COLORADO
Department of Education

State of Charter Schools Report 2026

Submitted to:
Governor Jared Polis
House of Representatives Education Committee
Senate Education Committee

By:

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July 2026

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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 groups. 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 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years. This report is written on an annual basis and will present information and analysis in the following areas:

- Charter School History and Current Conditions
- Characteristics of Colorado Charter Schools
- Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Authorizers
- Colorado Charter School Academic Performance
- 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 Individualized Education Plan status.

Highlights and Notable Trends

Part One: Colorado Charter School History and Current Conditions

- In 2025-26 three charter schools closed and three charter schools opened, keeping the total number of charter schools in Colorado at 262.
- In 2025-26, non-charter schools experienced a decline in enrollment by 10,681 (1.5%) students, whereas charter school enrollment increased by 409 (0.3%) students.
- Charter school enrollment comprises 15.7% of students enrolled in public Colorado schools.
- Charter school student enrollment is very similar demographically to students in non-charter schools, except for the proportion of students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which has been consistently about 4.5 percentage points lower in charter schools than they are in non-charters.
- 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.
- Charters have successfully reduced the enrollment gap for students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch and eliminated the enrollment gap for minority students and multilingual learners.

Part Two: Characteristics of Charter Schools

- Of the 45 charter school authorizers in Colorado, 42 responded and provided education models for 252 out of the 262 charter schools. The most prevalent educational model is the traditional approach, used by 23.4% of charter schools, followed by the Core Knowledge model at 17.9%.
- 18 charter school authorizers hold a rural status, and 4 charter school authorizers hold a small rural status.
- The average enrollment for charter schools was 521 in 2025-26, which is an increase of one from the year prior. Average enrollment has steadily increased over time. In the mid-1990's, over 70% of charter schools served fewer than 200 students. By 2025-26, charter schools with fewer than 200 students decreased by 23%. Meanwhile, only 4% of charter schools had enrollments exceeding 600 students in 1996, but this figure has grown to 28% in 2025-26.
- Out of the 262 charter schools in the 2025-26 school year, 91.2% are locally managed (96 through a local management organization and 143 as single-site schools). Additionally, 2.3% of Colorado charter schools (six schools) are under national management. There is also a hybrid category, where 17 schools or 6.5% of charter schools, 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.

Part Three: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Authorizers

- Two charter appeals were heard by the State Board of Education in 2025.
  - Chavez/Huerta K-12 Preparatory vs. Pueblo 60 School District, which resulted in the district as the prevailing side. The charter contract resulted in a non-renewal and ultimately the school closed.
  - Montrose Classical Academy vs. Montrose County School District, which resulted in the charter applicant as the prevailing side. The charter application was remanded back to the district for reconsideration. Montrose Classical Academy is slated to open in Fall 2026 with an option to push back opening to Fall 2027.
- 46 schools underwent a contract renewal in the school year 2024-25. 44 charter school renewals were approved, while one was extended and one was denied.
- According to the Authorizer Data Collection, 17 out of the 42 reporting authorizers noted that an annual evaluation was not provided to one or more charter schools.
- In Colorado, 173 out of the 178 school districts have exclusive chartering authority (ECA). Most recently, Poudre School District R-1 was granted Exclusive Charter Authority by the state board on April 9, 2026.
- Colorado Charter School Institute authorizes a total of 47 charter schools.

Part Four: Colorado Charter School Academic Performance

- In the 2024-25 school year, grade-level participation on CMAS ELA and math 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 and in grades 3-8 overall.
- When analyzing the CMAS ELA and Math Mean Scale Scores (MSS) for charter schools and non-charter schools in the 2024-25 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 on CMAS ELA and math all fall within the Approaching Expectations range of 725-749, except for 7th grade charter students which earned a "met expectations" rating.
- Disaggregated results for students based on race and ethnicity, multilingual status[1], FRL eligibility, and students with an IEP show that charter schools have higher Mean Scale Scores than non-charter schools on the CMAS ELA and math assessments for all student groups.
- Disaggregated student groups were compared with students not in the group to determine the achievement gap. Charter school students had lower achievement gaps than non-charter school students in all students' groups, except for students with IEPs in both ELA and math assessments.
- When looking at grade-level participation on PSAT/SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and math, charter schools exhibited a higher participation rate compared to non-charter schools during the 2024-25 school year in grades 9 and 10. Grade 11 participation, in both assessments, was nearly identical for charter and non-charter schools.
- From 2022-23 to 2024-25 charter schools were able to increase overall PSAT/SAT EBRW participation by 7.4% and non-charters participation decreased by 0.7%. In PSAT/SAT math, participation increased by 7.6% for charters and decreased by 0.5% in non-charter schools.
- Charter and non-charter schools' average MSS for grades 9-11 all fall within the "Met Expectations" range for EBRW and "Approached Expectations" range for math.

[1] For assessment purposes Multilingual students are considered ML if they are designated as Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2 and FEP Exit Year 1, and Exit Year 2.

- On PSAT/SAT EBRW and math assessments, disaggregated results for students based on race and ethnicity, multilingual status[2], FRL eligibility, and students with an IEP show that charter schools have higher Mean Scale Scores than non-charter schools for many student groups for EBRW and math.
- Student groups are compared with students not in the group to determine the achievement gap within the EBRW and Math assessments. Achievement gaps were lower for charter school students than for non-charter school students in every student group.
- The proportion of charter schools receiving the highest rating of "Performance" on their School Performance Frameworks (SPFs) has consistently been higher than it has been for non-charter schools. On the 2023 SPFs, 66.67% of charter schools earned a Performance rating and increased that to 80.88% in 2025. On the 2023 SPF, 60.94% of non-charter schools earned a Performance rating and increased that to 66.84% in 2025. Both charter and non-charter are increasing the percentage of schools earning Performance rating; however, charters are increasing this percentage at a higher rate.
- Charter schools and non-charter schools are also witnessing a decrease in schools receiving "Insufficient Data" ratings. Charter schools saw a decrease in schools receiving Insufficient Data ratings of 7.57% and non-charter schools saw a decrease of 1.51% between the 2022-23 and 2024-25 school years.

[2]For assessment purposes Multilingual students are considered ML if they are designated as Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2 and FEP Exit Year 1, and Exit Year 2.

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.

This report provides an overview of data from the 2025-26 school year, including updated enrollment and demographic information, along with academic performance data.

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. The report relies on the following publicly available data sets:

- Graduation Rates: https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/graduation-completion-statistics
- Mobility: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/mobility-stabilitycurrent
- Pupil Count: https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/pupilmembership-statistics
- 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 Improvement and Innovation unit, or from the charter authorizer collection administered by the Improvement and Innovation Unit.

Part One: Colorado Charter School History and Current Conditions

History

In 1993, Colorado established itself as the third state in the United States to enact a charter school law. As of the 2025-2026 school year, Colorado has over three decades of experience and 262 charter schools serving 15.7% of public-school students in the state, which is up 0.2% from the prior year. 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, and also deeply held, beliefs about their aspirations for education.

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 show the number of charter schools operating in Colorado over the years and the recent openings and closures of charter schools. The data shows consistent growth, with the single decline in 2023-24 and no growth in 2025-26. The decline in 2023-24 was due to eight charter schools in Byers School District converting to district run schools. In 2025-26, three charter schools opened and three charter schools closed.

In 2024-25, 262 charter schools operated across the state, serving 136,218 students spanning pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. In 2025-26, the number of charter schools remained at 262 and is serving 136,627 students, an increase of 409 students. This enrollment represented 15.5% in 2024-25 and 15.7% in 2025-26 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 Year[3]

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
2025-2026	3	3	0	262

[3] 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.

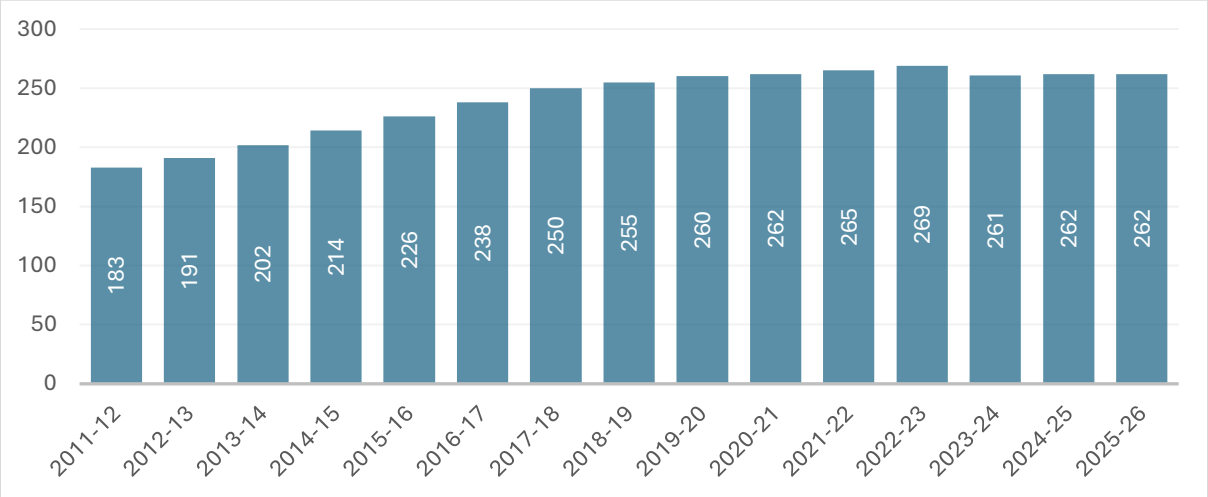
TABLE 2: Charter School Openings and Closures[4]

2024-25	
Open	**Close**
James Irwin Elementary- Canada Drive	Colorado Early Colleges Homeschool Academy
Jefferson Academy Coal Creek Canyon	Pueblo Classical Academy[5]
Orton Academy	GLOBE
Summit Academy	HOPE Online Learning Academy Middle School
University Prep- Commerce City	Vision Charter Academy K-8
Wildflower Grand Valley	
2025-26	
Open	**Close**
Capstone Academy	Girls Athletic Leadership High School
High Rockies Community School	Chavez Huerta K-12 Preparatory Academy
Wildflower Aurora	Colorado Skies Academy

Figures 1-4 show the number of charter schools in operation and enrollment ranging from 2011-12 to 2025-26. Charter schools have experienced growth since 2011-12 with exception in 2023-24 when Byers School District converted eight charter-managed multi-district online schools to district-managed multi-district online schools. The schools and students are no longer included in the charter school totals.

In 2025-26, non-charter schools experienced a decline in enrollment by 10,681 (1.5%) students, whereas charter school enrollment increased by 409 (0.3%) students.

FIGURE 1: Operating Charter Schools



[4] 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.

[5] In 2024-25, Pueblo Classical Academy converted from a charter school authorized by Pueblo 70 to a traditional school authorized by Education ReEnvisioned BOCES.

FIGURE 2: Charter School Enrollment by Year

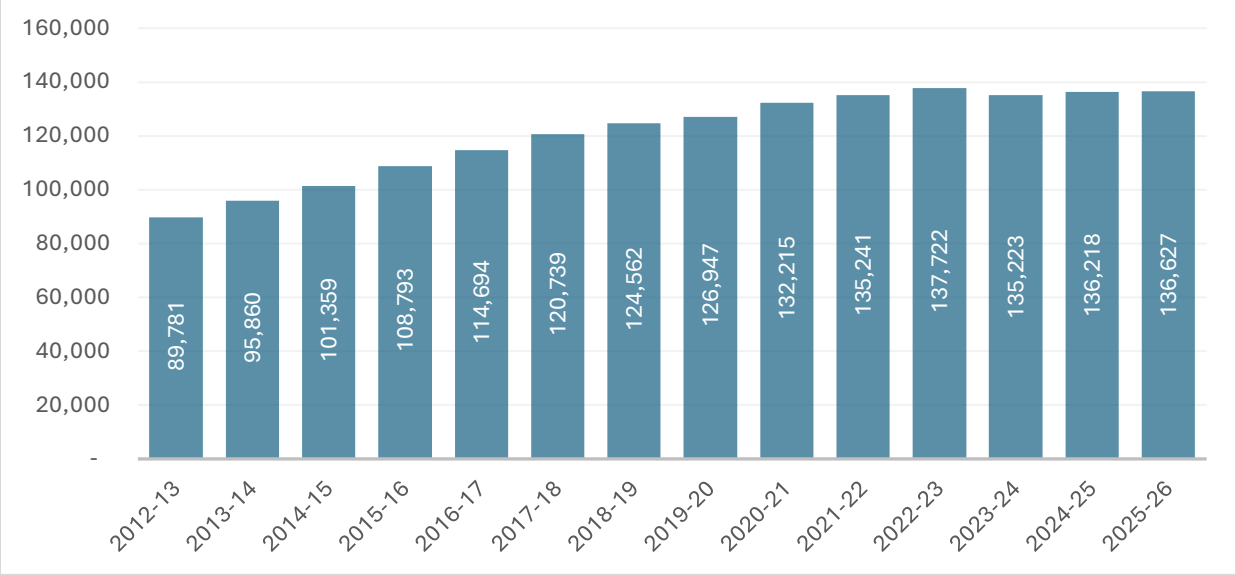


FIGURE 3: Non-Charter and Charter School Enrollment by Year

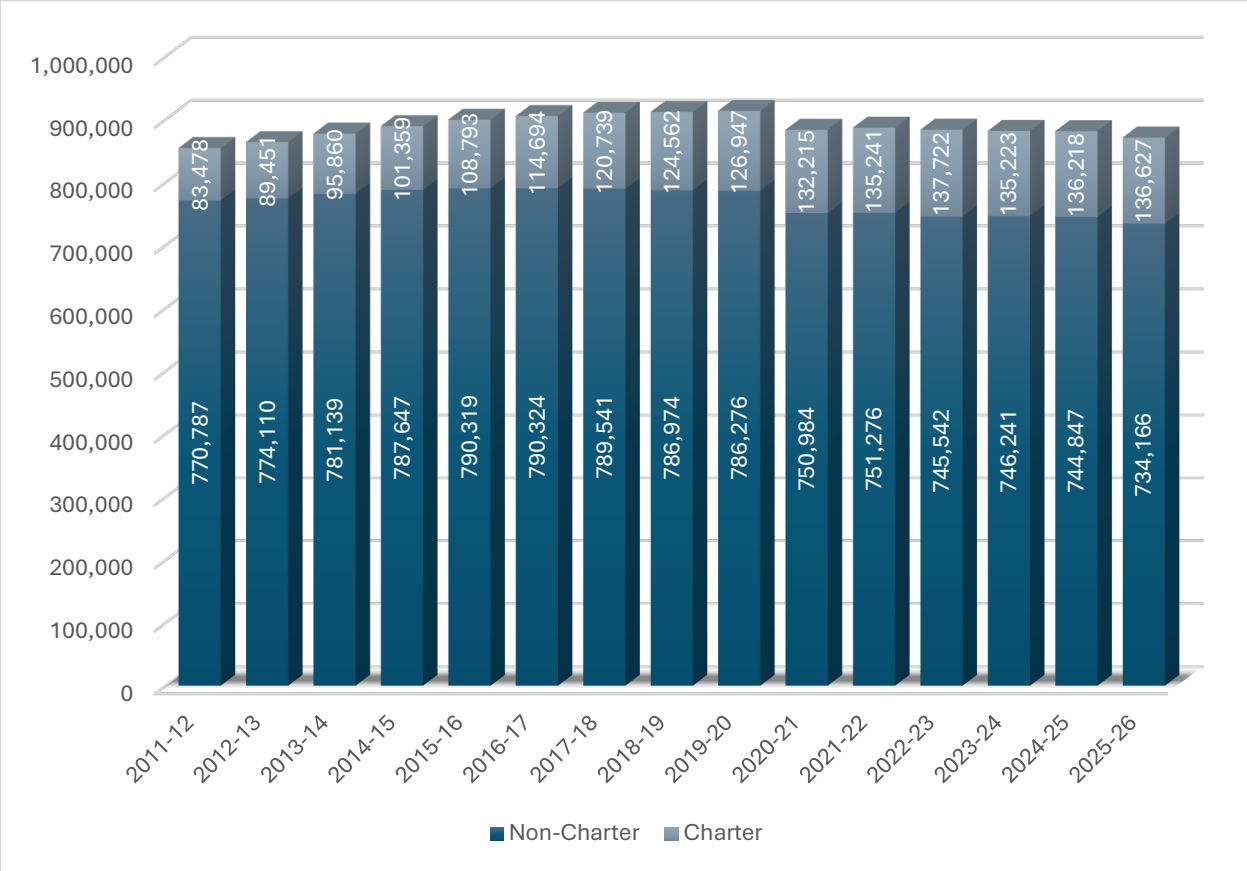
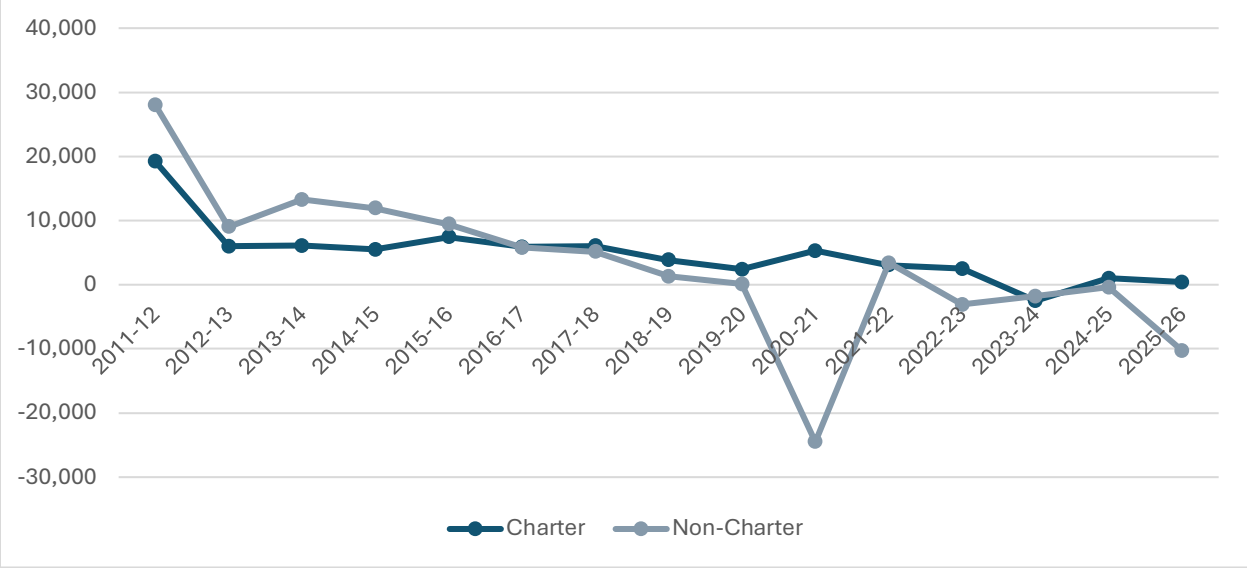


FIGURE 4: Change in Enrollment from Previous Year Over Time



Demographic Enrollment

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 and can be seen in Table 3 below. Overall, charter school student enrollment is very similar demographically to students in non-charter schools, except for the proportion of students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which has been consistently about 4.5 percentage points lower in charter schools than they are in non-charters. Charters have successfully reduced the enrollment gap for students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch and eliminated the enrollment gap for minority students and multilingual learners. 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.

TABLE 3: Student Enrollment by Demographic and Year

Free and Reduced Lunch Eligible															
	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Charters	32.6%	34.4%	35.4%	35.1%	35.7%	35.6%	35.7%	34.6%	36.0%	35.6%	33.0%	35.5%	41.1%	40.5%	41.1%
Non-Charters	41.9%	42.5%	42.9%	42.6%	42.8%	43.2%	42.7%	41.9%	41.7%	41.0%	37.9%	41.1%	46.6%	45.6%	45.4%
Gap	9.3%	8.1%	7.5%	7.5%	7.1%	7.6%	7.0%	7.3%	5.7%	5.4%	4.9%	5.6%	5.5%	5.1%	4.3%
Minority Students															
	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Charters	42.6%	44.3%	45.3%	45.3%	46.9%	47.3%	48.1%	48.3%	49.2%	48.7%	49.4%	49.9%	50.6%	52.0%	52.6%
Non-Charters	44.1%	44.5%	45.0%	45.6%	45.8%	46.2%	46.4%	46.5%	46.9%	47.3%	47.8%	48.5%	49.3%	50.6%	50.7%
Gap	1.5%	0.2%	-0.3%	0.3%	-1.1%	-1.1%	-1.7%	-1.8%	-2.3%	-1.4%	-1.6%	-1.4%	-1.3%	-1.4%	-1.9%
Multilingual Learner															
	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Charters	10.3%	14.2%	15.5%	15.9%	16.1%	15.8%	15.9%	15.8%	15.6%	14.5%	13.9%	13.8%	14.1%	14.7%	15.1%
Non-Charters	14.2%	14.6%	14.5%	14.4%	14.1%	14.1%	13.9%	13.5%	13.3%	12.6%	12.0%	12.1%	12.8%	14.0%	13.7%
Gap	3.9%	0.4%	-1.0%	-1.5%	-2.0%	-1.7%	-2.0%	-2.3%	-2.3%	-1.9%	-1.9%	-1.7%	-1.3%	-0.7%	-1.4%
Students with Individualized Education Plans															
	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Charters	6.0%	6.2%	6.2%	6.1%	6.3%	6.4%	6.7%	7.2%	7.6%	7.5%	7.7%	8.3%	8.8%	9.4%	9.9%
Non-Charters	10.1%	10.2%	10.5%	10.6%	10.9%	11.2%	11.6%	11.9%	12.3%	12.6%	12.6%	13.1%	13.7%	14.1%	14.4%
Gap	4.1%	4.0%	4.3%	4.5%	4.6%	4.8%	4.9%	4.7%	4.7%	5.1%	4.9%	4.8%	4.9%	4.7%	4.5%

Part Two: Characteristics of Colorado Charter Schools

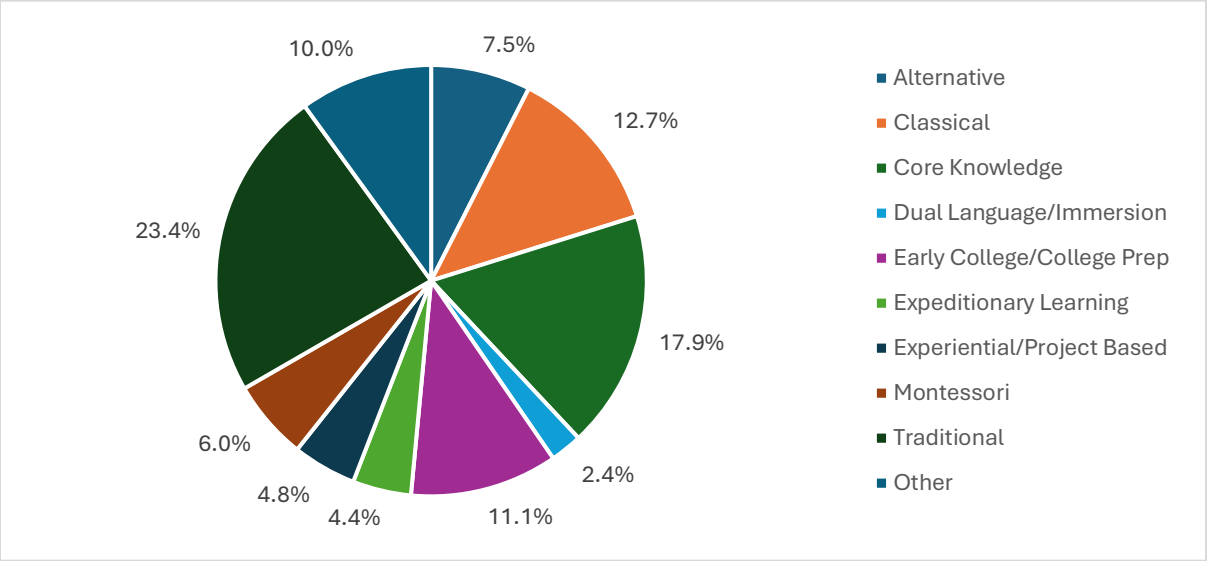
The following section centers on the key characteristics of Colorado charter schools and their service to students and families. The 2024-25 data below provides an overview of charter school programs.

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, Expeditionary, Montessori, and more, while their geographic setting spans from rural, small rural, and non-rural. 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 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 Figure 5. Of the 45 charter school authorizers in Colorado, 42 responded and provided education models for 252 out of the 262 charter schools. The most prevalent educational model is the traditional approach, used by 23.4% of charter schools, followed by the Core Knowledge model at 17.9%. The "other" category includes school models such as arts, personalized learning, STEAM, vocational, military, community schools, gifted and talented, Waldorf and wellness.

FIGURE 5: Education Models



Rural Designation

In Colorado, a school district is classified as rural based on factors such as its size, its distance from the nearest large urban or urbanized area and having an enrollment of 6,500 students or fewer. Districts that meet these criteria and have fewer than 1,000 students are considered small rural districts. Both district-managed schools and charter-managed schools have substantial presence in each geographical location; however, the distributions between each vary. Table 4 shows rural and small rural school districts that authorize one or more charter schools.

TABLE 4: Districts with Rural or Small Rural Status

Rural	Small Rural
Archuleta County 50 Jt	Clear Creek RE-1
Aspen 1	Huerfano Re-1
Bennett 29J	Park County RE-2
Canon City RE-1	West End RE-2
Delta County 50(J)	
Durango 9-R	
Eagle County RE 50	
Elizabeth School District	
Gunnison Watershed RE1J	
Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	
Lamar Re-2	
Moffat County RE: No 1	
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	
Montrose County RE-1J	
Roaring Fork RE-1	
Steamboat Springs RE-2	
Weld County School District RE-3J	
Woodland Park Re-2	

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 Board of Cooperative Education Services (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 5 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 5: Organizations with Management Responsibilities

Organization Name	Organization Type	Number of Schools
Accel Schools Colorado LLC	National Management	1[6]
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	5
Colorado High School Charter, Inc.	Local Management	2
Community Leadership Academy	Local Management	3

[6] Indicates that Organization Type is non-profit.

Organization Name	Organization Type	Number of Schools
Compass Montessori Schools	Local Management	2
Compass for Lifelong Discovery	Local Management	2
Denver School of Science and Technology, Inc.	Local Management	16
Global Village Collaborative	Local Management	3
Highline Academy Schools	Local Management	2
James Irwin Schools	Local Management	6
Jefferson Academy	Local Management	5
KIPP Colorado Schools	Local/National Management	6
Mesa Community	Local Management	2
Monument Academy	Local Management	2
National Heritage Academies	National Management	5
New America School	Local/National Management	3
New Legacy Charter Schools	Local Management	2
Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences	Local Management	3
Rocky Mountain Classical Academy	Local Management	2
Strive Preparatory Schools	Local Management	12
Swallows Charter	Local Management	2
The Classical Academy	Local Management	4
The Doral Academy Inc.	Local/National Management	1
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
Wildflower Montessori Public Schools of Colorado	Local Management	3
Windsor Charter Academy	Local Management	3

Out of the 262 charter schools in the 2025-26 school year, 91.2% are locally managed (96 through a local management organization and 143 as single-site schools). Additionally, 2.3% (six schools) of Colorado charter schools are under national management. There is also a hybrid category, where 17 schools, or 6.5% of charter schools, 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.

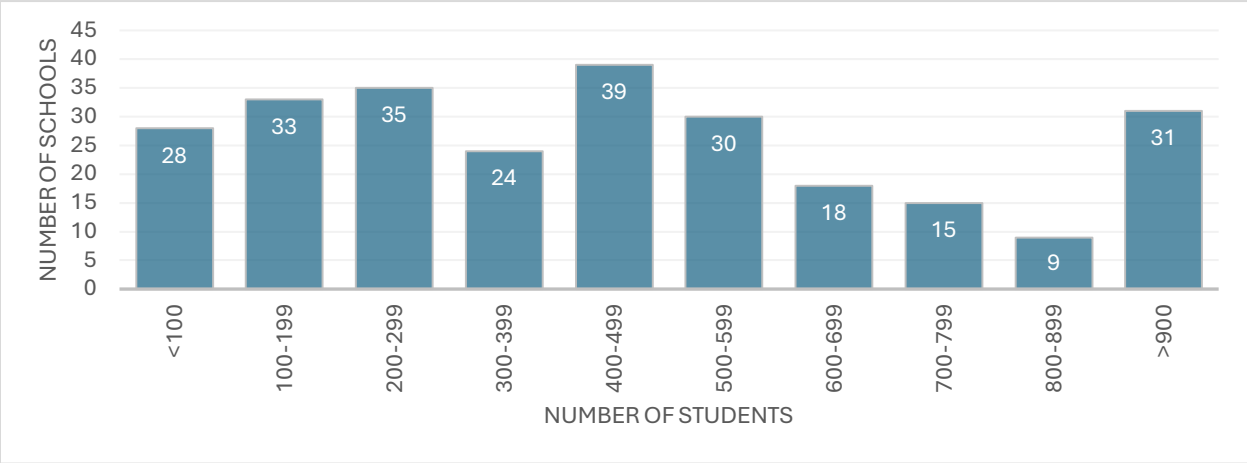
Charter Schools by Size

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 2025-26 school year.

The average enrollment for charter schools was 521 in 2025-26, which is an increase of one from the year prior. Historically, average enrollment has steadily increased over time. In the mid-1990's, over 70% of

charter schools served fewer than 200 students.[7] By 2025-26, charter schools with fewer than 200 students decreased to 23%. Meanwhile, only 4% of charter schools had enrollments exceeding 600 students in 1996, but this figure has grown to 28% in 2025-26.

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

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 (ECA), authorizing districts, and best practices will be presented in the following sections.[9]

Authorizing Districts

As described earlier in the report, during the 2025-26 school year, 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.

[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.

- **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.
- **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.

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.[10]

Charter School Application Processes

Based on the most recent authorizer data collection, 90% of responding authorizers indicated that the district has a defined process, generally set in board policy for reviewing new charter applications, while 10% 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 2024-25, authorizers received a total of 19 charter applications. Among these, nine applications were granted approval, seven were denied, and three applicants 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 6 provides a comprehensive breakdown of all such appeals and their outcomes from 2024 to present.

[10] See 1 CCR 301-88: *Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers*

TABLE 6: Charter School Appeals

Case No.	Appeal Type	Parties Involved with Link to Board Documents	Nature of Appeal	Prevailing Side
25-CS-01	1st Appeal	Chavez/Huerta K-12 Preparatory vs. Pueblo 60 School District	Denial of Charter Renewal	District - Denial decisions found not to be contrary to the "best interest" standard
25-CS-02	1st Appeal	Montrose Classical Academy vs. Montrose County School District	Denial of Charter Application	Charter Applicant-Remanded back to district for reconsideration

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, 46 schools underwent a contract renewal in the school year 2024-25. 44 charter school renewals were approved, while one was extended and one was denied. The schools that closed during the 2024-25 school year reported low enrollment as the primary reason for the closure.

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 § 22-11-210, C.R.S.), and the results of the charter school's most recent annual financial audit. The school district shall provide the charter school with written feedback 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 the department's Authorizer Data Collection, 17 out of the 42 reporting authorizers noted that an annual evaluation was not provided to one or more charter schools.

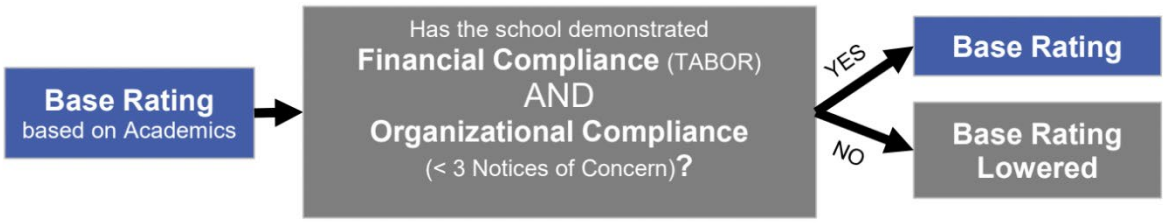
Example of Implementation:

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?

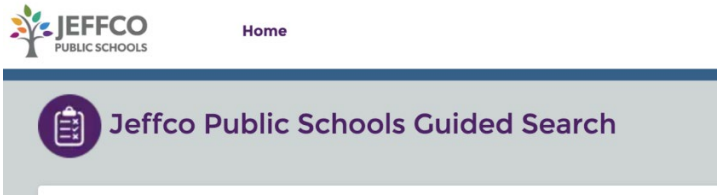
The following provide the complete Academic, Financial, and Organizational Performance Frameworks:



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, 41% of charter schools were reported as conducting their own lottery processes, while 36% participated in a centrally managed lottery process overseen by the authorizer. The remaining 23% employ some form of agreed-upon non-lottery enrollment method (such as first-come, first-served).
- **Centralized Enrollment System**: 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, approximately 32% of charter schools were reported

as paying a negotiated fee related to special education services. The remaining 68% 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, 72% 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 2025 collection, authorizers reported that 23% 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 2024-25, 60% of charter schools provide food to students by collaborating with their authorizer's School Food Authority (SFA). 20% provide food through a separate SFA, 2% operate their own SFA, and 7% do not provide food through an organized program. 11% of the responding authorizers left the answer blank.

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.

Colorado Charter School Institute

CSI, a state authorizing body established in statute, serves as an alternative authorizing charter school entity. CSI currently authorizes 47 charter schools throughout Colorado. Among these schools, four are situated in one school district, Adams 14, which is a district that is 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 7: 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	9
Colorado Springs 11	Has ECA	5
Douglas County	Has ECA	2

Geographical District	Authorizer Status	Number of Schools Authorized
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	2
Park County RE-2	Has ECA	1
Poudre R-1[11]	Has 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.

On April 9, 2026, Poudre School District R-1 sought ECA to authorize charter schools within the geographic boundaries of the school district and was granted this authority. Table 8 below lists schools that remain **without** ECA.

TABLE 8: 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	Adams County 14
Sierra Grande R-30	

[11] Poudre School District R-1 sought Exclusive Charter Authority to authorize charter schools within the geographic boundaries of the school district and was granted this authority on April 09, 2026. Items related to this approval can be found on Board Docs at https://go.boarddocs.com/co/cde/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DSCR7F6C9AE5

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 § 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;
- 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 § 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 include an application to CSI and approval from the CSI board through a public process as well.

Part Four: 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 2022-23 (2023 SPF), 2023-24 (2024 SPF), and 2024-25 (2025 SPF).

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

Colorado's statewide assessment system is designed around the Colorado Academic Standards, which defines 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 9 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 ELA assessment.

TABLE 9: Assessment List

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

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)

Performance levels are used to measure how well students align with the expectations for their respective grade levels. As shown in Table 10, 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 10: 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

Table 11 presents CMAS participation rates by year and grade level. During the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years, participation rates remain higher among charter schools.

In 2025, grade-level participation on CMAS ELA and math 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 and in grades 3-8 overall.

TABLE 11: ELA and Math Participation

	Grade	2023		2024		2025	
		Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter
CMAS ELA	3-8	89.7%	88.5%	91.5%	87.0%	91.4%%	89.9%
	3	94.8%	93.6%	95.5%	92.3%	95.3%	92.2%
	4	94.0%	93.4%	94.9%	91.6%	95.2%	92.6%
	5	92.4%	92.3%	94.0%	90.5%	93.7%	91.0%
	6	90.6%	89.0%	91.8%	87.1%	91.6%	88.1%
	7	87.4%	84.6%	89.7%	89.7%	89.4%	84.3%
	8	81.0%	78.7%	84.3%	84.3%	84.2%	78.4%
CMAS Math	**Grade**	**2023**		**2024**		**2025**	
		Charter	**Non-Charter**	**Charter**	**Non-Charter**	**Charter**	**Non-Charter**
	3-8	89.9%	88.9%	92.0%	88.5%	91.7%	88.7%
	3	95.0%	94.0%	96.1%	94.0%	95.6%	93.3%
	4	94.0%	93.6%	95.4%	93.1%	95.4%	93.3%
	5	92.4%	92.7%	94.4%	92.2%	94.0%	91.7%
	6	90.9%	89.5%	92.5%	88.6%	91.8%	89.1%
	7	87.5%	85.0%	90.2%	85.0%	89.6%	85.1%
	8	81.4%	79.1%	84.6%	78.5%	84.7%	79.5%

CMAS 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 2025 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, except for 7th grade charter students which earned a "met expectations" rating in ELA. Further analysis of MSS scores for charter and non-charter schools for school years 2023, 2024, and 2025 can be seen in Table 12 below.

TABLE 12: ELA and Math Mean Scale Score

	Grade	2023		2024		2025	
		Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter
CMAS ELA	3	739.4	736.2	739.6	736.5	739.2	736.0
	4	743.8	740.3	742.6	740.3	742.8	740.3
	5	749.4	746.8	748.5	746.6	747.0	745.9
	6	744.7	742.1	745.1	742.5	745.3	742.0
	7	747.5	743.0	749.1	745.0	750.9	745.9
	8	746.6	740.0	743.5	739.4	744.0	739.9
	Grade	2023		2024		2025	
		Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter
CMAS Math	3	741.5	737.3	742.4	739.7	741.9	738.7
	4	736.4	732.6	736.4	734.4	738.1	735.9
	5	738.0	736.7	733.2	738.2	740.1	738.9
	6	731.2	728.8	736.4	731.0	735.2	731.1
	7	733.8	729.9	735.5	732.3	738.1	734.2
	8	735.2	730.6	735.5	730.2	737.0	732.7
Key	Partially Met Expectations		Approached Expectations		Met Expectations		

CMAS English Language Arts and Math Performance – Disaggregated Results

In 2025, disaggregated results for students based on FRL eligibility, minority, multilingual status[12], and students with an IEP show that charter schools have higher Mean Scale Scores than non-charter schools on the CMAS ELA and math assessments for all student groups, as shown in Table 13. Additionally, these student groups are compared with students not in the group to determine the achievement gap. Charter school students had lower achievement gaps than non-charter school students in all student groups, except for students with IEPs in both ELA and math assessments.

[12] For assessment purposes Multilingual students are considered ML if they are designated as Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2 and FEP Exit Year 1, and Exit Year 2.

TABLE 13: ELA and Math Mean Scale Score- Disaggregated Results

	Disaggregated Student Group	2025		
		Charter	Non-Charter	Difference
CMAS ELA	FRL Eligible	729.4	725.2	4.2
	Non-FRL Eligible	752.9	753.3	-0.4
	Gap	23.5	28.1	
	Minority	736.3	729.9	6.4
	Non-Minority	754.2	753.8	0.4
	Gap	17.9	23.9	
	ML	724.6	715.7	8.9
	Non-ML	747.7	750.2	-2.5
	Gap	23.1	34.5	
	Students w/ IEP	708.4	707.8	0.6
	Students without IEP	748.9	747.0	1.9
	Gap	40.5	39.2	

	Disaggregated Student Group	2025		
		Charter	Non-Charter	Difference
CMAS Math	FRL Eligible	722.6	719.8	2.8
	Non-FRL Eligible	746.4	746.6	-0.2
	Gap	23.8	26.8	
	Minority	729.6	723.8	5.8
	Non-Minority	747.5	747.3	0.2
	Gap	17.9	23.5	
	ML	720.5	713.8	6.7
	Non- ML	740.7	743.0	-3.0
	Gap	20.2	29.2	
	Students w/ IEP	708.6	708.0	0.6
	Students without IEP	741.5	739.8	1.7
	Gap	32.9	31.8	

PSAT and SAT

Performance levels are used to measure how well a student meets academic expectations and the level of college readiness. As shown in Table 14, there are four performance levels for the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and math PSAT/SAT assessments.

TABLE 14: PSAT and SAT EBRW and Math Cut Scores

	Assessment	Level 1 Did Not Yet Meet Expectations	Level 2 Approached Expectations	Level 3 Met Expectations	Level 4 Exceeded Expectations
EBRW	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
Math	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, grade-level participation rates by year and grade level were also examined and is presented in Table 19. When looking at grade-level participation, charter schools exhibited a higher participation rate compared to non-charter schools during the 2025 in grades 9 and 10 on the EBRW and math assessments. Grade 11 participation in both assessments were nearly identical for charter and non-charter schools. From 2023 to 2025 charter schools increased overall EBRW participation by 7.4% and non-charters participation decreased by 0.7%. In math, participation increased by 7.6% for charters and decreased by 0.5% in non-charter schools.

TABLE 19: PSAT/SAT EBRW and Math Participation

	Grade	2023		2024		2025	
		Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter
PSAT/SAT EBRW	9-11	80.8%	85.5%	87.4%	84.5%	88.2%	84.8%
	9	84.1%	85.2%	89.8%	84.3%	90.6%	85.1%
	10	79.7%	84.0%	87.3%	82.9%	87.9%	83.2%
	11	78.8%	87.5%	85.3%	86.5%	86.1%	86.1%
	Grade	2023		2024		2025	
		Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter
PSAT/SAT Math	9-11	80.8%	85.5%	87.5%	85.0%	88.3%	85.0%
	9	84.1%	85.2%	89.8%	84.9%	90.8%	85.3%
	10	79.7%	84.0%	87.4%	83.3%	88.0%	83.4%
	11	78.7%	87.5%	85.3%	86.8%	861.%	86.2%

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

Charter and non-charter schools' average MSS for grades 9-11 all fall within the "Met Expectations" range for EBRW and "Approached Expectations" range for math. Further analysis of MSS scores for charter and non-charter schools for 2023, 2024, and 2025 can be seen in Table 20 below.

TABLE 20: EBRW and Math Mean Scale Score

		2023		2024		2025	
PSAT/SAT EBRW	Grade	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter
	9	452.8	448.6	455.7	449.3	456.0	450.7
	10	476.8	474.3	473.0	472.8	468.6	467.3
	11	503.2	505.4	499.9	499.4	501.2	507.6
		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25	
PSAT/SAT Math	Grade	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter	Charter	Non-Charter
	9	440.6	439.3	435.0	428.3	428.6	426.8
	10	455.0	453.6	445.4	443.9	448.1	448.8
	11	480.4	483.6	474.9	477.2	471.2	480.2
Key		Did Not Yet Meet		Approached Expectations		Met Expectations	

In 2025, disaggregated results for students based on race and ethnicity, multilingual status[13], FRL eligibility, and students with an IEP show that charter schools have higher Mean Scale Scores than non-charter schools for many student groups for EBRW and math and, as shown in Table 21. Additionally, these student groups are compared with students not in the group to determine the achievement gap. Charter school students had lower achievement gaps than non-charter school students in all student groups. Color coding is unavailable for this table due to the different ranges of the performance bands for each grade level. The MSS presented is an average of the three grade levels.

[13] For assessment purposes Multilingual students are considered ML if they are designated as Non-English Proficient (NEP), Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2 and FEP Exit Year 1, and Exit Year 2.

TABLE 21: EBRW and Math Mean Scale Score- Disaggregated Results

	Disaggregated Student Group	2025		
		Charter	Non-Charter	Difference
PSAT/SAT EBRW	FRL Eligible	433.0	425.0	8.0
	Non-FRL Eligible	507.6	502.0	5.6
	Gap	74.6	77.0	
	Minority	446.8	438.0	8.8
	Non-Minority	516.6	510.2	6.4
	Gap	69.8	72.2	
	ML	389.6	359.4	30.2
	Non-ML	494.7	490.9	3.8
	Gap	105.1	131.5	
	Students w/ IEP	383.9	379.9	4.0
	Students without IEP	484.6	485.0	-0.4
	Gap	100.7	105.1	
	Disaggregated Student Group	2024-25		
		Charter	Non-Charter	Difference
PSAT/SAT Math	FRL Eligible	412.4	402.6	9.8
	Non-FRL Eligible	477.6	478.2	-0.6
	Gap	65.2	75.6	
	Minority	427.4	418.2	9.2
	Non-Minority	481.3	483.7	-2.4
	Gap	53.9	65.5	
	ML	387.0	360.3	26.7
	Non- ML	463.5	464.6	-1.1
	Gap	76.5	104.3	
	Students w/ IEP	358.8	354.8	4.0
	Students without IEP	458.6	461.9	-3.3
	Gap	99.8	107.1	

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.[14]

As illustrated in Table 22, over the past three years for which data is available, the proportion of charter schools receiving the highest rating of "Performance" on their SPFs has consistently been higher than it has been for non-charter schools. In 2023, 66.67% of charter schools earned a Performance rating and increased that to 80.88% in 2025. In 2023, 60.94% of non-charter schools earned a Performance rating and increased that to 66.84% in 2025. Both charter and non- charter are increasing the percentage of schools earning Performance rating, however, charters are increasing this percentage at a higher rate. Charter schools and non-charter schools are also witnessing a decrease in schools receiving "Insufficient Data" ratings. Charter schools saw a decrease in schools receiving Insufficient Data ratings by 7.57% and non-charter schools saw a decrease of 1.51% between the 2023 and 2025 assessments.

TABLE 22: School Performance Frameworks

		Performance	Improvement	Priority Improvement	Turnaround	Insufficient Data
Charter	2023	66.67%	18.01%	4.98%	0.38%	9.96%
	2024	75.60%	13.78%	4.72%	1.18%	4.72%
	2025	80.88%	12.75%	3.58%	0.40%	2.39%
	2023-2025 Difference	14.21%	-5.26%	-1.40%	0.20%	-7.57%
Non-Charter	2023	60.94%	21.82%	7.50%	2.03%	7.71%
	2024	66.53%	19.69%	4.89%	1.97%	6.92%
	2025	66.84%	20.19%	5.16%	1.61%	6.20%
	2023-2025 Difference	5.90%	-1.63%	-2.34%	-0.42%	-1.51%

[14] Additional information regarding accountability frameworks, including scoring guides, can be found here: https://ed.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performanceframeworks

Part Five: 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: 2025 legislation, recommended future actions, and waivers from state statues.

2025 Legislation

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 noteworthy legislation passed in 2025 that has impacted both authorizers and charter schools.

- Senate Bill 25-073 [Codified at C.R.S. 22-36-107] This bill guarantees open enrollment access for children with disabilities of an active-duty military family, including remote enrollment before relocation. Schools must promptly provide services under a 504 plan or IEP and allow students to progress between school levels. Schools must also take reasonable steps to inform incoming military families of their rights and available supports and prevent inadvertent exclusion.
- Senate Bill 25-063 [Codified at C.R.S. 22-1-148] By September 1, 2025, school districts and charter schools must adopt written policies governing library resources.
- House Bill 25-1210 [Codified at C.R.S. 22-11-208; 22-11-210] This legislation imposes no direct requirements on individual schools but directs the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to streamline and consolidate Unified Improvement Plan reporting to eliminate redundant paperwork.
- House Bill 25-1190 [Codified at C.R.S. 22-2-135; 22-2-136] This bill establishes a new high school graduation requirement; a course that incorporates existing financial literacy standards.
- House Bill 25-1135 [Codified at 22-1-149] By January 5, 2026, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) must publish a list of resources and research to support policy development on cell phones and similar devices. Additionally, all schools need to adopt and implement a policy on cell phones by July 1, 2026.

Recommendations for Future Actions

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: Provide Mechanism to Define Educational Models

Policy Goal: Clearly define and categorize educational models across the state in order to establish a shared, consistent understanding among stakeholders.

- Promote alignment in how educational models are interpreted, implemented, and evaluated across districts, schools, and governing bodies.
- Provide opportunities for education models to collaborate, share best practices, and overcome obstacles.

- Highlight what is expected within each model and how to design programs with fidelity by reducing ambiguity and allowing school leaders and educators to make more confident, consistent decisions about curriculum, staffing, scheduling, and resource allocation.

Recommendation 2: 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 3: Support Rapid School Improvement in Struggling Charter Schools
Policy Goal: Ensure that charter schools take advantage of their flexibility to improve swiftly.
- 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 4: 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 5: 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) 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 6: 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 7: 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 8: 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 9: 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 a particular profession full-time.

Recommendation 10: Expand and Sustain Charter Access to Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Pathways

Policy Goal: Ensure equitable access to high-quality college and career pathways for all students.

- Build on the opportunities established through S.B. 25-315 by supporting charter schools' full participation and equitable inclusion in the design, implementation, and expansion of PWR pathways, particularly in high-demand and emerging industries.
- Promote cross-sector partnerships among charter schools, districts, higher education institutions, and industry partners to align pathways with regional workforce needs and strengthen student access to credentials, work-based learning, and postsecondary opportunities.

Recommendation 11: Improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities by strengthening special education leadership and increasing accountability for the quality and effectiveness of charter school programs. This recommendation is aligned with the intent of SB26-170 to expand access to effective public schools by ensuring students with disabilities are served through high-quality, well-supported special education programs.

- Provide state funding for specialized professional development for charter school leaders overseeing special education, ensuring they possess the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively implement

special education law, inclusive instructional practices, workload management strategies, and program design.
- Establish expectations for charter authorizers to review the quality of special education services, staffing practices, workload management, and student outcomes during renewal and monitoring activities.

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 also permits school districts to request waivers from specific aspects of state statutes and rule 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 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 its 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 Improvement and Innovation Unit (previously 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 23 outlines the waivers that are approved by the State Board of Education as automatic as of this time of report.

TABLE 23: 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)(I)	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 24.

TABLE 24: Non-Automatic Waivers

Statute	Statute Title	School Count
22-9-106	Local Board Duties Concerning Performance Evaluations	257
22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(A)	Calendar - Determining teacher-pupil contact hours	244
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	240
22-2-112(1)(q)(I)	Commissioner-Duties – Reporting performance evaluation ratings	237
22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(B)	Calendar – Determining instructional days	235
22-63-203	Teacher Employment Act-Requirements for probationary teacher, renewal & nonrenewal	216
22-63-202	Teacher Employment Act - Contracts in Writing, Damage Provision	219
22-63-206	Teacher Employment Act-Transfer of teachers	211
22-32-109(1)(b)	Local Board Duties Concerning Competitive Bidding	189
22-32-110(1)(y)	Local Board Powers-Accept Gifts, Donations, Grants	181

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 waivers from federal law.

Appendix A: List of Colorado Charter Schools

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
New Summit Charter Academy	6242	Academy 20	2019	584	Performance Plan	K - 8
TCA College Pathways	8779	Academy 20	1997	555	Performance Plan	7 - 12
The Classical Academy Charter	1627	Academy 20	1994	2220	Performance Plan	K - 6
The Classical Academy High School	1630	Academy 20	1994	636	Performance Plan	9 - 12
The Classical Academy Middle School	1629	Academy 20	1994	438	Performance Plan	7 - 8
New America School - Thornton	4699	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2004	166	AEC: Improvement Plan	9 - 12
Prospect Ridge Academy	6802	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2011	1474	Performance Plan	K - 12
Stargate Charter School	1519	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	1994	1586	Performance Plan	K - 12
Westgate Community School	9431	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2009	533	Performance Plan	K - 12
Aurora Academy Charter School	458	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2020	525	Performance Plan	K - 8
Aurora Science & Tech High School	5964	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2022	533	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Aurora Science & Tech Middle School	127	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2020	459	Performance Plan	6 - 8
AXL Academy	213	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2008	451	Improvement Plan	PK - 8
Global Village Academy Aurora	3471	Charter School Institute	2007	792	Performance Plan	K - 8
Lotus School for Excellence	5298	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2006	1077	Performance Plan	K - 12
Rocky Mountain Prep: Fletcher	7233	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2017	660	Performance Plan	PK - 5

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Vanguard Classical School - East	9189	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2014	694	Improvement Plan	K - 12
Vanguard Classical School - West	9056	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2007	352	Improvement Plan	K - 8
Vega Collegiate Academy	9053	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2018	566	Performance Plan	K - 8
Pagosa Peak Open School	6679	Archuleta County 50 Jt	2018	129	Improvement Plan	K - 8
Aspen Community Charter School	42	Aspen 1	2002	134	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Sky Ranch Academy	7796	Bennett 29J	2023	545	Performance Plan	K - 9
Boulder Prep Charter High School	934	Boulder Valley Re 2	1997	93	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
Horizons K-8 School	6642	Boulder Valley Re 2	1991	369	Performance Plan	K - 8
Justice High Charter School	4496	Boulder Valley Re 2	2006	95	AEC: Performance Plan	6 - 12
Peak to Peak Charter School	6816	Boulder Valley Re 2	200	1450	Performance Plan	K - 12
Summit Middle Charter School	8387	Boulder Valley Re 2	1996	366	Performance Plan	6 - 8
Mount View Core Knowledge Charter School	6752	Canon City RE-1	1996	245	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Academy of Advanced Learning	126	Charter School Institute	2018	832	Performance Plan	K - 8
Academy of Arts and Knowledge Elementary	657	Charter School Institute	1994	255	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Academy of Charter Schools	15	Charter School Institute	1994	1856	Performance Plan	PK - 12
Animas High School	75	Charter School Institute	2009	232	Performance Plan	9-12
Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County	79	Charter School Institute	2019	1038	Performance Plan	K - 12

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Ascent Classical Academy of Grand Junction	2905	Charter School Institute	2023	516	Improvement Plan	K - 10
Ascent Classical Academy of Northern Colorado	1005	Charter School Institute	2020	734	Performance Plan	K - 12
Ascent Classical Academy of Northern Denver	2904	Charter School Institute	2023	397	Performance Plan	K - 9
Axis International Academy	493	Charter School Institute	2020	291	Performance Plan	PK - 6
Battle Rock Charter School	609	Charter School Institute	1994	94	Performance Plan	K - 6
Caprock Academy	1279	Charter School Institute	2007	782	Performance Plan	K - 12
Colorado Early Colleges Aurora	1633	Charter School Institute	2018	582	Improvement Plan	9 - 12
Colorado Early Colleges Colorado Springs	1795	Charter School Institute	2007	765	Performance Plan	6 - 12
Colorado Early Colleges Douglas County	2196	Charter School Institute	2014	1018	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Colorado Early Colleges Fort Collins	2067	Charter School Institute	2012	1014	Performance Plan	6 - 12
Colorado Early Colleges Online Campus	9679	Charter School Institute	2022	441	Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	6 - 12
Colorado Early Colleges Windsor	1387	Charter School Institute	2020	168	Performance Plan	6 - 12
Colorado International Language Academy	3326	Charter School Institute	2013	364	Performance Plan	K - 5
Colorado Springs Charter Academy	1791	Charter School Institute	2005	251	Improvement Plan	K - 8
Community Leadership Academy	1882	Charter School Institute	2005	298	Improvement Plan	PK - 5
Coperni 3	1371	Charter School Institute	2020	365	Performance Plan	K - 8

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Crown Pointe Charter Academy	2035	Charter School Institute	1997	456	Performance Plan	K - 8
Early Learning Center at New Legacy Charter School	3513	Charter School Institute	2023	7	Not Tested	PK
Global Village Academy - North	3439	Charter School Institute	2017	867	Performance Plan	K - 8
Golden View Classical Academy	3393	Charter School Institute	2015	734	Performance Plan	K - 12
High Point Academy	655	Charter School Institute	2006	718	Performance Plan	PK - 8
High Rockies Community School	3947	Charter School Institute	2025	52	New School	K - 8
James Irwin Charter Academy	4403	Charter School Institute	2013	171	Priority Improvement Plan	K - 5
Kwiyagat Community Academy	5313	Charter School Institute	2022	79	AEC: Insufficient State Data	K - 5
Montessori del Mundo Charter School	5957	Charter School Institute	2014	409	Improvement Plan	PK - 8
Monument View Montessori Charter School	5845	Charter School Institute	2018	46	Performance Plan	PK - 4
Mountain Middle School	5453	Charter School Institute	2011	353	Performance Plan	4 - 8
Mountain Song Community School	5851	Charter School Institute	2013	439	Performance Plan	K - 8
New America School - Aurora	6219	Charter School Institute	2005	66	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
New Legacy Charter School	6266	Charter School Institute	2015	96	AEC: Improvement Plan	9 - 12
Prospect Academy	5499	Charter School Institute	2022	80	AEC: Improvement Plan	4 - 8
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	7278	Charter School Institute	2007	293	Priority Improvement Plan	K - 8

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Ross Montessori School	7512	Charter School Institute	2005	178	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Salida Montessori Charter School	8061	Charter School Institute	2015	202	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Steamboat Montessori	5423	Charter School Institute	2017	172	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Stone Creek School	653	Charter School Institute	2006	216	Performance Plan	K - 8
The Pinnacle Charter School	6914	Charter School Institute	1997	1921	Improvement Plan	K - 12
Thomas MacLaren State Charter School	8825	Charter School Institute	2009	958	Performance Plan	K - 12
Victory Preparatory Academy High State Charter School	9037	Charter School Institute	2013	130	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Victory Preparatory Academy Middle State Charter School	9040	Charter School Institute	2013	149	Performance Plan	6 - 8
Wildflower Montessori- Aurora North	9606	Charter School Institute	2025	19	New School	K - 3
Wildflower Montessori- Aurora South	9596	Charter School Institute	2023	64	Performance Plan	PK - 4
Wildflower Montessori- Grand Valley	9598	Charter School Institute	2024	54	Performance Plan	PK - 4
University Prep- Commerce City	8948	Charter School Institute	2024	81	Not Tested	PK - K
Cherry Creek Charter Academy	1571	Cherry Creek 5	1995	573	Performance Plan	K - 8
Heritage Heights Academy	4189	Cherry Creek 5	2017	567	Performance Plan	K - 8
Georgetown Community School	3385	Clear Creek RE-1	2006	68	Performance Plan	PK - 6
Academy for Advanced and Creative Learning	517	Colorado Springs 11	2010	308	Performance Plan	K - 8
CIVA Charter Academy	1616	Colorado Springs 11	1997	172	Performance Plan	9 - 12

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Colorado Military Academy	1505	Colorado Springs 11	2018	832	Improvement Plan	PK - 12
Community Prep Charter School	1885	Colorado Springs 11	1995	144	AEC: Priority Improvement Plan	9 - 12
Eastlake High School of Colorado Springs	5146	Colorado Springs 11	2004	72	AEC: Improvement Plan	9 - 12
Orton Academy	1892	Colorado Springs 11	2024	120	Turnaround Plan: Decreased due to Participation	2 - 8
Roosevelt Charter Academy	7482	Colorado Springs 11	1996	486	Improvement Plan	PK - 5
Vision Charter Academy	2166	Delta County 50(J)	2015	457	Performance Plan	K - 12
5280 High School	2994	Denver County 1	2019	89	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
Academy 360	99	Denver County 1	2013	229	Performance Plan	PK - 5
AUL Denver	67	Denver County 1	2005	142	AEC: Improvement Plan	9 - 12
Colorado High School Charter	1748	Denver County 1	2002	223	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
Colorado High School Charter - GES	1561	Denver County 1	2018	226	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
Compass Academy	1939	Denver County 1	2015	196	Improvement Plan	6 - 8
Denver Justice High School	4494	Denver County 1	2009	108	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
Denver Language School	2127	Denver County 1	2010	966	Performance Plan	K - 8
Downtown Denver Expeditionary School	2207	Denver County 1	2013	264	Performance Plan	K - 5
DSST: Cedar High School	2228	Denver County 1	2016	556	Performance Plan	9 - 12

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
DSST: Cedar Middle School	2186	Denver County 1	2013	489	Performance Plan	6 - 8
DSST: Cole High School	2175	Denver County 1	2014	251	Performance Plan	9 - 12
DSST: Cole Middle School	2223	Denver County 1	2011	269	Improvement Plan	6 - 8
DSST: College View High School	2244	Denver County 1	2015	535	Performance Plan	9 - 12
DSST: College View Middle School	4381	Denver County 1	2012	448	Performance Plan	6 - 8
DSST: Conservatory Green High School	1529	Denver County 1	2017	558	Performance Plan	9 - 12
DSST: Conservatory Green Middle School	2218	Denver County 1	2014	480	Performance Plan	6 - 8
DSST: Elevate Northeast High School	2026	Denver County 1	2022	536	Performance Plan	9 - 12
DSST: Elevate Northeast Middle School	2190	Denver County 1	2019	450	Performance Plan	6 - 8
DSST: Green Valley Ranch High School	2145	Denver County 1	2010	568	Performance Plan	9 - 12
DSST: Green Valley Ranch Middle School	2181	Denver County 1	2010	481	Performance Plan	6 - 8
DSST: Montview High School	2185	Denver County 1	2004	553	Performance Plan	9 - 12
DSST: Montview Middle School	2115	Denver County 1	2004	458	Performance Plan	6 - 8
French American School of Denver	1995	Denver County 1	2022	224	Performance Plan	K - 5
Girls Athletic Leadership School Middle School	3639	Denver County 1	2010	239	Performance Plan	6 - 8
Highline Academy Northeast	4049	Denver County 1	2014	589	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Highline Academy Southeast	3987	Denver County 1	2004	587	Performance Plan	K - 8

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
KIPP Denver Collegiate High School	4730	Denver County 1	2009	454	Performance Plan	9 - 12
KIPP Northeast Denver Leadership Academy	4509	Denver County 1	2015	570	Improvement Plan	9 - 12
KIPP Northeast Denver Middle School	4507	Denver County 1	2011	469	Performance Plan	5 - 8
KIPP Northeast Elementary	4500	Denver County 1	2015	494	Performance Plan	PK - 4
KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy	4732	Denver County 1	2002	287	Improvement Plan	5 - 8
KIPP Sunshine Peak Elementary	4850	Denver County 1	2019	163	Improvement Plan	PK - 4
Monarch Montessori	5621	Denver County 1	2012	283	Improvement Plan	K - 5
Odyssey School of Denver	6479	Denver County 1	1998	329	Performance Plan	K - 8
Omar D Blair Charter School	6508	Denver County 1	2004	800	Improvement Plan	K - 8
RiseUp Community School	7361	Denver County 1	2015	93	AEC: Performance Plan	9-12
Rocky Mountain Prep: Berkeley	1345	Denver County 1	2019	319	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Rocky Mountain Prep: Creekside	7241	Denver County 1	2012	635	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Rocky Mountain Prep: Federal	8085	Denver County 1	2006	340	Improvement Plan	6 - 8
Rocky Mountain Prep: Green Valley Ranch	9730	Denver County 1	2012	385	Improvement Plan	6 - 8
Rocky Mountain: Noel	9735	Denver County 1	2012	273	Priority Improvement Plan	6 - 8
Rocky Mountain: Rise	7973	Denver County 1	2017	582	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Rocky Mountain: Ruby Hill	8401	Denver County 1	2014	481	Performance Plan	K - 5

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Rocky Mountain: Smart Academy	9639	Denver County 1	2012	615	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Rocky Mountain Prep: Southwest	7471	Denver County 1	215	521	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Rocky Mountain: Sunnyside	9336	Denver County 1	2010	165	Performance Plan	6 - 8
Rocky Mountain: Westwood	9389	Denver County 1	2009	396	Performance Plan	6 - 8
SOAR at Green Valley Ranch	8053	Denver County 1	2010	491	Priority Improvement Plan	K - 5
University Prep - Arapahoe St.	8945	Denver County 1	2011	297	Improvement Plan	K - 5
University Prep - Steele St.	6957	Denver County 1	2017	365	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Wyatt Academy	9739	Denver County 1	1998	246	Performance Plan	K - 5
Banning Lewis Ranch Academy	555	District 49	2006	1665	Performance Plan	K - 12
GOAL Academy	3475	District 49	2008	6988	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
Grand Peak Academy	4251	District 49	2008	602	Performance Plan	K - 8
James Irwin Elementary - Canada Drive	4407	District 49	2024	139	Performance Plan	K - 5
Liberty Tree Academy	5191	District 49	2019	506	Performance Plan	K - 12
Mountain View Academy	467	District 49	2021	364	Priority Improvement Plan	K - 8
Pikes Peak School Expeditionary Learning	6935	District 49	1999	402	Performance Plan	K - 8
Pioneer Technology and Arts Academy	1275	District 49	2022	425	Performance Plan	K - 8
Power Technical	6653	District 49	2017	393	Performance Plan	6 - 12

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Rocky Mountain Classical Academy	7463	District 49	2006	1128	Performance Plan	K - 8
Academy Charter School	11	Douglas County Re 1	1993	675	Performance Plan	PK - 8
American Academy	215	Douglas County Re 1	2005	2789	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Aspen View Academy	6019	Douglas County Re 1	2013	1014	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Ben Franklin Academy	135	Douglas County Re 1	2011	961	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Challenge to Excellence Charter School	1512	Douglas County Re 1	2022	669	Performance Plan	K - 8
DC Montessori Charter School	5997	Douglas County Re 1	1997	552	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Global Village Academy - Douglas County	3327	Douglas County Re 1	2015	518	Performance Plan	K - 7
HOPE Online Learning Academy High School	3995	Douglas County Re 1	2005	1302	AEC: Performance Plan	6 - 12
Leman Classical Academy	5225	Douglas County Re 1	2019	1544	Performance Plan	PK - 8
North Star Academy	1579	Douglas County Re 1	2006	700	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Parker Core Knowledge Charter School	1873	Douglas County Re 1	2015	825	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Parker Performing Arts	6719	Douglas County Re 1	2017	622	Performance Plan	K - 8
Platte River Charter Academy	7047	Douglas County Re 1	1997	745	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Renaissance Secondary School	7244	Douglas County Re 1	2018	432	Performance Plan	6 - 12
Skyview Academy	6365	Douglas County Re 1	2010	1355	Performance Plan	PK - 12
STEM School Highlands Ranch	5259	Douglas County Re 1	2011	1456	Performance Plan	K - 12

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
World Compass Academy	9397	Douglas County Re 1	2015	817	Performance Plan	PK - 8
The Juniper School	4384	Durango 9-R	2018	179	Performance Plan	K - 8
Eagle County Charter Academy	2340	Eagle County RE 50	1994	360	Performance Plan	K - 8
Legacy Academy	2572	Elizabeth School District	1997	604	Performance Plan	K - 8
Frontier Charter Academy	1875	Greeley 6	2001	1660	Performance Plan	K - 12
Salida del Sol Academy	8467	Greeley 6	2006	679	Performance Plan	K - 8
Union Colony Elementary School	8975	Greeley 6	1997	338	Priority Improvement Plan	K - 5
Union Colony Preparatory School	8965	Greeley 6	1997	300	Performance Plan	6 - 12
University Schools	2850	Greeley 6	1999	1802	Performance Plan	K - 12
West Ridge Academy	9611	Greeley 6	2011	325	Performance Plan	K - 8
Marble Charter School	5577	Gunnison Watershed RE1J	1995	35	Performance Plan	K - 10
Atlas Preparatory Elementary School	5898	Harrison 2	2021	293	Performance Plan	K - 4
Atlas Preparatory High School	469	Harrison 2	2009	472	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Atlas Preparatory Middle School	369	Harrison 2	2009	473	Performance Plan	5 - 8
James Irwin Charter Elementary School	4380	Harrison 2	200	511	Performance Plan	K - 5
James Irwin Charter High School	4378	Harrison 2	2000	418	Performance Plan	9 - 12
James Irwin Charter Middle School	4379	Harrison 2	2000	407	Performance Plan	6 - 8

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
The Vanguard School (Elementary)	1582	Harrison 2	2006	878	Performance Plan	K - 6
The Vanguard School (High)	9057	Harrison 2	2006	295	Performance Plan	9 - 12
The Vanguard School (Middle)	9051	Harrison 2	2006	255	Performance Plan	7 - 8
Gardner Valley School	3306	Huerfano Re-1	2021	77	Improvement Plan	PK - 8
Addenbrooke Classical Academy	1451	Jefferson County R-1	2013	171	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Addenbrooke Classical Grammar School	491	Jefferson County R-1	2014	821	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Collegiate Academy of Colorado	7701	Jefferson County R-1	1994	241	Performance Plan	PK - 12
Compass Montessori - Golden Charter School	1880	Jefferson County R-1	2000	428	Performance Plan	PK - 12
Compass Montessori - Wheat Ridge Charter School	1869	Jefferson County R-1	1998	287	Performance Plan	PK - 6
Doral Academy of Colorado	2189	Jefferson County R-1	2017	159	Insufficient State Data	K - 8
Excel Academy Charter School	2799	Jefferson County R-1	1995	441	Performance Plan	K - 8
Jefferson Academy	4404	Jefferson County R-1	1994	1118	Not Tested	K - 12
Jefferson Academy Coal Creek Canyon	1730	Jefferson County R-1	2024	99	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Jefferson Academy Elementary	4402	Jefferson County R-1	1994	773	Performance Plan	PK - 6
Jefferson Academy High School	4410	Jefferson County R-1	1994	691	Performance Plan	7 - 12
Lincoln Charter Academy	5145	Jefferson County R-1	1997	804	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Montessori Peaks Charter Academy	5994	Jefferson County R-1	1997	486	Performance Plan	PK - 8

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Mountain Phoenix Community School	6139	Jefferson County R-1	2011	669	Performance Plan	PK - 8
New America School	6237	Jefferson County R-1	2006	62	AEC: Performance Plan	9 - 12
Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen	7462	Jefferson County R-1	2001	340	Performance Plan	K - 8
Rocky Mountain Deaf School	5415	Jefferson County R-1	1997	86	AEC: Performance Plan	PK - 12
Two Roads Charter School	8793	Jefferson County R-1	2012	606	Performance Plan	PK - 12
Woodrow Wilson Charter Academy	9427	Jefferson County R-1	2000	960	Performance Plan	PK - 8
CIVICA Colorado	6226	Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2022	131	Performance Plan	6 - 12
Knowledge Quest Academy	4785	Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2002	382	Performance Plan	K - 8
Alta Vista Charter School	200	Lamar Re-2	1998	132	Performance Plan	K - 6
Monument Charter Academy	2295	Lewis-Palmer 38	1996	692	Performance Plan	PK - 5
Monument Charter Academy Secondary School	5093	Lewis-Palmer 38	1996	451	Performance Plan	6 - 12
Littleton Academy	5229	Littleton 6	1996	459	Performance Plan	K - 8
Littleton Prep Charter School	5233	Littleton 6	1998	501	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Mesa Valley Enrichment Program	5833	Mesa County Valley 51	2023	167	Not Tested	K - 6
Independence Academy	2128	Mesa County Valley 51	2004	549	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Juniper Ridge Community School	4439	Mesa County Valley 51	2013	403	Performance Plan	K - 8
Mesa Valley Community School	5828	Mesa County Valley 51	2014	208	Performance Plan	6 - 12

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Crestone Charter School	2018	Moffat 2	1995	101	Performance Plan	K - 12
Children's Kiva Montessori School	2036	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	2014	138	Performance Plan	K - 8
Pleasant View Charter School	7082	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	2023	43	Performance Plan	K - 6
Southwest Open Charter School	8133	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	1999	105	AEC: Performance Plan	9-12
Vista Charter School	9149	Montrose County RE-1J	2004	219	AEC: Improvement Plan	9 - 12
Guffey Charter School	3681	Park County RE-2	1996	16	Insufficient State Data	PK - 8
Lake George Charter School	4908	Park County RE-2	1999	175	Insufficient State Data	PK - 12
Compass Community Collaborative School	1917	Poudre R-1	2019	155	Performance Plan	6 - 12
Fort Collins Montessori School	3242	Poudre R-1	2014	293	Performance Plan	PK - 6
Liberty Common Charter School	5120	Poudre R-1	1997	1607	Performance Plan	K - 12
Mountain Sage Community School	5917	Poudre R-1	2013	276	Performance Plan	K - 8
Ridgeview Classical Schools	146	Poudre R-1	2001	733	Performance Plan	K - 12
Pueblo Charter School for the Arts & Sciences	7209	Pueblo City 60	1994	371	Priority Improvement Plan	K - 8
Pueblo School for Arts & Sciences at Fulton Heights	6775	Pueblo City 60	2018	201	Priority Improvement Plan	K - 8
Pueblo Classical Academy	7533	Pueblo County 70	2022	260	Improvement Plan	K - 12
Swallows Charter Academy	8420	Pueblo County 70	1996	712	Performance Plan	K - 8
Swallows Charter Academy High School	7879	Pueblo County 70	1996	188	Performance Plan	9 - 12

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
The Connect Charter School	8810	Pueblo County 70	1993	243	Performance Plan	6 - 8
Villa Bella Expeditionary Middle School	5903	Pueblo County 70	2022	150	Performance Plan	6 - 8
Villa Bella Expeditionary School	9084	Pueblo County 70	2020	303	Improvement Plan	K - 5
Carbondale Community Charter School	429	Roaring Fork RE-1	1995	144	Performance Plan	K - 8
Two Rivers Community School	8821	Roaring Fork RE-1	8821	401	Performance Plan	K - 8
Belle Creek Charter School	700	School District 27J	2003	522	Performance Plan	K - 8
Bromley East Charter School	1052	School District 27J	2001	1206	Improvement Plan	PK - 8
Capstone Academy	1282	School District 27J	2025	460	New School	PK - 6
Eagle Ridge Academy	2399	School District 27J	2010	619	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Foundations Academy	2945	School District 27J	2010	770	Performance Plan	K - 8
Landmark Academy at Reunion	4950	School District 27J	2007	756	Performance Plan	K - 8
The STEAD School	6400	School District 27J	2022	404	Performance Plan	9 - 12
Aspen Ridge Preparatory School	71	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2011	621	Performance Plan	K - 8
Carbon Valley Academy	1284	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2005	230	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Firestone Charter Academy	4333	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2009	573	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Flagstaff Charter Academy	2964	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2005	730	Performance Plan	PK - 8
St. Vrain Community Montessori School	7565	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2009	265	Insufficient State Data	PK - 8

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2025-26 Enrollment	2025 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Twin Peaks Charter Academy	8927	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	1997	912	Performance Plan	K - 12
North Routt Community Charter School	6363	Steamboat Springs RE-2	2001	93	Performance Plan	PK - 8
Loveland Classical School	5235	Thompson R2-J	2011	1018	Performance Plan	K - 12
New Vision Charter School	6220	Thompson R2-J	2006	997	Performance Plan	K - 8
Cardinal Community Academy Charter School	1299	Weld County School District RE-3J	2000	179	Performance Plan	K - 8
American Legacy Academy	163	Weld RE-4	2023	447	Performance Plan	K - 8
Windsor Charter Academy Early College High School	9393	Weld RE-4	2001	435	Performance Plan	9-12
Windsor Charter Academy Elementary School	9665	Weld RE-4	2001	779	Performance Plan	K - 5
Windsor Charter Academy Middle School	9563	Weld RE-4	2001	406	Performance Plan	6 - 8
James Madison Charter Academy School	5033	Widefield 3	2014	76	Improvement Plan	K - 8
Merit Academy	8257	Woodland Park Re-2	2022	612	Performance Plan	PK - 12