



# State of Charter Schools Report 2019-2023

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

By:  
**Bill Kottenstette, Colorado Department of Education**  
**Janyse Skalla, Colorado Department of Education**

May 2024

---

School Quality and Support Division, Schools of Choice Unit, Charter Schools Program  
201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203  
303-866-6276  
[SOC@cde.state.co.us](mailto:SOC@cde.state.co.us)



## Table of Contents

Executive Summary	Page 4
<b>Highlights and Notable Trends</b>	
<b>Recommendations for Future Actions</b>	
Introduction	Page 7
<b>Purpose</b>	
<b>Methodology</b>	
Part One: Colorado Charter School Context and History	Page 8
<b>History</b>	
<b>Charter Schools and Charter Enrollment</b>	
<b>Charter Authorizers</b>	
Part Two: Characteristics of Colorado Charter Schools	Page 17
<b>Education Model</b>	
<b>Geographic Location</b>	
<b>Governance Type</b>	
<b>Size</b>	
<b>Grade Level Configuration</b>	
Part Three: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Authorizers	Page 24
<b>Authorizing Districts</b>	
<b>Charter School Application Processes</b>	
Charter Appeals	
Charter Renewals	
Annual Evaluations	
<b>Charter School and Authorizer Partnerships</b>	
<b>The Colorado Charter School Institute</b>	
Exclusive Chartering Authority	
<b>Authorizing Best Practices</b>	
Part Four: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Students	Page 30
<b>Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch</b>	
<b>Students of Color</b>	
<b>Multilingual Learners</b>	
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	
<b>Student Mobility</b>	
<b>Attendance</b>	



---

Part Five: Colorado Charter School Academic Performance

Page 36

---

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

**CMAS Performance**

- Levels and Cut Scores
- English Language and Arts and Math Performance -Overall and by Grade and Year
- Participation
- CMAS English Language and Arts Performance- Disaggregated Results
- CMAS Math Performance- Disaggregated Results

**PSAT and SAT Performance**

- Levels and Cut Scores
- Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Performance- Overall and by Grade and Year
- Math Performance-Overall and by Grade and Year
- Participation
- Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Performance- Disaggregated Results
- Math Performance- Disaggregated Results

**School Performance Frameworks**

---

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

Page 61

---

**Graduation Rate**

**Matriculation Rate**

---

Part Seven: Human Resources

Page 64

---

**Teacher Salaries**

**Teaching Experience**

**Student-Teacher Ratio**

**Teacher Licensure and In Field/Out of Field Status**

**Teacher Diversity**

---

Part Eight: Colorado State Actions Concerning Charter Schools

Page 69

---

**Legislative Action**

- Legislation Related to Charter School Finance
- Other Important Legislation
- Other Important State Initiatives

**Waivers from State Statute**

- Automatic Waivers
- Non-Automatic Waivers
- Prohibited Waivers

**Colorado Department of Education Charter School Support and Research**

**Recommendations for Future Actions**

---

Appendix A: 2022-23 List of Colorado Charter Schools

Page 75



## Executive Summary

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

This report presents data and descriptive information from the 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 school years, as available, as an update to the 2019 report. This report will be the first of what will now become an annual report and will present information and analysis in the following areas:

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

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

### Highlights and Notable Trends

- Colorado has seen a gradual increase in the number of operating charter schools year after year; however, the number of schools appears to be plateauing. This results from a combination of fewer new charter schools opening each year along with more charter schools closing or consolidating.
- Despite the slowing down of new charter school openings, charter schools have experienced slow but steady student enrollment growth year-over-year. This occurred even in 2020-21, the year of notable P-12 enrollment decline from the COVID-19 pandemic, when other Colorado public schools saw a large decrease in student enrollment.
- Demographically, students in charter schools tend to be similar to the populations in non-charter public schools. Some charter schools show greater diversity when compared to non-charter schools, and some show less diversity. Overall, differences between charters and non-charters tend to be small, with one notable exception: the proportion of students with disabilities has remained lower in charter schools than it has in other public schools. This enrollment gap has persisted at approximately 4.8 percentage points since 2016-17 despite efforts to close it. A gap of approximately 5 percentage points exists for FRL enrollment as well; however, this is a narrower gap relative to the overall enrollment and is also impacted by differences in how FRL data is collected.
- Charter schools and non-charter schools both saw a significant decline in assessment participation in the first assessment year following the pandemic. Nevertheless, participation rates are now approaching pre-pandemic levels. In the pre-pandemic years, charter schools exhibited lower participation rates in CMAS compared to non-



charter schools. However, the current landscape has seen a reversal, with charter schools now surpassing non-charter schools in CMAS participation rates. Conversely, when it comes to the PSAT/EBRW, non-charter schools outpace charter schools in participation rates. Notably, participation in PSAT/SAT is declining in both charter and non-charter schools.

- While recognizing the participation gaps that exist across all schools, the academic achievement results available demonstrate that charter schools overall show slightly higher performance at most grade levels on both English Language Arts (ELA)/Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and Math. In 2022-23, the average Mean Scale Scores of charter school students on the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) were higher than those of non-charter school students at every grade level on both English Language Arts (ELA) and Math assessments in grades 3 through 8. This has generally been true in previous years as well.
- While recognizing the same participation challenges for all schools in the state as noted above, charter schools also saw higher average performance overall on PSAT both for Math and Evidence-based Reading and Writing (EBRW) for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades in 2022-23. For 11<sup>th</sup> grade SAT results, charter schools' average scores were slightly lower than those of non-charters. This was already the case in 2021-22, whereas 11<sup>th</sup> graders also performed slightly better at charter schools than at non-charters in 2018-19). When disaggregating by AEC status, results show that charter schools have higher achievement scores compared to non-charter schools; however, charter AECs have lower overall achievement scores compared to non-charter AECs.
- When comparing achievement based on student demographic population, it is to be noted that charter schools demonstrate higher average CMAS ELA and Math scores for all groups except for students not eligible for Free or Reduced-price Lunch (FRL). In addition, achievement gaps between groups on the CMAS are narrower in charter schools with the exception of ELA scores, for students with disabilities.
- Average SAT/PSAT scores were higher in charter schools for all disaggregated demographic groups with the exception of students without an Individualized Education Plan in the area of EBRW and math, as well as for non-FRL students in the area of math. Achievement gaps were also narrower in all categories for charter schools – except in EBRW for students of color.
- In the 2021-22 school year, charter schools lagged non-charter schools in terms of overall graduation rates; however, we see variations in these differences when controlling for whether a school is an Alternative Education Campus (AEC). When controlling for AEC status, charter AECs have lower graduation rates than non-charter AECs and charter high schools that are not AECs have comparable graduation rates to non-charter high schools that are not AECs.
- Average salaries for charter school teachers are noticeably lower than average salaries for non-charter public school teachers - approximately \$17,000 less in school year 2022-23. This gap has also grown in recent years.

### Recommendations for Future Actions

- As highlighted in this report, authorizers play a pivotal role in establishing conditions for a high-quality charter school sector within Colorado. In this report, the Department instituted a new collection to better understand authorizer practices and applicable findings from charter reviews. Department staff will continue to review this information, refine the collection, and utilize the information to disseminate examples of strong established practices and explore more fully the relationship between strong practices and effective, school-level outcomes.
- With state collections in place for school-level financial transparency, the Department sees potential for analyzing charter school financial performance and health through these tools. Such analysis may include analysis of charter reserves relative to district averages, grant expenditure levels, and rates of spending on facilities relative to per pupil revenues.



- The department will continue to monitor charter school data and outcomes post-pandemic to identify possible trends of note. This may include enrollment and/or performance trends and may include financial indicators as well. When notable trends are identified, particularly around narrowing achievement gaps, they should be explored for possible case studies of evolving practices.
- With recent policy revisions clarifying access rights for students with disabilities to school choice, the department will continue to monitor enrollment outcomes. Other strategies that may be worth considering to ensure equal access include:
  - Ensure that the school, authorizing unit, and public stakeholders understand the requirements for ensuring access to schools of choice;
  - Invest in capacity building activities to ensure that all schools have the knowledge, skills, and resources to provide high quality education for all students; and
  - Engage in parent education and provide the tools necessary for parents to make well informed decisions and understand the rights that they have for schools of choice.



---

## 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 frequency has been increased and will now be annual. As part of this report, the statute specifies that charter performance should also consider the performance of charter school students relative to the performance of disaggregated student groups.

This report includes data and information from 2019, when the last report was written, through the 2022-23 school year. Within this report are included updates for enrollment and demographic data for school years 2019-20 through 2022-23 and for academic performance data for school years 2018-19 through 2022-23. Due to the disruptions in assessment administration caused by the pandemic, the academic data available for some of these years is limited. State tests were not administered in the 2019-20 school year and were given only in limited grades and subjects in the 2020-21<sup>1</sup> school year.

### Methodology

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

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

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

---

<sup>1</sup> More information is available [here](#).



---

## Part One: Colorado Charter School Context and History

---

### History

In 1993, Colorado established itself as the third state in the United States to enact a charter school law. As of the 2022-2023 school year, Colorado has three decades of experience and 269 charter schools serving 15.6% of public school students in the state. Charter schools have opened in many parts of the state – from the Eastern Plains to the Front Range, across many mountain communities, along the Western Slope, and in southern Colorado. In the 2021-22 school year, Kwiayagat Community Academy opened as Colorado’s first tribal charter school.

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

Terms such as “growing” and “dynamic” have historically characterized the charter school sector in Colorado, and this description remains true today. Although we anticipate an atypical decline in schools and enrollment in 2023-24 due to a school model shift in the Byers School District that took place at the start of the school year, aside from this isolated scenario, charter schools have consistently experienced upward trends in student enrollment and the overall number of charter schools year after year.

### Charter Schools and Charter Enrollment

The following section outlines data on the number and type of charter schools in Colorado over the past two decades and illustrates the growth and demand of charter schools.

Tables 1 and 2, along with Figure 1, show the number of charter schools operating in Colorado over the years. From these graphics, one can see consistent growth in the number of schools over time, but also a slowing in rates in recent years. The expansion in the number of charter schools has also been accompanied by a steady increase in the number of Colorado students enrolling in charter schools. Figure 3 illustrates the enrollment comparisons for charter and non-charter schools over time.

In 2022-23, 269 charter schools were in operation across the state, serving 137,722 students spanning Pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This enrollment represented 15.6% of students throughout Colorado, spread between charter schools authorized by the Colorado Charter School Institute and charter schools authorized by local school districts. To put this in perspective, if all these charter schools were consolidated into a single district, it would be the largest district in the state – comparable in size to both the second and third largest districts combined (Jefferson County and Douglas County School Districts).





**TABLE 1: The Number of Charter Schools Operating in Colorado by School Year<sup>2</sup>**

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.

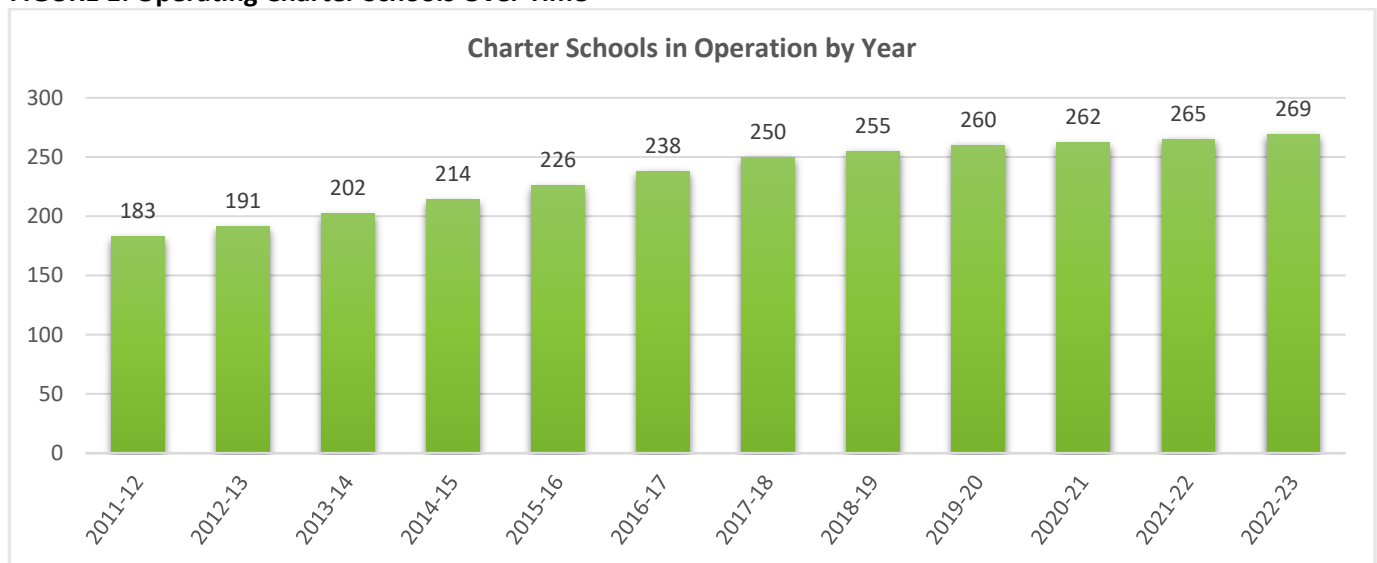
**TABLE 2: Charter School Openings and Closures by Year**

2022-23 School Openings and Closures			
Opened	Aurora Science & Tech High School	Closed	Colorado Early College Fort Collins
	Colorado Early Colleges Online Campus		Reach Charter School
	Merit Academy		Ridge View Academy Charter School
	Prospect Academy		
	Pueblo Classical Academy		
	Vill Bella Expeditionary Middle School		
	Vision Charter Academy K-8 <sup>3</sup>		
2021-22 School Openings and Closures			
Opened	CIVICA Colorado	Closed	DSST: Henry Middle School
	DSST: Elevate Northeast High School		Launch High School
	French American School of Denver		The Cube
	Kwiyagat Community Academy		
	Pioneer Technology and Arts Academy		
	The STEAD School		
2020-21 School Openings and Closures			
Opened	American Indian Academy of Denver	Closed	Aurora Community School
	Ascent Classical Academy Northern Colorado		Early College of Denver
	Atlas Preparatory Elementary School		Elevate Academy Elementary School
	Early Learning Center at New Legacy Charter School <sup>4</sup>		HOPE Online Learning Academy Elementary
	Gardner Valley School		STRIVE Prep - Excel
	Monument Charter Academy Secondary School		The Boys School of Denver
	Mountain View Academy		
	Union Colony Elementary School <sup>5</sup>		

<sup>3</sup> In School Year 2022-23, Vision Charter Academy, historically operating as a single K-12 school, converted its secondary grades to a multi-district online school, which necessitated the creation of a second school code. The Academy continues to serve students K-12 but now with two school codes.

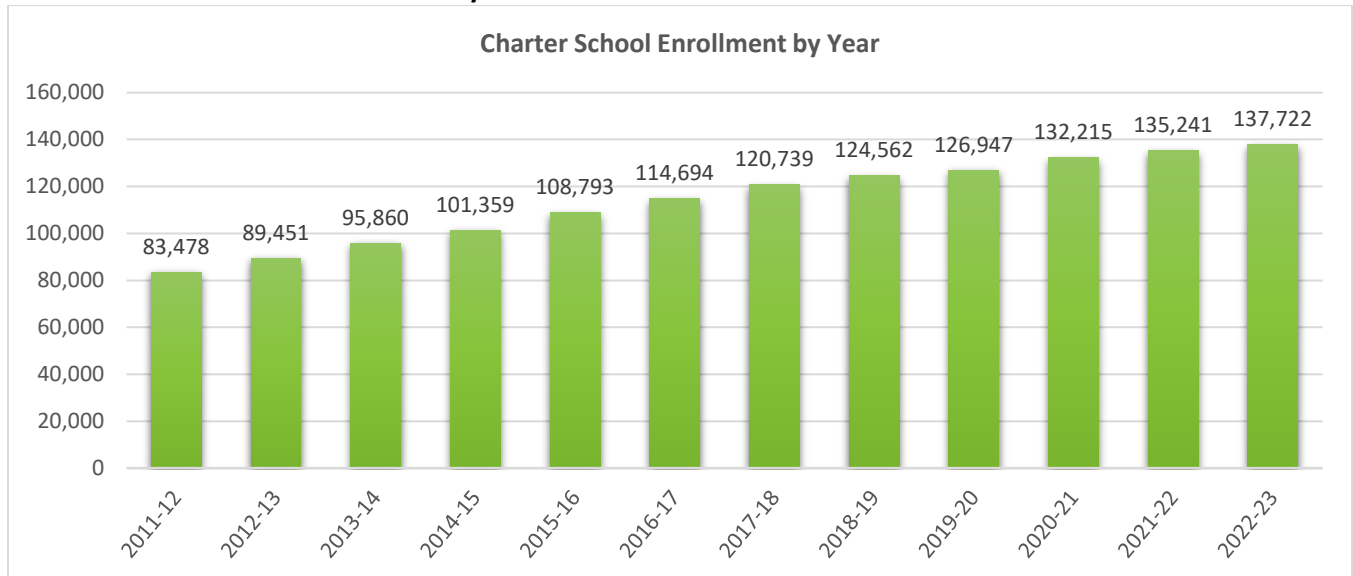
<sup>4</sup> New Legacy Charter School is unique among schools in that it employs a two-generational (2Gen) approach to education, providing support to both parenting teenagers and their young children. As such, there was an administrative change related to the coding of the ECE center and whether to assign a charter flag to the center. In school year 2019-20, the charter flag was removed and in school year 2020-21, the charter flag was returned. Although closures and openings are shown, the program has operated continuously since its original founding.

2019-20 School Openings and Closures			
Opened	Aurora Community School	Closed	Early Learning Center at New Legacy Charter School <sup>4</sup>
	Aurora Science & Tech Middle School		Frontier Charter Academy
	Axis International Academy		Indian Peaks Charter Academy
	Colorado Early Colleges Windsor		Roots Elementary
	Coperni 3		Union Colony Elementary <sup>5</sup>
	Colorado Early Colleges Fort Collins West		
	Empower Community High School		
	The Cube		
	Villa Bella Expeditionary School		
	Windsor Charter Academy Middle School		

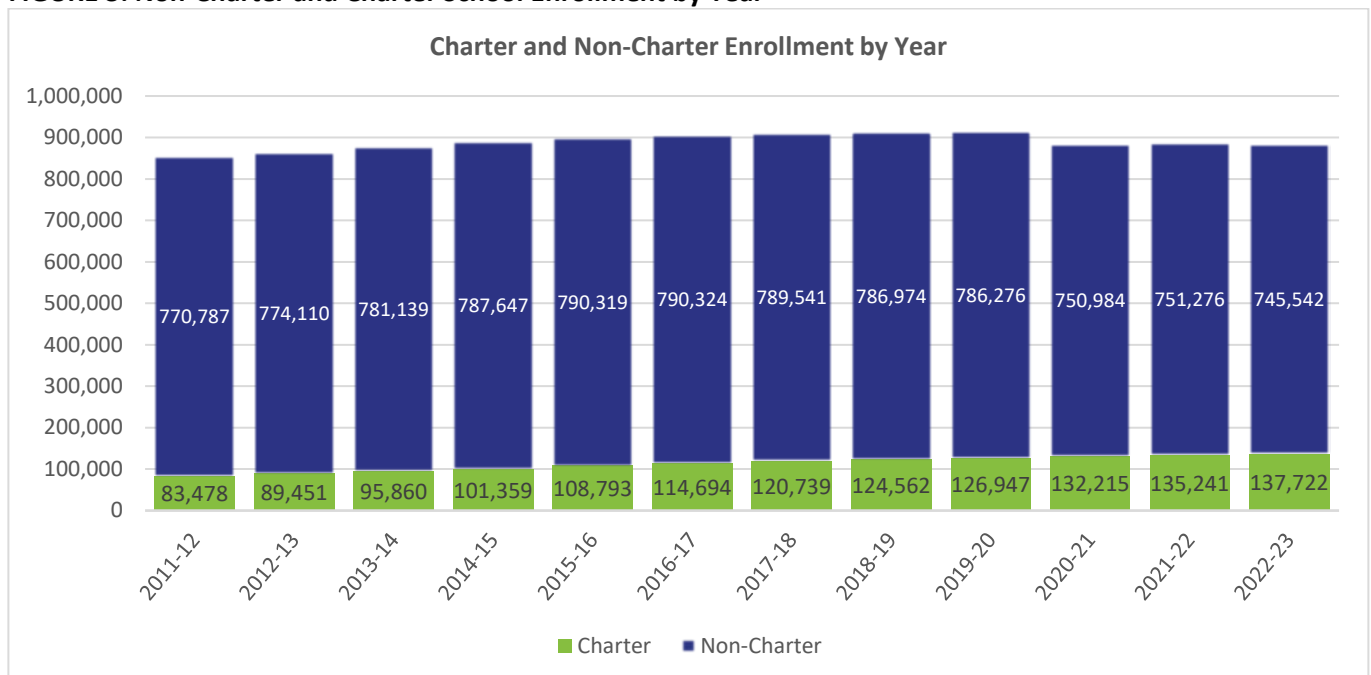
**FIGURE 1: Operating Charter Schools Over Time**


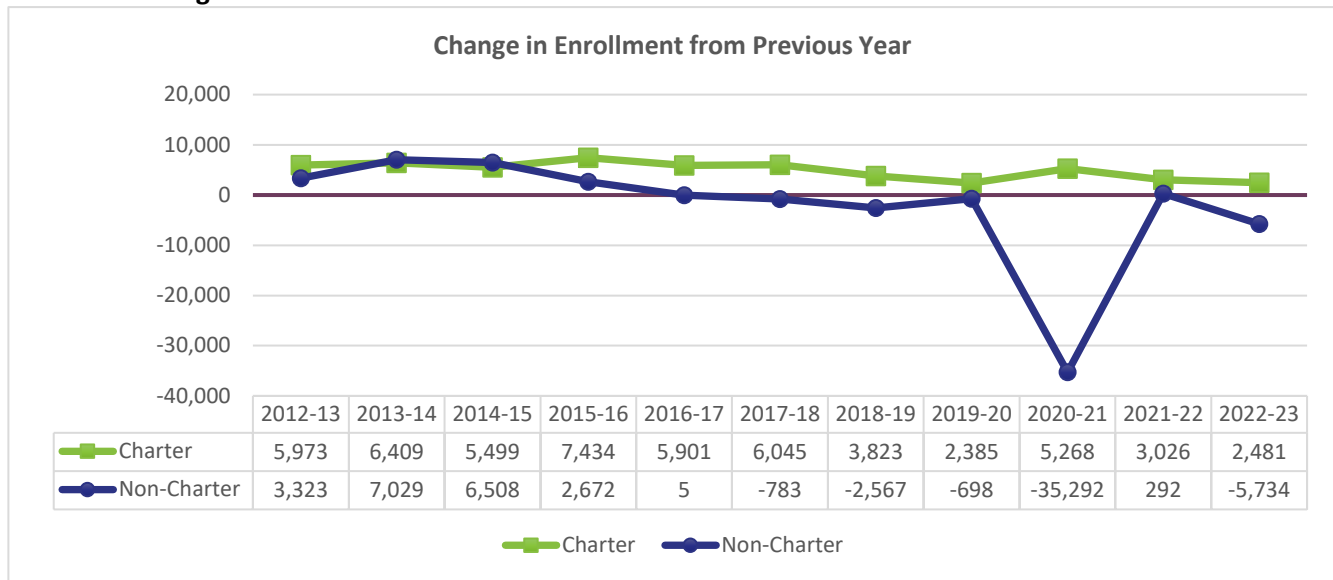
<sup>5</sup> In school year 2018-19 and earlier, Union Colony operated under two separate school codes (8975 for grades K-5 and 8965 for grades 6-12). In school year 2019-20, Union Colony asked to consolidate their schools under a single K-12 school. Thus, the school's secondary code (8965) carried over. In school year 2020-21, Union Colony sought again to distinguish between the K-5 and 6-12 environments and the two school codes were restored. Throughout this time, Union Colony continued operations for all K-12 grades.

**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**


The speed of growth in charter school enrollment, as illustrated in Figure 4, has slowed since 2011-12, but enrollment has continued to stay positive. The speed of non-charter growth began to slow in 2014-15 and enrollment in non-charters began a numeric decline in 2017-18. Non-charter schools have experienced declines every year since then, except for a slight uptick in 2021-22. Overall, the state has seen enrollment increases over the twelve-year period shown in Figure 4 except for school years 2020-21 and 2022-23.

### Charter Authorizers

When the Charter Schools Act was initially enacted in 1993 in Colorado, the exclusive authority for authorizing charter schools rested with school districts. Thus, all charter schools were authorized by their geographic district for many years. However, in 2004, the legislature created the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) to “provide an alternative mode of authorizing charter schools as a means to assist school districts in utilizing best practices for chartering schools and to approve and oversee charter schools in school districts not desiring to do so themselves.”<sup>6</sup> As part of this legislative revision, school districts were allowed to request an “Exclusive Chartering Authority” status, which would mean that any charter school seeking to operate a school in their district would first apply to the school district for consideration. Exclusive Chartering Authority is a status granted to school districts when the school district commits to providing fair and equitable treatment to its charter schools. In Colorado, most school districts have sought Exclusive Chartering Authority status, and most have been granted and retain this status. Additional details on the characteristics of Colorado charter school authorizers are found in Part Three of this report.

In 2022-23, forty-five (45) school districts in Colorado authorized charter schools along with the sole state authorizer, the Charter School Institute (CSI). Of these authorizers, 17 are responsible for only a single charter school, while seven authorizers oversee two charter schools. Table 3 shows charter school counts and enrollment information for these authorizers. Table 4 shows charter enrollment information for the remaining 22 authorizers that oversee three or more charter schools.

<sup>6</sup> §22-30.5-501(2)(b), C.R.S.



**TABLE 3: Student Enrollment for Authorizers with One or Two Charter Schools in 2022-23**

Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools	Charter Enrollment Count	District Enrollment Count	Charter Enrollment Percent
Archuleta County 50 Jt	1	125	1,678	7%
Aspen 1	1	137	1,572	9%
Canon City RE-1	1	253	3,308	8%
Clear Creek RE-1	1	94	680	14%
Delta County 50(J)	2	371	4,699	8%
Durango 9-R	1	162	5,595	3%
Eagle County RE 50	1	361	6,623	5%
Elizabeth School District	1	510	2,474	21%
Gunnison Watershed RE1J	1	55	2,061	3%
Huerfano Re-1	1	76	491	15%
Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2	548	3,869	14%
Lamar Re-2	1	131	1,522	9%
Lewis-Palmer 38	2	1,190	6,648	18%
Littleton 6	2	973	13,450	7%
Moffat 2	1	82	179	46%
Montrose County RE-1J	1	161	6,035	3%
Park County RE-2	2	162	595	27%
Roaring Fork RE-1	2	527	5,772	9%
Steamboat Springs RE-2	1	88	2,665	3%
Thompson R2-J	2	1,987	15,212	13%
Weld County School District RE-3J	1	176	2,785	6%
West End RE-2	1	18	260	7%
Widefield 3	1	103	9,612	1%
Woodland Park Re-2	1	331	2,122	16%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8,621</b>	<b>99,907</b>	<b>9%</b>

Of districts authorizing one or two charter schools, Moffat 2 has the highest percentage of students in charter schools, at 46%.

Of authorizers overseeing 3 or more charters schools, Denver Public Schools (Denver County 1) authorizes the most charter schools, with 56 schools under its purview, followed closely behind by CSI with 43 schools. Although Denver authorizes the most charter schools, Byers 32J is the school district with the highest percentage of students enrolled in district-authorized charter schools, at 91%.



**TABLE 4: Student Enrollment for Authorizers with Three or More Charter Schools in 2022-23**

Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools	Charter Enrollment Count	District Enrollment Count	Charter Enrollment Percent
Academy 20	5	4,255	26,607	16%
Adams 12 Five Star	4	3,784	35,747	11%
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	12	6,505	39,051	17%
Boulder Valley Re 2	5	2,378	28,487	8%
Byers 32J	8	5,149	5,671	91%
Charter School Institute	43	22,003	22,003	100%
Cherry Creek 5	3	1,228	52,948	2%
Colorado Springs 11	6	1,264	22,729	6%
Denver County 1	56	20,110	87,864	23%
District 49	9	11,309	25,616	44%
Douglas County Re 1	18	15,787	62,872	25%
Greeley 6	6	5,073	22,373	23%
Harrison 2	9	4,224	12,606	34%
Jefferson County R-1	19	9,215	77,078	12%
Mesa County Valley 51	3	1,215	20,851	6%
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	3	350	2,461	14%
Poudre R-1	5	2,816	30,105	9%
Pueblo City 60	3	1,819	15,007	12%
Pueblo County 70	6	1,685	10,629	16%
School District 27J	6	4,112	22,687	18%
St. Vrain Valley RE1J	6	3,284	32,639	10%
Weld RE-4	3	1,536	8,228	19%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>129,101</b>	<b>664,389</b>	<b>19%</b>

For districts authorizing 3 or more charter schools, most have seen charter enrollment increase since the last report. Table 5 shows the increase in charter school enrollment and number of charter schools between 2018-19 and 2022-23 for the authorizers that have three or more charter schools in 2022-23.



**TABLE 5: Change in Enrollment for Authorizers with Three or More Charter Schools from 2018-19 to 2022-23**

Authorizer	2018-19 Charter Schools	2018-19 Charter Enrollment	2022-23 Charter Schools	2022-23 Charter Enrollment	Change in Enrollment
Academy 20	5	4,242	5	4,255	13
Adams 12 Five Star Schools	4	3,616	4	3,784	168
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	9	5,265	12	6,505	1,240
Boulder Valley RE-2	5	2,359	5	2,378	19
Byers 32J	9	2,369	8	5,149	2,780
Charter School Institute	40	18,268	43	22,003	3,735
Cherry Creek	2	889	3	1,228	339
Colorado Springs 11	6	1,773	6	1,264	-509
Denver County 1	60	20,620	56	20,110	-510
District 49	7	8,866	9	11,309	2,443
Douglas County RE-1	20	16,207	18	15,787	-420
Greeley 6	6	5,416	6	5,073	-343
Harrison 2	5	2,345	9	4,224	1,879
Jefferson County R-1	19	9,052	19	9,215	163
Mesa County Valley 51	3	1,133	3	1,215	82
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	3	313	3	350	37
Poudre R-1	5	2,443	5	2,816	373
Pueblo City 60	3	1,546	3	1,819	273
Pueblo County 70	3	937	6	1,685	748
School District 27J	5	3,951	6	4,112	161
St. Vrain Valley RE 1J	6	3,194	6	3,284	90
Weld RE-4	2	1,259	3	1,536	277





## 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 data showcased provides an overview of charter school programs during the 2022-23 school year.

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

### Education Model

An education model is recognized as a guiding educational philosophy for a school that helps build consistency and coherence for the programs offered at the school. Typically, education models are based on beliefs about how children learn and the role of schools in supporting student learning.

**TABLE 6: Charter School Program Models**

<b>Educational Model</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>
Alternative Education	13
Arts Integration	8
Career and Technical Education	3
Classical	31
College Prep	26
Community School	9
Core Knowledge	58
Dual Language/Language Immersion	8
Early College	12
Expeditionary	12
Experiential	3
Gifted and Talented	2
Health and Wellness	2
Montessori	14
Online	13
Other (Gifted/Academic Challenged, Military)	3
Personalized Learning	18
Project Based	13
STEAM/STEM	15
Traditional	6
Waldorf	4

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

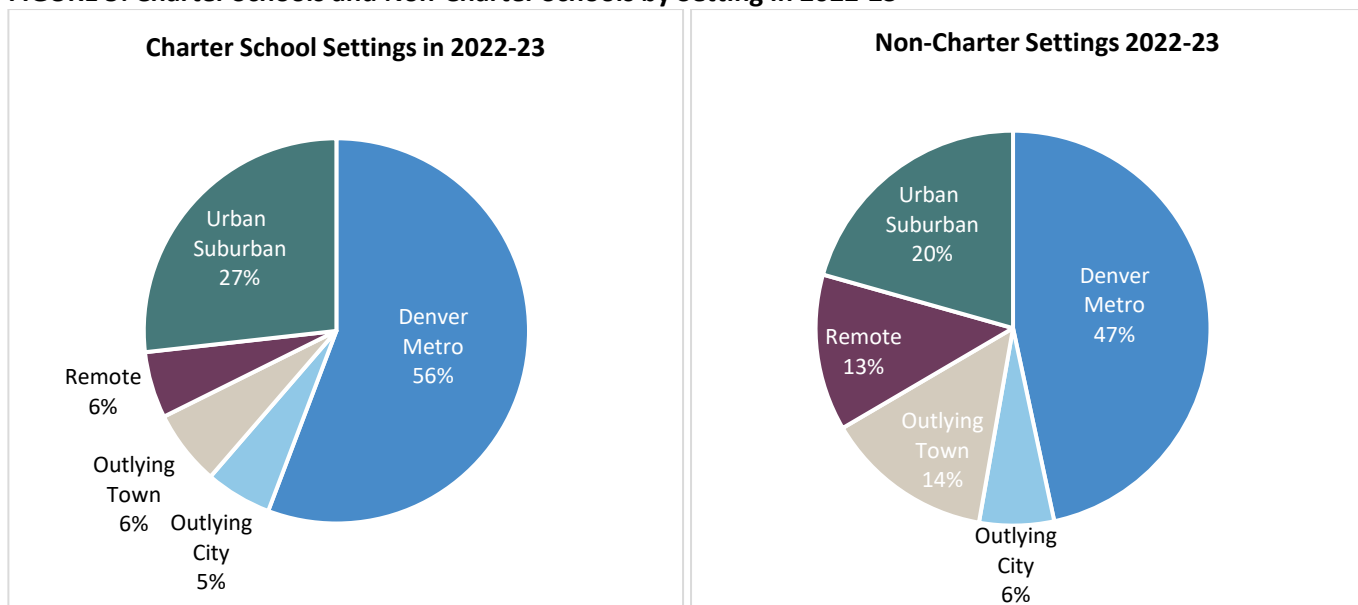
Understanding the wide range of educational models found in Colorado is essential for gaining insights into the state's charter schools. It is also helpful in appreciating the diverse viewpoints of teachers, parents, and students involved in the charter school community. Table 6 offers a broad summary of the educational models seen within Colorado charter schools as reported by the authorizer and/or school website. It is worth noting that there is no fixed method for categorizing educational models, and schools may adjust model designs over time.

### Geographic Location

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

Figure 5 displays the distribution of charter schools and charter enrollment across locations in Colorado for the 2022-23 school year. Over half of charter schools in the state are in the Denver Metro region, with the next highest concentration found in urban-suburban regions. Both settings also have a higher relative share of charter schools than non-charter schools. These trends are generally consistent with prior years, although there has been a slight increase in the proportion located in Denver Metro, offset by a decline in those located in urban-suburban areas.

**FIGURE 5: Charter Schools and Non-Charter Schools by Setting in 2022-23**





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

### Governance Type

In accordance with state law, all charter schools in Colorado are public schools and the holder of a charter contract is required to be a nonprofit organization 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 may 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 is unique in that network law allows a single entity, typically represented by a single non-profit board, to directly manage multiple schools under a single network contract. In Colorado, many of the historical CMOs now operate under network contracts, although it is important to note that this transition is not obligatory.
- **Collaborative** - In Colorado statute, this term pertains to the establishment of an organization that combines resources from multiple charter schools. This legal structure allows for the creation of shared services, such as the operation of a School Food Authority (SFA), among other possibilities. A comparable legal structure for district collaboration would be a BOCES. In limited instances, like a BOCES, a charter collaborative can be used to operate one or more schools.
- **External Management Organization (EMO)** - This widely used national term often refers to a for-profit organization that provides varying levels of central management support to schools. EMOs are typically separate legal entities and may provide support for a group of schools that may or may not have similar educational models. Since charter schools in Colorado must be governed by a non-profit board of directors, a for-profit EMO is not a governance type, but would instead be treated as an Education Service Provider (ESP) where the school’s non-profit board of directors would retain the authority to retain or terminate services with the EMO as they see fit.
- **Other, less formal structures** - It is not uncommon for an organization to maintain charter contracts for two or more schools (or school codes) without formally designating itself as a CMO or network. This scenario often pertains to a high performing single site charter school that establishes a second campus, expands grade levels through a new contract or authorization, or replicates another school.

Table 7 provides information regarding organizations in Colorado that manage one or more school codes (please note that a single charter contract may have multiple school codes, such as one for elementary grades, one for



middle grades, and one for high school grades). The table includes an identifier to distinguish between national management organizations and local, Colorado-based organizations. In limited circumstances, some organizations have affiliations with larger national entities but operate in Colorado with a significant degree of local autonomy. These organizations are described in the table as “Local/National Management”.

**TABLE 7: Organizations with Management Responsibilities in 2022-23 for One or More Charter Schools**

Organization Name	Organization Type	Number of Schools in Colorado
Accel Schools Colorado LLC	National Management	1
Addenbrooke Classical Academy	Local Management	2
Ascent Classical Academies	Local/National Management	2
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 Education Solutions	Local/National Management	8
Colorado High School Charter, Inc.	Local Management	2
Community Leadership Academy	Local Management	3
Compass Montessori Schools	Local Management	2
Compass for Lifelong Discovery	Local Management	2
Denver School of Science and Technology, Inc.	Local Management	14
Global Village Collaborative	Local Management	3
Highline Academy Schools	Local Management	2
Hope Online Learning Academy CO-OP	Local Management	2
ILEAD Schools Development	Local/National Management	1
James Irwin Collaborative	Local Management	5
Jefferson Academy	Local Management	3
KIPP Colorado Schools	Local/National Management	6
Monument Academy	Local Management	2
National Heritage Academies	National Management	3



Organization Name	Organization Type	Number of Schools in Colorado
New America School	Local/National Management	3
New Legacy Charter Schools	Local Management	2
Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences	Local Management	3
Rite of Passage, Inc.	National Management	1
Rocky Mountain Schools	Local Management	14 <sup>7</sup>
Swallows Charter	Local Management	2
The Classical Academy	Local Management	4
The Doral Academy Inc.	Local/National Management	1
The Girls Athletic Leadership Schools of Denver	Local Management	2
Third Future Schools	Local/National Management	3
Union Colony Schools	Local Management	2
University Preparatory Schools	Local Management	2
Vanguard Classical School, Inc.	Local Management	2
Villa Bella Expeditionary School	Local Management	2
Vision Home & Community, Inc.	Local Management	2
Windsor Charter Academy	Local Management	3

Out of the 269 charter schools in the 2022-23 school year, 89% are locally managed (93 through a local management organization and 146 as single-site schools). Additionally, 2% of Colorado charter schools, or five schools, are under national management. There is also a hybrid category, where 25 schools (9% of the total), 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.

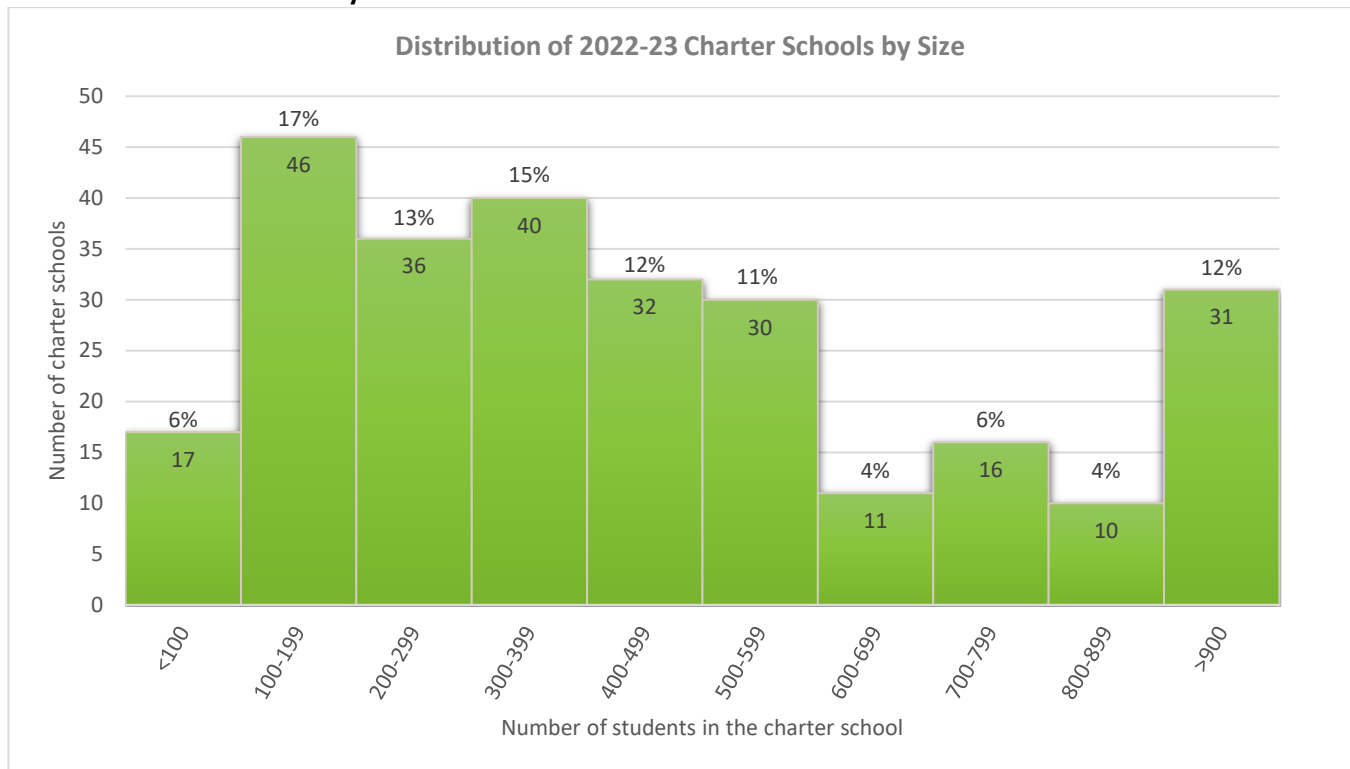
<sup>7</sup> The numbers may look atypical with the name. This is the surviving CMO from the merger of STRIVE and Rocky Mountain Prep.

## Size

Colorado charter schools exhibit significant variation in terms of size, ranging from schools serving fewer than 100 students to schools with over 5,000 students. Figure 6 provides an overview of the distribution of charter schools based on their total enrollment for the 2022-23 school year.

In the 2022-23 school year, 36.8% of charter schools had enrollments of fewer than 300 students. The average enrollment for charter schools was 512 students, while the median was 391 students. Average enrollment has steadily increased over time. In the mid-1990's, over 70% of charter schools served fewer than 200 students.<sup>8</sup> By 2023, this percentage had dropped to 23.4%. Meanwhile, only 4% of charter schools had enrollments exceeding 600 students in 2006, but this figure has grown to 25.3% in 2022-23.

**FIGURE 6: Charter Schools by Size**

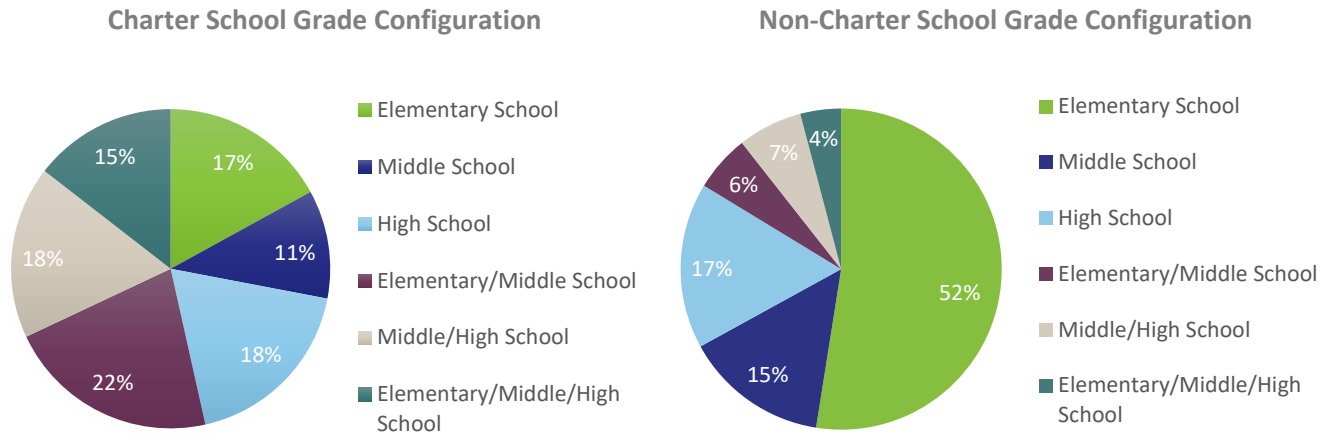


## Grade Level Configuration

Charter schools operate with a wide range of grade configurations. In the 2022-23 school year, over half of charter schools, specifically 55%, served students across more than one traditional education level. For instance, these schools may encompass elementary and middle school grades or middle and high school grades, or all three levels. In contrast, only 17% of non-charter schools serve multi-level configurations. The distribution across these levels is illustrated in Figure 7.

<sup>8</sup> See page 32 of the 2016 Charter Schools Report, which can be found at this link: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/20160719stateofcharterupdated>

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



## 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 local school 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 the Charter School Institute serves as a statewide authorizer in limited circumstances.<sup>9</sup> Additional details regarding Exclusive Chartering Authority, authorizing districts, and best practices will be presented in the following sections.

### Authorizing Districts

As described in Tables 3 and 4 within Part 1, during the 2022-23 school year, charter schools were authorized by 45 different school districts and Charter School Institute (CSI). Among these authorizers, 17 were responsible for a single charter school within their district, seven authorizers oversaw two charter schools, and 21 had authorized 3 or more charter schools. Denver Public Schools (Denver County 1) authorizes the most charter schools, with 56 schools, followed by CSI, which authorizes 43 charter schools. Table 8 illustrates the number of school openings and closures between the 2019-20 to 2022-23 school years.

**TABLE 8: Authorizers, Openings/Closures from 2019-20 to 2022-23**

Authorizer	Number of Charter Schools Opened	Number of Charter Schools Closed
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	4	1
Byers 32J	0	1
Charter School Institute	9	5
Delta County 50(J)	1	0
Denver County 1	5	9
District 49	2	0
Douglas County Re 1	0	1
Greeley 6	1	1
Harrison 2	1	0
Huerfano Re-1	1	0
Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	1	0
Lewis-Palmer 38	1	0
Pueblo County 70	3	0
School District 27J	1	0
Weld RE-4	1	0
Woodland Park Re-2	1	0

<sup>9</sup> CSI can only authorize schools with the host district's consent or in any district without Exclusive Chartering Authority.





### Charter School Application Processes

Based on a recent authorizer data collection, 78.7% of authorizers indicated that the district has a defined process, generally set in board policy, for reviewing new charter applications, while 21.3% 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 District Accountability Committees have set procedures for their reviews.

In School Year 2022-23, authorizers received a total of 28 charter applications. Among these, 12 applications were granted approval, 14 were denied, and 2 applicants withdrew their submissions prior to the authorizer board voting on the application.

### Charter Appeals

A charter school applicant seeking to establish a charter school within a school district can challenge the local school board's decision by appealing to the Colorado State Board of Education. Table 9 provides a comprehensive breakdown of all such appeals and their outcomes from 2019 to 2023.

**TABLE 9: Charter School Appeals**

Case No.	Appeal Type	Parties Involved with Link to Board Documents	Nature of Appeal	Prevailing Side
19-CS-01	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Liberty Common School vs. Poudre School District</a>	Unilateral imposition of conditions on charter	District - District's conditions were upheld
19-CS-02	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Pueblo School of Arts &amp; Science vs. Pueblo School District #60</a>	School claimed district refusal to review an application for a charter expansion	Both - Parties settled prior to hearing
19-CS-04	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Stargate Charter School vs. Adams County School District 12</a>	Unilateral imposition of conditions on charter	District - Order dismissing Stargate's Notice of Appeal for lack of jurisdiction
19-CS-05	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Vega Collegiate Academy vs. Aurora Public Schools</a>	District revocation of charter contract	Charter school - Revocation reversed
19-CS-07	1st Appeal	<a href="#">John Dewey Institute vs. Douglas County School District</a>	A charter application was denied	District - Upheld local board decision
20-CS-01	1st Appeal	<a href="#">CIVICA Charter School vs. Weld County</a>	Denial of Charter Application	Charter Applicant - District asked to revisit denial decision
20-CS-02	1st Appeal	<a href="#">DSST Public Schools vs. City and County of Denver School District No. 1</a>	Denial of charter application	Charter Applicant - District asked to revisit denial decision



21-CS-02	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Community Leadership Academy vs. Charter School Institute</a>	Unilateral conditions in charter contract	Authorizer - Contract conditions were not found to be contrary to the “best interest” standard
22-CS-02	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Ascent Classical Academy of Durango vs. Durango 9-R School District</a>	Refusal to review charter application resulting in a denial	Charter Applicant - District asked to review charter application
22-CS-03	1st Appeal	<a href="#">5280 Freedom School vs. City and County of Denver School District No. 1</a>	Denial of Charter Application	Charter Applicant - District asked to revisit denial decision
22-CS-04	2nd Appeal	<a href="#">Ascent Classical Academy of Durango vs. Durango 9-R School District</a>	Denial of Charter Application	District - Denial decision found not to be contrary to the “best interest” standard
22-CS-05	1st Appeal	<a href="#">University Preparatory Schools vs. Adams 14 School District</a>	Denial of Charter Application	Charter Applicant - District asked to revisit denial decision
22-CS-06	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Be the Change Community School vs. Adams 14 School District</a>	Denial of Charter Application	District - Denial decision found not to be contrary to the “best interest” standard
23-CS-01	2nd Appeal	<a href="#">University Preparatory School vs. Adams 14 School District</a>	School District failed to take action in response to the State Board’s Order	Charter Applicant- Remanded back to district for reconsideration
23-CS-01A&B	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Alexander School of Innovation and John Dewey vs. Douglas County School District R-1</a>	Denial of Charter Applications	District - Denial decisions found not to be contrary to the “best interest” standard
23-CS-02A&B	1st Appeal	<a href="#">Alexandria School of Innovation and John Dewey Institute vs. Jefferson County School District R-1</a>	Denial of Charter Applications	District - Denial decisions found not to be contrary to the “best interest” standard

### Charter Renewals

The agreement between the charter school and the authorizer specifies various terms, including the duration of the contract. While the most prevalent term length is typically five years, contract terms vary. Based on information from the most recent data collection from authorizers, 62 schools underwent a contract renewal in School Year 22-23, and all but one was approved for another term.

### Annual Evaluations

As outlined in statute (§22-30.5-110(1)(b), C.R.S.), authorizers are responsible for completing an annual evaluation for all their operating charter schools. According to data gathered from authorizers, 43% of charter schools received an annual evaluation, 49% percent did not receive an evaluation, and 7% did not have information



reported. Of the 43% reported as not receiving an evaluation, several authorizers reported that a review was in progress.

### Charter School and Authorizer Partnerships

- **Enrollment:** Every charter school is given a degree of independence in managing their enrollment procedures. In cases where a charter school has reached its enrollment limit, a lottery system is often employed to ensure a fair distribution of enrollment slots. According to recent data gathered from authorizers, 31.1% of charter schools were reported as conducting their own lottery processes, while 48.3% participated in a centrally managed lottery process overseen by the authorizer. The remaining 20.6% employ a non-lottery enrollment method.
- **Special Education:** One of the more complex collaborations between charter schools and authorizers relates to services for students with disabilities. 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, 67% of charter schools reported paying a negotiated fee related to special education services. The remaining 33% of charters either do not pay a fee or information was not available at the time of 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, 74% of schools reported 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 2023 collection, authorizers reported that 111 charter schools (41% of all 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 authorizer collection, in School Year 22-23, 55% of charter schools provide food to students by collaborating with their authorizer's School Food Authority (SFA). 14% provide food through a separate SFA, 4% operate their own SFA, and 11% do not provide food through an organized program.

### The Colorado Charter School Institute

The Colorado Charter School Institute (commonly known as "CSI"), a state authorizing body established in statute, serves as an alternative authorizing charter school entity. Currently, CSI authorizes 43 charter schools throughout Colorado. Among these schools, eight are situated in districts that are currently without Exclusive Chartering Authority (Poudre and Adams 14), while the remainder operate in districts that currently retain Exclusive Chartering Authority, where permission was granted for CSI to serve as the authorizer. CSI schools are located within various regions of Colorado, as indicated in the table below.



**TABLE 10: CSI School Geographical Distribution**

Geographical District	Authorizer Status (as of 12/31/2023)	Number of Schools Authorized by CSI
Adam 12 Five Star	ECA	3
Adams County 14	Not ECA	3
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	ECA	5
Colorado Springs 11	ECA	7
Douglas County	ECA	2
Durango 9-R	ECA	2
Eagle County RE 50	ECA	1
Jefferson County R-1	ECA	2
Mesa County Valley 51	ECA	3
Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	ECA	1
Poudre R-1	Not ECA	5
Roaring Fork RE-1	ECA	1
Salida R-32	ECA	1
School District 27J	ECA	2
Steamboat Springs RE-2	ECA	1
Westminster Public Schools	ECA	3

### Exclusive Chartering Authority (ECA)

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 over 3,000 students must have ECA granted by the State Board. Statute states that “the State Board shall grant to a local board of education exclusive authority to authorize charter schools within the geographic boundaries of the school district if the State Board determines, after adequate notice and in a public hearing and after receiving input from any charter schools authorized by the local board of education, that the local board can show a recent pattern of providing fair and equitable treatment to its charter schools.” Once a district receives ECA, they retain such authority unless it is later revoked by the State Board of Education. Below is a list of districts currently **without** ECA. Most recently, in 2023, the Colorado State Board of Education removed ECA from Adams County School District 14.

**TABLE 11: Districts Without Exclusive Chartering Authority**

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

School districts that retain ECA have the option to permit a new charter school applicant to apply to CSI or to transfer an existing school to CSI. It's important to note that all such requests must receive approval from CSI as well.

### Authorizing Best Practices

Nationally established best practices for charter school authorizers have been defined by the National Association of Charter Authorizers (NACSA). In Colorado, these practices were adopted by the State Board of Education as the [Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers](#). Statewide professional learning for authorizers is ongoing and supported through various initiatives of the Department, as well as funded programs of the Federal Charter School Program Grant. Many authorizers have demonstrated their commitment to applying the standards in their work and remain actively involved in professional learning communities supported by the Department, the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers, and the Colorado League of Charter Schools.

## Part Four: Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Students

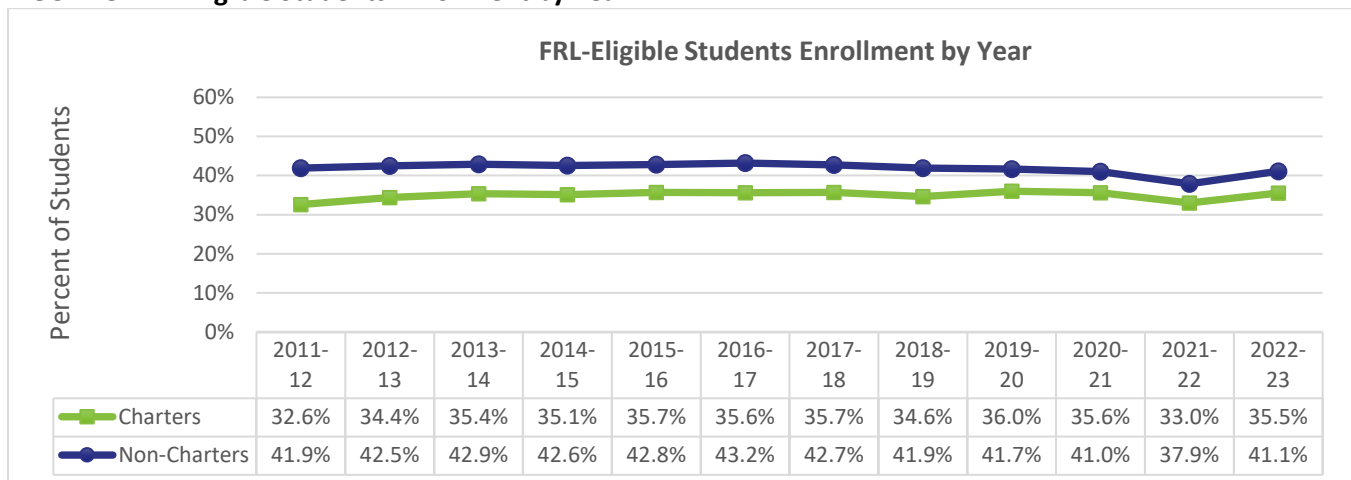
In this section, demographic and other descriptive statistics about students attending Colorado charter schools are compared with the student population in non-charter schools across the state. Overall, charter school students are very similar demographically to students in other Colorado Public Schools,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

### Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Free and Reduced-price Lunch (FRL) eligibility serves as the most widely used and accessible indicator of a student's household income level. It is important to acknowledge that when interpreting FRL eligibility data, there are certain limitations to consider. Notably, FRL eligibility may potentially underestimate the number of students who qualify if the school they attend lacks food program eligibility for reimbursement under the National School Lunch Program.

During the 2022-23 school year, 35.5% of charter school students were identified as FRL eligible. The percentage of students meeting eligibility criteria for a free and reduced lunch has largely remained consistent over time, with the exception for the slight decrease in the 2021-22 school year, which was the year in which eligibility under-reporting increased as a result of the pandemic. Charter schools have historically served a lower population of students eligible for free and reduced lunches compared to non-charter schools.

**FIGURE 8: FRL-Eligible Students Enrollment by Year**

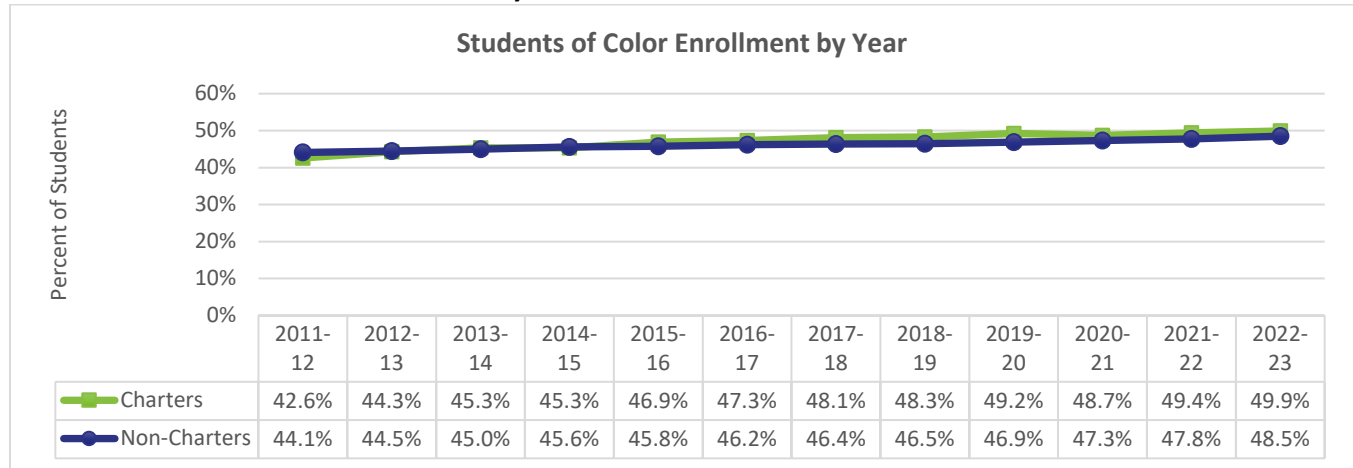


### Students of Color

As illustrated in Figure 9, charter schools during the 2022-23 school year served a slightly higher percentage of students of color when compared to the non-charter student population. In the 2022-23 school year, the percentage of students of color enrolled in charter schools was at 49.9%, compared to 48.5% for non-charter schools. Over the past decade, charter schools have witnessed growth in enrollment of students of color, outpacing the rate of increase observed in non-charter schools. In 2013, charter schools went from serving a

slightly lower percentage of students of color than non-charters to now serving a slightly higher percentage of them than non-charters.

**FIGURE 9: Students of Color Enrollment by Year**

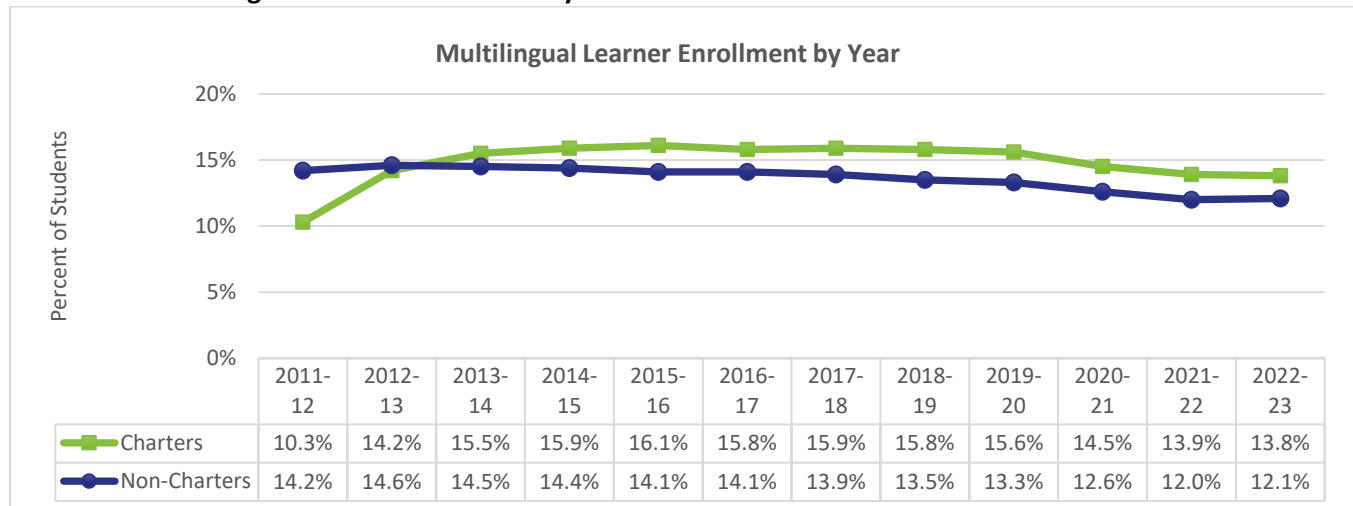


### Multilingual Learners

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

During the 2018-19 school year, both charter schools and non-charter schools experienced a decrease in ML enrollment, and this trend continued in the following years.

**FIGURE 10: Multilingual Learner Enrollment by Year<sup>10</sup>**



<sup>10</sup> For enrollment figures in this report, the term multilingual learner is inclusive of the following categories: NEP, LEP, and FEP Monitor Year 1 and Monitor Year 2. Reported numbers align to multilingual learner figures found on the CDE pupil membership page.

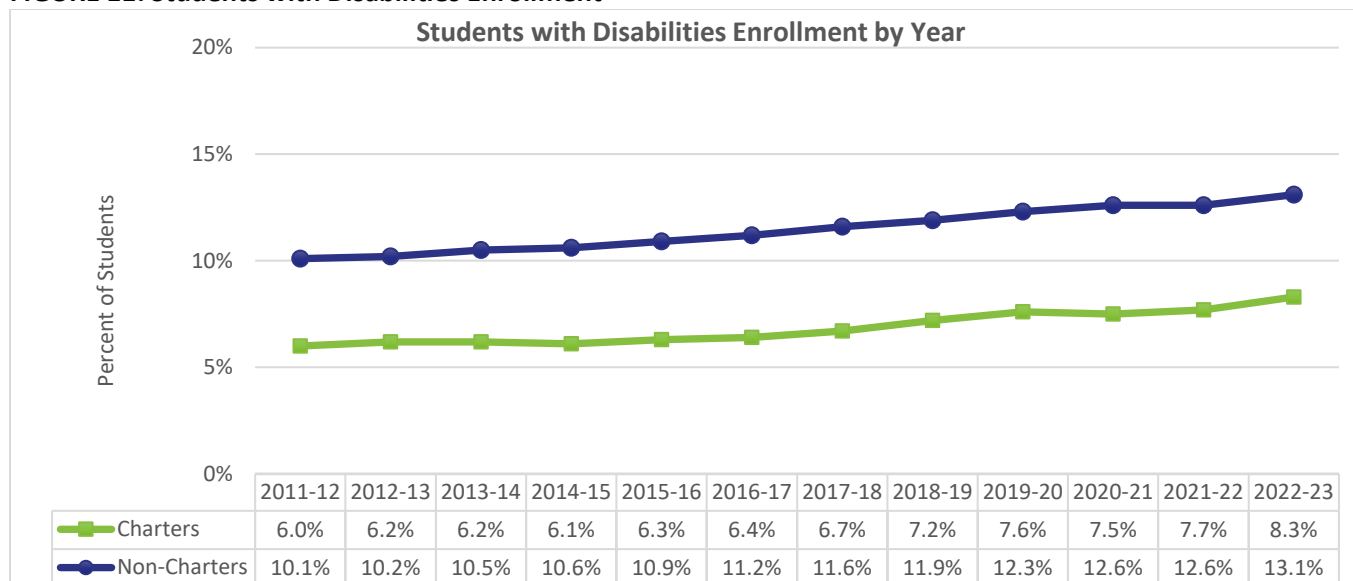
## Students with Disabilities

The data presented in Figure 11 encompasses students classified with a disability, as indicated by the presence of an individualized education plan (IEP) in the 2022-23 school year.

Charter schools experienced a slight increase in the percentage of students with disabilities enrolled over the past few years. This percentage rose from 7.7% of students in the 2021-22 school year to 8.3% percent in 2022-23 school year (a 0.6 percentage points increase). Comparatively, non-charter schools saw an increase from 12.6% of students in 2021-22 school year to 13.1% in the 2022-23 school year (a 0.5 percentage points increase). Charter schools continue serving a smaller proportion of students with disabilities when compared to non-charter schools statewide; however, both charter and non-charter schools have shown a steady increase in the percentage of students with disabilities served.

In recent years, various efforts have been made to close enrollment gaps between charter schools and non-charter schools for students with disabilities. However, even with these efforts, the gap was slightly wider in 2022-23 (4.8 percentage points) than it was in 2019-20 (4.6 percentage points).

**FIGURE 11: Students with Disabilities Enrollment**



Three notable developments to attempt to close enrollment gaps between charter schools and non-charter schools include:

- Rulemaking:** In January of 2022, the State Board of Education passed revisions to *1 CCR 301-88 Standards for Charter Schools and Authorizers* that clarified that charter schools are not to ask about disability status on enrollment forms. The rule language also requires other non-discrimination language be included on any enrollment materials. In addition, in April of 2022, the State Board of Education passed revisions to *1 CCR 301-8 Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children's Educational Act* clarifying that any time a student's school of choice was determined to not be the proper placement for providing special education services, such decision must be made in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting with the child's parent/guardian as a participant.





- **Professional Development:** The Department has provided frequent training on the updated rules, both for charter schools and authorizers, including training for BOCES Directors and Directors of Special Education. In addition, the Department provided a 9-part training series for charter schools on adopting best practices for inclusion for students with disabilities.
- **Targeted Legislation:** In 2022, H.B. 22-1294 was signed into law, allowing charter schools to develop and administer an enrollment preference plan to give greater enrollment priority to students with disabilities. In addition, the legislation created ways for charter schools or groups of charter schools to form or join alternative administrative units to build greater capacity within charter school communities for high-quality special education service delivery.

Although these developments have not yet closed enrollment differences between charter and non-charter schools, the department anticipates that gaps will narrow in upcoming years. The department will monitor these trends. Additional progress might be made with efforts to:

- Ensure that the school, authorizing unit, and public stakeholders understand the requirements for ensuring access to schools of choice;
- Invest in capacity building activities to ensure that all schools have the capability to provide high quality education for all students; and engage in parent education and provide the tools necessary for parents to make well informed decisions and understand the rights that they have for schools of choice.

### Student Mobility

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

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

### Mobility Rate

Student mobility rates are calculated using the following formula:

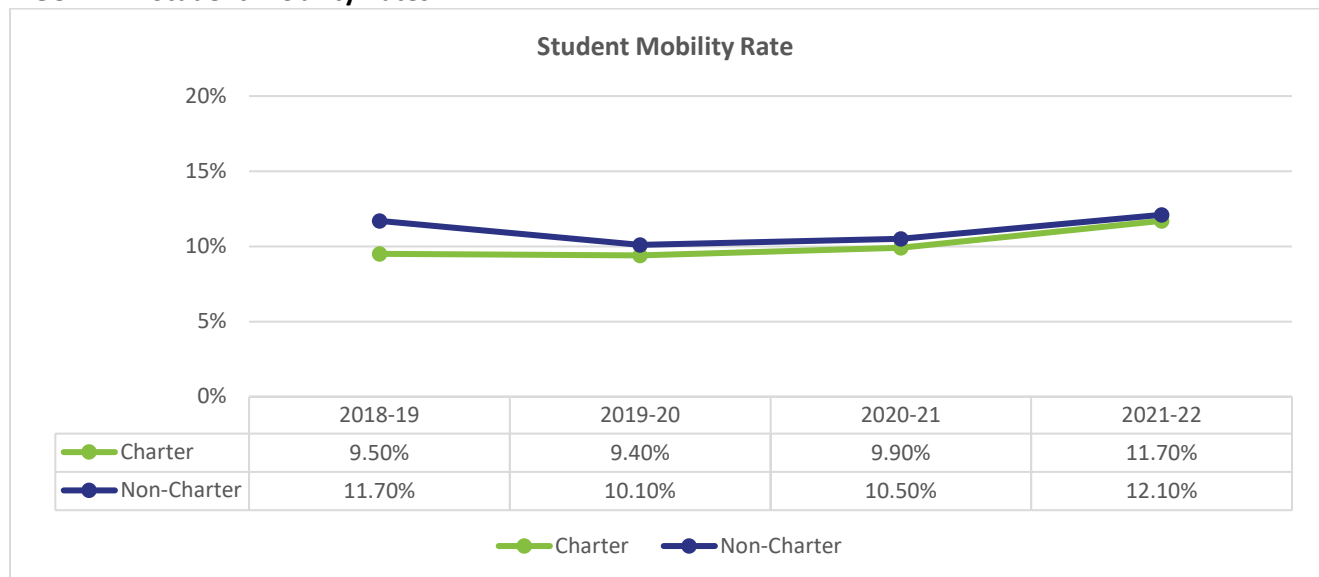
$$\frac{(\text{Unduplicated count of } K - 12 \text{ students who moved into or out of a school in year } X)}{(\text{Number of students that are part of a school at any point within year } X)}$$

Once a student is classified as mobile for a specific school, that student will not be included in the student mobility rate again within the same school year. Figure 12 displays the student mobility rates for charter schools during 2018-19 through 2021-22 school years (2022-23 mobility data was not yet available at the time of writing of this report). Since the charter report will be updated annually, these figures will also be updated on an annual basis. Prior to the 2017-18 school year, the Student Mobility Rate was calculated year-round. The 2017-18 school year was the initiation of new rules surrounding mobility rates. The new rules, included in *1 CCR 301-1 Rules for*

*Administration of Accreditation of School Districts*, direct mobility rates to be calculated between the Student Pupil Count Date (October 1) and the end of the school year. Moves over the summer or at the very beginning of the school year are now seen as more routine and not counted in the mobility rate.

As illustrated in Figure 12, students enrolled in charter schools have experienced a comparable trend in mobility rates over the past three school years compared to non-charter schools – with charter schools showing slightly lower rates. Both charter and non-charter schools have seen an increase in these rates in recent years.

**FIGURE 12: Student Mobility Rates**



### Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

The Colorado Department of Education collects and reports attendance data in several metrics. These rates provide a general measure of student engagement in learning (attendance rate) and consistency of engagement (chronic absenteeism). Attendance rates and rates of chronic absenteeism improved in the 2022-23 school year compared to the previous one. This follows the highest rates of chronic absenteeism and lowest rates of attendance since 2016-17 in the 2021-22 school year.

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

Table 12 provides data on chronically absent rates and attendance rates for both charter and non-charter schools in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. While rates for charter schools have followed patterns similar to the statewide rates, charter schools did show higher attendance rates and lower chronically absent rates in comparison to non-charter schools in both 2021-22 and 2022-23. Both charter and non-charter schools have seen improvement in these indicators from 21-22 to 22-23 as the state sees continued improvement from the low rates of the pandemic and its immediate aftermath.



**TABLE 12: Attendance Rate and Chronic Absenteeism Rate**

	<b>2021-22 Chronically Absent Rate</b>	<b>2021-22 Attendance Rate</b>	<b>2022-23 Chronically Absent Rate</b>	<b>2022-23 Attendance Rate</b>	<b>Chronic Absenteeism Year Change</b>	<b>Attendance Rate Year Change</b>
<b>Charter</b>	29.9%	91.3%	26.4%	92.1%	-3.5%	+0.8%
<b>Non- Charter</b>	35.6%	90.0%	33.0%	90.5%	-2.6%	0.5%
<b>All Schools</b>	35.5%	90.2%	31.1%	90.8%	-4.4%	0.6%

## Part Five: Colorado Charter School Academic Performance

The following section provides an overview of student performance on state assessments in charter schools and non-charter schools statewide. The data presented in this report focuses on the school years 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2022-23, as state assessments were not administered during the 2019-20 school year due to the pandemic, and in 2020-21 assessments were only administered to select grade levels as schools gradually returned to normal operations. All assessments were administered in the 2021-22 school year, although the availability of growth data was limited due to the challenges experienced in the previous year. Results encompass the performance for all students and specific disaggregated student groups.

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

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

- 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 13 provides a detailed list of the statewide assessments administered to students at each grade level each school year. Science assessments are also administered to students in 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade; however, such results are not included within this report.

**TABLE 13: Assessment List**

Year	Test	Grades	Content Area
2018-19	CMAS	3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	English Language Arts
		3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
	Colorado PSAT	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup>	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
		9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
	Colorado SAT	11 <sup>th</sup>	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
		11 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
2019-20	No tests administered due to pandemic disruptions		
2020-21	CMAS	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , and 7 <sup>th</sup>	English Language Arts
		4 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> , and 8 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
	Colorado PSAT	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup>	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
		9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
	Colorado SAT	11 <sup>th</sup>	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
		11 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
2021-22 and 2022-23	CMAS	3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	English Language Arts
		3 <sup>rd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
	Colorado PSAT	9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup>	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
		9 <sup>th</sup> and 10 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics
	Colorado SAT	11 <sup>th</sup>	Evidenced Based Reading and Writing
		11 <sup>th</sup>	Mathematics



## CMAS Performance

### Levels and Cut Scores

Performance levels are used to measure how well students align with the expectations for their respective grade levels. As shown in Table 14, there are five performance levels for the CMAS English Language Arts (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 14: CMAS Cut Scores**

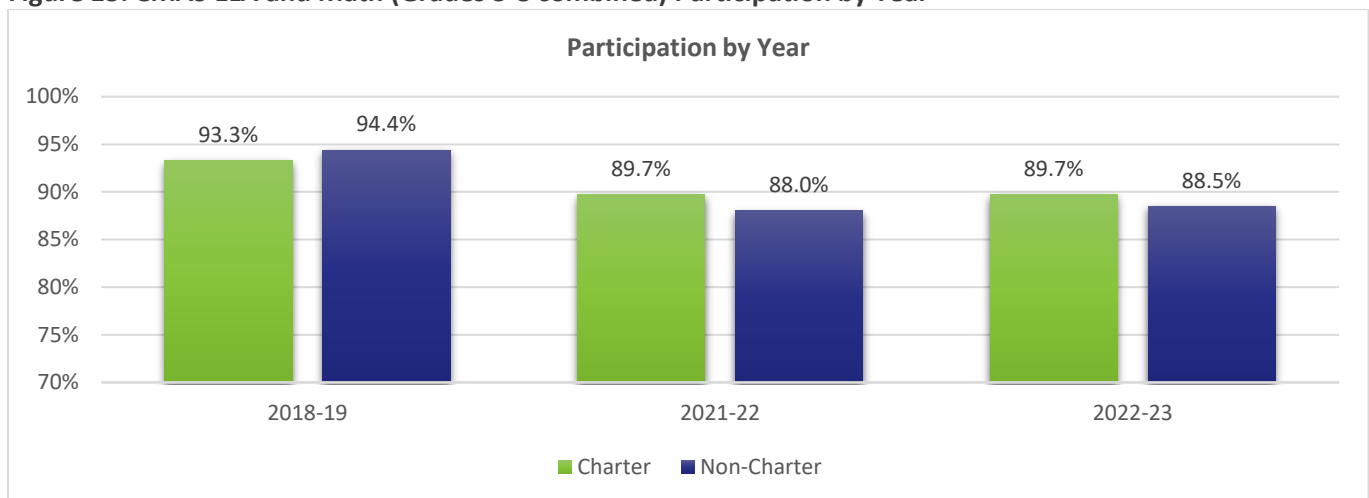
Grade Level/Content	Does Not Yet Meet Expectations (Level 1)	Partially Met Expectations (Level 2)	Approached Expectations (Level 3)	Met Expectations (Level 4)	Exceeded Expectations (Level 5)
<b>Mathematics</b>					
Grade 3	650-699	700-724	725-749	750-789	790-850
Grade 4	650-699	700-724	725-749	750-795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

### CMAS Participation

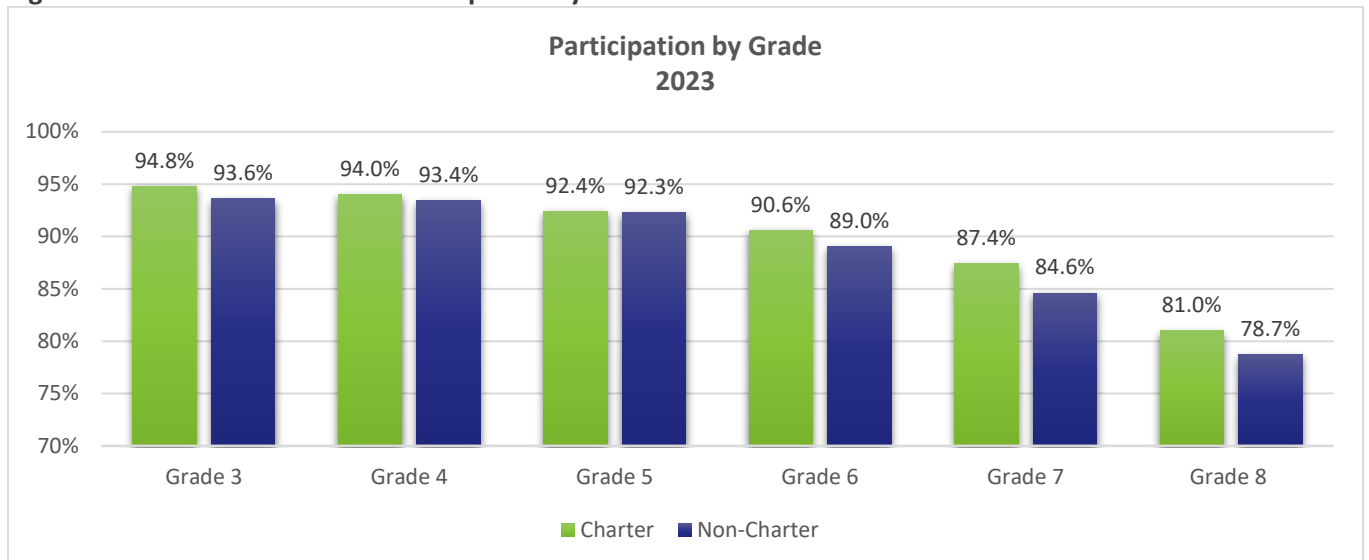
Figures 13 and 14 present CMAS participation rates by year and grade level. Pre-pandemic, non-charter schools showed a slightly higher participation rate. However, in the post-pandemic period, participation rates were higher among charter schools. Both non-charter and charter schools experienced a significant decrease in participation after the pandemic, and they remain below pre-pandemic levels.

In the 2022-23 school year, grade-level participation was highest in the early grades and gradually decreased in the later grades. A consistent trend of declining participation as grades progressed was observed in both charter and non-charter schools. However, charter schools exhibited higher participation rates at each grade level.

**Figure 13: CMAS ELA and Math (Grades 3-8 combined) Participation by Year**



**Figure 14: CMAS ELA and Math Participation by Grade Level**



### ELA and Math Performance – Overall and by Grade and Year

When analyzing the CMAS ELA Mean Scale Scores (MSS) for charter schools and non-charter schools in the 2022-23 school year across grades 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, scale scores for charter schools were higher than non-charter schools across grade 3 through 8 as seen in Table 15. Charter and non-charter schools' average MSS for grades 3-8 all fall within the Approached Expectations range of 725-749.

**TABLE 15: CMAS ELA Performance 2022-23 by grade level**

Grade Level	Charter Mean Scale Score	Charter Participation Rate	Non-Charter Mean Scale Score	Non-Charter Participation Rate	Scale Score Difference
Grade 3	739.3	94.8%	736.3	93.6%	3.0
Grade 4	743.8	94.0%	740.3	93.4%	3.0
Grade 5	749.4	92.4%	746.8	92.3%	2.6
Grade 6	744.7	90.6%	742.1	89.0%	2.6
Grade 7	744.4	87.4%	743.0	84.6%	1.4
Grade 8	746.6	81.0%	740.0	78.7%	6.6

Given the testing disruptions and the limited grades assessed in recent years, conducting a performance comparison over time presents challenges. Nevertheless, available data indicates that scores in charter schools are consistently higher than those for non-charter schools year after year across grade levels for the years included in this report. Figure 15 (next page) presents a comparison of CMAS ELA performance at charter schools and non-charters by year and grade levels in 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

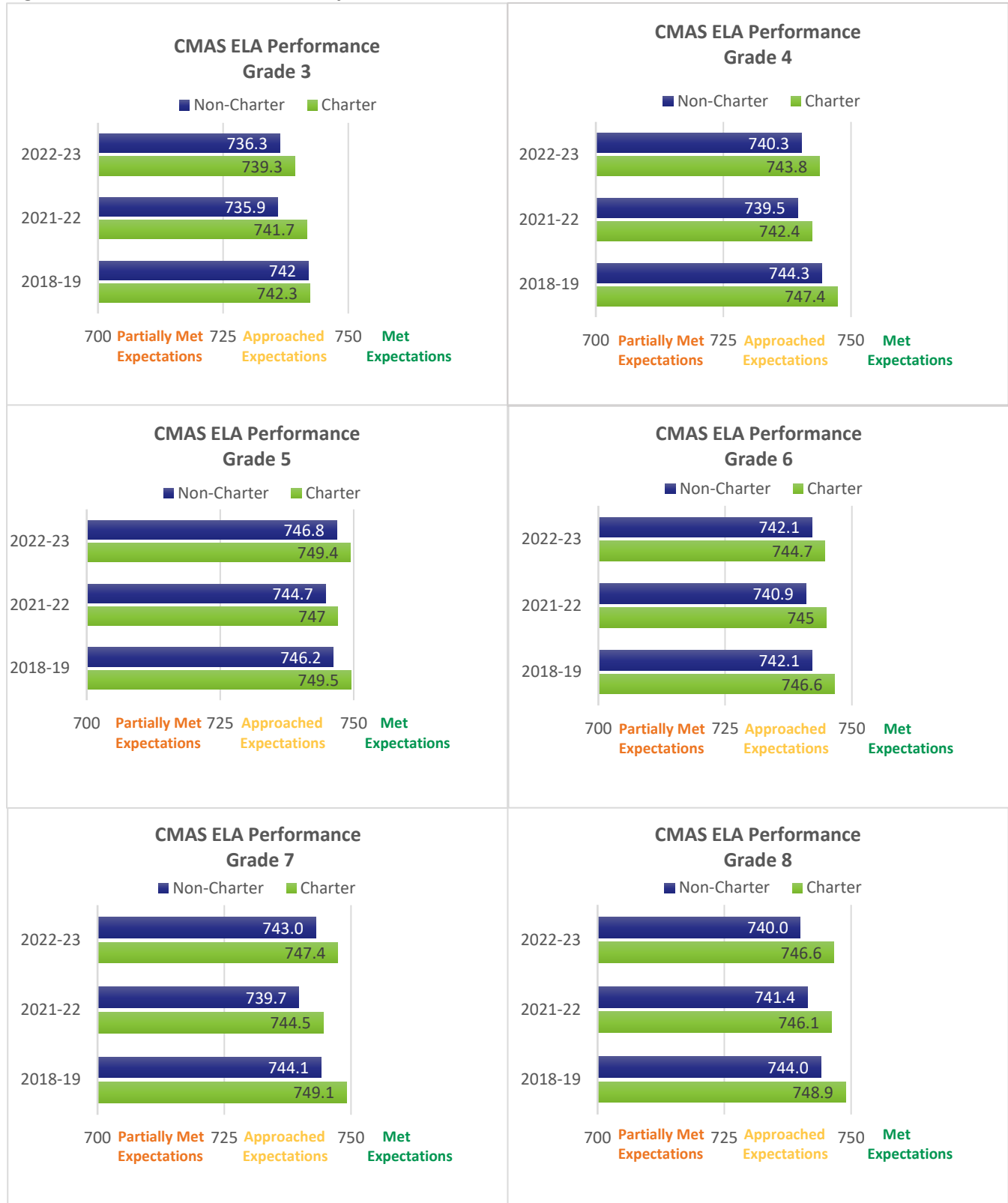
When examining the CMAS Math performance of charter schools and non-charter schools in the 2022-23 school year across grades 3 through 8, it also shows that charter schools had consistently higher scores at each grade level assessed as seen in Table 16. Charter and non-charter schools' scaled scores all fall within the Approached Expectations range of 725-749, as shown in figure 16 (page 41).

**TABLE 16: CMAS Math Performance 2022-23 by Grade Level**

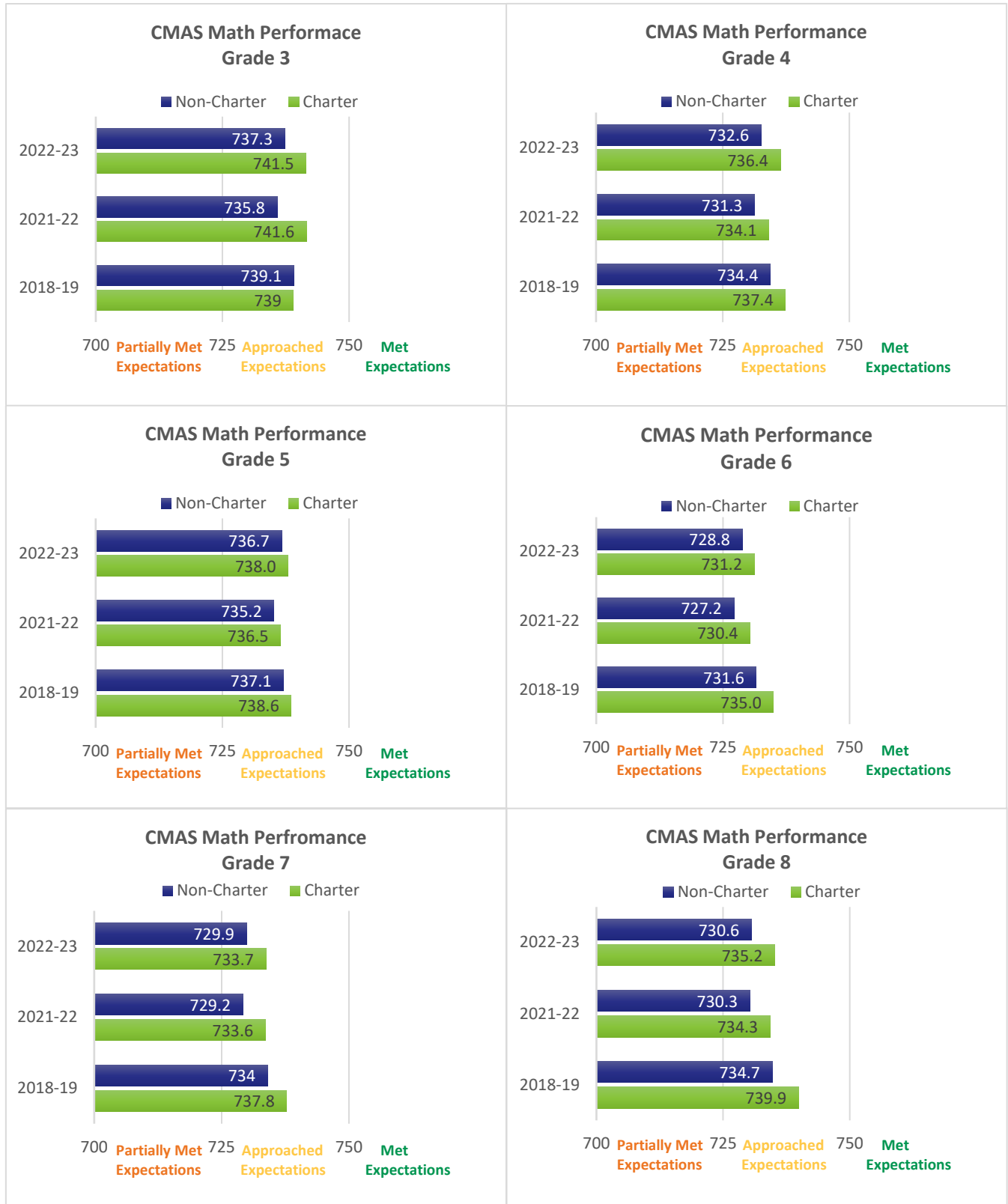
Grade Level	Charter Mean Scale Score	Charter Participation Rate	Non-Charter Mean Scale Score	Non-Charter Participation Rate	Scale Score Difference
Grade 3	741.5	94.8%	737.3	93.6%	4.2
Grade 4	736.4	94.0%	732.6	93.4%	3.8
Grade 5	738.0	92.4%	736.7	92.3%	1.3
Grade 6	731.2	90.6%	728.8	89.0%	2.4
Grade 7	733.7	87.4%	729.9	84.6%	3.8
Grade 8	735.2	81.0%	730.6	78.7%	4.6

Given the testing disruptions and the limited grades assessed in recent years, conducting a performance comparison over time presents challenges. Nevertheless, a clear trend does show charter schools' scores are almost always higher than non-charter schools' year after year across the grade levels assessed.

Figure 15: CMAS ELA Performance by Year and Grade Level





**FIGURE 16: CMAS Math Performance by Year and Grade Level**




### CMAS English Language Arts Performance – Disaggregated Results

In 2023, disaggregated results for students based on race and ethnicity, multilingual status<sup>11</sup>, Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility, and students with an IEP show that charter schools have higher scores than non-charter schools on the CMAS English Language Arts assessment for all available groups except for students non eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, as depicted in Table 17. Charters also demonstrated narrower achievement gaps between most student groups than non-charter schools - except for a slightly larger gap for students with an Individualized Education Plan. A detailed breakdown of the disaggregated results can be found in Figures 17 through 20.

**TABLE 17: 2022-23 CMAS ELA Performance by School Type and Disaggregated Student Group**

	Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible		Not Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	729.2	Approached Expectations	753.5	Met Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	725.4	Approached Expectations	754.8	Met Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	3.8		-1.3	

	Students of Color		White Students (non-Hispanic)	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	737.3	Approached Expectations	753.9	Met Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	731.2	Approached Expectations	752.9	Met Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	6.1		1	

	Multilingual Learners		Non-Multilingual Learners	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	726.2	Approached Expectations	750.2	Met Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	720.1	Partially Met Expectations	746.9	Approached Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	6.1	1 level	3.3	1 level

	Students with an IEP		Students without an IEP	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	708.5	Partially Met Expectations	749.4	Approached Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	707.3	Partially Met Expectations	748.1	Approached Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	1.2		1.3	

Figures 17-20 focus on the gap in CMAS assessment results between various disaggregated student groups in both charter and non-charter schools in English Language Arts.

<sup>11</sup> For assessment purposes Multilingual students are considered ML if they are designated as NEP, LEP and FEP Monitor Year 1, Monitor Year 2 and FEP Exit Year 1, and Exit Year 2.

Figure 17 displays the ELA CMAS results for Free and Reduced Lunch students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 5.1-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches and students who are not.

**FIGURE 17: CMAS ELA Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility**

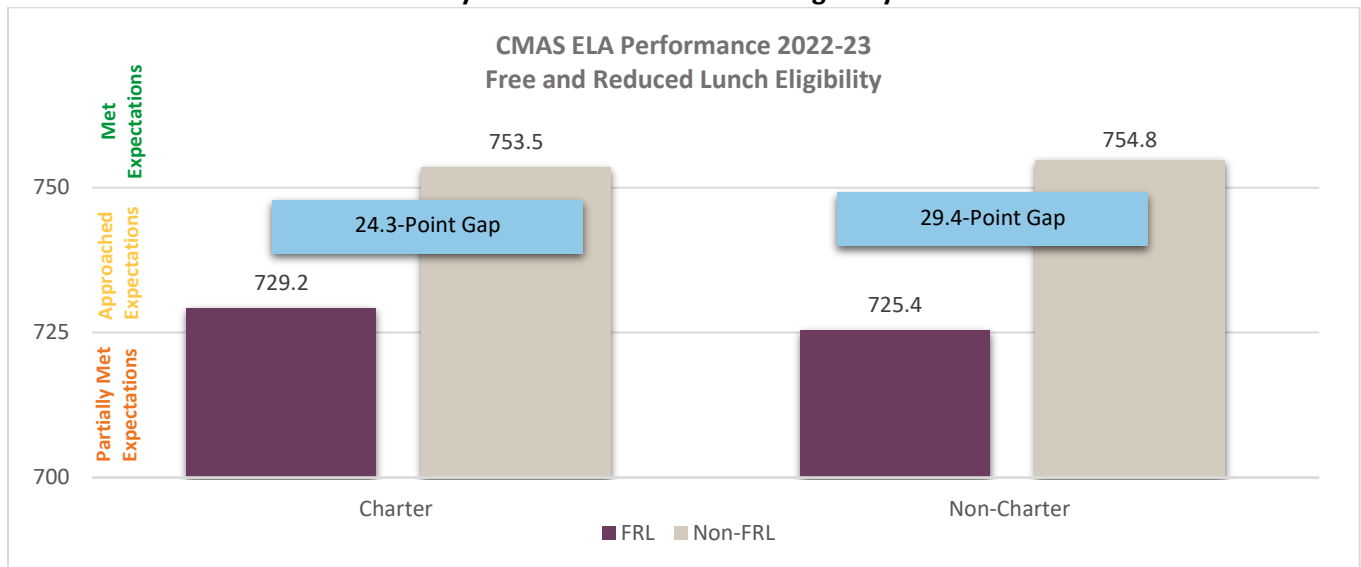


Figure 18 displays the ELA CMAS results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 5.1-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students of colors and white non-Hispanic students.

**FIGURE 18: CMAS ELA Performance by Race and Ethnicity**

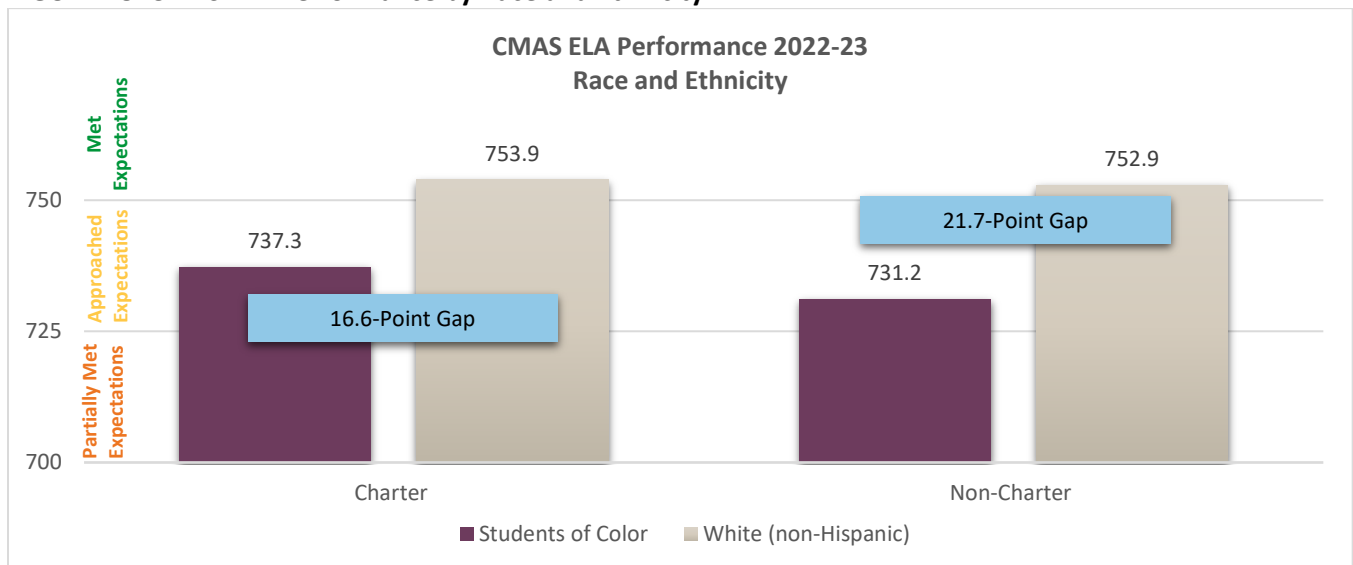


Figure 19 displays the ELA CMAS results for Multilingual Learners in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 2.8-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between Multilingual and Non-Multilingual students.

**FIGURE 19: CMAS ELA Performance by Multilingual Learner Status**

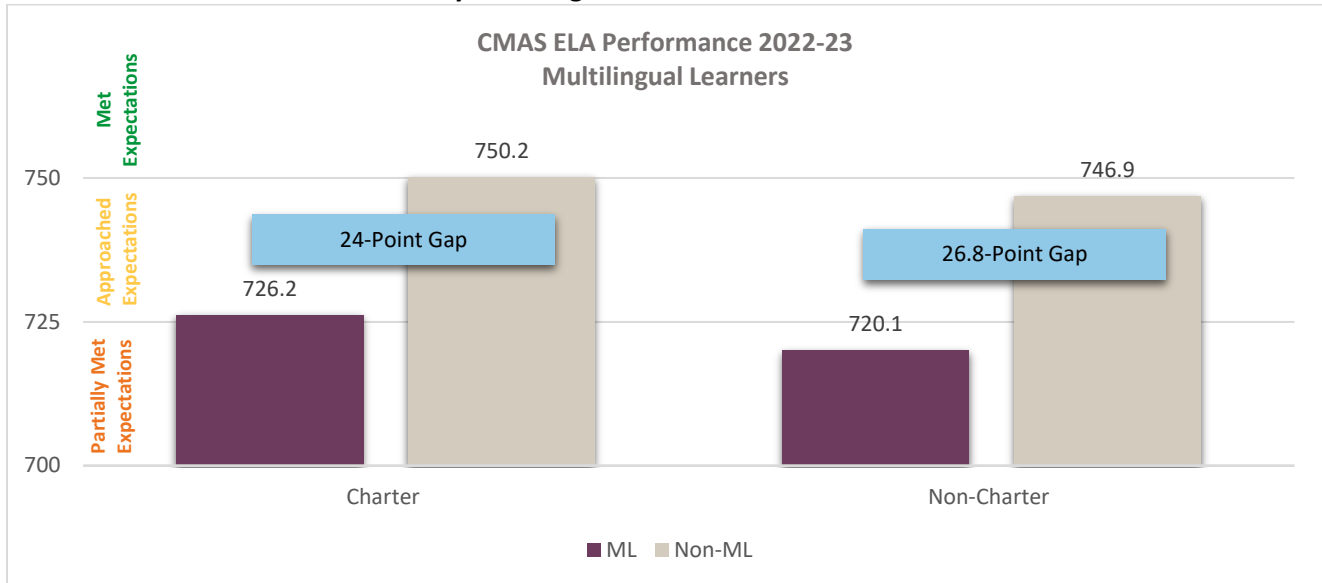
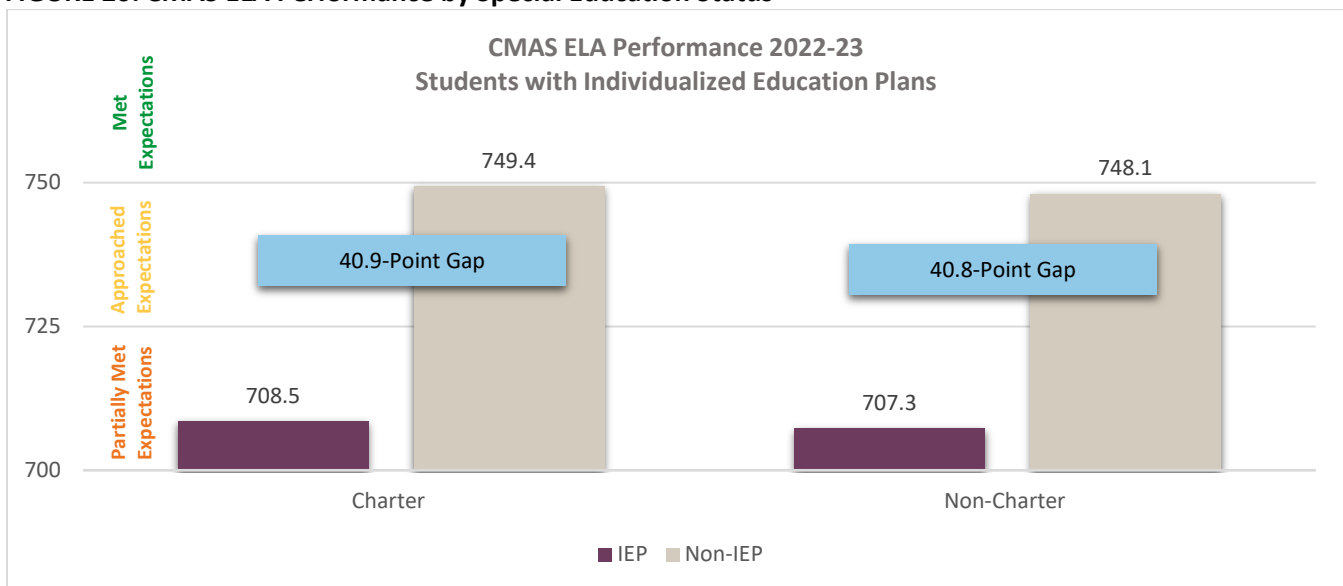


Figure 20 displays the ELA CMAS results for students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Plan in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 0.1-point higher gap than non-charter schools between students in Special Education programs and students who are not. The difference between charters and non-charters is small in this case, and in the opposite direction compared to the other groups analyzed.

**FIGURE 20: CMAS ELA Performance by Special Education Status**





### CMAS Math Performance – Disaggregated Results

In 2023, disaggregated results for students based on race and ethnicity, multilingual status, Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility, and disability status, show that students in charter schools tended to achieve higher outcomes than students in non-charter schools on the CMAS Math assessment, except for students not eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. This finding is consistent with the ELA results. Charters consistently demonstrated narrower achievement gaps between these student groups than non-charter schools as well – except for an equal gap for students with an Individualized Education Plan. A detailed breakdown of the disaggregated results can be found in Figures 21 through 24.

**TABLE 18: 2022-23 CMAS Math Performance by School Type and Disaggregated Student Group**

	Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible		Not Free or Reduced Lunch Eligible	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	719.2	Partially Met Expectations	744.2	Approached Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	717	Partially Met Expectations	745.6	Approached Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	2.2		-1.4	

	Students of Color		White Students (non-Hispanic)	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	727.6	Approached Expectations	744.5	Approached Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	722.3	Partially Met Expectations	744.1	Approached Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	5.3	1 level	0.4	

	Multilingual Learners		Non-Multilingual Learners	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	718.6	Partially Met Expectations	740.3	Approached Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	713.6	Partially Met Expectations	737.8	Approached Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	5.0		2.5	

	Students with an IEP		Students without an IEP	
	Average MSS	Average Rating	Average MSS	Average Rating
<b>Charter</b>	706.3	Partially Met Expectations	739.0	Approached Expectations
<b>Non-Charter</b>	705.3	Partially Met Expectations	738.0	Approached Expectations
<b>Difference</b>	1.0		1.0	

Figures 21-24 focus on the gap differences in CMAS assessment results between disaggregated student groups in both charter and non-charter schools in math.

Figure 21 displays the math CMAS results for Free and Reduced Lunch students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 3.6-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between Free and Reduced Lunch and Non-Free and Reduced Lunch students.

**FIGURE 21: CMAS Math Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility**

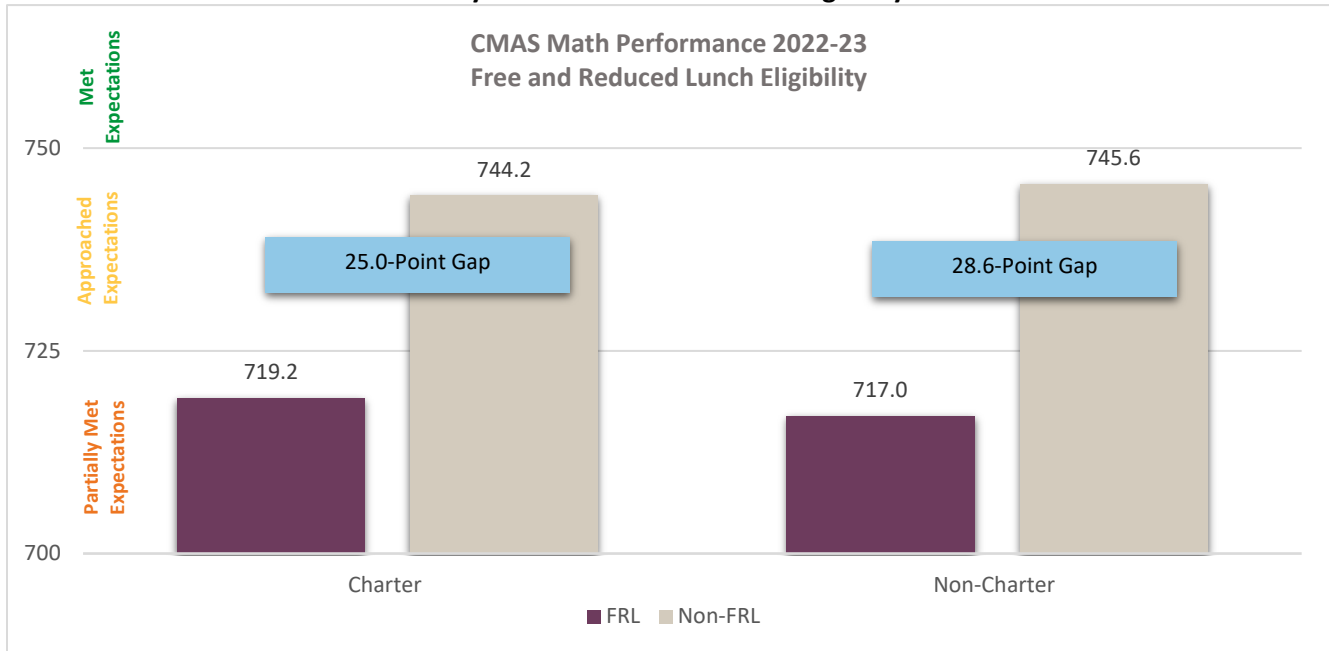


Figure 22 displays the math CMAS results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 4.9-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students of color and white (non-Hispanic) students.

**FIGURE 22: CMAS Math Performance by Race and Ethnicity**

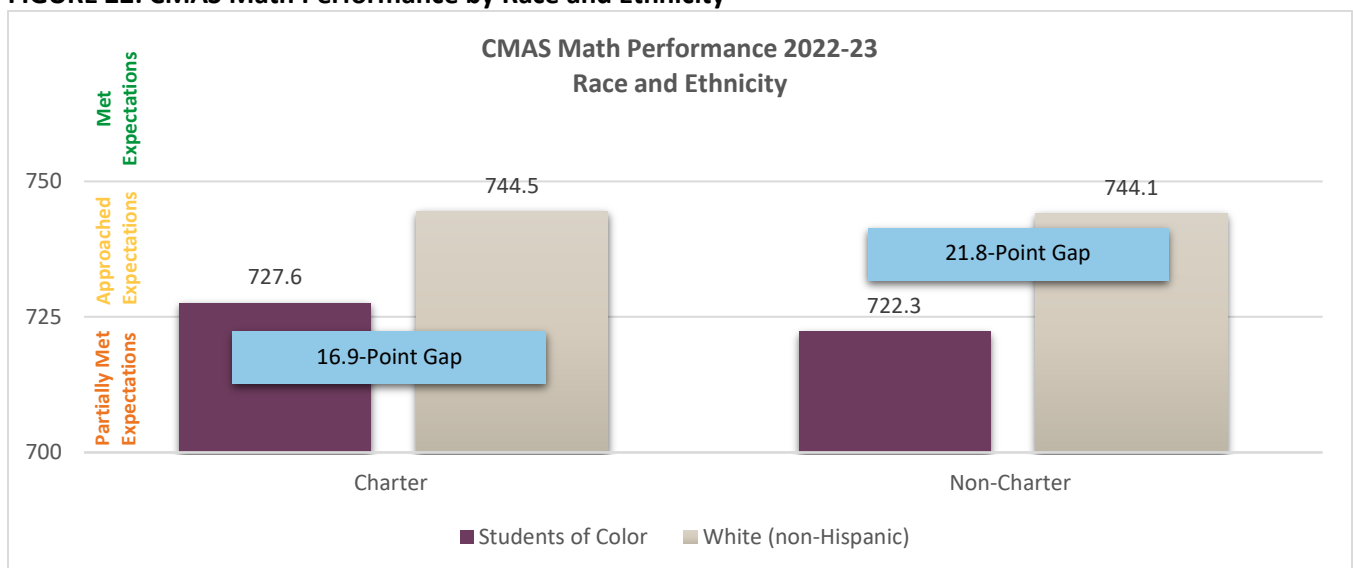


Figure 23 displays the math CMAS results for Multilingual Learners in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 2.5-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between Multilingual and Non-Multilingual students.

**FIGURE 23: CMAS Math Performance by Multilingual Learner Status**

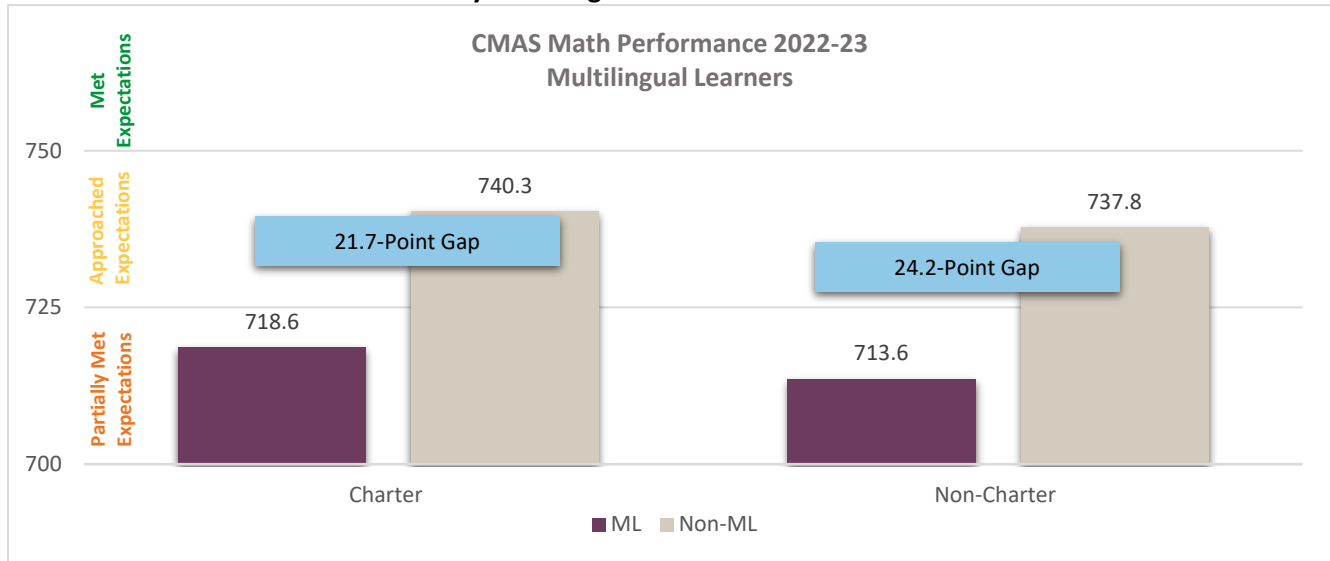
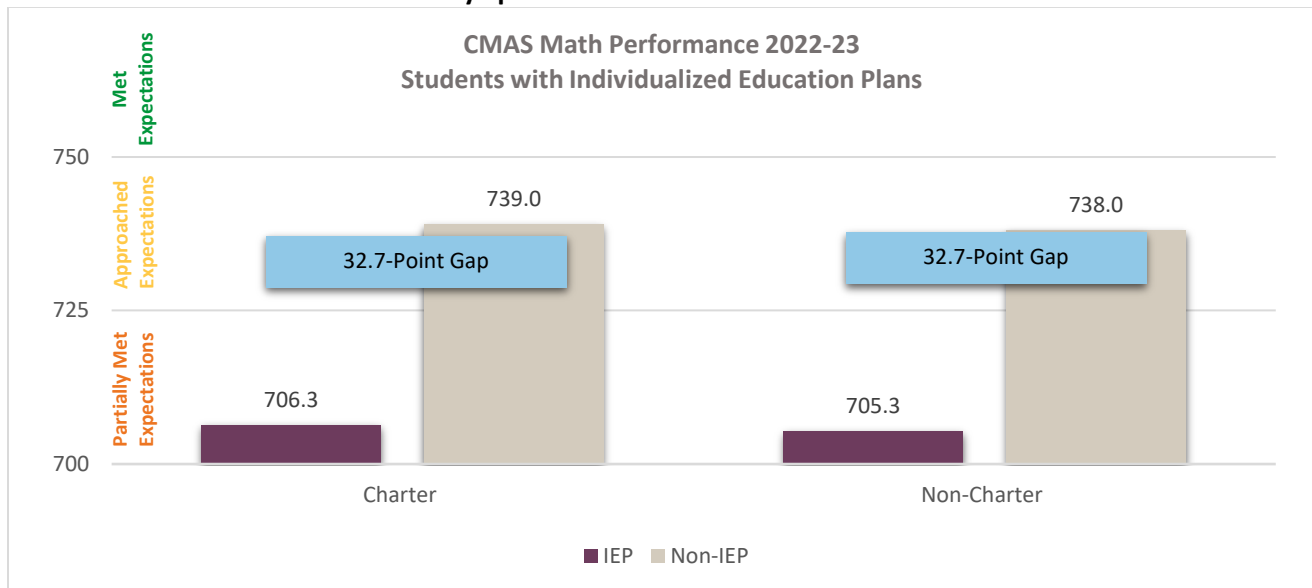


Figure 24 displays the math CMAS results for students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Plan in both charter and non-charter schools. The gap between students in Special Education programs and students who are not was the same at charter schools and non-charter schools.

**FIGURE 24: CMAS Math Performance by Special Education Status**





## PSAT and SAT Performance

### Levels and Cut Scores

Performance levels are used to measure how well a student meets academic expectations and the level of college readiness. As shown in Table 19, there are four performance levels for the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing PSAT and SAT assessments. Table 20 displays the four performance levels for the Math PSAT and SAT assessments and the associated scale score cuts.

**TABLE 19: PSAT and SAT EBRW Cut Scores**

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

**TABLE 20: PSAT and SAT Math Cut Scores**

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

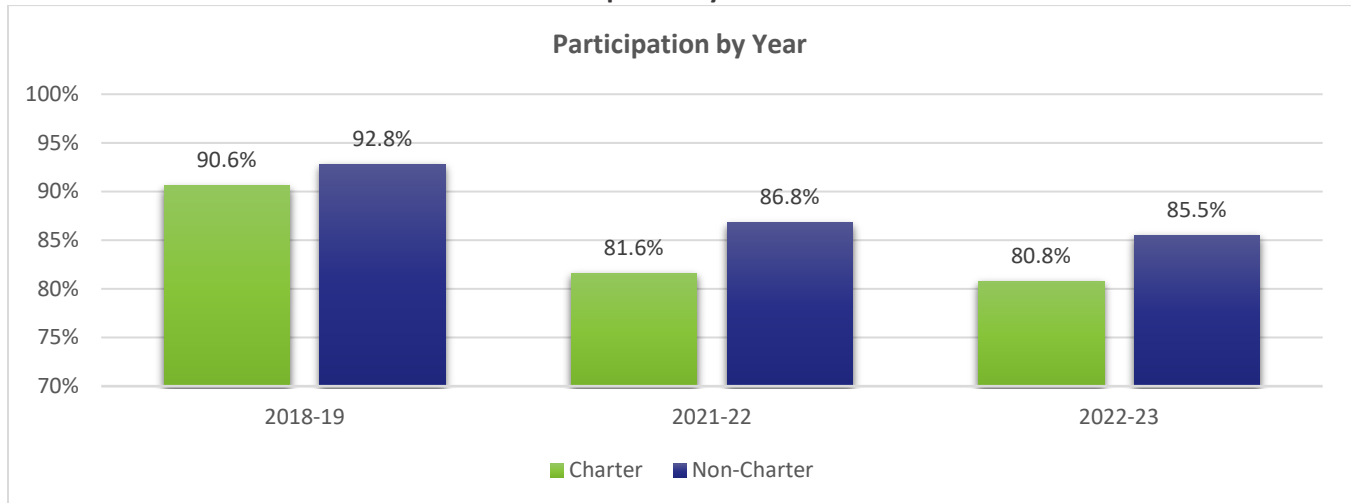
### PSAT and SAT Participation

In addition to evaluating EBRW and math performance, we examined grade-level participation rates by year and grade level, as presented in Figures 25 and 26 below. Pre-pandemic, participation rates exceeded 90% for both charter and non-charter schools. Post-pandemic, in 2021-22 there was a significant decrease in participation rates, with 81.6% for charters and 86.8% for non-charters. In 2022-23, participation rates on PSAT and SAT declined slightly further. Non-charter schools consistently maintained a higher participation rate compared to charters in the 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23 school years.

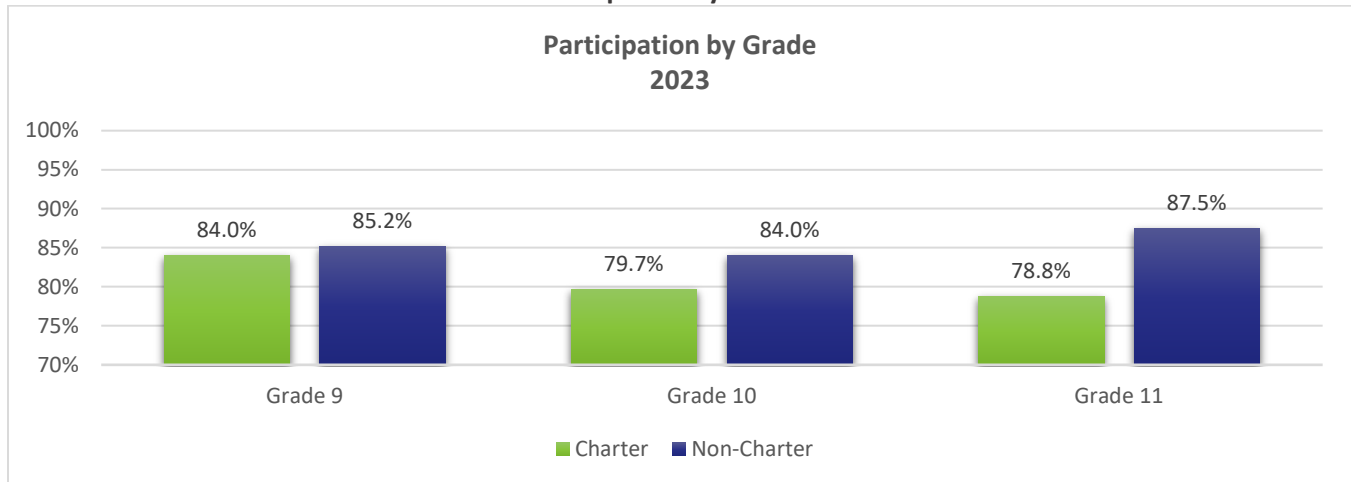
When examining grade-level participation, non-charter schools exhibited a higher participation rate compared to charter schools. There is a decline in participation among charter school students as they progress through the grade levels.



**FIGURE 25: PSAT and SAT EBRW and Math Participation by Year**



**FIGURE 26: PSAT and SAT EBRW and Math Participation by Grade**



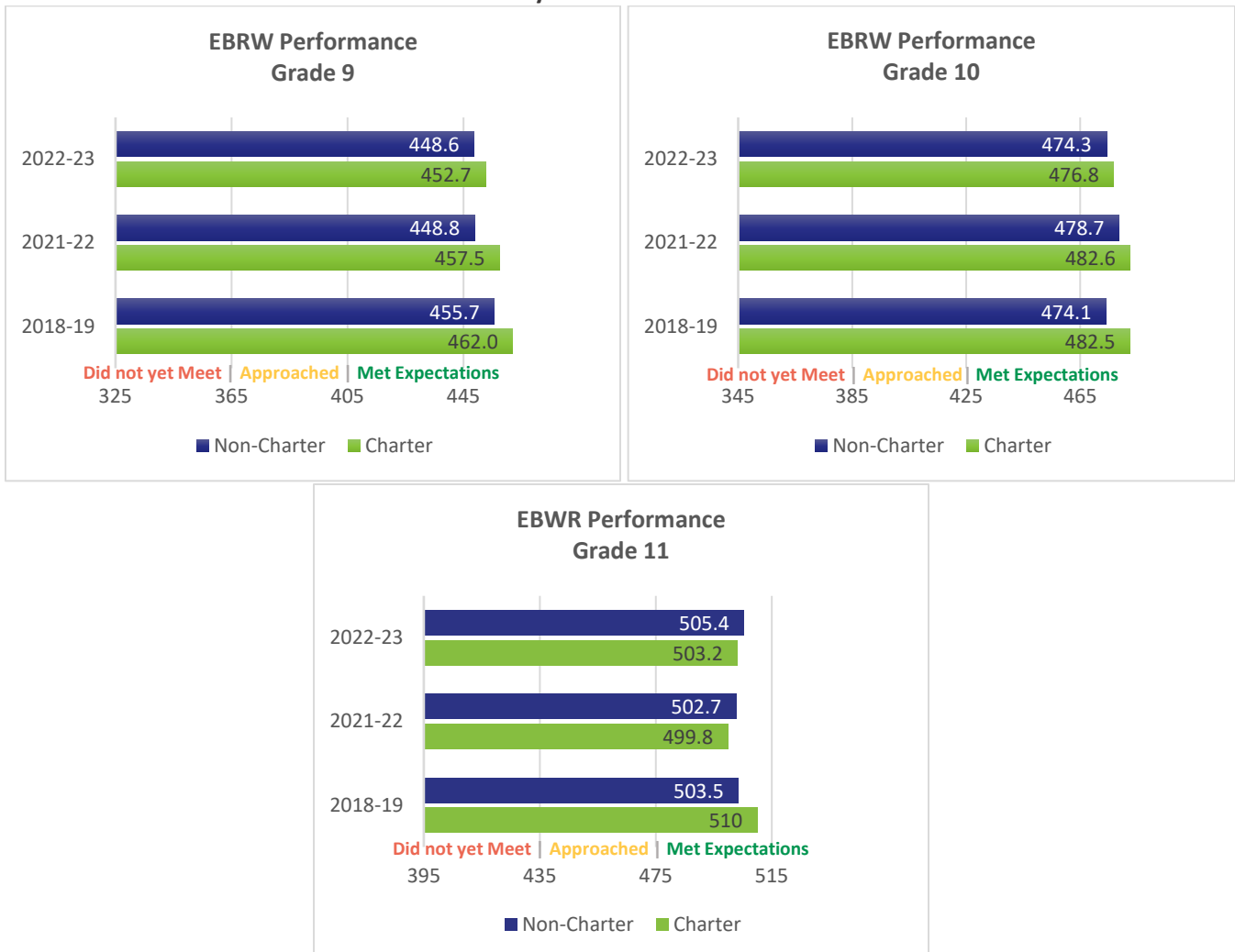
### Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) Performance – Overall and by Grade and Year

Table 21 displays the 2022-23 average Mean Scale Scores and the associated rating for each grade level within charter and non-charter schools on the EBRW assessment. In 2022-23 charter school students in grades 9 and 10 earned higher MSS on average than their non-charter peers. Conversely, in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, non-charter schools had higher scores. In charter schools, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students met expectations. In non-charter schools, 10<sup>th</sup> grade students approached expectations, whereas 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students met expectations.

**TABLE 21: 2022-23 PSAT and SAT EBRW Mean Scale Score and Rating**

Grade Level	Charter Mean Scale Score	Rating	Charter Participation Rate	Non-Charter Mean Scale Score	Rating	Non-Charter Participation Rate	Difference
Grade 9	452.7	Met	84.0%	448.6	Met	85.2%	4.1
Grade 10	476.8	Met	79.7%	474.3	Approached	84.0%	2.5
Grade 11	503.2	Met	84.0%	505.4	Met	87.5%	-2.2

As depicted in Figure 27, charter schools demonstrated higher average Mean Scale Scores compared to non-charter schools on the EBRW assessment for grade 9 and 10 in each of the years shown. For 11<sup>th</sup> grade, charter schools had higher average MSS than non-charters in 2018-19 but lower average MSS than non-charters in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school year.

**FIGURE 27: PSAT and SAT EBRW Performance by Year and Grade Level**


### Math Performance – Overall and by Grade and Year

Math performance mirrored the trends seen on the EBRW assessment. Students in charter schools showed higher scores except for the 11<sup>th</sup> grade and in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

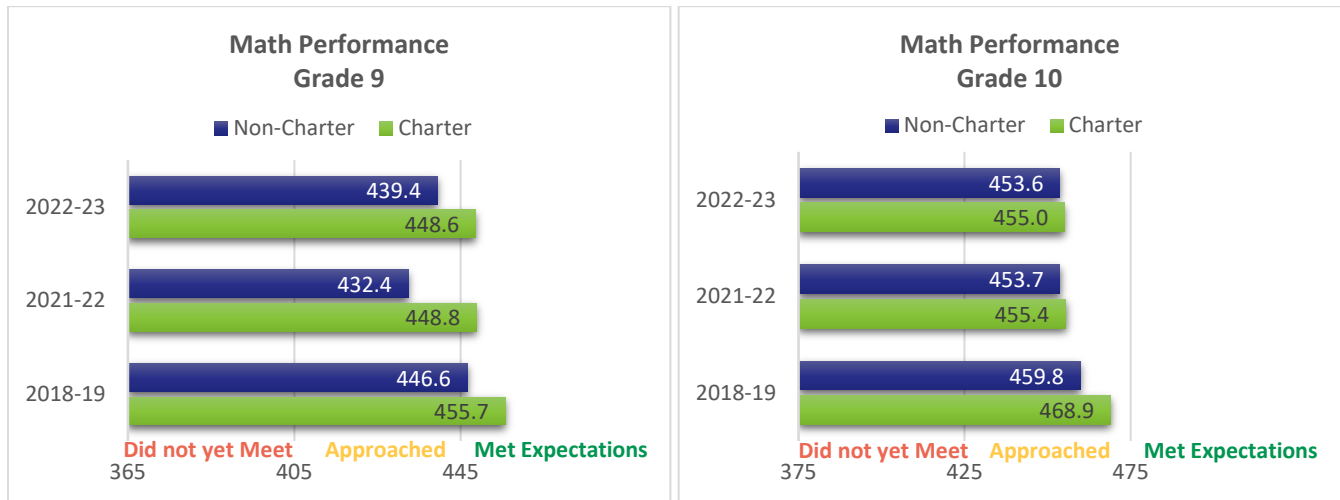
Table 22 displays the 2022-23 Mean Scale Scores and the rating for each grade level within charter and non-charter schools on the math assessment. In 2022-23 students in grades 9 and 10 in charter schools earned higher MSS than non-charter students, while a higher scale score was achieved by the 11<sup>th</sup> grade students in non-charter schools. In charter schools, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students approached expectations, while 9<sup>th</sup> grade scores met expectations. In non-charter schools, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade student scores approached expectations.

**TABLE 22: 2022-23 PSAT and SAT Math Mean Scale Score and Rating**

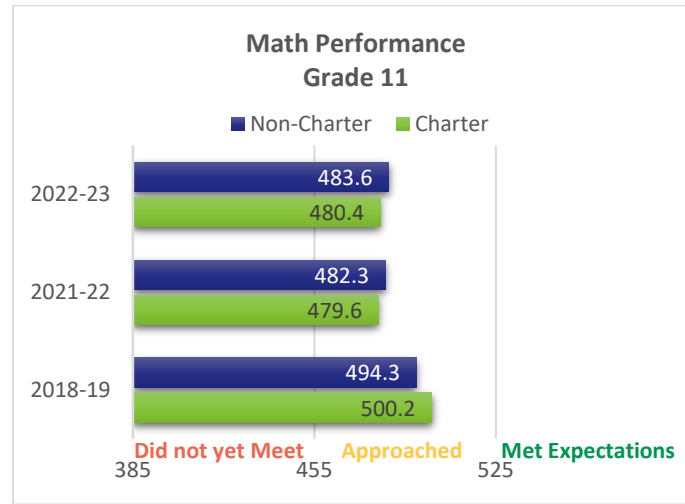
	Charter average MSS	Rating	Non-Charter average MSS	Rating	Difference
Grade 9	448.6	Met Expectations <sup>12</sup>	439.4	Approached Expectations	9.2
Grade 10	455.0	Approached Expectations	453.6	Approached Expectations	1.4
Grade 11	480.4	Approached Expectations	483.6	Approached Expectations	-3.2

As depicted in Figure 28, charter schools demonstrated higher average Mean Scale Scores compared to non-charter schools on the Math assessment for grades 9 and 10 in the 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23 school years. For 11<sup>th</sup> graders, average scores were higher in charters schools in 2018-19 but higher in non-charters in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. This mirrors the trend of the EBRW assessments for the same school years.

**FIGURE 28: PSAT and SAT Math Performance**



<sup>12</sup> The PSAT and SAT are graded in 10 points increments. The maximum score for the Math PSAT 9 in the “Approached Expectations” level is 440, and the minimum score in the “Met Expectations” level is 450. Hence, with a Mean Scale Score of 448.6 in 2022-23, charter school 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are on average closest to the “Met Expectations” level, but technically in between the two.



### Evidence-Based Reading and Writing Performance – Disaggregated Results

As shown in Table 23, during the 2022-23 school year, disaggregated average achievement results were higher at charter schools for all student populations, except for students without an IEP, who had a slightly higher average score in non-charter schools. Achievement gaps between student groups were smaller at charter schools compared to non-charter schools, as illustrated in Figures 29 through 32 – except the gap between students of color and white non-Hispanic students, which was smaller in non-charter schools, as shown in figure 30.

**TABLE 23: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Student Group 2022-23**

	FRL	Non-FRL	Students of Color	White Students	ML	Non-ML	IEP	Non-IEP
<b>Charter</b>	431.8	508.1	451.1	518.5	397.2	497.6	390.3	487.6
<b>Non-Charter</b>	426.3	504.1	443.4	508.2	384.7	489.7	384.8	487.7
<b>Difference</b>	5.5	4.0	7.7	10.3	12.5	7.9	5.5	-0.1

Figure 29 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools and non-charter schools had a 1.5-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches and students who are not.

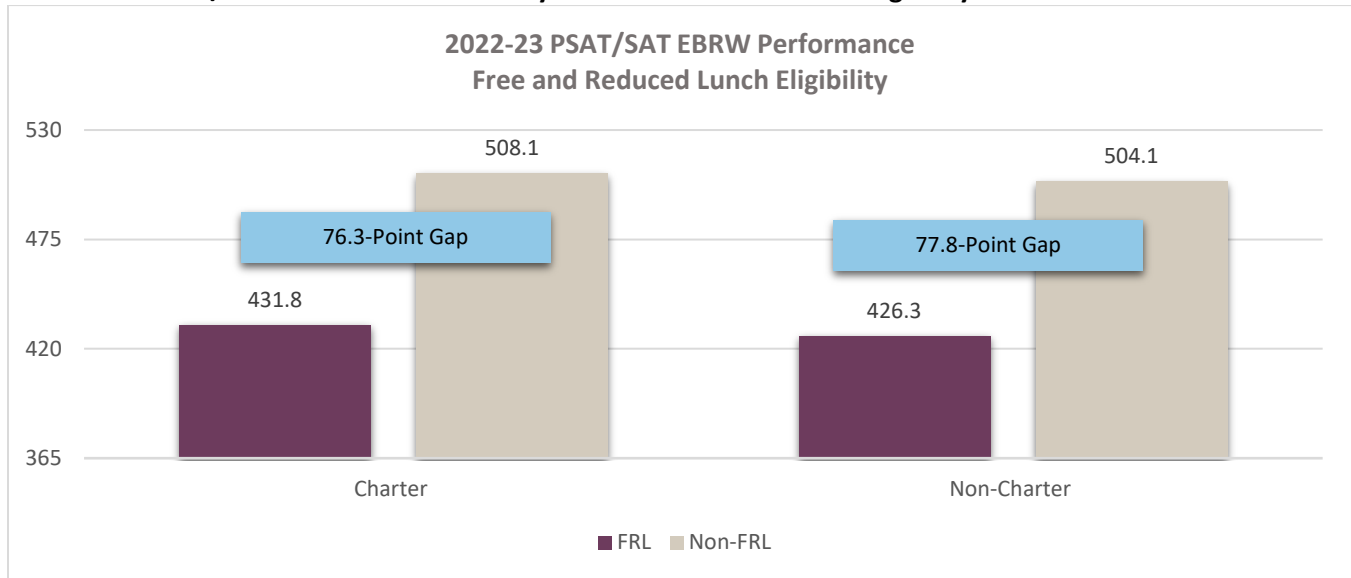
**FIGURE 29: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility**


Figure 30 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 2.6-point larger gap than non-charter schools between students of colors and white non-Hispanic students.

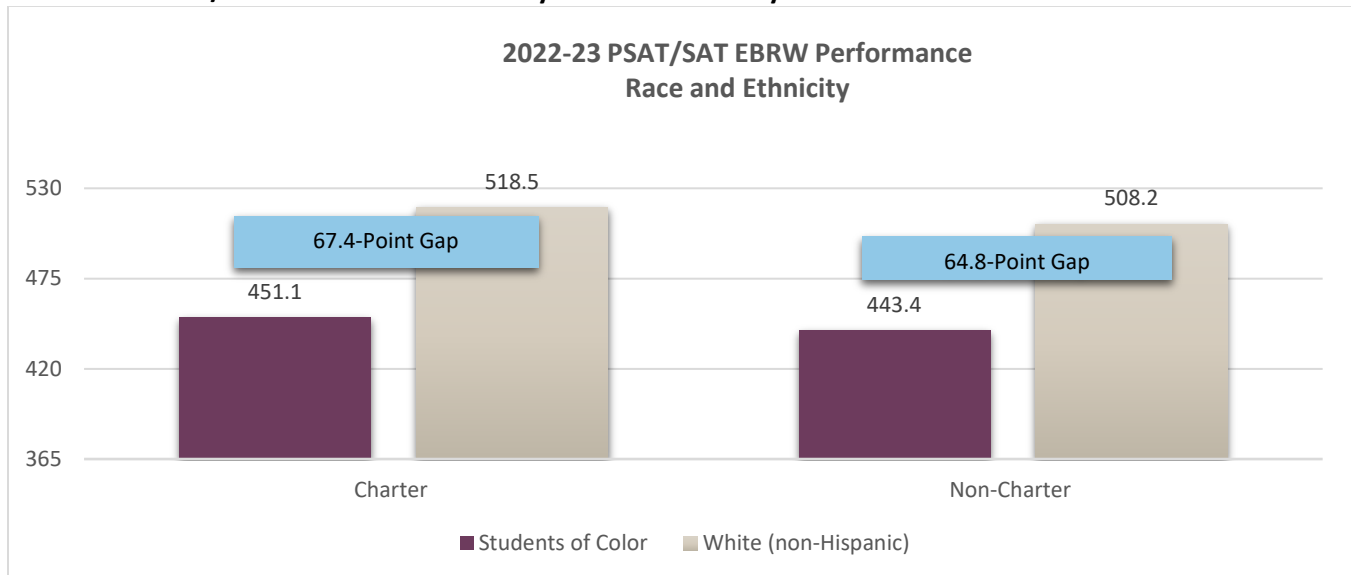
**FIGURE 30: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Race and Ethnicity**


Figure 31 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for Multilingual Learners in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 4.6-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between multilingual and non-multilingual students.

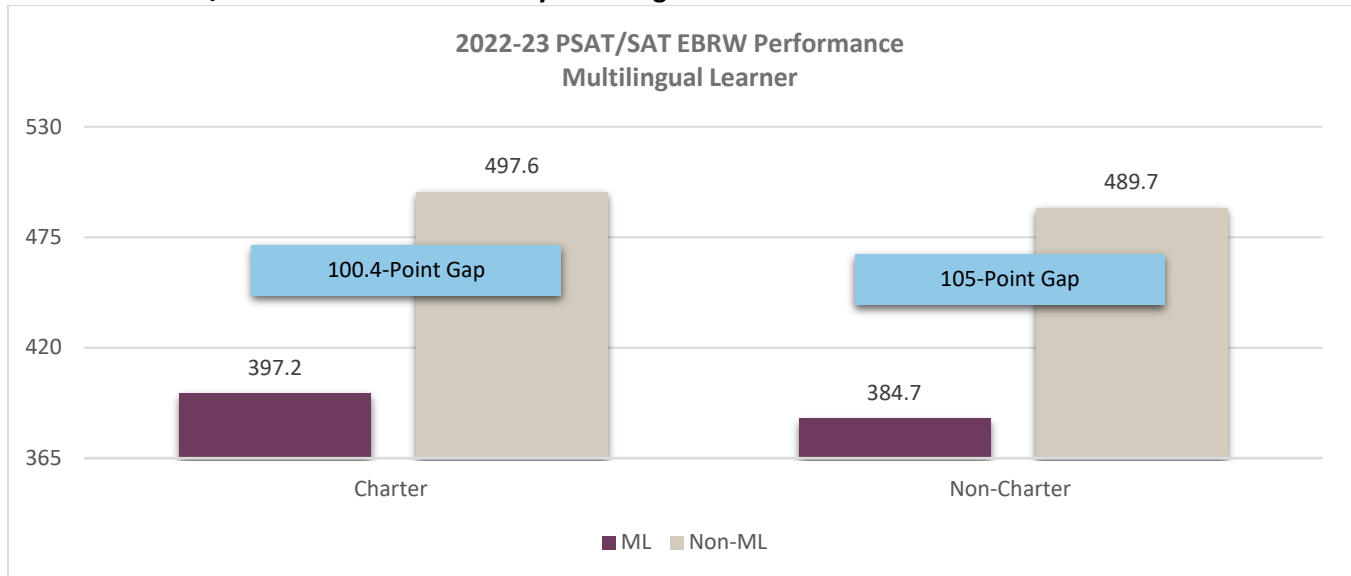
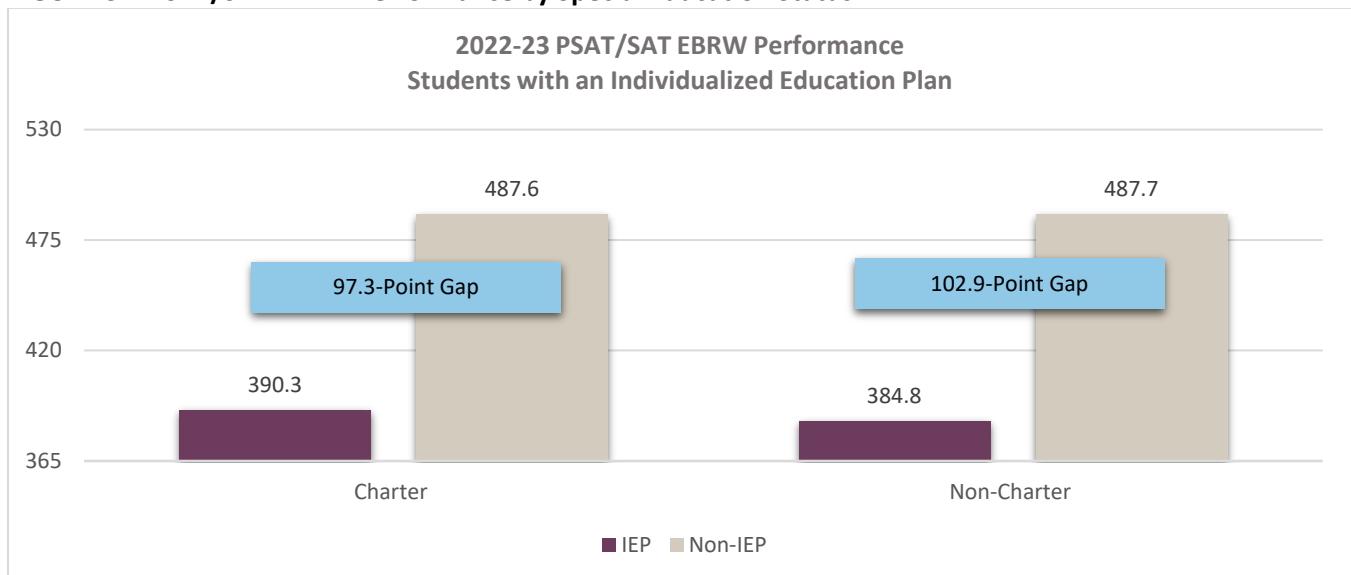
**FIGURE 31: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Multilingual Learner Status**


Figure 32 displays the PSAT/SAT EBRW results for students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Plan in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 5.6-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students in Special Education programs and students who are not.

**FIGURE 32: PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance by Special Education Status**


### PSAT/SAT Math Performance – Disaggregated Results

As indicated in Table 24, the disaggregated results during the 2022-23 academic year were higher at charter schools on the Colorado PSAT/SAT Math exam for all student groups, except for non-FRL and non-IEP students. In looking at score differences between student groups, charter schools showed narrower gaps for all groups by

about 10 Mean Scale Score points. Although the narrower gaps merit recognition, many of the gaps continue to be quite large. A summary of these scores and analyses can be found in Figures 33-36.

**TABLE 24: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Subgroup**

	FRL	Non-FRL	ML	Non-ML	Students of Color	White Students	IEP	Non-IEP
<b>Charter</b>	421.3	483.3	401.4	473.2	439.7	487.9	384.8	466.7
<b>Non-Charter</b>	411.7	483.7	383.8	469.7	428.4	486.8	376.3	467.8
<b>Difference</b>	9.6	-0.4	17.6	3.5	11.3	1.1	8.5	-1.1

Figure 33 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools showed a 10.0-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches and students who are not.

**FIGURE 33: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility**

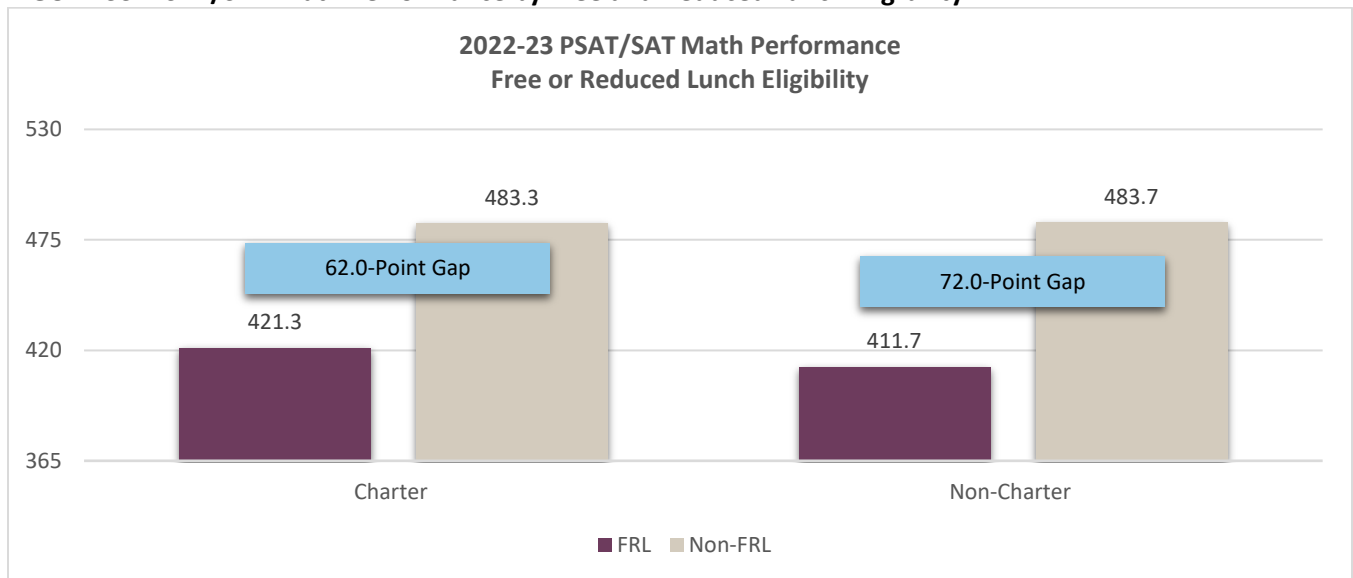


Figure 34 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for students of color in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 10.2-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students of colors and white non-Hispanic students.

**FIGURE 34: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Race and Ethnicity**

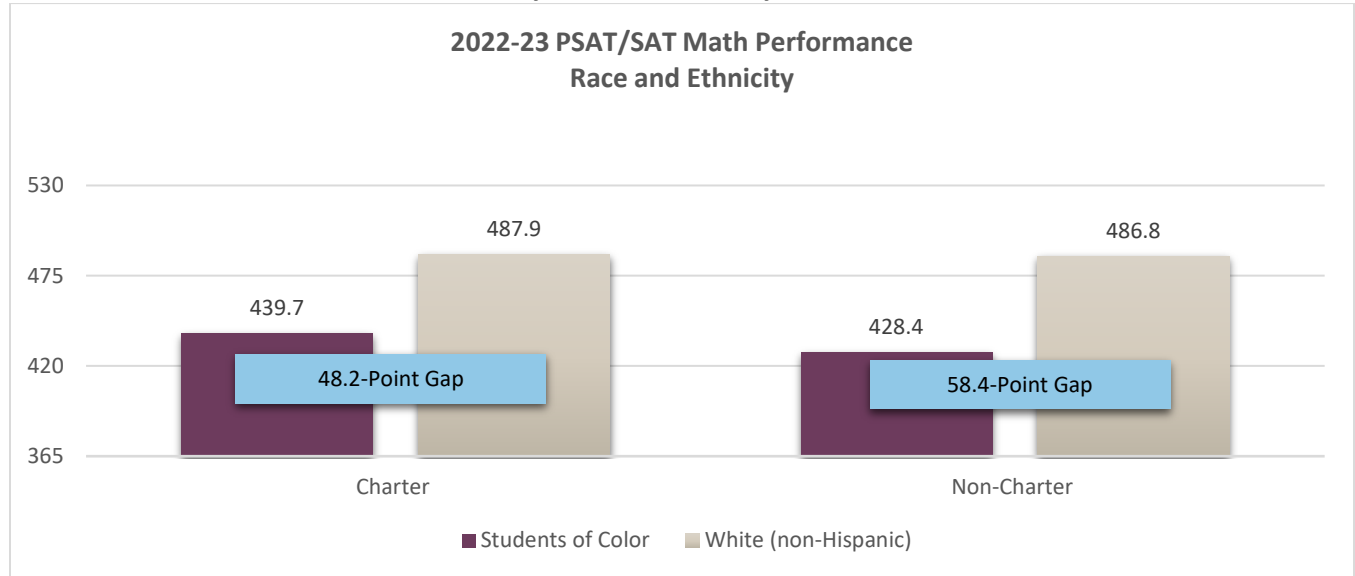


Figure 35 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for Multilingual Learner students in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 14.1-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between multilingual and non-multilingual students.

**FIGURE 35: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Multilingual Learner Status**

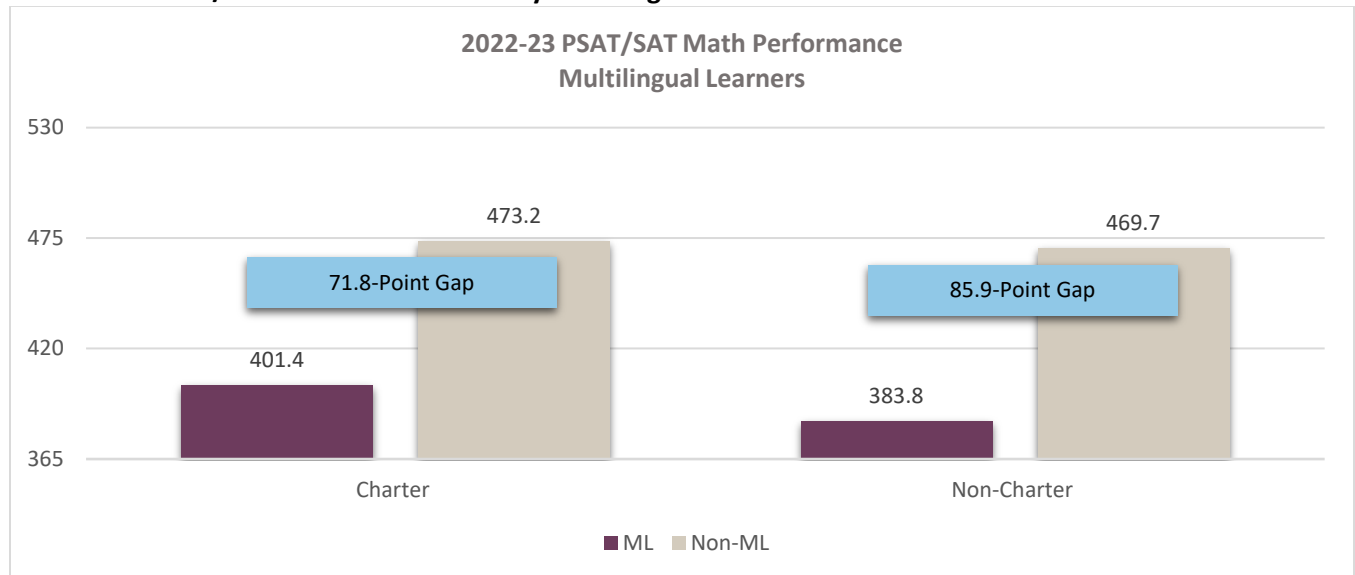
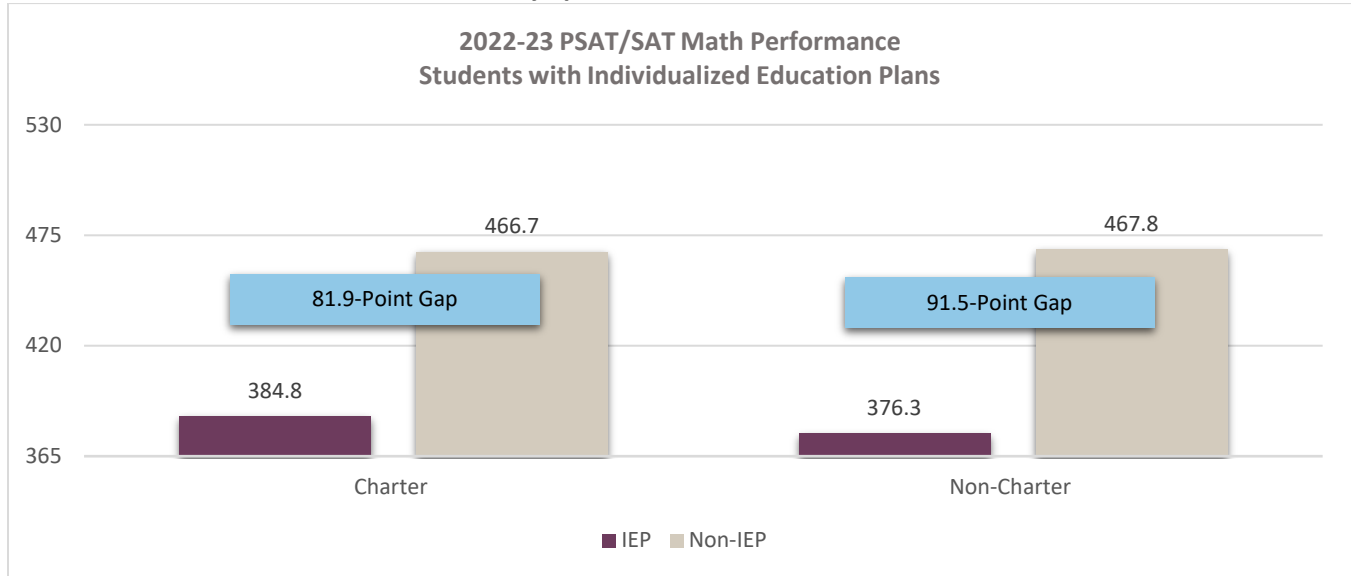


Figure 36 displays the PSAT/SAT math results for students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Plan in both charter and non-charter schools. Charter schools had a 9.6-point smaller gap than non-charter schools between students in Special Education programs and students who are not.



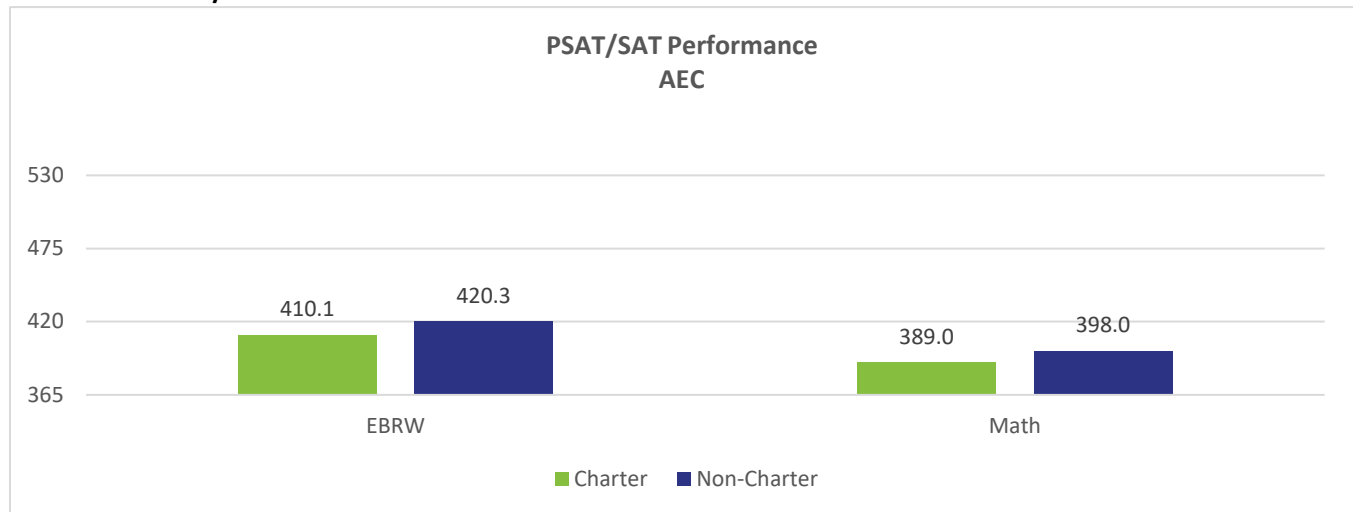
**FIGURE 36: PSAT/SAT Math Performance by Special Education Status**



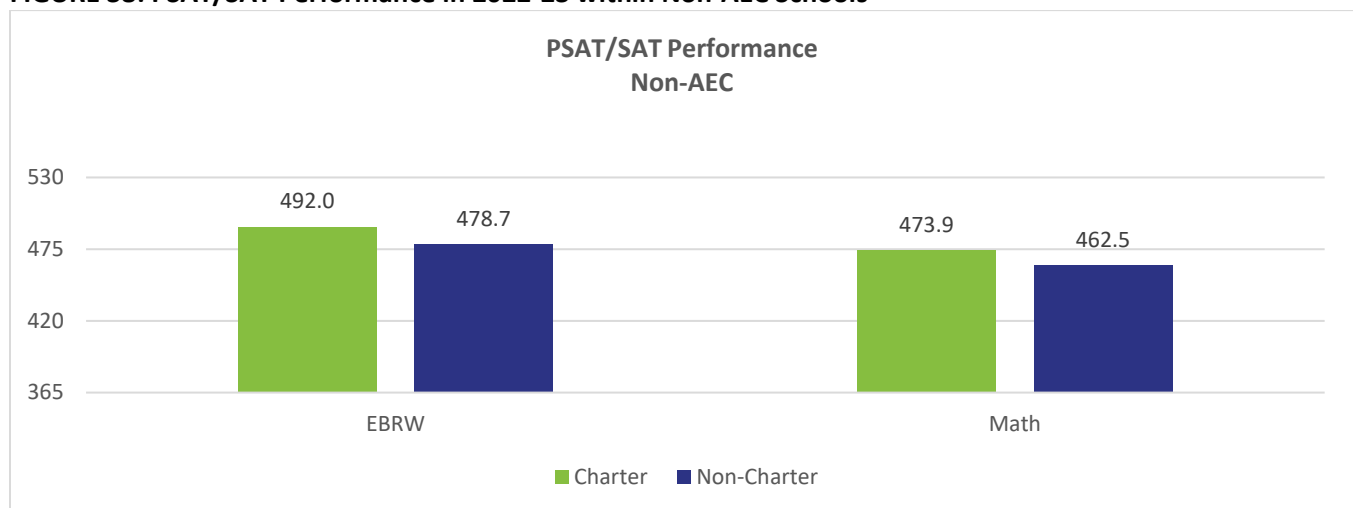
#### PSAT/SAT EBRW Performance – Alternative Education Campus

Alternative Education Campuses, also known as AECs, serve youth who previously dropped out of school or are at high-risk for dropping out (the statutory requirements for a school to have AEC status includes serving at least 90% of students that meet “high risk” conditions). The majority of AEC students are juniors or older with almost half (47 percent) of students in AECs categorized as 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. In most cases, students transfer to AECs from another middle or high school or enroll directly after being out of school. In the 2022-2023 school year, over 28,00 students (or about 10 percent of Colorado’s high school students) attended one of the state’s 87 AECs. About 15% of AECs in the state of Colorado (13 schools) are charter schools.

The analysis found in Figure 37, focusing on the academic achievements of students in Alternative Education Campuses (AECs) both charter and non-charter, revealed that those attending charter AEC schools obtained a lower mean scale score in both EBRW and math than their counterparts in non-charter AEC schools.

**FIGURE 37: PSAT/SAT Performance in 2022-23 within AEC Schools**


In contrast, when looking at non-AEC schools as shown in Figure 38 (next page), students in charter non-AEC schools earned higher performance scores in both EBRW and math.

**FIGURE 38: PSAT/SAT Performance in 2022-23 within Non-AEC Schools**


### School Performance Frameworks

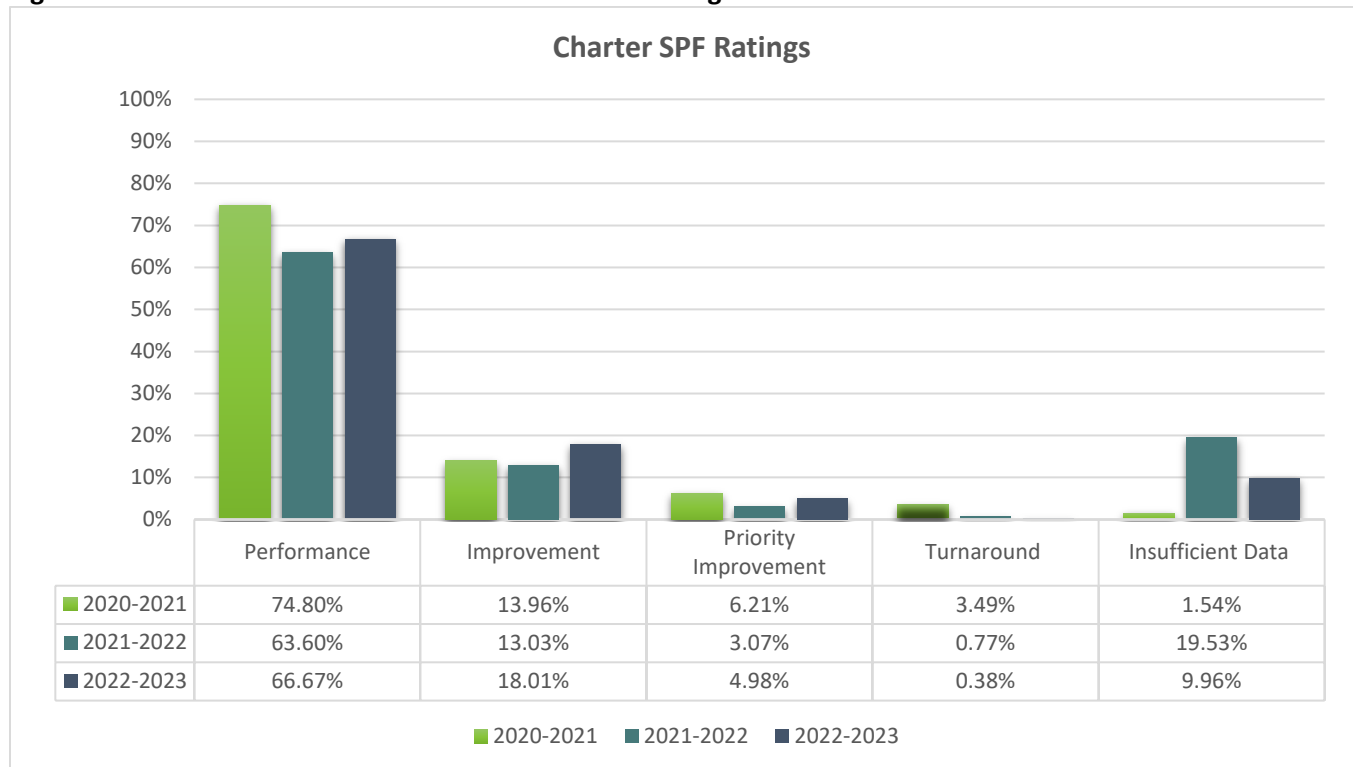
School Performance Frameworks (SPF) are an annual rating published by the Colorado Department of Education for public schools in the state, offering a summative report of a school's academic performance for the year.<sup>13</sup> Frameworks were not released in 2019-20 or 2020-21 due to the disruptions in assessments caused by the pandemic. Ratings from the 2018-19 school year were carried forward for these years, with a corresponding pause in the state accountability clock.

<sup>13</sup> Additional information regarding accountability frameworks, including scoring guides, can be found here : <https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performanceframeworks>

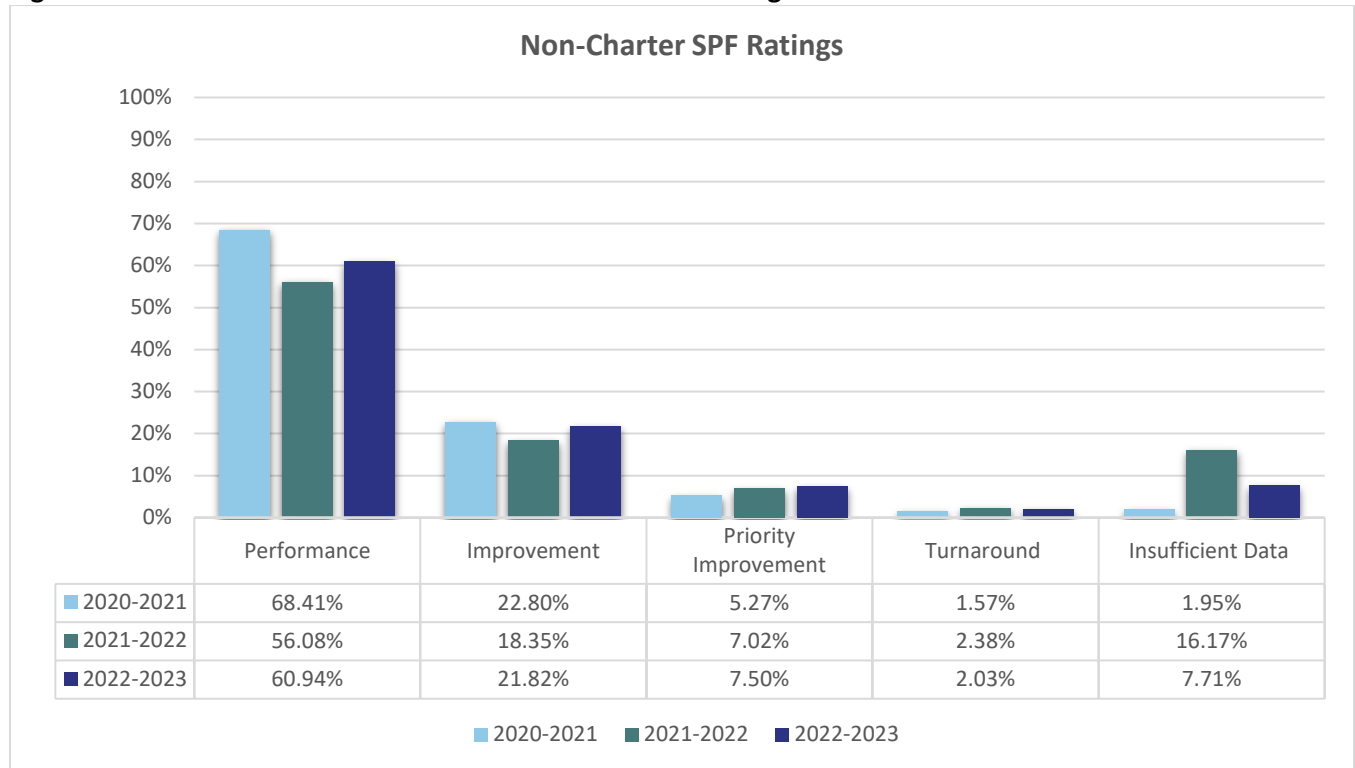


As illustrated in Figures 39 and 40, over the past three years for which data is available, the proportion of charter schools receiving the highest rating of “Performance” on their Frameworks has consistently been higher than it is for non-charter schools (please note that the 2020-21 ratings presented in the figures are mostly those carried over from 2018-19, since the accountability frameworks were paused in 2019-20 and 2020-21). In 2022-23, 67% of charter schools earned a Performance rating, compared with 61% of non-charter schools. Additionally, the proportion of charter schools assigned to the lowest rating of “Turnaround” decreased by 3 percentage points between 2020-21 and 2022-23. During the 2021-22 period, there was a significant rise in the proportion of schools receiving “Insufficient Data” ratings for both charters and non-charters (19.53% and 16.17%, respectively), followed by a gradual decrease in that regard for both types of schools during the 2022-23 school year (though not to pre-pandemic levels). Charter schools had higher rates of “insufficient data” than non-charter schools in 2021-22 and 2022-23. “Insufficient Data” ratings are given when participation is low.

**Figure 39: Charter School Performance Frameworks Ratings Year Over Year**



**Figure 40: Non-Charter School Performance Frameworks Ratings Year Over Year**



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

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

It is important to evaluate AEC performance separately because Alternative Education Campuses, by their inherent design as focusing on dropout recovery, will have different outcomes on certain Post-secondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) indicators when compared to students in traditional high schools. Furthermore, there is a much higher concentration of charter schools among AECs, making this distinction in the analysis relevant for a comprehensive assessment of charter schools' performance.

As depicted in Table 25, 1.7% of non-charter students were enrolled in an Alternative Education Campus (AEC), while 5.8% of students enrolled in charter schools were enrolled in an AEC.

**TABLE 25: Alternative Education Campus (AEC) Enrollment 2022-23**

	Number of Students Enrolled in AEC Schools	Number of Total Students Enrolled K-12	Percent of Students Enrolled in AEC Schools
<b>Charter Schools</b>	7,931	137,722	5.8%
<b>Non-Charter Schools</b>	12,788	745,542	1.7%
<b>Overall</b>	20,719	883,246	2.3%

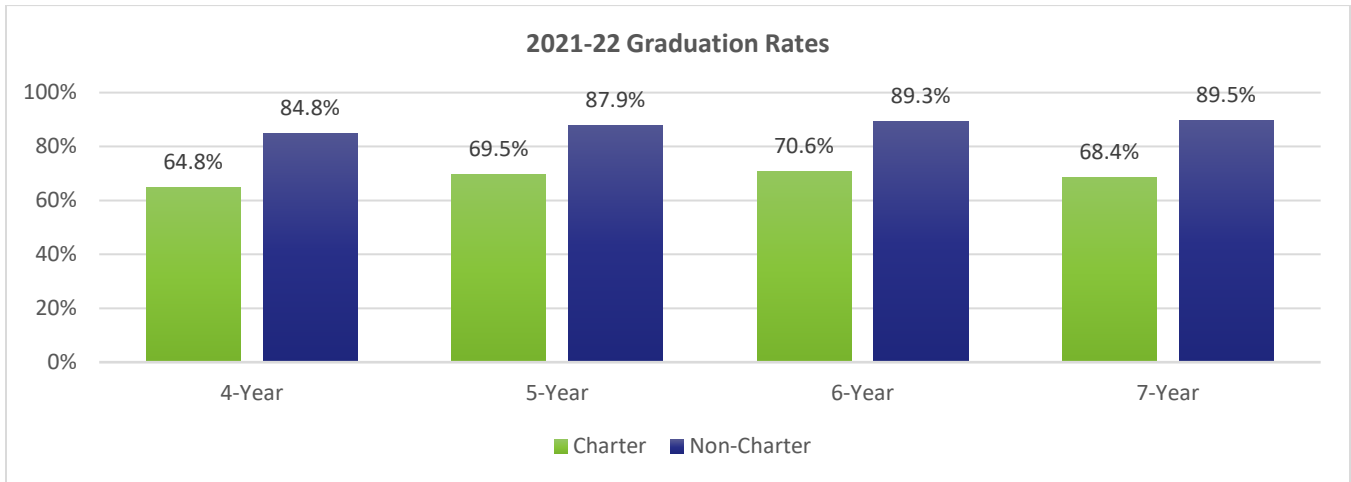
### Graduation Rate

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

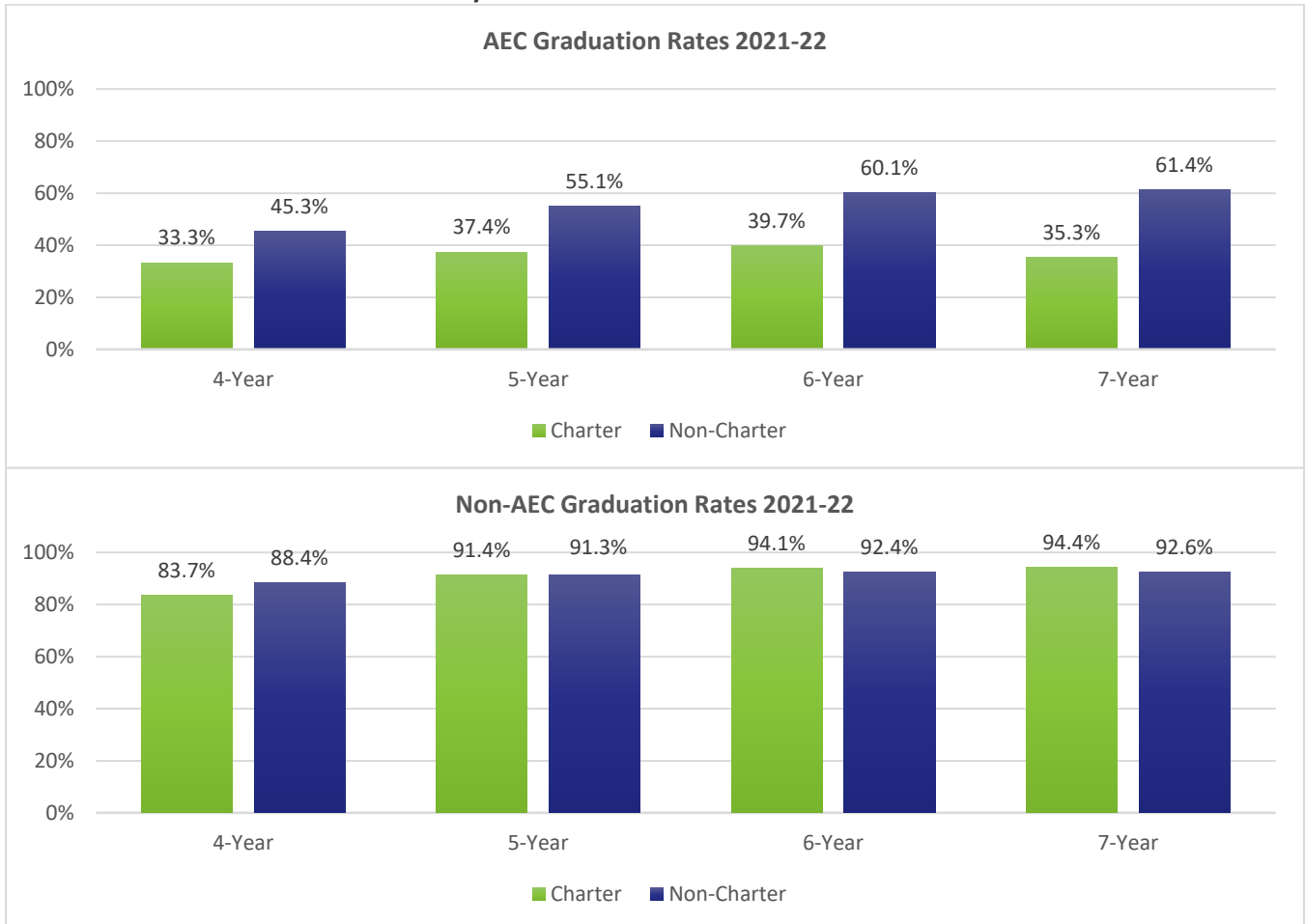
For this report's purpose, a comparison was completed for graduation rates for charter and non-charter schools for various cohorts graduating in 2021-22 (e.g., 4-year rate reflecting the class of 2022, 5-year rate reflecting the class of 2021, etc.). The findings indicate that charter schools have lower graduation rates, as shown in Figure 41. When separated by AEC status, charter schools show significantly lower graduations rates for alternative education campuses and comparable rates for non-AEC high schools (charters show lower 4-year rates, but higher 6- and 7-year rates and basically equal rates for 5-year graduates), as shown in figure 42.

Graduation rates for the 2022-23 school year will be included in next year's report due to the timing of when graduation rates are finalized.

**FIGURE 41: 2021-22 Graduation Rates**



**FIGURE 42: 2021-22 Graduation Rates by AEC Status**



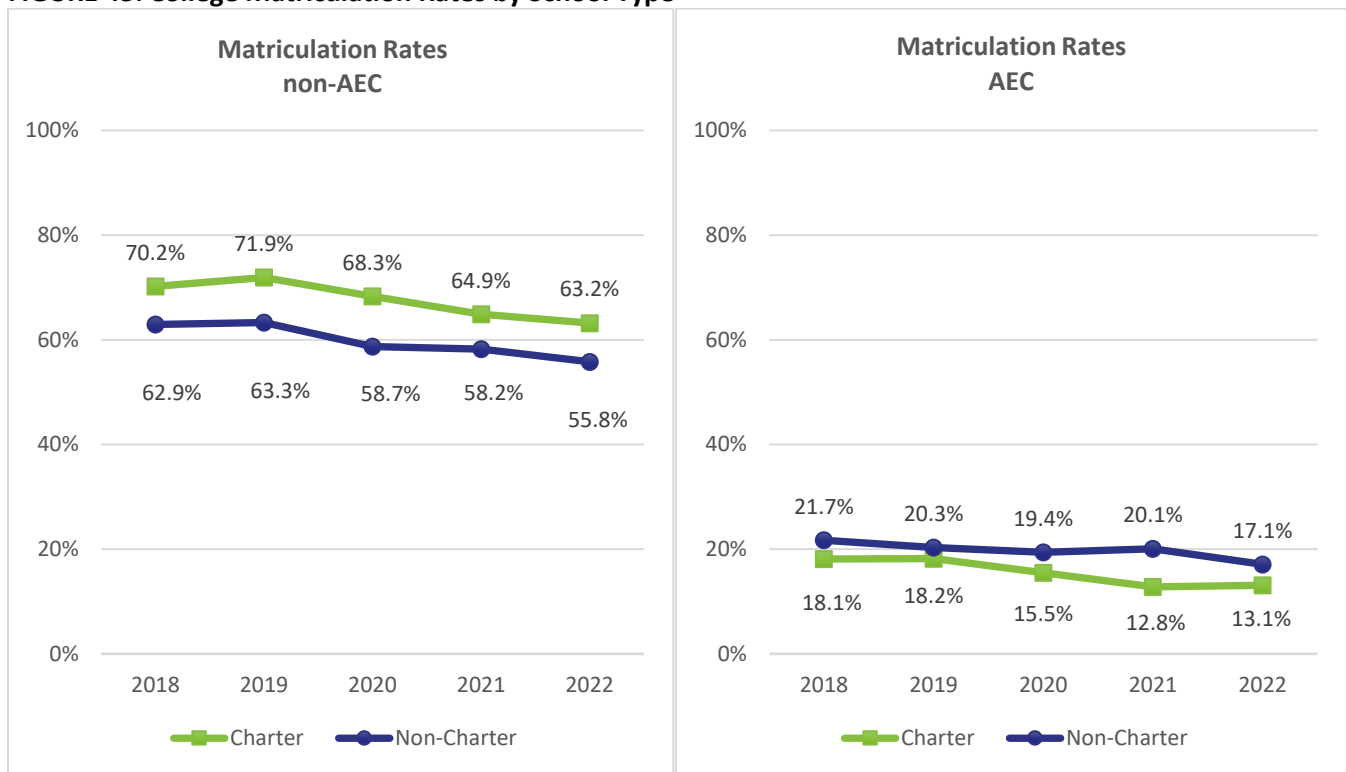
## Matriculation Rate

The Colorado Department of Education reports matriculation rates as a part of the School Performance Framework. The matriculation rate is the percentage of high school graduates who enroll in a career and technical education program, community college, four-year institution of higher education or the military during the summer or fall term immediately following graduation.<sup>14</sup>

Consistent with the outcomes for graduation rates, matriculation rates for charter schools and non-charter schools vary based on whether the schools are AECs or non-AECs. It is important to note that the pandemic influenced matriculation rates. Since 2020, both charter and non-charter schools have shown an overall decline in matriculation rates.

As shown by Figure 43, matriculation rates are higher for charter schools compared to non-charter schools in non-AECs, but they are lower for charter AECs.

**FIGURE 43: College Matriculation Rates by School Type**



<sup>14</sup> More information is available in CDE's [2023 Matriculation Fact Sheet](#).

## Part Seven: Human Resources

This section reports on characteristics of teacher staffing in Colorado charter schools and non-charter schools. The information presented comes from data collected and reported by the Colorado Department of Education for the 2022-23 school year.

### Teacher Salaries

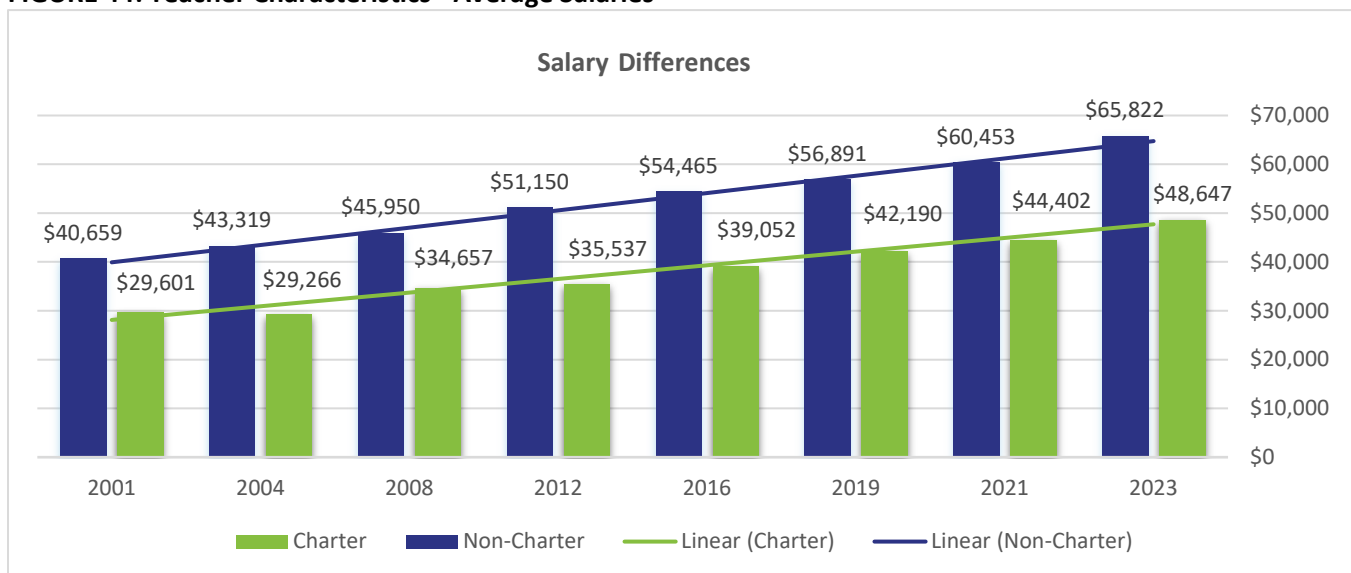
As presented in Table 26, the average salary for teachers in charter schools was \$48,647 as compared to \$65,822 in non-charter schools statewide during the 2022-23 school year.

**TABLE 26: Average Teacher Salaries**

	Charter	Non-Charter	Difference
<b>2023</b>	\$48,647	\$65,822	\$17,175
<b>2021</b>	\$44,402	\$60,453	\$16,051
<b>2019</b>	\$42,190	\$56,891	\$14,701
<b>2016</b>	\$39,052	\$54,465	\$15,413
<b>2012</b>	\$35,537	\$51,150	\$15,613
<b>2008</b>	\$34,657	\$45,950	\$11,293
<b>2004</b>	\$29,266	\$43,319	\$14,053
<b>2001</b>	\$29,601	\$40,659	\$11,058

Charter school teacher salaries have continually lagged behind those in non-charter schools. The salary gap between charter school teachers and non-charter school teachers in 2001 was \$11,058 and has grown to \$17,175 in 2023. Figure 44 illustrates the differences in teacher salary between charters and non-charters over time.

**FIGURE 44: Teacher Characteristics - Average Salaries**





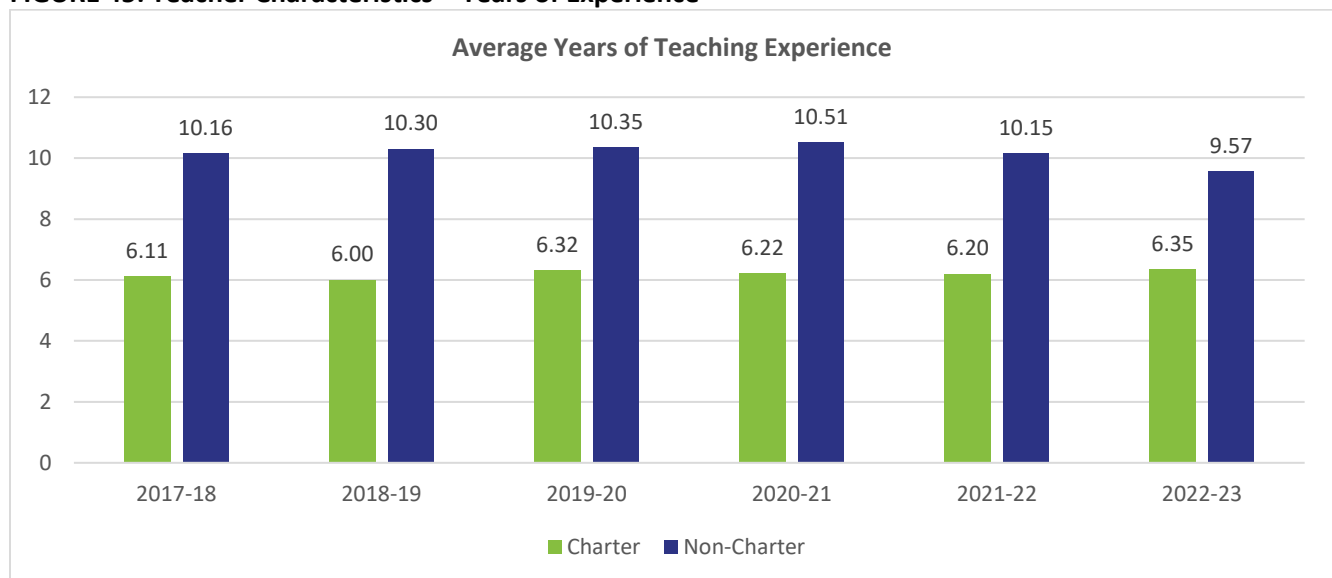
This widening difference in teacher pay with charter schools can be attributed to multiple factors<sup>15</sup>, including:

- **Facility expenses:** As found in prior studies, charter schools use a larger percentage of annual per pupil revenue (PPR) to pay for rents, lease payments, and or debt payments for the facilities they occupy.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, many districts are able to cover a much larger share of their capital expenses through bonds or other historical factors that lessen the need to draw from PPR. As the cost of land and facilities continues to rise in Colorado, facilities expenses continue to present greater challenges – particularly for schools in earlier stages of their development.
- **Experience levels:** Charter school teachers have fewer years of experience on average when compared to non-charter public school teachers (see specific data in the next section). Thus, if average years of experience narrow over time, one may find that the differences in salaries would also narrow.
- **Financial reserves:** Although school districts and charter schools are required to maintain a certain amount of reserves under TABOR, larger districts have a greater ability to raise or sustain salary levels even if it places short-term strain on financial reserves. Charter schools tend to have far fewer reserves and are therefore less able to approve a salary structure that would require a short-term drawdown of reserve balances.

### Teaching Experience

The average years of teaching experience for charter school teachers have historically been lower than those for non-charter school teachers. Between 2017-18 and 2020-21, this difference has been stable between 4 and 4.3 years. In recent years, this gap has shown some narrowing as the average years of experience within non-charter schools has been declining since school year 2021-22. During this same period, averages for charter schools have shown a slight increase in 2022-23. As a result, this gap is now 3.22 years, or a full year lower. Figure 45 displays the years of experience of charter and non-charter teachers over the past 6 years.

**FIGURE 45: Teacher Characteristics – Years of Experience**



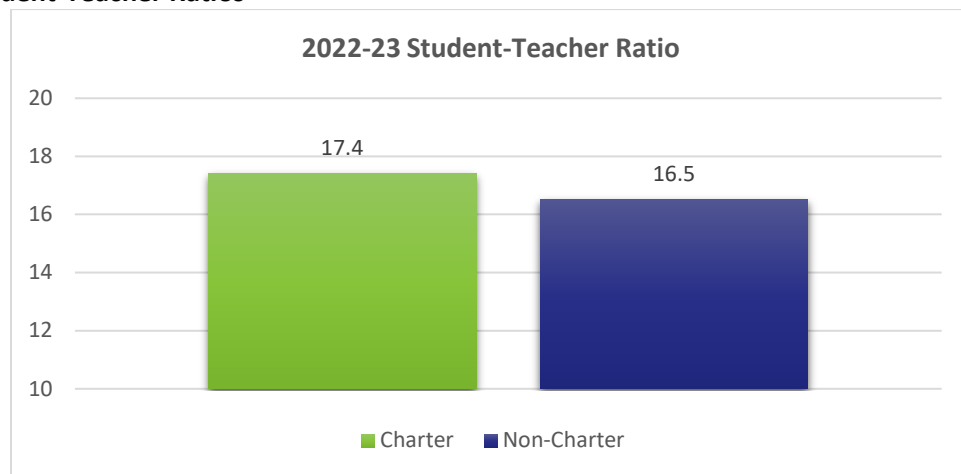
<sup>15</sup> The factors listed are not universal to all charter schools - or to all school districts; however, the explanations have been shown to be fruitful in understanding averages.

<sup>16</sup> Last report is from 2016-17 and is available at: [An Analysis of The Charter School Facility Landscape in Colorado \(ed.gov\)](https://ed.gov/An-Analysis-of-The-Charter-School-Facility-Landscape-in-Colorado)

### Student-Teacher Ratio

During the academic year 2022-23, charter schools maintained an average student-to-teacher ratio of 17.4, whereas non-charter schools exhibited an average ratio of 16.5.

**FIGURE 46: Student-Teacher Ratios**

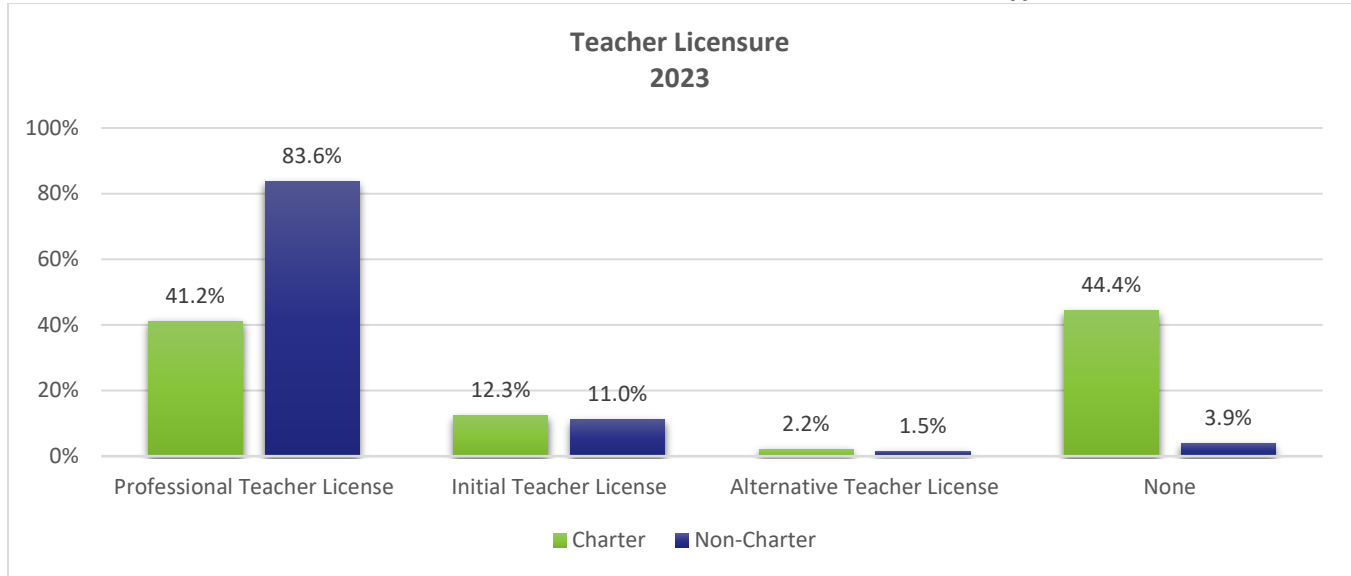


### Teacher Licensure and In-Field/Out of Field Status

In Colorado, most charter schools have a waiver of teacher licensure laws from section 22-63-201, C.R.S., which means that they generally are not required to hire licensed classroom staff.<sup>17</sup> When a charter school requests a licensure waiver from the State Board of Education, the charter school must provide an explanation for how they will meet the intent of the statute, publish this explanation on the school's financial transparency website, ensure for legally-required background checks, and participate in applicable Federal reporting and notification requirements related to the qualifications of staff.

As shown in figure 47, an active license is held by roughly 96% of non-charter school teachers, compared to 56% of teachers in charter schools.

<sup>17</sup> Charter schools are not waived from Federal licensure requirements that apply to special education providers.

**FIGURE 47: Teacher Characteristics – Licensure Rates for Teachers in Each School Type**


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

Colorado introduced four methods to demonstrate subject matter expertise, as listed on Table 27, and monitored teachers who were classified as out of field. In School Year 2022-23, 25.0% of charter teachers were found to be teaching out of field, compared to 5.9% for non-charter schools.

**Table 27: Primary Method a Teacher Establishes In-Field Designation**

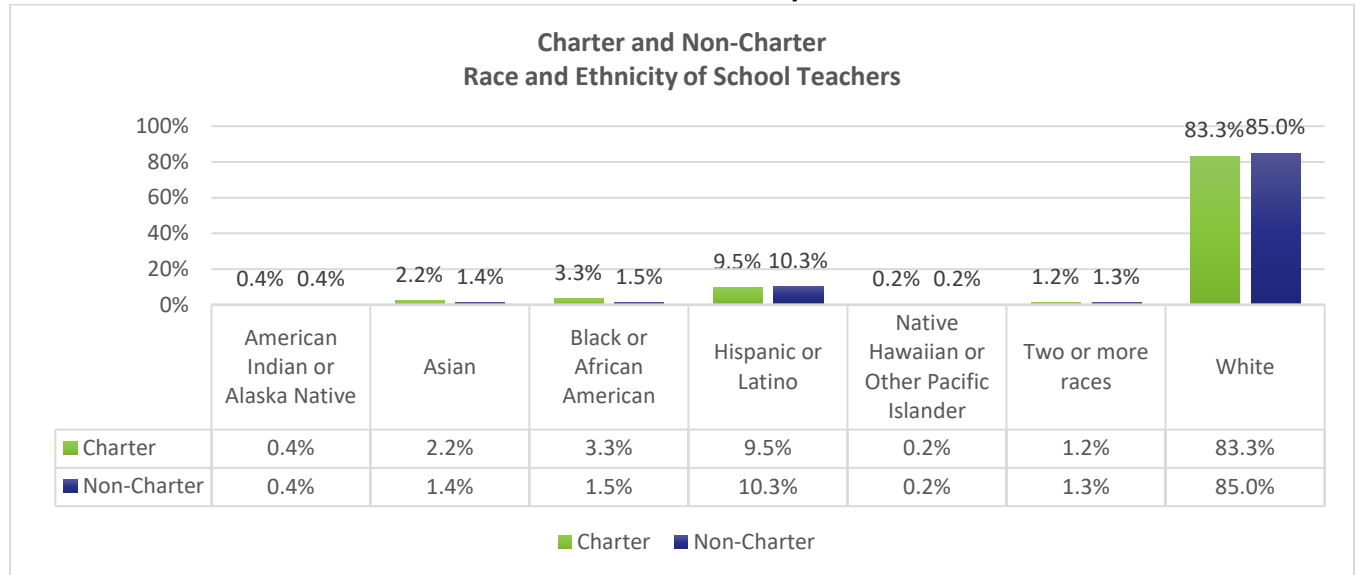
	Charter	Non-Charter
Subject area endorsement on teaching license	33.5%	66.6%
Degree (BA or higher) in subject area	23.0%	13.7%
36 semester credit hours in subject area	9.5%	11.9%
Passed State Board of Education content exam in subject area	9.0%	1.9%
Teacher is out of field	25.0%	5.9%

### Teacher Diversity

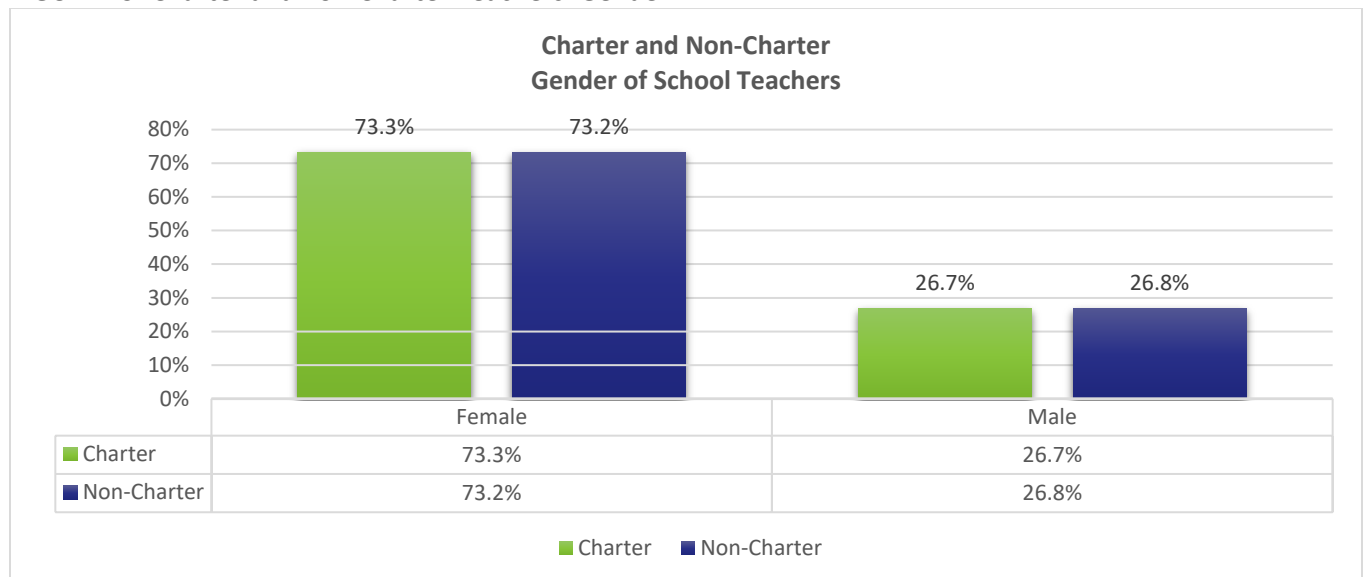
As depicted in Figures 48 and 49, the demographic profile of charter school teachers closely mirrors that of non-charter teachers. Charter educators exhibit a slightly higher representation of Black or African American professionals and Asian professionals than non-charters do, by 1.8 and 0.8 percentage points, respectively. There

is a slightly lower percentage of Hispanic or Latino and White educators in charter schools than in non-charter schools, by 0.8 and 1.7 percentage points, respectively.

**FIGURE 48: Charter and non-Charter Teachers' Race and Ethnicity**



**FIGURE 49: Charter and non-Charter Teachers' Gender**





## Part Eight: Colorado State Actions Concerning Charter Schools

---

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

### Legislative Action

While the operation of charter schools in Colorado is largely governed by the Colorado Charter Schools Act, there are also numerous other state laws that impact charter schools. This report summarizes legislation of note passed between 2019 and 2023 that has impacted both authorizers and charter schools during this time.

#### Legislation Related to Charter School Finance

##### **S.B. 19-246 Public School Finance**

- Per Pupil Funding: Funding for the 2019-20 school year increased by \$182.76, for a total amount of \$6,951.53.
- Kindergarten: Full-day kindergarten funding for all schools.
- Capital Assistance Fund: Increased allocations to the charter capital assistance fund.
- Special Education: Increased Per Pupil Revenue for educating students with disabilities for all schools.
- Mill Levy: Increased Charter School Institute (CSI) equalization funding to approximately \$7.5 million.

##### **H.B. 20-1418 Public School Finance**

- Per Pupil Funding: Funding for the 2020-21 school year increased by 1.9% or \$132.08, for a total amount of \$7,083.61.
- Mill Levy: Decreased Charter School Institute (CSI) equalization funding to approximately \$5.6 million.

##### **S.B. 21-268 Public School Finance**

- Per Pupil Funding: Funding for the 2021-22 school year increased by 2.0% or \$141.67, for a total amount of \$7,225.28.
- Mill Levy: Increased Charter School Institute (CSI) equalization funding to approximately \$9 million.

##### **H.B. 22-1390 Public School Finance**

- Per Pupil Funding: Funding for the 2022-23 school year increased by 3.5% or \$252.88, for a total amount of \$7,478.16.
- Mill Levy: Increased Charter School Institute (CSI) equalization funding to approximately \$17 million.

##### **S.B. 23-287 Public School Finance**

- Per Pupil Funding: Funding for the 2023-24 school year increased by \$598.25, for a total amount of \$8,076.41.
- Charter Legislative Report: Increased the frequency of the charter report from a triannual to annual cycle.
- Public Entity: Charter schools, including charter networks and charter collaboratives, were officially designated as public entities. Consequently, they are now required to submit specific documentation to formalize this status. Members of local charter school boards must undergo an oath of office and submit the necessary paperwork to the division of Local Affairs. You can access the list through [this link](#).
- CSI Mill Equalization: CSI has generally experienced regular increased appropriations into the state mill levy equalization fund. In 2023, the General Assembly voted to fully fund this account. Thus, moving forward, CSI schools will be funded consistent with this policy.
- Charter School Capital Assistance Fund: An increase of over \$10 million in the Charter School Capital Assistance Fund.



## **Other Important Legislation**

### **S.B. 21-157 Moral Obligation Program**

- This bill increased the cap on the state’s “Moral Obligation Program” by \$250M which has supported charter schools with accessing lower interest rates for building facilities. By increasing the cap, the Colorado Educational and Cultural Facilities Authority (CECFA) is able to support qualified charter schools with accessing lower-interest bond financing for school construction.

### **H.B. 22-1294 Special Education Services in Charter Schools**

Prior to the passage of this bill, school districts in Colorado – not the charter schools authorized by those districts – were one of the only allowable “administrative units,” or AUs, for purposes of supervising special education delivery in charter schools.<sup>18</sup>

H.B. 22-1294 allows interested groups of charter schools to seek AU status from the state. It also allowed individual charter schools to move from a district-administered AU to a CSI-administered AU.

Some key provisions of the bill included:

- Ability for charter schools to weigh their lottery more favorably for students with disabilities.
- Ability for charter school collaboratives to seek an alternative AU designation.
- Ability for charter schools to join CSI’s AU for special education purposes only, while remaining a district-authorized charter school.

Groups of charter schools and advocates are currently working on implementation of this bill. Currently, no schools have moved away from their historic AU structure. This is due, in part, to the time required for the state to define procedures for such a move. In addition, the planning necessary to prepare a comprehensive design for administering a new AU is significant and the state anticipates that it may take some time for a well-designed application to come forward.

### **H.B. 23-1025 Charter School Applications Timeline**

This bill expanded the standard application window under statute to 18 months instead of 12 months. Due to this expanded window schools can still open in the school year as planned to allow additional time due to possible unforeseen challenges, including appeals.

## **Other Important State Initiatives**

Apart from these charter-specific efforts, efforts were also focused on general pandemic relief. A significant number of resources, coming from both federal programs such as ESSER<sup>19</sup> and GEER<sup>20</sup>, as well as state-led sources, were distributed fairly to charter schools. Several essential elements of this support included:

- **RISE Grant:** This was a competitive grant for educational organizations administered by the Governor’s office to help with the pandemic recovery. Charter schools both independently and as collaboratives, were eligible to apply and did, in several cases, receive grant awards.

---

<sup>18</sup> The Charter School Institute (CSI) functions as the Administrative Unit for CSI-authorized schools. Also, some rural charter schools are overseen by a BOCES that serves as the Administrative Unit for their region.

<sup>19</sup> Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (link [here](#))

<sup>20</sup> Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (link [here](#))



- ESSER Fund Distribution: Colorado districts were required by the state to share these funds equitably with charter schools.
- H.B. 1258 on Rapid Mental Health for Colorado Youth: This bill provided additional support for mental health for students as a response to the pandemic.
- H.B. 1234 on High-Impact Tutoring Programs: This bill provided resources for districts and schools, including charter schools, to offer tutoring services to address learning gaps related to the pandemic.

## Waivers from State Statute

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

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

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

Lastly, charter schools may request waivers from state law 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 Colorado Department of Education website at [Waivers & Policy Guidance | CDE \(state.co.us\)](https://www.cde.state.co.us/waivers-policy-guidance). 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 a school and the school's authorizer before a final waiver request is submitted to the State Board of Education.

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 school's existence. Typically, schools, authorizers, and the Colorado Department of Education's Schools of Choice Unit review the waivers of a charter school every three to five years prior to submitting them to the State Board of Education for re-approval.

Charter schools, like innovation schools, may also request waivers from certain aspects of 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.

### 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 can be granted automatically, and these are codified in state board rules. Charter schools are not required to submit any additional documentation to obtain these waivers if the waivers are explicitly stated in the charter contract. Table 28 outlines the waivers that are approved by the State Board of Education as automatic as of this time of report.

**TABLE 28: Automatic Waivers**

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

As specified by H.B. 17-1375, CDE is responsible for providing charter schools with a “standardized description” for each automatic waiver and a rationale for including the statute on the list of automatic waivers. This document is maintained on the charter schools page of the department’s website at [Automatic Waivers for Charter Schools \(state.co.us\)](https://www.cde.state.co.us/automatic-waivers-for-charter-schools). All charter schools are required to post a copy of this file on their financial transparency page within 30 days of State Board of Education approval.

### 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 29.

**TABLE 29: Non-Automatic Waivers 2022-23**

Statute	Statute Title	School Count
22-9-106	Local Board Duties Concerning Performance Evaluations	267
22-63-201	Teacher Employment Act - Compensation & Dismissal Act- Requirement to hold a certificate	265
22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(A)	Calendar - Determining teacher-pupil contact hours	249
22-63-203	Teacher Employment Act-Requirements for probationary teacher, renewal & nonrenewal	249
22-63-202	Teacher Employment Act - Contracts in Writing, Damage Provision	247
22-63-206	Teacher Employment Act-Transfer of teachers	245
22-2-112(1)(q)(I)	Commissioner-Duties – Reporting performance evaluation ratings	242
22-32-109(1)(n)(I)	Local Board Duties Concerning School Calendar	242
22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(B)	Calendar – Determining instructional days	238
22-32-109(1)(b)	Local Board Duties Concerning Competitive Bidding	218
22-32-110(1)(y)	Local Board Powers-Accept Gifts, Donations, Grants	207
22-7-1014(2)(a)	Preschool Individualized Readiness Plans - School Readiness - Assessments	110

### 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, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services (§22-30.5-104(3), C.R.S.)

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



## Charter School Support and Research by CDE

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

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

- Administering the Federal Charter School Program Grant;
- Offering technical support and guidance to charter schools and authorizers and presenting about charter schools and charter policy for various programs, groups, and task forces;
- Reviewing contracts and preparing waiver requests for the State Board of Education;
- Supporting data collection and analysis on charter schools to ensure ready public access to information about charter schools and their performance.
- Conducting in-depth studies on specific topics and performing the state evaluation of charter schools;
- Addressing a diverse range of inquiries from the general public, media organizations, think tanks, and other research centers; and
- Supporting other Departmental units with administering programs that require technical support within the context of charter school operations and governance.

## Recommendations for Future Actions

- As highlighted in this report, authorizers play a pivotal role in establishing conditions for a high-quality charter school sector within Colorado. In this report, the Department instituted a new collection to better understand authorizer practices and applicable findings from charter reviews. Department staff will continue to review this information, refine the collection, and utilize the information to disseminate examples of strong established practices and explore more fully the relationship between strong practices and effective, school-level outcomes.
- With state collections in place for school-level financial transparency, the Department sees potential for analyzing charter school financial performance and health through these tools. Such analysis may include analysis of charter reserves relative to district averages, grant expenditure levels, and rates of spending on facilities relative to per pupil revenues.
- The department will continue to monitor charter school data and outcomes post-pandemic to identify possible trends of note. This may include enrollment and/or performance trends and may include financial indicators as well. When notable trends are identified, particularly around narrowing achievement gaps, they should be explored for possible case studies of evolving practices.
- With recent policy revisions clarifying access rights for students with disabilities to school choice, the department will continue to monitor enrollment outcomes. Other strategies that may be worth considering to ensure equal access include:
  - Ensure that the school, authorizing unit, and public stakeholders understand the requirements for ensuring access to schools of choice;
  - Invest in capacity building activities to ensure that all schools have the knowledge, skills, and resources to provide high quality education for all students; and
  - Engage in parent education and provide the tools necessary for parents to make well informed decisions and understand the rights that they have for schools of choice.



## Appendix A: 2022-23 Colorado Charter Schools

School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
New Summit Charter Academy	6242	Academy 20	2019	601	628	Performance Plan	K-08
TCA College Pathways	8779	Academy 20	1997	520	511	Performance Plan	07-12
The Classical Academy Charter	1627	Academy 20	1994	2,144	2149	Performance Plan	K-06
The Classical Academy High School	1630	Academy 20	1994	552	547	Performance Plan	09-12
The Classical Academy Middle School	1629	Academy 20	1994	392	420	Performance Plan	07-08
New America School - Thornton	4699	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2004	244	240	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Prospect Ridge Academy	6802	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2011	1,463	1453	Performance Plan	K-12
Stargate Charter School	1519	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	1994	1,494	1551	Performance Plan	K-12
Westgate Community School	9431	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	2009	549	540	Performance Plan	K-12
Academy of Advanced Learning	0126	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2018	872	789	Performance Plan	K-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
<b>Aurora Academy Charter School</b>	0458	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2020	506	512	Performance Plan	K-08
<b>Aurora Science &amp; Tech High School</b>	5964	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2022	N/A	161	Improvement Plan	09-09
<b>Aurora Science &amp; Tech Middle School</b>	0127	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2020	444	454	Priority Improvement Plan	06-08
<b>AXL Academy</b>	0213	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2008	358	356	Improvement Plan	PK-08
<b>Global Village Academy Aurora</b>	3471	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2007	855	856	Improvement Plan	K-08
<b>Lotus School for Excellence</b>	5298	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2006	956	951	Performance Plan	K-12
<b>Rocky Mountain Prep: Fletcher</b>	7233	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2017	545	571	Performance Plan	PK-05
<b>Vanguard Classical School - East</b>	9189	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2014	773	725	Improvement Plan	K-12
<b>Vanguard Classical School - West</b>	9056	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2007	341	363	Performance Plan	K-08
<b>Vega Collegiate Academy</b>	9053	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	2018	506	553	Performance Plan	K-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Pagosa Peak Open School	6679	Archuleta County 50 Jt	2018	122	125	Improvement Plan	K-08
Aspen Community Charter School	0042	Aspen 1	2002	135	137	Performance Plan	PK-08
Boulder Prep Charter High School	0934	Boulder Valley Re 2	1997	107	119	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Horizons K-8 School	6642	Boulder Valley Re 2	1991	348	348	Performance Plan	K-08
Justice High Charter School	4496	Boulder Valley Re 2	2006	82	102	AEC: Performance Plan	06-12
Peak to Peak Charter School	6816	Boulder Valley Re 2	200	1,448	1450	Performance Plan	K-12
Summit Middle Charter School	8387	Boulder Valley Re 2	1996	356	359	Performance Plan	06-08
Astravo Online Academy Elementary School	8994	Byers 32J	2018	679	573	Insufficient State Data	PK-05
Astravo Online Academy High School	3362	Byers 32J	2019	1,564	2134	Insufficient State Data	09-12
Astravo Online Academy Middle School	9033	Byers 32J	2019	714	827	Insufficient State Data	06-08
Colorado Online High School	2356	Byers 32J	2014	513	322	Insufficient State Data	09-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Colorado Online Middle School	2793	Byers 32J	2014	714	371	Insufficient State Data	06-08
Colorado Virtual Academy	6241	Byers 32J	2003	454	264	Insufficient State Data	K-06
Colorado Virtual Academy High School	1752	Byers 32J	2003	369	525	Insufficient State Data	09-12
Colorado Virtual Academy Middle School	6263	Byers 32J	2003	125	133	Insufficient State Data	07-08
Mount View Core Knowledge Charter School	6752	Canon City RE-1	1996	252	253	Performance Plan	PK-08
Academy of Arts and Knowledge Elementary	0657	Charter School Institute	1994	152	176	Performance Plan	K-05
Academy of Charter Schools	0015	Charter School Institute	1994	1,894	1890	Performance Plan	PK-12
Animas High School	0075	Charter School Institute	2009	204	229	Performance Plan	09-12
Ascent Classical Academy Douglas County	0079	Charter School Institute	2019	856	1036	Performance Plan	K-12
Ascent Classical Academy Northern Colorado	1005	Charter School Institute	2020	581	669	Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	K-09



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Axis International Academy	0493	Charter School Institute	2020	190	205	Performance Plan	PK-05
Caprock Academy	1279	Charter School Institute	2007	883	899	Performance Plan	K-12
Colorado Early Colleges Aurora	1633	Charter School Institute	2018	451	477	Improvement Plan	09-12
Colorado Early Colleges Colorado Springs	1795	Charter School Institute	2007	644	642	Performance Plan	06-12
Colorado Early Colleges Douglas County	2196	Charter School Institute	2014	1,096	1320	Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	09-12
Colorado Early Colleges Fort Collins	2067	Charter School Institute	2012	1,249	1091	Performance Plan	06-12
Colorado Early Colleges Online Campus	9679	Charter School Institute	2022	N/A	255	Insufficient State Data	06-12
Colorado Early Colleges Windsor	1387	Charter School Institute	2020	1,303	1881	Insufficient State Data	06-12
Colorado International Language Academy	3326	Charter School Institute	2013	308	311	Performance Plan	K-05
Colorado Military Academy	1505	Charter School Institute	2018	768	804	Priority Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	PK-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Colorado Springs Charter Academy	1791	Charter School Institute	2005	403	309	Improvement Plan	K-08
Community Leadership Academy	1882	Charter School Institute	2005	322	321	Performance Plan	PK-05
Coperni 3	1371	Charter School Institute	2020	413	298	Performance Plan	K-08
Crown Pointe Charter Academy	2035	Charter School Institute	1997	462	459	Performance Plan	K-08
Early College of Arvada	2837	Charter School Institute	2008	251	208	Improvement Plan	06-12
Global Village Academy - North	3439	Charter School Institute	2017	852	832	Performance Plan	K-08
Golden View Classical Academy	3393	Charter School Institute	2015	726	758	Performance Plan	K-12
High Point Academy	0655	Charter School Institute	2006	715	716	Priority Improvement Plan	PK-08
James Irwin Charter Academy	4403	Charter School Institute	2013	308	299	Improvement Plan	K-05





School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Kwiyagat Community Academy	5313	Charter School Institute	2022	27	48	Insufficient State Data: No Students at Grade Levels Tested for State Assessments	K-01
Montessori del Mundo Charter School	5957	Charter School Institute	2014	315	317	Improvement Plan	PK-06
Monument View Montessori Charter School	5845	Charter School Institute	2018	61	59	Insufficient State Data:	PK-05
Mountain Middle School	5453	Charter School Institute	2011	275	362	Performance Plan	04-08
Mountain Song Community School	5851	Charter School Institute	2013	403	404	Performance Plan	K-08
New America School - Aurora	6219	Charter School Institute	2005	169	124	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
New Legacy Charter School	6266	Charter School Institute	2015	84	101	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
Prospect Academy	5499	Charter School Institute	2022	N/A	61	Insufficient State Data	05-08
Ricardo Flores Magon Academy	7278	Charter School Institute	2007	251	253	Priority Improvement Plan	K-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Ross Montessori School	7512	Charter School Institute	2005	310	250	Performance Plan	K-08
Salida Montessori Charter School	8061	Charter School Institute	2015	117	128	Performance Plan	PK-08
Steamboat Montessori	5423	Charter School Institute	2017	160	151	Performance Plan	PK-06
Stone Creek School	0653	Charter School Institute	2006	314	295	Performance Plan	K-08
The Pinnacle Charter School	6914	Charter School Institute	1997	2,112	1940	Improvement Plan	K-12
Thomas MacLaren State Charter School	8825	Charter School Institute	2009	908	927	Performance Plan	K-12
Victory Preparatory Academy High State Charter School	9037	Charter School Institute	2013	112	140	Performance Plan	09-12
Victory Preparatory Academy Middle State Charter School	9040	Charter School Institute	2013	176	165	Performance Plan	06-08
Cherry Creek Charter Academy	1571	Cherry Creek 5	1995	571	594	Performance Plan	K-08
Colorado Skies Academy	0188	Cherry Creek 5	2020	214	177	Performance Plan	06-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Heritage Heights Academy	4189	Cherry Creek 5	2017	393	457	Performance Plan	K-08
Georgetown Community School	3385	Clear Creek RE-1	2006	105	94	Performance Plan	PK-06
Academy for Advanced and Creative Learning	0517	Colorado Springs 11	2010	285	289	Performance Plan	K-08
CIVA Charter Academy	1616	Colorado Springs 11	1997	186	112	Performance Plan	09-12
Community Prep Charter School	1885	Colorado Springs 11	1995	253	172	AEC: Insufficient State Data	09-12
Eastlake High School of Colorado Springs	5146	Colorado Springs 11	2004	96	101	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Globe Charter School	3470	Colorado Springs 11	1996	95	88	Performance Plan	K-06
Roosevelt Charter Academy	7482	Colorado Springs 11	1996	444	420	Priority Improvement Plan	K-05
Vision Charter Academy	2166	Delta County 50(J)	2015	398	112	Performance Plan	K-12
Vision Charter Academy K-8	0313	Delta County 50(J)	2022	N/A	259	Insufficient State Data	K-08
5280 High School	2994	Denver County 1	2019	114	104	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Academy 360	0099	Denver County 1	2013	197	210	Turnaround Plan	PK-05
AUL Denver	0067	Denver County 1	2005	157	159	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Colorado High School Charter	1748	Denver County 1	2002	191	204	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Colorado High School Charter - GES	1561	Denver County 1	2018	146	187	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Compass Academy	1939	Denver County 1	2015	284	246	Improvement Plan	06-08
Denver Justice High School	4494	Denver County 1	2009	131	102	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Denver Language School	2127	Denver County 1	2010	885	882	Performance Plan	K-08
Downtown Denver Expeditionary School	2207	Denver County 1	2013	274	259	Performance Plan	K-05
DSST: Cedar High School	2228	Denver County 1	2016	557	558	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Cedar Middle School	2186	Denver County 1	2013	476	469	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Cole High School	2175	Denver County 1	2014	357	308	Improvement Plan	09-12
DSST: Cole Middle School	2223	Denver County 1	2011	262	274	Performance Plan	06-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
DSST: College View High School	2244	Denver County 1	2015	581	558	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: College View Middle School	4381	Denver County 1	2012	484	457	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Conservatory Green High School	1529	Denver County 1	2017	576	574	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Conservatory Green Middle School	2218	Denver County 1	2014	447	476	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Elevate Northeast High School	2026	Denver County 1	2022	160	305	Performance Plan	09-09
DSST: Elevate Northeast Middle School	2190	Denver County 1	2019	456	446	Improvement Plan	06-08
DSST: Green Valley Ranch High School	2145	Denver County 1	2010	565	565	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Green Valley Ranch Middle School	2181	Denver County 1	2010	479	480	Performance Plan	06-08
DSST: Montview High School	2185	Denver County 1	2004	570	570	Performance Plan	09-12
DSST: Montview Middle School	2115	Denver County 1	2004	475	466	Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	06-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
French American School of Denver	1995	Denver County 1	2022	97	143	Insufficient State Data	K-03
Girls Athletic Leadership School High School	3540	Denver County 1	2014	110	98	Improvement Plan	09-12
Girls Athletic Leadership School Middle School	3639	Denver County 1	2010	227	187	Improvement Plan	06-08
Highline Academy Northeast	4049	Denver County 1	2014	547	579	Priority Improvement Plan	PK-05
Highline Academy Southeast	3987	Denver County 1	2004	528	531	Performance Plan	K-08
KIPP Denver Collegiate High School	4730	Denver County 1	2009	488	477	Performance Plan	09-12
KIPP Northeast Denver Leadership Academy	4509	Denver County 1	2015	565	560	Priority Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	09-12
KIPP Northeast Denver Middle School	4507	Denver County 1	2011	459	463	Improvement Plan	05-08
KIPP Northeast Elementary	4500	Denver County 1	2015	500	499	Performance Plan	PK-04
KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy	4732	Denver County 1	2002	385	387	Improvement Plan	05-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
KIPP Sunshine Peak Elementary	4850	Denver County 1	2019	155	165	Priority Improvement Plan	PK-03
Monarch Montessori	5621	Denver County 1	2012	220	223	Performance Plan	K-05
Odyssey School of Denver	6479	Denver County 1	1998	278	291	Performance Plan	K-08
Omar D Blair Charter School	6508	Denver County 1	2004	679	727	Performance Plan	K-08
RiseUp Community School	7361	Denver County 1	2015	97	120	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Rocky Mountain Prep: Berkeley	1345	Denver County 1	2019	323	298	Improvement Plan	PK-05
Rocky Mountain Prep: Creekside	7241	Denver County 1	2012	581	578	Performance Plan	PK-05
Rocky Mountain Prep: Southwest	7471	Denver County 1	215	413	358	Improvement Plan	PK-05
SOAR at Green Valley Ranch	8053	Denver County 1	2010	467	483	Improvement Plan	K-05
Rocky Mountain Prep: Federal	8085	Denver County 1	2006	360	366	Performance Plan	06-08
Rocky Mountain Prep: Green Valley Ranch	9730	Denver County 1	2012	367	361	Improvement Plan	06-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Rocky Mountain: Noel	9735	Denver County 1	2012	171	194	Improvement Plan	06-08
Rocky Mountain: Rise	7973	Denver County 1	2017	537	524	Improvement Plan	09-12
Rocky Mountain: Ruby Hill	8401	Denver County 1	2014	439	391	Performance Plan	K-05
Rocky Mountain: Smart Academy	9639	Denver County 1	2012	510	540	Improvement Plan	09-12
Rocky Mountain: Sunnyside	9336	Denver County 1	2010	190	144	Improvement Plan	06-08
Rocky Mountain: Westwood	9389	Denver County 1	2009	311	314	Improvement Plan	06-08
University Prep - Arapahoe St.	8945	Denver County 1	2011	303	280	Performance Plan	K-05
University Prep - Steele St.	6957	Denver County 1	2017	315	287	Performance Plan	PK-05
Wyatt Academy	9739	Denver County 1	1998	179	191	Performance Plan	K-05
Banning Lewis Ranch Academy	0555	District 49	2006	1,676	1600	Performance Plan	K-12
GOAL Academy	3475	District 49	2008	5,328	5690	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
Grand Peak Academy	4251	District 49	2008	618	596	Improvement Plan	K-08





School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Liberty Tree Academy	5191	District 49	2019	648	689	Performance Plan	K-11
Mountain View Academy	0467	District 49	2021	354	393	Performance Plan	K-07
Pikes Peak School Expeditionary Learning	6935	District 49	1999	392	396	Performance Plan	K-08
Pioneer Technology and Arts Academy	1275	District 49	2022	220	445	Performance Plan	K-08
Power Technical Early College	6653	District 49	2017	340	368	Performance Plan	06-12
Rocky Mountain Classical Academy	7463	District 49	2006	1096	1132	Performance Plan	K-08
Academy Charter School	0011	Douglas County Re 1	1993	739	751	Performance Plan	PK-08
American Academy	0215	Douglas County Re 1	2005	2,556	2559	Performance Plan	PK-08
Aspen View Academy	6019	Douglas County Re 1	2013	930	961	Performance Plan	PK-08
Ben Franklin Academy	0135	Douglas County Re 1	2011	905	893	Performance Plan	PK-08
Challenge to Excellence Charter School	1512	Douglas County Re 1	2022	536	538	Performance Plan	K-08
DC Montessori Charter School	5997	Douglas County Re 1	1997	489	442	Performance Plan	PK-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Global Village Academy - Douglas County	3327	Douglas County Re 1	2015	383	364	Performance Plan	K-05
HOPE Online Learning Academy High School	3995	Douglas County Re 1	2005	1,600	1361	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
HOPE Online Learning Academy Middle School	3847	Douglas County Re 1	2005	414	394	Priority Improvement Plan	06-08
Leman Classical Academy	5225	Douglas County Re 1	2019	1,038	1100	Performance Plan	K-08
North Star Academy	1579	Douglas County Re 1	2006	673	683	Performance Plan	K-08
Parker Core Knowledge Charter School	1873	Douglas County Re 1	2015	703	706	Performance Plan	K-08
Parker Performing Arts	6719	Douglas County Re 1	2017	657	639	Performance Plan	K-08
Platte River Charter Academy	7047	Douglas County Re 1	1997	543	567	Performance Plan	PK-08
Renaissance Secondary School	7244	Douglas County Re 1	2018	330	347	Performance Plan	06-12
Skyview Academy	6365	Douglas County Re 1	2010	1,257	1273	Performance Plan	PK-12
STEM School Highlands Ranch	5259	Douglas County Re 1	2011	1,670	1498	Performance Plan	K-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
World Compass Academy	9397	Douglas County Re 1	2015	679	711	Performance Plan	PK-08
The Juniper School	4384	Durango 9-R	2018	143	162	Performance Plan	K-05
Eagle County Charter Academy	2340	Eagle County RE 50	1994	360	361	Performance Plan	K-08
Legacy Academy	2572	Elizabeth School District	1997	449	510	Performance Plan	K-08
Frontier Charter Academy	1875	Greeley 6	2001	1,621	1609	Performance Plan	K-12
Salida del Sol Academy	8467	Greeley 6	2006	593	602	Improvement Plan	K-08
Union Colony Elementary School	8975	Greeley 6	1997	369	325	Improvement Plan	K-05
Union Colony Preparatory School	8965	Greeley 6	1997	362	364	Performance Plan	06-12
University Schools	2850	Greeley 6	1999	1,748	1771	Performance Plan	K-12
West Ridge Academy	9611	Greeley 6	2011	424	402	Performance Plan	K-08
Marble Charter School	5577	Gunnison Watershed RE1J	1995	42	55	Insufficient State Data	K-10



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Atlas Preparatory Elementary School	5898	Harrison 2	2021	206	267	Insufficient State Data	K-03
Atlas Preparatory High School	0469	Harrison 2	2009	512	479	Performance Plan	09-12
Atlas Preparatory Middle School	0369	Harrison 2	2009	516	484	Improvement Plan	05-08
James Irwin Charter Elementary School	4380	Harrison 2	200	531	542	Performance Plan	K-05
James Irwin Charter High School	4378	Harrison 2	2000	416	403	Performance Plan	09-12
James Irwin Charter Middle School	4379	Harrison 2	2000	459	451	Performance Plan	06-08
The Vanguard School (Elementary)	1582	Harrison 2	2006	1,099	1058	Performance Plan	K-06
The Vanguard School (High)	9057	Harrison 2	2006	311	321	Performance Plan	09-12
The Vanguard School (Middle)	9051	Harrison 2	2006	232	219	Performance Plan	07-08
Gardner Valley School	3306	Huerfano Re-1	2021	82	76	Priority Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	PK-08
Addenbrooke Classical Academy	1451	Jefferson County R-1	2013	184	201	Improvement Plan	09-12



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Addenbrooke Classical Grammar School	0491	Jefferson County R-1	2014	635	728	Performance Plan	PK-08
Collegiate Academy of Colorado	7701	Jefferson County R-1	1994	415	360	Performance Plan	K-12
Compass Montessori - Golden Charter School	1880	Jefferson County R-1	2000	420	424	Performance Plan	PK-12
Compass Montessori - Wheat Ridge Charter School	1869	Jefferson County R-1	1998	288	288	Performance Plan	PK-06
Doral Academy of Colorado	2189	Jefferson County R-1	2017	168	140	Insufficient State Data	K-11
Excel Academy Charter School	2799	Jefferson County R-1	1995	506	478	Performance Plan	K-08
Jefferson Academy	4404	Jefferson County R-1	1994	1,155	1314	Insufficient State Data	K-12
Jefferson Academy Elementary	4402	Jefferson County R-1	1994	764	733	Performance Plan	K-06
Jefferson Academy High School	4410	Jefferson County R-1	1994	427	424	Performance Plan	09-12
Lincoln Charter Academy	5145	Jefferson County R-1	1997	779	809	Performance Plan	PK-08
Montessori Peaks Charter Academy	5994	Jefferson County R-1	1997	425	410	Performance Plan	PK-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Mountain Phoenix Community School	6139	Jefferson County R-1	2011	620	671	Performance Plan	PK-08
New America School	6237	Jefferson County R-1	2006	113	99	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen	7462	Jefferson County R-1	2001	376	349	Performance Plan	K-08
Rocky Mountain Deaf School	5415	Jefferson County R-1	1997	72	91	AEC: Performance Plan	PK-12
Two Roads Charter School	8793	Jefferson County R-1	2012	605	628	Performance Plan	PK-12
Woodrow Wilson Charter Academy	9427	Jefferson County R-1	2000	771	808	Performance Plan	PK-08
CIVICA Colorado	6226	Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2022	131	149	Performance Plan	06-09
Knowledge Quest Academy	4785	Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	2002	407	399	Performance Plan	K-08
Alta Vista Charter School	0200	Lamar Re-2	1998	130	131	Performance Plan	K-06
Monument Charter Academy	2295	Lewis-Palmer 38	1996	693	704	Improvement Plan	PK-05
Monument Charter Academy Secondary School	5093	Lewis-Palmer 38	1996	475	486	Performance Plan	06-10



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Littleton Academy	5229	Littleton 6	1996	455	454	Performance Plan	K-08
Littleton Prep Charter School	5233	Littleton 6	1998	542	519	Performance Plan	PK-08
Independence Academy	2128	Mesa County Valley 51	2004	470	485	Performance Plan	PK-08
Juniper Ridge Community School	4439	Mesa County Valley 51	2013	414	419	Performance Plan	K-08
Mesa Valley Community School	5828	Mesa County Valley 51	2014	400	311	Insufficient State Data	K-12
Crestone Charter School	2018	Moffat 2	1995	83	82	Insufficient State Data	K-12
Battle Rock Charter School	0609	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	1994	89	95	Improvement Plan	K-06
Children's Kiva Montessori School	2036	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	2014	139	142	Improvement Plan	K-08
Southwest Open Charter School	8133	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	1999	133	113	AEC: Improvement Plan	09-12
Vista Charter School	9149	Montrose County RE-1J	2004	156	161	AEC: Performance Plan	09-12
Guffey Charter School	3681	Park County RE-2	1996	25	20	Insufficient State Data	PK-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Lake George Charter School	4908	Park County RE-2	1999	137	142	Insufficient State Data	PK-08
Compass Community Collaborative School	1917	Poudre R-1	2019	173	174	Performance Plan	06-12
Fort Collins Montessori School	3242	Poudre R-1	2014	219	241	Performance Plan	PK-06
Liberty Common Charter School	5120	Poudre R-1	1997	1,150	1359	Performance Plan	K-12
Mountain Sage Community School	5917	Poudre R-1	2013	287	306	Performance Plan	K-08
Ridgeview Classical Schools	0146	Poudre R-1	2001	706	736	Performance Plan	K-12
Chavez/Huerta K-12 Preparatory Academy	1488	Pueblo City 60	2009	1,025	996	Improvement Plan	K-12
Pueblo Charter School for the Arts & Sciences	7209	Pueblo City 60	1994	539	563	Priority Improvement Plan	K-08
Pueblo School for Arts & Sciences at Fulton Heights	6775	Pueblo City 60	2018	247	260	Improvement Plan	K-08
Pueblo Classical Academy	7533	Pueblo County 70	2022	N/A	301	Insufficient State Data	K-10
Swallows Charter Academy	8420	Pueblo County 70	1996	603	629	Performance Plan	K-08





School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Swallows Charter Academy High School	7879	Pueblo County 70	1996	152	144	Performance Plan	09-12
The Connect Charter School	8810	Pueblo County 70	1993	258	261	Performance Plan	06-08
Villa Bella Expeditionary Middle School	5903	Pueblo County 70	2022	N/A	50	Performance Plan	06-06
Villa Bella Expeditionary School	9084	Pueblo County 70	2020	300	300	Priority Improvement Plan	K-05
Carbondale Community Charter School	0429	Roaring Fork RE-1	1995	135	138	Performance Plan	K-08
Two Rivers Community School	8821	Roaring Fork RE-1	8821	373	389	Performance Plan	K-08
Belle Creek Charter School	0700	School District 27J	2003	600	571	Improvement Plan	K-08
Bromley East Charter School	1052	School District 27J	2001	1,175	1237	Improvement Plan	PK-08
Eagle Ridge Academy	2399	School District 27J	2010	526	510	Performance Plan	09-12
Foundations Academy	2945	School District 27J	2010	753	767	Performance Plan	K-08
Landmark Academy at Reunion	4950	School District 27J	2007	761	770	Performance Plan	K-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
The STEAD School	6400	School District 27J	2022	156	257	Performance Plan	09-09
Aspen Ridge Preparatory School	0071	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2011	503	547	Performance Plan	K-08
Carbon Valley Academy	1284	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2005	211	265	Performance Plan	PK-08
Firestone Charter Academy	4333	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2009	626	637	Performance Plan	PK-08
Flagstaff Charter Academy	2964	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2005	774	772	Performance Plan	PK-08
St. Vrain Community Montessori School	7565	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	2009	258	256	Insufficient State Data: Low Participation	PK-08
Twin Peaks Charter Academy	8927	St. Vrain Valley RE1J	1997	830	807	Performance Plan	K-12
North Routt Community Charter School	6363	Steamboat Springs RE-2	2001	114	88	Performance Plan	PK-08
Loveland Classical School	5235	Thompson R2-J	2011	949	989	Performance Plan	K-12
New Vision Charter School	6220	Thompson R2-J	2006	960	998	Performance Plan	K-08
Cardinal Community Academy Charter School	1299	Weld County School District RE-3J	2000	179	176	Performance Plan	K-08



School Name	School Code	Authorizer	Date Opened	2021-22 Enrollment	2022-23 Enrollment	2022-23 SPF Rating	Grades Served
Windsor Charter Academy Early College High School	9393	Weld RE-4	2001	359	375	Performance Plan	09-12
Windsor Charter Academy Elementary School	9665	Weld RE-4	2001	778	778	Performance Plan	K-05
Windsor Charter Academy Middle School	9563	Weld RE-4	2001	365	383	Performance Plan	06-08
James Madison Charter Academy School	5033	Widefield 3	2014	96	103	Priority Improvement Plan	K-08
Merit Academy	8257	Woodland Park Re-2	2022	N/A	331	Improvement Plan: Decreased due to Participation	K-08

