

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES



Charter public schools are relatively new to Washington; our state's oldest charters are in their fifth year of operation.

There are currently nine operating charter public schools in Washington state. Five more are scheduled to open in Fall 2020.

Here are some key facts and figures to help you get more familiar with Washington's growing sector of charter public schools.

What is a charter public school?

Charter public schools are a type of public school. Like all public schools, they are:

- Open to all students
- Tuition-free
- Publicly funded
- Staffed by certified teachers
- Held accountable to state and national standards

In exchange for higher levels of accountability, charter public schools have more flexibility than traditional public schools to implement innovative school models and individualize instruction, giving students from all backgrounds additional school options.

How are Washington's charter public schools unique?

Washington's charter public school policy is particularly robust – it was crafted based on twenty years of lessons learned in charter school sectors across the nation and has been ranked third strongest in the nation for three years running by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools for its high level of accountability in exchange for a high degree of flexibility.

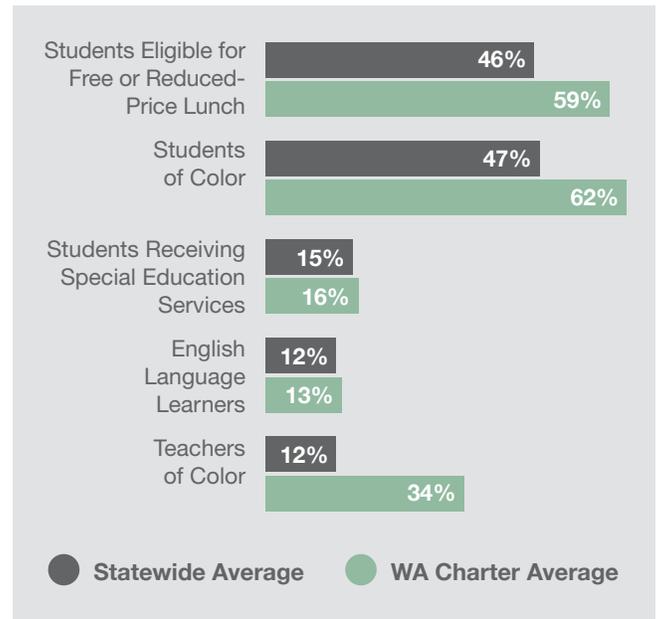
Washington's charter public school law is unique for its explicit focus on serving “at-risk” students – students of color, students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and other systemically underserved students and communities.

Who are Washington's charter public schools attracting and serving?

Charter public schools are free and open to all students. They do not have special eligibility or entrance requirements, and they are built on the belief that every student should have the chance to go to a great school that puts their needs first, regardless of zip code, income or ability level. If more students want to attend a specific charter school than there are spaces available, enrollment is determined by a random lottery.

Washington's charters attract and serve higher percentages of systemically underserved students, and employ 3 times the percentage of teachers of color, as compared to the statewide average.¹

¹OSPI (Accessed September 10, 2019). Washington State Report Card. washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/



What Results Are Washington's Charter Public Schools Delivering?

“Promising but not yet definitive”

A January 2019 study by Stanford University's Center for Research on Educational Outcomes (CREDO)² summarized the performance of Washington's charter public schools as “promising but not yet definitive ... given the limited years of data available.”

Washington State Report Card shows gains for charter public school students

Per OSPI (2019), **students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch outperformed their state and/or district peers at seven of the eight charter public schools** that administered statewide tests in at least one subject area.³

Every single charter public school that has been operating for two or more years has shown typical to high growth for its students as compared to the state average for growth.⁴

A study conducted by the Washington State Charter School Commission showed that on average, **median rates of growth were higher at Commission-authorized charter public schools**, as compared to the schools where students would have been assigned, based on their home address.⁵



Yadira (front right) and fellow Impact parents on a recent visit to Olympia, where they shared with legislators what it means to them to have high-quality public school options.

PARENT PERSPECTIVE | Yadira Diaz Lemus

“Before Impact, I didn't have a choice of where my daughter would go to school and that terrified me because our assigned school was not what I wanted. Impact has gone beyond the call of duty, not only are they teaching my daughter how to read, spell, and learn science and math. They are focused on her emotional well-being too. She loves her school! Every time she is picked up she always asks for five more minutes!”

² CREDO (January 2019). Charter School Performance in the State of Washington. credo.stanford.edu/publications/charter-school-performance-state-washington

³ OSPI (Accessed September 10, 2019). Washington State Report Card. washingtonstatereportcard.ospi.k12.wa.us/

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Washington State Charter School Commission (Accessed January 2020). 2018-19 Growth Results. charterschool.app.box.com/s/ag3anpfubzvsjgr3rhwr9ciwzyidw8o/file/603611933170