



**COLORADO LEAGUE of
CHARTER SCHOOLS**
(focus on achievement)

Focus on the Facts

Colorado Charter School Facts

Charter schools are tuition-free, public schools that have the flexibility to be more innovative and are held accountable for student achievement. Below are more facts about Colorado's charter schools.

- Charter schools are public schools.
- Charter schools do not charge tuition.
- Charter schools use non-discriminatory enrollment practices.
- There are no "test-in" requirements to attend charter schools.
- Currently, nearly 66,000 students attend the 160 charter schools in Colorado. This amounts to 7.6% of total K-12 public school enrollment in the state.
- Charter school students must take the CSAP.
- Charter schools are subject to the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.
- Charter school teachers must be "highly qualified" under NCLB.
- Charter schools serve a broad range of diverse students, including low-income, racial and ethnic minorities, and students with disabilities or other special needs.
- Colorado charter schools continue to attract a variety of students and are located in diverse geographical areas across the state.
- Charter school programs and academic designs are as diverse as the students they enroll. Some charters implement longer school days, while others implement curricula specifically designed for at-risk students, gifted children, pregnant/parenting teens, juvenile offenders, and more.

Demographics

Statewide data regarding the 62,000+ students enrolled in charter schools in 2008, demonstrates diversity comparable to statewide data on traditional public schools.

Currently:

- 38% of Colorado charter school students are minorities compared to 39% of the state's K-12 public school students.
- Of the 62,000+ students enrolled in charter schools:
 - 62% are white (not Hispanic)
 - 25% are Hispanic
 - 8% are Black (not Hispanic)
 - 4% are Asian or Pacific Islander
 - 1% are American Indian or Alaskan Native



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Academic Performance

Evidence of the strong academic performance of charter schools is provided by both federal and state measures of student achievement:

- In 2008, 74% of Colorado charter schools had strong enough academic performance to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), while 59% of non-charters made AYP.
- Overall, 55% of charters were rated excellent or high by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) in 2008, while 43% of non-charter public schools received that rating. The evidence is even more compelling for middle schools-- 63% of charters were rated excellent or high compared to 45% of non-charters.

Charter School Funding

The academic success achieved by charter schools is especially impressive in light of the financial challenges they face:

- On average, charter schools in Colorado spend \$480 per student from designated per-pupil operating revenue on facilities costs.
- School districts finance their facilities using property tax, mill levies, and taxpayer-backed bonds. Charter schools generally do not receive a proportionate share of these monies. As a result, money often comes out of the classroom to pay for buildings.

For more information, contact the Colorado League of Charter Schools at 303-989-5356, or visit www.coloradoleague.org.