

# Accountability for Non-traditional School Models

Colorado Charter School Institute



# Introduction



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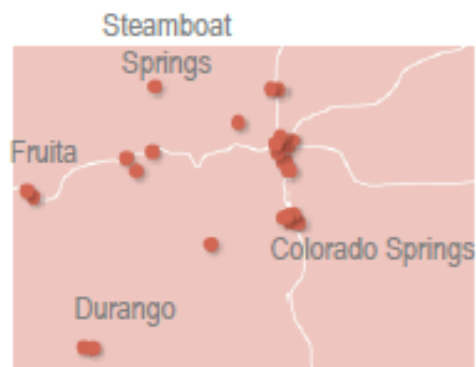
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# What is CSI?

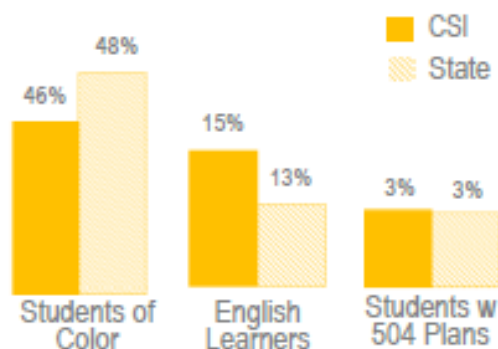
## Our Schools

CSI oversees 42 charter schools that serve 20,000+ students and offer 16 unique educational models, including AEC, Early College, and Montessori.



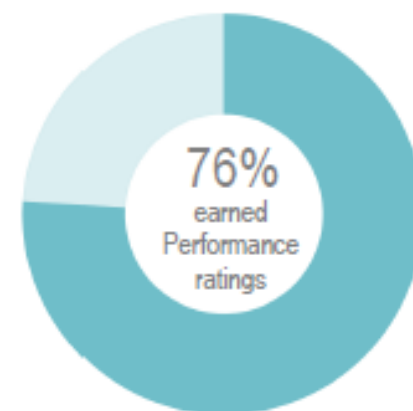
## Our Students

CSI continues to increase service to students with special needs and remains comparable to the state for enrollment of students of color, English Learners, and students with 504 plans.



## Our Outcomes

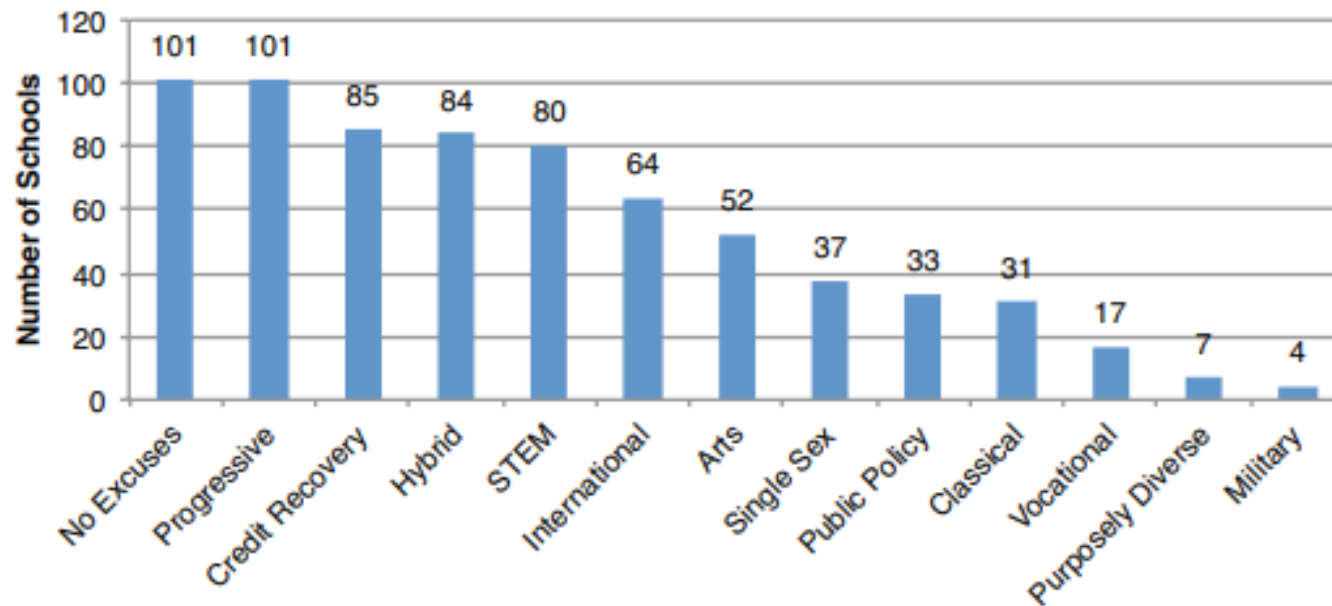
CSI holds schools accountable for their performance. Three out of four CSI schools earned the state's highest academic rating this past year.





# Existing Charter Model Diversity

FIGURE 2  
SPECIALIZED CHARTER SCHOOLS: BY THE NUMBERS



Source: Authors' calculations.

AEI Measuring diversity in charter school offerings (<https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/measuring-diversity-in-charter-school-offerings/>)



# New Charter Proposal Diversity

## Charter School Proposals by School Model (2013-14 to 2017-18)

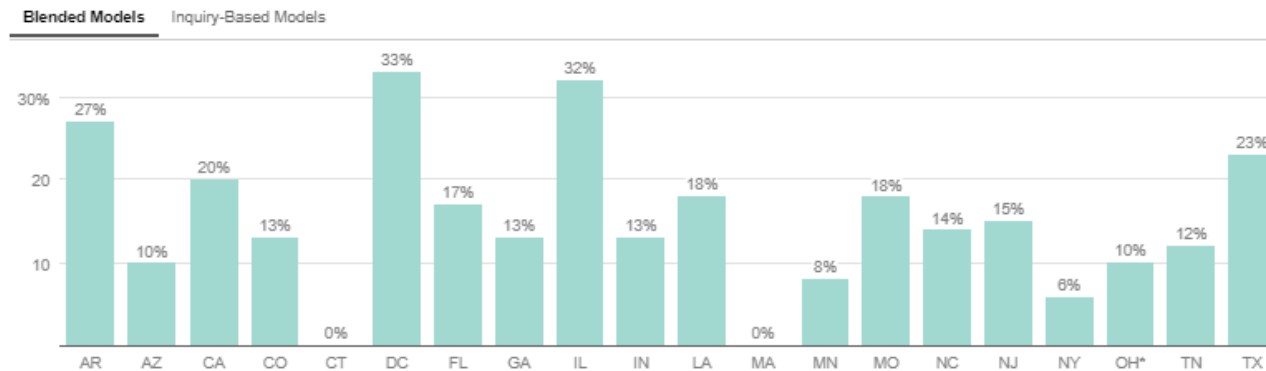
	MODEL	PERCENT OF SCHOOLS PROPOSED†	▼ APPROVAL RATE
1	Diverse by Design	1%	64%
2	Classical	4%	57%
3	No Excuses	10%	55%
4	Vocational	3%	43%
5	Military	<1%	43%
6	General	29%	42%
7	Special Education	2%	42%
8	Inquiry-Based (e.g., Montessori, Waldorf)	14%	40%
9	Early College	1%	40%
10	Other	4%	38%
11	Policy	<1%	38%
12	International/Foreign Language	5%	36%
13	Alternative/Credit Recovery	11%	34%
14	Blended/Hybrid	16%	34%



# New Charter Proposal Diversity

## Charter School Proposals by School Model in 20 States

The percentage of charter school proposals with Blended/Hybrid and Inquiry-Based (e.g., Waldorf or Montessori) in each state.

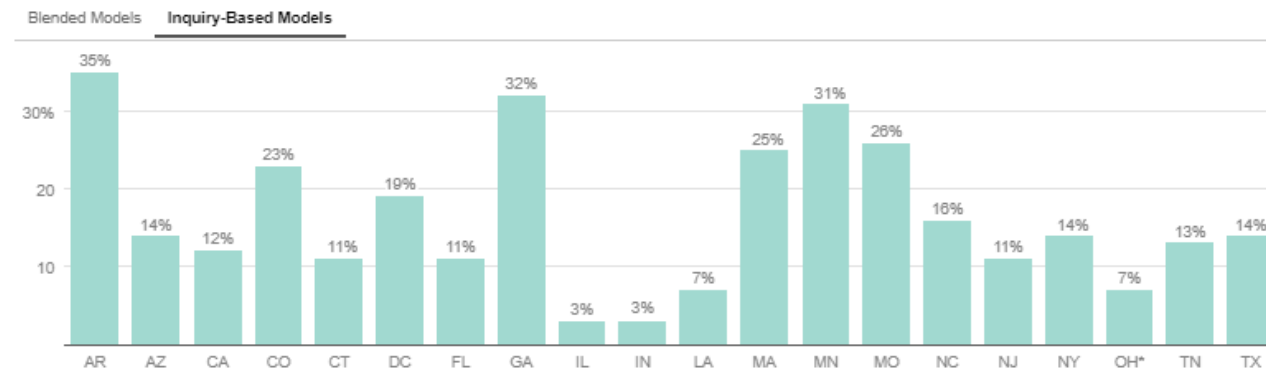


\*Response rates in Ohio were lower than in other states. Please see the Overview of Methods and Sample for more information.

Source: National Association of Charter School Authorizers - Created with Datawrapper

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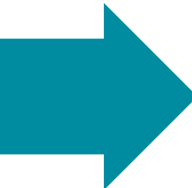
# School Models



Across the United States, authorizers are approving a wide variety of school models<sup>1</sup> and beginning to see an increase in the number of non-traditional school models approved.




A recent review of school models<sup>2</sup> found that there was nearly an even split between traditional and non-traditional charter schools



Nearly 75% of CSI schools – which include fifteen unique educational models – are classified as non-traditional and this greatly exceeds the national average as well as the average for Denver Public Schools.

<sup>1</sup> NACSA Charter School Pipeline Study (<https://www.qualitycharters.org/research/pipeline/topten/>)

<sup>2</sup> AEI Measuring diversity in charter school offerings (<https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/measuring-diversity-in-charter-school-offerings/>)





# Summary of Work

## Non-traditional school model research

We are building out model-specific analyses for Montessori, Waldorf, dual-language, and Early College school models.

We are working closely with the first tribal charter school in Colorado to develop unique accountability measures.

## Multi-year action research project

We have partnered with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) on a multi-year action research project to develop stronger authorizing practices for non-traditional charter schools.

## AEC accountability and A-GAME

We work with the Advancing Great Authorizing and Modeling Excellence (A-GAME) network and participated in national conversations around accountability for alternative charter schools.

This is a continuation of our ongoing work around alternative accountability since we convened our AEC Task Force in 2017.



# Why is this work important?

In order to sustain the diversity of the existing portfolio and encourage new and innovative charter school models, CSI has undertaken a **long-term project to broaden our definition of quality** by examining student performance within school models.

While we believe that we have a strong and comprehensive accountability system at CSI, we want to continue to innovate and make sure that we have consistent and **meaningful accountability for all schools** as they implement their educational models.

**Why are you interested in understanding how to measure the success of your model outside of traditional accountability measures?**



# Case #1

## Rural Montessori Charter School

- Multiage classrooms spanning three years.
- Montessori curriculum is highly individualized but with scope and sequence and clearcut domains.

# Challenge: Monitoring student progress within and at the end of the three-year cycle

Students in the intermediate classroom are exposed to all grade level academic standards but in a non-standard progression

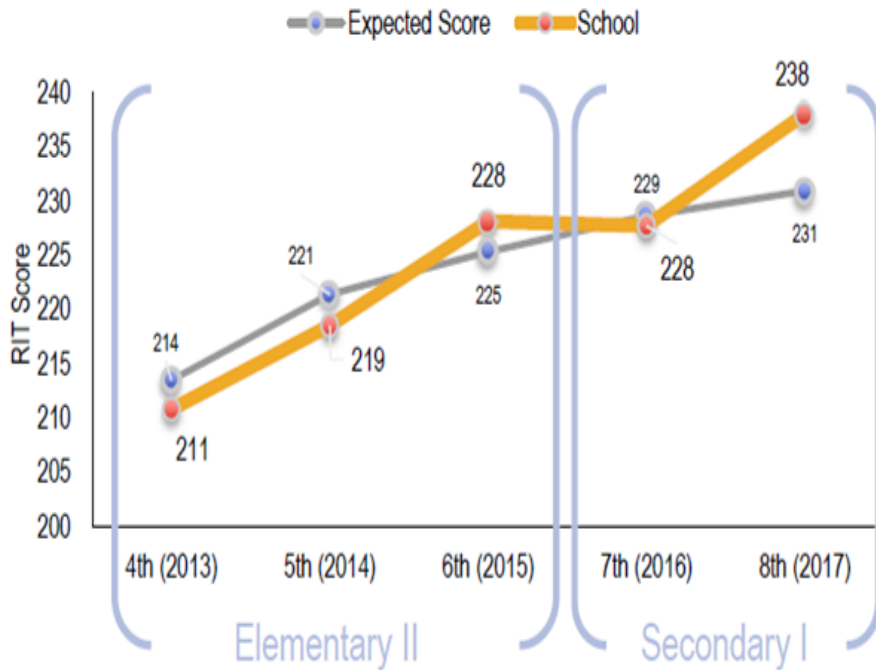
Interpretation and presentation  
of data is critical to  
understanding school and  
student outcomes



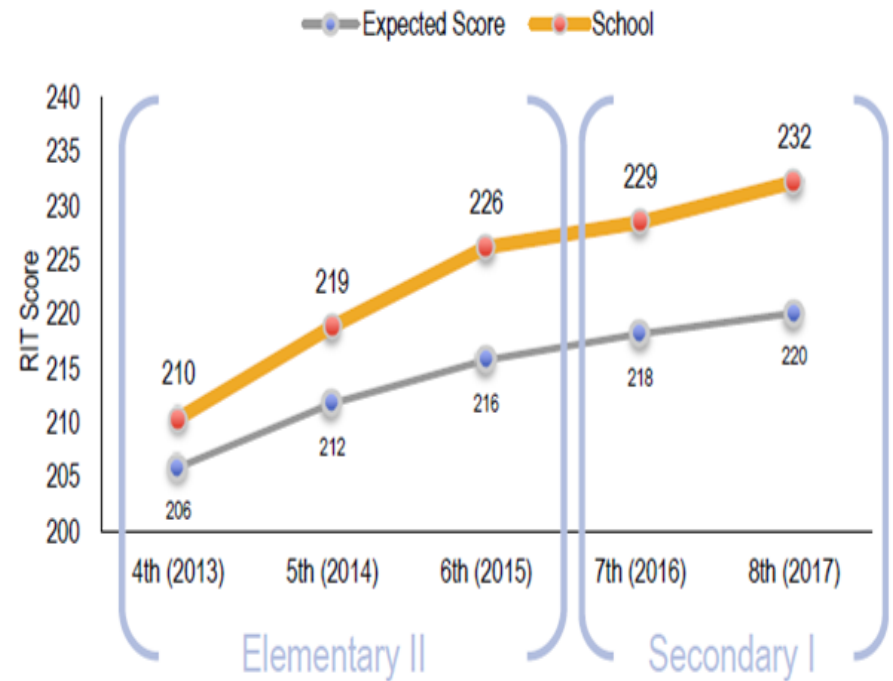
# 8th Grade Cohort Achievement Patterns in Montessori

## 2016-17 8th Grade Cohort Achievement

### Math



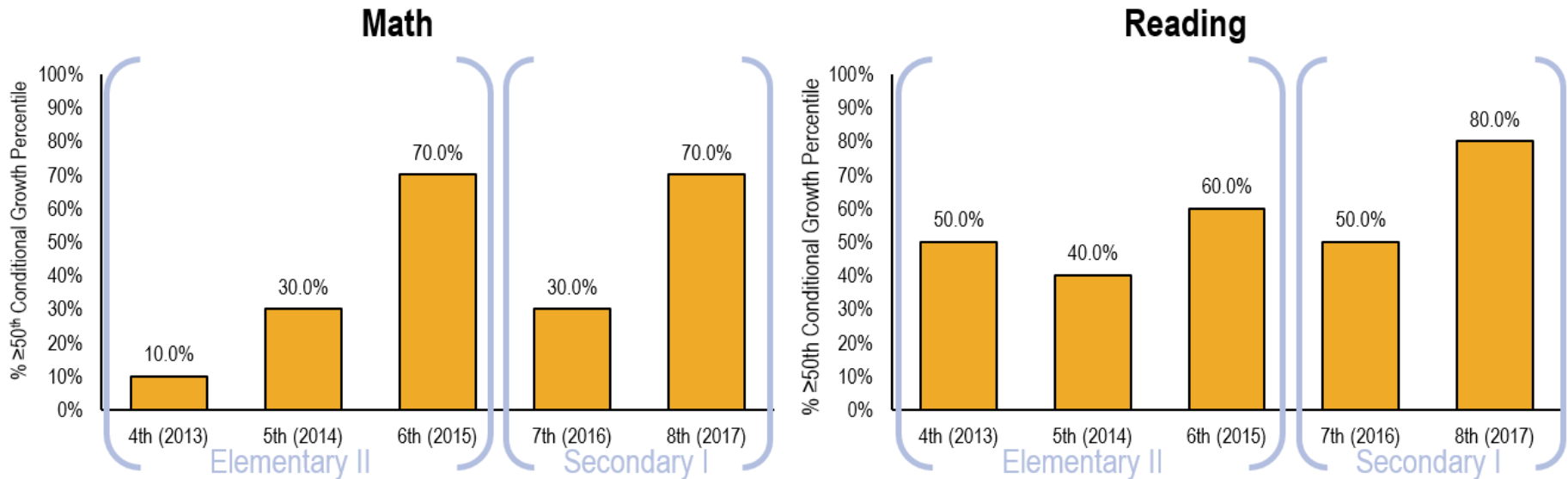
### Reading





# 8th Grade Cohort Growth Patterns in Montessori

## 2016-17 8th Grade Cohort Growth



\*Each student receives a conditional growth percentile (CGP) based on their RIT score growth from Fall to Spring. Similar to what is seen in the Colorado Growth Model, growth percentile scores help demonstrate how that student has grown relative to their academic peers. A student with a CGP higher than 50 demonstrates higher growth than the norm. This measure (% of student with a CGP ≥50th percentile) can be used to view how students grew relative to their academic peers in a given year.



## Case #2

# Suburban Waldorf Charter School

- An Ascending Spiral of Knowledge explains the Waldorf curriculum and how it is taught.
  - Early education focus is on imaginary play and shifts to conscious imagination or feeling intelligence and ends with the development of rational, abstract power of the intellect
- Waldorf schools integrate intellectual, artistic, and practical instruction throughout the curriculum.
- A Waldorf teacher typically remains with the same class for five to eight years.



Challenge: Evaluating student progress  
across the “ascending spiral of  
knowledge” and through cycles of  
learning

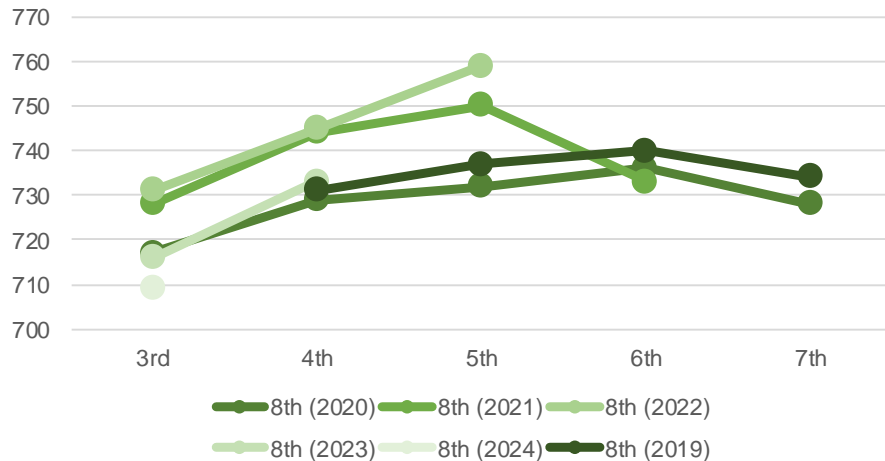
Student learning is self-paced and learning  
trajectories are often non-linear



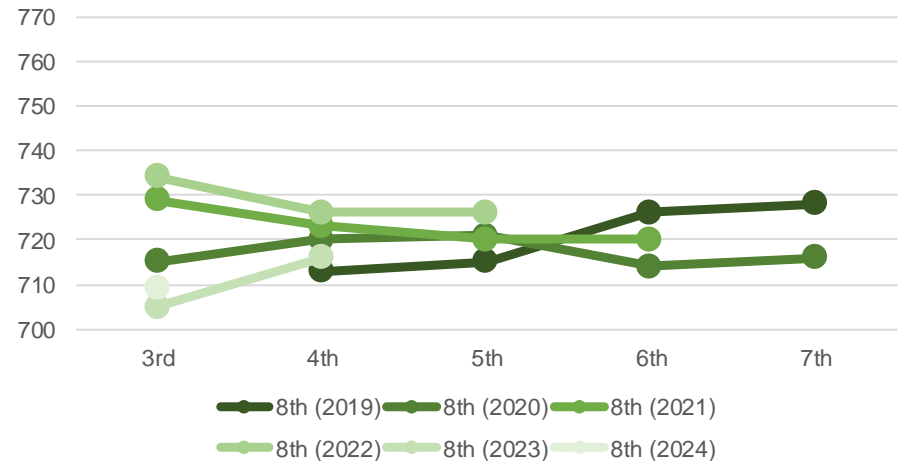
# 8th Grade Class of Cohort Achievement

## 8th Grade Class of Cohort Achievement

### English Language Arts



### Math





## Case #3

# Early College Charter School

- Early Colleges are designed such that students who complete the program will have completed either an associate's degree or sixty credits toward the completion of a postsecondary credential.
- About 50% of students can complete the program in four years but most take at least five years.

## Challenge: Fully understanding the impact of a high-performing Early College high school

Students perform at high-level against state-required measures (PSAT/SAT, graduation rate etc.) and a large majority of students concurrently enroll in post-secondary courses while in high school.

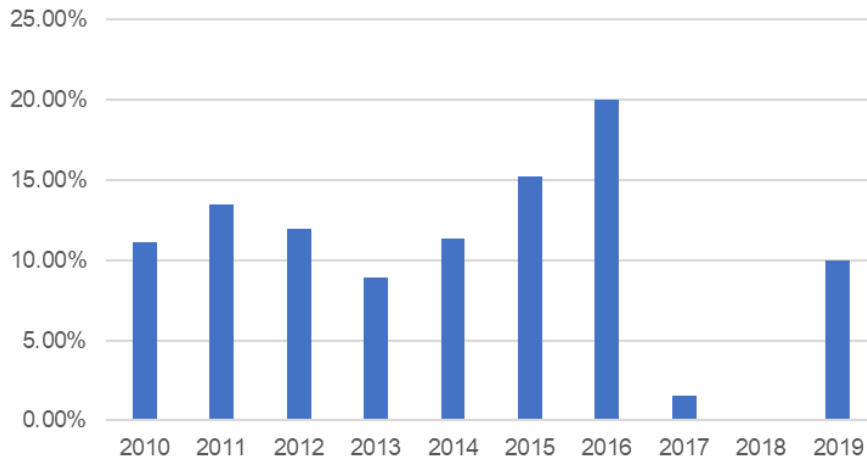
Expanding the types of data  
evaluated is illustrative of  
broader successes (and  
challenges)



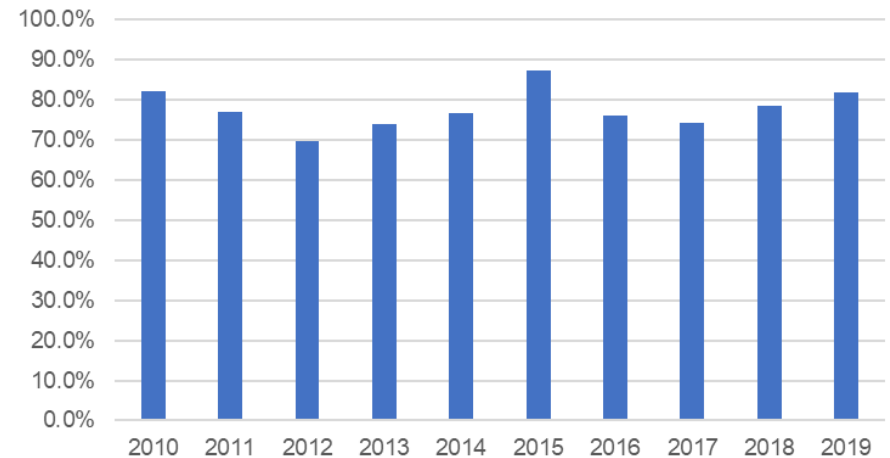
# Post-secondary Outcomes

- Exploring Colorado Department of Higher Education data files and research on post-secondary outcomes and issues of equity in higher education.

Developmental Education Rate



FAFSA Completion Rate



CDHE Post-secondary Data (<https://cdhe.colorado.gov/pathways-to-prosperity-postsecondary-access-and-success-for-colorados-high-school-graduates>)

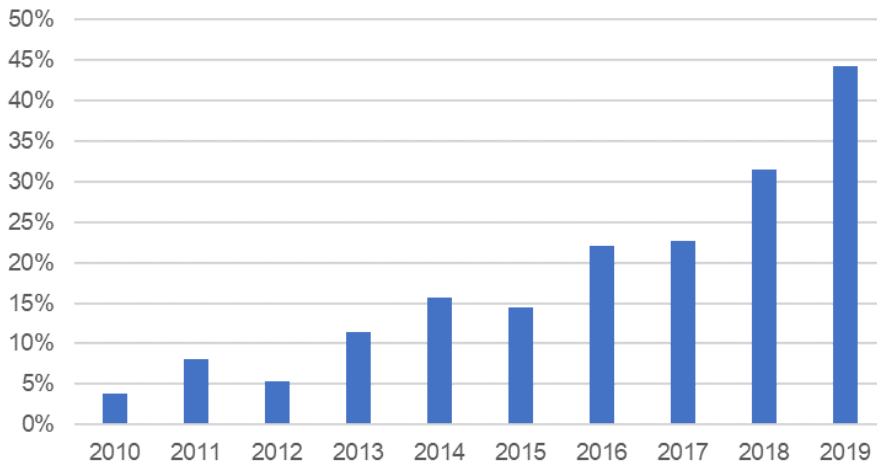
FAFSA Report (<https://tcf.org/content/report/states-make-fafsa-mandatory/?session=1>)



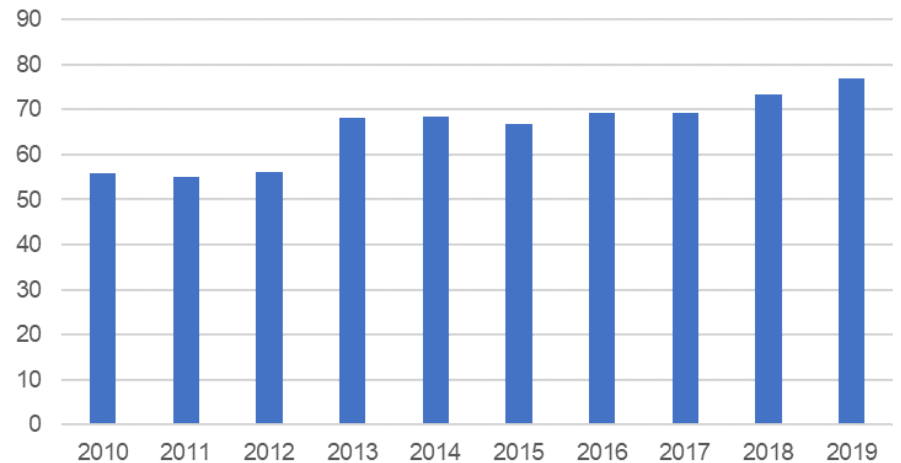
# Post-secondary Outcomes

- Exploring Colorado Department of Higher Education data files and research on post-secondary outcomes and issues of equity in higher education.

Secondary Credential Rate



Average Cumulative Credits





## Case #4

# Alternative Education Campus Charter School

- Alternative schools have a specialized mission and serve a student population that is comprised of at least 90% “high-risk” students
- Alternative schools may submit optional measures to supplement or contextualize data and to allow schools to indicate whether they are successfully serving their target populations and fulfilling their mission-specific goals



# Challenge: Incorporating school and student progress across a broad array of student challenges

97% of students enrolled are high-risk (and most students are pregnant or parenting) and have a wide variety of academic and non-academic needs



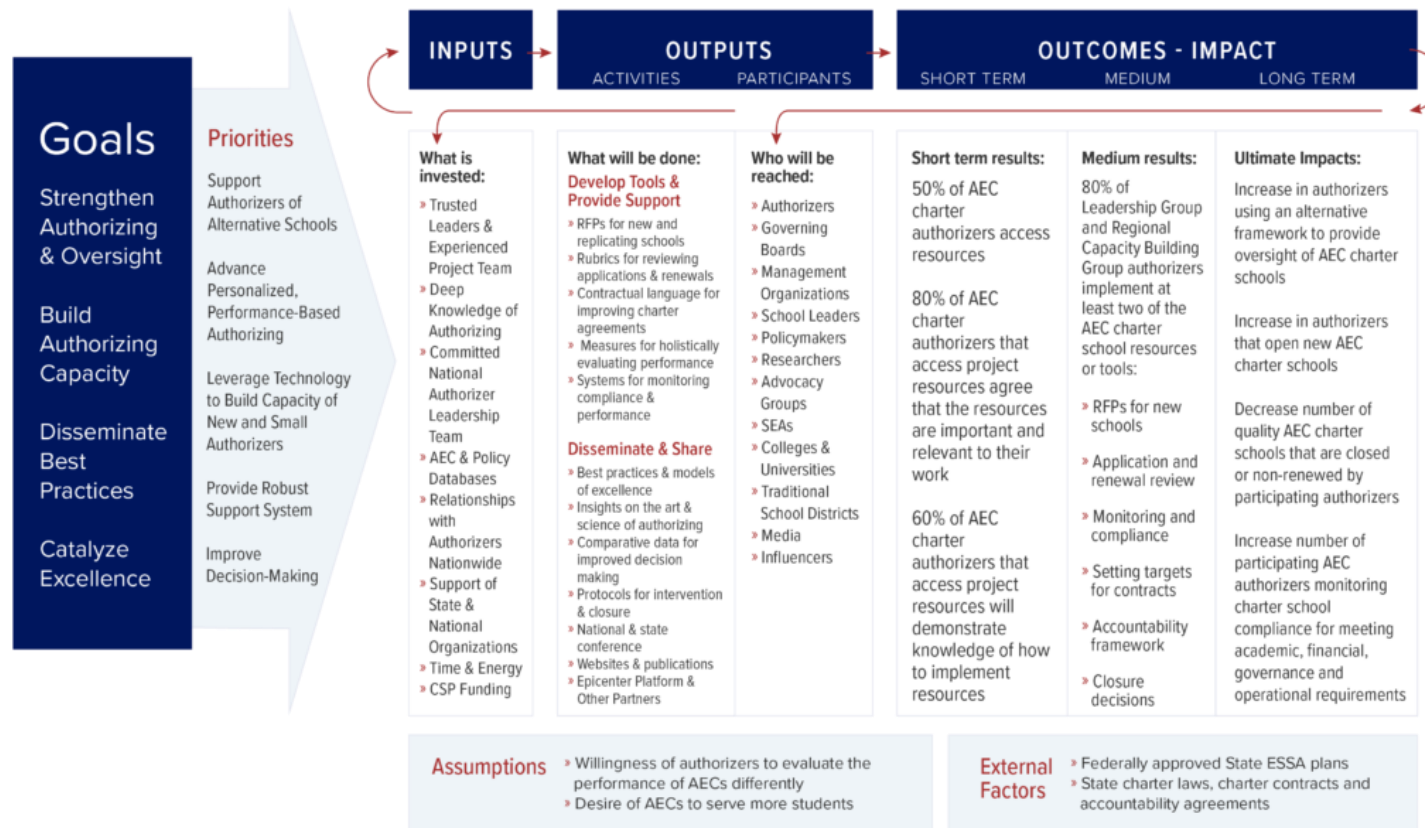
# Develop mission-specific measures

Returning Student Rate	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	3-year
Numerator	56	53	69	178
Denominator	78	64	74	216
Result	71.8%	82.8%	93.2%	82.4%
Student Discipline Rate	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	3-year
Numerator				16
Denominator	119	140	148	407
Result	5.0%	3.6%	3.4%	3.9%
Credit Completion Rate	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	3-year
Numerator	484	327	437	1247
Denominator	725	490	699	1915
Result	66.7%	66.7%	62.5%	65.1%
Postsecondary Acceptance	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	3-year
Numerator	22	17	24	63
Denominator	24	18	26	68
Result	91.7%	94.4%	92.3%	92.6%



# A-GAME

- Advancing Great Authorizing & Modeling Excellence to support charter school authorizers measure the quality and effectiveness of alternative education campuses.





# Worksite Evaluation Rubric

This tool can be used as a self-evaluation, advisor observation, and a worksite evaluation, allowing for consistency between school and internship site. This is a readiness tool that can also determine how students feel about their preparedness for the workforce.

### Advisor Instructions:

Prior to a student entering a real world learning experience, have each student complete this evaluation as a self-reflection on where they believe they are starting out. Make at least three 30 minute observations during the course of an internship, work study program or other alternative experiential/Real World Learning sessions. Collect an evaluation from each student's mentor or supervisor every quarter. Share all evaluations with the RWL Coordinator for data collection and tracking.

### Mentor/Supervisor Instructions:

Students participating in an internship or work study program should receive one evaluation per quarter based on observations made over the duration of the quarter. Evaluations should be turned into the student's advisor each quarter to monitor student growth and progress as well as provide feedback for the advisor to coach the student with.

- **Ready** = students who self-assess accurately (perhaps more critical on themselves); teacher evaluates as "meets expectations" 6 out of 8 in the final weeks of the classroom experience; student has a grade of A or B.
- **Almost Ready** = student self-assessment is partially accurate but does not reflect that they take full responsibility for their actions; teacher evaluates as "meets expectations" for at least 5 of the 8 competencies on each of the assessments in the last weeks of the classroom study experience; student has a grade of C or higher.
- **Not ready** = student self-assessment is inaccurate or accurately reflects that they are not ready; teacher evaluates as "needs improvement" on 3 or more of the competencies in the final weeks of the classroom study experience; students has a grade of D or F will not attend an internship but will repeat training and classroom work until meeting expectations to enter an internship.


	Meets Expectations Add any additional comments or notes	Needs Improvement Add any additional comments or notes	N/A Add any additional comments or notes
<b>1. Attendance</b> The student meets the expectation when they attend as scheduled, arrive on time, return from breaks or lunch on time, and communicate in advance with the supervisor if they will be absent or late.			
<b>2. Workplace Dress/Grooming</b> The student meets expectations when they arrive at work wearing the proper uniform or clothing, footwear, any necessary safety gear. If required, the student covers body art and covers or removes piercings. In addition, the student appears clean and appropriately groomed.			
<b>3. Communication (in person, telephone, and online)</b> The student meets expectations when they use appropriate written and verbal communication with customers, co-workers, supervisors, and other entities.			




# How this fits with our work...



There are 15 unique models across our portfolio with different student learning trajectories leading towards student success



Anecdotes aren't enough, but they can help provide insights into areas to explore to better understand how students finding success at school



Learning more about the school model in order to better evaluate student success inherently requires you to develop a better relationship between school and authorizer



# Discussion

What stories or anecdotes do school leaders share with you about their school?

How can you partner with them to explore these stories/anecdotes?

What other data do you and your schools have that could be utilized and incorporated into some sort of an evaluation?



This report provides a summary of the recommendations and observations and discusses the following questions:

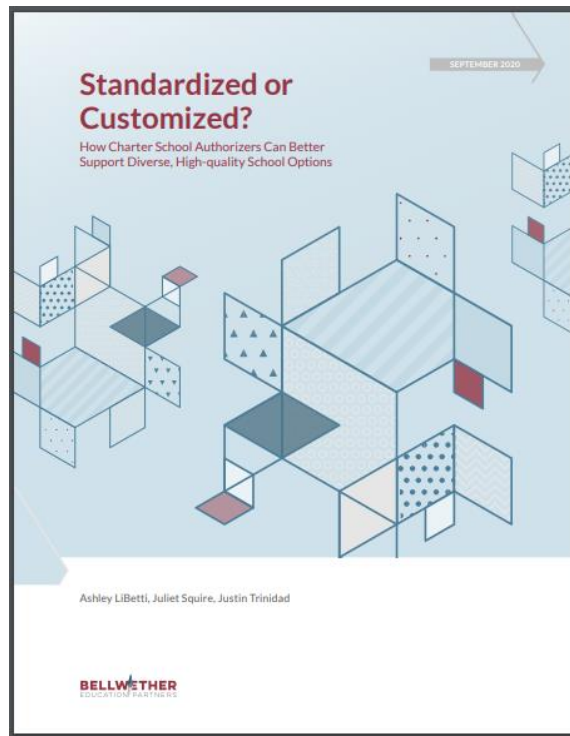
- How can we improve the process and timeline for finalizing optional measures for AECs?
- How should the school and the authorizer decide which optional measures to include in the AEC SPF?
- What is required to sufficiently clarify how an optional measure will be operationalized?

# Establishing Optional Measures: Findings from the Colorado Alternative Education Campuses (AEC) Task Force

# Authorizer role in supporting a diversity of school models

Fostering a **diversity of school options** is an **essential value proposition** of the charter sector.

But to what degree does the current sector **fulfill that mission**?



**Our hypothesis:** Increasingly **standardized authorizing practices**, created in response to concerns about **quality**, could **backfire** and stymie **model diversity** and limit **family choice**

- This work sought to test that hypothesis
- We did so through:
  - Interviews
  - Analysis of four authorizers, selected for their work with diverse models
- We developed multiple resources:
  - *Standardized or Customized* policy report
  - Interactive toolkits for authorizers and school leaders:
    - Navigating the Authorization Process
    - Authorizing Nontraditional Schools
    - Authorizing Amid COVID
- Each of these resources provides tactical recommendations for authorizers and school leaders





# Standardized or Customized? How Charter School Authorizers Can Better Support Diverse, High-quality School Options



[Authorizing Amidst COVID-19: Authorizer and School Leader Toolkit](#)



[Authorizing Nontraditional Schools: Authorizer Toolkit](#)



[Navigating the Authorization Process: School Leader Toolkit](#)



# Q&A

What questions do you have?