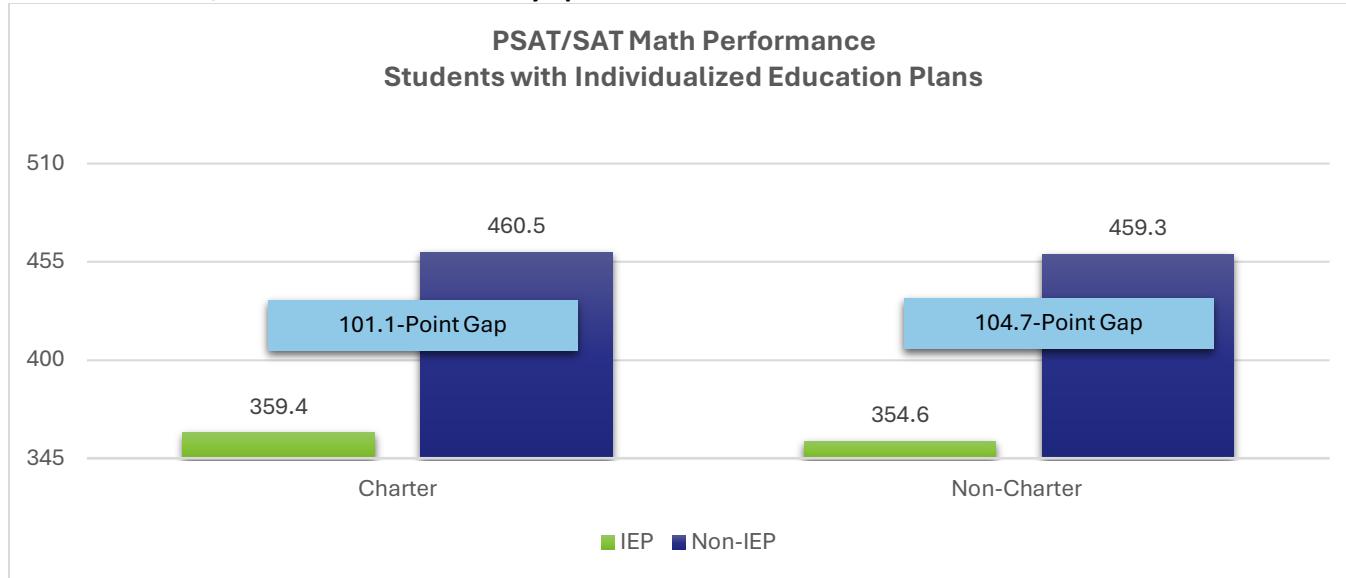
FIGURE 37: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Multilingual Learner Status 2023-24


Figure 38 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for students with an IEP in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 3.6-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students in Special Education programs and students who are not.

FIGURE 38: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Special Education Status 2023-24


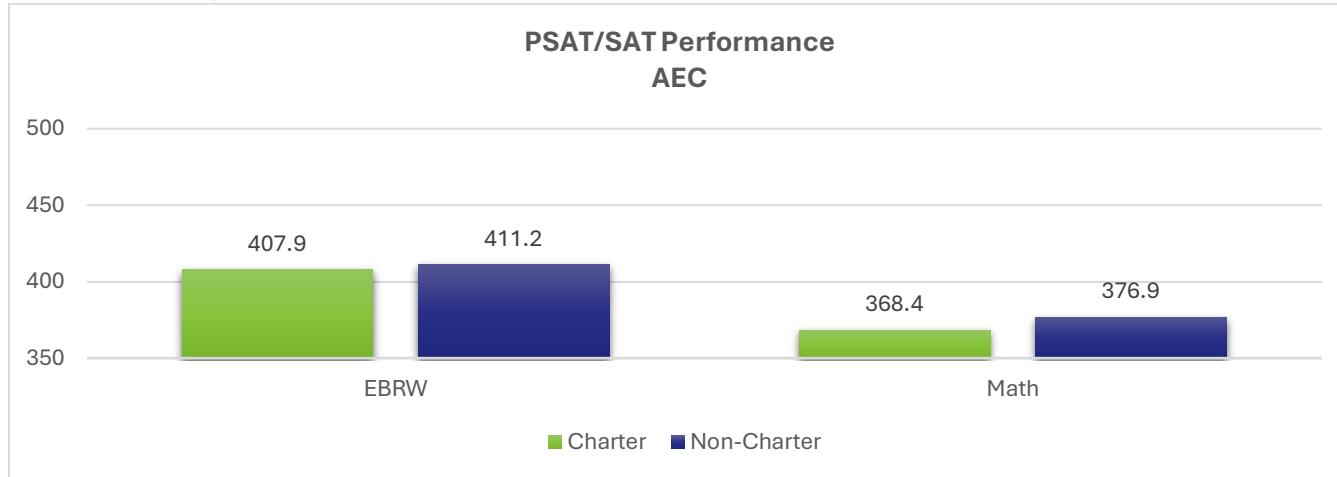
PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance – Alternative Education Campus

AECs serve students who previously dropped out of school or are at high-risk for dropping out. The statutory requirements for a school to have AEC status includes serving at least 90% of students that meet “high risk” conditions. Most of their students are juniors or older with almost half of students in AECs categorized as 12th grade students. In most cases, students transfer to AECs from another middle or high school or enroll directly after

being out of school. In the 2023-24 school year, over 24,609 students, or 8.7% of Colorado's high school students, attended one of the state's 116 AECs. About 17% of AECs in the state of Colorado (20 schools) are charter schools.

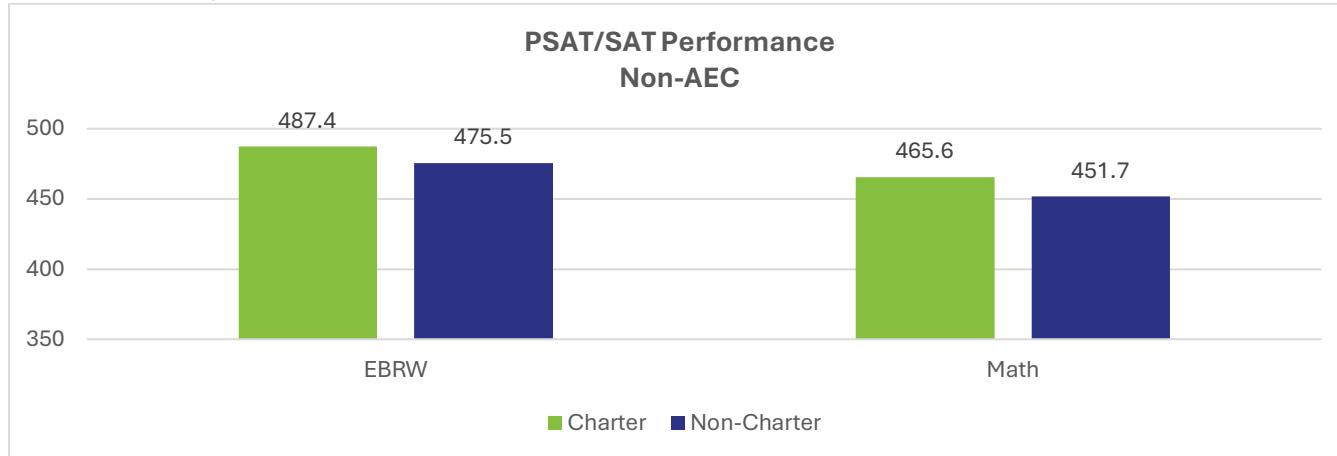
The analysis found in Figure 39, focusing on the academic achievements of students in AECs both charter and non-charter, revealed that those attending charter AEC schools obtained a lower MSSs in both EBRW and Math than their counterparts in non-charter AEC schools.

FIGURE 39: PSAT/SAT Performance within AEC Schools 2023-24



In contrast, when looking at non-AEC schools as shown in Figure 40, students in charter non-AEC schools earned higher performance scores in both EBRW and Math.

FIGURE 40: PSAT/SAT Performance within Non-AEC Schools 2023-24



School Performance Frameworks

School Performance Frameworks (SPF) are an annual rating published by the CDE for public schools in the state, offering a summative report of a school's academic performance for the year.¹⁵

¹⁵ Additional information regarding accountability frameworks, including scoring guides, can be found here: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performanceframeworks>

As illustrated in Figures 41 and 42, over the past three years for which data is available, the proportion of charter schools receiving the highest rating of “Performance” on their Frameworks has consistently been higher than it has been for non-charter schools. In 2022-23, 67% of charter schools earned a Performance rating, compared with 61% of non-charter schools. Charter schools are also witnessing a notable decrease in schools receiving “Insufficient Data” ratings. For the first time in five years charter schools have lower percentages of “Insufficient Data” ratings than non-charter schools.

Figure 41: Charter School Performance Frameworks Ratings Year Over Year

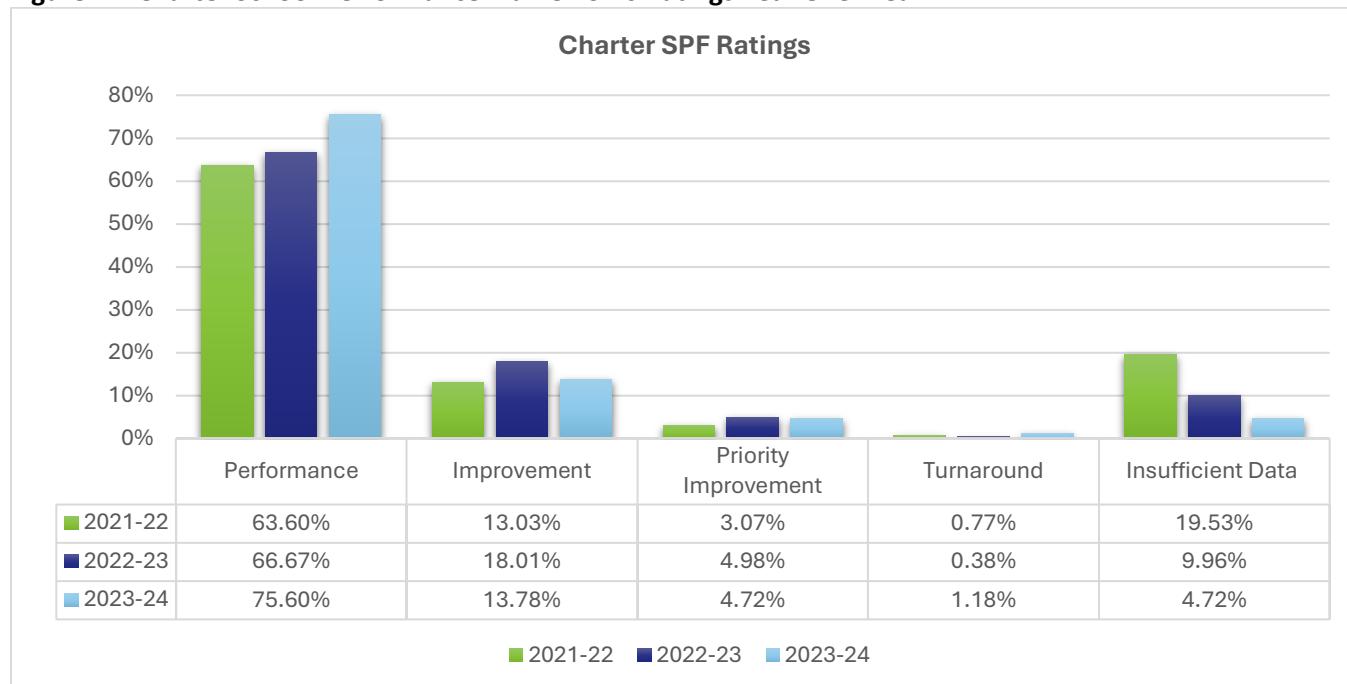
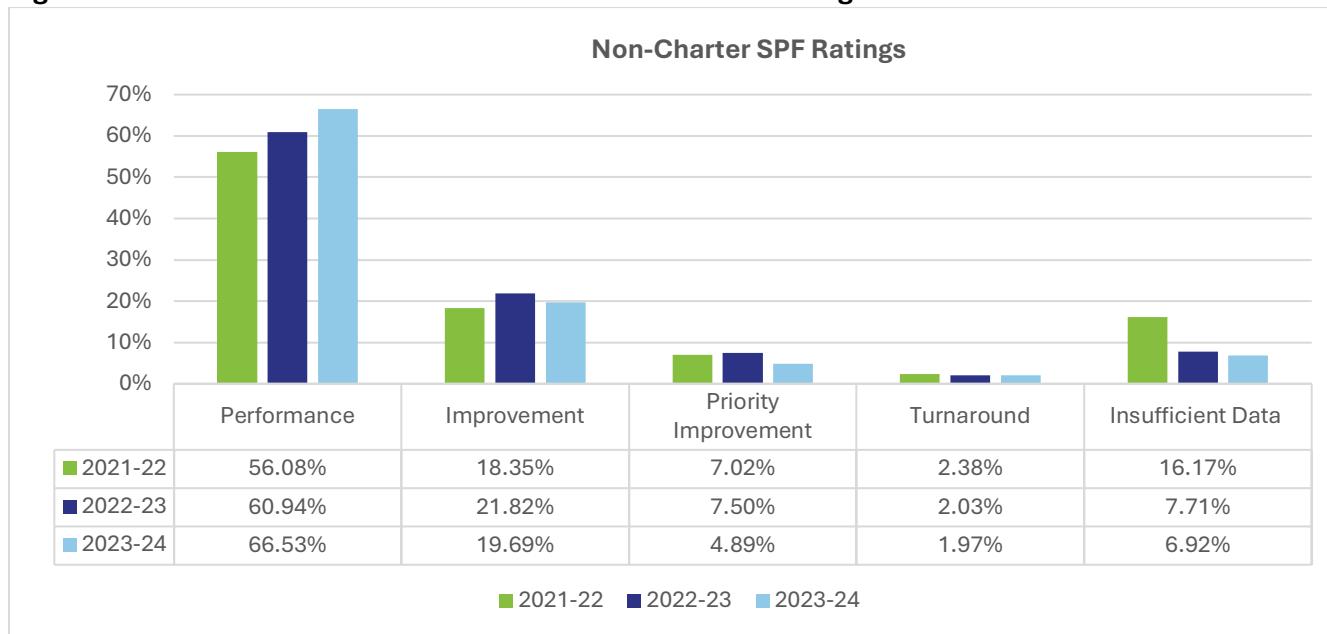


Figure 42: Non-Charter School Performance Frameworks Ratings Year Over Year


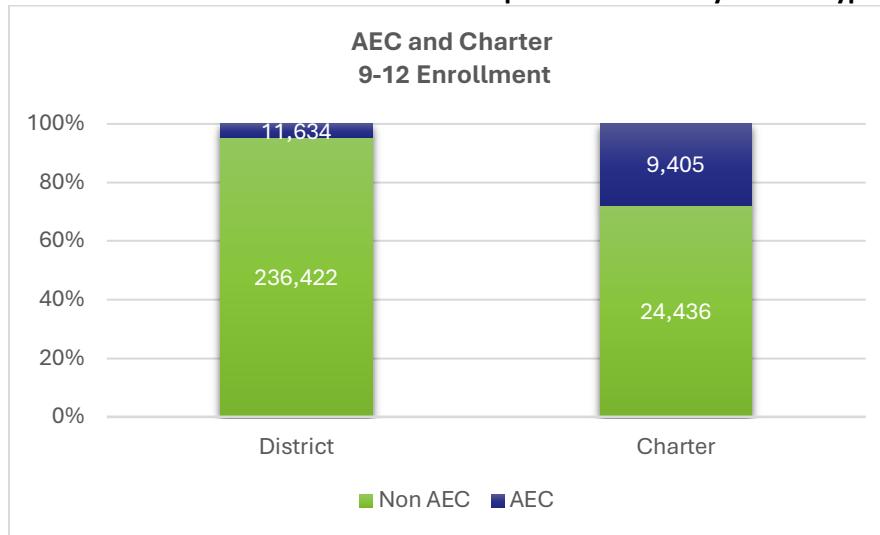
Part Six: Colorado Charter School Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness Performance

This section focuses on the performance of secondary schools in preparing students for college and career. Within this report, there is a performance comparison of charter and non-charter schools. Additionally, the results are broken down based on the type of secondary school, whether it is a traditional high school or an AEC.

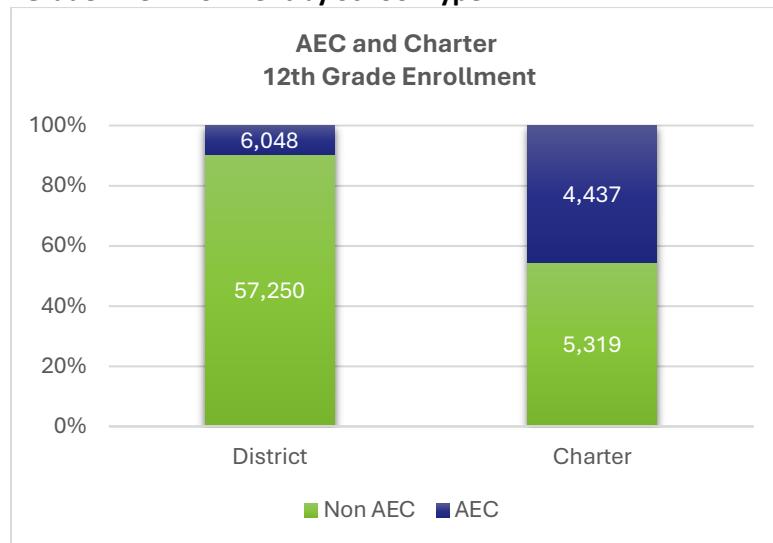
It is important to evaluate AEC performance separately because AEC schools, by their inherent design, focus on serving populations of highly at-risk students with unique models and missions. As a result, Colorado has developed a framework specific to measuring outcomes unique to AECs. Furthermore, there is a much higher concentration of charter schools among AECs, making this distinction in the analysis relevant for a summative assessment of charter school performance.

As depicted in Figure 43, the percentage of high school students enrolled in AEC campuses is significantly higher in charter schools compared to traditional schools.

FIGURE 43: 2023-24 Grades 9-12 Alternative Education Campus Enrollment by School Type



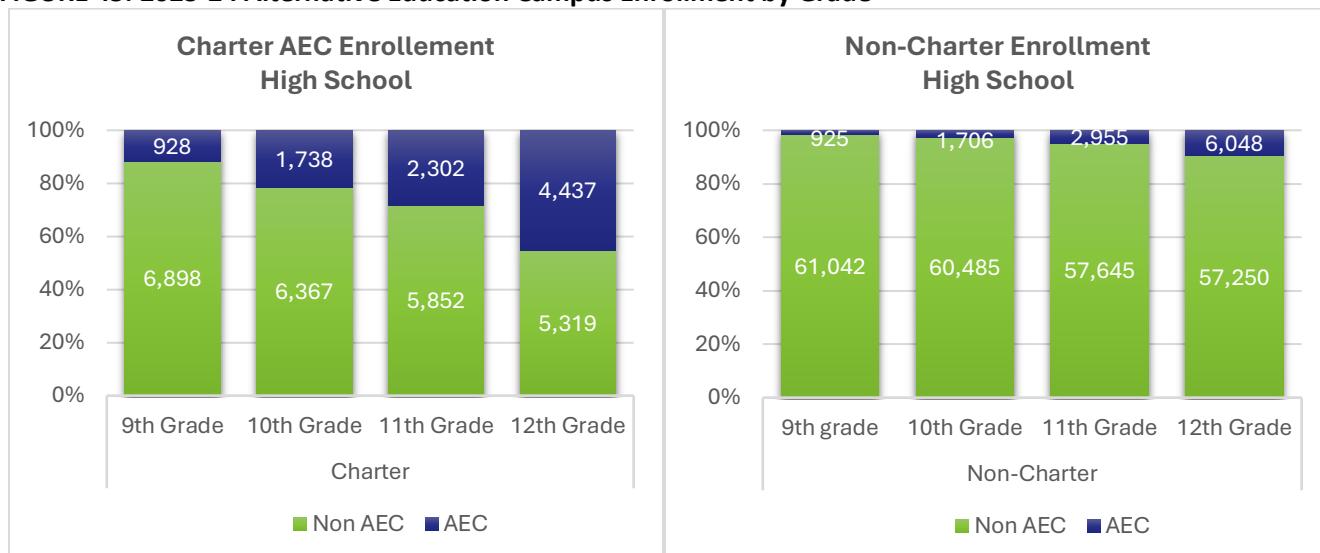
This difference becomes even more pronounced, as shown in Figure 44, when examining 12th-grade enrollment, where 45.5% of charter school students attend AECs, compared to just 9.6% in traditional schools.

FIGURE 44: 2023-24 12th Grade AEC Enrollment by School Type


Charter school AECs often focus on serving older students, contributing to a growing share of high school students enrolled in AECs as they advance through grades. This demographic trend helps explain two key observations:

- 1. PSAT Performance:** Charter school students demonstrate the strongest PSAT performance in 9th grade, with the gap between charter and traditional schools narrowing in later grades.
- 2. Post-Secondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Indicators:** Despite strong early academic indicators, charter schools tend to have lower overall PWR outcomes, partly due to the higher proportion of older students served in AECs.

This context provides valuable insight into how student enrollment patterns may influence key performance metrics for charter schools.

FIGURE 45: 2023-24 Alternative Education Campus Enrollment by Grade


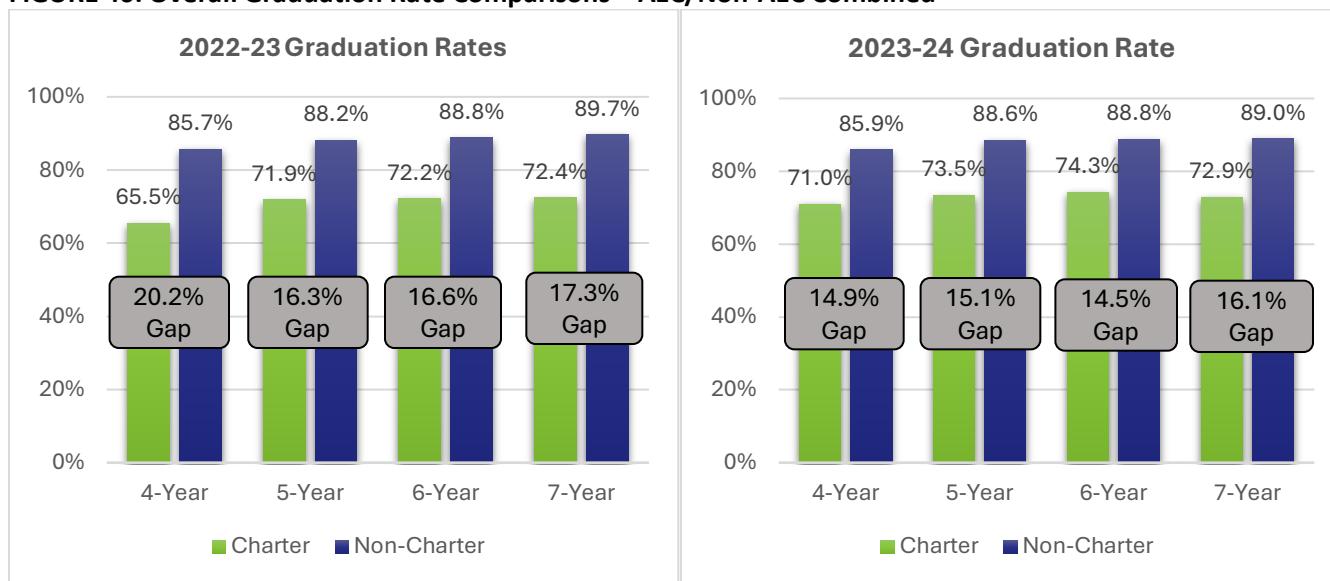
Graduation Rate

Starting in the 2009-10 school year, Colorado, (along with many other states), updated its methodology for calculating graduation rates. Previously, early and late graduates were included in the current graduating class. Under the current calculations, each student is assigned a fixed Anticipated Year of Graduation (AYG) upon enrollment in high school. Early and late graduates are reflected in four-year, five-year, six-year, and seven-year graduation rates based on a student's assigned AYP.

For this report's purpose, a comparison was made for graduation rates for charter and non-charter schools for various cohorts graduating in 2022-23 and 2023-24 (e.g., 4-year rate reflecting the class of 2023, 5-year rate reflecting the class of 2022, etc.).

The findings indicate that charter schools have lower graduation rates overall, as shown in Figure 46, but the gaps closed significantly between the years 2022-23 and 2023-24. In 2023-24 charter school graduation rates among the all the various cohorts had risen, whereas non-charter schools saw a percentage increase among 4- and 5-year cohorts only.

FIGURE 46: Overall Graduation Rate Comparisons – AEC/Non-AEC Combined



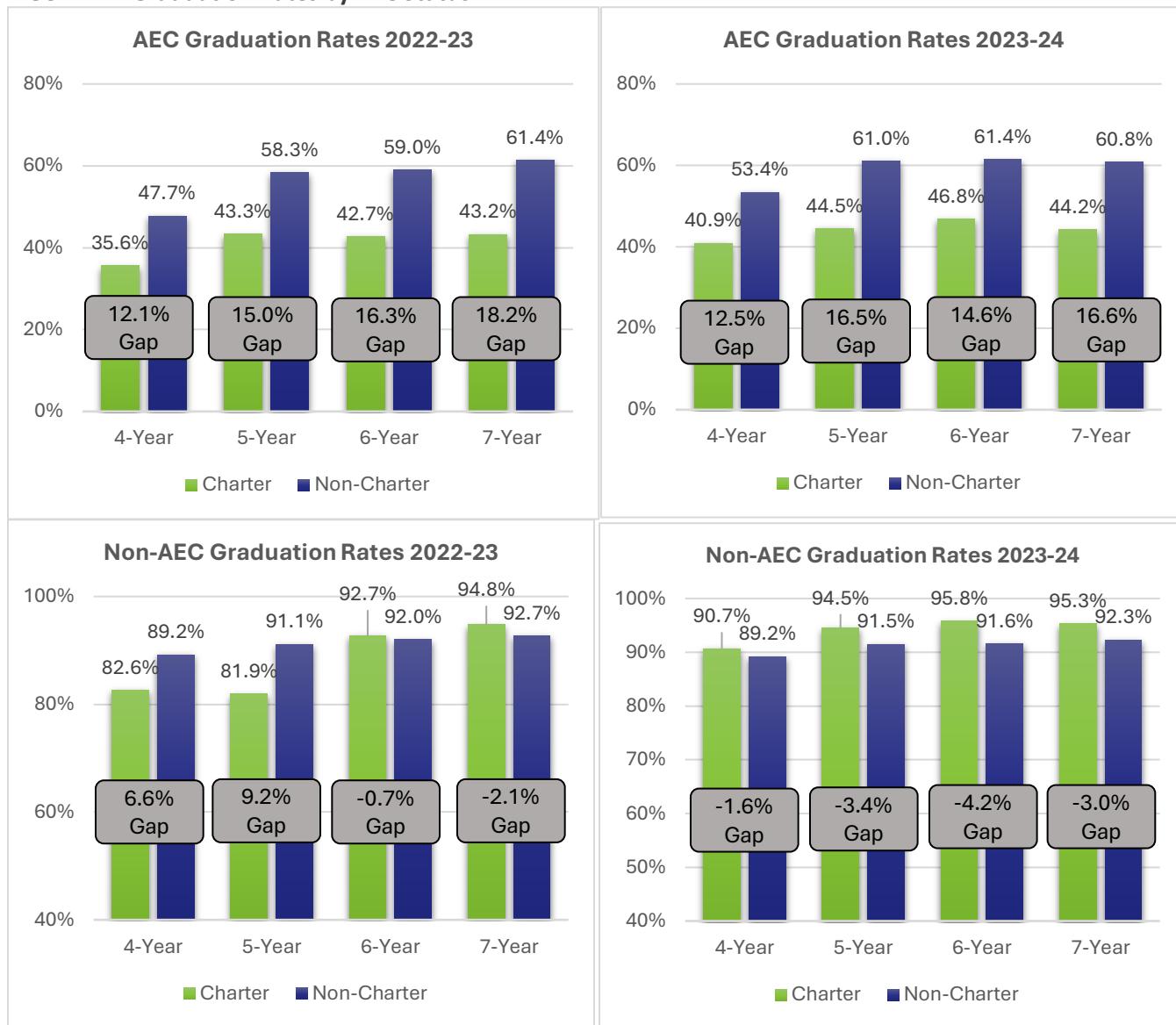
As noted previously, charter schools have a higher percentage of AEC schools than non-charters, therefore, at the following analysis examines graduation rates for AEC and non-AEC schools, as shown in figure 47.

The findings show that charter AEC schools have lower graduation rates in 2022-23 and 2023-24 compared to non-AEC charter schools. In spite of the gaps, charter and non-charter school graduation rate gaps narrowed among the all the various cohorts in 2023-24. In each instance, the gap in graduation rates between charter and non-charter schools decreased between 1.2 and 5.3 percentage points.

For non-AEC high schools, charter schools had historically shown a unique trend where their 6- and 7-year graduation rates were higher than non-charter schools, but these rates were lower for the 4- and 5-year rates. In

2023-24, this trend changed to where now charter school non-AEC graduation rates are higher for all four cohort groups.

FIGURE 47: Graduation Rates by AEC Status



Matriculation Rate

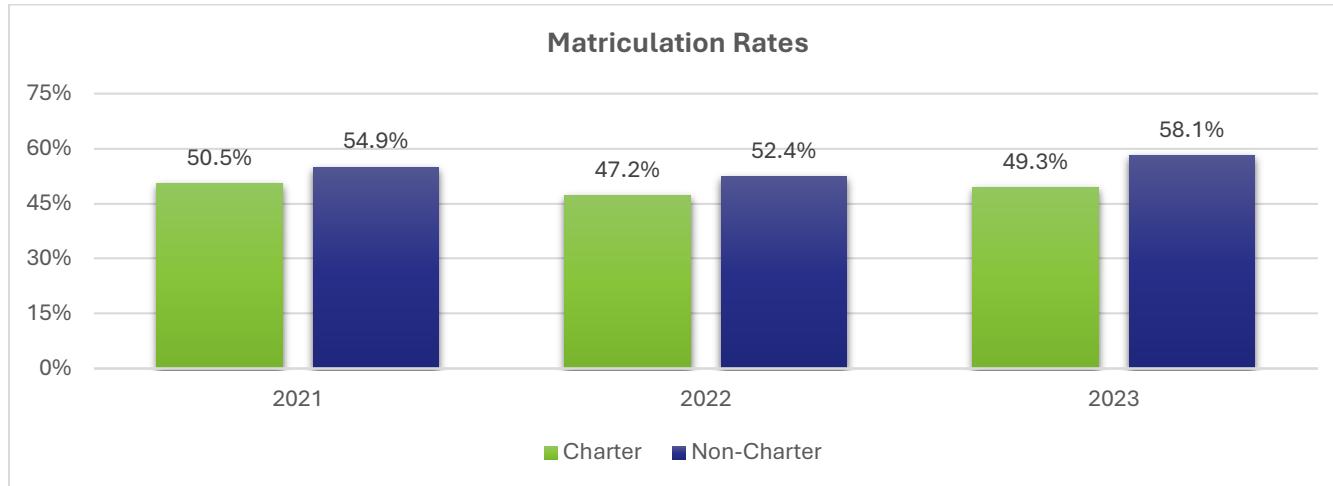
CDE reports matriculation rates as a part of the SPF. The matriculation rate is the percentage of high school graduates who enroll in a career and technical education program, community college, four-year institution of higher education or the military during the summer or fall term immediately following graduation.¹⁶

As seen in Figure 48, Non-charter schools experienced a higher matriculation rate than charter schools in 2021, 2022, and 2023. Also, the matriculation rate differences are narrower than the graduation rate difference of 8.8

¹⁶ More information is available in CDE's [2023 Matriculation Fact Sheet](#).

percentage-points for matriculation rates in 2023 versus a 20.2 percentage-point difference in graduation rates in 2022-23.

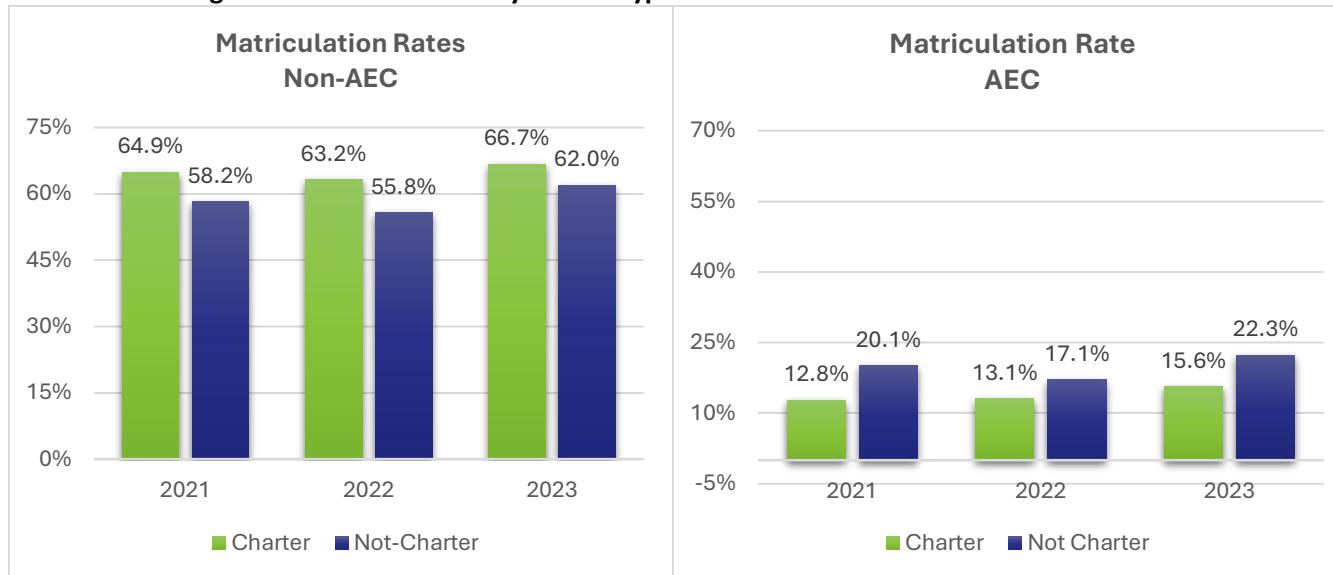
FIGURE 48: Matriculation Rates



Consistent with the outcomes for graduation rates, matriculation rates for charter schools and non-charter schools vary based on whether the schools are AECs or non-AECs.

As shown by Figure 49, when controlling for AEC status and non-AEC, matriculation rates are 4.7 percentage points higher for charter schools compared to non-charter schools in 2023. At the same time matriculation rates are lower for charter AECs.

FIGURE 49: College Matriculation Rates by School Type



Part Seven: Educator Workforce

This section reports on characteristics of teacher staffing in Colorado charter schools and non-charter schools. The information presented comes from data collected and reported by CDE for the 2023-24 school year.

Teacher Salaries

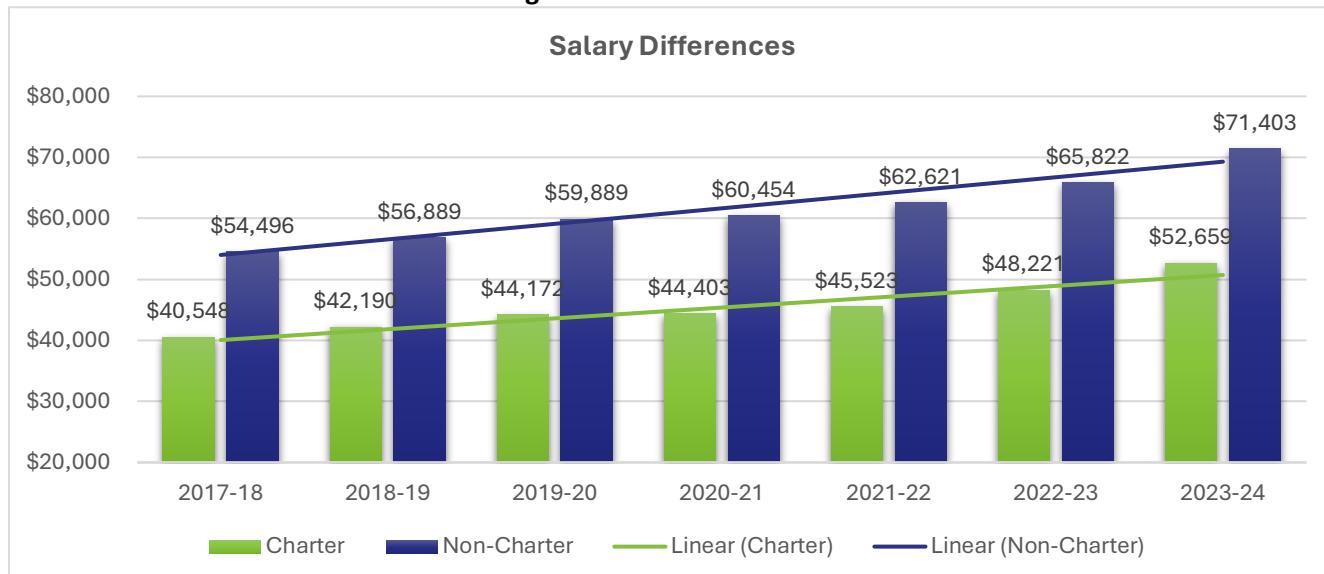
As presented in Table 24, the average salary for teachers in charter schools in Colorado was \$52,659 as compared to \$71,403 in non-charter schools statewide during the 2023-24 school year. The difference between teacher salaries at a charter and non-charter school was \$18,744 in 2023-24. In each of these years, the average teacher salary has remained between 73% and 75% of the average non-charter salary. In 2023-24 the average charter teacher increased by 9.2% as compared to 8.5% for non-charter schools.

TABLE 24: Average Teacher Salaries

	Charter	Non-Charter	Percent	Difference
2023-24	\$52,659	\$71,403	73.7%	-\$18,744
2022-23	\$48,221	\$65,822	73.3%	-\$17,601
2021-22	\$45,523	\$62,621	72.7%	-\$17,098
2020-21	\$44,403	\$60,454	73.4%	-\$16,051
2019-20	\$44,172	\$59,889	73.8%	-\$15,717
2018-19	\$42,190	\$56,889	74.2%	-\$14,699
2017-18	\$40,548	\$54,496	74.4%	-\$13,948

Charter school teacher salaries have continually lagged behind those in non-charter schools. The salary gap between charter school and non-charter school teachers in 2017-18 was \$13,948 and has since grown to \$18,744 in 2023-24. Figure 50 illustrates the differences in teacher salary between charters and non-charters over time.

FIGURE 50: Teacher Characteristics - Average Salaries



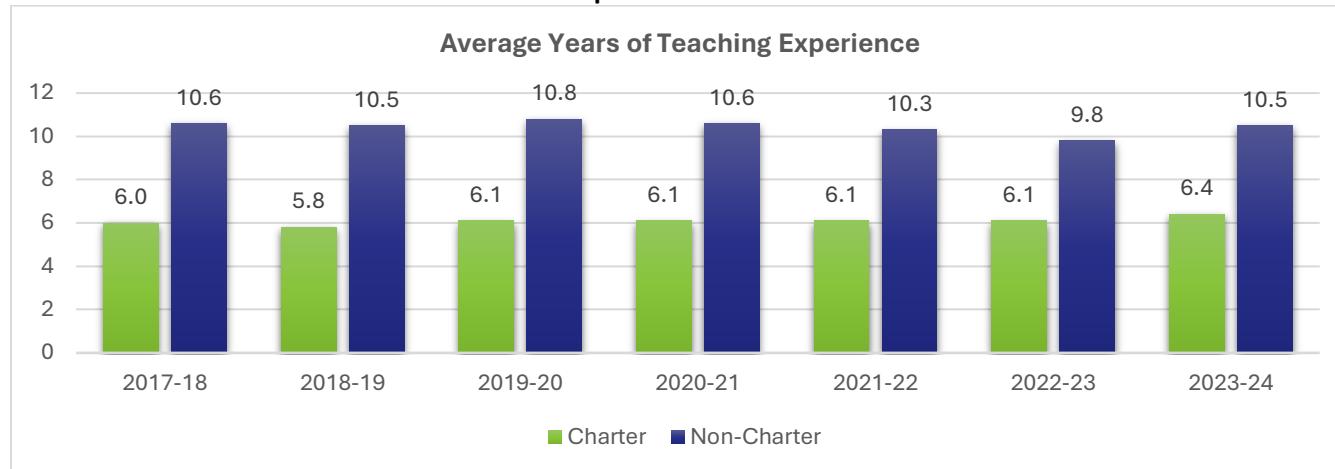
The differences in teacher pay with charter schools can be attributed to multiple factors¹⁷, including:

- **Facility expenses:** As found in prior studies, charter schools use a larger percentage of annual per pupil revenue (PPR) to pay for rents, lease payments, and or debt payments for the facilities they occupy.¹⁸ In contrast, many districts are able to cover a much larger share of their capital expenses through bonds or other historical factors that do not create a need to use PPR. As the cost of land and facilities continues to rise in Colorado, facilities expenses continue to present greater challenges – particularly for schools in earlier stages of their development.
- **Experience levels:** Charter school teachers have fewer years of experience on average when compared to non-charter public school teachers (see specific data in the next section). Thus, if average years of experience narrow over time, one may find that the differences in salaries would also narrow.
- **Financial reserves:** Although school districts and charter schools are required to maintain a certain amount of reserves under TABOR, larger districts have a greater ability to raise or sustain salary levels even if it places short-term strain on financial reserves. Charter schools tend to have far fewer reserves and are therefore less able to approve a salary structure that would require drawing down reserve balances.
- **Teacher Licensure:** Charter school teachers hold fewer teacher licenses when compared to non-charter school teachers (see specific details in figure 51).

Teaching Experience

The average years of teaching experience for charter school teachers have historically been lower than they have been for non-charter school teachers. Between 2017-18 and 2023-24, this difference has been stable between 4.1 and 4.7 years, however, 2022-23 the difference narrowed to 3.7 years and then back to a difference of 4.1 years. Figure 51 displays the years of experience of charter and non-charter teachers over the past seven years.

FIGURE 51: Teacher Characteristics – Years of Experience



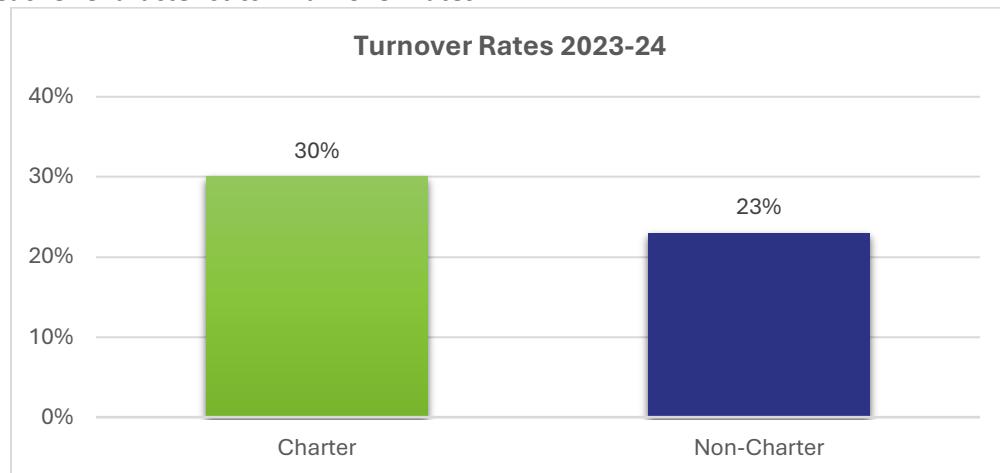
¹⁷ The factors listed are not universal to all charter schools - or to all school districts; however, the explanations have been shown to be fruitful in understanding averages.

¹⁸ Last report is from 2016-17 and is available at: [An Analysis of The Charter School Facility Landscape in Colorado \(ed.gov\)](https://www2.ed.gov/regions/colorado/charter-schools-facility-landscape-report.pdf)

Teacher Turnover

Charter schools exhibit a higher teacher turnover rate when compared to non-charter schools. Figure 52 illustrates the turnover rates¹⁹ observed in both charter and non-charter schools for the 2023-24 school year.

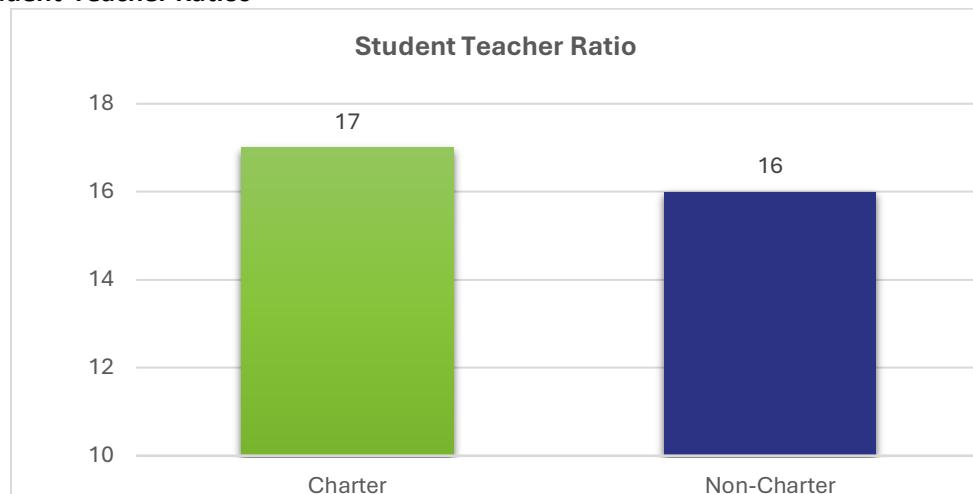
FIGURE 52: Teacher Characteristics – Turnover Rates



Student-Teacher Ratio

During the 2023-24 academic year, charter schools maintained an average student-to-teacher ratio of 17:1, whereas non-charter schools exhibited an average ratio of 16:1.

FIGURE 53: Student-Teacher Ratios



¹⁹ The turnover data presented here aggregates all classroom teachers (regular, Special Education teachers, permanent substitutes and Title 1 teachers) and librarians, reading interventionists and math interventionists, who otherwise belong to the job category of “instructional support”.

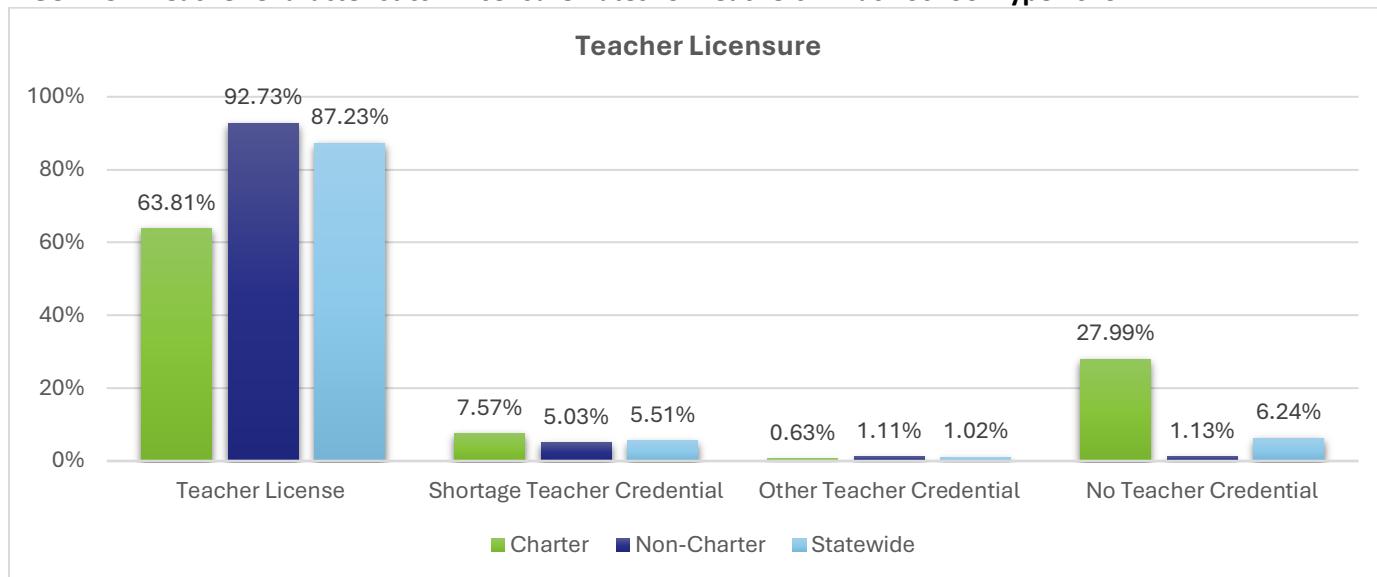
Teacher Licensure and In-Field/Out of Field Status

In Colorado, most charter schools have a waiver of teacher licensure laws from section 22-63-201, C.R.S., which means that they are not required to hire licensed general education teachers.²⁰ When a charter school requests a licensure waiver from the State Board of Education, the charter school must provide an explanation for how they will meet the intent of the statute, publish this explanation on the school's financial transparency website, ensure for legally-required background checks, and participate in applicable Federal reporting and notification requirements related to the qualifications of staff.

As shown in figure 54, a teacher license is held by 92.73% of non-charter school teachers, compared to 63.81% of teachers in charter schools. Due to a data discrepancy, previous reporting on charter educator's licensure status overestimated the percentage of unlicensed educators in charter schools. This discrepancy has been corrected in this year's report.

Please note, all educators in both charter and non-charter schools must pass a background check and complete fingerprinting requirements prior to working with children in Colorado schools.

FIGURE 54: Teacher Characteristics – Licensure Rates for Teachers in Each School Type 2023-24



Another legal requirement for educators relates to a teacher's subject matter expertise. This is monitored through the classification of being "In field" or "Out of Field" and is a term that emerged from the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Before ESSA, during the era of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act's "No Child Left Behind," all charter schools were required to ensure that their core subject teachers met the Federal definition of "Highly Qualified." With the implementation of ESSA, the term "Highly Qualified" was replaced with "In Field." While the law no longer mandated teachers to be strictly in field, it emphasized tracking this information, aspiring to have all teachers instructing within their subject matter expertise, especially in Title 1 schools.

²⁰ Charter schools are not waived from Federal licensure requirements that apply to special education providers.

Colorado introduced four methods to demonstrate subject matter expertise, as listed on Table 25, and monitored teachers who were classified as out of field. In school year 2023-24, 23.69% of charter teachers were found to be teaching out of field, compared to 5.57% for non-charter schools.

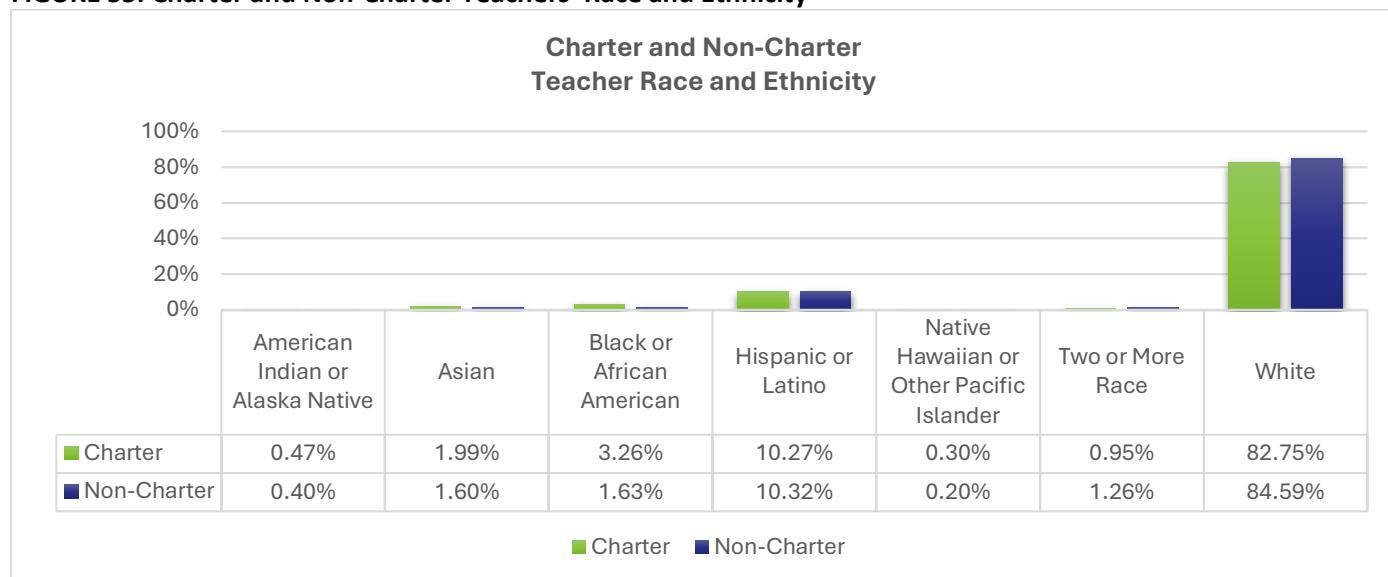
Table 25: Primary Method a Teacher Establishes In-Field Designation

Demonstrates In-field Status	Charter	Non-Charter
Subject area endorsement on teaching license	37.68%	83.24%
Degree (BA or higher) in subject area	21.26%	3.74%
36 semester credit hours in subject area	8.73%	5.94%
Passed State Board of Education content exam in subject area	8.64%	1.51%
Teacher is out-of-field	23.69%	5.57%

Teacher Diversity

As depicted in Figure 55, the demographic profile of charter school teachers closely mirrors that of non-charter teachers. Charter educators exhibit a slightly higher representation of Black or African American, Asian, American Indian, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Island educators than non-charters do. There is a slightly lower percentage of Hispanic or Latino, White, and two or more race educators in charter schools than in non-charter schools.

FIGURE 55: Charter and Non-Charter Teachers' Race and Ethnicity



Part Eight: Colorado State Actions Concerning Charter Schools

This section provides background on actions that the state has taken with charter schools, focused on three main areas: legislative action, waivers, and charter school supports.

Legislative Action

While the operation of charter schools in Colorado is largely governed by the Colorado Charter Schools Act, there are also numerous other state laws that impact charter schools. This section of the report summarizes legislation of note passed in 2024 that has impacted both authorizers and charter schools during this time.

2024 Legislation Related to Colorado Charter Schools

House Bill 24-1154 Institute Charter Schools and Bond Indebtedness

This bill allows, but does not require, local school districts to consider including CSI schools that are located in geographic boundaries to be included on ballot measures. The CSI charter school is required to provide a capital construction plan to the local school board for their consideration.

Senate Bill 24-070 Remote Testing and Online Education Programs

This bill allows remote state assessments to schools that offer full time online education models. Full implementation of this bill will occur during the 2025-26 school year, whereas 2024-25 will be used for pilot administration.

Senate Bill 24-188 Public School Finance and House Bill 24-1448 New Public Finance Formula

These two bills fulfill the buy-down of the Budget Stabilization Factor to fully fund schools throughout Colorado, while increasing per-pupil funding. For the 2024-25 school year, per-pupil funding was increased by \$419.97, which increases the funding average to \$8,496.38 per pupil. Public school funding was increased to \$9.7 billion for the 2024-25 budgeted year. Additionally, this legislation also increased funding to the Charter Capital Assistance Program over the next five years and called on CDE to apply for the United States Department of Education School Facilities Incentive Grant program. CDE ultimately applied and was awarded a five-year grant to provide additional federal money to support charter schools with their facility expenses.

House Bill 24-1039 Non-Legal Name Changes for Students

Public schools must respect students' chosen names and use them in all school-related settings, including extracurricular activities. Schools must adopt written policies outlining the process for honoring name-change requests and addressing intentional noncompliance as harassment or discrimination under Title IX. This law ensures that all schools, including charter schools, prioritize inclusivity and support for students' identities. Charter schools are also not allowed to waive these requirements.

House Bill 24-1076 Purple Star Program

This bill establishes the Purple Star School Program to recognize public schools, including charter schools, that support military-connected students and families. Schools earning the designation must meet criteria that address the unique challenges faced by these students, such as frequent relocations and parental deployments. Designation as a Purple Star School is valid for three years, with annual statewide recognition during April. Charter schools can apply for this designation, highlighting their commitment to military-connected communities.

House Bill 24-1164 Free Menstrual Products to Students

Schools must gradually provide free menstrual products in applicable student bathrooms, with full implementation by June 30, 2028. The law includes charter schools as eligible for grants to support compliance, prioritizing those with the greatest needs. Schools may use grant funds to purchase dispensing machines or receptacles.

House Bill 24-1282 Ninth Grade Success Grant and Performance Reporting

This bill secures annual funding of \$2 million from the State Education Fund through FY 2027-28 for ninth-grade success programs, including programs run by charter schools. These programs help students build skills for high school graduation and career readiness. Starting March 2026, dropout prevention reports will include ninth-grade performance measures for all public schools.

House Bill 24-1389: School Funding for New Arrivals

For the 2023-24 school year, \$24 million in one-time funding was allocated to school districts and Institute charter schools to support students who enrolled after the official enrollment count date. This funding helped eligible charter schools address the sudden financial and logistical challenges of accommodating new arrival students.

Senate Bill 24-162 Best Practices to Prevent Discrimination in Schools

This bill mandates CDE to contract with an organization to create training and best practices to address school harassment and discrimination. The program will include policies for notifying parents, handling reports, and providing trauma-informed responses. CDE will make this training available to public schools, including charter schools, at no cost. The initiative enhances charter schools' ability to foster safer, more inclusive learning environments.

2023 Legislation Related to Colorado Charter Schools

House Bill 23-1025 Charter School Application Timeline

This bill modified the timeline for charter school applications submitted to local school boards on or after January 1, 2025. The new timeline is as follows:

- February 1 through April 1 (18 months prior to opening)- aspiring charter schools are to file their applications with a school district
- June 30th or prior- charter applications are to be voted on by a school district board
- September 30 or 90 days after the local board rules on the application- charter contract negotiations are to be completed by.
- If approved, July 1 to June 30- charter schools utilize the year “as a planning year, during which the charter school shall prepare for serving students the next school year.”
- Separate timeline option for rural or small rural school districts

Other Important State Initiatives

House Bill 24-1063 Addressing Abbreviated School Days

This bill seeks to provide clarity and the effects of an “abbreviated school day” on students with an IEP within schools.

House Bill 24-1323 School Graduation Attire

This bill allows students to wear articles of cultural or religious significance during a preschool, public school, or public college or university graduation ceremony.

House Bill 24-1451 Include Hair Length in CROWN Act

This bill includes hair length as an additional characteristic to the state's nondiscrimination law.

Waivers from State Statute

Colorado law grants the Colorado State Board of Education broad, though not complete, authority to approve waivers from specific provisions of the state's education laws for school districts, charter schools, and innovation schools upon a properly filed request from a school or school district.

Colorado law permits school districts to request waivers from specific aspects of state statutes and policy requirements through a district waiver process specified by §22-2-117(1)(a), C.R.S. These waivers can pertain to the entire school district or to specific schools within their district. It involves a more thorough process, including actions like public notice in local newspapers, public hearings, and evidence of consultations with the District Accountability Committee before the waiver is granted.

Furthermore, districts have the option to seek waivers for district schools under the Innovation School Act, in accordance with §22-32.5-108, C.R.S. These waivers may be granted to a single innovation school or to a group of innovation schools functioning as an innovation zone. These waiver requests are integrated into a school or zone plan and, as a result, go through evaluation at the school and district levels through a plan review process before submission to the State Board of Education for consideration.

Lastly, charter schools may request waivers from state law or state rule under the Charter Schools Act. This flexibility is intended to grant charter schools with the autonomy they need to fully implement the educational plan initially detailed in their charter application. Charter school waiver requests must adhere to the requirements established in §22-30.5-101, C.R.S., which specifies different criteria based on whether the waivers are categorized as automatic or non-automatic. Further details on how charter schools can request waivers can be found on the CDE website at [Waivers & Policy Guidance | CDE \(state.co.us\)](#). Similar to innovation waivers, charter school waivers are integrated into a charter school education plan/application and undergo regular evaluation at both the school and authorizer levels. Charter waivers are part of a signed charter contract and must be agreed to by the school and the school's authorizer before a final waiver request is submitted to the State Board of Education for their consideration.

In contrast to school district and innovation waivers, charter school waivers must be re-approved by the authorizer's board and the State Board of Education during the charter contract renewal process. Thus, charter school waivers are subject to review, reconsideration, and possible revisions throughout the operation of the school. Typically, schools, authorizers, and the CDE's Schools of Choice Unit review the waivers of a charter school every three to five years, depending on the term of the contract, prior to submitting them to the State Board of Education for consideration.

Charter schools may also request waivers from school district policies. For charter schools, such requests must receive approval from the local board of education and would subsequently be integrated into a charter contract.



Although district waivers are integrated into the executed charter contract, they do not necessitate approval from the State Board of Education. Also, some districts may choose to waive certain district policies automatically for charter schools by determining that the policies are not applicable to the charter school due to the autonomous nature of the school. This is at the discretion of the individual school district and may not necessarily be called out in the contract.

Automatic Waivers

Automatic waivers are those automatically granted to a charter school upon the execution of a contract, extension, or renewal. The State Board of Education has the authority to designate which provisions of law are waived automatically, and these are codified in state board rules. Charter schools are not required to submit any additional documentation to obtain these waivers so long as the waivers are listed within the charter contract. Table 26 outlines the waivers that are approved by the State Board of Education as automatic as of this time of report.

TABLE 26: Automatic Waivers

Statutory Citation	Description
22-32-109(1)(f)	Local board duties concerning selection of staff and pay
22-32-109(1)(t)	Determine educational program and prescribe textbooks
22-32-110(1)(h)	Local board powers-Terminate employment of personnel
22-32-110(1)(i)	Local board duties-Reimburse employees for expenses
22-32-110(1)(j)	Local board powers-Procure life, health, or accident insurance
22-32-110(1)(k)(l)	Local board powers-Policies relating the in-service training and official conduct
22-32-110(1)(ee)	Local board powers-Employ teachers' aides and other non-certificated personnel
22-32-126	Employment and authority of principals
22-33-104(4)	Compulsory school attendance-Attendance policies and excused absences
22-63-301	Teacher Employment Act- Grounds for dismissal
22-63-302	Teacher Employment Act-Procedures for dismissal of teachers
22-63-401	Teacher Employment Act-Teachers subject to adopted salary schedule
22-63-402	Teacher Employment Act-Certificate required to pay teachers
22-63-403	Teacher Employment Act-Describes payment of salaries
22-1-112	School Year-National Holidays

Non-Automatic Waivers

All other charter waivers from statute and rule are considered non-automatic waiver requests and must undergo a formal process to be reviewed and considered by the State Board of Education. To be considered for approval, waiver requests must include a signed copy of the current charter contract, along with the following:

- Clear start and end date of the term of the charter contract
- Signatures of both the charter school and the authorizing boards
- A list of the non-automatic waivers from statute and rule that the school is requesting; and
- A rationale and replacement plan (RRP) for all non-automatic waivers specifying how the charter school will comply with the intent of the waived statutes and/or state board rules.

Once a request for state waivers is approved by the State Board of Education, the waivers are valid through the term of the contract between the charter school and its authorizer - including any extensions allowable in the contract. Commonly requested non-automatic waivers for charter schools are listed below in Table 27.

TABLE 27: Non-Automatic Waivers

Statute	Statute Title	School Count
22-9-106	Local Board Duties Concerning Performance Evaluations	261
22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(A)	Calendar - Determining teacher-pupil contact hours	261
22-63-201	Teacher Employment Act - Compensation & Dismissal Act-Requirement to hold a certificate	260
22-32-109(1)(n)(I)	Local Board Duties Concerning School Calendar	255
22-2-112(1)(q)(I)	Commissioner-Duties – Reporting performance evaluation ratings	252
22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(B)	Calendar – Determining instructional days	250
22-63-203	Teacher Employment Act-Requirements for probationary teacher, renewal & nonrenewal	249
22-63-202	Teacher Employment Act - Contracts in Writing, Damage Provision	243
22-63-206	Teacher Employment Act-Transfer of teachers	238
22-32-109(1)(b)	Local Board Duties Concerning Competitive Bidding	211
22-32-110(1)(y)	Local Board Powers-Accept Gifts, Donations, Grants	201
22-7-1014(2)(a)	Preschool Individualized Readiness Plans - School Readiness - Assessments	92

Prohibited Waivers

The Charter Schools Act also prohibits charter schools from seeking waivers from certain statutes, which include:

- Statute or rule concerning school accountability committees (§22-11-401, C.R.S.)
- Statute or rule necessary to prepare school performance reports (Title 22, Article 5, C.R.S.)
- Statute or rule necessary to implement the provisions of the “Public School Finance Act of 1994” (Title 22, Article 54, C.R.S.)
- Statute or rule related to the “Children’s Internet Protection Act” (Title 22, Article 87, C.R.S.)
- Statute or rule concerning the requirement to post online the list of waivers that have been obtained by a school (§22-44-305, C.R.S.)
- Statute regarding notification to parents of alleged criminal conduct by school employees (§22-1-130, C.R.S.)
- Statute or rule concerning suspension and expulsion of students in preschool through second grade (§22-33-106.1, C.R.S.)
- Any federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, hair length type, or style, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services (§22-30.5-104(3), C.R.S.)
- Statute concerning a student chosen name (§22-1-145, C.R.S.)

Another important note is that charter schools may only request waivers from state statutes in Title 22, state board rules, or district law or policies. The State Board of Education does not have authority to grant waivers from Colorado law outside of Title 22 or from federal law.

Charter School Support and Research by CDE

The Schools of Choice Unit within CDE is dedicated to facilitating high-quality educational options for Colorado families and students and supporting thoughtful innovations that will prepare Colorado students to be 21st century adults. This unit offers resources on various public school choice options including charter schools, innovation schools, and blended and online learning.

The responsibilities of the charter school team within the unit include:

- Administering the Federal Charter School Program (CSP) State Entities Grant for the 2023-24 school year and supporting the transition of the grant to the Colorado League of Charter Schools beginning 2024-25 school year;
- Applying for, securing, and implementing the CSP State Facilities Incentives Grant²¹;
- Offering technical support and guidance to charter schools and authorizers and presenting about charter schools and charter policy for various programs, groups, and task forces;
- Processing waiver requests for the State Board of Education;
- Supporting data collection and analysis on charter schools to ensure ready public access to information about charter schools and their performance;
- Conducting in-depth studies on specific topics and writing the annual legislative report;
- Addressing a diverse range of inquiries from the general public, media organizations, think tanks, and other research centers; and
- Supporting other Departmental units including Exceptional Student Services Unit and other offices within the School Quality and Supports Division, with administering programs that require technical support within the context of charter school operations and governance.

Recommendations for Future Actions

Overview

As charter schools in Colorado approach serving approximately one in six public school students, they further demonstrate operating as an essential part of the state's public education system. This section outlines a series of structural and policy recommendations to strengthen the sector, encourage innovation, and ensure accountability — while preserving the foundational autonomy that has facilitated charter school success over the past 30 years

Recommendation 1: Encourage Learning from Promising Practices

Policy Goal: Advance systemic improvement through shared learning.

- Identify charter schools demonstrating high performance or innovative practices in replicable ways.
- Support a mechanism—possibly through CDE strategic plan implementation activities—to document and disseminate promising practices across schools, districts, and authorizers.
- For charter schools that are struggling – emphasize engagement with state supported improvement efforts that increase leadership exposure to replicable promising practices.

Recommendation 2: Support Rapid School Improvement in Struggling Charter Schools

Policy Goal: Ensure that charter schools take advantage of their flexibility to improve swiftly.

²¹ In September of 2024, the Department was notified by the U.S. Department of Education that Colorado did receive the Charter School Program – State Facilities Incentive Grant. Information about the award can be found on the [Federal site](#).

- Promote improvement strategies specifically designed for the charter context, emphasizing speed and innovation in turnarounds.
- Highlight and analyze success stories where low-performing charter schools have demonstrated rapid improvement.
- Encourage peer-to-peer learning between struggling schools and successful turnaround schools.

Recommendation 3: Facilitate Quality Charter School Authorizing

Policy Goal: Elevate the quality of charter authorizing across the state.

- Encourage the development of a community of practice among district superintendents and senior leaders focused on charter school authorization.
- Support technical assistance and professional development for authorizers, with potential state funding or facilitation from CDE or nonprofit partners.

Recommendation 4: Improve Charter School Facility Conditions

Policy Goal: Ensure equitable and adequate facilities for charter schools.

- Leverage data from the **Facility Insight Program** to inform policy and resource allocation.
- Use standardized financial health metrics—based on state-collected financial data—to evaluate school financial health. Require use of such metrics to support decisions about school readiness for capital investment, including **BEST Grant** eligibility.
- Train charter leaders (including school leaders, financial officers, board members, and authorizers) in recognized best practices for responsible charter school facilities financial management and planning.
- Share facility condition and financial health reports with charter schools and charter authorizers to support informed oversight and long-term planning.

Recommendation 5: Foster District-Charter Relationships

Policy Goal: Build a more collaborative K–12 ecosystem.

- Highlight effective strategies in use across the state that foster collaboration and community cohesion between charter schools, districts, and other nearby public schools.
- Support regional convenings or forums where district and charter leaders can co-design initiatives such as joint post-secondary pathway programs, special education supports, or teacher pipeline development programs.

Recommendation 6: Sustain the Charter School Infrastructure

Policy Goal: Preserve stability within the charter sector and prepare for system-wide challenges.

- Recognize the charter sector as an essential component of Colorado's public education landscape.
- Support continuity of operations and long-term planning in the face of major system shocks (e.g., enrollment declines, funding changes, policy shifts).
- Avoid sweeping policy changes that could impact current schools in the event of larger policy shifts at the Federal level (for example, Supreme Court decisions may impact authorizing policy but should not impact continuity for existing schools).

Recommendation 7: Preserve Charter Autonomy

Policy Goal: Maintain the flexibility necessary for innovation.

- Avoid overly prescriptive regulations that increase the regulatory burden placed on charter schools. When policies are created that reduce regulatory burden on rural districts, consider whether such reductions may also be beneficial for charter schools as well.

- Monitor trends in local or state directives that may inadvertently proceduralize charter operations and limit their ability to innovate.
- Promote balanced oversight that protects student interests while preserving operational freedom.

Recommendation 8: Expand Voluntary Access to Educator Credentialing

Policy Goal: Enhance professional development and workforce quality.

- Encourage the development and voluntary uptake of credentialing opportunities for charter school educators and leaders. Encourage charter inclusion in local induction programs including district and BOCES-administered programs.
- Support flexible, relevant credential pathways that allow educators to earn workforce credentials and/or endorsements while working in the particular profession full-time.

Recommendation 9: Increase Charter Participation in Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Pathways

Policy Goal: Expand access to college and career pathways.

- Encourage charter schools to engage in the design and implementation of PWR pathways, particularly in high-demand fields. Increase flexibility for charter school inclusion when pathways may otherwise be limited to particular districts or schools.
- Foster partnerships between charters, districts, higher education, and industry to ensure alignment with local and regional workforce needs.



Appendix A: List of Colorado Charter Schools

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
New Summit Charter Academy	6242	Academy 20	2019	637	628	Performance Plan	K-08
TCA College Pathways	8779	Academy 20	1997	529	561	Performance Plan	07-12
The Classical Academy Charter	1627	Academy 20	1994	2149	2,196	Performance Plan	K-06
The Classical Academy High School	1630	Academy 20	1994	581	616	Performance Plan	09-12
The Classical Academy Middle School	1629	Academy 20	1994	441	445	Performance Plan	07-08
New America School - Thornton	4699	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2004	238	190	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
Prospect Ridge Academy	6802	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2011	1457	1478	Performance Plan	K-12
Stargate Charter School	1519	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	1994	1572	1572	Performance Plan	K-12
Westgate Community School	9431	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2009	547	540	Performance Plan	K-12
Aurora Academy Charter School	0458	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2020	524	536	Performance Plan	K-08
Aurora Science & Tech High School	5964	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2022	309	434	Performance Plan	09-09
Aurora Science & Tech Middle School	0127	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2020	454	448	Priority Improvement Plan	06-08
AXL Academy	0213	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2008	400	402	Improvement Plan	PK-08
Global Village Academy Aurora	3471	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2007	861	802	Improvement Plan	K-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Lotus School for Excellence	5298	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2006	945	1008	Performance Plan	K-12
Rocky Mountain Prep: Fletcher	7233	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2017	614	701	Performance Plan	PK-05
Vanguard Classical School - East	9189	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2014	728	690	Improvement Plan	K-12
Vanguard Classical School - West	9056	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2007	365	380	Improvement Plan	K-08
Vega Collegiate Academy	9053	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2018	557	583	Performance Plan	K-08
Pagosa Peak Open School	6679	Archuleta County 50 J	2018	106	111	Improvement Plan	K-08
Aspen Community Charter School	0042	Aspen 1	2002	137	135	Performance Plan	PK-08
Sky Ranch Academy	7796	Bennett 29J	2023	365	495	Improvement Plan	K-09
Boulder Prep Charter High School	0934	Boulder Valley Re 2	1997	115	114	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Horizons K-8 School	6642	Boulder Valley Re 2	1991	361	358	Performance Plan	K-08
Justice High Charter School	4496	Boulder Valley Re 2	2006	103	108	AEC: Performance Plan	06-12
Peak to Peak Charter School	6816	Boulder Valley Re 2	200	1452	1447	Performance Plan	K-12
Summit Middle Charter School	8387	Boulder Valley Re 2	1996	361	366	Performance Plan	06-08
Mount View Core Knowledge Charter School	6752	Canon City RE-1	1996	247	250	Performance Plan	PK-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Academy of Advanced Learning	0126	Charter School Institute	2018	773	847	Performance Plan	K-08
Academy of Arts and Knowledge Elementary	0657	Charter School Institute	1994	203	247	Performance Plan	K-05
Academy of Charter Schools	0015	Charter School Institute	1994	1874	1887	Performance Plan	PK-12
Animas High School	0075	Charter School Institute	2009	268	260	Performance Plan	09-12
Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County	0079	Charter School Institute	2019	1017	1033	Performance Plan	K-12
Ascent Classical Academy of Grand Junction	2905	Charter School Institute	2023	285	457	Improvement Plan	K-08
Ascent Classical Academy of Northern Colorado	1005	Charter School Institute	2020	683	694	Performance Plan	K-09
Ascent Classical Academy of Northern Denver	2904	Charter School Institute	2023	222	305	Turnaround Plan	K-07
Axis International Academy	0493	Charter School Institute	2020	263	298	Performance Plan	PK-05
Caprock Academy	1279	Charter School Institute	2007	895	871	Performance Plan	K-12
Colorado Early Colleges Aurora	1633	Charter School Institute	2018	527	569	Improvement Plan	09-12
Colorado Early Colleges Colorado Springs	1795	Charter School Institute	2007	965	1075	Performance Plan	06-12
Colorado Early Colleges Douglas County	2196	Charter School Institute	2014	1502	1066	Performance Plan	09-12
Colorado Early Colleges Fort Collins	2067	Charter School Institute	2012	1017	1045	Performance Plan	06-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Colorado Early Colleges Online Campus	9679	Charter School Institute	2022	337	444	Performance Plan	06-12
Colorado Early Colleges Windsor	1387	Charter School Institute	2020	2139	203	Performance Plan	06-12
Colorado International Language Academy	3326	Charter School Institute	2013	334	364	Performance Plan	K-05
Colorado Military Academy	1505	Charter School Institute	2018	796	817	Priority Improvement Plan	PK-12
Colorado Skies Academy	0188	Charter School Institute	2020	119	90	Improvement Plan	06-08
Colorado Springs Charter Academy	1791	Charter School Institute	2005	296	295	Performance Plan	K-08
Community Leadership Academy	1882	Charter School Institute	2005	315	316	Performance Plan	PK-05
Coperni 3	1371	Charter School Institute	2020	412	367	Performance Plan	K-08
Crown Pointe Charter Academy	2035	Charter School Institute	1997	460	461	Performance Plan	K-08
Early Learning Center at New Legacy Charter School	3513	Charter School Institute	2023	2	8	Population not tested	PK
Global Village Academy - North	3439	Charter School Institute	2017	819	838	Performance Plan	K-08
Golden View Classical Academy	3393	Charter School Institute	2015	744	737	Performance Plan	K-12
High Point Academy	0655	Charter School Institute	2006	671	680	Improvement Plan	PK-08
James Irwin Charter Academy	4403	Charter School Institute	2013	286	213	Performance Plan	K-05



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Kwiyagat Community Academy	5313	Charter School Institute	2022	55	61	Insufficient State Data	K-04
Montessori del Mundo Charter School	5957	Charter School Institute	2014	357	365	Improvement Plan	PK-06
Monument View Montessori Charter School	5845	Charter School Institute	2018	52	38	Insufficient State Data	PK-05
Mountain Middle School	5453	Charter School Institute	2011	364	348	Performance Plan	04-08
Mountain Song Community School	5851	Charter School Institute	2013	396	364	Performance Plan	K-08
New America School - Aurora	6219	Charter School Institute	2005	106	82	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
New Legacy Charter School	6266	Charter School Institute	2015	96	96	AEC: Priority Improvement Plan	09-12
Prospect Academy	5499	Charter School Institute	2022	79	94	Turnaround Plan	04-08
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	7278	Charter School Institute	2007	254	292	Priority Improvement Plan	K-08
Ross Montessori School	7512	Charter School Institute	2005	213	183	Performance Plan	K-08
Salida Montessori Charter School	8061	Charter School Institute	2015	151	186	Performance Plan	PK-08
Steamboat Montessori	5423	Charter School Institute	2017	153	140	Performance Plan	PK-06
Stone Creek School	0653	Charter School Institute	2006	299	297	Improvement Plan	K-08
The Pinnacle Charter School	6914	Charter School Institute	1997	1909	1905	Improvement Plan	K-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Thomas MacLaren State Charter School	8825	Charter School Institute	2009	965	965	Performance Plan	K-12
Victory Preparatory Academy High State Charter School	9037	Charter School Institute	2013	144	118	Performance Plan	09-12
Victory Preparatory Academy Middle State Charter School	9040	Charter School Institute	2013	170	166	Performance Plan	06-08
Wildflower Montessori- Aurora	9596	Charter School Institute	2023	17	49	Population not tested	01-02
Wildflower Montessori- Grand Valley	9598	Charter School Institute	2024	0	40	Performance Plan	K-03
University Prep- Commerce City	8948	Charter School Institute	2024	0	24	New School	PK
Cherry Creek Charter Academy	1571	Cherry Creek 5	1995	571	594	Performance Plan	K-08
Heritage Heights Academy	4189	Cherry Creek 5	2017	507	539	Performance Plan	K-08
Georgetown Community School	3385	Clear Creek RE-1	2006	85	78	Performance Plan	PK-06
Academy for Advanced and Creative Learning	517	Colorado Springs 11	2010	280	299	Performance Plan	K-08
CIVA Charter Academy	1616	Colorado Springs 11	1997	181	174	Performance Plan	09-12
Community Prep Charter School	1885	Colorado Springs 11	1995	167	158	AEC: Insufficient State Data	09-12
Eastlake High School of Colorado Springs	5146	Colorado Springs 11	2004	123	104	AEC: Priority Improvement Plan	09-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Orton Academy	1892	Colorado Springs 11	2024	116 ²²	116	Improvement	02-08
Roosevelt Charter Academy	7482	Colorado Springs 11	1996	471	480	Priority Improvement Plan	K-05
Vision Charter Academy	2166	Delta County 50(J)	2015	111	430	Performance Plan	K-12
5280 High School	2994	Denver County 1	2019	92	109	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Academy 360	0099	Denver County 1	2013	231	201	Priority Improvement Plan	PK-05
AUL Denver	0067	Denver County 1	2005	151	156	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
Colorado High School Charter	1748	Denver County 1	2002	203	206	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Colorado High School Charter - GES	1561	Denver County 1	2018	189	209	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Compass Academy	1939	Denver County 1	2015	200	200	Improvement Plan	06-08
Denver Justice High School	4494	Denver County 1	2009	107	106	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Denver Language School	2127	Denver County 1	2010	924	930	Performance Plan	K-08
Downtown Denver Expeditionary School	2207	Denver County 1	2013	243	263	Performance Plan	K-05
DSST: Cedar High School	2228	Denver County 1	2016	528	546	Performance Plan	09-12

²² Orton Academy converted to a charter school in 2024-25. Prior to this, Orton Academy was authorized by Education reEnvisioned BOCES as a traditional school.



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
DSST: Cedar Middle School	2186	Denver County 1	2013	479	485	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Cole High School	2175	Denver County 1	2014	308	287	Improvement Plan	09-12
DSST: Cole Middle School	2223	Denver County 1	2011	268	282	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: College View High School	2244	Denver County 1	2015	543	533	Improvement Plan	09-12
DSST: College View Middle School	4381	Denver County 1	2012	460	446	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Conservatory Green High School	1529	Denver County 1	2017	562	556	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Conservatory Green Middle School	2218	Denver County 1	2014	463	468	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Elevate Northeast High School	2026	Denver County 1	2022	447	545	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Elevate Northeast Middle School	2190	Denver County 1	2019	452	451	Priority Improvement Plan	06-08
DSST: Green Valley Ranch High School	2145	Denver County 1	2010	565	562	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Green Valley Ranch Middle School	2181	Denver County 1	2010	480	482	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Montview High School	2185	Denver County 1	2004	566	562	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Montview Middle School	2115	Denver County 1	2004	459	463	Performance Plan	06-08
French American School of Denver	1995	Denver County 1	2022	189	203	Performance Plan	K-06



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Girls Athletic Leadership School High School	3540	Denver County 1	2014	93	59	Improvement Plan	09-12
Girls Athletic Leadership School Middle School	3639	Denver County 1	2010	203	223	Performance Plan	06-08
Highline Academy Northeast	4049	Denver County 1	2014	593	589	Performance Plan	PK-05
Highline Academy Southeast	3987	Denver County 1	2004	535	591	Performance Plan	K-08
KIPP Denver Collegiate High School	4730	Denver County 1	2009	471	477	Performance Plan	09-12
KIPP Northeast Denver Leadership Academy	4509	Denver County 1	2015	559	555	Improvement Plan	09-12
KIPP Northeast Denver Middle School	4507	Denver County 1	2011	471	464	Performance Plan	05-08
KIPP Northeast Elementary	4500	Denver County 1	2015	477	495	Improvement Plan	PK-04
KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy	4732	Denver County 1	2002	364	301	Priority Improvement Plan	05-08
KIPP Sunshine Peak Elementary	4850	Denver County 1	2019	158	146	Improvement Plan	PK-04
Monarch Montessori	5621	Denver County 1	2012	247	282	Improvement Plan	K-05
Odyssey School of Denver	6479	Denver County 1	1998	307	318	Performance Plan	K-08
Omar D Blair Charter School	6508	Denver County 1	2004	748	783	Performance Plan	K-08
RiseUp Community School	7361	Denver County 1	2015	111	100	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Rocky Mountain Prep: Berkeley	1345	Denver County 1	2019	327	329	Performance Plan	PK-05
Rocky Mountain Prep: Creekside	7241	Denver County 1	2012	599	637	Performance Plan	PK-05
Rocky Mountain Prep: Federal	8085	Denver County 1	2006	380	376	Performance Plan	06-08
Rocky Mountain Prep: Green Valley Ranch	9730	Denver County 1	2012	361	379	Performance Plan	06-08
Rocky Mountain: Noel	9735	Denver County 1	2012	258	287	Priority Improvement Plan	06-08
Rocky Mountain: Rise	7973	Denver County 1	2017	565	586	Performance Plan	09-12
Rocky Mountain: Ruby Hill	8401	Denver County 1	2014	388	433	Performance Plan	K-05
Rocky Mountain: Smart Academy	9639	Denver County 1	2012	565	604	Performance Plan	09-12
Rocky Mountain Prep: Southwest	7471	Denver County 1	215	431	453	Performance Plan	PK-05
Rocky Mountain: Sunnyside	9336	Denver County 1	2010	168	154	Performance Plan	06-08
Rocky Mountain: Westwood	9389	Denver County 1	2009	380	411	Performance Plan	06-08
SOAR at Green Valley Ranch	8053	Denver County 1	2010	492	484	Performance Plan	K-05
University Prep - Arapahoe St.	8945	Denver County 1	2011	285	313	Improvement Plan	K-05
University Prep - Steele St.	6957	Denver County 1	2017	333	334	Performance Plan	PK-05



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Wyatt Academy	9739	Denver County 1	1998	208	240	Performance Plan	K-05
Banning Lewis Ranch Academy	555	District 49	2006	1623	1697	Performance Plan	K-12
GOAL Academy	3475	District 49	2008	6142	6693	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Grand Peak Academy	4251	District 49	2008	631	608	Performance Plan	K-08
James Irwin Elementary - Canada Drive	4407	District 49	2024	0	132	Insufficient State Data	K-05
Liberty Tree Academy	5191	District 49	2019	592	602	Performance Plan	K-12
Mountain View Academy	467	District 49	2021	358	387	Performance Plan	K-08
Pikes Peak School Expeditionary Learning	6935	District 49	1999	399	400	Performance Plan	K-08
Pioneer Technology and Arts Academy	1275	District 49	2022	501	538	Performance Plan	K-08
Power Technical	6653	District 49	2017	377	406	Performance Plan	06-12
Rocky Mountain Classical Academy	7463	District 49	2006	1127	1162	Performance Plan	K-08
Academy Charter School	0011	Douglas County Re 1	1993	748	675	Performance Plan	PK-08
American Academy	0215	Douglas County Re 1	2005	2579	2803	Performance Plan	PK-08
Aspen View Academy	6019	Douglas County Re 1	2013	973	1019	Performance Plan	PK-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Ben Franklin Academy	135	Douglas County Re 1	2011	879	956	Performance Plan	PK-08
Challenge to Excellence Charter School	1512	Douglas County Re 1	2022	548	551	Performance Plan	K-08
DC Montessori Charter School	5997	Douglas County Re 1	1997	546	547	Performance Plan	PK-08
Global Village Academy - Douglas County	3327	Douglas County Re 1	2015	394	450	Performance Plan	K-06
HOPE Online Learning Academy High School	3995	Douglas County Re 1	2005	1061	1307	AEC: Performance Plan	06-12
Leman Classical Academy	5225	Douglas County Re 1	2019	1114	1390	Performance Plan	K-08
North Star Academy	1579	Douglas County Re 1	2006	678	684	Performance Plan	K-08
Parker Core Knowledge Charter School	1873	Douglas County Re 1	2015	705	705	Performance Plan	K-08
Parker Performing Arts	6719	Douglas County Re 1	2017	619	638	Performance Plan	K-08
Platte River Charter Academy	7047	Douglas County Re 1	1997	643	736	Performance Plan	PK-08
Renaissance Secondary School	7244	Douglas County Re 1	2018	406	441	Performance Plan	06-12
Skyview Academy	6365	Douglas County Re 1	2010	1283	1358	Performance Plan	PK-12
STEM School Highlands Ranch	5259	Douglas County Re 1	2011	1399	1394	Performance Plan	K-12
World Compass Academy	9397	Douglas County Re 1	2015	740	791	Performance Plan	PK-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
The Juniper School	4384	Durango 9-R	2018	169	171	Insufficient State Data	K-08
Eagle County Charter Academy	2340	Eagle County RE 50	1994	360	360	Performance Plan	K-08
Legacy Academy	2572	Elizabeth School District	1997	516	553	Performance Plan	K-08
Frontier Charter Academy	1875	Greeley 6	2001	1584	1650	Performance Plan	K-12
Salida del Sol Academy	8467	Greeley 6	2006	631	654	Improvement Plan	K-08
Union Colony Elementary School	8975	Greeley 6	1997	329	342	Performance Plan	K-05
Union Colony Preparatory School	8965	Greeley 6	1997	348	333	Performance Plan	06-12
University Schools	2850	Greeley 6	1999	1751	1784	Performance Plan	K-12
West Ridge Academy	9611	Greeley 6	2011	351	329	Performance Plan	K-08
Marble Charter School	5577	Gunnison Watershed RE1J	1995	45	34	Insufficient State Data	K-10
Atlas Preparatory Elementary School	5898	Harrison 2	2021	282	286	Improvement Plan	K-04
Atlas Preparatory High School	0469	Harrison 2	2009	481	499	Performance Plan	09-12
Atlas Preparatory Middle School	0369	Harrison 2	2009	458	473	Performance Plan	05-08
James Irwin Charter Elementary School	4380	Harrison 2	200	539	522	Performance Plan	K-05



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
James Irwin Charter High School	4378	Harrison 2	2000	412	425	Performance Plan	09-12
James Irwin Charter Middle School	4379	Harrison 2	2000	419	434	Performance Plan	06-08
The Vanguard School (Elementary)	1582	Harrison 2	2006	1000	949	Performance Plan	K-06
The Vanguard School (High)	9057	Harrison 2	2006	303	303	Performance Plan	09-12
The Vanguard School (Middle)	9051	Harrison 2	2006	240	243	Performance Plan	07-08
Gardner Valley School	3306	Huerfano Re-1	2021	86	82	Improvement Plan	PK-08
Addenbrooke Classical Academy	1451	Jefferson County R-1	2013	198	191	Performance Plan	09-12
Addenbrooke Classical Grammar School	491	Jefferson County R-1	2014	760	774	Performance Plan	PK-08
Collegiate Academy of Colorado	7701	Jefferson County R-1	1994	348	304	Performance Plan	K-12
Compass Montessori - Golden Charter School	1880	Jefferson County R-1	2000	422	425	Performance Plan	PK-12
Compass Montessori - Wheat Ridge Charter School	1869	Jefferson County R-1	1998	288	288	Performance Plan	PK-06
Doral Academy of Colorado	2189	Jefferson County R-1	2017	173	168	Insufficient State Data	K-12
Excel Academy Charter School	2799	Jefferson County R-1	1995	435	446	Performance Plan	K-08
Jefferson Academy	4404	Jefferson County R-1	1994	1430	1132	Performance Plan	K-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Jefferson Academy Coal Creek Canyon	1730	Jefferson County R-1	2024	0	68	New School	PK-08
Jefferson Academy Elementary	4402	Jefferson County R-1	1994	728	737	Performance Plan	K-06
Jefferson Academy High School	4410	Jefferson County R-1	1994	445	696	Performance Plan	07-12
Lincoln Charter Academy	5145	Jefferson County R-1	1997	817	824	Performance Plan	PK-08
Montessori Peaks Charter Academy	5994	Jefferson County R-1	1997	449	479	Performance Plan	PK-08
Mountain Phoenix Community School	6139	Jefferson County R-1	2011	662	650	Performance Plan	PK-08
New America School	6237	Jefferson County R-1	2006	81	74	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen	7462	Jefferson County R-1	2001	351	350	Performance Plan	K-08
Rocky Mountain Deaf School	5415	Jefferson County R-1	1997	81	82	AEC: Performance Plan	PK-12
Two Roads Charter School	8793	Jefferson County R-1	2012	644	630	Performance Plan	PK-12
Woodrow Wilson Charter Academy	9427	Jefferson County R-1	2000	847	852	Performance Plan	PK-08
CIVICA Colorado	6226	Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2022	155	157	Performance Plan	06-12
Knowledge Quest Academy	4785	Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2002	407	395	Performance Plan	K-08
Alta Vista Charter School	0200	Lamar Re-2	1998	135	133	Performance Plan	K-06



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Monument Charter Academy	2295	Lewis-Palmer 38	1996	649	642	Performance Plan	PK-05
Monument Charter Academy Secondary School	5093	Lewis-Palmer 38	1996	516	541	Performance Plan	06-12
Littleton Academy	5229	Littleton 6	1996	458	455	Performance Plan	K-08
Littleton Prep Charter School	5233	Littleton 6	1998	516	498	Performance Plan	PK-08
Mesa Valley Enrichment Program	5833	Mesa County Valley 51	2023	139	152	Insufficient State Data	K-06
Independence Academy	2128	Mesa County Valley 51	2004	487	491	Performance Plan	PK-08
Juniper Ridge Community School	4439	Mesa County Valley 51	2013	392	375	Performance Plan	K-08
Mesa Valley Community School	5828	Mesa County Valley 51	2014	170	178	Performance Plan	06-12
Crestone Charter School	2018	Moffat 2	1995	87	100	Insufficient State Data	K-12
Battle Rock Charter School	609	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	1994	100	94	Performance Plan	K-06
Children's Kiva Montessori School	2036	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	2014	142	130	Priority Improvement Plan	K-08
Pleasant View Charter School	7082	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	2023	33	35	Performance Plan	K-06
Southwest Open Charter School	8133	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	1999	134	131	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
Vista Charter School	9149	Montrose County RE-1J	2004	177	188	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Guffey Charter School	3681	Park County RE-2	1996	20	26	Insufficient State Data	PK-08
Lake George Charter School	4908	Park County RE-2	1999	139	152	Insufficient State Data	PK-12
Compass Community Collaborative School	1917	Poudre R-1	2019	163	179	Performance Plan	06-12
Fort Collins Montessori School	3242	Poudre R-1	2014	257	278	Performance Plan	PK-06
Liberty Common Charter School	5120	Poudre R-1	1997	1475	1516	Performance Plan	K-12
Mountain Sage Community School	5917	Poudre R-1	2013	315	287	Performance Plan	K-08
Ridgeview Classical Schools	0146	Poudre R-1	2001	735	723	Performance Plan	K-12
Chavez/Huerta K-12 Preparatory Academy	1488	Pueblo City 60	2009	978	844	Improvement Plan	K-12
Pueblo Charter School for the Arts & Sciences	7209	Pueblo City 60	1994	434	444	Turnaround Plan	K-08
Pueblo School for Arts & Sciences at Fulton Heights	6775	Pueblo City 60	2018	228	221	Improvement Plan	K-08
Pueblo Classical Academy	7533	Pueblo County 70	2022	177	177	Improvement Plan	K-12
Swallows Charter Academy	8420	Pueblo County 70	1996	675	677	Performance Plan	K-08
Swallows Charter Academy High School	7879	Pueblo County 70	1996	170	178	Performance Plan	09-12
The Connect Charter School	8810	Pueblo County 70	1993	253	252	Performance Plan	06-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Villa Bella Expeditionary Middle School	5903	Pueblo County 70	2022	100	141	Performance Plan	06-08
Villa Bella Expeditionary School	9084	Pueblo County 70	2020	297	298	Improvement Plan	K-05
Carbondale Community Charter School	0429	Roaring Fork RE-1	1995	140	143	Performance Plan	K-08
Two Rivers Community School	8821	Roaring Fork RE-1	8821	385	390	Performance Plan	K-08
Belle Creek Charter School	0700	School District 27J	2003	558	519	Performance Plan	K-08
Bromley East Charter School	1052	School District 27J	2001	1215	1214	Improvement Plan	PK-08
Eagle Ridge Academy	2399	School District 27J	2010	571	593	Improvement Plan	09-12
Foundations Academy	2945	School District 27J	2010	767	763	Performance Plan	K-08
Landmark Academy at Reunion	4950	School District 27J	2007	798	758	Performance Plan	K-08
The STEAD School	6400	School District 27J	2022	370	421	Performance Plan	09-12
Aspen Ridge Preparatory School	0071	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2011	548	581	Performance Plan	K-08
Carbon Valley Academy	1284	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2005	250	245	Performance Plan	PK-08
Firestone Charter Academy	4333	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2009	615	600	Performance Plan	PK-08
Flagstaff Charter Academy	2964	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2005	775	725	Performance Plan	PK-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2023-24 Enrollment	2024-25 Enrollment	2024 SPF Rating	Grades Served
St. Vrain Community Montessori School	7565	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2009	267	260	Insufficient State Data	PK-08
Twin Peaks Charter Academy	8927	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	1997	853	881	Performance Plan	K-12
North Routt Community Charter School	6363	Steamboat Springs RE-2	2001	83	89	Performance Plan	PK-08
Loveland Classical School	5235	Thompson R2-J	2011	1007	1032	Performance Plan	K-12
New Vision Charter School	6220	Thompson R2-J	2006	1006	1005	Performance Plan	K-08
Cardinal Community Academy Charter School	1299	Weld County School District RE-3J	2000	180	182	Performance Plan	K-08
American Legacy Academy	163	Weld RE-4	2023	382	419	Improvement Plan	K-08
Windsor Charter Academy Early College High School	9393	Weld RE-4	2001	413	435	Performance Plan	09-12
Windsor Charter Academy Elementary School	9665	Weld RE-4	2001	776	780	Performance Plan	K-05
Windsor Charter Academy Middle School	9563	Weld RE-4	2001	371	397	Performance Plan	06-08
James Madison Charter Academy School	5033	Widefield 3	2014	104	72	Priority Improvement Plan	K-08
Merit Academy	8257	Woodland Park Re-2	2022	436	504	Performance Plan	PK-12