

FAST FACTS ON CHARTER SCHOOLS



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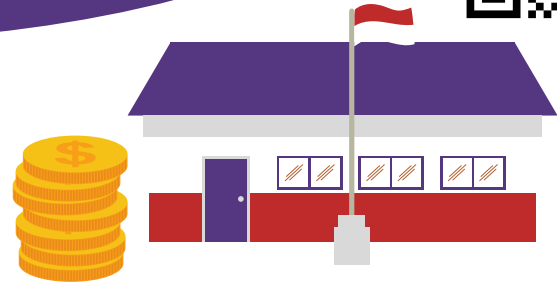


CHARTER SCHOOL HISTORY IN NC

In North Carolina, charter schools are primarily funded through state and local tax dollars and all applications are authorized by the state. They are not allowed to discriminate in admissions or be affiliated with a religion/religious group.

The original North Carolina charter school legislation, House Bill 955 Charter Schools Act of 1996, was passed to authorize establishment of up to 100 charter schools. The legislation identified six purposes of charter schools in North Carolina:

- 1 Improve student learning
- 2 Increase learning opportunities for all students, including those at risk of academic failure or academically gifted
- 3 Encourage the use of new and innovative teaching methods
- 4 Create new professional opportunities for teachers
- 5 Provide parents and students more choices in the educational opportunities in the public school system
- 6 Hold schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results, and provide schools the choice of rule-based or performance-based accountability systems.



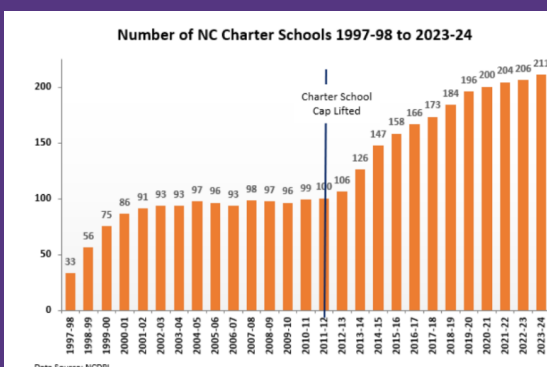
WHAT IS A CHARTER SCHOOL?

Charter schools are generally tuition-free, independent public schools exempt from many of the rules, regulations, and statutes that apply to traditional public schools.

CHARTER V. TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS

Requirements	Traditional	Charter
Required to participate in the NC accountability program	✓	✓
Required to have 100% of teachers be licensed or pursuing licensure	✓	✗
Required to provide free & reduced-price meals	✓	✗
Required to provide student transportation and follow safety standards	✓	✗
Prohibited from being managed by for-profit companies	✓	✗
Restrictions on school calendars and class size	✓	✗
Governed by a citizen-elected school board and must make financial records public	✓	✗

CHARTER SCHOOLS BY THE NUMBERS



In August 2011, Senate Bill 8 removed the 100-school limit as well as limits on enrollment increases and guardrails against schools being created to serve only specific subcategories of students (e.g. students with disabilities)

After the 100-school cap was lifted, the number of charter schools and students steadily increased. In 2011-12 there were 44,829 students enrolled in 100 charter schools. By 2022-23 the number had increased to more than 138,352 students in 206 schools.

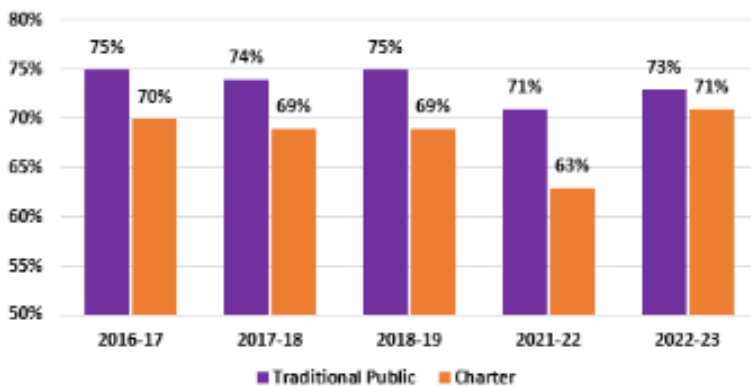


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HOW CHARTER SCHOOLS MEASURE UP

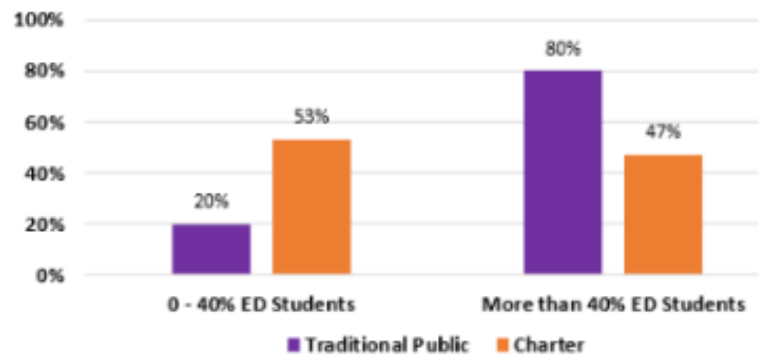
Since 2016-17, the percentage of charter schools meeting or exceeding expected annual growth has been lower than traditional public schools. Charter schools also enroll a much smaller percentage of ED students than traditional public schools. In 2022-23, fewer than half (47%) of the charter schools had populations with more than 40% ED students while 80% of the traditional public schools had more than 40% ED students.

Percentage of Schools Meeting or Exceeding Growth



Data Source: NCDPI

Percentage of Schools Enrolling +/- 40% Economically Disadvantaged Students 2022-23



Data Source: NCDPI

CONCERNS ABOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS

- **Impact on local public school districts:** Shifting funds from local districts to charter schools results in fewer resources at the local public school for staff, programs, and other expenditures.
- **Oversight:** The Office of Charter Schools lacks adequate staff and a sufficiently rigorous process for evaluating applications and tracking charter success.
- **Reduced Public Input:** Charter schools are not required to have publicly elected boards or representation from the school community, which removes an important avenue for community input into decisions regarding charter schools' operation.
- **Student outcomes:** The percentage of charter schools in North Carolina meeting or exceeding expected annual growth lags that of traditional public schools.
- **Racial isolation:** Charter schools are often more segregated than traditional public schools; the growing number of charter schools drive increasing segregation in traditional public schools.
- **Public assets can become private assets:** A failing charter can be taken over by a new entity instead of being closed. The school's assets could then be transferred to the new operator, not back to the state.