

Charter School Facts

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

- ✓ Charter schools are public schools.
- ✓ Charter schools do not charge tuition.
- ✓ Charter schools use non-discriminatory enrollment practices.
- ✓ There are no "test-in" requirements to attend charter schools.
- ✓ In 2013-14, there are 96,000 students attending 200 charter school campuses in Colorado. This represents 11% of total K-12 public school enrollment in the state.
- ✓ Charter school students must take state assessment tests.
- ✓ Charter schools are subject to the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.
- ✓ Charter school teachers must be "highly qualified" under NCLB.
- ✓ Charter schools serve a broad range of diverse students, including low-income, racial and ethnic minorities, and students with disabilities or other special needs.
- ✓ Colorado charter schools continue to attract a variety of students and are located in diverse geographical areas across the state.
- ✓ Charter school programs and academic designs are as diverse as the students they enroll. Some charters implement longer school days, while others implement curricula specifically designed for at-risk students, gifted children, pregnant/parenting teens, juvenile offenders, and more.

Demographics

Statewide data regarding students enrolled in charter schools in 2012-13, demonstrates diversity comparable to statewide data on traditional public schools. Currently:

- ✓ 44.4% of Colorado charter school students are minorities compared to
- ✓ 44.1% of the state's traditional K-12 public school students.

Colorado Charter School Demographics (2012-13):

- ✓ 55.6% are white (not Hispanic)
- ✓ 30.5% are Hispanic
- ✓ 6.2% are Black or African American
- ✓ 3.7% are Asian
- ✓ 0.7% are American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ✓ 0.2% are Native Hawaiian
- ✓ 3.2% are two or more races

Colorado Traditional Public School Demographics (2012-13):

- ✓ 55.9% are white (not Hispanic)
- ✓ 32.2% are Hispanic
- ✓ 4.5% are Black or African American
- ✓ 3.1% are Asian
- ✓ 0.8% are American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ✓ 0.2% are Native Hawaiian
- ✓ 3.3% are two or more races

Charter School Funding

Charter schools are public schools, thus they are funded with state taxpayer dollars in the form of "per-pupil operating revenue" or PPR.

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

School districts finance their facilities using property tax, mill levies, and taxpayer-backed bonds. Charter schools generally do not receive a proportionate share of these monies. As a result, money often comes out of the classroom to pay for buildings.

On average, charter schools in Colorado spend \$606 per student from designated per-pupil operating revenue on facilities costs.