

Utah's Public Charter Schools

Report, January 2015

EXPANDING OUR PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM



Utah State Office of Education
250 East 500 South
P.O. 14420
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200

Brad C. Smith
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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Charter Schools

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P.O. Box 14420
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Report produced by the Utah State Charter School Board, (801) 538-7720

Foreword

Tim Beagley
Utah State Charter School Board Chair



Charter schools first appeared on the Utah public education scene in 1999, and have now become an integral and popular component of our system. Indeed, with strong support from our governors, our legislators, and the State Board of Education, the number of charter schools in Utah has surpassed the milestone of 100 charter schools. In fact, during the 2014-2015 school year, there were 110 charter schools, serving 10 percent of all Utah public education students.

Charter schools have created extensive opportunities for greater parental involvement, and their continued success in Utah is a testament to the endless hours of volunteerism seen at each school. Our charter schools continue to emphasize quality, innovation, and creativity. They are generating new and exciting opportunities for educators and increasing choices of learning opportunities for students. Utah charter schools continue to experiment with new models of instruction and accountability as they focus on learning outcomes and student academic growth. Over the last few years especially, charter schools have waded into some of the most challenging educational environments in our state. We now have schools whose very mission centers around serving immigrant families, children with disabilities, and students with accumulated risk factors.

The Utah State Charter School Board currently authorizes most of the charter schools in Utah. In order to accomplish our statutory mandate to annually evaluate the performance of the schools we authorize, and to hold the schools accountable for their performance, the board has created and implemented a performance framework called Charter School Performance Standards. This framework monitors academic, operational, and governance performance while leaving room for mission specific goals and standards. It is truly an exciting time to be part of the Utah charter school movement.

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**Board of Regents Advisory Representative Appointment

***Coalition of Minorities Advisory Committee Advisory Representative Appointment

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Utah State Charter School Board Profiles



Tim Beagley Ph.D., Board Chair. Dr. Beagley is an Associate Professor of Biology at Salt Lake Community College, where he teaches Cell Biology, Microbiology, and College Biology. Dr. Beagley also conducts research in the field of molecular evolution, where he studies the genomic changes that have led to modern-day life forms. Many of his students participate in these research projects, either as Independent Study or within their courses. Dr. Beagley served as an elected member of the Utah State Board of Education from 2002 to 2006, representing the western half of Salt Lake City and most of West Valley City, and as a non-voting member from 2011 to 2012, representing the Utah State Charter School Board.



Howard M. Headlee, Board Vice Chair. Mr. Headlee was appointed President and CEO of the Utah Bankers Association (UBA) in 1997. As leader of the UBA, Mr. Headlee represents all of the banks in Utah, the fifth largest banking state in America (by state chartered assets). Mr. Headlee created the Regulatory Feedback Initiative, designed to introduce nationwide transparency and accountability into the bank examination process. Prior to that, Mr. Headlee served six years as Vice President of the Utah Taxpayers Association and as an auditor in the Detroit office of the international accounting firm KPMG Peat Marwick, specializing in the area of financial institutions. Mr. Headlee received his BS from Brigham Young University School of Accountancy and earned an MBA from the University of Utah. In 2001 he founded American Preparatory Academy. In 2012, Mr. Headlee was appointed by Utah Governor Gary Herbert to serve on the Utah State Charter School Board. Mr. Headlee, his wife Tana, and their six children live in Sandy, Utah.



Dean Brockbank. Mr. Brockbank is a Senior Environmental and Legal Strategist for the Greenfield Environmental Trust Group. He served on the Board of Trustees of the Legal Aid Society of Salt Lake for three years, and as Chairman of the School Community Council for Park Lane Elementary School for six years. Mr. Brockbank has served as a teacher-volunteer with Junior Achievement, as the executive sponsor for the United Way fundraiser campaign, and as a long-time volunteer for the Boy Scouts of America. He holds an accounting degree from Brigham Young University and a law degree from George Mason University. He speaks Spanish, French and Portuguese. He is married to Stephanie Brockbank, and they have five children. Governor Gary Herbert appointed Mr. Brockbank to the Utah State Charter School Board in 2010 and reappointed him in 2014.



Bruce Davis, Ph.D. Dr. Davis serves as University Vice Provost and Dean of Continuing Education at Weber State University, where he teaches in the Goddard School of Business and Economics and the Dumke College of Health Professions. He has taught at Weber State for 30 years and serves on a number of other boards, including the boards of McKay-Dee Hospital (Intermountain Healthcare), the Davis Chamber of Commerce, Utah Certified Development Company, Davis Arts Council, and the NUAMES school board. He and his wife Valerie are the parents of seven children and have 13 grandchildren.



Kristin Elinkowski. Mrs. Elinkowski is the owner of an Internet/direct response marketing company. She formerly served as the president of the Board of Directors at North Davis Preparatory Academy. Mrs. Elinkowski previously worked as a congressional staff assistant to Congressman James V. Hansen, and as a campaign manager for several local campaigns. Mrs. Elinkowski has served as the vice chair on the Layton City Planning Commission, and has volunteered on several committees in her community. She also is an Honorary Commander at the 388th Fighter Wing at Hill Air Force Base. She is a graduate of Weber State University and the proud parent, along with her husband Ron, of three great kids.



Robert Enger. Mr. Enger, CPA, started with the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies in 2008. Before being named as the general manager for Total Care Auto in 2012, he worked as the controller and assistant general manager. Mr. Enger graduated with a BS from Westminster College. Prior to his role with the Larry H. Miller Group, he worked for 10 years as an audit manager for Larson & Rosenberger, a regional CPA firm. He is the former president of the Utah Chapter of the Insurance Accounting and Statistical Association and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and Utah Association of Certified Public Accountants, and currently is a board member for Providence Hall Charter School in Herriman, Utah. He enjoys music, plays the saxophone, and performs with several local bands. He is married to Melissa Enger, and together they have three boys.



DeLaina Tonks. Mrs. Tonks is currently the director at Mountain Heights Academy, an online public charter school. She previously taught high school French and Spanish, and worked as an online instructional designer in Upper Arlington, Ohio. Mrs. Tonks is a 2014 “Best of State – Principal” winner and she was also named as one of Utah Business's “30 Women to Watch.” She serves as a member of the national Association of American Educators Foundation Board, Argosy University's Educational Program Advisory Committee, President Holland's Community Advisory Council at UVU, and has enjoyed previous service as the Draper Youth Council Chair, Legislative District 27 Chair, and as a member of the Utah Immigration Commission, and the State Office of Education's Digital Literacy Task Force. Mrs. Tonks holds a BA in French and Spanish teaching from BYU, an MA in Second Language Acquisition from The Ohio State University, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Instructional Psychology and Technology at Brigham Young University. She and her husband, Paul, live on top of a mountain with their four fabulous children, three cats, two bettas, and one turtle.

Utah State Board of Education

District 1

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District 3

Linda B. Hansen

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District 5

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Brad C. Smith

Chief Executive Officer

District 6

Brittany Cummins

District 7

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District 8

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Murray, UT 84107
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District 9

Joel Wright

District 10

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Lorraine Austin

Secretary

District 11

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Saratoga Springs, UT 84045
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District 12

Dixie L. Allen
218 West 5250 North
Vernal, UT 84078
Phone: 435-789-0534

District 13

C. Mark Openshaw
3329 Piute Drive
Provo, UT 84604
Phone: 801-377-0790

District 14

Mark A. Huntsman

District 15

Barbara W. Corry
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Clearfield, UT 84015
Phone: 801-773-2426

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Layton, UT 84040
Phone: 801-941-1789

*Board of Regents Appointments

***CMAC Advisory Representative Appointment

*****Charter School Representative Appointment

**UCAT Representative Appointment

****USBA Advisory Representative Appointment

Charter School Distribution

By Charter School Authorizer

Cache District

InTech Collegiate High School

Davis Applied Technical College

Utah Career Path High School

Granite District

Utah International Charter School

Iron District

SUCCESS Academy

Logan City District

Edith Bowen Laboratory School

Fast Forward High School

Salt Lake District

Salt Lake Center for Science Education

Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts

The Open Classroom

State Charter School Board

Alianza Academy

American International School of Utah

American Leadership Academy

American Preparatory Academy

AMES

Aristotle Academy

Ascent Academies of Utah

Bear River Charter School

Beehive Science & Technology Academy

C.S. Lewis Academy

Canyon Grove Academy

Canyon Rim Academy

Channing Hall

City Academy

State Charter School Board (cont.)

DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts

Dixie Montessori Academy

Dual Immersion Academy

East Hollywood High School

Endeavor Hall

Entheos Academy

Esperanza Elementary

Excelsior Academy

Freedom Preparatory Academy

Gateway Preparatory Academy

George Washington Academy

Good Foundations Academy

Guadalupe School

Hawthorn Academy

HighMark Charter School

Itineris Early College High School

Jefferson Academy

John Hancock Charter School

Kairos Academy

Karl G. Maeser Preparatory Academy

Lakeview Academy

Leadership Learning Academy

Legacy Preparatory Academy

Liberty Academy

Lincoln Academy

Mana Academy

Maria Montessori Academy

Merit College Preparatory Academy

Moab Charter School

Monticello Academy

Mountain Heights Academy

Mountain West Montessori Academy

Mountainville Academy

Navigator Pointe Academy

Noah Webster Academy

State Charter School Board (cont.)

North Davis Preparatory Academy
North Star Academy
NUAMES
Odyssey Charter School
Ogden Preparatory Academy
Pacific Heritage Academy
Paradigm High School
Pinnacle Canyon Academy
Pioneer High School for the Performing Arts
Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning
Providence Hall
Quest Academy
Renaissance Academy
Rockwell Charter High School
Ronald Reagan Academy
Salt Lake Arts Academy
Scholar Academy
Soldier Hollow Charter School
Spectrum Academy
Summit Academy
Summit Academy High School
Syracuse Arts Academy

State Charter School Board (cont.)

The Early Light Academy
The Ranches Academy
Thomas Edison Charter Schools
Timpanogos Academy
Tuacahn High School for the Performing Arts
Uintah River High School
Utah Connections Academy
Utah County Academy of Sciences (UCAS)
Utah Military Academy
Utah Virtual Academy
Valley Academy
Venture Academy
Vista at Entrada School of Performing Arts and
Technology
Voyage Academy
Walden School of Liberal Arts
Wasatch Institute of Technology
Wasatch Peak Academy
Weilenmann School of Discovery
Winter Sports School

Weber State University

Weber State University Charter Academy

By Utah State Board of Education District

District 1—Terryl Warner

Bear River Charter School
Edith Bowen Laboratory School
Fast Forward High School
InTech Collegiate High School
Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning
Thomas Edison Charter Schools

District 2—Spencer F. Stokes

DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts
Maria Montessori Academy
Ogden Preparatory Academy
Quest Academy
Venture Academy
Weber State University Charter Academy

District 3—Linda B. Hansen

Alianza Academy—Magna
APA—The Accelerated School
East Hollywood High School
Endeavor Hall
Entheos Academy—Magna
Esperanza Elementary
Excelsior Academy
Mana Academy
Monticello Academy
Scholar Academy

District 4—David L. Thomas

Good Foundations Academy
HighMark Charter School
NUAMES
Syracuse Arts Academy
Utah Military Academy—Riverdale
Voyage Academy

District 5—Laura C. Belnap

Ascent Academies of Utah—Farmington
Jefferson Academy
Legacy Preparatory Academy
North Davis Preparatory Academy
Pacific Heritage Academy
Salt Lake Center for Science Education
Spectrum Academy—NSL
Utah Career Path High School
Wasatch Peak Academy

District 6—Brittany Cummins

Ascent Academies of Utah—West Jordan
Entheos Academy—Kearns
Navigator Pointe Academy

District 7—Leslie B. Castle

Alianza Academy—SLC
Alianza Academy—WVC
APA—School for New Americans
City Academy
Dual Immersion Academy
Guadalupe School
Kairos Academy
Leadership Learning Academy
Salt Lake Arts Academy
Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts
The Open Classroom
Weilenmann School of Discovery
Winter Sports School

District 8—Jennifer A. Johnson

AMES
American International School of Utah
Canyon Rim Academy
Utah International Charter School
Wasatch Institute of Technology

District 9—Joel Wright

Aristotle Academy
Canyon Grove Academy
C.S. Lewis Academy
John Hancock Charter School
Karl G. Maeser Preparatory Academy
Lakeview Academy
Lincoln Academy
Mountainville Academy
Odyssey Charter School
Pioneer High School for the Performing Arts
Renaissance Academy
Rockwell Charter High School
Spectrum Academy—Pleasant Grove
The Ranches Academy

District 10—David L. Crandall

APA—Draper #1
Beehive Science & Technology Academy
Channing Hall
Summit Academy—Draper

District 11—Jefferson Moss

APA—Draper #2
APA—Draper #3
Hawthorn Academy
Itineris Early College High School
Mountain West Montessori Academy
North Star Academy
Paradigm High School
Providence Hall
Summit Academy—Bluffdale
Summit Academy High School
The Early Light Academy

District 12—Dixie Allen

Noah Webster Academy
Soldier Hollow Charter School
Timpanogos Academy
Utah County Academy of Sciences (UCAS)
Uintah River High School
Walden School of Liberal Arts

District 13—C. Mark Openshaw

American Leadership Academy
Freedom Preparatory Academy
Merit College Preparatory Academy
Ronald Reagan Academy

District 14—Mark A. Huntsman

Liberty Academy
Moab Charter School
Pinnacle Canyon Academy

District 15—Barbara Corry

Dixie Montessori Academy
Gateway Preparatory Academy
George Washington Academy
SUCCESS Academy—DSU
SUCCESS Academy—SUU
Tuacahn High School for the Performing Arts
Valley Academy
Vista at Entrada School of Performing Arts and
Technology

Statewide

Mountain Heights Academy
Utah Connections Academy
Utah Virtual Academy

By Utah House District

House District 2—Rep. David E. Lifferth

Lakeview Academy
Rockwell Charter High School
The Ranches Academy

House District 3—Rep. Jack R. Draxler

Fast Forward High School
InTech Collegiate High School
Thomas Edison Charter School—North

House District 4—Rep. Edward H. Redd

Bear River Charter School
Edith Bowen Laboratory School

House District 5—Rep. R. Curt Webb

Thomas Edison Charter School—South

House District 7—Rep. Justin Fawson

Maria Montessori Academy

House District 9—Rep. Jeremy A. Peterson

DaVinci Academy of Science and Arts
Ogden Preparatory Academy

House District 10—Rep. Dixon Pitcher

Weber State University Charter Academy

House District 11—Rep. Brad L. Dee

Good Foundations Academy
HighMark Charter School
Utah Military Academy—Riverdale

House District 12—Rep. Mike Schultz

Quest Academy

House District 13—Rep. Paul Ray

Voyage Academy

House District 15—Rep. Brad R. Wilson

Jefferson Academy
North Davis Preparatory Academy
Syracuse Arts Academy

House District 16—Rep. Stephen G. Handy

Leadership Learning Academy
NUAMES

House District 17—Rep. Stewart Barlow

Utah Career Path High School

House District 18—Rep. Timothy Hawkes

Ascent Academies of Utah—Farmington

House District 20—Rep. Rebecca P. Edwards

Legacy Preparatory Academy
Spectrum Academy—NSL
Wasatch Peak Academy

House District 21—Rep. Doug Sagers

Scholar Academy

House District 22—Rep. Susan Duckworth

Alianza Academy—Magna
Entheos Academy—Magna

House District 23—Rep. Sandra Hollins

Guadalupe School
Pacific Heritage Academy
Salt Lake Center for Science Education

House District 24—Rep. Rebecca Chavez-Houck

City Academy
The Open Classroom

House District 26—Rep. Angela Romero

Alianza Academy—WVC
Dual Immersion Academy
Kairos Academy
Salt Lake Arts Academy

House District 27—Rep. Michael S. Kennedy

Mountainville Academy

House District 28—Rep. Brian S. King

Salt Lake School for the Performing Arts
Weilenmann School of Discovery

House District 29—Rep. Lee B. Perry

Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning
Venture Academy

House District 31—Rep. Sophia DiCaro

APA—The Accelerated School
APA—The School for New Americans
East Hollywood High School
Endeavor Hall
Esperanza Elementary
Mana Academy
Monticello Academy

House District 35—Rep. Mark A. Wheatley

Alianza Academy—SLC
American International School of Utah
Utah International Charter School
Wasatch Institute of Technology

House District 36—Rep. Patrice M. Arent

Canyon Rim Academy

House District 37—Rep. Carol Spackman Moss

AMES

House District 38—Rep. Eric K. Hutchings

Entheos Academy—Kearns

House District 41—Rep. Daniel McCay

North Star Academy
Summit Academy—Bluffdale
Summit Academy High School

House District 42—Rep. Kim Coleman

Ascent Academies of Utah—West Jordan

House District 43—Rep. Earl D. Tanner

Navigator Pointe Academy

House District 45—Rep. Steve Eliason

Beehive Science and Technology

House District 47—Rep. Ken Ivory

Hawthorn Academy
Itineris Early College High School

House District 48—Rep. Keven J. Stratton

Walden School of Liberal Arts

House District 50—Rep. Rich Cunningham

Mountain West Montessori Academy
Paradigm High School

House District 51—Rep. Gregory H. Hughes

APA—Draper #1
APA—Draper #2
APA—Draper #3
Channing Hall
Summit Academy—Draper

House District 52—Rep. John Knotwell

Providence Hall
The Early Light Academy

House District 54—Rep. Kraig Powell

Soldier Hollow Charter School
Winter Sports School

House District 55—Rep. Scott Chew

Uintah River High School

House District 56—Rep. Kay J. Christofferson

Pioneer High School for the Performing Arts
Renaissance Academy

House District 57—Rep. Brian M. Greene

Aristotle Academy
Canyon Grove Academy
John Hancock Charter School
Lincoln Academy
Odyssey Charter School

House District 59—Rep. Val L. Peterson

Karl G. Maeser Preparatory Academy
Spectrum Academy—Pleasant Grove
Timpanogos Academy

House District 60—Rep. Brad Daw

Noah Webster Academy
Utah County Academy of Sciences (UCAS)

House District 61—Rep. Keith Grover

Freedom Preparatory Academy

House District 62—Rep. Jon Standard

Dixie Montessori Academy

House District 64—Rep. Norm Thurston

Merit College Preparatory Academy
Ronald Reagan Academy

House District 66—Rep. Mike K. McKell

American Leadership Academy
Liberty Academy

House District 67—Rep. Marc K. Roberts

C.S. Lewis Academy

House District 68—Merrill F. Nelson

Excelsior Academy

House District 69—Rep. Brad King

Pinnacle Canyon Academy

House District 70—Kay L. McIff

Moab Charter School

House District 71—Rep. Bradley G. Last

Gateway Preparatory Academy
George Washington Academy
Valley Academy

House District 72—Rep. John R. Westwood

SUCCESS Academy—SUU

House District 74—Rep. V. Lowry Snow

Tuacahn High School for the Performing Arts
Vista at Entrada School of Performing Arts and
Technology

House District 75—Rep. Don Ipson

SUCCESS Academy—DSU

Statewide

Mountain Heights Academy
Utah Connections Academy
Utah Virtual Academy

By Utah Senate District

Senate District 1 – Sen. Luz Escamilla

APA – The Accelerated School
Dual Immersion Academy
East Hollywood High School
Endeavor Hall
Esperanza Elementary
Guadalupe School
Mana Academy
Monticello Academy
Pacific Heritage Academy

Senate District 2 – Sen. Jim Dabakis

City Academy
Salt Lake Arts Academy
The Open Classroom

Senate District 3 – Sen. Gene Davis

Alianza Academy – SLC
Alianza Academy – WVC
American International School of Utah
APA-School for New Americans
Kairos Academy
Utah International Charter School
Wasatch Institute of Technology

Senate District 4 – Sen. Jani Iwamoto

Canyon Rim Academy
Salt Lake School for Performing Arts

Senate District 5 – Sen. Karen Mayne

Entheos Academy – Kearns

Senate District 6 – Sen. Wayne A. Harper

Hawthorn Academy
Itineris Early College High School

Senate District 7 – Sen. Deidre M. Henderson

American Leadership Academy
Liberty Academy
Merit College Preparatory Academy

Senate District 8 – Sen. Brian E. Shiozawa

AMES

Senate District 9 – Sen. Wayne L. Niederhauser
Beehive Science & Technology

Senate District 10 – Sen. Aaron Osmond

Ascent Academies of Utah – West Jordan
Mountain West Montessori Academy
Paradigm High School
The Early Light Academy

Senate District 11 – Sen. Howard A. Stephenson

APA – Draper #1
APA – Draper #2
APA – Draper #3
Channing Hall
North Star Academy
Summit Academy – Bluffdale
Summit Academy – Draper
Summit Academy High School

Senate District 12 – Sen. Daniel W. Thatcher

Alianza Academy – Magna
Entheos Academy – Magna
Navigator Pointe Academy
Scholar Academy

Senate District 13 – Sen. Mark B. Madsen

Lakeview Academy
Providence Hall
Renaissance Academy
Rockwell Charter High School
The Ranches Academy

Senate District 14 – Sen. Alvin B. Jackson

Aristotle Academy
Canyon Grove Academy
John Hancock Charter School
Lincoln Academy
Mountainville Academy
Odyssey Charter School
Pioneer High School for the Performing Arts

Senate District 15 – Sen. Margaret Dayton

Freedom Preparatory Academy
Karl G. Maeser Preparatory Academy
Noah Webster Academy
Spectrum Academy – Pleasant Grove
Utah County Academy of Sciences (UCAS)

Senate District 16 – Sen. Curtis S. Bramble

Walden School of Liberal Arts

Senate District 17 – Sen. Peter C. Knudson

Excelsior Academy
Promontory School of Expeditionary Learning
Thomas Edison Charter School—South

Senate District 18 – Sen. Ann Milner

DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts
Good Foundations Academy
HighMark Charter School
Utah Military Academy – Riverdale
Weber State University Charter Academy

Senate District 19 – Sen. Allen M. Christensen

Maria Montessori Academy
Ogden Preparatory Academy
Weilenmann School of Discovery

Senate District 20 – Sen. Scott K. Jenkins

Quest Academy
Venture Academy
Voyage Academy

Senate District 21 – Sen. Jerry W. Stevenson

North Davis Preparatory Academy
NUAMES
Syracuse Arts Academy

Senate District 22 – Sen. J. Stuart Adams

Ascent Academies of Utah – Farmington
Jefferson Academy
Leadership Learning Academy
Utah Career Path High School

Senate District 23 – Sen. Todd Weiler

Legacy Preparatory Academy
Salt Lake Center for Science Education
Spectrum Academy – NSL
Wasatch Peak Academy

Senate District 24 – Sen. Ralph Okerland

C.S. Lewis Academy

Senate District 25 – Sen. Lyle W. Hillyard

Bear River Charter School
Edith Bowen Laboratory School
Fast Forward High School
InTech Collegiate High School
Thomas Edison Charter School—North

Senate District 26 – Sen. Kevin T. Van Tassell

Soldier Hollow Charter School
Uintah River High School
Winter Sports School

Senate District 27 – Sen. David P. Hinkins

Moab Charter School
Pinnacle Canyon Academy
Ronald Reagan Academy

Senate District 28 – Sen. Evan J. Vickers

Dixie Montessori Academy
Gateway Preparatory Academy
SUCCESS Academy – SUU
Valley Academy

Senate District 29 – Sen. Stephen H. Urquhart

George Washington Academy
Tuacahn High School for the Performing Arts
SUCCESS Academy - DSU
Vista at Entrada School of Performing Arts and
Technology

Statewide

Mountain Heights Academy
Utah Connections Academy
Utah Virtual Academy

Introduction

Utah charter schools have come a long way since the Utah Legislature enacted the Utah Charter Schools Act of 1998. As of October 2014 (school year 2014-15), there are 100 charter LEAs and 110 charter schools serving 61,435 students. This is 6,476 more students than enrolled the prior year on October 2013 (11.9% growth). District growth for the same timeframe was 3,442 students (0.6%). The combined total of the charter school population equals that of the fourth largest school district in the state (last year, it equaled that of the fifth largest school district).

Even with 61,435 and strong growth, the demand outpaces the supply; thousands of students are wait-listed statewide every year. A little more than a fifth of all charter schools were at or above their maximum allowed enrollment in October 2014. Another 20% are close to their maximum enrollment (more than 95% enrolled).

Increasing enrollments and long waiting lists are not the only indicators of success. Charter school founders, board members, administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students have reason to celebrate the success of these schools and their contribution to our state's education system. While overall charter school performance is often on par with district schools, the data in this report shows that many charter schools perform well above state averages and other schools serving similar populations.

The goal of charter schools is to provide additional educational options with quality outcomes for students and parents. Successful, quality charter schools are more than a gathering of excellent teachers and effective curricula. These schools also have sound policy, strong governance, capable academic leadership, robust fiscal responsibility, and active parent and community engagement. Utah public charter schools possess this level of quality. Some common trends seen among the most successful charter schools are strong professional development, good use of data, smaller class sizes, and leveled learning.

While this report looks at charter schools as a whole, it is important to note that there is much variety among charter schools. Some schools focus on serving educationally disadvantaged students, while others target advanced students and offer strong college preparatory curriculum. Schools also vary in their focus (e.g., arts, STEM, classical education) and in their educational programs. This report presents a few vignettes highlighting some schools that, according to the State Charter School Board's Academic and Engagement Performance Framework, scored in the top 25% of charter schools authorized by the State Charter School Board for 2012 and for 2013, and continued to have high

achievement in 2014. However, there are many charter schools with impressive achievement that could also have been highlighted. Future Charter School Annual Reports will highlight other schools. Those wishing to know more about individual charter schools are encouraged to access the Charter School Directory at <http://schools.utah.gov/charterschools/School-Directory.aspx> and the USOE Data Gateway at <https://datagateway.schools.utah.gov/>.

Charter schools may be authorized by different chartering entities, such as local school districts, institutions of higher education, and a seven-member, governor-appointed Utah State Charter School Board. The Utah State Charter School Board is the authorizer for the majority of charter schools. Utah Code Annotated §53A-3-501.6 dictates that the Utah State Charter School Board has, among other things, the power and duty to:

- a. Authorize and promote the establishment of charter schools.
- b. Annually review and evaluate the performance of charter schools authorized by the Utah State Charter School Board, and hold the schools accountable for their performance.
- c. Monitor charter schools authorized by the Utah State Charter School Board for compliance with federal and state laws, rules, and regulations.
- d. Provide technical support to charter schools and persons seeking to establish charter schools.

This report celebrates the accomplishments of all charter schools and their students, and shares information and performance data for charter schools regardless of chartering entity.

- e. North Star Academy serves 530 students in grades K-9 and is located in Bluffdale, Utah. It is based on the Schoolwide Enrichment Model that believes every student has unique talents and interests. The teachers receive yearly professional development on the model, and best practices that encourage looking at every child as a unique individual. North Star Academy focuses on the student's interests and engages the learner, which promotes excellence. Students become inspired to learn about a topic that they are interested in, yearning to read, write, and share that newly acquired information in projects in which they have been given choice. Along with differentiation, service opportunities are encouraged and promoted through clusters and classroom opportunities. When asked what factors contribute to the school's success, North Star Academy responded:
 - f. *Our rigorous curriculum standards are promoted in all grades with not only classroom teachers, but teaching assistants who are trained to provide small group instruction alongside their classroom teachers. In an effort to challenge every child, we employ a special education staff, intervention specialists, and an enrichment aid. North Star believes every student has the right to succeed and is challenged at his/her individualized level. Continuous data-driven decisions are made through collaborative efforts to decide which students need additional support, as well as which students have solid understandings of curriculum and need additional enrichment to take them deeper into the subject matter or a career field that relates to the curriculum, termed curriculum compacting. Finally, our teachers, support staff, administration, Board of Trustees, parents and students believe that by working together we create an incredible team that engages and inspires every student and meets his/her needs through a safe, individualized, and challenging environment.*

Fast Facts

Charter Schools by the Numbers

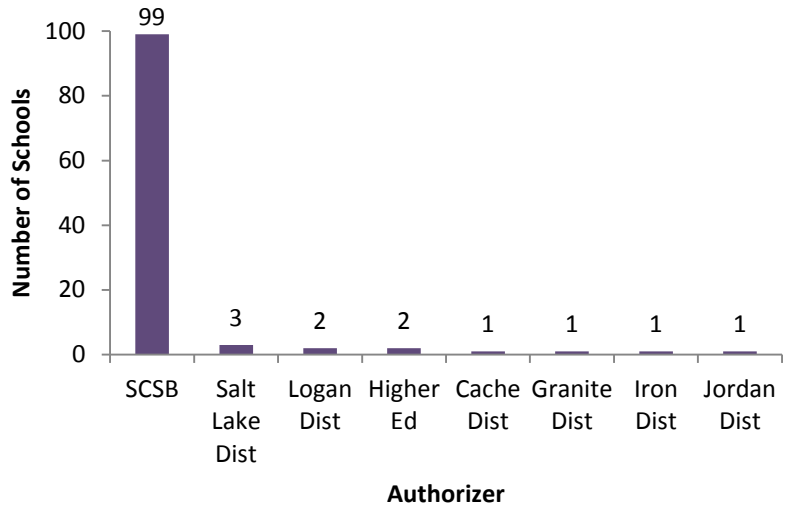
In School Year (SY) 2013-14 there were 95 operational charter schools serving 54,900 students.

In SY 2014-15 there are 110 operational charter schools serving 61,435 students.

Locations

One hundred and six charter schools are located in 22 districts; four charter schools are online. Students who attend charter schools come from 40 of the 41 districts (all except Piute District).

Charter School Authorizers



New School Applications and Approvals

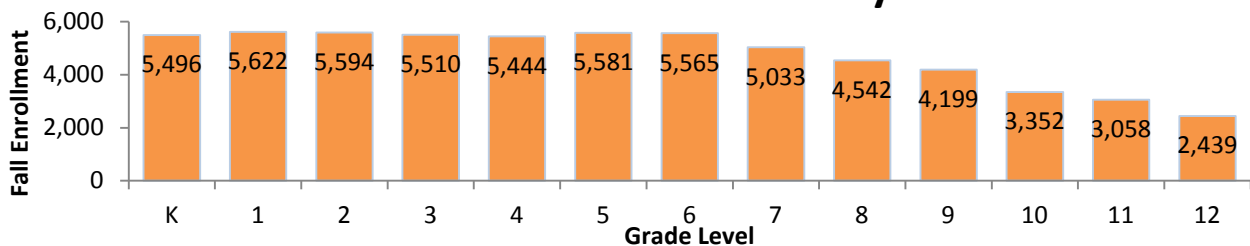
- 2007: 24 applications/12 approved
- 2008: 15 applications/6 approved
- 2009: 13 applications/5 approved
- 2010: 12 applications/4 approved
- 2011: 11 applications/6 approved
- 2012: 12 applications/8 approved
- 2013: 15 applications/7 approved
- 2014: 13 applications/7 approved

Grade Configurations

Charter schools also serve a wide range of grades and grade configurations, though charter schools serve more students in elementary and middle grades than in high school.

- 26 serve grades K-8
- 21 serve grades K-9
- 17 serve grades K-6
- 14 serve grades 9-12
- 12 serve grades K-12
- 8 serve grades 7-12
- 4 serve grades 10-12
- 8 serve other grade configurations

2014-15 Charter School Enrollment by Grade Level



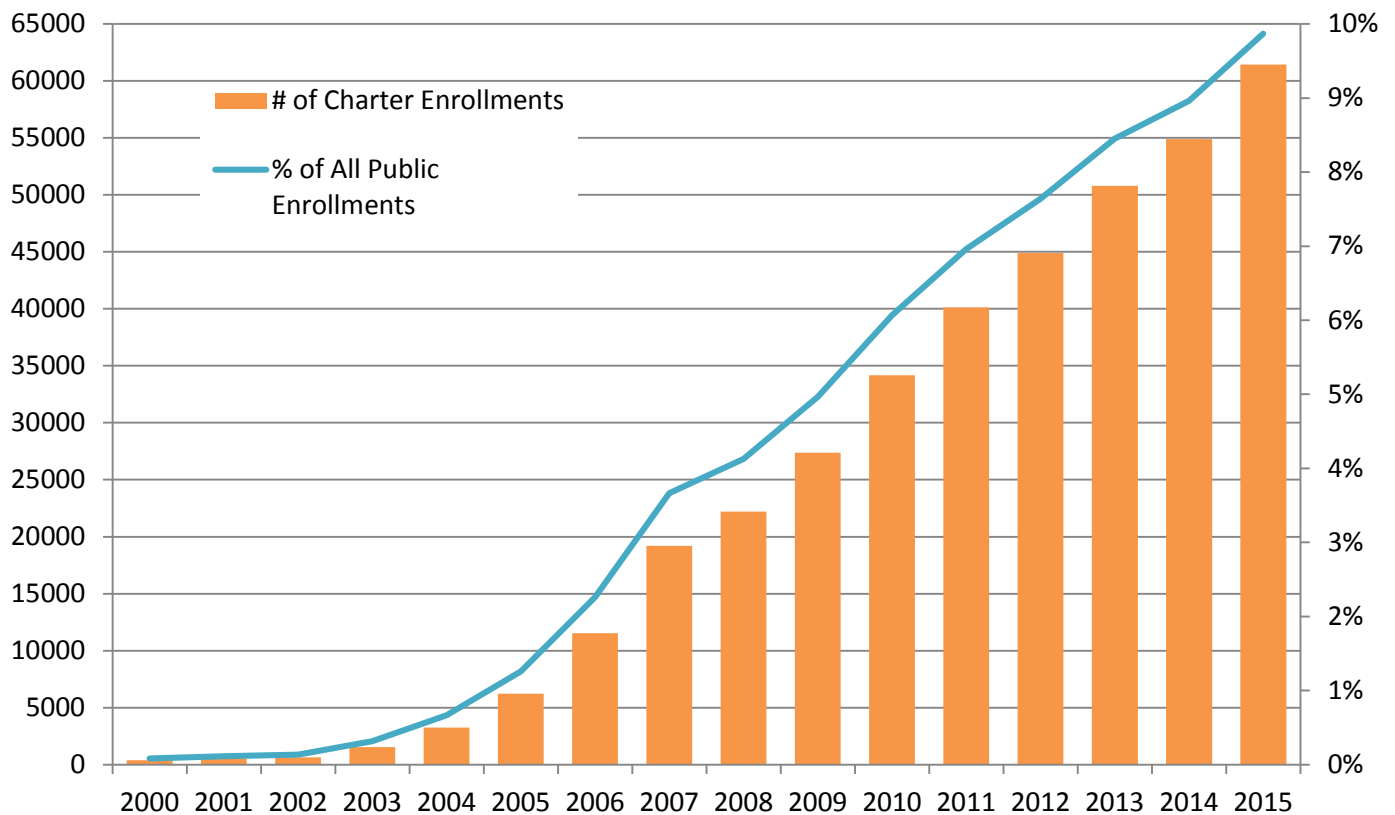
Enrollment and Engagement

Utah has long offered public school choice options through school district open enrollment and charter schools. People choose charter schools for various reasons, some of which include curricular focus, geographic location, school size, safety, and school culture.

Enrollment Longitudinally

Charter school enrollments continue to rise. While all public school student enrollments have been increasing, charter school enrollments have been increasing at a faster pace than district school enrollments. As can be seen, charter schools' percentage share of the whole Utah public school population has been steadily increasing, reaching 61,435 students and 9.9% of all enrollments in SY 2014-15. Just last year, in SY 2013-14, charter school enrollment was 9.0% of all enrollments. In SY 2009-10, it was 6.1% and in SY 2004-05, it was 1.3%.

Charter School Enrollments and Percentages Over Time



Much of the enrollment increase from last year came from enrollments to new charter schools. These schools were largely able to fill their seats. Five of the 14 new charter schools enrolled at or above their maximum enrollment; only three of the new charter schools enrolled at less than 85% of their maximum enrollment.

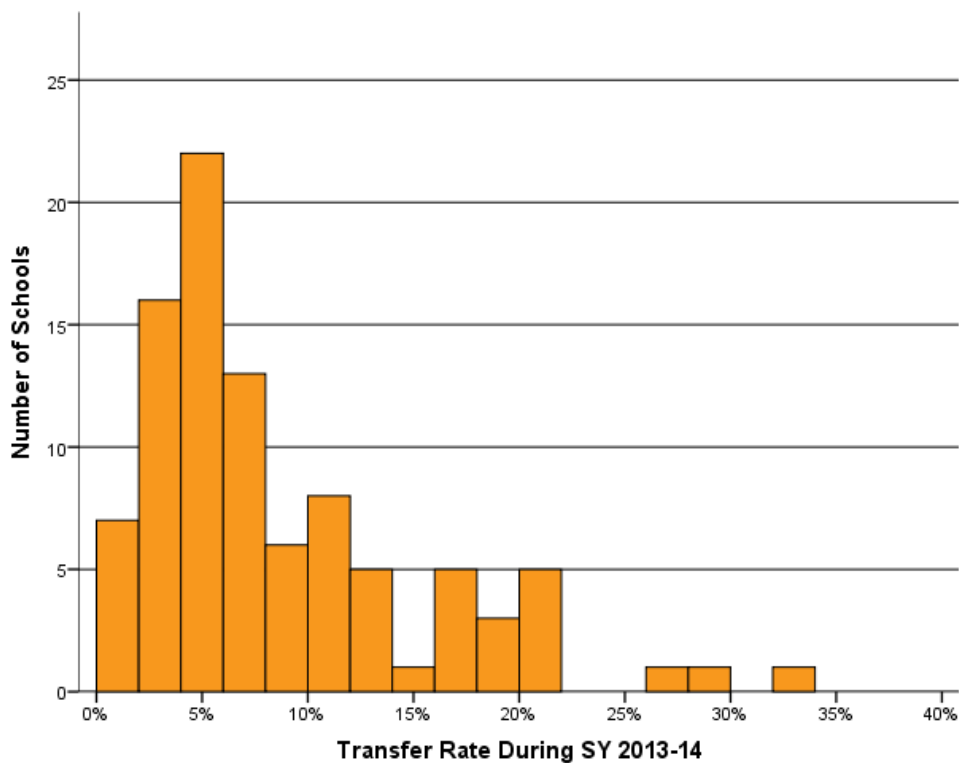
Additionally, some charter schools that were already in existence prior to SY 2014-15 increased in enrollment. Fifteen charter schools increased their enrollment by more than 10% compared to last year (October 2013).

Transfer and Retention

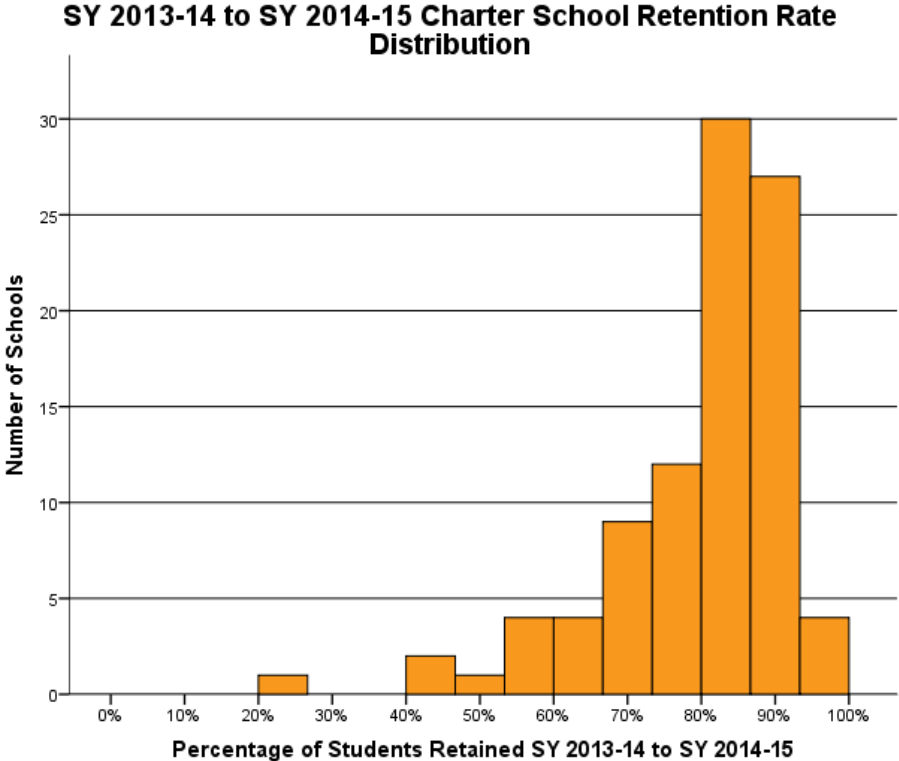
While the overall enrollment of a charter school is important, the Utah State Charter School Board also recognizes the importance of student transfer rates (the percentage of students leaving the charter school during a school year) and student retention rates (the percentage of students reenrolling at the same charter school from one year to the next).

As a whole, charter schools had a transfer rate of 8.3% during SY 2013-14. This was slightly down from 8.6% during SY 2012-13. The transfer rates for individual charter schools ranged from 1.0% to 33.8%. Online and distance education programs tended to have higher transfer rates.

SY 2013-14 Charter School Transfer Rate Distribution



The majority of charter schools also retained most of their students from the end of SY 2013-14 to October 1, 2015. Overall, charter schools retained 80% of their students during that time period. However, as with the transfer rate, retention rates also vary by charter school. About a fifth of charter schools retained 90% or more of their students from SY 2013-14 to SY 2014-15. Two-thirds of charter schools retained 80% or more of their students. Similar to the trend seen with transfer rates, online and distance education programs tended to have lower retention rates.



Wasatch Peak Academy is an elementary school with a diverse student population, located in North Salt Lake. Wasatch Peak Academy’s focus is daily Spanish instruction and Service Learning. The school not only has high test scores, but also very low transfer rates and high retention rates. When asked what factors contribute to the school’s success, Wasatch Peak Academy responded:

We level students for literacy and math instruction to provide individualized and small-group instruction, opportunities for success and mastery in these core subjects, and challenges for those students who excel. We have a Case Management Team (CMT) that meets monthly to review students’ data and make any necessary adjustments to math and literacy placements as the students improve and progress. We emphasize content-literacy integration (in science and history) through the research-based principles of Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI). We maximize our opportunities to have paraprofessionals in our classrooms to help with small-group instruction. We only hire highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. We strive to establish a safe and collaborative environment in our school for both students and for teachers. We have teacher mentors for teachers in their first three years of teaching. We work hard to support each other’s professional growth; each teacher has his/her own Professional Growth Plan he/she is accountable for yearly, where he/she may choose his/her own area(s) for professional development and growth. The Director’s goal is to empower teachers to be their best for the rigorous academic success of all students.

Demographics

Utah charter schools have always served a variety of students across the state, beginning with the first cohort of charter schools that opened in fall 1999 and continuing with the most recent cohort of charter schools that opened for the 2014-15 school year. As public schools, charter schools must accept students who apply to the school. Any time a charter school has more applications than seats available, it must conduct a lottery to fill the seats. According to state law, preference may only be given to:

- A child or grandchild of an individual who has actively participated in the development of the charter school.
- A child or grandchild of a member of the charter school governing board.
- A sibling of a student presently enrolled in the charter school.
- A child of an employee of the charter school.
- Students articulating between charter schools offering similar programs that are governed by the same governing board.
- Students articulating from one charter school to another pursuant to an articulation agreement between the charter schools that is approved by the State Charter School Board.
- Students who reside within:
 - The school district in which the charter school is located;
 - The municipality in which the charter school is located; or
 - A two-mile radius of the charter school.

Additionally:

- A charter school whose mission is to enhance learning opportunities for refugees or children of refugee families may give an enrollment preference to refugees or children of refugee families.
- A charter school whose mission is to enhance learning opportunities for English language learners may give an enrollment preference to English language learners.
- A charter school may weight its lottery to give a slightly better chance of admission to educationally disadvantaged students, including:
 - Low-income students.
 - Students with disabilities.
 - English language learners.
 - Migrant students.
 - Neglected or delinquent students.
 - Homeless students.

2013-2014 Demographics

Compared to statewide demographic percentages, charter schools overall reported lower percentages of students who are identified as low income, ethnic minority, and English learners (EL). However, in ten percent of charter schools, more than 75% of students are identified as low income, ethnic minority, having a disability (SWD) or an English learner.

2013-14 Charter School Student Demographics



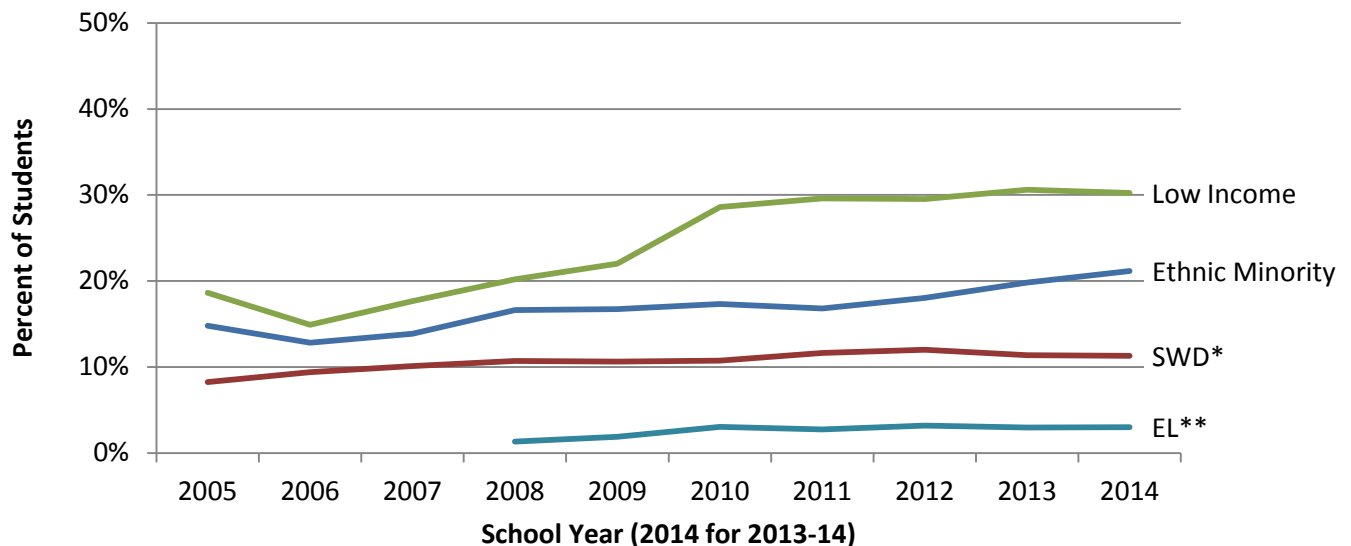
*SWD = Students with disabilities

** EL = English learners

Demographics Longitudinally

Utah charter schools have seen some increases in some demographic subgroups. In particular, the percentage of ethnic minorities has shown a steady increase over time, from 14% in 2007 to 21% in 2014.

Charter School Demographics, Over Time



*SWD = Students with disabilities

** EL = English learners

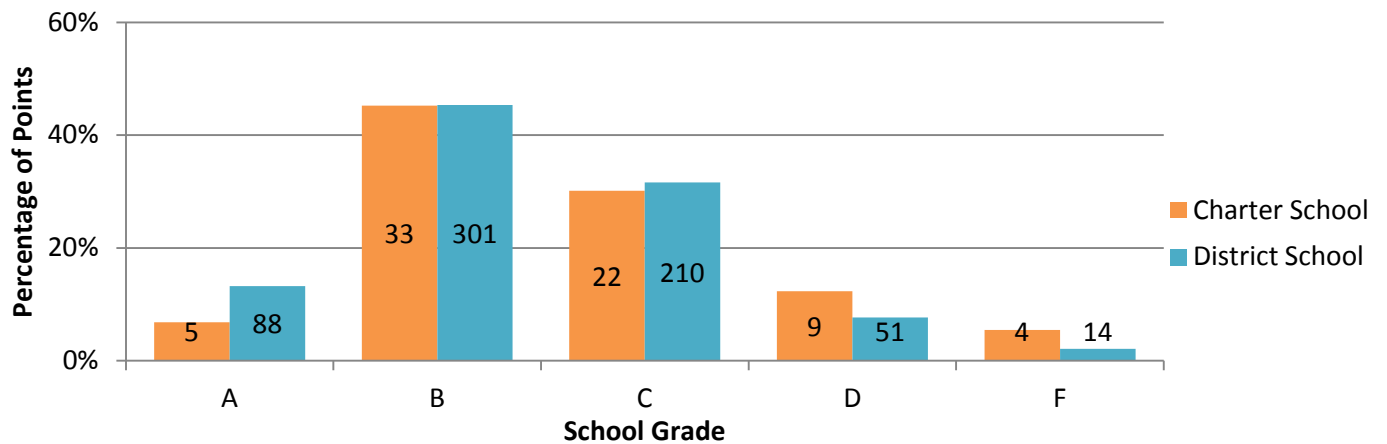
Note: English learner designations changed in 2008; data prior to 2008 was not included for this subgroup.

Academics

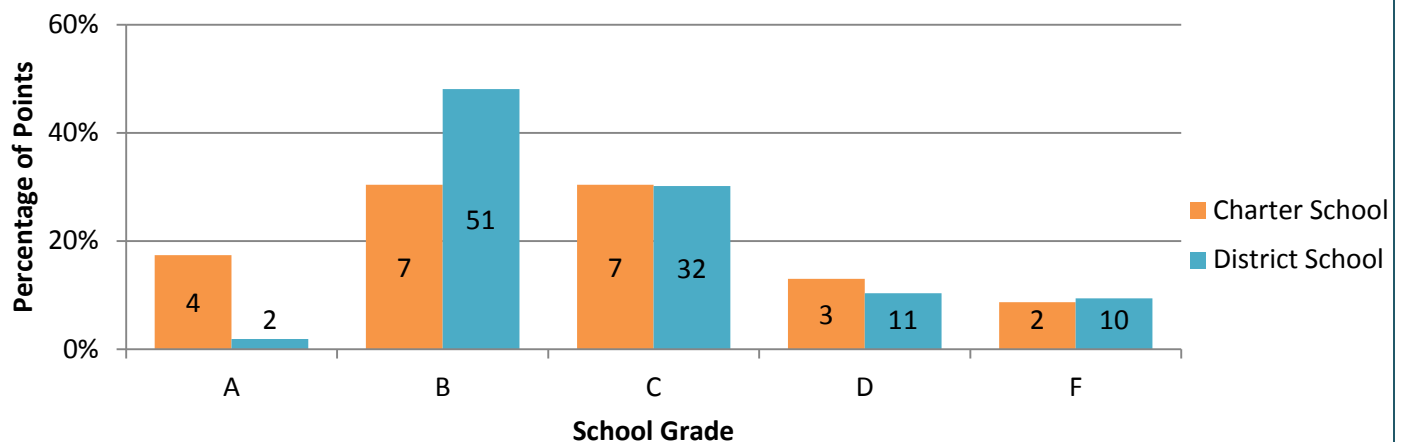
Grading Schools

Schools received a grade for the first time for the 2012-13 school year. Grades are assigned based on points awarded for the percentage of students reaching proficiency in language arts, mathematics, and science; the percentage of students reaching sufficient growth in those same subjects; ACT scores (for high schools only); and the percentage of students graduating within four years (for high schools only). In 2013-14, a higher percentage of charter high schools earned an A than district schools, but a lower percentage of charter elementary/middle schools earned an A than district schools. A similar trend was seen for the 2012-13 school year.

2013-14 School Grades for Elementary Schools



2013-14 School Grades for High Schools



George Washington Academy serves grades K-8 in St. George, Utah. George Washington Academy uses the research-based Core Knowledge Sequence, presented in a comprehensive, sequenced manner, to ensure that students not only meet, but far exceed the Utah State and Common Core standards. To support Core Knowledge standards in science, history, art, and music, the school also uses other rigorous and proven curricula, including Saxon Math, Spalding Language Arts, and Shurley English. Math is taught a minimum of one year ahead for all students, and the school offers full-day, challenging kindergarten for its youngest students. In addition to top-notch academics, George Washington Academy stresses educating “the whole child” with a solid Character Education program and many opportunities for extracurricular activities. Students wear uniforms so that their focus is on learning, and not on what they are wearing.

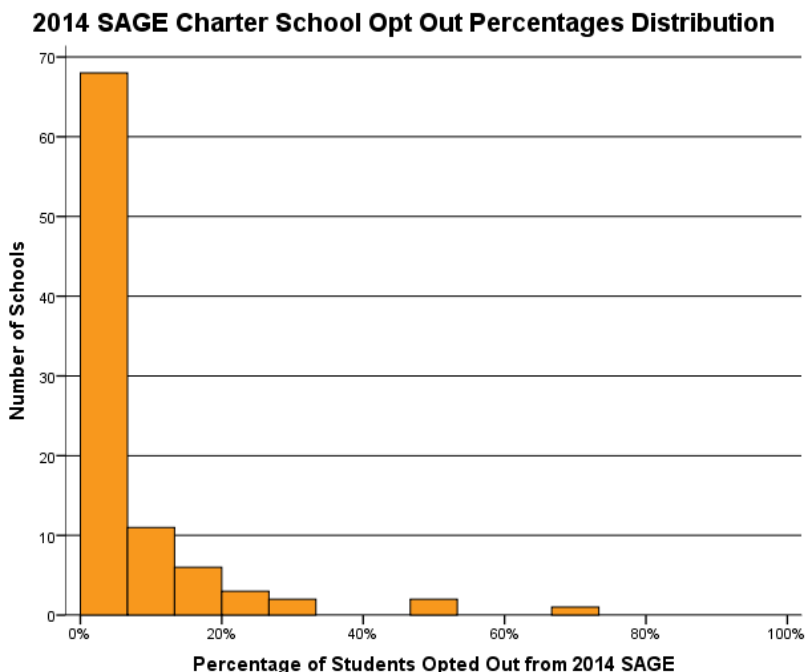
George Washington Academy commented:

We challenge our students with an aggressive, academically rigorous program. We have found that with a clearly defined curriculum and direct instruction, our students are able to achieve their fullest potential.

End of Level Assessments (SAGE)

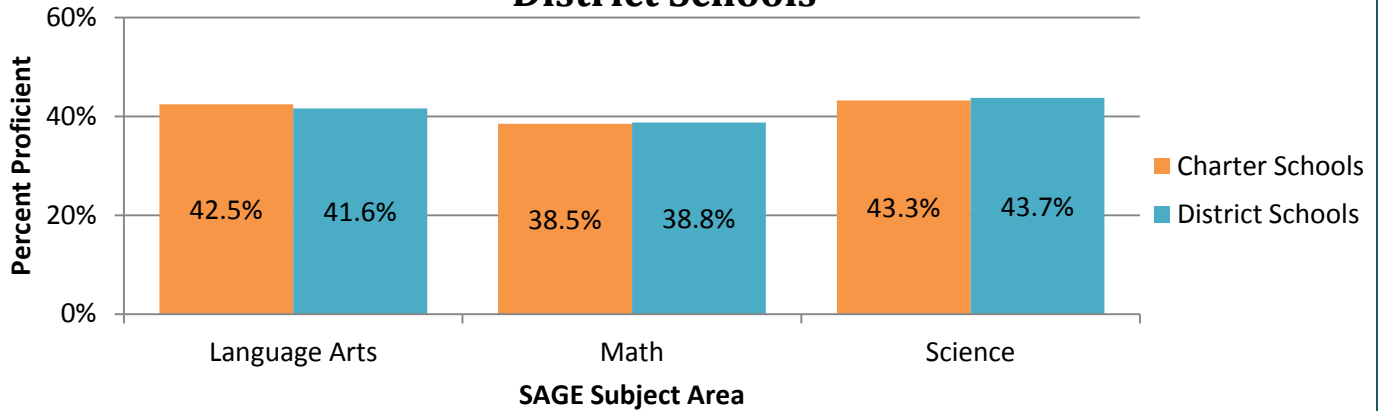
In 2014, Utah began using a new set of end-of-year assessments, the Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE), which uses more rigorous standards than past years’ CRTs. Thus, past proficiency rates on the CRTs should not be compared to proficiency rates on SAGE.

In 2014, Utah saw increases in the percentages of students who were opted out of the end-of-year state assessment. While this happened statewide, some schools saw higher percentages of students opted out of the SAGE assessments than other schools. Charter schools were particularly affected. Seven percent of charter school students opted out of 2014 SAGE testing, compared to 1.5% of district school students. However, there was much variability among charter schools in percentages of students opting out. More than a third of charter schools (37.6%) had 1.5% or fewer students opt out of 2014 SAGE testing. Seventy-five percent of charter schools had less than seven percent of students opt out.



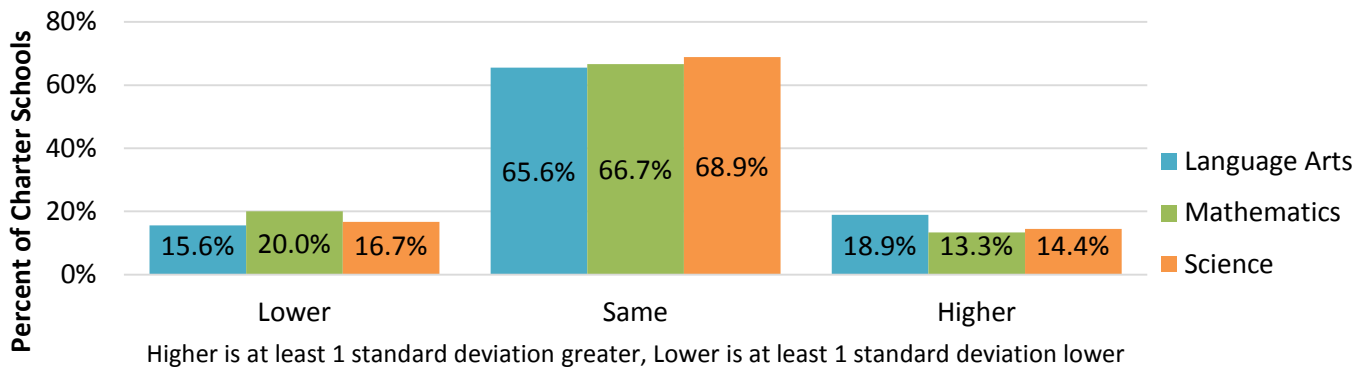
The 2014 proficiency rates on SAGE were lower than the proficiency rates on the CRTs in prior years. This was not a reflection of decreased student achievement, but a reflection of increased expectations and higher standards aligned with college and career readiness. Overall, there was little to no difference between the percentage of charter school students and the percentage of district school students who were proficient on the 2014 SAGE test.

2014 SAGE Proficiency Rates for Students at Charter and District Schools



There are some charter schools with comparatively high proficiency rates. The three high schools with the highest language arts proficiency are charter schools, the four high schools with highest mathematics proficiency are charter schools, and the three high schools with highest science proficiency are charter schools. Overall, 18.9% of charter schools had higher language arts proficiency rates (meaning more than one standard deviation) than the district in which they reside. This was also true for 13.3% of charter schools for mathematics and 14.4% of charter schools for science.

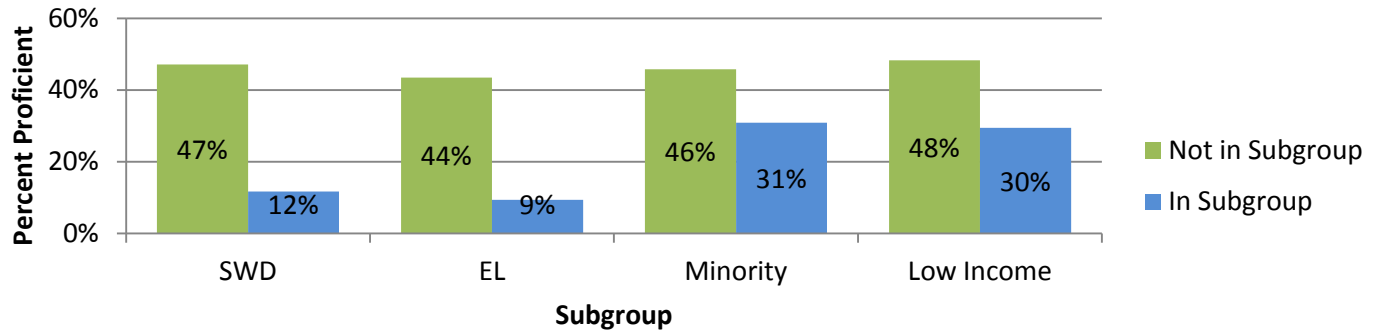
Charter School 2014 SAGE Proficiency Rates Comparison to District



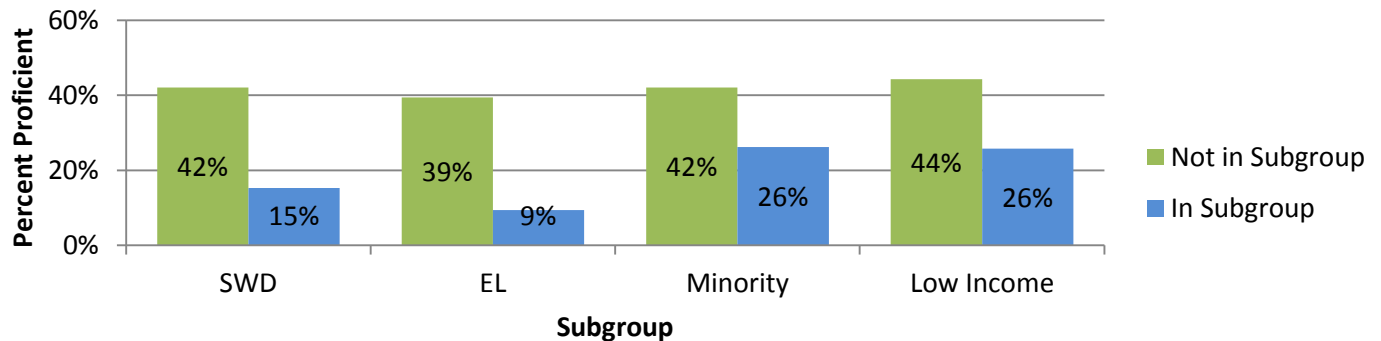
Demographics and SAGE Achievement

Statewide, there is a correlation between achievement and demographics where certain subgroups tend to have lower test scores than those not in the subgroups. This is also true for charter schools. In 2014, for all subject SAGE tests, charter school students with disabilities (SWD), English learners (ELs), ethnic or racial minorities, and low-income students had lower proficiency rates than charter school students not in those subgroups. All achievement gaps shown below are statistically significant ($p < .05$).

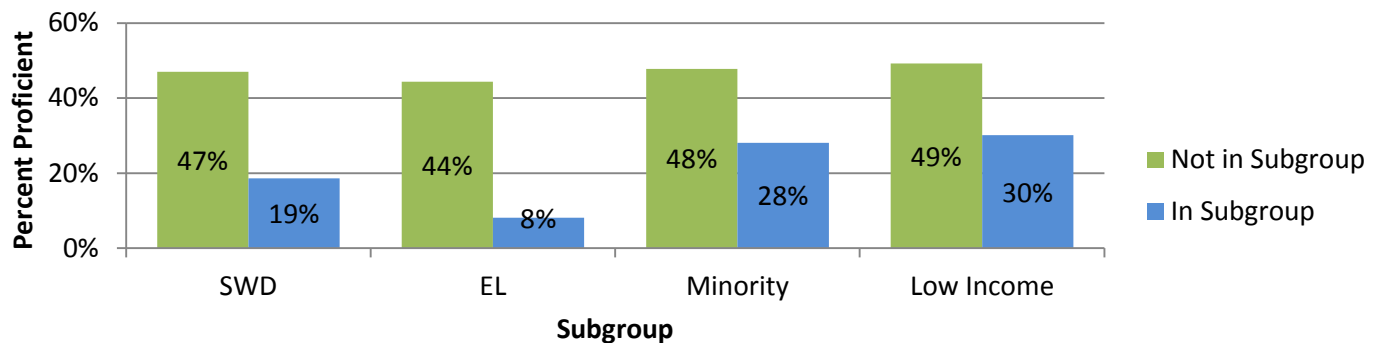
2014 Charter School SAGE Proficiency by Subgroup Language Arts



Mathematics

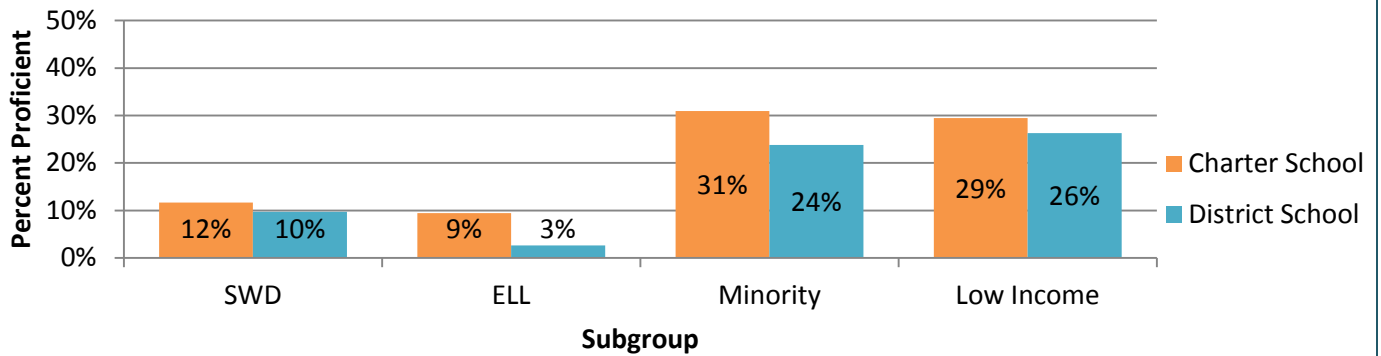


Science

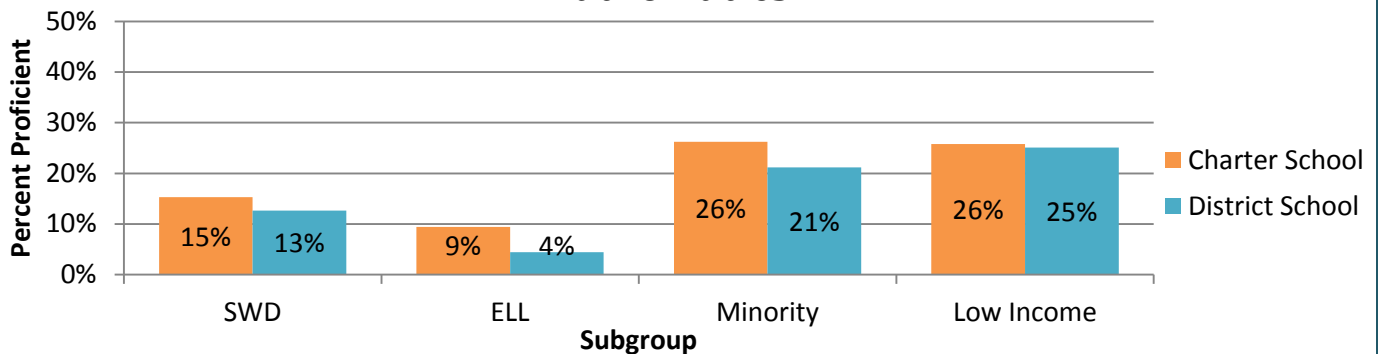


While there is an achievement gap within charter schools, charter schools as a whole do a comparatively good job in closing that gap. A number of charter schools serve high percentages of students in these subgroups and are able to raise these students' proficiency rates. For every subgroup and in every subject on the 2014 SAGE test, the gap within charter schools was smaller than the gap within district schools. Further, charter school students in these subgroups had higher proficiency rates than district school students in these subgroups, as seen in the graphs below. Except for low-income students in math, the differences are statistically significant ($p < .05$).

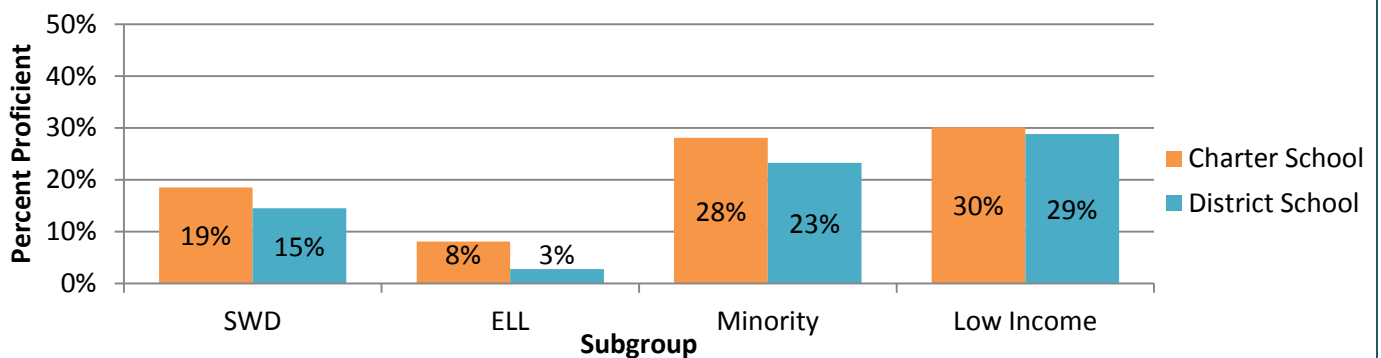
2014 SAGE Subgroup Proficiency Rates Language Arts



Mathematics



Science



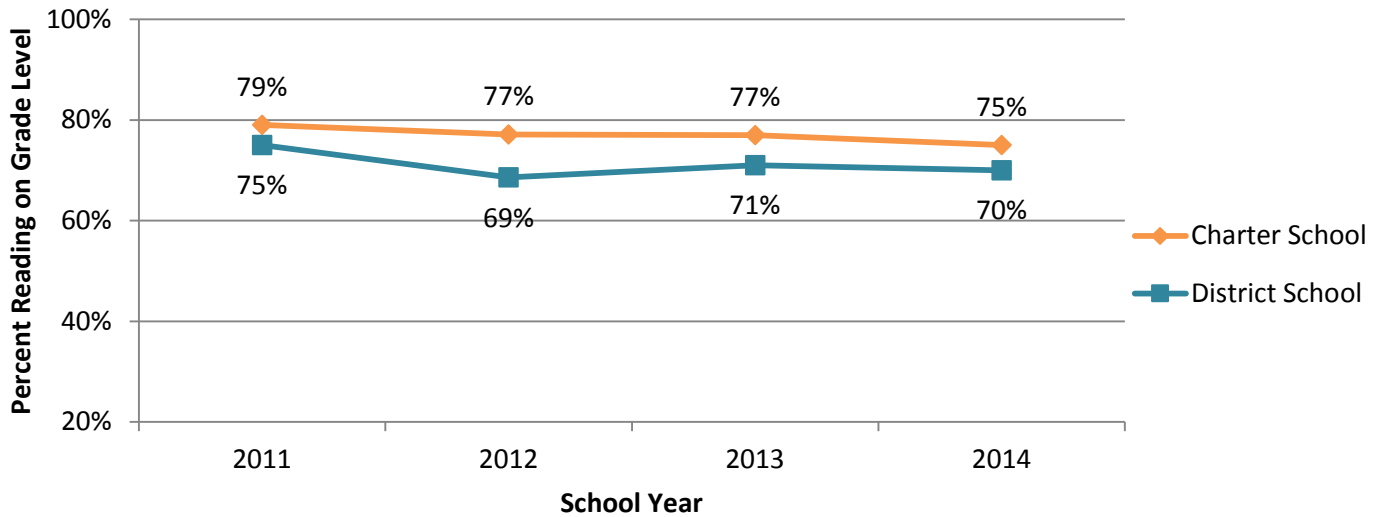
The Ranches Academy serves grades K-6 in Eagle Mountain, Utah. The Ranches Academy strives to deliver the highest education to Utah students. This is achieved through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program. Students will attain the most success and growth if provided with instruction at their individual learning level. The Ranches Academy's highly qualified teachers utilize trained paraprofessionals five hours a day in each classroom. This allows each student to receive instruction targeted for his or her specific needs. Ability grouping takes place for spelling, reading, mathematics, and writing instruction. All staff members have been instructed on differentiation across all curriculum areas. Differentiation provides grade-level standards to be presented to the class, and the assignments are tailored to the students' needs.

Data is a vital part of the Ranches Academy's continual school improvement program. Each grade-level team meets weekly to analyze student data. In addition to grade-level data, school-wide data is gathered to examine longitudinal trends. The information is used to guide instruction. By using data and monitoring student progress, the school is able to decrease the performance gap between the total school population and subgroups. The Ranches Academy believes that all students have the ability to excel if given a learning environment suited for their instructional needs.

Reading on Grade Level

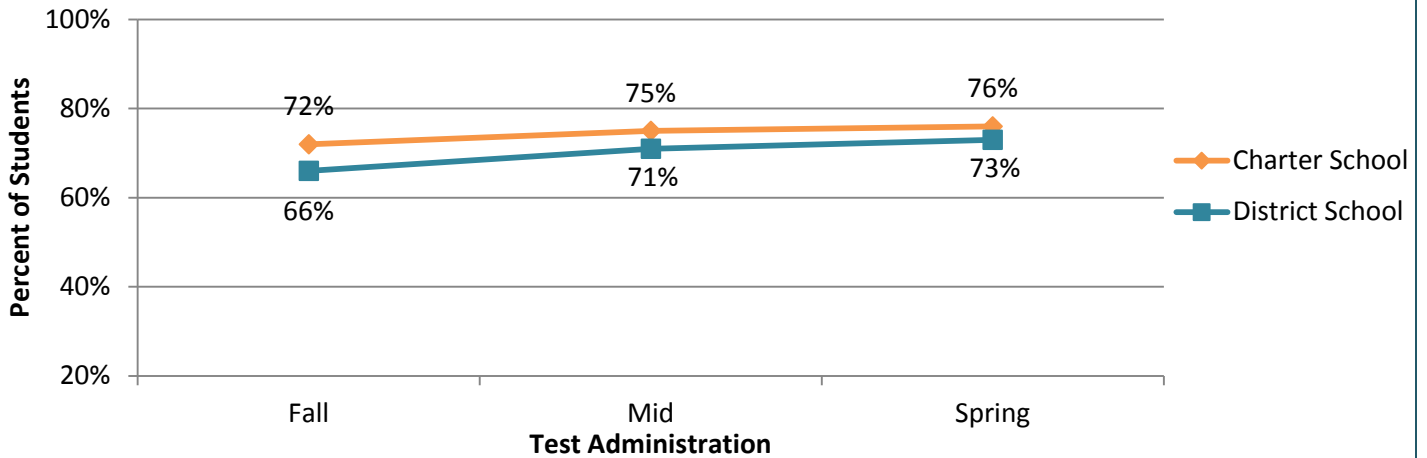
Using the DIBELS mid-year reading assessment, schools report whether students in grades 1-3 are reading on grade level. In 2014, a higher percentage of charter school students were reading on grade level than in district schools. This difference between the two percentages is statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Mid-Year Reading on Grade Level, Over Time



DIBELS was also administered at the beginning of the school year and the end of the school year. Thus, students in grades 1-3 were assessed for reading on grade level three times during the 2013-14 school year (Fall, Mid, and Spring).

Reading on Grade Level, Throughout School Year 2013-14



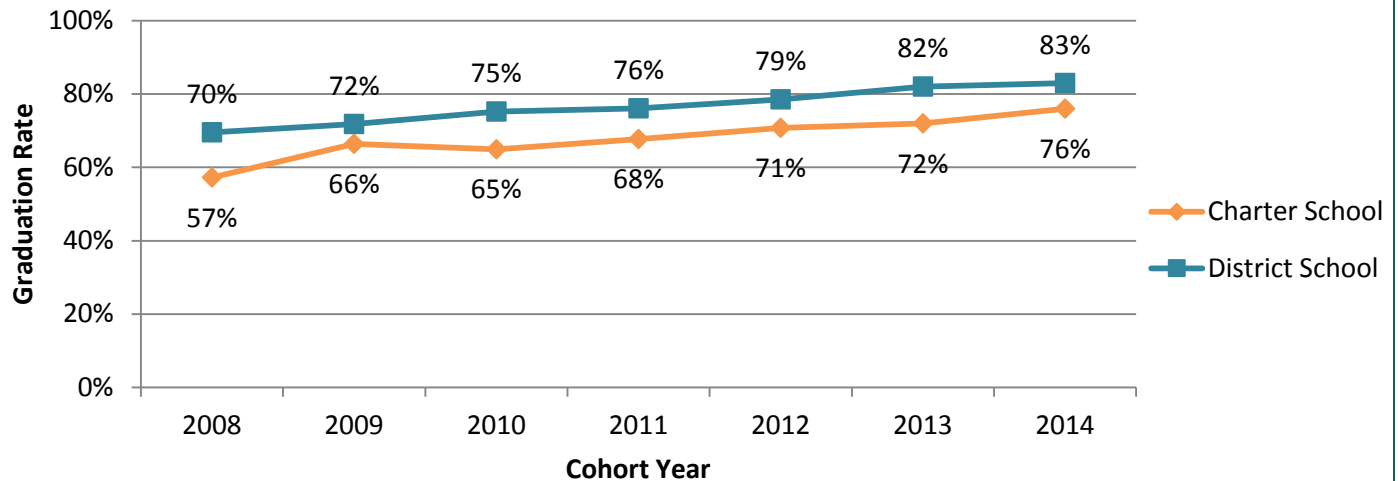
Bear River Charter School serves grades K-8 in Logan, UT. Bear River Charter School is driven by a clear vision and mission that focuses on the academic, social and emotional development of its students. The school accomplishes its mission by using research-based instructional practices, positive behavior supports, and individualized instruction. When asked what factors contribute to the school’s success, Bear River Charter School responded:

We are fortunate to have a talented, committed board of directors who are passionate about the school’s mission and focus on policy that allows the teachers and the administration to concentrate on the students. We have a very strong special education program that works closely with families to make sure that we are addressing the needs of these students. We have a committed group of teachers who strive to deliver the instructional programs with fidelity and are analytical about each student’s performance. We place a premium on satisfaction for the teachers and strive to provide them with a work place that promotes happiness and satisfaction. In addition, we make every effort to provide the teachers with the instructional tools they need. The board, administration, teachers, students and parents continually desire to improve instruction, student performance and the culture of the school.

Graduation Rates

Using the four-year Federal cohort graduation rate, the graduation rate for charter high school students has been lower than the graduation rate for district high school students. However, except for the “bump” with the charter school 2009 cohort, the charter school graduation rate has been steadily increasing. Also, like with other data presented in this report, some charter schools have very high graduation rates. For the 2014 cohort, one charter school had a 100% graduation rate and 20 had a graduation rate above 90%.

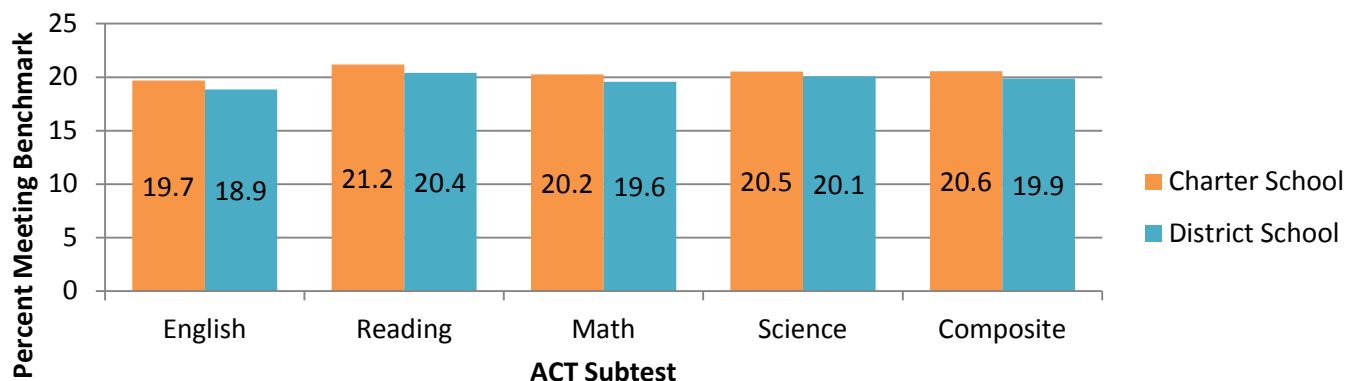
Graduation Rate Over Time



College Readiness (ACT)

Beginning with SY 2013-14, the ACT was given to all eleventh grade students in a Utah public school. In SY 2013-14, eleventh grade students enrolled in Utah charter schools performed significantly ($p < .05$) better than students enrolled in district schools. (Note: The ACT data used in accountability reports uses ACT scores for graduates after they graduate, which means the ACT data is likely from years prior to 2014; this graph reports the ACT data for eleventh grade students taken in 2014.)

2014 Average ACT Scores, 11th Grade Students



The ACT sets College Readiness Benchmarks for each subtest. These benchmarks are indicators of being more likely than not of earning a B or higher in a corresponding college course. The benchmarks are as follows:

- English: 18
- Reading: 22
- Math: 22
- Science: 23

In SY 2013-14, 68.5% of eleventh grade students enrolled in a Utah charter school met at least one ACT College Readiness Benchmark. Twenty-two percent of eleventh grade students enrolled in a Utah charter school met all four.

2014 ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, 11th Grade

