

# Utah's Public Charter Schools

## Report, January 2016

### Expanding Our Public Education System



Utah Charter Schools



Utah State Office of Education  
250 East 500 South  
P.O. 144200  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4200

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Report produced by the Utah State Charter School Board, (801) 538-7720

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# Utah State Charter School Board Profiles



**Howard M. Headlee, Board 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.



**Kristin Elinkowski, Board Vice Chair.** 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 388<sup>th</sup> 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.



**Tim Beagley Ph.D.** 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.



**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.



**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.

# 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

North Davis Preparatory Academy

North Star Academy

**State Charter School Board (cont.)**

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  
The Early Light Academy

**State Charter School Board (cont.)**

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 2015, (school year 2015-16), there are 104 charter LEAs and 117 charter schools serving 67,509 students. This is 6,045 more students than enrolled the prior year on October 2014 (10% growth). District growth for the same timeframe was 5,669 students (1% growth). The combined total of the charter school population equals that of the fourth largest school district in the state.

Even with 67,509 and strong growth, the demand outpaces the supply in many areas; thousands of students are wait-listed statewide every year. A quarter of all charter schools were at or above their maximum enrollment in October 2015. 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. There are many charter schools with impressive achievement. 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.



# Fast Facts

## Charter Schools by the Numbers

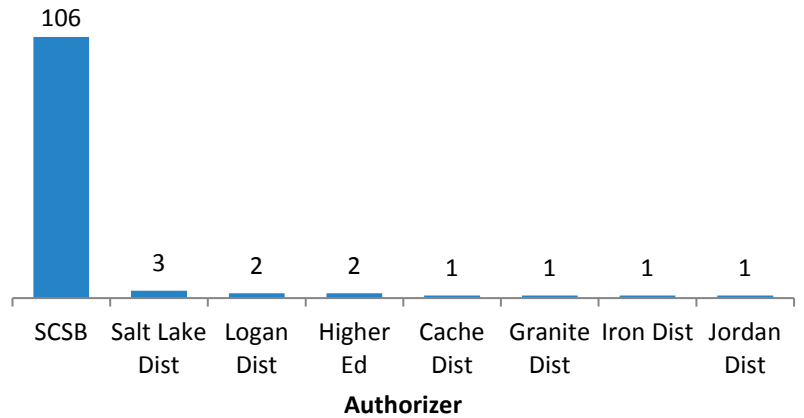
In School Year (SY) 2014-15 there were 110 operational charter schools serving 61,435 students.

In SY 2015-16 there are 117 operational charter schools serving 67,509 students.

## Locations

One hundred and twelve charter schools are located in 22 districts; five charter schools are online. Students who attend charter schools come from all 41 districts.

## Charter School Authorizers



## New School Applications and Approvals

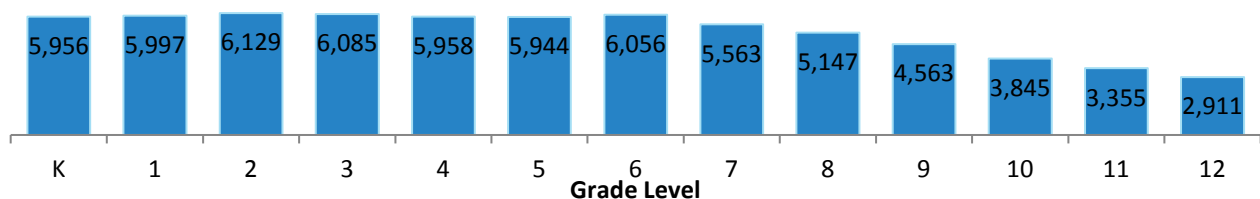
- 2008: 15 applications/6 approved
  - 2009: 13 applications/5 approved
  - 2010: 11 applications/4 approved
  - 2011: 12 applications/6 approved
  - 2012: 15 applications/7 approved
  - 2013: 14 applications/7 approved
  - 2014: 17 applications/6 approved
  - 2015: 11 applications/2 approved\*
- \*As of February 2016.

## 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.

- 25 serve grades K-9
- 22 serve grades K-8
- 19 serve grades K-6
- 16 serve grades K-12
- 15 serve grades 9-12
- 9 serve grades 7-12
- 4 serve grades 10-12
- 7 serve other grade configurations

## 2015-16 Charter School Enrollment by Grade Level





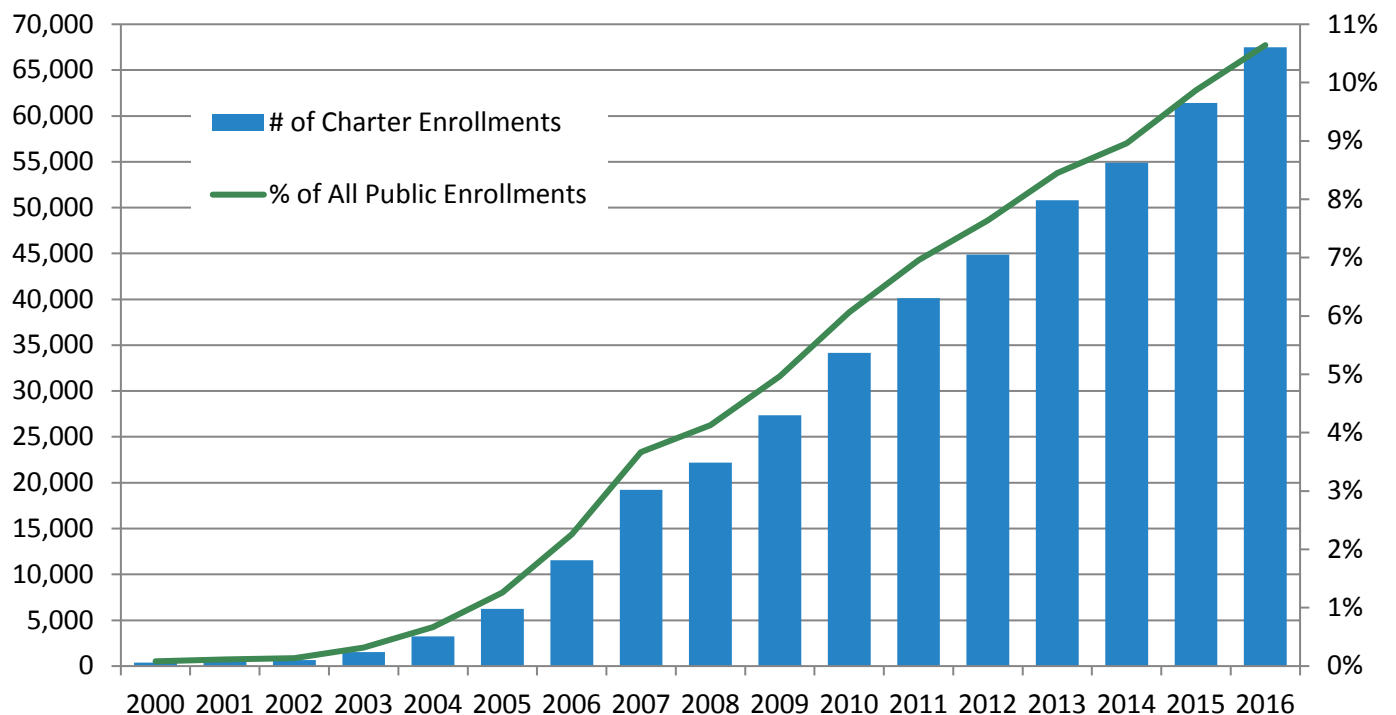
# Enrollment and Engagement

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 67,509 students and 10.6% of all enrollments in SY 2015-16. Just last year, in SY 2014-15, charter school enrollment was 9.9% 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



Seventy-five percent of the enrollment increase from last year were in enrollments to new charter schools. These schools were largely able to fill their seats. Four of the nine new charter schools enrolled at or above 94% of their maximum enrollment; only one of the new charter schools enrolled at less than 75% of their maximum enrollment.

Additionally, some charter schools that were already in operation prior to SY 2015-16 increased in enrollment. Charter schools already in operation prior to SY 2015-16 collectively grew by 1,540 students (2.5%).

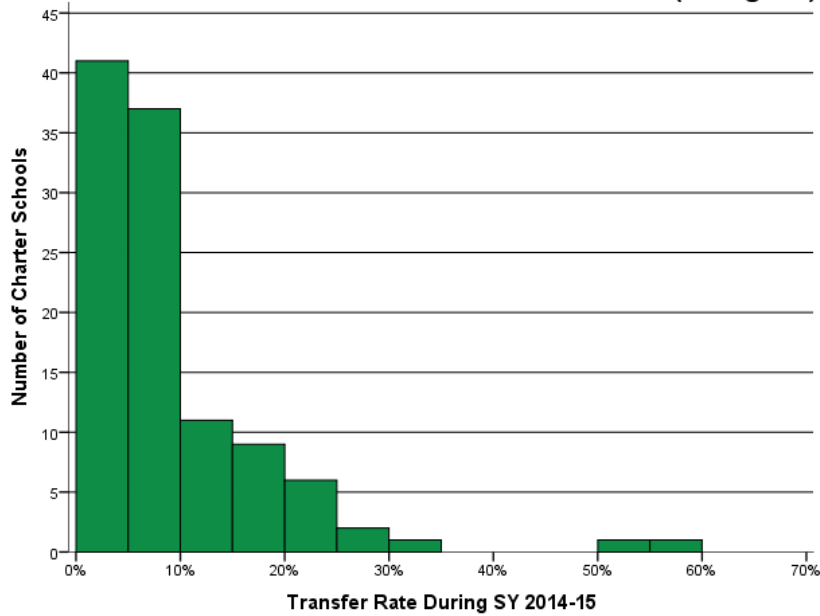


### Transfer and Retention

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).

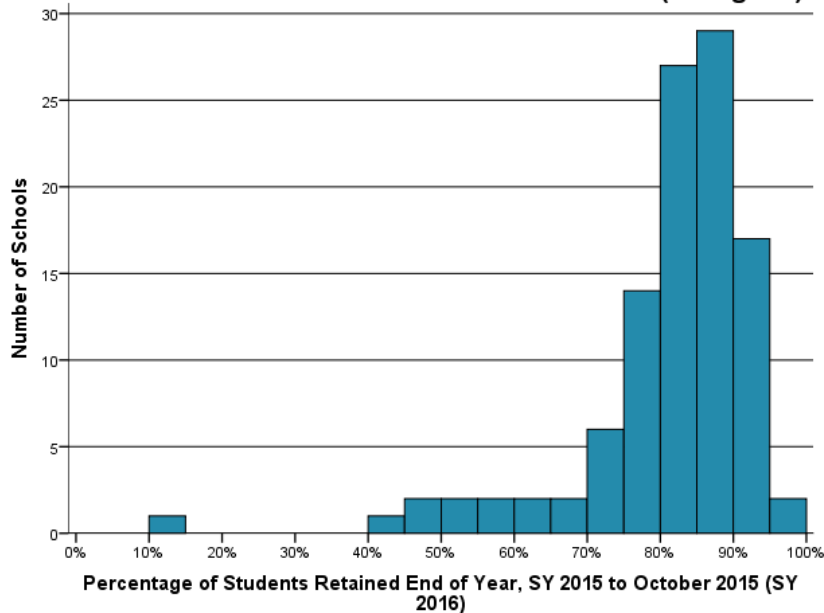
As a whole, charter schools had a transfer rate of 8.3% during SY 2014-15. This was an increase from 7.4% during SY 2013-14. The transfer rates for individual charter schools ranged from less than a half a percent (0.4%) to 57.6%. More than a third of the charter schools (37.6%) had a transfer rate below 5%.

**SY 2014-15 Charter School Transfer Rate Distribution (Histogram)**



The majority of charter schools also retained most of their students from the end of SY 2014-15 to October 1, 2016. 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. Almost a fifth of charter schools retained 90% or more of their students. Seventy percent of charter schools retained 80% or more of their students.

**SY 2015 Charter School Retention Rate Distribution (Histogram)**



# 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 2015-16 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.



## 2015-2016 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 13 charter schools (11%), more than 75% of students are identified as low income, ethnic minority, having a disability (SWD) or an English learner. In 50 charter schools (43%), at least half of the enrolled students are identified as low income, ethnic minority, having a disability (SWD) or an English learner.

## 2015-16 Charter School Student Demographics



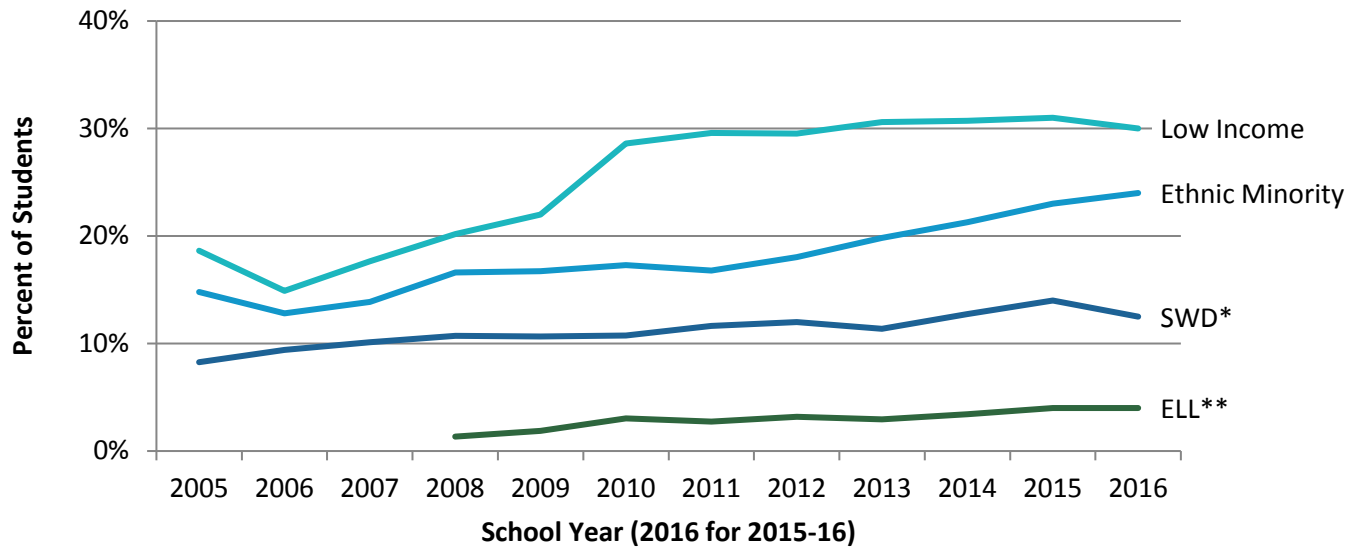
\*SWD = Students with disabilities

\*\* 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 24% in October 2015 (SY 2015-16).

### 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.

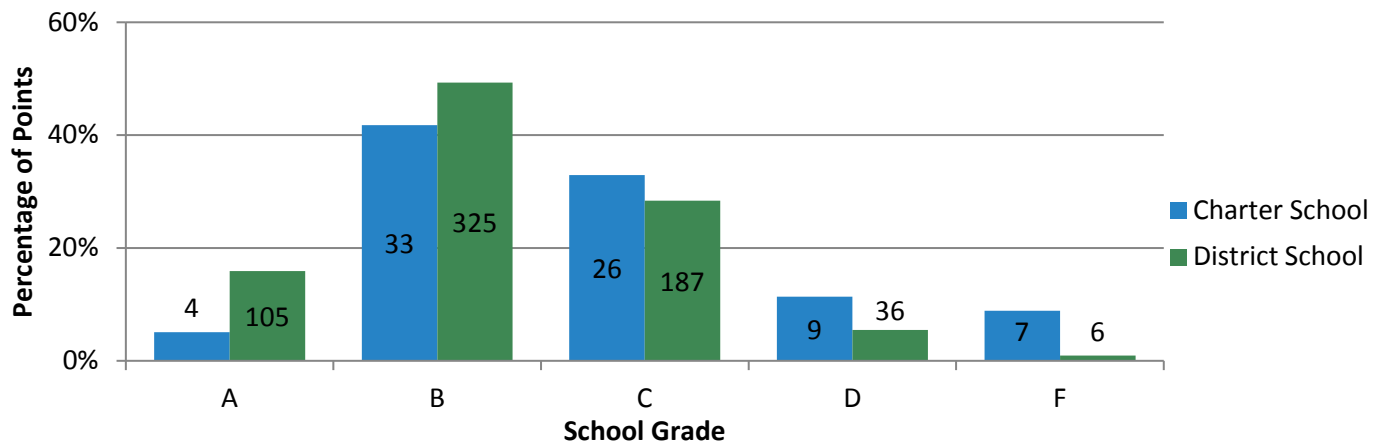


# Academics

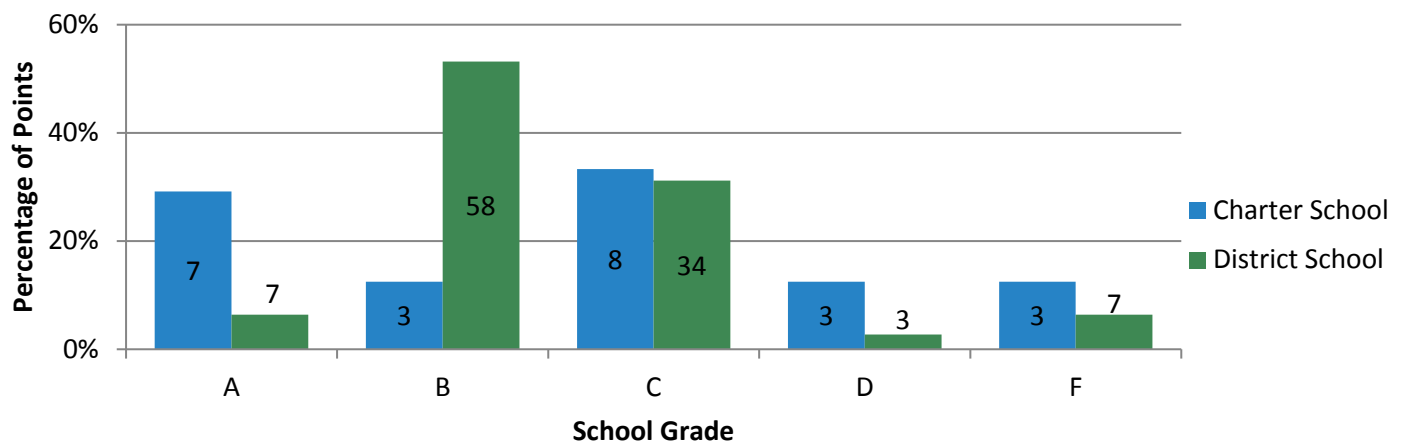
## Grading Schools

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 SY 2014-15, 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 in prior years.

### SY 2014-15 School Grades for Elementary Schools



### SY 2014-15 School Grades for High Schools



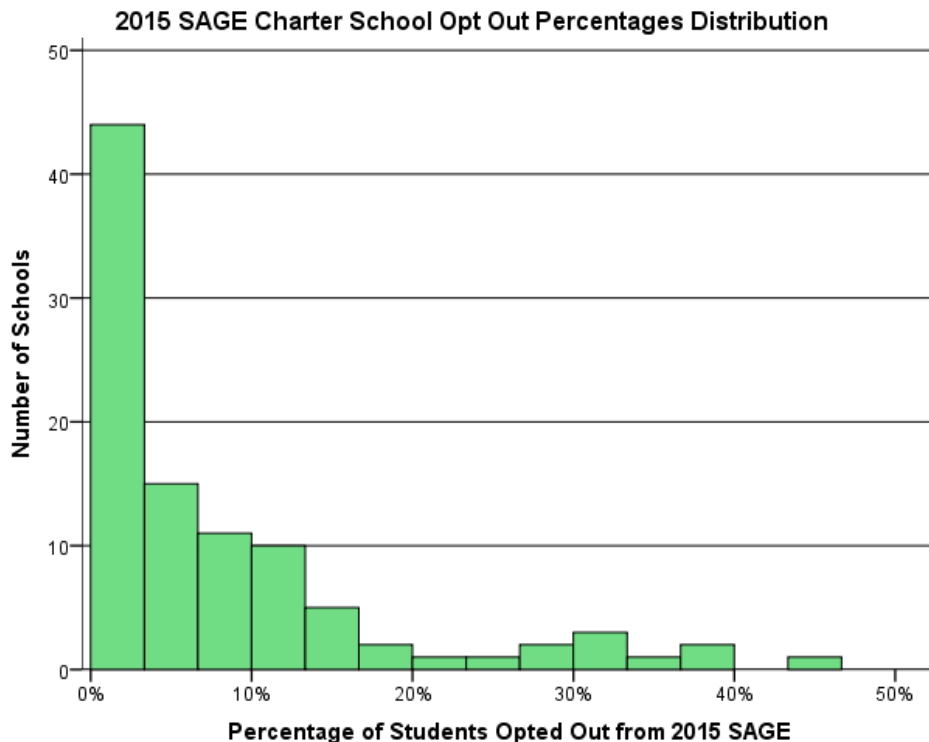
## End of Level Assessments (SAGE)

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.



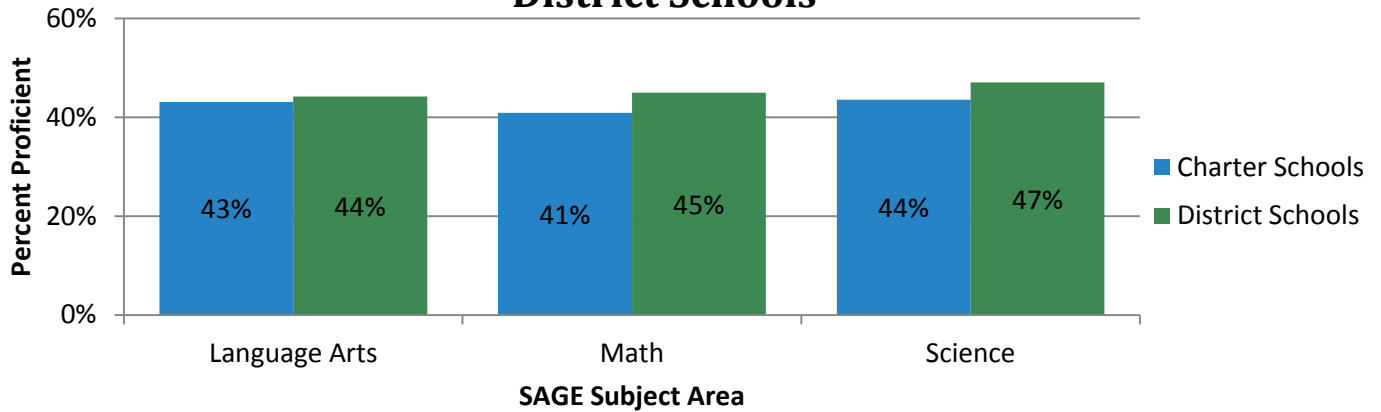
In 2015, Utah saw increases in the percentages of students who were opted out of the end-of-year state assessment. While this happened statewide, some schools saw higher percentages of students opted out of the SAGE assessments than other schools. Charter schools were particularly affected. About a tenth of charter school students opted out of 2015 SAGE testing (9.8%), compared to 2.4% of district school students. This was an increase from 2014, where seven percent of charter school students were opted out of SAGE testing. However, there was much variability among charter schools in

percentages of students opting out. More than a quarter of charter schools (26.3%) had 2.0% or fewer students opt out of 2015 SAGE testing. Seventy percent of charter schools had less than ten percent of students opt out. Further, a quarter of charter schools (24.7%) had a lower opt out rate in 2015 than in 2014. However, nearly a quarter of charter schools (23.6%) also saw an increase in their opt out rate by more than five percent.



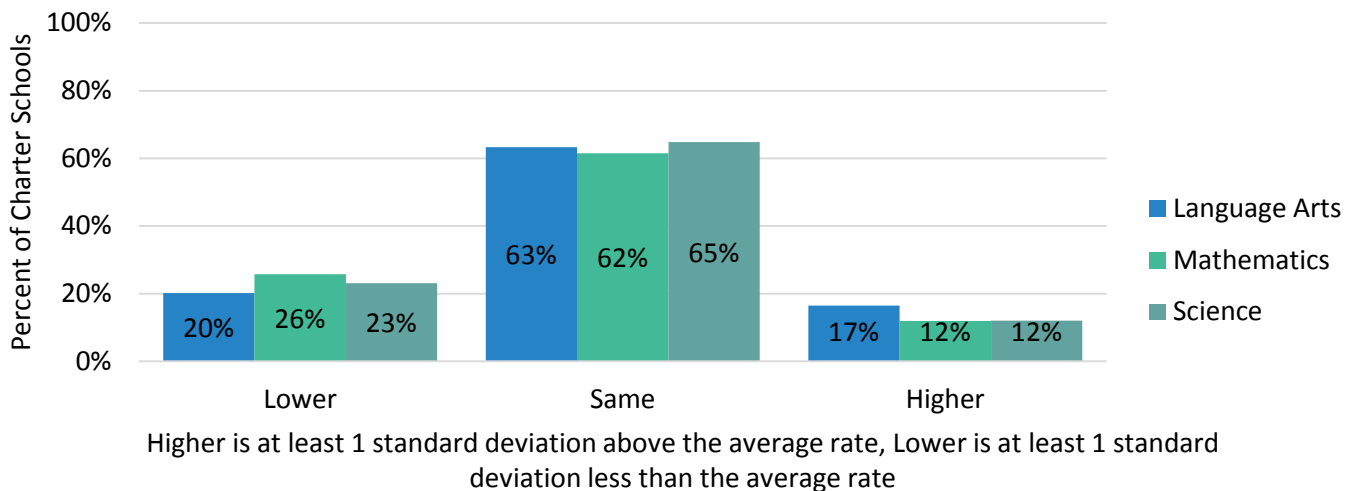
Overall, charter school 2015 SAGE proficiency rates increased from the rates in 2014. However in 2015, the proficiency rates among charter school students were lower than the proficiency rates among district school students.

### 2015 SAGE Proficiency Rates for Students at Charter and District Schools



There are some charter schools with comparatively high proficiency rates. Seven of the ten high schools with the highest language arts proficiency in the state were charter schools. The top five high schools with highest mathematics proficiency are charter schools, and the top five high schools with highest science proficiency are also charter schools. Overall, 16.5% 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 11.9% of charter schools for mathematics and 12.0% of charter schools for science.

### Charter School 2015 SAGE Proficiency Rates Comparison to Average State Proficiency Rates

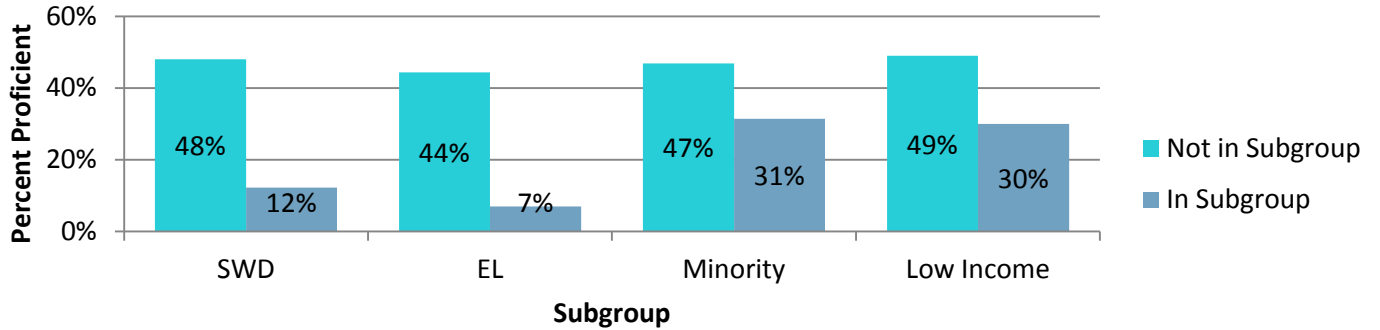




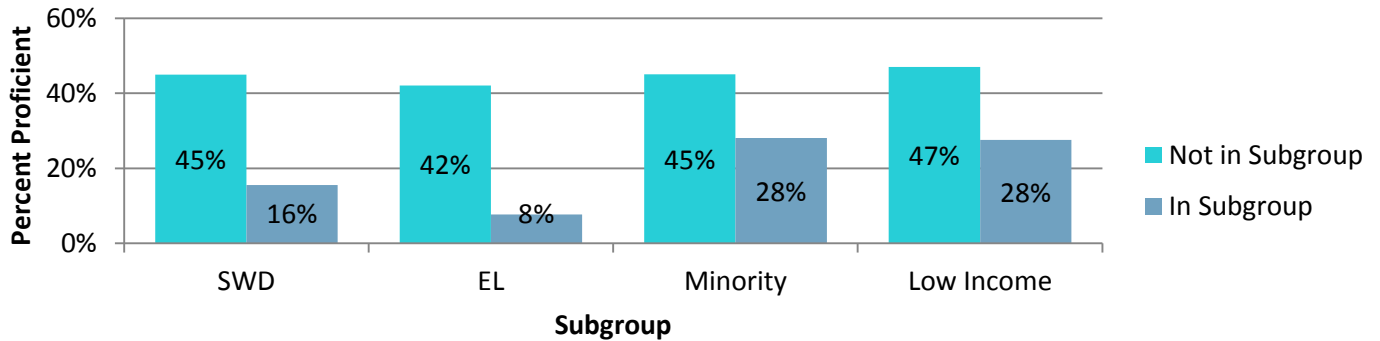
## Demographics and SAGE Achievement

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 2015, 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 ( $p < .05$ ).

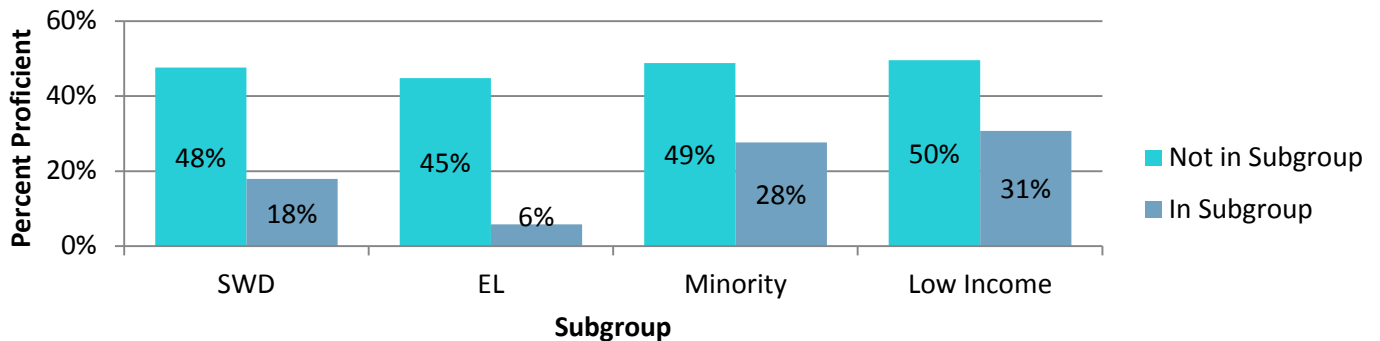
### 2014 Charter School SAGE Proficiency by Subgroup Language Arts



### Mathematics

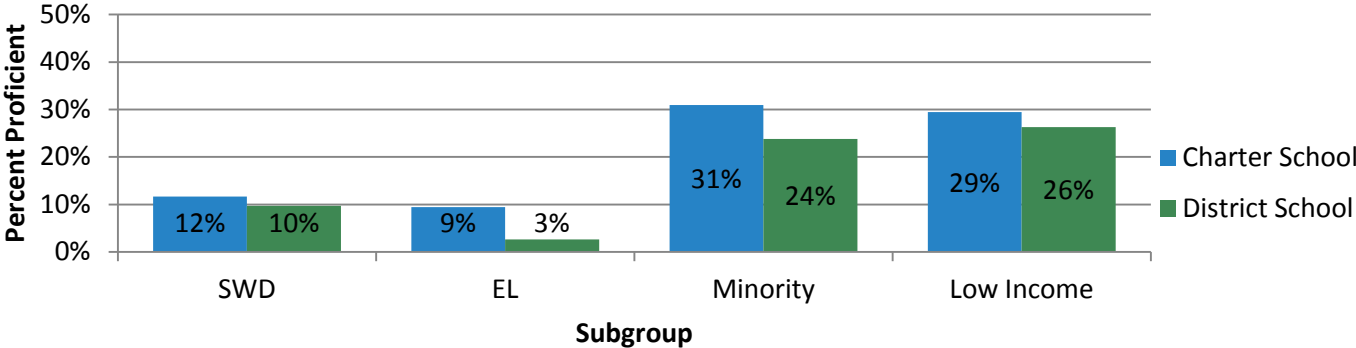


### Science

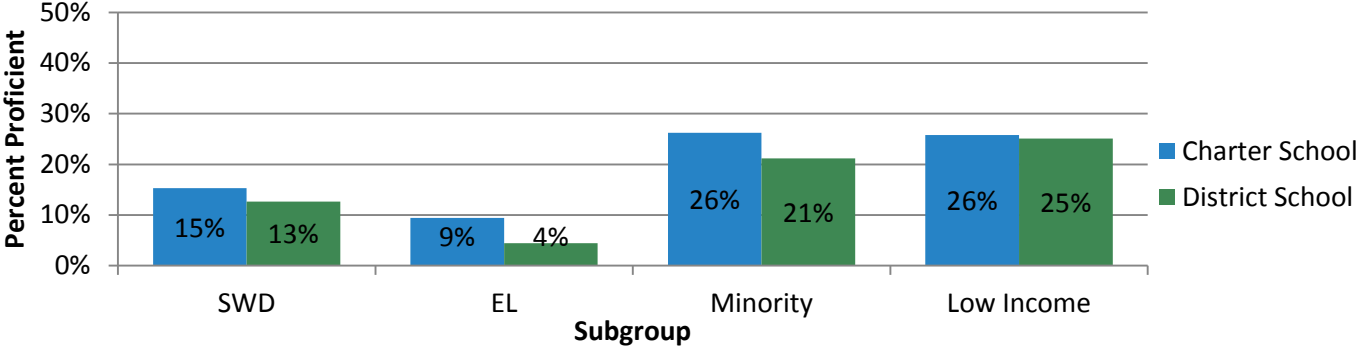


While there is an achievement gap within charter schools, charter schools as a whole do a comparatively good job in closing that gap. A number of charter schools serve high percentages of students in these subgroups and are able to raise these students’ proficiency rates. For every subgroup and in every subject on the 2015 SAGE test, the gap within charter schools was smaller than the gap within district schools. Further, except for Low Income students in Mathematics and Science, charter school students in these subgroups had higher proficiency rates than district school students in these subgroups, as seen in the graphs below.

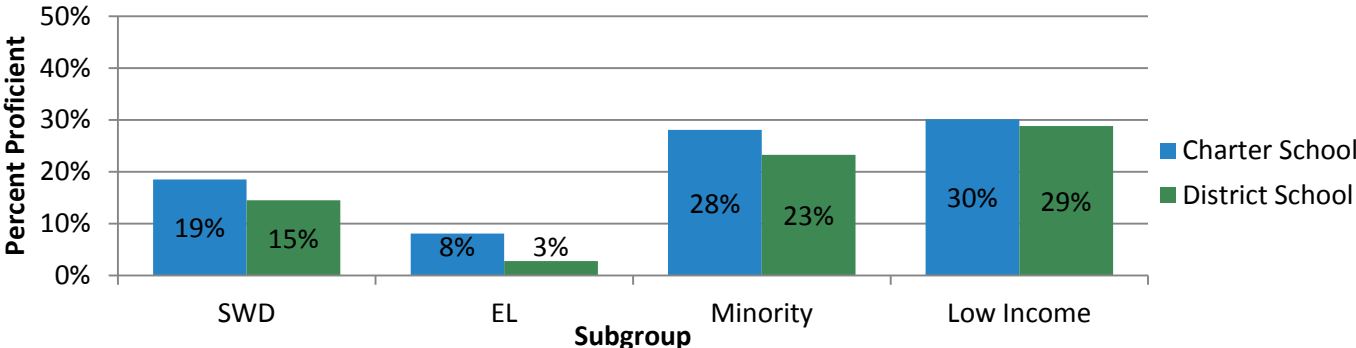
### 2015 SAGE Subgroup Proficiency Rates Language Arts



### Mathematics



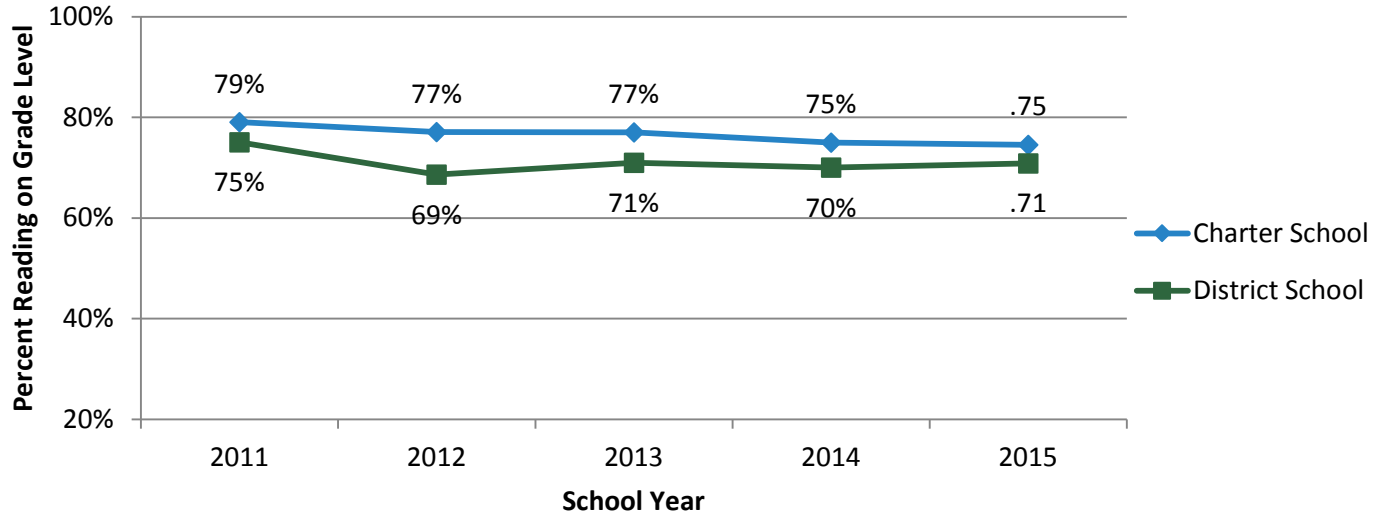
### Science



## Reading on Grade Level

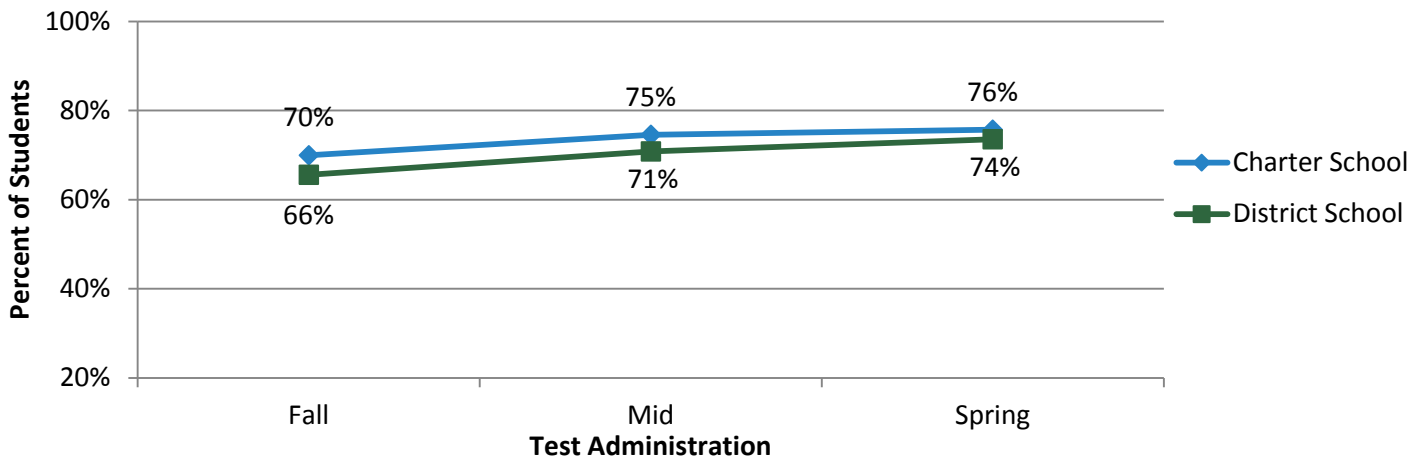
Using the DIBELS mid-year reading assessment, schools report whether students in grades 1-3 are reading on grade level. In 2015, a higher percentage of charter school students were reading on grade level than in district schools. This difference between the two percentages is statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ).

### 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 2014-15 school year (Fall, Mid, and Spring).

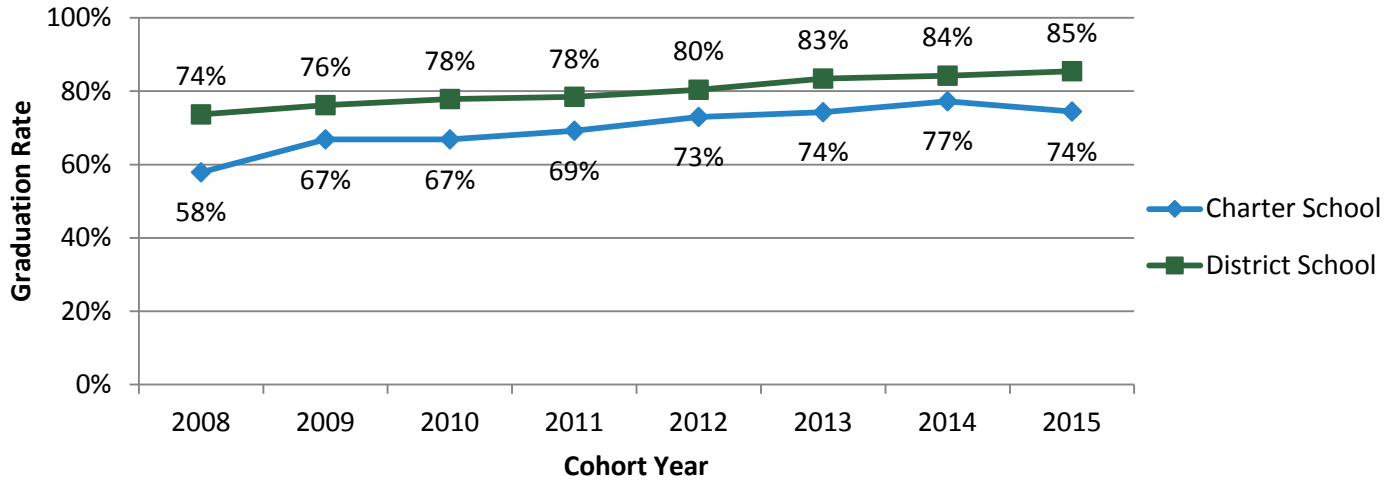
### Reading on Grade Level, Throughout School Year 2013-14



## 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, 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 12 had a graduation rate 90% or higher.

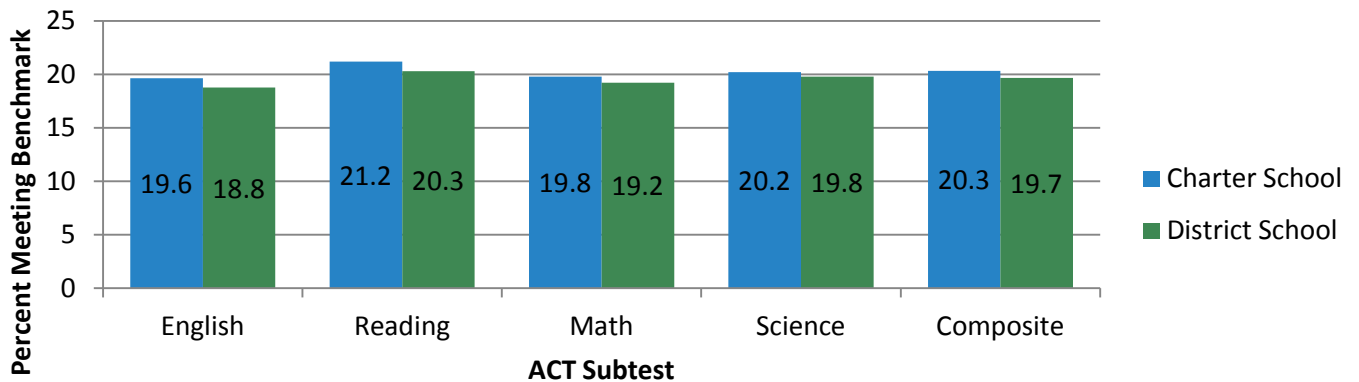
### Graduation Rate Over Time



## College Readiness (ACT)

Beginning with SY 2013-14, the ACT was given to all eleventh grade students in a Utah public school. In SY 2014-15, 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 2015; this graph reports the ACT data for eleventh grade students taken in 2015.)

### 2015 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 2014-15, 66.0% of eleventh grade students enrolled in a Utah charter school met at least one ACT College Readiness Benchmark. Twenty-three percent of eleventh grade students enrolled in a Utah charter school met all four.

### 2015 ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, 11th Grade

