

# FOCUS ON THE FACTS



## COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOL FACTS

*Charter schools offer parents more choice in their children's public education. This promotes community, parental involvement, teacher commitment, and student achievement.*

### Charter School Facts:

- Charter schools are public schools.
- Charter schools do not charge tuition.
- Charter schools do not pick and choose their students or discriminate.
- There are no "test-in" requirements to attend charter schools.
- In 2007, 56,458 students attended 141 charter schools in Colorado. This amounted to over 7% of K-12 public school enrollment in the state.
- Charter school students must take the CSAP.
- 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.



COLORADO LEAGUE of  
CHARTER SCHOOLS

*focus on achievement*

### Academic Performance

Evidence of the strong academic performance of charter schools is provided by both federal and state measures of student achievement:

- In 2007, 74% of Colorado charter schools had strong enough academic performance to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), while 59% of non-charters made AYP.
- Overall, 48% of charters were rated excellent or high by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) in 2006, while 42% of non-charter public schools received that rating. The evidence is even more compelling for middle schools -- 55% of charters were rated excellent or high compared to 41% of non-charters.

### Charter School Funding

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

- Charter schools spend, on average, 15% of their per pupil operating dollars to pay for their facilities.
- 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 charter school classroom to pay for buildings.

### Demand

- There is demand for more charter schools. Over 40,000 students are on waitlists in Colorado.
- According to a 2008 report by the Colorado League of Charter Schools, it is estimated that over 100 additional charter schools would need to be opened in Colorado in order to accommodate all of the children on waitlists.

**For more information, contact the Colorado League of Charter Schools at 303.989.5356, or visit [www.coloradoleague.org](http://www.coloradoleague.org).**