

*Charter Schools in New York:
A New Choice in Public Education*



*The First Three Years
1999-2002*



Charter Schools Institute

State University of New York

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FOREWORD

Dear Trustees and Other Friends:

The Charter Schools Act of 1998 thrust New York State into the forefront of the national move toward greater public school choice and accountability. The Act allowed for the creation of 100 new, start-up public charter schools and an unlimited number of conversions of existing public schools to charter status. Under the law, which Governor Pataki called the “single greatest education reform in state history,” the State University of New York Trustees and the Board of Regents each may authorize 50 new schools, while only the Regents may authorize conversions.

For the 2001-02 school year, there are 32 public charter schools in New York, serving some 9,000 children. They are virtually all located in urban areas where the academic needs are glaring. Many schools have opened in areas with large numbers of existing public schools on the Education Commissioner’s list of failing schools. Every school has a waiting list and several schools are already seeking to expand to meet parent and student demand.

In just three years as a charter school authorizer, the State University of New York has gained a national reputation for intelligent charter school authorizing, strict and smart accountability, and balanced monitoring. Through its Charter Schools Institute, the University has built on the best practices of other states in developing state-of-the-art models for application review and school accountability. Additionally, the Institute is fulfilling its mandate to help schools where appropriate through technical assistance and guidance.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the strong commitment and support of the University Trustees, Chancellor King and the State University administration, as well as the support of partners in the Legislative and Executive branches.

I am pleased to offer this report to the University Trustees, Chancellor King and all others who are interested in the progress of New York’s public charter school initiative. This report reviews the progress of the public charter school initiative in New York and offers statistics and data on the 22 University-authorized public charter schools operating during the 2001-02 academic year.

The report also includes an assessment of how the initiative’s implementation stacks up against the statute’s objectives and a discussion of the challenges to come. Public charter schools have come a long way, but in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., there are many mountains yet to climb.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Bellafiore

President

Charter Schools Institute

State University of New York



Charter Schools Institute

State University of New York

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 1998, Governor George Pataki signed the New York State Charter Schools Act (Article 56 of the Education Law), allying the Empire State with a national movement to improve public education by establishing an alternative to the system of public school districts through the creation of charter schools.

Charter schools are public schools of choice established by visionary and energetic parents, educators, civic leaders and other community leaders, open to all students and designed to improve learning. Operating under a five-year license, or charter, they are less inhibited by red tape and top-down educational bureaucracy, allowing them greater flexibility in determining curriculum, staffing, hours, budgeting and other features. In return for this flexibility, public charter schools must set and meet measurable goals for student achievement or face closure.

Public charter schools have proven themselves to be educational havens, particularly in urban areas across the state, offering new educational opportunities to children and families who could not afford to opt out of their local public schools.

- **For the 2001-2002 school year, 32 charter schools across New York educate about 9,000 students.**
- **The Charter Schools Institute has reviewed nearly 160 applications of which the University Trustees have approved 25.**
- **Entry testing indicates students enrolling in public charter schools are among the most at risk of academic failure.**
- **All State University-authorized charter schools have a waiting list.**
- **Public charter schools use their flexibility to improve work in the classroom.**
- **Public charter schools have embraced a rigorous accountability system, and use academic data to inform teaching and learning.**
- **The creation of public charter schools has resulted in hundreds more parents and civic leaders becoming actively involved in the children's schools.**
- **Facing new competition for students, school districts have been sparked to reconsider their educational programs and how they are delivered. Districts also are reevaluating their relationships to parents and surrounding communities.**

Executive Summary

In the three years since its passage, notable progress has been made toward achieving the objectives expressed in the Act [Educ. Law § 2850(2)(a-f)]:

- Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.
- Increase learning opportunities for all students with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure.
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- Improve student learning and achievement.
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers and school administrators.

Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.

In 1999, the first five public charter schools opened in New York: three new public charter schools and two “conversions” of existing public schools to charter status. Three years later, 32 public charter schools are educating approximately 9,000 students.* For the 2002-2003 school year, another 11 public charter schools are slated to open and one will open its doors in 2003. The University Trustees have authorized 25 public charter schools, half the 50 permitted them under the Charter Schools Act.

Parents have responded enthusiastically to the public charter schools option, with each of the SUNY authorized charter schools having a waiting list for at least one grade, and several with many waiting lists as large, or larger, than the number of open seats.

Further, several State University-authorized public charter schools serving elementary children are being asked by parents to add middle schools so their children may remain in the charter school for the later grades.

The Buffalo Board of Education is investigating the further expansion of public education choices available to parents by converting a number of its own schools to charter status. On December 5, 2001, the Board’s Choice Committee invited charter school experts, including Institute staff, to discuss the issues surrounding conversion charter schools.

There has also been considerable activity in Rochester, where Superintendent Clifford Janey has expressed an interest in converting as many as one-third of the city’s public schools to charter status. And a charter school committee comprising business, labor, education, municipal and community leaders has been working for three years to promote the creation of effective charter schools in Rochester, including conversion charter schools.

Activity of New York’s charter school authorizers:

- 25 have been authorized by the State University Trustees.
- 12 by the Board of Regents.
- 2 by the New York City Schools Chancellor.
- 5 public schools in New York City converted to charter status.

*Two conversion charter schools elected to turn in their charters, citing funding inequities.

Executive Summary

One of the most notable innovations in charter schools is their basic governance structure. Each charter school is entrusted to a board of trustees made up of citizens, parents, interested community members, and educators. Board members serve according to bylaws approved in their charter. This structure has created new opportunities for hundreds of parents – mostly inner-city parents – to participate actively in public education and the governance of their children’s schools.

Increase learning opportunities for all students with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure.

The University Trustees have placed a priority on approving public charter schools in urban areas with pressing educational needs. Of the 22 operating public charter schools approved by the University Trustees, 19 are located in communities with schools identified by the State Education Commissioner as failing. It is in these areas where children’s educational needs are least being met by the system.

Contrary to critics who have charged that public charter schools “cream” the best students in a district, the baseline test scores of the public charter schools authorized by the State University demonstrate unequivocally their students are among those most at risk of academic failure before coming to the charter school. This is consistent with the Charter Schools Act’s “special emphasis” on expanded learning experiences for students at risk of academic failure [Educ. Law § 2950(2)(b)].

Baseline test scores of the public charter schools authorized by the State University demonstrate unequivocally their students are among the most at risk of academic failure.

Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.

A review of the public charter profiles in the appendix of this report reveals a broad array of educational approaches adopted by the schools. This variety is indicative of each public charter school’s effort to adopt an educational program designed to improve student learning and achievement, and to provide alternatives to programs already offered in their communities.

Innovation also comes in how public charter schools approach their students. As Kristin Kearns Jordan, founder and Director of the Bronx Preparatory Charter School, puts it: “The innovation is in the expectation.” Charter schools reject the notion that low academic achievement and behavior problems are to be expected of children from low-income families. Instead, charter schools set high expectations for their students and use the flexibility afforded them by the Charter Schools Act to implement education programs that will help their students succeed.

Executive Summary

Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.

Public charter schools are given a blanket waiver from many state regulations governing education. This allows them greater flexibility in determining curriculum, staffing, hours, budgeting and other features. In return for this flexibility, public charter schools are held to a level of accountability unmatched in public education. They operate under a 5-year performance contract, i.e., the charter. This document represents a “prove-it-or-lose-it” proposition in which the school must meet measurable academic goals or risk losing its license.

The Institute works closely with each public charter school authorized by the University to develop a required accountability plan that contains clear, measurable performance goals. The school must then demonstrate progress toward its goals. The evidence schools compile will then be used to make the case for charter renewal at the end of the five-year term.

Charter renewal is not automatic. It is made very clear to the operators of each State University-authorized public charter school that the burden of proof lies with them to demonstrate their school is worthy of renewal.

Improve student learning and achievement

As previously noted, baseline data indicate students who are enrolling at public charter schools are among those most at risk of academic failure. The great need of these students makes all the more important the focus of public charter schools on improving student achievement. Charter schools must demonstrate their students are learning if they are to secure renewal of their charters.

Because public charter schools in New York are still relatively new, it is too early to render conclusive judgments on academic improvement. However, preliminary data are encouraging, as is seen in a number of the school profiles found in the appendix.

What’s more, evidence is growing that the creation of public charter schools is stimulating fresh thinking within the traditional education system. This is consistent with the principles of competition and choice fundamental to the charter school initiative.

...public charter schools are held to a level of accountability unmatched in public education.

In New York competition arises in part from the means by which public charter schools are funded. The federal, state and local funds received by a district are divided by the number of its students to arrive at a per pupil funding number. That per pupil amount then follows each student to the charter school.

- A U.S. Department of Education report found that in states like New York with “pass through” funding, public charter schools are potent agents of change. School districts that faced genuine competition for students more often reported implementing new educational programs or made other changes similar to what was offered at local charter schools.*

* United States Department of Education, *Challenge and Opportunity: The Impact of Charter Schools on School Districts* (2001).

Executive Summary

- The New York State School Boards Association has urged its members to view themselves as competing for students, even if no charter schools are on the horizon, and to treat students, parents, taxpayers and other stakeholders as customers who expect good value for their dollar.*

- The New York City School District has already converted five of its schools to charter status, and the leadership of the Buffalo and Rochester City School Districts are also considering conversions. Paul Buchanan, president of the Buffalo Board of Education has lauded charter schools for being able to decentralize, improve parent involvement, implement flexible scheduling, and pay more attention to individual students. Said Buchanan, “Ultimately, the challenge for us is to make all schools comparable in those ways to charter schools.”**

These examples support the proposition that providing a choice within public education and creating competition for students will improve the educational opportunities for all students attending public schools in New York.

Create new professional opportunities for teachers and school administrators.

The formation of 32 new public charter schools has resulted in the creation of several hundred new teaching positions. Because of the freedom and flexibility granted under the Charter Schools Act, public charter schools attract teachers who seek the opportunity to implement educational programs designed to improve student achievement. Public charter schools provide teachers with a broader array of learning environments in which to work.

As with all schools, no individual is more important to a charter school's success than the educational leader. University-authorized schools have attracted dynamic and driven educators experienced with inner-city children. Marina Bernard-Damiba, Director at Bronx Preparatory Charter School, was a lead teacher at the nationally recognized KIPP Academy in the South Bronx. Alma Alston, Principal at Merrick Children's Academy Charter School in Queens, and Tess Alviar, Principal at Harlem Day Charter School in Manhattan, were both veteran principals at private and parochial schools in New York City. Dr. Claity Massey, founder and Principal at King Center Charter School in Buffalo, is a long-time childhood educator who previously supervised an annex for the Buffalo City Public Schools.

The principal of Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School in Rochester, Miriam Vasquez, was a respected principal in the Rochester City Schools before joining the charter school. Bob Wallace, director of Harbor Science and Arts Charter School in Harlem, was previously education director for Boys Harbor, a well-respected non-profit educational organization. And Eleanor Bartlett, a universally respected career educator and administrator in the Albany City School District, had risen to become a member of the State Board of Regents, but resigned that position to become director at New Covenant Charter School in Albany.

Evidence is growing that public charter schools are stimulating fresh thinking within the traditional education system.

*New York State School Boards Association, Facing the Challenge of Charter Schools (2000), 7.

***Buffalo News*, May 30, 2001.

Executive Summary

The Charter Schools Act also stipulates that instructional staff at public charter schools which have fewer than 250 students in their first year do not automatically belong to the local teachers union. Additionally, the Charter Schools Act grants the State University Trustees the authority to grant 10 waivers to public charter schools with more than 250 students in the first year to release them from local collective bargaining requirements. The

...public charter schools attract teachers who seek the opportunity to implement educational programs designed to improve student achievement.

University Trustees have granted five such waivers. Teachers are free to organize at any public charter school, regardless of size, even if the University Trustees have granted the school a waiver. Charter schools must employ state-certified teachers, with the exception that they may hire individuals with unique talents so long as they do not comprise more than 30 percent of the staff, or five teachers, whichever is less.

Public charter schools are using this freedom to more effectively utilize their teachers' talents, to hold teachers accountable for results and to reward teachers for high performance. Principals at public charter schools do not belong to a collective bargaining unit.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

New York's public charter school initiative has shown great promise in the three years since passage of the New York Charter Schools Act. The enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by those operating charter schools bodes well for the students who attend them. The quality of many schools is already evident, and the eagerness of parents to enroll their children at public charter schools is proof of the need for an alternative in public education.

However, much work remains if New York's public charter school initiative is to fulfill its potential. Important next steps include:

Continue approving new charter schools, with the continuing focus on quality.

By approving 25 charters of the 50 they are permitted under the Charter Schools Act, the University Trustees already have shown their commitment to providing parents with more choices within public education and fostering the kind of competition that results in better public schools for all children in New York. The Trustees have expressed their resolve to approve all 50 charters, and the Institute will assist the Trustees any way it can to help them achieve their goal.

Proceed in holding public charter schools strictly accountable for results.

Strict accountability is a key distinction between public charter schools and their district counterparts who presume their continued existence. Institute staff have been successful in developing new state-of-the-art models that focus on academic results rather than regulatory compliance. The Institute's duty is to ensure charter schools approved by the University Trustees are fully cognizant of their responsibility to prove they are achieving the goals laid out in their individual accountability plans. Schools that lack compelling proof of improved student learning risk losing their charters.

Executive Summary

Continue collecting data.

Key to the accountability effort is the collection of data that will track the success of public charter schools. The overall importance of this effort was underscored by a recent report of the Rand Institute which found that choice-based reforms such as charter schools seemed to have improved student performance but are too young to offer long-range data as conclusive proof.

Look for ways to assist applicants and charter school operators with securing adequate facilities.

Nationally and here in New York, school operators identify access to facilities and facilities funding as one of the primary obstacles to opening a successful public charter school. The Institute will continue to work closely with applicants, school operators and the charter school community to seek solutions to the facility problems they may encounter.

Promote the sharing of best practices.

Charter schools benefit greatly from their independence and autonomy, which give them the flexibility to develop or adapt programs best suited to their needs. However, they are isolated from one another and need the opportunity to share with one another the benefit of their experience. The Institute has forged a close working relationship with the New York Charter Schools Association, which represents all the state's charter schools, regardless of authorizer, as well as with the Center for Educational Innovation, a New York City-based organization with a long history of support for school reform. On October 22, 2001, the Institute and Association hosted a charter school conference called, "Building Toward Renewal." We will continue to provide such forums and pursue other means that increase the opportunities for charter schools to interact with one another.

Prepare for the renewal of charters.

With the first three schools at the mid-point of their 5-year charters, the next major task before the Institute is developing a charter renewal process. That work has already begun with the development of accountability plans and annual accountability reviews. The Institute is now developing the protocols to ensure each charter school gets an objective and comprehensive review of its charter.

Conversions.

While New York's Charter Schools Act caps the number of new, start-up schools, it allows for an unlimited number of conversion charter schools, i.e. existing, district-run public schools that wish to gain the autonomy and flexibility afforded by charter status. While the University and the Institute have no statutory role in the conversion process, they stand ready to lend their expertise and experience to visionary school districts, school leaders and others interested in pursuing this option.

A NEW CHOICE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1988, Ray Budde, a retired school teacher of 30 years, authored a bold report, *Education by Charter: Restructuring School Districts*. He proposed granting groups of teachers both administrative and instructional flexibility in exchange for being held accountable for student performance. Budde's notion of education by charter sought to forgo the rigid nature of bureaucratic compliance in order to make educational institutions more accountable to the communities they serve.

The idea of choice driving better public education was not entirely new. In the 1950s the economist and Nobel winner Milton Friedman proposed that government should not provide education directly, but instead should subsidize student attendance at any one of a number of state-approved schools. Rather than depending on regulatory compliance to ensure quality, Friedman believed the competition for students would force schools to improve or shut down.

Albert Shanker, the long-time president of the American Federation of Teachers, quickly endorsed the idea of education by charter. In a 1988 speech to the National Press Club and subsequent article, he asserted the need to "question or justify every assumption we have had about schooling for the last 150 years." Shanker suggested school districts should allow teachers to propose better ways to educate students and grant them a "charter" to implement the proposal. He stressed this new structure would

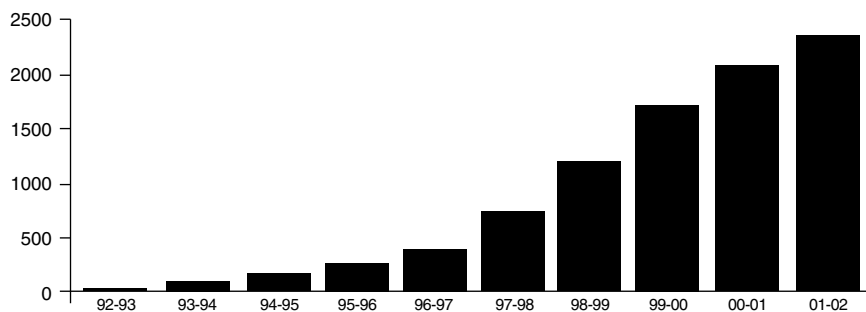
be voluntary, with both teachers and parents free to choose whether to participate in the charter. At the end of a 5 or 10 year period the charter would be reviewed and either extended or revoked.

Charter schools moved quickly from concept to reality. In 1991, Minnesota enacted the nation's first charter legislation, and the first public charter school opened in September 1992. Since this landmark initiative, 37 states and the District of Columbia have followed suit. Now 2,400 public charter schools educate more than 540,000 students.

In 1994, the federal government became a sponsor of the charter school initiative when Congress approved creation of the Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP). The PCSP helps charter schools overcome financial barriers by defraying some of the costs associated with school planning and implementation. With bipartisan support, the PCSP's budget has grown from an initial appropriation of \$6 million to \$200 million for fiscal year 2002. Additionally, Congress passed the Charter School Expansion Act of 1998, which not only re-authorized the PCSP, but created grants to operating charter schools to strengthen their academic programming and promote best practices.

President George W. Bush's support of education reform dates back to his tenure as Governor of Texas where he signed into law a number of results-oriented education reforms including one of the strongest state charter laws in the nation. As President, Bush's

U.S. Charter School Growth



Source: The Center for Education Reform, Washington, DC.

A New Choice in Public Education

national educational plan, “No Child Left Behind,” informed his administration’s proposals for the 2002 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The resulting law contains Bush’s top priorities for America’s students, including new testing requirements and, much like New York’s charter school initiative, greater accountability for student academic achievement.

ESEA extends the charter school “prove it or lose it” challenge to all public schools across New York State.

ESEA, also known as the No Child Left Behind Act, requires all states to give reading and mathematics tests in grades 3 through 8 no later than the 2005-2006 school year. States benefit from an authorization of over \$400 million to use in the design and administration of these tests. Additionally, ESEA requires each state to break down its test results by ethnicity, income, and other factors to identify growth of learning for every child. To ensure states’ tests and student scores are valid, a random sample of children in 4th and 8th grade from every state will participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress. For New York’s charter schools, this means their current practice of administering and analyzing student scores on the regents tests will be augmented by the administration of new tests designed by the state for grades 3, 5, 6, and 7. As a result, New York charter schools will have access to more evidence of student academic success during the term of their charters.

All State University of New York public charter schools are required to show improved academic results for students within the five year term of their charter or risk losing the right to operate a public charter school. ESEA extends the charter school “prove it or lose it” challenge to all public schools across New York State. Under the new law, all public schools must achieve a level of academic proficiency within 12 years. This level of proficiency, termed “adequate yearly progress,” is set by individual states. Schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress in improving the academic achievement of their students risk losing students. Parents in such failing schools are given the opportunity to choose another, presumably better, public school, including a better performing charter school. Parents of children at schools and school districts already identified as

failing under the 1994 authorization of ESEA are offered the right to choose better performing schools, including charters, beginning with the 2002-2003 school year.

Public schools who fail to show adequate yearly progress for three years receive federal Title I funds (\$500 to \$1,000 per child) to provide supplemental educational services – including tutoring, after school services, and summer school programs.

Under ESEA, public schools that continue to fail at making adequate yearly progress for four consecutive years are required to work with their school district to implement specific corrective actions to improve the school’s ability to educate children. These include replacing staff and provision of supplemental educational services to students. Parents retain the right to take their children out of a failing school and choose a better performing district or charter public school. After five years of persistent failure to make adequate yearly progress, a school may face reconstitution (replacing its principal and teachers) or be converted to a charter school.

In many respects, the new federal law can be seen as an attempt to help “regular” public schools catch up with public charter schools, which have taken the lead on accountability and measurable student performance.

During his June 14, 2001 address to the Manhattan Institute in New York City, the U. S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige stressed that “Nowhere is the strong connection between school accountability and parental choice more evident than in the charter school movement, which exposes the myth that parents are not interested in choice. Nearly two-thirds of charter schools have waiting lists almost half as large as their school’s enrollment. They offer meaningful options for parents and their children – particularly those children who would otherwise be left behind in low-performing schools.”

“Nowhere is the strong connection between school accountability and parental choice more evident than in the charter school movement...”

***U.S. Sec. of Education
Rod Paige***

A New Choice in Public Education

Public charter schools continue to receive strong support from across the political spectrum, particularly from elected officials in under-served, urban areas. As former President Bill Clinton said in an August 28, 1999 radio address: “For an increasing number of families, charter schools are the right choice... The charter school movement is a real grass-roots revolution in education. We must do everything we can to support it.”

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL INITIATIVE

For nearly 190 years New York State had only one means for providing public education. In 1812, a state law established common school districts, and affirmed these districts were the primary administrative units for public education. From this beginning grew the public school system we have today.

Support for charter schools was as diverse in New York as it was across the nation. Charter school supporters included Assemblyman Roger Green (D-Brooklyn), a leader of the legislators’ Black and Puerto Rican Caucus, and Assemblyman John Faso (R-Kinderhook), the Assembly’s Republican Leader, and an upstater.

In December 1998, Governor George Pataki signed the New York State Charter Schools Act,* creating a wholly new approach to public education. As Governor Pataki put it: “I proposed and fought for this new law because I believe families who are dissatisfied with their current public school, but cannot afford to move to a better school district or pay private school tuition, should have a real choice for their children. And I believe that competition will improve public education, as it does with virtually all facets of life.”

The New York Charter Schools Act sets the following objectives for public charter schools:

- Increase learning opportunities for all students with special emphasis on students who are at risk of academic failure.
- Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities available within the public school system.

- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers and school administrators.
- Improve student learning and achievement.

To achieve these objectives the Act affirms the status of charter schools as public schools, and contains key elements that together constitute a wholly new means of delivering public education.

Open Enrollment:

Charter schools are public schools that operate under a five-year license, or charter, and are open to all students, tuition free. Like all public schools, charter schools cannot discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. Furthermore, admission cannot be limited on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, religion, or ancestry.

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats, a lottery must be employed to select new students randomly. The law does permit the establishment of single-sex public charter schools, or public charter schools designed to provide expanded learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure. Additionally, the law grants enrollment preferences to students who are residents in the district where the public charter school is located, and to siblings of students already enrolled at the school.

“I proposed and fought for this new law because I believe families who are dissatisfied with their current public school, but cannot afford to move to a better school district or pay private school tuition, should have a real choice for their children. And I believe that competition will improve public education, as it does with virtually all facets of life.”

– George E. Pataki

*Chapter 4, Laws of 1998

A New Choice in Public Education

Independence:

The New York Charter Schools Act grants charter schools a blanket waiver from virtually all state and local rules and regulations applicable to public or private schools, boards of education, and school districts, except those relating to health, safety, civil rights and student assessment applicable to other public schools. They are subject to the Open Meetings Law and the Freedom of Information Law, and must also comply with all federal laws and regulations, including those pertaining to the provision of service to English language learners and special education students.

Principals at public charter schools are key to achieving the goals of the school. With the regulatory freedom granted to public charter schools, they are empowered to make quick decisions and adapt the school's operation to new circumstances as they and their governing board see fit and within the terms of their charter.

The Charter Schools Act stipulates that instructional staff at public charter schools which have fewer than 250 students in their first year do not automatically belong to the local teachers union. Additionally, the Charter Schools Act grants the State University Trustees the authority to grant 10 waivers

With the regulatory freedom granted to public charter schools, principals are empowered to make quick decisions and adapt the school's operation to new circumstances.

to public charter schools with more than 250 students in the first year to free them from local collective bargaining requirements. The University Trustees have granted five such waivers. However, teachers are free to organize at any public charter school, regardless of size, even if the University Trustees have granted the school a waiver. Public charter schools are using this freedom to utilize more effectively their

teachers' talents, to hold teachers accountable for results and to reward teachers for high performance. Principals at public charter schools do not belong to a collective bargaining unit.

Accountability:

In return for operational flexibility, public charter schools must set measurable goals for student achievement – and attain them – or risk losing their charters. The Institute's accountability program will be discussed in more detail starting on page 18 of this report,

Research has shown that external accountability (to the chartering entity for academic and fiscal quality) and internal accountability (to parents and their own boards of trustees) combine to create the environment necessary to increase student learning and achievement.* Such a combination, if applied broadly, could revolutionize public education.

Additionally, a charter entity or the Board of Regents may revoke a school's charter if student achievement falls below the level that would allow the State Commissioner of Education to revoke the registration of another public school, and does not improve over the next three school years. In addition, a charter can be revoked for serious violations of law; for violation of the charter, including fiscal mismanagement; or, for violations of the civil service law regarding discrimination against employees.

If a parent is not satisfied with a public charter school, the parent may remove the student. If enough parents do so, the charter school will shut down.

Choice/Competition:

The purest accountability may be the power of choice given to parents. If a parent is not satisfied with a public charter school, the parent may remove the student. If enough parents do so, the charter school will shut down.

The Charter Schools Act also makes clear that public charter schools are established to increase learning opportunities for all students, and creates a funding mechanism intended to motivate school improvement through competition for students.

The per-pupil funding of a charter school student's district of residence follows that student to the public charter school. This funding includes state aid monies, monies raised through the local tax levy, and federal funds. This per pupil amount is based on the formula that calculates the Approved Operating Expense (AOE) for each Total Aidable Pupil Unit (TAPU) in the school district. Because not all district expenditures are included in the formula, public charter schools receive on average two-thirds to three-quarters the per pupil amount spent by the local school district, challenging charter schools to do more with less.

*U.S. Department of Education, *A Study of Charter School Accountability*.

A New Choice in Public Education

Any additional aid received by the district attributable to students with disabilities would flow to the charter school if the charter school provides, directly or through a contract with an outside provider, the funded special education services. State building aid is not included in the formula for calculating per pupil aid, nor are charter schools eligible to receive

other public funds that school districts can receive for capital construction and renovation.

The “pass through” funding mechanism for public charter schools affirms that school districts do not lay a unique claim on local school tax revenues and federal and state education aid. These monies

are collected by the districts on behalf of public education, for which they are no longer the sole delivery mechanism. For their part, public charter schools can secure these revenues only to the extent they enroll students.

Among the 27 new charter schools in operation this year, 22 were authorized by the State University Board of Trustees.

Multiple authorizers:

A hallmark of successful public charter school initiatives across the United States is the designating of more than one entity to authorize charters. The New York Charter Schools Act provides for three chartering entities:

- The State University Trustees can authorize up to 50 new, start-up charter schools,
- The Board of Regents also may authorize up to 50 new, start-up charter schools,
- Local school boards (and the Schools Chancellor in New York City) may approve charters, although those schools may open only with subsequent approval of the Regents. Charter schools approved by local school boards are counted against the 50 the Board of Regents may approve.

An unlimited number of public schools may convert to charter status, with the approval of the local school board, the majority of parents who children attend the school, and the Board of Regents.

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN NEW YORK

For the 2001-2002 school year, there are 32 charter schools in New York educating about 9,000 students. Of the 32 charter schools, 27 are new, start-up schools and five are existing district-run public schools that converted to charter status. Among the 27 new charter schools, 22 were authorized by the State University Board of Trustees, four by the Board of Regents, and one by the New York City Schools Chancellor. The five conversion charter schools are located in New York City. Two other conversion charter schools in New York City authorized in 1999 subsequently requested that their charters be rescinded.

Another 11 public charter schools currently are scheduled to open for the 2002-2003 school year: two authorized by the State University Trustees, eight by the Board of Regents and one by the New York City Schools Chancellor. One State University-approved charter school will open its doors in 2003.

Charter School Authorizer Activity

*The Number of Charter Schools
Approved by Authorizers in New York
[Includes schools not yet opened]*

State University Board of Trustees25
Board of Regents12
New York City Schools Chancellor7 (2 new charter schools and 5 “conversion” schools.)
TOTAL44

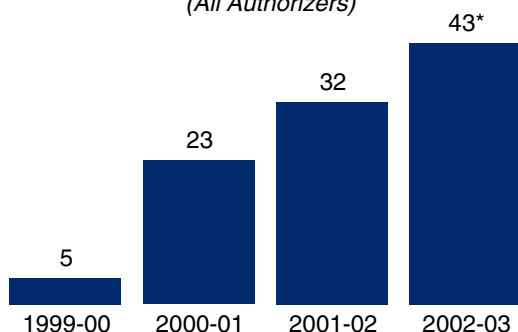
The Buffalo Board of Education, is investigating the further expansion of public education choices available to parents by converting a number of its own schools to charter status. On December 5, 2001, the Board’s Choice Committee invited charter school experts, including Institute staff, to discuss the issues surrounding “conversion” charter schools.

There has also been considerable activity in Rochester, where Superintendent Clifford Janey has expressed an interest in converting as many as one-third of the city’s public schools to charter status. And a charter school committee comprising business, labor, education, municipal and community leaders has been working for three years to promote the creation of effective charter schools in Rochester, including conversion charter schools. This committee operates under the auspices of the Center for Governmental Research, a Rochester-based civic-minded think tank.

A New Choice in Public Education

Charter Schools in New York

(All Authorizers)



*To date, one charter school is scheduled to open for 2003-2004.

The public charter schools authorized by the State University Trustees each have a waiting list, and several have waiting lists that match or exceed the total enrollment at the school. Examples include:

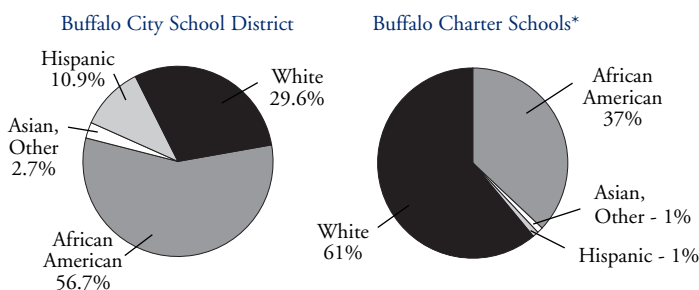
- Sisulu Children's Academy Charter School in Harlem which had 240 applicants for the nine open seats for the 2001-02 school year.
- Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School had 142 applicants for 42 seats.
- Community Partnership Charter School in Brooklyn had 255 seeking the 39 available seats.
- Beginning With Children Charter School, a "conversion" public charter school in Brooklyn, saw 214 applicants for the 25 available seats.
- In Buffalo, the Stepping Stone Charter School opened its doors for the first time this September with 300 students – and 300 more on a waiting list.

Public charter schools demographics:

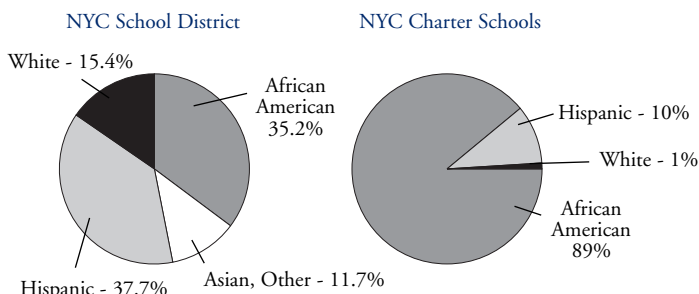
Enrollment at public charter schools in New York State reflects the National Center for Education Statistics January 2000 report finding that, nationwide, there are minimal differences in the distribution of minorities in charter schools and traditional public schools. Public charter schools in New York largely reflect the same demographic mix as the school districts in which they are located. They also contain similar percentages of students receiving federally sponsored free and reduced lunches.

The following pie charts compare public charter school diversity to that of the Buffalo, New York and Rochester school districts, in which are located 12 of the 16 public charter schools authorized by the University Trustees and in operation for the entire 2000-2001 school year, the last year for which data was available.

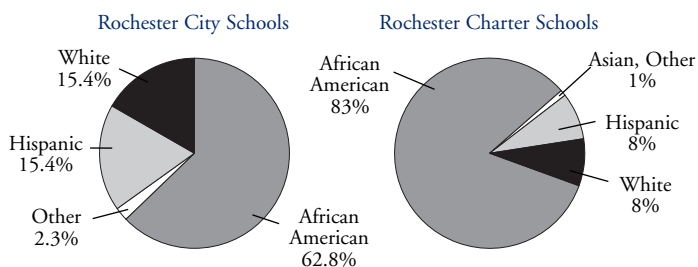
BUFFALO



NEW YORK CITY



ROCHESTER



The statewide average of students with disabilities enrolled at public charter schools, 14 per cent, is higher than the statewide average for other public schools, 11.1 per cent.

*With the opening of two additional University-authorized charter schools in 2001, charter school demographics more closely mirror those of the Buffalo City School District: African American, 56%; White, 38%; Hispanic, 3%; Asian, Other, 3%.

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In a short time the Institute has become recognized as a national leader in the charter school movement.

In terms of academic achievement, data to be discussed at length later in this report indicate students who enrolled in charter schools are among the most at risk of academic failure. National standardized tests administered at State University-authorized charter schools indicate students arrive with average reading skills at the 31st national percentile and math skills at the 30th national percentile.

Allegations that top achieving students would flee to public charter schools are contradicted by data.

Please see the Public Charter School Profiles included at the end of this report for more information on each school authorized by the University Trustees.

CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

The New York Charter Schools Act grants the State University Board of Trustees the authority to approve up to 50 new, start-up public charter schools. To facilitate their oversight, the Trustees created the Charter Schools Committee. Co-Chaired by Secretary of State and Board Vice Chairman Randy A. Daniels, and Trustee Edward F. Cox, the Committee considers all charter school applications and initiatives relating to public charter schools and makes recommendations for action by the full Board.

At their February 1999 meeting, the University Trustees created the Charter Schools Institute to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities under the Charter Schools Act. Their decision was supported by the U.S. Department of Education report on charter school accountability which found that states with a special office for charter schools, particularly as a branch of a university, had a better record of promoting the establishment of charter schools and holding them accountable for results rather than regulatory compliance.

In a short time the Institute has become recognized as a national leader in the charter school movement. Institute staff members possess extensive experience in charter schools and all aspects of public education, including curriculum, school operation, accountability,

fiscal oversight and program development. The president of the Institute is a founding board member of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, and is a board member of the National Charter Schools Institute for Performance and Development.

The University Trustees have authorized the Charter Schools Institute to fulfill the following duties:

- Receive and review public charter school applications.
- Notify school districts and non-public schools of the status of applications in their areas.
- Draft proposed charters with applicants and submit charter approved by the University Trustees to the Board of Regents.
- Assist public charter schools in the preparation of accountability plans.
- Perform regular site visits to operating public charter schools.
- Work with public charter schools to ensure compliance with all legal requirements.
- Receive annual reports and audited financial statements.
- Investigate complaints with respect to public charter schools and, when necessary, establish grounds for the termination of a charter.
- Conduct research and disseminate information regarding public charter schools.

Three functions of the Institute warrant particular attention:

Application Review:

Since its inception in February 1999, the Institute has reviewed nearly 160 applications for public charter schools. Applications to the University are reviewed by Institute staff and panels of national experts, including charter school operators, charter authorizers from other states, and experts in fields including curriculum, assessment, accountability, not-for-profit management, and education law.

A New Choice in Public Education

School financial plans are also reviewed by Institute staff and an independent CPA firm with expertise in school budgeting to determine if the school is likely to be financially sound and organizationally viable. State University Trustees and Institute staff then interview the proposed charter school's founding team, including applicants and aspiring members of the charter school's board of trustees.

Based on this review, the Institute recommends to the University Trustees those applications that are both legally sufficient and provide the greatest likelihood of academic success and fiscal and organizational soundness.

Since its inception in February 1999, the Institute has reviewed nearly 160 applications for new charter schools.

It is important to note that the review process is not only thorough but highly competitive. All applicants are informed they must not expect approval simply for providing all the necessary information. Only those applications considered most qualified are approved each year.

Building on the lessons learned from previous years as well as the experience of other states, the Institute has regularly improved its charter school application. With each new edition, the requirements have been made clearer and the process for submitting the substantial documentation an application requests has been streamlined. The 2001 application included, along with the 57 items and explanations that made up the application itself: a section of "Frequently Asked Questions"; guidelines for writing a charter school accountability plan; sample curriculum formats; a sample request for information from prospective charter school board members; sample start-up, first- and five-year budgets; and, a copy of the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998.

In the fall of 2001 the Institute received seven applications, a significant drop-off from previous years, but one that was expected. The reduction in application volume in New York tracked the experience of charter school authorizers in other states.

Typically, there is an initial rush of applicants seeking the charter school alternative. Following the first rounds of approvals, prospective applicants have benefited from witnessing the many challenges inherent in running a new public charter school. Many will take more time to develop their proposals, and others may decide they are not suited to the job of getting a public charter school approved and then operating it.

Accountability:

Fundamental to the public charter school initiative is the idea that schools should not be monitored only for strict compliance with numerous regulations; rather they should be judged on how well they educate the children who attend them. Public charter schools in New York are granted considerable flexibility in developing and implementing their educational programs. In return for this independence, public charter schools are held accountable for measurable results.

The Institute has developed its own accountability program with the guidance of nationally recognized charter school experts and authorizers. The program takes into consideration the challenges and successes of charter school accountability programs in other states as well as the experiences of charter schools in New York. Since its development, the Institute's accountability program has earned praise from such organizations as the Center for Education Reform, the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, and the Charter Friends National Network, and was presented at the September 2001 meeting of the Education Leaders Council, an independent national education reform organization.

Research has shown that external accountability (to the chartering entity for academic and fiscal quality) and internal accountability (to parents and their own boards of trustees) combine to increase student learning and achievement.

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A few key ideas influenced the program's design:

Effective Accountability Involves Collaboration Between Authorizer and School

The Institute sets guidelines for accountability but allows each school to interpret and implement the guidelines in a manner that best fits its distinctive mission. Approved plans represent a combination of what a public charter school feels best represents its work and what the Institute considers essential to demonstrate the school is serving the interests of its students and their families, with the primary focus on teaching and learning.

Effective Accountability Must Focus on Results

To ensure schools focus relentlessly on the bottom line – student learning – the Institute makes them responsible for reporting first and foremost on student progress and achievement. The Institute discourages schools from describing programs, plans and intentions in their accountability documents. This approach is supported by the findings of a recent federal accountability study, which suggests that when external accountability focuses on results rather than compliance, it drives schools to be more flexible, better managed, and more responsive to their students' progress.*

Clarity and Transparency are Essential to Effective Accountability

Strong accountability requires providing sound information, including student achievement data that parents can use and understand in making choices. The Institute insists that accountability documents be written with parents and community members in mind and that the documents provide the kinds of information that are most useful to parents who may be considering a public charter school as an option.

Higher Standards for Schools Require Higher Standards for Measurement

To hold public charter schools accountable for results requires effective, thorough, and accurate ways to measure student learning and achievement.

However, no single test given on a single day can do that. Accordingly, the Institute requires schools to employ multiple measures that capture the richness and depth of their educational programs. Charter schools are asked to measure student progress against an absolute standard, in comparison to students in other schools, and in comparison to themselves over time, i.e. a “value-added” measure. And by asking schools to measure student achievement on several different occasions and in multiple ways, the Institute reduces the tendency for any one measurement to have “make or break” consequences.

Establishing Meaningful Accountability Means Providing Effective Guidance

Operating a school where continued existence is explicitly tied to increased student learning and achievement demands an entirely new approach to reporting. The Institute provides the guidance and support school leaders may need to meet the demands of the accountability program and fulfill the promise of the charter school initiative.

The Institute publishes clear guidelines with useful examples as well as model reports and documents. Working closely with the New York State Charter Schools Association, the Institute makes the development of accountability plans an interactive process, holding on-site meetings at each school during the drafting process and providing comment on each of the numerous drafts preceding the final plan. It also provides constructive, objective observations regarding the effectiveness of implementation at the request of school leaders.

Key Documents and Events in the Accountability Process

During its first year of operation, each school is required to develop an **Accountability Plan** consisting of clear and explicit goals. Schools set goals in the areas of Academics, Organizational Viability and Unique Programmatic Areas and are encouraged to focus on those aspects of their program that are most important. Each goal includes a precise description of the methods by which it will be measured.

Operating a school where continued existence is explicitly tied to increased student learning and achievement demands an entirely new approach to reporting.

*U.S. Department of Education, *A Study of Charter School Accountability* (2001).

A New Choice in Public Education

After each school year, each school submits an **Accountability Progress Report**, which describes their progress towards the goals described in the Accountability Plan. Unlike other reporting documents, the Progress Report asks schools not only to report data but to interpret it and present a case for the school's effectiveness. The progress reports become part of the basis for the school's argument for charter renewal.

The data undercut the pernicious myth that public charter schools “cream” the best students from already struggling school districts.

The Institute augments the evidence presented by schools by conducting at least two **informal site visits** and one **end-of-year site visit** to every school each year. These visits evaluate whether the school is operating in accordance with the charter and provide context for objective data. They also afford Institute staff the

opportunity to observe the quality of classroom instruction, school culture, and discipline.

Information from each of these sources is used to construct a record of each school's performance. At the end of the five-year charter, this record will be analyzed as part of the charter renewal process.

The Challenge of Accountability Reporting

In fall 2001, the Institute began receiving the first Accountability Progress Reports from State University-authorized charter schools. Many schools did exemplary work, and have used their academic data to refine their programs and adjust classroom instruction. However, the process of compiling and interpreting data revealed just how novel – and difficult – accountability reporting at the level expected of State University-authorized charter schools has proven to be. In some cases, the reports did not include data anticipated in the accountability plans. And many schools required further support in conducting data analysis. But as charter schools successfully complete the reporting process, they provide a model for the sort of accountability in public education envisioned in the recently approved federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The Institute wrote to schools advising, and in some cases requiring, that changes and additions be made. Further meetings were conducted on site with school officials to discuss methods of effective data analysis and reporting. The Institute also made accountability reporting the focus of its first charter school leaders' conference, held October 22, 2001 and entitled “Building Toward Renewal.” As a result of these steps most schools have increased their understanding of reporting standards and the most accurate forms of data analysis and in most cases have requested the opportunity to revise their 2000-2001 Progress Reports. Many are presently completing this process.

Analysis of Baseline Data

The Institute has conducted an analysis of baseline data from State University-authorized charter schools in operation during the 2000-2001 school year, providing a clearer picture of the families who have been drawn to the movement in New York. The Institute's findings are based on nationally-normed test data from 14 of 16 State University-authorized public charter schools in operation during the 2000-01 school year. In addition the findings are based on the results of state assessments of the six charter schools that have taken these exams. These findings are bolstered by anecdotal and observational data from at least three visits to each of the 16 schools. The data undercut one of the most pervasive and pernicious myths about public charter schools: they “cream” the best students from already struggling school districts.

University-authorized charters schools are in high-need areas, and their students arrive years behind their national peers, data show.

The findings from the various sources are highly consistent and suggest that New York Charter Schools authorized by the State University serve a population of disproportionate and dramatic need. The data show students upon arrival at the typical New York charter school are years behind national norms in skills and knowledge, scoring even below their peers at the districts in which the schools operate, some of the lowest performing in the state.

A New Choice in Public Education

The test results show that, having aggressively sought to serve students in the neediest districts, charter schools are attracting those very students. The test results also clearly demonstrate that the older students are upon their arrival at New York's charter schools, the farther they are behind their peers nationwide.

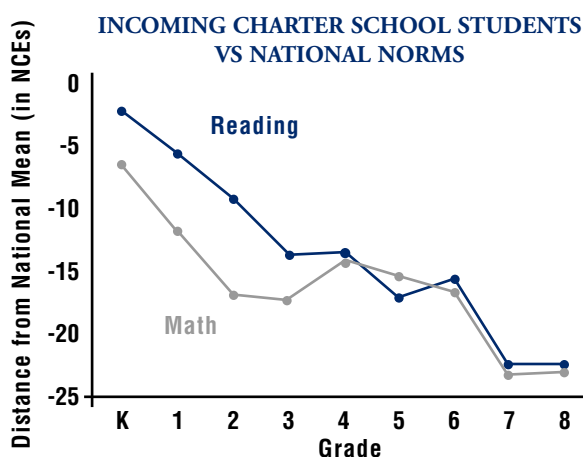
Nationally-Normed Tests

Fifteen schools presented data from baseline administrations of nationally normed tests given during their first year of operation. The data represent the performance of more than 2,400 students on widely used and accepted normed tests such as the Stanford Achievement Test, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills. Twenty-seven test batteries were analyzed, fourteen in reading or language and thirteen in math.

According to the baseline data (presented in the table below), the average State University charter school serves a population that arrived at the school with a mean reading score of 39.9 Normal Curve Equivalents (NCEs)*, or approximately the 31st national percentile and a mean math score of 38.9 NCEs, or the 30th national percentile. These rankings are distressingly consistent. Of the 27 batteries

administered, only one resulted in a mean score that exceeded the national average.

In addition, the results of these nationally normed baseline tests reveal that students who enroll at charter schools in the later grades are even more likely to struggle academically. As the graph below illustrates, students enrolling in State University-authorized charter schools at the Kindergarten level score within two NCEs of the national mean in reading/language arts and within 7 NCEs of the national mean in math. Students enrolling in the eighth grade averaged a score fully 22 NCEs below the national mean in both subjects.



The baseline average Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE)* score of New York State charter school populations.

School	Nationally Normed NCEs		# Students	Test	Administered
	Reading	Math			
Amber CS	no data	no data			
Bronx Prep CS	43.7	42.9	99	CTBS	Fall 00
Central New York CS	47.1	48.0	221	Stanford 9	Fall 00
CS of Sci. and Tech.	31.6	31.1	747	Stanford 9	Spring 01
CDCH	40.5	38.2	23	Terra Nova	Spring 01
Comm. Partnership CS	59.4	43.6	89	PIAT	Fall 00
Eugenio Maria de Hostos	47.4	46.5	37	Stanford 9 (2)	Spring 01
Harbor CS	33.3	no data	37	Gates-M	Fall 00
King Center CS	33.2	33.9	37	ITBS	Spring 01
Merrick Academy CS	48.7	44.5	111	ITBS	Fall 00
New Covenant CS	24.1	26.8	257	Stanford 9	Fall 99
Reisenbach CS	35.0	42.9	206	ITBS	Fall 99
Roch. Leadership CS	43.9	40.1	125	MAT	Fall 00
Roosevelt CS	32.5	30.5	125	ITBS	Fall 00
Sisulu CS	38.5	36.8	324	ITBS	Fall 99
South Buffalo CS	no data	no data			

*NCE is a standard score (a score that is expressed as a deviation from a population mean) with the lowest score being 1, the highest being 99 and the mean (arithmetical average) of 50. NCE's may be added, subtracted and averaged and may be used to represent how a student or group of students performed in comparison to the mean. For example, a drop in scores over time means the students are being passed by their peers nationwide and an increase in scores over time means that students are passing their peers nationwide.

A New Choice in Public Education

It should be noted that five of the baseline tests included in the analysis were administered primarily in the spring of the first year of the charter schools' operation. As they measure student performance after almost a year's enrollment, those scores would include any gains made during the first year of the school's operations. Of course the reverse is also true, and any losses incurred while students were in attendance at the charter schools in question would also be included in the data. Therefore, it is difficult or impossible to gauge to what degree delays in setting baselines may have affected test

Preliminary data suggest students are making gains at their new schools.

scores. However, preliminary data on charter schools in New York suggest that of the 15 cohort analyses of standardized test batteries for which the Institute can confidently ascribe validity at the present time, 14 show at least some longitudinal progress in the charter school setting. Extrapolating from this tentative data, it seems possible if not likely that the skill deficits of students arriving at State University-authorized charter schools are even larger than baseline test scores indicate.

New York State Assessments

Given in grades 4 and 8, the New York State Assessments of English Language Arts (ELA) and Math are designed to measure the sum of a student's learning during his or her schooling up to that point. When administered in the first year of a school's existence, they are primarily a measure of what skills students have on arrival. The results of the state assessments corroborate findings from nationally-normed standardized tests and provide clearer evidence of the skill deficits of students coming to charter schools, even in comparison to the skills of students in the districts from which they come.

Tests administered at the six State University-authorized charter schools enrolled students in grades 4 and/or 8 during their first year of operation were analyzed using the State Education Department's School Performance Index (SPI)*:

- The average charter school enrolled a population scoring an SPI of 95.3 across all tests given in the first year.
- The average sending district scored an SPI 114.8 in the same year on the same tests.
- Out of 15 possible comparisons to sending school districts, charter schools enrolled populations with significantly lower skills in 11 cases. In two cases scores were close enough to be considered even. In two cases charter schools inherited populations that outscored the sending school district average on the test.

As with the nationally normed tests, these assessments demonstrate New York charter schools have attracted students consistently less successful than their peers at the local school districts, which in many cases are among the poorest performing districts in the state. Additionally, it reasonably could be concluded that a district in which a large number of its least prepared students enroll in charter schools might see an increase in its own SPI.

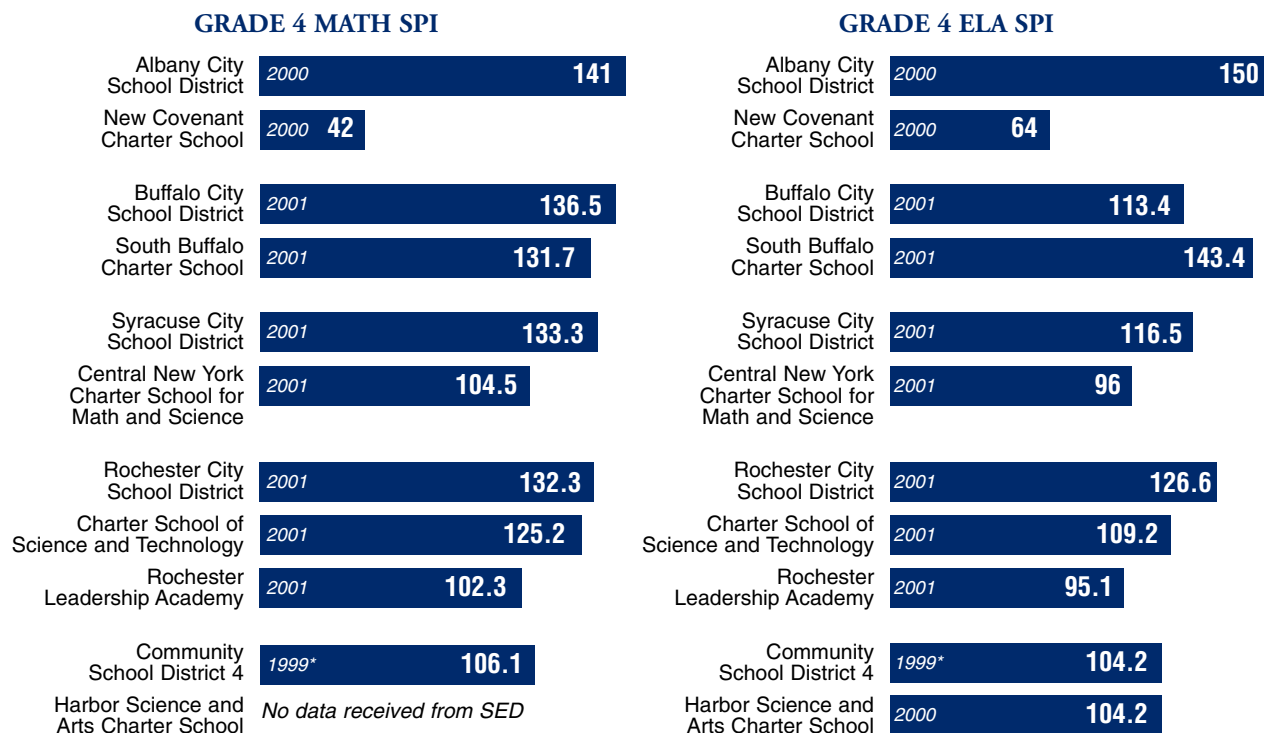
Both the nationally-normed tests and the state test data dispell the "creaming" criticism. First year charter school students scored an average SPI of 97.9 on state ELA assessments and an average SPI of 92.4 on state math assessments, scores that show dramatic overall weakness and slightly greater weakness in math. This finding mirrors the nationally normed test results which show reading skills at the 31st national percentile and math skills at the 30th national percentile. Also similar to the nationally-normed test scores was the consistently weaker performance of students enrolling in the later grade. The older the student, the weaker their skills: the average SPI of enrolling fourth grade populations on both tests was 101.6, while the average SPI of enrolling eighth grade populations on both tests was 78.2.

*SPI indicates progress toward meeting the state performance standards and is calculated by adding the percentage of students scoring at Level 2 (approaching standard) to two times the percentage of students scoring at Levels 3 and 4 (meeting and exceeding the standard). The State Education Department established the target SPI for 2000 at 140.

A New Choice in Public Education

The following bar graphs compare the baseline scores of State University-authorized charter school students in the first year of operation to local district scores for the same year.

Baseline 4th Grade School Performance Index (SPI) scores of charter schools, compared to the local school district.



*The 1999 SPIs were the latest available from the State Education Department.

Other Findings

The implementation and development of the Charter School Institute's school accountability program has revealed several trends that may be of consequence for the New York State charter schools initiative.

First, it appears likely the State University's emphatic focus on clarity and results is pushing public charter schools to target student academic performance. The focus on improvement has led schools to strengthen their internal procedures, their teaching methods and their academic programs. For example, some schools have elected to assess teacher effectiveness based on student performance and/or to use teacher performance to inform personnel decisions.

The emphasis on results has also inspired some schools to develop innovative ways to measure their work with students and their overall school performance. For example, State University-authorized charter schools have developed or are developing ways to objectively measure and report:

- the percentage of homework students complete during the course of the year (to be reported to parents as well as authorizers);
- the particular progress of at-risk or special education students;
- the development of student technology skills;
- the quality of a school's culture and learning environment;
- the ability of students to conduct and report upon research.

A New Choice in Public Education

Finally, good accountability is hard work. Even first-rate instructional leaders and organizational managers struggle to collect, analyze, describe and use data focused specifically and narrowly on student and school performance. The Institute recognizes the need for even more technical support so charter schools can meet its uniquely high reporting standards.

The Institute has begun developing documents, programs and professional relationships that will allow it to help grow the capacity of the State University-authorized charter schools it oversees to meet the challenges of this new higher standard for accountability. Organizations such as the New York Charter Schools Association have also begun to respond strongly to the need for more expertise with data collection and analysis.

Grant Review:

An important function of the Charter Schools Institute is the review of applications from charter schools seeking support through the State Stimulus Fund Program and the federal Public Charter Schools Program.

The Institute has begun developing the resources that will allow it to help grow the capacity of the State University-authorized charter schools to meet the challenges of new, higher standards for accountability.

The State Stimulus Fund (SSF) program was proposed by Governor George E. Pataki and included in the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998. Pursuant to an annual State budget appropriation, the SSF grants can be used for virtually any expense associated with the start-up of a charter school. Additionally, SSF Start-Up Grants may be used to pay for costs associated with the acquisition, renovation, or construction of school facilities.

Pursuant to a Memorandum of Agreement between the University Trustees and the New York State Education Department (SED), the Board of Trustees is authorized to award grants under the United States Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP). Each year for the three-year life of the PCSP Grant, the University Trustees award \$2.1 million to start-up public charter schools.

PCSP Grants are available for two types of activities: "Planning Grants," and, "Implementation Grants."

"Planning Grants" can be used for the refinement of educational programs and the methods for measuring results. They can also be used for professional development.

"Implementation Grants" can be used for a number of purposes, including:

- informing the community about the school, e.g., advertisements, public meetings, direct mail;
- acquiring necessary operating equipment and systems and educational materials and supplies;
- acquiring or developing curriculum materials;
- other initial operating costs that cannot be met from State or local sources.

PCSP Grants cannot be used for rent, for capital expenditures such as the purchase of land or buildings, or for the construction of new facilities. Minor renovations may be permissible, and will be approved only on a case-by-case basis with input from U.S. Department of Education. Also, PCSP funds cannot generally be used for salaries and fringe benefits, or for the purchase or lease of vehicles.

All other expenses, such as the purchase of supplies, materials, furniture, computers and other equipment are allowable under the federal guidelines, so long as these expenditures are connected with the initial operational costs involved in implementing the school's program. Exceptions to the exclusion of salary will also be considered where the school can demonstrate the individual was hired solely to initially implement the school's program and are not an ongoing operational need.

Due to federal restrictions, PCSP Grants may only be used to underwrite costs incurred after the date the grant is awarded and may not be used to reimburse applicants for any expenses incurred before that date.

A New Choice in Public Education

Grants Awarded to University-Authorized Public Charter Schools

CHARTER SCHOOL	SSF TO DATE	PCSP TO DATE	TOTAL TO DATE
Amber Charter School	\$125,000.00	\$286,720.00	\$411,720.00
The Ark Community Charter School	\$300,000.00	\$0.00	\$300,000.00
Bronx Preparatory Charter School	\$124,950.00	\$124,646.00	\$249,596.00
Carl C. Icahn Charter School	\$150,730.00	\$0.00	\$150,730.00
Central New York Charter School for Math and Science	\$107,352.00	\$215,748.00	\$323,100.00
Charter School of Science and Technology	\$205,642.00	\$106,995.00	\$312,637.00
Child Development Center of the Hamptons CS	\$199,800.00	\$197,550.00	\$397,350.00
Community Partnership Charter School	\$200,000.00	\$178,587.00	\$378,587.00
Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School	\$0.00	\$320,065.00	\$320,065.00
Family Life Academy Charter School	\$299,999.00	\$185,600.00	\$485,599.00
Harbor Science and Arts Charter School	\$100,000.00	\$317,342.31	\$417,342.31
Harlem Day Charter School	\$300,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$500,000.00
International Charter School of Schenectady	\$43,983.04	\$0.00	\$43,983.04
John A. Reisenbach Charter School	\$250,000.00	\$155,400.00	\$405,400.00
King Center Charter School	\$150,000.00	\$274,470.00	\$424,470.00
Merrick Children's Academy Charter School	\$300,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$500,000.00
New Covenant Charter School	\$100,000.00	\$199,470.00	\$299,470.00
Our World Neighborhood Charter School	\$100,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$300,000.00
Rochester Leadership Academy Charter School	\$100,000.00	\$150,522.00	\$250,522.00
Roosevelt Academy Charter School	\$300,000.00	\$180,000.00	\$480,000.00
Sisulu Children's Academy Charter School	\$150,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$250,000.00
South Buffalo Charter School	\$88,000.00	\$217,023.00	\$305,023.00
Stepping Stone Academy Charter School	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00
Tapestry Charter School	\$300,000.00	\$115,075.00	\$415,075.00
TOTAL AWARD	\$4,095,456.04	\$3,925,213.31	\$8,020,669.35

Source: Charter Schools Institute of the State University of New York

Institute reviews of both SSF and PCSP grant applications consider the extent to which the grant advances the mission of the school as laid out in its charter. The Institute may recommend less than the amount requested, based upon its review of the proposal, or in the event that total grant requests exceed the amount of funds available for disbursement in any one fiscal year, the Institute may award funds for allowable expenses it deems *necessary* for successfully fulfilling the terms of the grant applicant's charter.

Charter Renewal:

As public charter schools approach the end of their five-year charters, the Institute must move into an important new phase of its work – charter renewal. Charter renewal is not automatic. It is made very clear to the operators of each State University public charter school that the burden of proof lies with them to demonstrate their school has achieved the objectives laid out in its charter and is therefore

worthy of renewal. As has been discussed previously in this report, maintaining such a high level of accountability is one of the greatest challenges facing public charter schools.

Recognizing the daunting task facing public charter schools, on October 22, 2001 the Institute sponsored a statewide conference titled, "Building Toward Renewal." The first such conference to be hosted by a charter school authorizer in New York, representatives of virtually all 32 operating public charter schools (and several scheduled to open in 2002) attended and heard presentations on a number of prominent issues.

As public charter schools approach the end of their five-year charters, the Institute is moving into the important new work of charter renewal.

A New Choice in Public Education

Along with remarks from Board of Trustees Vice Chairman Randy A. Daniels, who co-chairs the Trustees' Charter Schools Committee and Chancellor Robert L. King, Robert G. Freeman, Executive Director of the New York State Committee on Open Government, discussed the responsibilities of public charter schools under the Freedom of Information Law and the Open Meetings Law. In a similar vein,

James D. Merriman, Institute Senior Vice President and General Counsel Institute detailed issues associated with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which guarantees student privacy.

Michael Stevens, Vice President of Evaluation and Research, and Jennifer Sneed, Vice President for Applications, offered an overview of the Institute's

inspection process. Vice President for Accountability Doug Lemov gave first year charter schools a primer on accountability, and later he and Senior Fellow Susan Miller Barker presented a case study on charter renewal, which underscored the complexities of both making a case for renewal and judging the merits of that case. Finally a panel of charter school operators discussed their successful strategies fulfilling the accountability reporting requirements.

THE IMPACT OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

As previously noted, baseline data indicate students who are enrolling at public charter schools are most at risk of academic failure. The great need of the students makes all the more important the focus of public charter schools on improving student achievement. Charter schools must demonstrate that their students are learning if they are to secure renewal of their charters.

* United States Department of Education, *Challenge and Opportunity: The Impact of Charter Schools on School Districts* (2001).

** New York State School Boards Association, *Facing the Challenge of Charter Schools* (2000), 7.

*** *Buffalo News*, May 30, 2001.

Because public charter schools in New York are still relatively new, it is too early to render conclusive judgments on academic improvement. However, preliminary data are encouraging, as is seen in a number of the school profiles found in the appendix.

Evidence is growing that the creation of public charter schools is stimulating fresh thinking within the traditional education system. This is consistent with the principles of competition and choice fundamental to the charter school initiative.

In New York competition arises in part from the means by which public charter schools are funded. The federal, state and local funds received by a district are divided by the number of its students to arrive at a per pupil funding number. That per pupil amount then follows each student to the charter school.

- A U.S. Department of Education report found that in states like New York with "pass through" funding, public charter schools are potent agents of change. School districts that faced genuine competition for students more often reported implementing new educational programs or made other changes similar to what was offered at local charter schools.*

- The New York State School Boards Association has urged its members to view themselves as competing for students, even if no charter schools are on the horizon, and to treat students, parents, taxpayers and other stakeholders as customers who expect good value for their dollar.**

- The New York City School District has already converted five of its schools to charter status, and the leadership of the Buffalo and Rochester City School Districts are also considering conversions. Paul Buchanan, president of the Buffalo Board of Education has lauded charter schools for being able to decentralize, improve parent involvement, implement flexible scheduling, and pay more attention to individual students. Said Buchanan, "Ultimately, the challenge for us is to make all schools comparable in those ways to charter schools."***

These examples support the proposition that providing a choice within public education and creating competition for students will improve the educational opportunities for all students attending public schools in New York.

The New York State School Boards Association has urged its members to view themselves as competing for students, even if no charter schools are on the horizon.

A New Choice in Public Education

A review of the public charter profiles in the appendix of this report reveals a broad array of educational approaches adopted by the schools. This variety is indicative of each public charter school's effort to adopt an educational program designed to improve student learning and achievement, and to provide alternatives to those programs already offered in their communities.

Innovation also comes in how public charter schools approach their students. As Kristin Kearns Jordan, founder and Director of the Bronx Preparatory Charter School, puts it: "The innovation is in the expectation." Charter schools reject the notion that low academic achievement and behavior problems are to be expected of children from low-income families. Instead, charter schools set high expectations for their students and use the flexibility afforded them by the Charter Schools Act to implement education programs that will help their students succeed.

One of the most notable innovations in charter schools is their basic governance structure. Each charter school is entrusted to a board of trustees made up of citizens, parents, interested community members, and educators. Board members serve according to bylaws approved in their charter. This structure has created new opportunities for hundreds of parents – mostly inner-city parents – to participate actively in public education and the governance of their children's schools.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

New York's public charter school initiative has shown great promise in the three years since passage of the New York Charter Schools Act. The enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by those operating charter schools bodes well for the students who attend them. The quality of many schools is already evident, and the eagerness of parents to enroll their children at public charter schools is proof of the need for an alternative in public education.

However, much work remains if New York's public charter school initiative is to fulfill its potential. Important next steps include:

Continue approving new charter schools, with the continuing focus on quality.

By approving 25 charters of the 50 they are permitted under the Charter Schools Act, the University Trustees already have shown their commitment to providing parents with more choices within public education and fostering the kind of competition that results in better public schools for all children in New York. The Trustees have expressed their resolve to approve all 50 charters, and the Institute will assist the Trustees any way it can to help them achieve their goal.

The quality of many charter schools is already evident, and the eagerness of parents to enroll their children at them is proof of the need for an alternative in public education.

Proceed in holding public charter schools strictly accountable for results.

Strict accountability is a key distinction between public charter schools and their district counterparts who presume their continued existence. Institute staff have been successful in developing new state-of-the-art models that focus on academic results rather than regulatory compliance. The Institute's duty is to ensure charter schools approved by the University Trustees are fully cognizant of their responsibility to prove they are achieving the goals laid out in their individual accountability plans. Schools that lack compelling proof of improved student learning risk losing their charters.

Continue collecting data.

Key to the accountability effort is the collection of data that will track the success of public charter schools. The overall importance of this effort was underscored by a recent report of the Rand Institute* which found that choice-based reforms such as charter schools seemed to have improved student performance but are too young to offer long-range data as conclusive proof.

*Rand Corporation, *Rhetoric Versus Reality: What We Know and What We Need to Know About Vouchers and Charter Schools*.

A New Choice in Public Education

Look for ways to assist applicants and charter school operators with securing adequate facilities.

Nationally and here in New York, school operators identify access to facilities and facilities funding as one of the primary obstacles to opening a successful public charter school. The Institute will continue to work closely with applicants, school operators and the charter school community to seek solutions to the facility problems they may encounter.

Promote the sharing of best practices.

Charter schools benefit greatly from their independence and autonomy, which give them the flexibility to develop or adapt programs best suited to their needs. However, they are isolated from one another and need the opportunity to share with one another the benefit of their experience. The Institute has forged a close working relationship with the New York Charter Schools Association, which represents all the state's charter schools, regardless of authorizer, as well as with the Center for Educational Innovation, a New York City-based organization with a long history of support for school reform. On October 22, 2001, the Institute and Association hosted a charter school conference

called, "Building Toward Renewal." We will continue to provide such forums and pursue other means that increase the opportunities for charter schools to interact with one another.

Prepare for the renewal of charters.

With the first three schools at the mid-point of their 5-year charters, the next major task before the Institute is developing a charter renewal process. That work has already begun with the development of accountability plans and annual accountability reviews. The Institute is now developing the protocols to ensure each charter school gets an objective and comprehensive review of its charter.

Conversions

While New York's Charter Schools Act caps the number of new, start-up schools, it allows for an unlimited number of conversion charter schools, i.e. existing, district-run public schools that wish to gain the autonomy and flexibility afforded by charter status. While the University and the Institute have no statutory role in the conversion process, they stand ready to lend their expertise and experience to visionary school districts, school leaders and others interested in pursuing this option.

Appendix:
**Profiles of Charter Schools
Authorized by the
State University Trustees**

Amber Charter School

310 Lenox Avenue, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10027 212-534-9667

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

The Amber Charter School, approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in March, opened in the fall of that year. The school currently educates 120 students in grades K-2. The school plans to expand by the end of its 5-year charter to educate 280 students in grades K-5. The Amber Charter School is located on the second floor of a building at 125th St. and Lenox Ave. in Harlem, which also houses retail and office facilities.

The Amber Charter School uses a project-based, dual language curriculum to achieve New York State standards and enable all students, both Spanish-dominant and English-dominant, to attain fluency in both languages. The school is partnered with the Community Association of Progressive Dominicans, which has a strong community service history and education experience through its extensive role in development and operation of the Twenty-first Century Academy for Community Leadership (P.S. 210), a New York City public school.

Special Populations	Amber*	CSD 5**
English Language Learners	13%	8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	84%	88%
Special Education Students	2%	10.8%***

Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 84.3%

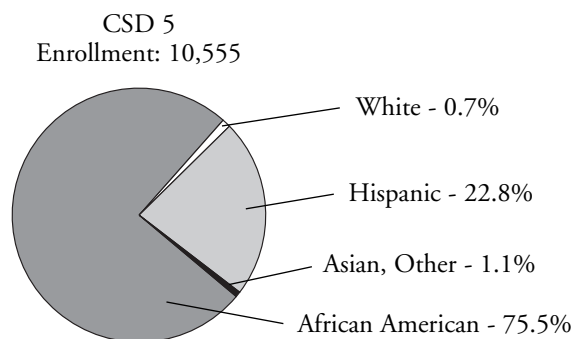
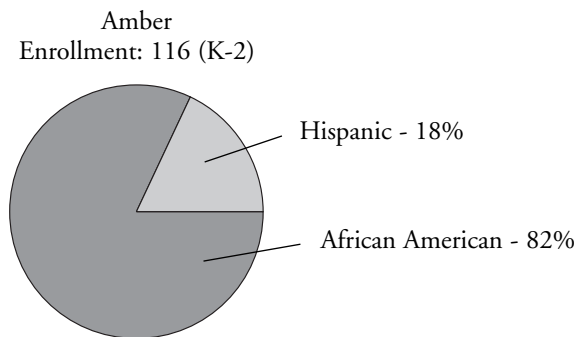
Academic Measures

The school has presented data from an on-site assessment of its own students using the Early Childhood Language Arts Survey (ECLAS), a diagnostic assessment of literacy readiness. The school found that 67% of its Kindergarten students scored at the “Emergent Reader” or “Beginning Reader” levels of the exam in a spring 2001 administration of the test. The school will present externally verified, objective data on its students skill levels and on the school’s progress in fostering overall student growth starting in 3rd grade. The school does not compile such data for grades K-2.

Percentage of students in Community School District 5 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	25%	20.8%
Math:	24.3%	8.3%

Amber Charter School scored highest in the U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language Assistance Program and has received a \$174,000 grant to support the teaching of Spanish.



*Amber Charter School Annual Report 2000-2001
 **State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*
 ***1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education

The Ark Community Charter School

2247 13th Street, Troy, NY 12180 518-274-6312

Term of Charter: 2001-2006

Students receive practical experience when they apply and interview for such on-campus, for-pay jobs as art room helper.

The Ark Community Charter School, approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2001, and by the Board of Regents in March, opened in September of that year. The school will maintain an enrollment of 96 students in grades K-5 throughout the term of its charter. The school is partnered with the Ark, an after-school program operating in the Taylor Public Housing projects in downtown Troy serving “at-risk” children who live in public housing. The school is housed in the former St. Paul’s School of the Roman Catholic Diocese.

The Ark Community Charter School uses small class size and multi-age classrooms with a variety of teaching methods including teaching centers, inter-disciplinary projects, cooperative learning, and large and small

group instruction to improve the skills of students at-risk of academic failure. The school employs an assessment plan that provides standardized measures regarding student achievement during the “off years” when there are no State-required assessments.

Special Populations	Ark*	Troy**
English Language Learners	14%	1.6%
Free and Reduced Lunch	96%	60.9%
Special Education Students	15%	14.7%

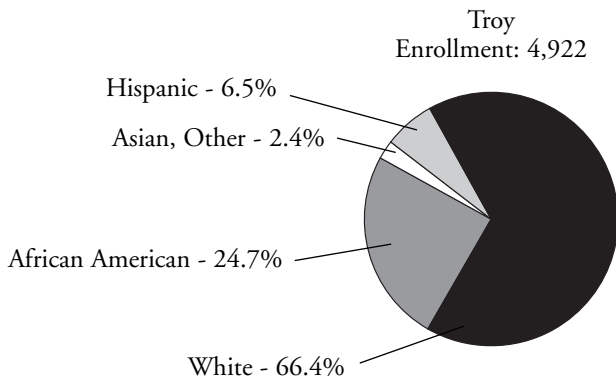
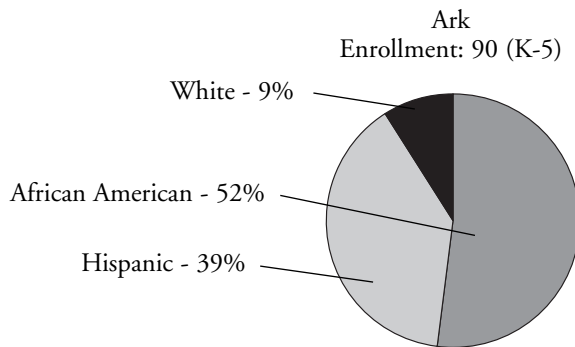
Ark Community Charter School Average Daily Attendance: 93%

Academic Measures

Currently in its first year of operation, the Ark Charter School has yet to report on standardized testing of its students.

Percentage of students in Troy School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	51%	33%
Math:	54%	31%



* Reported by school.

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

Bronx Preparatory Charter School

1508 Webster Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457 718-294-0841

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Bronx Preparatory Charter School, approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000, and by the Board of Regents in March, opened in August of that year. Located in the South Bronx, the school's current enrollment is 150 students in grades 5-7. By the end of its 5-year charter, the school plans to enroll 300 students in grades 5-10. Currently located in a former Roman Catholic school, Bronx Preparatory Charter School will be moving to a new facility for the 2003-2004 school year.

Bronx Prep emphasizes reading and math skills instruction in the middle school years, while preparing students to think critically and creatively as they approach high school. The school has a 200-day academic year, and is in session from 8 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. to provide additional time for student learning. It also offers a summer tutorial program for children who struggle with lagging reading skills.

Special Populations	Bronx* Prep	CSD 9**
English Language Learners	2%	23.4%
Free and Reduced Lunch	98%	88.8%
Special Education Students	8.5%	12.5%***

Bronx Preparatory Charter School
Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01:
96.7%

*Bronx Preparatory Charter School Annual Report 2000-01

**State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

***1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City board of Education.

Academic Measures

The school has presented data from fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills. Baseline test data from the fall 2000 administration shows the school enrolled an overall population scoring in the 38th percentile in reading comprehension, the 24th percentile in vocabulary and the 37th percentile in math, on average.

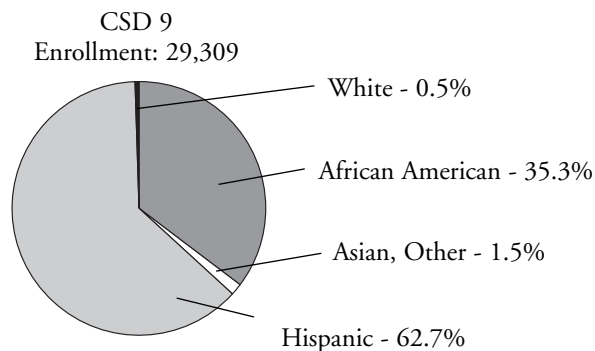
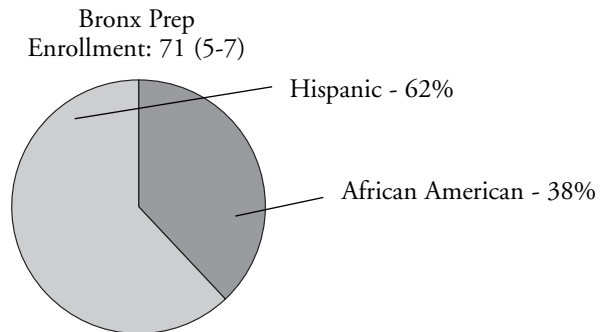
Improvement data from the spring administration of the same tests shows that students in the school increased their scores on all three of these batteries. In reading comprehension, students increased their scores by an average of 6 percentiles nationally. In vocabulary, students also increased their scores by an average of 6 percentiles nationally.

In math, students increased their scores by an average of 41 percentiles nationally.

The school has also presented data from an on-site assessment of its own students using measures developed by school faculty. Ninety-six percent of students achieved a passing score of 70% or better on the school's History Final Essay; 94% of students achieved a passing grade of 70% on the school's Science Final Exam; and, 96% of students achieved a passing grade of 70% on the school's Writing Final Exam.

Percentage of students in Community School District 9 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	20.7%	14%
Math:	28.1%	8%



The Carl C. Icahn Charter School

1525 Brook Avenue, Bronx, NY 10457 718-716-8105

Term of Charter: 2001-2006

The Carl C. Icahn Charter School participates in the National Safe Kids Foundation, which has provided parents with free car seats and training in their proper use.

The Carl C. Icahn Charter School, approved by the State University Trustees in January 2001 and by the Board of Regents that March, opened September 2001. In its first year, the school has 108 students in grades K-2. The school will expand by the third year of its 5-year charter to 180 students in grades K-4. It is located in Community School District 9, and is housed in a new facility built especially for the school.

The school seeks to serve at-risk students in the South Bronx, including students residing at the Icahn House shelter for homeless women and their families. It uses the Core Knowledge curriculum in an intimate environment featuring small classes (18 students per class) in a small school. With an extended school year of 209 days and an extended school

day, the school has more time for instruction and reduces the loss of academic skills that occurs over long, school vacations.

The school employs a variety of real life applications and hands-on learning opportunities to make the curriculum "immediate" for children. It will maintain high standards for instruction through on-going and professional development. The school stresses the importance of parental involvement (including parent meetings to bolster their capacity to promote education at home) to support the curriculum.

Special Populations	Icahn*	CSD 9**
English Language Learners	2.7%	23.4%
Free and Reduced Lunch	93%	88.8%
Special Education Students	4.3%	12.5%***

Carl C. Icahn Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 94%

Academic Measures

Currently in its first year of operation, the Carl C. Icahn Charter School has yet to report on standardized testing of its students.

Percentage of students in Community School District 9 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

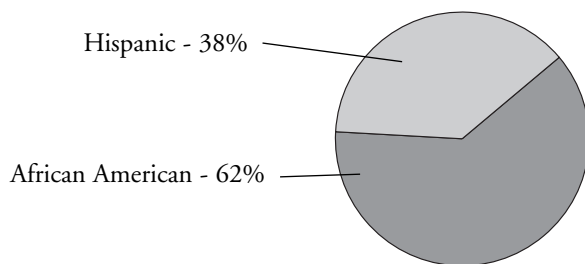
	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	20.7%	14%
Math:	28.1%	8%

* Reported directly by school.

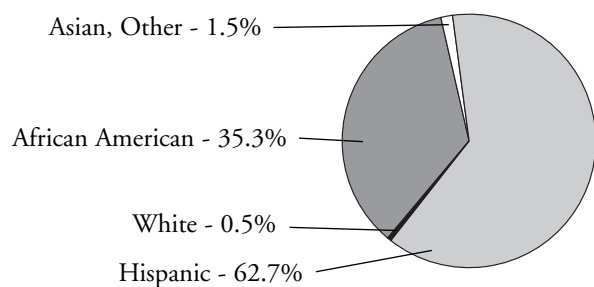
** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

*** 1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.

Carl C. Icahn
Enrollment: 108 (K-2)



CSD 9
Enrollment: 29,309



Central New York Charter School for Math and Science

610 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13202 315-472-5914

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Central New York Charter School for Math and Science was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000, and by the Board of Regents in April of that year. It opened in September 2000. It currently enrolls 425 students in grades K-7. By the end of its 5-year charter the school plans to enroll 816 students in grades K-10. The school year at CNYCS lasts 195 days with an instructional day lasting from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

To oversee its management, the school contracted with Beacon Education Management, Inc., which has merged with another education management company, becoming Chancellor Beacon Academies of Miami. The company is the nation's second-largest educational-management firm, serving 19,000 students from pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 at 81 schools in eight states and the District of Columbia. The school is employing Beacon's Lightpoints standards and curriculum with particular emphasis on math and science. The school received one of the 10 waivers from collective bargaining requirements provided the State University in the Charter Schools Act of 1998.

Special Populations	CNYCS*	Syracuse**
English Language Learners	–	5.7%
Free and Reduced Lunch	67%	72.8%
Special Education Students	6%	16.5%

CNYCS Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 85%

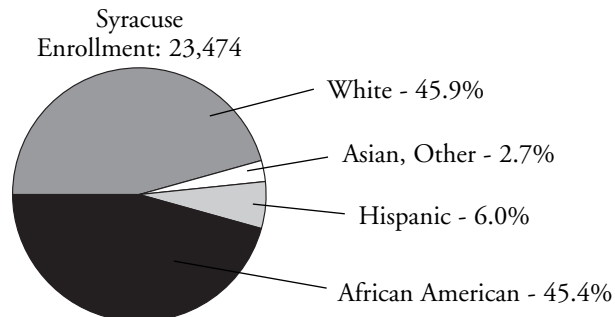
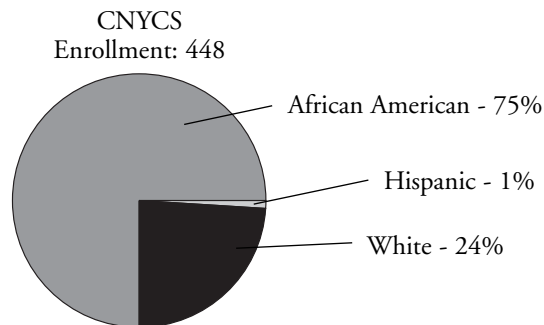
Academic Measures

Summary data on students initial skill levels, as measured by a fall 2000 administration of the Stanford Achievement Test, has been presented by the school for most students. While not complete and pending verification, the data suggest the school enrolled a population scoring on average at the 44th national percentile in reading and the 46th national percentile in math.

The school also presented data from the 2000 administration of 4th Grade State Assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. On the 4th Grade ELA Assessment, 26% of students scored at or above the state standard. On the 4th Grade Math Assessment, 35.6% of students scored at or above the state standard.

Percentage of students in Syracuse City School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests*:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	39%	21%
Math:	43%	20%



The school is located on a campus of two buildings that were formerly teaching and laboratory facilities for Syracuse University.

*CNYCS Annual Report 2000-01

**State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

Charter School for Science and Technology

690 St. Paul Street, Rochester, NY 14605 585-454-0100

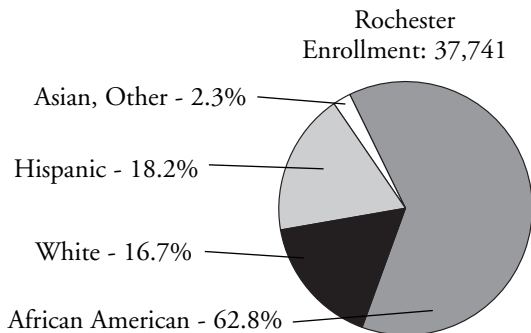
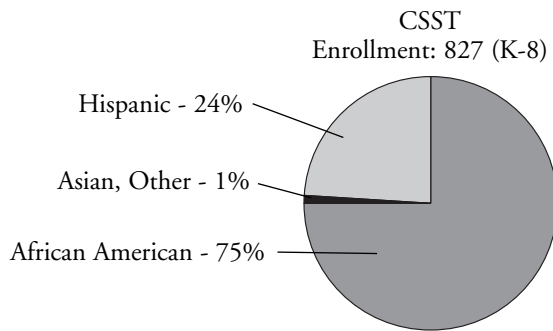
Term of Charter: 2000-2005

The Charter School for Science and Technology was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in May of that year. It opened in the fall of 2000. Currently enrolling 970 students in grades K-9, the school plans an enrollment of 1,338 pupils in grades K-12 at the end of the 5-year charter. Its school year is 20 days longer than the traditional 180-day school year. The mission of the school is to focus on high achievement in science, as well as applied and industrial technology to meet the similarly oriented job market in the Western New York region.

The Charter School for Science and Technology, which is housed in a renovated Bausch & Lomb plant at 690 St. Paul Street, Rochester, contracted with Edison Inc. for the management of the school. The school entered partnerships with Monroe Community College, Rochester Institute of Technology, and the American Red Cross-Greater Rochester Chapter.

Special Populations	CSST*	Roch.**
English Language Learners	5.9%	8.1%
Free and Reduced Lunch	77%	93.4%
Special Education Students	9.9%	14.4%

CSST Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 92.35%



Academic Measures

Summary data on students' initial skill levels, as measured by a spring 2001 administration of the Stanford Achievement Test. While pending verification, the data suggest the school enrolled a population scoring on average at the 19th national percentile in reading and the 19th national percentile in math.

The school also presented data the 2000 administration of the State Assessments of English Language Arts (ELA) and Math Assessment.

Percentage of CSST students who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	27.6%	12.5%
Math:	44.8%	10.7%

The school has also submitted improvement data from the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test for all students. The school also presented data on performance improvement of a limited number of students (those who initially tested two or more years below grade level) on the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test. This data also has not yet been presented in statistically valid formats.

Percentage of students in Rochester School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	37%	27%
Math:	38%	12%

* Charter School of Science & Technology Annual Report 2000-01

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

Child Development Center of the Hamptons Charter School

175 Daniels Hole Road, Wainscott, NY 11975-0404 631-537-6330

Term of Charter: 2001-2006

The Child Development Center of the Hamptons Charter School was approved by the State University Board of Trustees and by the Board of Regents in July 2000. It opened in Wainscott in January 2001, with a focus on serving severe special needs students residing in eastern Long Island. The school currently enrolls 46 students in K-4, and plans to expand to 72 students by the end of its 5-year charter.

The applicants sought an inclusive alternative for children from eastern Long Island many of whom faced a lengthy round trip to a BOCES program that was disconnected from the communities where the children and their families live. The school enrolls students from seven different school districts located throughout eastern Long Island.

CDCH offers a community-based setting stressing parental involvement and benefits from access to such local resources as artists and business owners. It employs a multi-grade approach to instruction, which places students in classes based on ability levels and promotes the integration of special needs children with children in the mainstream. A theme-based curriculum designed with Modern Red Schoolhouse is used to meet all New York State Learning Standards.

Special Populations CDCH* Suffolk**

*Reported directly by school.

**NOTE: CDCH Charter School is unique in its combination of small size and multiple student districts of residence. Hence, county-wide data has been presented for comparison purposes. County data drawn from State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

English Language Learners	4.3%	3.3%
Free and Reduced Lunch	8.7%	23.7%
Special Education Students	50%	12.9%

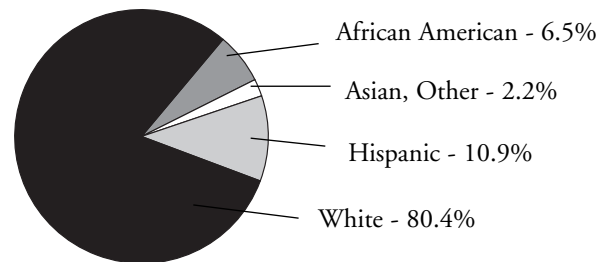
CDCH Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 94.2%

Academic Measures

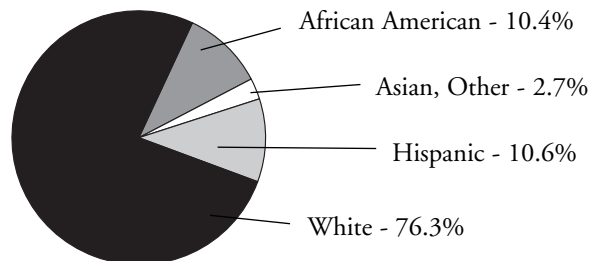
Summary data on students' initial skill levels, as measured by a spring 2001 administration of the Terra Nova, suggest that the school enrolled a population scoring on average at the 33rd national percentile in reading, the 30th national percentile in language and the 29th national percentile in math. The school plans to present growth data based on subsequent administrations of the Terra Nova starting in the 2001-2002 school year.

CDCH employs a "full-inclusion" model that keeps special education students, who make up half of the school, together with other students.

CDCH Enrollment: 24 (K-3)



Suffolk County Enrollment: 244,310



The Community Partnership Charter School

171 Clermont Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11205 718-330-0480

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Students organized a two-day bake sale and raised over \$1,600 for FDNY Engine Company No. 210

The Community Partnership Charter School was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in April of that year. It opened in the fall of 2000 in the Fort Greene section of Brooklyn. The school currently enrolls 150 students in grades K-2. By the end of its 5-year charter it plans to enroll 300 students in grades K-5. The school is located in a refurbished armory that also houses an apartment complex.

The school is operated in partnership with the Beginning with Children Foundation, a New York-based philanthropy founded by Joe and Carol Reich to advance educational opportunities for children. The Foundation's Executive Director is Mimi Clarke Corcoran.

Community Partnership Charter School's mission is to create a strong academic base,

involving families, educators and community members. Students will learn to read, write and perform math at levels that exceed city-wide averages.

Special Populations	CPCS*	CSD13**
English Language Learners	–	4.7%
Free and Reduced Lunch	78%	88.7%
Special Education Students	8.7%	11.9%***

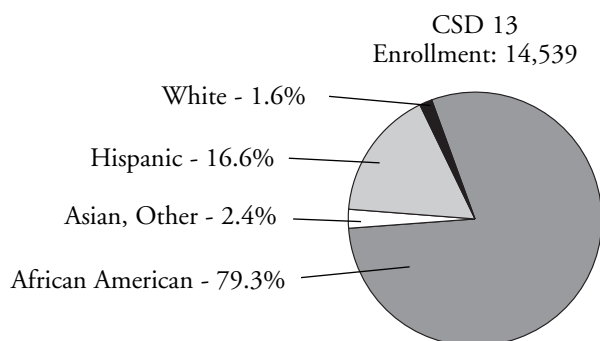
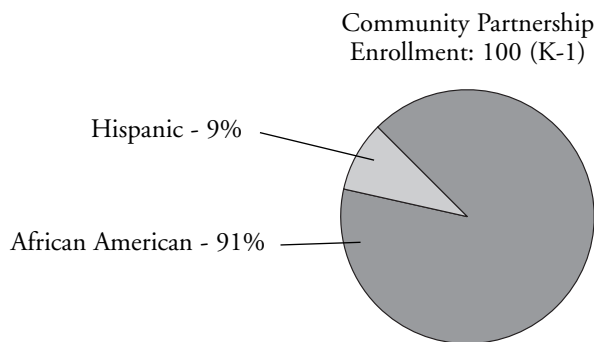
Community Partnership Charter School
Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 93.5%

Academic Measures

The school has presented data from fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (Revised). Baseline test data from the fall 2000 administration show the school enrolled a population with a mean reading score of 59.4 NCEs (the 67th national percentile) and a mean math score of 43.6 NCEs (the 38th national percentile). Growth data gleaned from the spring 2001 administration of the same tests show that in reading comprehension, student scores decreased by an average of 1 percentile nationally. In math, students increased their scores by an average of 3.5 percentiles nationally.

Percentage of students in Community School District 13 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	35.4%	19.2%
Math:	35.4%	15.8%



* Community Partnership Charter School Annual Report 2000-2001

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

*** 1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.

Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School

938 Clifford Avenue, Rochester, NY 14621 585-544-6956

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in April of that year. Sponsored by the Ibero American Action League, Inc., the Rochester school opened in September 2000 in a former Roman Catholic elementary school. The school currently enrolls 160 students in grades K-3, and plans to expand by the end of the school's 5-year charter to 280 students in grades K-6.

Based on the performance-oriented America's Choice design, the school has a longer school day that runs from 8:30 am to 5 p.m., with an additional one-hour tutoring program for those who need extra help.

The goal of the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School is to create an environment where Spanish-dominant students are more quickly and smoothly immersed in English, while exposing English-dominant students to Spanish immersion. While originally anticipating a majority of students to be Spanish-dominant, the majority of students are English-dominant. The school has adapted its educational program to meet the needs of the students it serves.

Special Populations	Eug.*	Roch.**
English Language Learners	11%	8.1%
Free and Reduced Lunch	91%	93.4%
Special Education Students	4%	14.4%

*Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School Annual Report 2000-01

**State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools*: Submitted June 2001.

Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 92.1%

Academic Measures

Summary data on students' initial skill levels, as measured by a spring 2001 administration of the Stanford Achievement Test, suggest the school enrolled a population scoring on average at the 45th national percentile in reading and the 43rd national percentile in math.

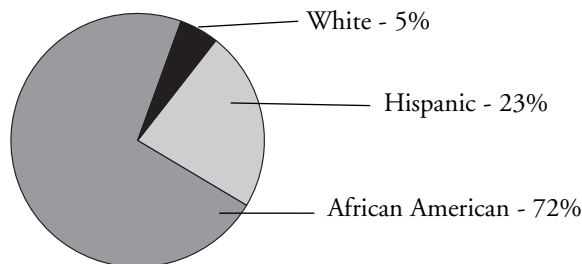
The school also has presented data on the progress of first and second grade students on the self-assessed Reading Running Records program. This assessment measures literacy skills by rating students on a seven level scale, from "emergent" to "extending" readers. The school reported that 98.75% of students moved at least one reading stage on the program's seven-level scale during the academic year.

The school also presented data on student progress on an internally developed and self-assessed narrative writing assessment. School-developed measures were used to gauge whether students' narrative writing met school standards. The school reported that while no students met the school's standards in fall 2000, 42.5% of kindergarten students, 50% of first grade students and 55% of second grade students met or exceeded grade level standards on the spring 2001 assessment.

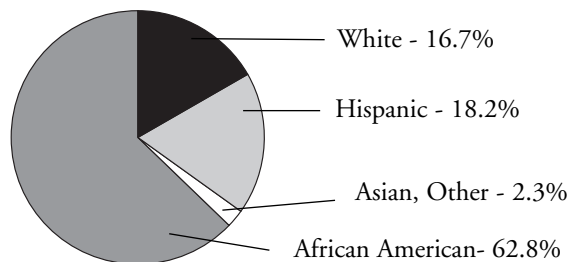
Percentage of students in Rochester School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	37%	27%
Math:	38%	12%

Eugenio Enrollment: 120



Rochester Enrollment: 37,741



Family Life Academy Charter School

14 West 170th Street, Bronx, NY 10452 718-410-8100

Term of Charter: 2001-2006

The charter school's partner, the Latino Pastoral Action Center, has a nine-year history of providing services in the Highbridge section of the Bronx.

The Family Life Academy Charter School, approved by the State University Trustees in January 2001 and by the Board of Regents that March, opened September 2001. The school's charter calls for an initial enrollment of 104 students in grades K-1. The school plans to expand by the end of its 5-year charter to 250 students in grades K-5. The school is located in a community with a large percentage of students living in poverty and with many having limited English language proficiency.

The Family Life Academy Charter School offers an educational model of its own design, English/Spanish Immersion, which will gradually increase the level of instruction in an English-language classroom while simultaneously retaining Spanish as a subject area for specific instruction. The English

language program will offer a mix of phonics- and literature-based instruction and assumes full immersion in English instruction by second grade, with an additional hour per day of instruction in Spanish language arts.

Special Populations	FLACS*	CSD 9**
English Language Learners	51%	23.4%
Free and Reduced Lunch	88%	88.8%
Special Education Students	6%	12.5%***

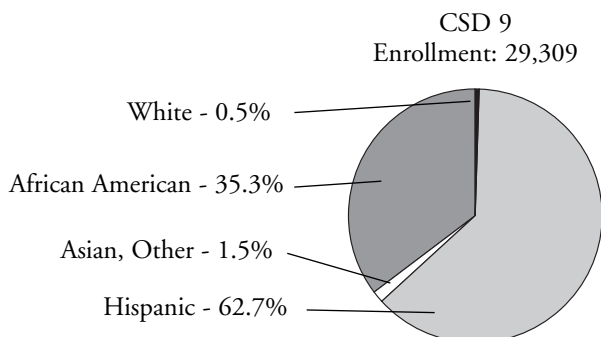
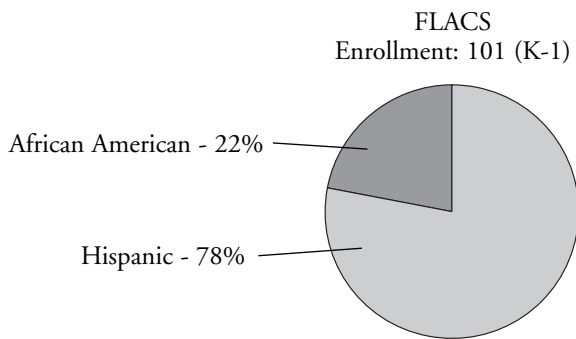
Family Life Academy Charter School
Average Daily Attendance: 94.2%

Academic Measures

Currently in its first year of operation, the Family Life Academy Charter School has yet to report on standardized testing of its students.

Percentage of students in Community School District 9 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
ELA:	21%	14%
Math:	28.1%	8%



* Reported directly by school.

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

*** 1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.

Harbor Science & Arts Charter School

One East 104th Street, Suite 603, New York, NY 10029 212-427-2244 extension 627

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

The Harbor Science and Arts Charter School, approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in April, opened in September of that year in East Harlem. The school's current enrollment stands at 160 in grades 1-7. In the 2002-2003 school year the school plans to expand to its full enrollment of 184 students in grades 1-8.

The Harbor Science and Arts Charter School emphasizes science and technology while integrating them with the arts to provide a well-rounded education. Students work with adult science partners to explore how nature works, and then share their findings with others through student run workshops, conferences, international telecommunications conventions and publications. The School makes use of many community resources including the Harlem Meer studies with Central Park Conservancy, the Biodiversity Project with the American Museum of Natural History, The Urban Woodlands Project sponsored by The City Parks Foundation and the support services of the multi-service youth agency Boys and Girls Harbor.

Special Populations	Harbor*	CSD 4**
English Language Learners	—	14.2%
Free and Reduced Lunch	79%	92.1%
Special Education Students	8%	15.1%***

Harbor Science & Arts Charter School
Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 93.9 %

* Harbor Science & Arts Charter School Annual Report 2000-01

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

*** 1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.

Academic Measures

The school has presented data from the fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test. Baseline test data from the fall 2000 administration, while incomplete, show that the school enrolled an overall population scoring in the 22nd percentile in reading skills. Growth data drawn from the spring 2001 administration of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test suggest students in the school increased their scores by 12 percentiles based on a same-student analysis of an incomplete sample of students.

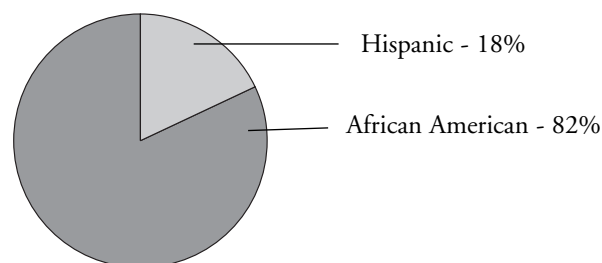
The school also presented baseline scores from the 2000 administration of the 4th Grade State English Language Arts (ELA) Assessment, with 16.7% of students meeting the state standard.

Percentage of students in Community School District 4 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

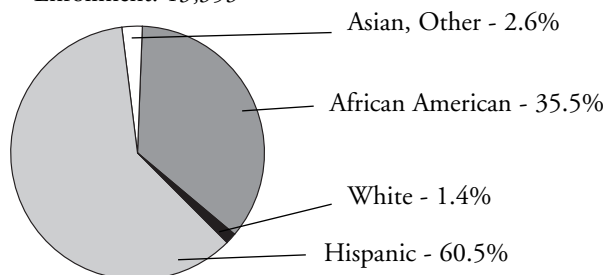
	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	31%	22%
Math:	32%	13%

The Harbor Science and Arts Charter School in East Harlem was founded in 2000 and provides a science and technology-integrated curriculum to its 160 elementary and middle school students.

Harbor
Enrollment: 162 (1-7)



CSD 4
Enrollment: 13,353



Harlem Day Charter School

2253 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10035 212-876-9953

Term of Charter: 2001-2006

Students from Harlem Day Charter School sent letters to the children of Afghanistan, along with \$133 they contributed.

Harlem Day Charter School, approved by the State University Trustees in January 2001 and by the Board of Regents that March, opened September of that year. The school's enrollment is currently 50 students in grades K-1. The school plans to expand by the end of its 5-year charter to 240 students in grades K-5. It is located in Community School District 6.

Harlem Day Charter School offers a back-to-basics academic program, that seamlessly weaves the State learning standards with the Core Knowledge curriculum, while emphasizing reading and writing skills and character development. The school plans to have an English as a Second Language (ESL) program to meet the needs of the student population of the area.

The school is partnered with Sheltering Arms Inc., a community organization with a 178-year history of serving Harlem. Sheltering Arms makes child welfare services available to the school, as well as other support.

Special Populations	Harlem*	CSD 6**
English Language Learners	–	21.6%
Free and Reduced Lunch	86%	92.6%
Special Education Students	4%	10%***

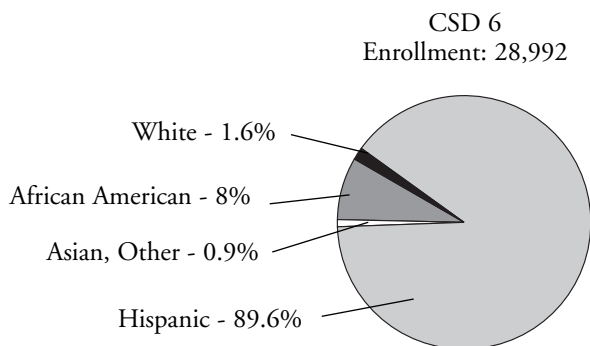
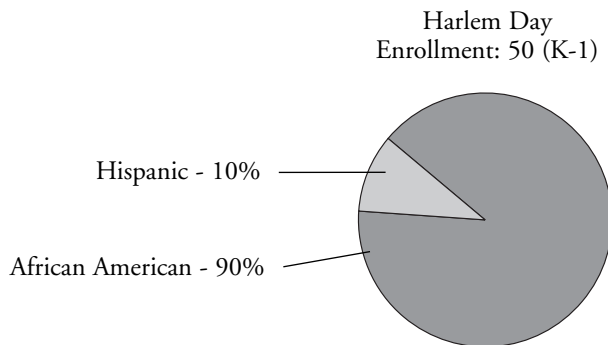
Harlem Day Charter School Average Daily Attendance: 91%

Academic Measures

Currently in its first year of operation, the Harlem Day Charter School has yet to report on standardized testing of its students.

Percentage of students in Community School District 6 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	35.6%	37.9%
Math:	37.9%	17.3%



* Directly reported by the school.
 ** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*
 *** 1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.

John A. Reisenbach Charter School

257 West 117th Street, New York, NY 10026 212-666-3941

Term of Charter: 1999-2004

John A. Reisenbach Charter School was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in July 1999 and by the Board of Regents in August of that year. The school, which opened in September 1999, currently enrolls 275 students in grades 1-2 and 6-7, and plans at the end of its 5-year charter to enroll 600 students in grades K-9. The school is located in Harlem's NYC Community School District 5, which at the time of the school's opening was the worst performing community school district in Manhattan, and 30th out of 32 in New York City.

The school is partnered with The Learning Project, Inc., a not-for-profit organization which is responsible for the day-to-day operations of The Learning Project One Middle School on Manhattan's Lower East Side, whose students outpace students city-wide in math and reading score increases.

John A. Reisenbach Charter School is the namesake of a young New York City man murdered during a random mugging. In his memory, the mission of the school is to develop in the children of New York City the knowledge and habits that are necessary to become citizens of America. It uses the Learning Project's education program which integrates a focus on basic skills and core knowledge with educational methods that emphasize attending to the learning habits and individual learning styles of students.

Learning is enhanced during the Extended Day program, during which children receive academic support and homework help, along with a wide array of enrichment activities.

Special Populations	JAR*	CSD 5**
English Language Learners	7%	8.8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	84%	88%
Special Education Students	7%	10.8%***

Reisenbach Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 91.2%

Academic Measures

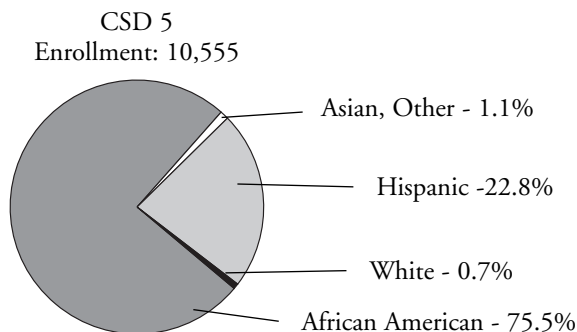
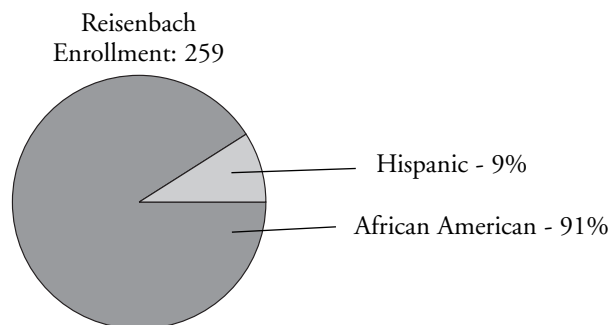
The school has presented data from the 2000 and 2001 administrations of the Iowa Test of Basic skills to 184 students in grades K,1,5 and 6. Baseline test data from the fall and spring administrations show students began

the year with a mean reading score of 37.2 NCEs (approximately the 27th national percentile), a mean language score of 42.4 NCEs (approximately the 35th national percentile), and a mean math score of 43.1 NCEs (approximately the 37th national percentile). Growth data gleaned from same-student analyses of the spring 2001 test administration show that in reading student scores increased by an average of 2.5 NCEs (approximately 4 percentiles nationally), in math by an average of 2.0 NCEs (approximately 4 percentiles nationally), and in language skills by an average of 1.2 NCEs (approximately 3 percentiles nationally).

Percentage of students in Community School District 5 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	25%	19%
Math:	24%	8%

*Reisenbach Charter School Annual Report 2000-01.
 **State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*
 ***1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.



King Center Charter School

938 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY 14211 716-891-7912

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

The King Center Charter School is working with Dr. Frank Wood of the Wake Forest School of Medicine to develop the means to better predict reading ability in order to customize the curriculum to the particular needs of each student.

The King Center Charter School, named after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in April. It opened in the fall of that year. Current enrollment stands at 100 in grades K-4 and will remain there for the remainder of the charter. The school is located on Buffalo's economically distressed East Side, which was designated a federal Enterprise Zone Community in 1994. The school was founded by Dr. Claity Massey, an early childhood educator affiliated with the King Urban Life Center, a social service and community organization that grew out of an effort to save the former St. Mary of Sorrows Church from demolition in the mid 1980s. The school is located in the former church, now an historic landmark.

King Center Charter School uses a holistic model for early childhood development based on Howard Gardner's principles of Multiple Intelligences, with multi-age classrooms and individualized programs for students. Relying on research that shows students lose ground over prolonged school breaks, the school utilizes year-round teaching, with no break longer than three weeks.

Special Populations	King*	Buffalo**
English Language Learners	–	5.8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	81%	83.5%
Special Education Students	11%	16.5%

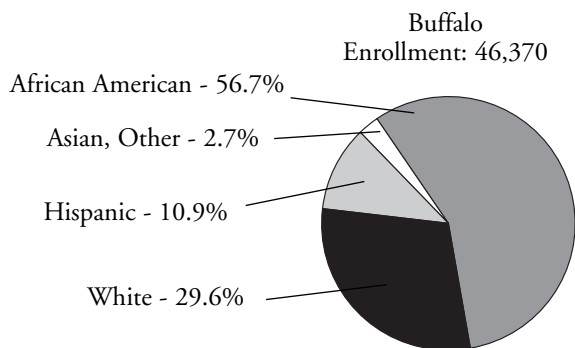
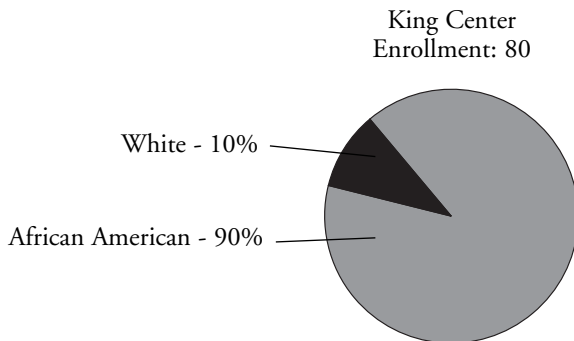
King Center Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 96.7%

Academic Measures

Summary data on students' initial skill levels, as measured by a spring 2001 administration of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills has been presented by the school for students in the second and third grades. The data suggest that the school enrolled a population scoring on average at the 21st national percentile in reading, the 28th national percentile in language and the 22nd national percentile in math.

Percentage of students in the Buffalo School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	33%	23%
Math:	43%	20%



*King Center Charter School Annual Report 2000-01
 **State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

Merrick Academy – Queens Public Charter School

207-01 Jamaica Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11428 718-341-9544

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Merrick Academy – Queens Public Charter School was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in May of that year. The school, which opened in fall 2000, currently enrolls 168 students in grades K-3, and plans to expand by the end of its 5-year charter to 400 students in grades K-6. Queens faces a projected shortage of more than 58,000 classroom seats by 2007. Merrick Academy – Queens Public Charter School provides much-needed classroom space.

The school has contracted with Victory Schools, Inc. for its management. Victory Schools seeks to improve public education by assisting in the start-up and management of public charter schools of outstanding quality, particularly those created to serve at-risk students. Based on the premise that all children can learn, Victory Schools uses an educational program that employs Direct Instruction, Core Knowledge and an extended school day schedule featuring a strong enrichment component based on thematic curricula.

Special Populations	Merrick*	CSD 27**
English Language Learners	–	9.7%
Free and Reduced Lunch	75.2%	83.4%
Special Education Students	6%	12%***

Merrick Academy Public Charter School
Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 92%

Academic Measures

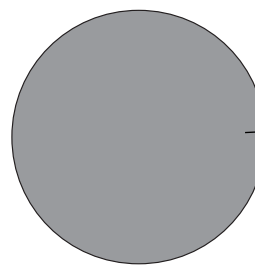
The school has presented data from the fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Iowa Test of Basic skills. Baseline test data from the 2000 administration show the school enrolled an overall population scoring in the 48th percentile in reading comprehension, and the 40th percentile in math, on average. Growth data gleaned from the spring 2001 administration of the same tests show that in reading comprehension, student scores increased by an average of 2.9 NCEs nationally, based on a same-student analysis. In math, students increased their scores by an average of 2.8 NCEs nationally, based on a same-student analysis. In language skills student scores increased by an average of 10.5 NCEs nationally, based on a same-student analysis.

Percentage of students in Community School District 27 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	40%	27%
Math:	49%	14%

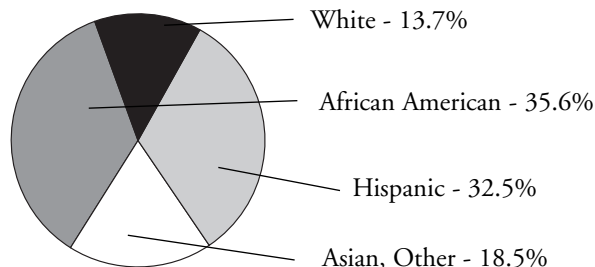
The school opened in temporary space in Springfield Gardens, but for the 2001-02 school year has moved into a newly refurbished facility in Queens Village.

Merrick Enrollment: 125



African American - 100%

CSD 27 Enrollment: 34,839



* Merrick Academy Public Charter School Annual Report 2000-01.

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

*** 1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.

New Covenant Charter School

50 North Lark Street, Albany, NY 12210 518-463-3912

Term of Charter: 1999-2004

Founded by a coalition of community leaders seeking to provide a quality public education alternative for the children and families of Albany, New Covenant Charter School was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in August of 1999 and opened in September of that year. Located in Arbor Hill, New Covenant Charter School currently enrolls 708 students in grades K-7, and plans to expand by the end of its 5-year charter to 900 students in grades K-8.

In its second year, the school contracted with a new administrative partner, Edison Schools, Inc., which has implemented its school design in 136 public schools, including many charter schools, with more than 75,000 students. The Edison model employs separate school academies using a curriculum that includes Direct Instruction, project-

based learning, cooperative learning, and other features. The school received one of the 10 waivers from collective bargaining requirements provided the State University in the Charter Schools Act of 1998.

Eleanor Bartlett, a highly regarded educator, resigned her seat on the State Board of Regents to assume leadership of New Covenant, and immediately implemented such changes as a heightened emphasis on reading and math, and an optional Saturday morning tutorial program.

Special Populations	NC*	Albany**
English Language Learners	–	2.8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	98.5%	70.7%
Special Education Students	6.3%	12%

New Covenant Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 91.6%

Academic Measures

The school has presented data from the fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test to 185 students in grades 2-5, approximately 70% of the school's population at those grade levels. The spring administration of the test revealed a mean increase of 7.7 NCEs over a mean baseline score of 26.2.

This baseline placed the average tested student at the 13th national percentile while the retest indicated improvement to the 23rd national percentile. The school also presented data from fourth grade State Assessments in English Language Arts and Math.

Percentage of New Covenant students who met state standards on the 2000 and 2001 4th Grade State Tests:

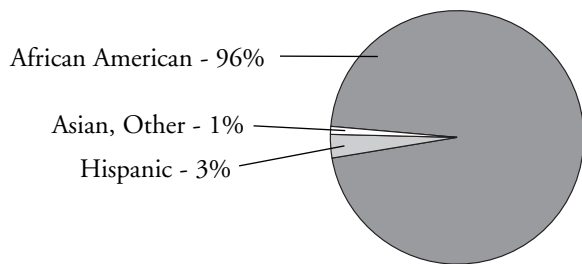
	ELA	Math
2000	9	3
2001	22.2	21.7

While these scores represent the achievement of two different groups of students, the dramatic increase in the number of students meeting the state standards on the 2001 test compared to the 2000 test may indicate significant progress by the school.

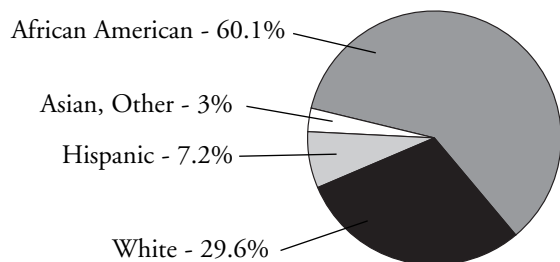
Percentage of students in the Albany School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	43%	28%
Math:	53%	33%

New Covenant Enrollment: 380 (K-6)



Albany Enrollment: 10,132



*New Covenant Charter School Annual Report 2000-01.
 ** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

Rochester Leadership Academy Charter School

82 St. Paul Street, Rochester, NY 14604 585-454-5000

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Rochester Leadership Academy Charter School was approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2000 and by the Board of Regents in April of that year. The school, which opened fall 2000, currently enrolls 340 students in grades K-8, and plans to expand to 648 students by the end of its 5-year charter. It occupies the first three floors of an office building in downtown Rochester, sharing the building with professional tenants.

Based on a belief that a child's self-esteem is developed through diligence and achievement, the school's founders sought to create a school that provides an orderly environment with high academic and social expectations, and in which parents play a key role in helping the school to achieve its mission.

The school has contracted with National Heritage Academies to oversee its management. National Heritage Academies, which has a network of 28 schools in Michigan, North Carolina and New York educating 13,940 students, uses a well-known and highly regarded curriculum, including Core Knowledge, Open Court, and Saxon Math, as well as a character development component. The school's governance structure includes a School Leadership team consisting of parent chairs of nine school committees who report to the school's board of trustees.

Special Populations	RLA*	Rochester**
English Language Learners	–	8.1%
Free and Reduced Lunch	62%	93.4%
Special Education Students	8.3%	14.4%

Rochester Leadership Academy Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 87.8%

Academic Measures

The school has presented data from the fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Metropolitan Achievement Test. Baseline test data from the fall 2000 administration show that the school enrolled an overall population scoring in the 39th percentile in reading comprehension, and the 32nd percentile in math, on average.

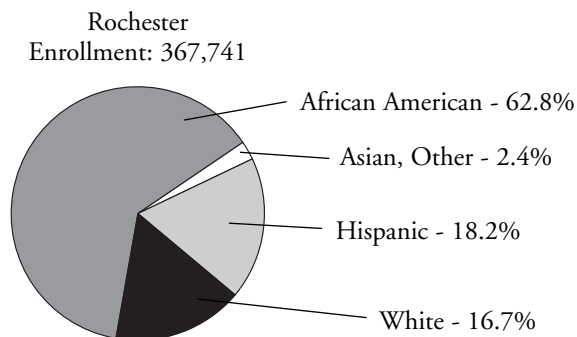
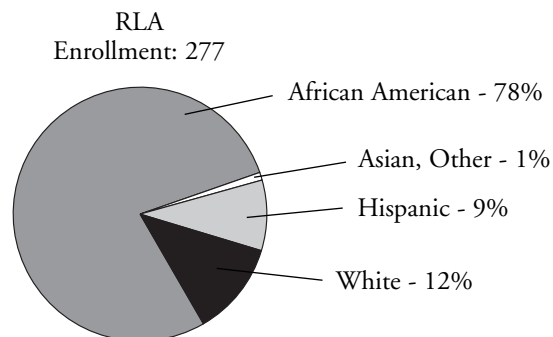
Percentage of students at RLA who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade
English:	19.5%
Math:	27.3%

Percentage of students in the Rochester School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	37%	27%
Math:	38%	12%

Students organized a food drive for Food Link, a local organization that assists families in need.



* Rochester Leadership Academy Charter School Annual Report 2000-01

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools*: Submitted June 2001.

Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School

105 Pleasant Avenue, Roosevelt, NY 11575 516-867-6202

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Students, teachers, and parents created a W.T.C. Relief Fund, and organized such fundraisers as the "Night of Fun and Hope" at the school.

Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School was approved by the State University Trustees in January 2000 and opened in September of that year. The school currently enrolls 150 students in grades 1-3, and plans to expand to 347 students in grades K-6 by the end of its 5-year charter.

Members of the Roosevelt community felt a great need for a public education alternative to the Roosevelt School District, which a state law placed under special supervision of the State Education Department for the last five years.

The school contracted with Victory Schools, Inc. for its management. The Victory Schools' curriculum is built on the principle that all children can learn and integrates the Core Knowledge academic program with Direct Instruction, and state standards. For the 2000-2001 academic year, Roosevelt

Children's Academy Charter School has moved to a newly constructed modular facility on Pleasant Avenue in Roosevelt.

Special Populations	RCA*	RSD**
English Language Learners	3%	8.4%
Free and Reduced Lunch	67.5%	62.1%
Special Education Students	2.8%	11.5%

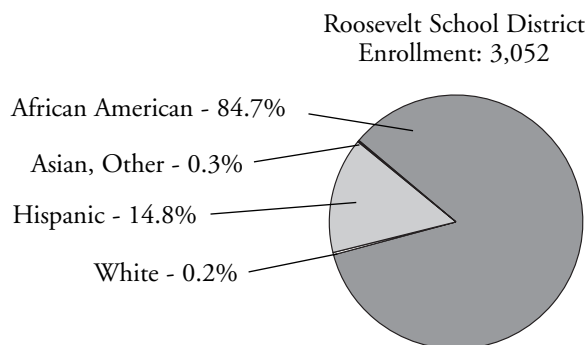
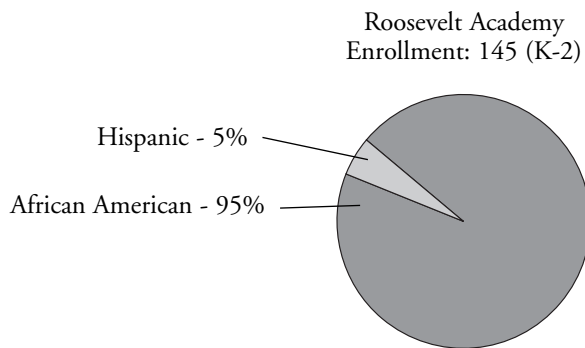
Roosevelt Academy Public Charter School
Average Daily Attendance: 92.6%

Academic Measures

The school has presented data from fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Iowa Test of Basic skills. Baseline test data from the fall 2000 administration show the school enrolled an overall population scoring in the 20th percentile in reading comprehension, and the 18th percentile in math, on average. Growth data gleaned from the spring 2001 administration of the same tests show that in reading comprehension, student scores increased by an average of 15.2 NCEs, based on a same-student analysis. In math, students increased their scores by an average of 17.2 NCEs, and in language skills increased by an average of 17.5 NCEs.

Percentage of students in the Roosevelt School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	48%	11%
Math:	63%	2%



*Roosevelt Children's Academy Public Charter School Annual Report 2000-01

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

Sisulu Children's Academy – Harlem Public Charter School

125 West 115th Street, and 441 Manhattan Avenue, Block 1945, New York, NY 10026 212-663-8216

Term of Charter: 1999-2004

The Sisulu Children's Academy – Harlem Public Charter School approved by the State University Board of Trustees in July of 1999 and by the Board of Regents in August, opened that month. The school's current enrollment stands at 294 in grades 1-4, and it plans to add one grade level and enroll 75-100 more students each year of its 5-year charter.

The school's founders sought to provide a quality public education alternative for one of the poorest areas in Manhattan – the school is located in Community School District 5, at the time of the school's opening the worst performing community school district in Manhattan, and 30th out of 32 in New York City. The school is located in two facilities in Harlem. Grades K-2 are located in a facility on 155th Street. Grades 3 and 4 are housed in the Police Athletic League (PAL) Facility located on Manhattan Avenue.

The school has contracted with Victory Schools, Inc. for its management. Victory Schools seeks to improve public education by assisting in the start-up and management of public charter schools of outstanding quality, particularly those created to serve at-risk students. Built on the premise that all children can learn, Victory Schools uses an educational program that employs Direct Instruction, Core Knowledge and an extended school day schedule featuring a strong enrichment component based on thematic curricula.

Special Populations	Sisulu*	CSD 5**
English Language Learners	.6%	8.8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	91%	88%
Special Education Students	5.8%	10.8%***

Sisulu Children's Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 90.4%

Academic Measures

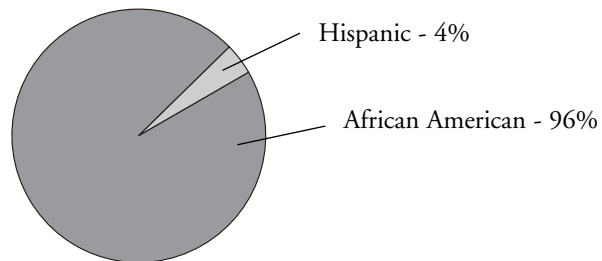
The school has presented data from the fall 2000 and spring 2001 administrations of the Iowa Test of Basic skills to 215 students in grades K-3. Baseline test data from the fall 2000 administration show students began the year with a mean reading score of 41.6 NCEs (approximately the 35th national percentile), a mean language score of

34 NCEs (approximately the 22nd national percentile), and a mean math score of 33.3 NCEs (approximately the 21st national percentile). Growth data gleaned from same-student analyses of the spring 2001 test administration show that in reading, student scores increased by an average of 3.4 NCEs (approximately 5 percentiles nationally), in math by an average of 8.8 NCEs (approximately 12 percentiles nationally), and in language skills by an average of 7.7 NCEs (approximately 14 percentiles nationally).

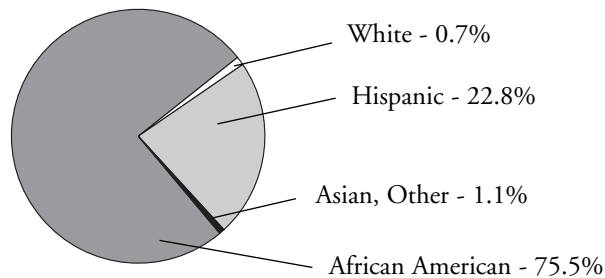
Percentage of students in Community School District 5 who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	25%	19%
Math:	24%	8%

Sisulu Enrollment: 325



CSD 5 Enrollment: 10,555



* Sisulu Children's Charter School Annual Report 2000-01.

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*

*** 1999-00 Annual School Report of the New York City Board of Education.

South Buffalo Charter School

2219 South Park Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14220 716-826-7213

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Third, fourth and fifth grade students signed a smoke-free pledge, called "2Smart2Start." The program, sponsored by Universal Healthcare, seeks to prevent first-time smokers.

South Buffalo Charter School was approved by the State University Trustees in January 2000 and opened in September of that year. The school currently enrolls 305 students in grades K-5 and plans to grow to 650 students in grades K-8 by the end of its 5-year charter. The school is housed in a former public elementary school, and shares the facility with a senior citizens center.

South Buffalo Charter School's application resulted from a desire by local residents to create public school choice and increase educational opportunities in the City of Buffalo. The city's magnet schools have waiting lists of five students for each available seat, demonstrating a citywide desire for additional public school opportunities.

The school's mission is to educate each child in a challenging learning environment that links character education with an individualized learning plan and technology. To oversee its management the school contracted

with Beacon Education Management, Inc., which has merged with another education management company, becoming Chancellor Beacon Academies of Miami. The company is the nation's second-largest educational-management firm, serving 19,000 students from pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 at 81 schools in eight states and the District of Columbia. Beacon features the Lightpoints standards and curricula, which includes Core Knowledge.

Special Populations	So.Buff.*	Buffalo**
English Language Learners	—	5.8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	70%	83.5%
Special Education Students	13%	16.5%

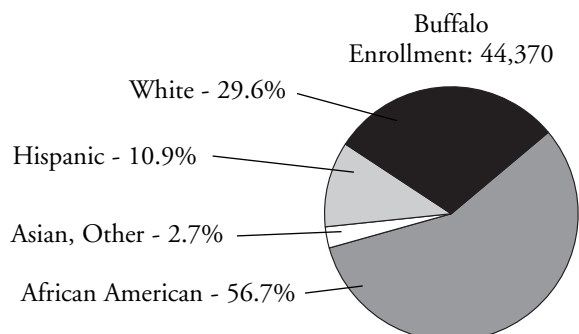
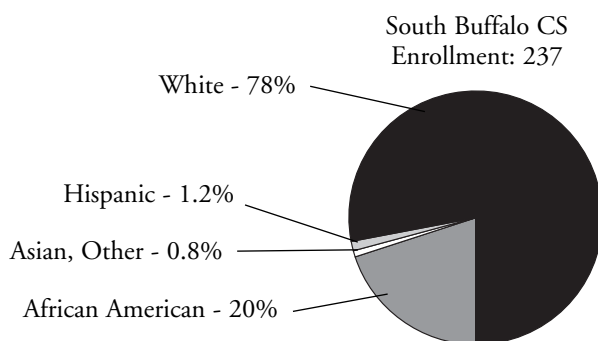
South Buffalo Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 83.6%

Academic Measures

The school presented baseline data from the fourth grade State Assessments in English Language Arts and Math. The following percentages of students at South Buffalo Charter School met state standards on the 2001 state tests: 4th Grade English Language Arts: 56.5%; 4th Grade Math: 45.4%

Percentage of students in the Buffalo School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	33%	23%
Math:	43%	20%



* South Buffalo Charter School Annual Report 2000-01
 ** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools*: Submitted June 2001.

Stepping Stone Academy Charter School

909 East Ferry Street, Buffalo, NY 14211 716-895-5766

Term of Charter: 2000-2005

Stepping Stone Academy Charter School, approved by the State University Board of Trustees in January 2001 and by the Board of Regents in March, opened in September of that year. The school currently enrolls 300 students in grades K-5, and plans to grow to 700 students in grades K-8 by the end of its 5-year charter. The school is housed in a facility that once served as a neighborhood supermarket.

Stepping Stone Academy Charter School was established for students at-risk of academic failure in Buffalo. The school has contracted for management services with Edison Schools, Inc. which has implemented its school design in 136 public schools, including many charter schools, with more than 75,000 students. The Edison model employs separate school academies using a curriculum that includes Direct Instruction, project-based learning, cooperative learning, and other features.

Special Populations	StepStone*	Buffalo**
English Language Learners	—	5.8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	82%	83.5%
Special Education Students	10%	16.5%

Stepping Stone Academy Charter School
Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 95%

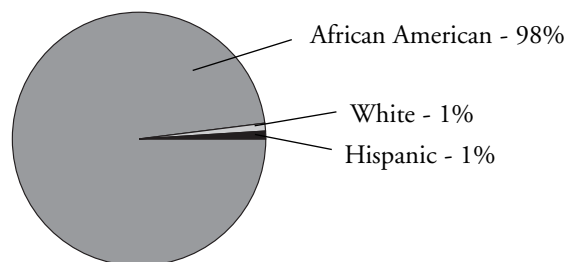
Academic Measures

Currently in its first year of operation, Stepping Stone Charter School has yet to report on standardized testing of its students.

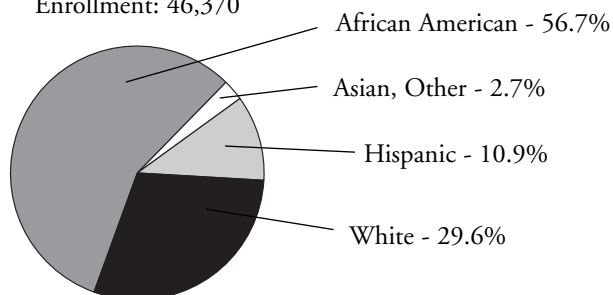
Percentage of students in the Buffalo School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	33%	23%
Math:	43%	20%

Stepping Stone Academy
Enrollment: 300 (K-5)



Buffalo
Enrollment: 46,370



*As reported by school.

**State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools*: Submitted June 2001.

Tapestry Charter School

40 North Street, Buffalo, NY 14202 716-332-0754

Term of Charter: 2001-2006

Tapestry Charter School students publish their own student newspaper, with faculty and administrator interviews and recipes from the cooks.

The Tapestry Charter School offers small, multi-age classrooms where students are given many opportunities for self-directed learning. Upon arrival students participate in independent learning activities. Each class holds a daily Morning Meeting designed to teach social and emotional skills as well as introduce new academic material.

The school's literacy program makes balanced use of phonics and literature-based approaches. Some of the materials used in the Language Arts and Math Curricula integrate intellectual, ethical and social development. The math program focuses on developing "number sense" and collaboration skills to the mastery of core concepts, with significant use of hands-on practice and "real life" applications to make math more practical for students.

Arts education, a key component to the curriculum, is offered daily. All students participate in Art, Music, Dance, Spanish and Physical Education two times a week.

Parent involvement at the school is significant and ranges from daily support in the classroom to organizing Friday afternoon clubs. The Tapestry Charter School Community Association has been formed with a parent-elected board of trustees.

Special Populations	Tapestry*	Buffalo**
English Language Learners	2%	5.8%
Free and Reduced Lunch	18%	83.5%
Special Education Students	4%	16.5%

Tapestry Charter School Average Daily Attendance in 2000-01: 97%

Academic Measures

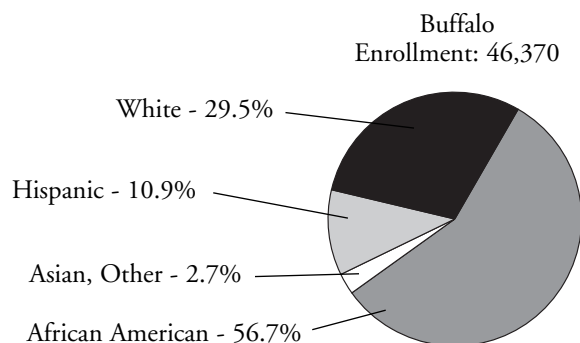
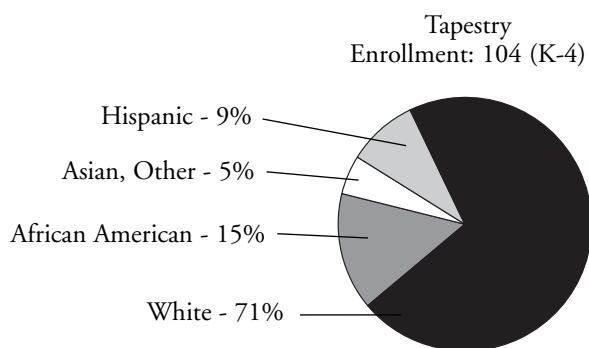
The Tapestry Charter School measures student achievement with The Work Sampling System, a self-assessed performance-based diagnostic tool. Students took the State 4th Grade English Language Arts Test in January, and will take the Math Test in March. Nationally-normed standardized tests will be administered later this year.

Percentage of students in the Buffalo School District who met state standards on the 2000 State Tests:

	4th Grade	8th Grade
English:	33%	23%
Math:	43%	20%

* As reported by school.

** State Education Department, *A Report to the Governor and The Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools: Submitted June 2001.*



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