

FLORIDA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC

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CHARTER SCHOOL FAST FACTS

- Established in Florida in 1996, charter schools are identified as tuition-free public schools typically created through a contract agreement (or "charter") between the charter school and the local school board.
- Charter school enrollment has steadily grown and has increased by an average of about 22,470 each year over the past 5 years. Florida charter schools are currently serving nearly 230,000 students, or about 9.3% of the total public school enrollment. Florida ranks 3rd in the nation in charter school student enrollment.
- Florida is among 43 states and the District of Columbia that allow charter schools. Charter schools have been established in 45 of Florida's 67 school districts.
- From the inception of charter schools in Florida, the number of charter schools has steadily increased from 5 charter schools in 1996-1997 to 615 charter schools in 2013-2014.
- Since the 1996-97 school year, nearly 300 charter schools have closed, with these closures most often due to various academic, fiscal, and/or management problems.
- 65% of the students enrolled in charter schools are minorities (compared to 57.6% of the total public school enrollment), 49% of the students enrolled in charter schools are eligible for free or reduced price lunch (compared to 57% in the total public school enrollment), 9% are English Language Learners (compared to 9% in the total public school enrollment), and 9% receive Exceptional Student Services (compared to 18.7% in the total public school enrollment).
- School accountability data for the 2013-2014 school year show that only 476 of Florida's 615 charter schools received a school grade. Of those charter schools that received grades, 220 (46%) of schools earned a grade of A, 75 (16%) earned a B, 96 (20%) earned a C, 36 (8%) earned a D, and 49 (10%) earned an F.
- Reports in 2009 and 2013 issued by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University found that there is a wide variance in the quality of the nation's several thousand charter schools. In the aggregate, Florida's charter school students are not faring as well as students in traditional public schools.
- Charter school governing boards must participate in governance training approved by the department, which must include government in the sunshine, conflicts of interest, ethics, and financial responsibility.
- The school district that sponsors a charter school must provide certain administrative and educational services to charter schools including contract management, FTE and data reporting, exceptional student education administration, assessment administration services, teacher certificate data and processing services, and various information services.

*State figures based on 2013-2014 data
National figures based on 2012-2013 data*