



Charter Schools Report



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Executive Summary

The Washington State's Charter School Act ([RCW 28A.710](#)) was enacted on April 3, 2016 for the primary purpose of allowing flexibility to innovate in areas such as scheduling, personnel, funding, and educational programs to improve student outcomes and academic achievement of "at-risk" student populations¹. A Washington charter school is a public school that is not a common school: a public alternative to traditional common schools. The first public charter schools began operating in Washington in 2014 and then again under the Charter School Act in the fall 2016. The State Board of Education (SBE) issues an annual report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the public, in accordance with [RCW 28A.710.250](#).

The statute requires the annual charter school report to include the following.

- The performance of the state's charter schools during the preceding school year, including a comparison of the performance of charter school students with the performance of academically, ethnically, and economically comparable groups of students in traditional public schools² (TPS),
- The SBE's assessment of the successes, challenges, and areas for improvement in meeting the purposes of the Washington Charter Public Schools Act (RCW 28A.710), including the Board's assessment of the sufficiency of funding for charter schools, the efficacy of the formula for authorizer funding, and
- Any suggested changes in state law or policy necessary to strengthen the state's charter schools.

Key Findings on the Academic Performance of Charter Schools

The academic performance of charter school students in comparison to TPS students has been an interest to academicians, educators, policymakers, and the public for more than 30 years. Like traditional public school students, the academic achievement of charter school students varies considerably across the nation, from state to state, by school level, by presence and nature of a

¹ RCW 28A.710.010 defines an "at-risk student" as one who has an academic or economic disadvantage that requires assistance or special services to succeed in educational programs. The term includes, but is not limited to, students who do not meet minimum standards of academic proficiency, students who are at risk of dropping out of high school, students in chronically low-performing schools, students with higher than average disciplinary sanctions, students with lower participation rates in advanced or gifted programs, students who are limited in English proficiency, students who are members of economically disadvantaged families, and students who are identified as having special educational needs.

² Traditional public school (TPS) students are those students whose primary school assignment is a public common school and who were not enrolled in a charter public school at any time during the year. The TPS abbreviation is that which is most commonly used in educational research differentiating between charter schools and non-charter schools.

management organization, and results differ for specific student groups. On average, the [evidence](#) from a myriad of studies indicates no difference in achievement on tests between students who attend a charter school and those who attend a TPS (Appendix A).

Overall, students attending Washington charter schools perform similar to or a little better than similar students attending traditional public schools. In addition, charter school students identifying as Black or African Americans, students who are English learners, and students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program (FRL) outperform their matched TPS peers.

The key findings listed below reflect data for the charter schools operating in the 2021-22 school year based on the spring 2022 statewide assessment administration, the winter 2023 Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF), the Washington State Report Card, and other publicly available data sources.

- For the most part, charter schools continue to serve higher percentages of systemically marginalized students as compared to the home school districts.
- Students at charter schools are more apt to have a teacher who is:
 - a. a person of color,
 - b. more apt to be less experienced, and
 - c. more likely to be teaching out of endorsement.
- On average, the charter schools' Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF) scores are similar to the average WSIF score for the state.
- Official graduation rates were reportable for five of the six charter schools issuing diplomas in 2022. The OSPI is expected to correct the graduation rates for two charter schools with erroneously low graduation rates in a report to the Commission. Among the other three charter schools with reportable graduation rates, the rates for two charter schools were similar to the state average and the rate for one charter school was a little higher than the state rates.
- On the spring 2022 statewide assessments, students at some charter schools performed a little better than or similar to students at the home school districts, depending on the content area assessed. In some cases, the charter school student performance was a little lower than the home school district.
- Based on the matched peers comparison using the spring 2022 statewide assessments, charter school students performed a little better than their TPS peer group on four of the six measures and similar to TPS students on two of the six measures.
- The percentage of charter school students regularly attending school is a lower than the rate for the students in the home school districts.
- The percentage of first time, 9th grade, charter school students who earned credit for all courses attempted (9th Graders On-Track) is a little higher than the rate for the students in the home school districts.

- The percentage of charter school students participating in dual credit courses is considerably lower than the rate for the students in the home school districts.

Key Developments Charter Schools

The Washington State Charter School Commission (CSC or Commission) and Spokane Public Schools (Spokane PS) continue as the only charter school authorizers in the state. The two authorizers oversaw 16 charter public schools operating in Washington during the 2021-22 school year. Total charter public school enrollment increased to 4,642 K-12 students in the 2021-22 school year from 3,712 students enrolled in public charter schools for the 2020-21 school year.

Spokane Public Schools and the SBE executed a new charter school authorizer agreement effective October 1, 2022. With the new agreement, Spokane PS will serve as a charter school authorizer for a six-year term, continuing through September 30, 2028.

Since the 2016 passage of the Charter School Act, 24 charter schools have been authorized for operations. Of those, 21 opened and as of the 2022-23 school year, 16 are currently operating, two approved schools will open in the fall 2023, five charter schools were opened and subsequently closed, and one school chose to re-open as a tuition-free private school).

In April 2021, the timeframe for approval of new public charter schools ended. During the 2021 and 2022 legislative sessions, the SBE supported legislation to extend the time in which to approve additional charter public schools. If either effort had been successful, the timeframe for establishing up to 40 total charter schools would have been extended by five years. No new charter schools can be authorized until the legislature passes and the Governor signs into law legislation authorizing as much.

The Washington Legislature approved and the Governor signed a budget in the 2022 legislative session that included enrichment funding for certain charter public school students. This one-time funding for the 2022-23 school year is limited to small school districts, tribal compact schools, and charter public schools that have less than 800 students, are in urban or suburban areas, and have less than \$18,000 per pupil in budgeted expenditures for the 2021-22 school year. The Washington Charter Schools Association estimates that this provision will provide approximately \$6.5 million in additional public funds for charter public schools in the 2022-23 school year.

In spring 2022, the Washington State Auditor's Office released a report and findings regarding the employment of non-certificated educators at three charter schools affiliated with the Summit Public Schools charter management organization in the 2019-20 school year. Later in spring 2022, a journalist at a local radio station released a multi-part series featuring parental complaints on the delivery of special education services and bilingual education services at charter schools affiliated with the Impact Public Schools charter management organization. The Charter School Commission opened inquiries with both Summit Public Schools and Impact Public Schools regarding these findings or allegations. The Commission required Summit Public

Schools to put a Corrective Action Plan in place, and renewed Summit Atlas for only a two-year period with conditions instead of the usual five-year period. The Commission renewed Impact Puget Sound Elementary for only a two-year period, instead of the usual five-year period, and required the school to develop a plan for special education improvement.

Representatives Rude, Santos, Schmidt, and Pollet introduced HB 1744 in the 2023 legislative session clarifying the responsibilities and accountability for the effective delivery and oversight of public education services to charter school students. The legislation was passed off the House floor on March 6 and sent to the Senate for further consideration. In the Senate, the bill passed out of the Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education on March 27 and a public hearing was held on March 31st in the Senate Committee on Ways & Means. The Bill is scheduled for executive session on April 4 in the Senate Committee on Ways & Means. HB 1774 was passed off the Senate floor with a unanimous vote on April 12, but because the Senate amended the bill, the bill will be sent back to the House for concurrence.

Near the end of January 2023, SB 5648 was introduced at the legislative session. The bill would have allowed charter school and tribal school local education agencies to apply for waivers currently available to traditional public school districts from the provisions of RCW 28A.150.200 through 28A.150.220 because the charter schools and tribal schools are classified as Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), not school districts. Such waivers are deemed necessary to successfully implement a local plan to provide for all students in the district an effective education system that is designed to enhance the educational program for each student. The bill would have authorized the SBE to grant waivers to state-tribal education compact schools and charter public schools from the provisions of RCW 28A.150.220(3)(b), which is described as instruction providing students the opportunity to complete twenty-four credits for high school graduation. The bill was passed off the Senate floor on February 28 and sent to the House for further consideration. SB 5648 received a public hearing on March 6, was scheduled for an Executive Session on March 16, but no action was taken in the House Committee on Education and the bill is now considered dead.

Key Developments - Charter School Commission

In the summer after the 2020-21 school year, the Executive Director of the CSC departed the agency. The search for a new Executive Director concluded in February 2023 when Ms. Jessica Barros assumed the role of Executive Director after one year serving as interim. A key focus for the new Executive Director has been to partner with other entities to broaden awareness of the Commission's oversight and accountability role. To that end, the Commission has refreshed various channels of information, including its website, and created [graphics](#) intended to strengthen understanding of Washington's system of charter school oversight. The Commission initiated and/or maintained regular meetings with the State Auditor's Office, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Board of Education, and Washington State Charter Schools Association, is communicating regularly with legislators and the Governor's Office.

Commission staff continued their professional development for quality charter authorizing by participating in trainings with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) and the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA). Other CSC developments include the following:

- 14 CSC authorized charter schools were in operation for the entire 2021-22 school year.
- In March and April 2022, the Commission granted two schools (Impact | Black River and Rooted Schools) an additional planning year, which resulted in an anticipated opening in the fall 2023.
- The Commission completed a renewal process for two schools.
 - Rainier Valley Leadership Academy was renewed for a full five (5) years.
 - Summit Atlas was renewed for two years with conditions.
- In 2021-22, the Commission's portfolio of schools served approximately 3,900 students.
- Sixteen CSC authorized charter schools are expected to be in operation for the 2023-24 school year.

Key Developments - Spokane Public Schools

During the 2021-22 school year, two district-authorized charter schools were in operation. These schools were subject to oversight from the district and the OSPI.

- Spokane PS reported that PRIDE Prep continued to have challenges meeting financial performance indicators. Corrective action plans and increased monitoring continued throughout the 2021-22 school year, which was the school's first year of a three-year conditional renewal. PRIDE Prep has taken specific steps toward addressing areas of concern and is currently working closely with the Spokane PS Authorizer to improve areas of academic and financial concern.
- Lumen Charter High School opened in the fall of 2020 for the 2020-21 school year. Given the remote learning due to COVID in the 2020-21 school year, the 2021-22 school year was the school's first year of year-round in-person instruction. During the 2021-22 school year, Spokane PS worked with Lumen on how to best measure effectiveness considering their unique mission of serving students who are or are become parents. The school created strong community partnerships in support of students and built up social and emotional learning strategies to keep students engaged and attending school.

The Spokane charter school authorizer staff strengthened their understanding of quality charter authorizing by participating in professional development trainings, and by partnering with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) and the Washington Charter Schools Association (WA Charters) to create a collaborative spirit with charter operators. The authorizer invested in the Charter Tools monitoring system to track the progress of each of the Spokane PS charter schools.

Spokane PS contends that, "...we [Spokane PS] still have much to learn about high quality charter authorizing, we are committed to learning and leading the state as a district authorizer. We are committed to only authorizing schools, which we believe will uphold our vision for

excellence and have every intention of following proven and best practices for quality authorizing.”

Beginning in the 2021-22 fiscal year, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) made effective a new reporting requirement (GASB 87), whereby governmental organizations (including charter schools) are required a change in reporting of operating leases. This new accounting standard implemented in 2021-22 requires the capitalization of the net present value of each school’s facilities lease, and for that amount to be presented as long-term debt on the F-196 Annual Financial Statement. The capitalization of each district’s facilities lease caused charter schools’ debt to asset ratios to be higher than the ratio specified in the benchmark. This has greatly affected the long-term debt reported by charter schools.

In Spokane, both PRIDE and Lumen are not meeting their debt to asset ratio financial performance benchmarks. Both schools are aware of and actively working toward having 60 or more days cash on hand, another financial benchmark in the authorizers’ framework. Additional funding for school facility construction or acquisition would support a more equitable funding system for charter public schools and charter public school fiscal stability.

Key Findings on the Analysis of Funding Efficacy

A brief review of school and district revenues and expenditures might give the casual reader the impression that charter schools have substantially greater per student revenues than the home school districts, but this ignores key differences in how the costs are accounted for. Charter schools often seek out and receive significant grants to support start-up expenses, typically available for only a few years at most and often for a specific purpose. Operating costs for charter schools generally include expenses that would be part of the capital budget for a TPS. For example, grant funds are often used to acquire space, renovate buildings, purchase required school furnishings, and these monies are included in charter school per student revenues but generally would not be included for a TPS. In addition, the charter schools are not eligible to receive local levy funding. **Overall and when one-time grant monies are removed from the analysis, charter schools receive lower revenues from state and local sources than the home school districts.**

- The average total salary for charter school instructional staff is substantially lower than the salary allocation from the state.
- The average total salary for charter school instructional staff is substantially lower than the average total salary paid by the home school district.
- The state apportionment is similar for the charter school LEAs and the home school districts, but one-half of the charter school LEAs receive a lower state apportionment than the home school district.
- The average support from the Local and Other revenue source is approximately \$1,825 per student for the home school districts and is approximately \$95 per student for the charter school LEAs.

Recommendations

In January 2021, the Board approved changes to Chapter 180-19 WAC to align rule to current policy or practice, correct references to law, improve readability of the rule, align rule to SBE's recommendations in the annual charter school report, and make other changes identified by staff in collaboration with authorizers. As adopted, the final rules streamline the application process for authorizers, transition to a performance-based authorizer fee structure, and adjust reporting dates to align with recent legislation.

The [National Alliance for Public Charter Schools](#) ranks the Washington Charter School Act as one of the strongest in the nation, but highlights two major weaknesses. First, the law includes a cap of 40 charter schools over the first five years after enactment of the Charter School Act. The window to authorize new charter schools closed in April 2021 and therefore, no new schools may be authorized without a change to the law. Second, Washington law codifies inequitable funding for students in public charter schools. These two weaknesses are central to this year's recommendations.

Authorizing Additional Charter Schools

Since the enactment of the 2016 Charter School Act, new charter schools opened in each school year. In addition, the Commission reports that approximately 1,200 students are on waiting lists to enroll in charter schools across the state. This is evidence that parents or guardians continue to seek out alternatives to traditional public schools to find the best educational fit for their children. The Charter School Act allowed for the authorization of up to 40 schools within the first five years of the Act. After a handful of charter schools closed in the previous years, 16 charter schools are operating in the 2022-23 school year. Since the enactment of the Charter School Act, the count of operating charter schools steadily increased, while remaining well below the cap of 40 schools authorized in statute.

During the 2021 and 2022 legislative sessions, legislation was introduced that would have extended the timeframe for establishing up to 40 total charter schools by another five years but the bills were unsuccessful. No bills have been introduced in the 2023 legislative session that would extend or reopen the authorization window. No additional charter schools will be approved or authorized unless the Legislature and the Governor pass and approve legislation to do so.

RECOMMENDATION 1: The SBE and CSC recommend that the window for authorization be extended to allow additional charter schools, up to 40 total, to operate in Washington.

Funding of Charter Schools

The SBE finds that charter schools face unique challenges with regard to funding due to lack of access to public funding for capital and lower appropriation per student due to a lack of access to local funding. The CSC continues to advocate for more equitable student apportionment and access to public funding for capital expenditures to ensure the sustainability of charter schools over time.

The SBE supports equitable funding for all Washington students in public schools. When the school apportionment model fails to include locally sourced levy funding for charter schools, charter school funding differs from and is lower than the funding of traditional public schools.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The SBE recommends a close examination of the sufficiency of charter school funding and approaches used in other states in order to bring about equitable educational funding for all students.

Authorizer Oversight Fees and Usage

Another focus of recommendations over the last two years centers on authorizer oversight fees. In January 2021, the SBE finalized rules authorizing the SBE to adjust the authorizer oversight fee rate in consultation with the charter school authorizers. After consulting with authorizers, the SBE set the authorizer oversight fee rate at three percent for the 2021-22 school year.

While consulting with charter school authorizers, three additional issues arose regarding the authorizer oversight fees. The legislature could consider taking action to address the three issues briefly described below.

- Issue 1: What changes would be necessary for authorizers to use the authorizer oversight fees for purposes other than those specified in statute, provided the other purposes directly benefit the charter schools under its authority?
- Issue 2: When a charter school contract is transferred from one authorizer to another, what changes would be necessary for the originating authorizer to transfer all or a portion of unused authorizer fees to the receiving authorizer?
- Issue 3: The oversight fee is an expenditure unique to the charter schools that is diverted from the state apportionment. It would be more equitable if the charter schools were to receive the full apportionment for its students and the authorizers receive their authorizer fees directly through a state funding appropriation.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Explore options to create more flexibility in the use of authorizer fees and/or direct appropriation to cover charter school oversight costs.

Other Recommendations

- SBE recently hired a temporary contractor to review of all of WAC 180-19. The purpose of the review is to identify opportunities to clarify and streamline the WAC to ensure it aligns with current RCW and practice, and to remove unnecessary timelines and steps for approval and monitoring.
- School district apportionment provides lower payments in the months that levy dollars are received by traditional districts. Given charter schools do not receive levy dollars this creates cash flow challenges in those months. The SBE and Spokane PS recommend evaluation and adjustment of the payment schedule to address cash flow challenges.
- Beginning in the 2021-22 fiscal year, GASB requires the capitalization of the net present value of each school's facilities lease, and for that amount to be presented as long-term debt on the F-196. The capitalization of Spokane's charter schools' facilities lease caused the schools' debt to asset ratios to be higher than the ratio specified in the charter school financial performance benchmark. However, charter schools budget for lease obligations annually and in multi-year forecasting. We recommend additional funding for school facility construction or acquisition, as this would greatly assist with charter school fiscal stability.

Introduction

Legislative Authority

RCW 28A.710.250 (1) directs the State Board of Education (SBE) to issue a report on the performance of the state's charter schools. RCW 28A.710.250(2) stipulates that the annual report must be based on the reports submitted by each authorizer as well as any additional relevant data compiled by the State Board of Education. Information from the authorizer reports is incorporated into this SBE annual report. The charter school authorizer annual reports are accessible [on SBE's website](#). Legislation in 2020 (HB 2853) changed the reporting timeline such that the final report is now due on March 1 of each year for the report covering the prior school year.

The Charter School Commission and Spokane Public Schools submitted authorizer reports to the SBE in February 2023 in compliance with RCW 28A.710. As specified in the authorizing legislation, the SBE used the authorizer reports and additional relevant data compiled by the SBE to complete this sixth annual report of the performance of the charter schools.

In addition to this short introduction and appended materials, the SBE's sixth annual report is divided into several sections, and collectively, the sections address the three reporting requirements specified in statute.

- I. The performance of the state's charter schools during the preceding school year, including a comparison of the performance of charter school students with the performance of academically, ethnically, and economically comparable groups of students in other public schools,
- II. The State Board of Education's assessment of the successes, challenges, and areas for improvement in meeting the purposes of the Washington Charter Public Schools Act (RCW 28A.710), including the Board's assessment of the sufficiency of funding for charter schools, the efficacy of the formula for authorizer funding, and
- III. Any suggested changes in state law or policy necessary to strengthen the state's charter schools.

The 2020-21 statewide assessment administration was conducted in fall 2021 to meet the U. S. Department of Education requirement for a spring 2021 assessment. The spring 2022 statewide assessment was administered under a normal testing window and under normal conditions. For the purposes of this report, we refer to the assessment based on when it was administered, fall 2021 or spring 2022. Under this assessment administration plan, most students sat for the assessment for the grade level they were enrolled in for the 2020-21 school year in fall 2021, and sat again for a second summative assessment in the spring 2022 corresponding to their current grade level (Table 1). In the 2021-22 school year, most students sat for two statewide assessments at different grade levels. Both the fall 2021 and spring 2022 assessments align to a shortened blueprint in comparison to the regular Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) last administered in the spring 2019.

Table 1: shows the grade level statewide summative assessments administered to students in the fall 2021 and spring 2022.

Grade Level 2021-22 School Year	Fall 2021 Assessed Grade	Spring 2022 Assessed Grade
3 rd Grade	None	3 rd Grade
4 th Grade	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade
5 th Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade
6 th Grade	5 th Grade	6 th Grade
7 th Grade	6 th Grade	7 th Grade
8 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
9 th Grade	8 th Grade	None
10 th Grade	None	HS Test (10 th Grade)
11 th Grade	HS Test (10 th Grade)	HS Test (10 th Grade)

The SBE is directed in RCW 28A.710.250 to issue the annual report on the performance of the state’s charter schools during the preceding year, meaning that this report is to elaborate on the academic performance of the charter schools operating during the 2021-22 school year. Both the fall 2021 and spring 2022 statewide assessments were administered during the 2021-22 school year, but the focus of this report is on the spring 2022 administration because we feel these results better reflect student achievement.

We are compelled to highlight several factors or issues regarding the fall 2021 statewide assessment, which might lead one to question the comparability of the outcomes to those from prior administrations.

- Off-grade testing is typically appropriate for individual students on a case-by-case basis, but is not routinely done for a statewide student population. The year-to-year comparability of the results are suspect.
- The assessments align to a shortened blueprint that do not contain the same elements as the previously administered Smarter Balanced Assessments. The Smarter Balanced Consortia is conducting psychometric analyses of the new blueprint.
- Participation rates for the fall 2021 assessments were significantly lower than previous administrations, which leads one to suspect the year-to-year comparability of the results.

Notwithstanding these limitations, assessing twice in the same school year (near the beginning and near the end of a school year) provides a unique opportunity to analyze the learning in one school year, without having to consider summer learning loss.

Charter Schools in Washington

Charter School Act

Washington State's Charter School Act ([RCW 28A.710](#)) was enacted in 2013 and later updated in 2016. Charter schools are common schools that are part of the general and uniform system of public schools provided by the Legislature as required by Article IX, section 2 of the state Constitution. A charter school authorizer must approve charter schools before commencing operation. The Washington State Charter School Commission (CSC) has the authority to authorize charter schools throughout the state. In addition, school districts may apply to the State Board of Education (SBE) to become a charter school authorizer for schools within their district. Spokane Public Schools (Spokane PS) is the only school district approved by the SBE to authorize additional charter schools. The Act provided for the establishment of up to 40 charter schools through April 2021. Just like traditional common schools, charter schools in Washington are tuition-free, accessible-to-all, and non-sectarian.

The window to authorize additional charter schools closed in April 2021. Efforts to extend or reopen the authorization window through legislation have not been successful. No additional charter schools will be approved unless the Legislature and the Governor pass and approve legislation to do so.

The primary purpose of Washington's Charter School Act is to allow flexibility to innovate in areas such as scheduling, personnel, funding, and educational programs to improve student outcomes and academic achievement of systemically marginalized student populations.

Washington charter schools:

- Are public schools (but are not common schools) that are alternatives to traditional common schools,
- Are open to all children free of charge and by choice, with admission based only on age group, grade level, and school enrollment availability, and
- Must be nonsectarian and nonreligious.

In addition, Washington charter schools:

- Must be a Washington nonprofit public benefit corporation with federal tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code,
- Must be governed by a nonprofit board according to the terms of a renewable, performance-based charter contract executed with an approved authorizer and approved by the SBE that contains at least the 32 elements required by RCW 28A.710.130,
- Are subject to the supervision of the OSPI and SBE, including accountability measures and the performance improvement goals adopted by SBE, to the same extent as other

public schools, must provide a program of basic education, and participate in the statewide student assessment system,

- Employ educators meeting the same certification requirements as traditional public school teachers, including background checks, and
- Must comply with local, state, and federal health, safety, parents' rights, civil rights, Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and nondiscrimination laws applicable to school districts.

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (National Alliance) publishes an [annual report](#) ranking the strength of each state's charter school laws. The purpose of the analysis is to encourage state laws and regulations to require best practices and guarantee charter school rights and freedoms so that state charter school movements will benefit from a supportive legal and policy environment. The ranking is based on 21 components of the National Alliance model law. Washington's charter school laws were rated among the strongest in the country for 2021. Per the National Alliance, a "strong" charter school law is one, which requires best practices, and guarantees the rights and freedoms of charter schools so that state charter school movement will benefit from a supportive legal and policy environment. The report summarized the findings for Washington as follows:

"Washington's law allows multiple authorizers through local school districts and a statewide authorizer, has strong quality control components, and gives operational autonomy to public charter schools. The two major weaknesses of the law include a cap of 40 charter schools during the initial five years that it is in effect and inequitable funding for public charter school students. Potential areas for improvement include lifting the state's cap [on the number of charter schools], ensuring equitable funding, and strengthening accountability for full-time virtual charter schools."

Charter Schools, Students, and Educators

The charter schools in operation change from year to year (Table 2). Some charter schools add one or two grade levels each year to accommodate the grade promotion of continuing students, meaning that the grade levels served at each charter school often change from year to year until the schools' approved grade levels are fully in place. Throughout the text of this report, some school names are shortened to enhance readability and to improve the appearance of charts and tables. For example, Rainier Valley Leadership Academy is referred to as Rainier Valley, Impact | Puget Sound Elementary is most often referred to as Impact Puget Sound, and these types of shortened names are used for many of the charter schools.

Together, the Washington Charter School Commission and Spokane Public Schools oversaw 16 charter public schools operating in Washington during the 2021-22 school year (Table 2). Per

the Washington State Report Card, 4,642 students attended Washington public charter schools on the official count day for the 2021-22 school year (Table 3).

From the time the Charter School Act passed the total charter school enrollment more than tripled (Table 4), as total enrollment increased from approximately 1200 in fall 2015 to 4,642 in the fall 2021. The increased enrollment occurs at all grade levels but is greatest for the high school grades. The fall 2021 charter school enrollment represents approximately 0.4 percent of Washington's total K-12 public school enrollment.

RCW 28A.710 directs the CSC to authorize high quality charter public schools throughout the state, especially schools that are designed to expand opportunities for systemically marginalized (at-risk) students. Washington statute defines an at-risk (systemically marginalized) student as a student who has an academic or economic disadvantage that requires assistance or special services to succeed in educational programs. The SBE and a number of other agencies avoid using the term "at-risk" whenever possible, as the term implies flaws or problems with the student rather than the educational system. However, the term remains in statute.

The demographics of students enrolled in charter schools (Table 5) during the 2021-22 school year vary considerably from school to school. This occurs primarily because some but not all charter schools engage in strategies and practices specifically intended to support the learning of one or more specific student groups. Here are a couple of examples.

- Black African American students comprise a little less than five percent of the statewide K-12 enrollment, while five charter schools had percentages of Black African American students in excess of 50 percent. These are also more than double or triple the district rate.
- Some but not all charter schools serve students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program at a rate much higher than the district rate.

We see demographic differences on a school-by-school basis, and when viewed as a group, we see that the charter schools serve higher percentages of students of color than the home school districts and the state. In particular, the charter schools tend to serve higher percentages of Black African American students and lower percentages of Hispanic and White students.

Table 2: shows the charter public schools in operation over the most recent school years.

2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Green Dot Destiny			
Green Dot Excel			
Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	Rainier Valley Leadership Academy
Impact Puget Sound Elementary	Impact Puget Sound Elementary	Impact Puget Sound Elementary	Impact Puget Sound Elementary
PRIDE Prep School	PRIDE Prep School	PRIDE Prep School	PRIDE Prep School
Rainier Prep	Rainier Prep	Rainier Prep	Rainier Prep
SOAR Academy			
Spokane International Academy	Spokane International Academy	Spokane International Academy	Spokane International Academy
Summit Atlas	Summit Atlas	Summit Atlas	Summit Atlas
Summit Olympus	Summit Olympus	Summit Olympus	Summit Olympus
Summit Sierra	Summit Sierra	Summit Sierra	Summit Sierra
Innovations Charter Sch. (Willow)	Innovations Charter Sch. (Willow)	Innovations Charter Sch. (Willow)	
		Impact Salish Sea ES	Impact Salish Sea ES
		Catalyst Public School	Catalyst Public School
		Lumen High School	Lumen High School
			Pinnacles Prep
			Pullman Community Montessori
			Impact Commencement Bay
			Why Not You Academy
			Whatcom IHS*

*Note: after opening for the 2019-20 school year, Ashé Prep closed in late October 2019. Whatcom HIS is the Whatcom Intergenerational High School

Table 3: shows some basic information for the charter schools operating for the 2021-22 school year.

School Name	Authorizer	Home District*	Grades Served	Fall 2021 Enrollment
Catalyst Public School	State Charter School Comm.	Bremerton	K-3 and 5-7	298
Impact Commencement Bay	State Charter School Comm.	Tacoma	K-1	267
Impact Puget Sound	State Charter School Comm.	Tukwila	K-4	602
Impact Salish Sea	State Charter School Comm.	Seattle	K-2	300
Lumen High School	Spokane Public Schools	Spokane	9-12	39
Pinnacles Prep	State Charter School Comm.	Wenatchee	6-7	113
PRIDE Prep School	Spokane Public Schools	Spokane	6-12	663
Pullman Community Montessori	State Charter School Comm.	Pullman	K-5	79
Rainier Prep	State Charter School Comm.	Highline	5-8	336
Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	State Charter School Comm.	Seattle	6-12	160
Spokane International Academy	State Charter School Comm.	Mead	K-9	683
Summit Atlas	State Charter School Comm.	Seattle	6-12	464
Summit Olympus	State Charter School Comm.	Tacoma	9-12	181
Summit Sierra	State Charter School Comm.	Seattle	9-12	307
Why Not You Academy	State Charter School Comm.	Highline	9-10	102
Whatcom IHS	State Charter School Comm.	Bellingham	9-10	48

Note: The home district is the school district in which the charter school is physically situated. Enrollment data is from the Washington State Report Card. Impact | Salish Sea Elementary was co-located with Impact | Puget Sound Elementary in Tukwila for the 2020-21 school year. Beginning in 2021-22, the school moved into its permanent location in South Seattle.

Table 4: shows the charter school enrollment changes over time by grade level.

Grade Level	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Kindergarten	117	98	93	214	168	369	738
1 st Grade	106	99	91	148	189	248	435
2 nd Grade	16	89	95	81	124	207	292
3 rd Grade	20	0	92	94	47	139	239
4 th Grade	17	0	0	86	46	69	161
5 th Grade	85	77	154	151	136	157	186
6 th Grade	505	385	512	559	437	363	420
7 th Grade	138	470	393	629	479	405	430
8 th Grade	0	133	397	386	465	456	360
9 th Grade	212	128	353	383	374	427	479
10 th Grade	0	196	142	335	322	334	358
11 th Grade	0	0	180	132	264	295	277
12 th Grade	0	0	0	165	114	243	267
All Grades	1,216	1,675	2,502	3,363	3,165	3,712	4,642

Note: data is from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table 5: 2021-22 student demographics for charter schools, home school districts, and the state.

	Native American or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	English Learners	Low-Income*	Special Education*
Whatcom IHS	4.2	4.2	8.3	27.1	0.0	45.8	10.4	0.0	60.4	14.6
Bellingham SD	0.9	4.9	1.5	17.4	0.3	68.1	8.9	7.2	36.2	16.4
Catalyst Public School	0.3	3.0	8.7	11.7	0.3	62.4	13.4	0.0	51.3	10.7
Bremerton SD	1.0	3.9	5.1	25.2	2.0	47.2	15.5	10.8	68.5	17.2
Rainier Prep	0.0	6.5	56.0	29.5	0.3	3.3	4.5	30.7	81.8	7.7
Why Not You Acad.	0.0	7.8	55.9	16.7	2.9	14.7	2.0	4.9	68.6	18.6
Highline SD	0.8	14.6	14.8	39.5	3.4	18.1	8.9	31.4	71.1	15.6
Spokane International	1.6	4.0	3.2	11.1	0.6	65.2	14.3	4.5	51.5	11.9
Mead SD	0.7	1.5	1.3	6.5	1.1	81.5	8.4	2.9	34.6	15.2
Pullman Community Montessori	0.0	3.8	0.0	10.1	0.0	74.7	11.4	5.1	25.3	15.2
Pullman SD	0.9	7.7	3.5	14.9	0.6	65.2	7.3	5.1	34.6	14.2
Summit Atlas	0.9	4.5	25.4	19.2	0.0	36.9	13.1	12.7	39.2	18.8
Rainier Valley	1.3	5.0	70.6	11.3	0.0	2.5	9.4	14.4	76.9	23.1
Summit Sierra	0.3	2.9	33.6	18.2	0.0	30.9	14.0	13.0	32.6	20.5
Seattle PS	0.4	12.6	14.9	13.4	0.4	45.9	12.4	13.1	34.0	15.5
Lumen High School	7.7	2.6	7.7	7.7	2.6	56.4	15.4	0.0	94.9	17.9
PRIDE Prep	2.7	1.4	3.9	13.9	0.3	68.6	9.2	0.0	59.0	17.3
Spokane PS	1.1	2.1	3.2	11.3	2.4	66.3	13.6	6.6	59.7	17.6
Impact Commencement Bay	0.0	3.4	21.0	25.1	2.2	28.1	20.2	10.9	60.3	5.2
Summit Olympus	2.2	1.7	23.2	34.3	5.0	21.5	12.2	5.0	64.1	16.0
Tacoma SD	0.8	8.6	13.1	22.3	3.6	35.5	16.2	11.1	56.0	15.6
Impact Puget Sound	0.3	11.3	52.7	15.9	1.2	11.8	5.8	27.2	62.5	4.0
Impact Salish Sea	1.0	8.3	54.7	13.0	0.3	11.3	11.3	16.7	62.0	3.3
Tukwila SD	0.7	24.2	19.1	34.4	4.3	11.1	6.0	37.2	77.8	12.3
Pinnacles Prep	0.0	0.9	0.9	28.3	0.0	69.9	0.0	17.7	43.3	9.7
Wenatchee SD	0.4	1.1	0.4	53.9	0.0	41.7	2.5	22.0	60.1	15.0
Charter School Ave.	1.4	4.5	26.6	18.3	1.0	37.8	10.4	10.2	58.4	13.4
Home District Ave.	0.8	8.1	7.7	23.9	1.8	48.1	10.0	14.7	53.3	15.5
Washington	1.3	8.5	4.6	25.2	1.2	49.9	9.2	12.5	47.6	14.5

Notes: throughout the report, Low-Income and FRL are used interchangeably and mean the students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) program. Special Education refers to students with a disability (SWD) who are receiving special educational services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). English learners (ELs) are students receiving bilingual educational supports. Charter school and home school district averages are not weighted averages. From the Washington State Report Card.

The teacher workforce at charter schools differs from the teacher workforce at the home school districts based on teacher race or ethnicity. For the 2020-21 school year, approximately 39 percent of classroom teachers at charter schools were people of color, while only 18 percent of home school district classroom teachers were people of color (Table 6). In every instance, the percentage of teachers of color at charter schools exceeds the percentage of teachers of color at the home school districts.

Not only do the charter schools differ from the home school districts by teacher race and ethnicity the characteristics of the classroom teachers differ in other important ways (Table 7). First, the charter schools consistently engage teachers with considerably less teaching experience than teachers in the home school districts (an average of 3.8 years for charter school classroom teachers vs. 13.8 years for home school district teachers in the 2020-21 school year). Second, the percentage of teachers with a Master's degree or higher at charter schools (35.1 percent) is much lower than the percentage of teachers with a Master's degree or higher at the home school districts (62.2 percent). Finally, the percentage of teachers who are fully certified at charter schools (61 percent) is significantly lower than the corresponding measure for the home school districts (97 percent). In Washington, it is allowable for teachers who are not yet fully certified and who are in the process of being certified, to be classroom teachers.

Because of the teacher characteristics presented in Table 7, student access to experienced and qualified educators differs between the charter schools and home school districts and by content area. Students at charter schools are also more likely to be taught by an English language arts (ELA) or math teacher who is inexperienced and or who might be teaching out of endorsement (Table 8)

Regarding access to experienced (defined as more than five full years of teaching experience) and qualified (fully endorsed and credentialed) ELA educators:

- Approximately 30 percent of students at charter schools are taught by an experienced ELA teacher, while 77 percent of students in the home school districts are taught by an experienced ELA teacher.
- Approximately 93 percent of students at charter schools are taught by fully endorsed ELA teacher, while 97 percent of students in the home school districts are taught by fully endorsed ELA teacher.

Regarding access to experienced and qualified math educators:

- Approximately 35 percent of students at charter schools are taught by an experienced math teacher, while 80 percent of students in the home school districts are taught by an experienced math teacher.
- Approximately 92 percent of students at charter schools are taught by fully endorsed math teacher, while 96 percent of students in the home school districts are taught by fully endorsed ELA teacher.

Table 6: shows the percentage of teachers who are people of color by school and home school district.

Charter School and Home School District	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Catalyst Public School				N.D.
<i>Bremerton SD</i>				11.9
Rainier Prep	38.1	38.1	40.0	36.0
Why Not You Acad.				N.D.
<i>Highline SD</i>	20.0	24.2	26.2	27.
Spokane International	42.9	41.7	38.7	>22.9
<i>Mead SD</i>				3.8
Pullman Community Montessori				N.D.
<i>Pullman SD</i>				6.9
Summit Atlas	41.7	36.0	25.0	39.3
Rainier Valley	30.0	45.0	48.3	78.6
Summit Sierra	37.5	42.3	23.1	40.0
<i>Seattle PS</i>	20.2	20.5	20.9	21.3
Lumen HS				0
PRIDE Prep	20.7	9.4	8.8	11.6
<i>Spokane PS</i>	6.7	6.5	7.4	7.4
Impact Commencement Bay				N.D.
Summit Olympus	25.0	41.2	30.8	15.4
<i>Tacoma SD</i>	18.3	19.1	19.0	20.0
Impact Puget Sound		40.0	47.6	51.9
Impact Salish Sea				75.0
<i>Tukwila SD</i>	27.3	28.5	27.0	28.2
Pinnacles Prep				N.D.
<i>Wenatchee SD</i>				14.6
<i>Charter Schools (Average)</i>	33.7	36.7	32.8	38.6
<i>Home Districts (Average)</i>	16.3	17.6	18.4	18.0
<i>Washington</i>	12.5	12.9	13.2	13.2

Note: the number of teachers in the home school districts range from less than 200 to approximately 3500, while the number of teachers in the charter schools ranges from less than 10 to approximately 30. Blank cells indicate the school years in which the charter school was not yet in operation. Data taken from the Washington State Report Card. Charter school and home school district averages are not weighted averages. N.D. means no data or data suppressed.

Table 7: shows certification status, the years of teaching experience, and highest education level attained by teachers for charter school LEAs and home school districts.

Charter School and Home School District	2021 Fully Certified Teachers Percent*	2021 Teaching Experience (Ave. Yrs.)	2021 MA+ Percent
Whatcom IHS	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
<i>Bellingham</i>	97.6	14.2	59.0
Catalyst Public School	50.0	N.D.	N.D.
<i>Bremerton SD</i>	94.9	15.0	54.8
Rainier Prep	72.0	3.9	28.0
Why Not You Academy	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
<i>Highline SD</i>	93.5	10.7	56.1
Spokane International	100	5.5	>23.0
<i>Mead SD</i>	99.0	15.9	71.1
Pullman Community Montessori	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
<i>Pullman SD</i>	96.5	11.8	53.2
Summit Atlas	64.3	3.7	28.6
Rainier Valley	42.9	3.1	50.0
Summit Sierra	52.0	4.7	16.0
<i>Seattle PS</i>	94.0	11.0	65.5
Lumen HS	83.3	4.3%	66.7
PRIDE Prep	79.1	3.1	27.9
<i>Spokane PS</i>	98.3	14.8	65.3
Impact Commencement Bay	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Summit Olympus	76.9	4.2	23.1
<i>Tacoma SD</i>	96.7	14.6	59.6
Impact Puget Sound	25.9	1.7	25.9
Impact Salish Sea	25.0	3.9	50.0
<i>Tukwila SD</i>	97.6	12.1	64.7
Pinnacles Prep	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
<i>Wenatchee SD</i>	93.6	14.5	62.3
<i>Charter Schools (Average)</i>	61.0	3.8	35.1
<i>Home Districts (Average)</i>	96.8	13.8	62.2
<i>Washington</i>	94.8	13.3	60.6

Notes: the number of teachers in the school districts range from less than 200 in Tukwila SD to nearly 3500 in Seattle PS. The number of teachers in the charter schools ranges from less than 10 to approximately 30. MA+ means Master's degree or higher. In Washington, it is allowable for teachers who are not yet fully certified and who are in the process of being certified, to teach in the classroom. N.D. means no data. Charter school and home school district averages are not weighted averages. Data taken from the Washington State Report Card.

Table 8: shows some of the teacher characteristics by charter school LEA and home school district by content area for the 2020-21 school year.

Organization	% of All Students with Access to an Experienced ELA Educator	% of All Students with Access to an ELA Educator Teaching In Field	% of All Students with Access to a Fully Certified ELA Teacher	% of All Students with Access to an Experienced Math Educator	% of All Students with Access to a Math Educator Teaching In Field	% of All Students with Access to a Fully Certified Math Teacher
Whatcom IHS	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Bellingham SD	82.5	95.4	99.7	87.0	92.7	99.7
Catalyst Public School	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Bremerton SD	88.3	96.5	85.3	92.1	86.6	100
Rainier Prep	51.3	100	100	30.3	100	100
Why Not You Acad.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Highline SD	66.9	96.3	95.6	75.3	96.2	96.1
Spokane International	90.0	100	100	0.0	100	100
Mead SD	87.9	91.2	97.7	87.5	92.6	100
Pullman Community Montessori	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Pullman SD	65.0	100	100	98.8	100	100
Summit Sierra	23.5	73.5	100	21.5	100	100
Summit Atlas	45.2	90.5	100	70.0	100	86.7
Rainier Valley	0.0	100	90.3	0.0	100	90.6
Seattle PS	69.9	96.1	94.5	68.6	96.9	92.8
Lumen High School	0.0	100	60.0	100	82.8	100
PRIDE Prep	15.9	75.2	84.1	0.0	82.6	97.8
Spokane PS	88.9	99.1	100	92.0	96.8	100
Impact Commencement Bay	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Summit Olympus	0.0	100	100	78.9	63.2	100
Tacoma SD	79.0	97.4	98.2	84.2	96.0	96.8
Impact Puget Sound	11.7	100	96.1	11.7	100	96.1
Impact Salish Sea	36.0	88.0	100	36.0	88.0	100
Tukwila SD	71.9	100	94.4	71.9	100	94.4
Pinnacles Prep	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Wenatchee SD	92.4	85.7	94.8	73.2	99.2	86.8
Charter School Average	30.4	92.7	93.1	34.8	91.7	97.1
Home District Average	77.4	96.7	96.7	79.9	96.4	96.7
Washington	78.1	94.9	96.4	78.1	94.0	96.4

Notes: Experienced status means that a teacher had more than 5.0 years of teaching experience. In-field status means that a teacher taught all courses within their endorsement area. Fully certificated status

means that a teacher taught all courses under a full certificate. N.D. indicates no data. Charter school and home school district averages are not weighted averages. From the Washington State Report Card.

Overview of the Performance of Charter Schools

The first charter school opened in the upper mid-west nearly 30 years ago, and since then, the academic performance of charter school students in comparison to TPS students has been of great interest to academicians, educators, policymakers, and the public. Like traditional public school students, the academic achievement of charter school students varies considerably across the nation, from state to state, by school level, by presence and nature of a management organization (Appendix B), and results differ for specific student groups. **On average, the evidence from a myriad of studies indicates no difference in achievement on tests between students who attend a charter school and those who attend a TPS.**

Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) is one of the most credible entities researching charter schools. In 2013, CREDO published the [National Charter School study](#) on the academic performance of students attending charter schools. Using CREDO's matched peers³ methodology, the study found that students attending charter schools exhibit slightly higher levels of learning in reading and approximately the same level of learning in math as compared to their TPS peers. The 2019 report titled "[School Choice in the United States](#)" conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics found no measurable differences in the 2017 reading and math test scores between charter school and TPS students.

However, other evidence shows that urban charter schools serving systemically marginalized and low-income students following a "no excuses" philosophy have a demonstrable and positive impact on student outcomes. No excuses schools emphasize high academic and behavioral expectations, extended instructional time, and other prescribed educator practices. As did other studies of Boston, New York, and Denver charter schools, the CREDO 2013 study concluded that Black students, students from low-income households, and English learners appear to benefit most from attending charter schools. A body of work summarized in "[Charter Schools and the Achievement Gap](#)" concludes that a subset of charter schools that includes but is not limited to the "no excuses" schools yields significant and positive effects on educational outcomes.

In another important publication titled "[Urban Charter School Study: Report on 41 Regions](#)" by CREDO in 2015, the authors reported that Black and Hispanic/Latinx students, students from

³ The CREDO work relies on a peer-reviewed methodology utilizing a virtual control record (VCR) method of analysis. The VCR approach creates a "virtual twin" for each charter student who is represented in the data using student records that match the student's demographic and academic characteristics. Potential matches are obtained from traditional public schools that serve as "feeders". In many cases, the "virtual twin" is a composite of up to ten different students fitting the matching criteria. In theory, this "virtual twin" would differ from the charter student only on a single factor: attending a charter school.

low-income households, English learners, and students receiving special education services all posted larger academic gains in urban charter schools as compared to their matched peers in urban TPS. The report provided evidence that low-income Black students and low-income Hispanic students posted much larger academic gains than their TPS peers.

In another summary of research ([The National Charter School Landscape](#)) concurred that the most successful charter schools are those serving low-income students, usually in urban areas. In this subset of charter schools, the effects are largest for students of color, low-income students, and those with special education needs. In addition, English learners with the lowest level of English proficiency make some of the largest gains on statewide assessments after enrolling in a charter school.

A just released [study](#) of the performance of charter school students compared to TPS students on the National Assessment of Student Progress (NAEP) over time found that charter school students are improving at a higher rate than TPS students are. The greatest gains for charter school students, relative to TPS students, are for Black students and students of low socioeconomic status.

In January 2019, CREDO released the preliminary results of a study on the [Charter School Performance in the State of Washington](#) covering the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years. While acknowledging the challenges of reporting on a small number of schools and their short history of school operations, the authors concluded that on average, charter school students in Washington experience annual growth in reading and math similar to the educational gains made by their matched peers who enroll in the TPS the charter school students would otherwise have attended. The CREDO authors characterized the performance of the charter schools as promising but not yet definitive.

Later in January 2019, the SBE delivered the [second annual report](#) to the educational committees of the Legislature and the Governor on the academic performance of charter school students for the 2017-18 school year. The study followed a rigorous design, and similar to the CREDO study covering earlier school years, concluded that charter school students perform approximately the same as demographically similar TPS students on the statewide ELA, math, and science assessments.

The SBE delivered the [third annual report on Washington charter schools](#) to the Governor, the Legislature, and the public in January 2020. The report concluded that the performance of individual charter schools in comparison to the home district on statewide assessments varied, as some schools posted higher proficiency rates on the statewide assessments and others posted lower proficiency rates. Two charter schools reported adjusted cohort graduation rates and these were similar to or a little lower than the home district graduation rates. Likewise, the performance data for charter schools on the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF) was limited and mixed.

The SBE's third annual report also included the results of an SBE analysis showing that, as a group, charter school students posted scale scores similar to the scale scores achieved by demographically and academically similar TPS students on the ELA assessment, but higher scale scores than TPS students on the math and science assessments. The analysis yielded effect sizes showing that the effect associated with charter school enrollment was small to very small. The student growth percentiles (SGPs) for charter school students were mostly similar to or higher than the TPS student group.

In fall 2020, CREDO released an updated report titled [Charter School Performance in the State of Washington](#). Using assessment results through the 2017-18 school year, the CREDO researchers provide evidence that on average, Washington charter school students demonstrated annual academic growth in ELA and math similar to the growth of their matched peers in traditional public schools. Students from low-income households, Black, and Latinx student groups posted gains that were higher on average but statistically similar to the gains of their respective TPS peers. The CREDO researchers show that the academic growth made by English learners and Latinx English learners was different and higher than their TPS peers in ELA and/or math were.

Using a rigorous evaluation, the [SBE's fourth annual report](#) showed that, as a group, charter school students performed higher than the TPS student group on seven of the eight assessment and growth measures analyzed. In addition, charter school students identifying as Hispanic/Latinx, students who are English learners, and students who qualify for FRL (free and reduced-price, a proxy for low-income) consistently outperformed their TPS matched peers. The analyses yielded effect sizes showing that the effect associated with charter school enrollment was small to very small.

In fall 2021, Harvard researchers released a [study](#) comparing the performance of students from charter schools to those of traditional school districts on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) administrations from 2005 to 2017. After adjusting for student background characteristics, the test scores for students at charter schools improved approximately one-third of a year's worth of learning more than scores for students at district schools. The study also found that Black/African American and Hispanic students and students from low-income households at charter schools made greater gains (approximately one-half year worth of learning) than students did at traditional public schools. The authors report that two-thirds of the relative gain in the charter sector cannot be explained by demography. The authors assert that the rate of change for the charter schools is greater either because the charter sector, relative to the district sector, is attracting a more proficient set of students in ways that cannot be detected by demographic characteristics, or because charter schools and their teachers are doing a better job of teaching students.

The Washington State Charter Schools Association recently developed an [interactive webpage](#) comparing the academic performance of charter schools to the home school districts and the state. In summary and for the All Students group, the charter schools collectively perform about the same as the home school districts and the state on the English Language Arts (ELA), math,

and science statewide assessments. The website shows that students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program, Black African American, and Hispanic and Latinx students at charter schools performed higher than the corresponding student groups for the home school districts and the state.

The [SBE's fifth annual report](#) released in March 2022 showed that, as a group, charter school students performed higher than the TPS student group on seven of the eight assessment and growth model measures analyzed. In addition, charter school students identifying as Hispanic/Latinx, students who are English learners, and students who qualify for FRL (low-income) consistently outperformed their TPS matched peers. Finally, students identifying as Black African American consistently outperformed their TPS matched peers on the math scale score and growth model measures. However, the analyses yielded effect sizes showing that the effect associated with charter school enrollment was small to very small. Regardless, the effects of charter school enrollment should not be discounted and cannot be ignored.

Section I – Washington Charter School Performance

This section of the annual report is divided into two parts in accordance to 28A.710.250 (2). Part A is comprised of selected analyses on the academic performance or achievement of students at charter schools compared to the home district and the state. This information comes primarily from publicly available data files available through the Washington State Report Card and the Washington Education Data Portal. Part B summarizes the comparisons of the academic performance of students at charter schools to similar students in traditional public schools described in earlier SBE charter school reports. This information results from a rigorous analysis of educational data obtained through a data sharing agreement with the OSPI Office of Student Information.

This report elaborates on the performance of charter schools based primarily on the spring 2022 statewide assessment administration. As was stated for the previous charter school reports assessing the performance of charter schools and charter school students, the findings presented continue to be preliminary. Earlier reports stated that it would be premature to make any judgements about the performance of the charter schools until multiple years of results (at least five years) are available. Notwithstanding the limited number of charter schools and the relatively small number of student assessment records available for analysis, evidence shows that the Washington charter school students, as a group, perform similar to or a little better than their TPS peers.

When comparing the performance of the charter schools to their TPS counterparts, a couple of other challenges should be noted. First, most of the charter schools add one or two new grades each year. This means that schools must build curriculum, hire new teachers, and provide training each year to new teachers. This challenge is unique to the charter schools, as most traditional public schools used for comparison have been fully built out for years. Second, the

enrolling of a high percentage of systemically marginalized students means that a charter school needs to allocate more resources to ensure every student is making good academic progress. The effects of concentrating systemically marginalized students in a school building creates teaching and learning challenges, about which we are just beginning to learn.

In addition, charter schools are “schools of choice.” Parents may have selected the charter school option because they felt that their child or children were not well served by traditional public schools. These children may have lagged behind their classmates. In other cases, the parents of these children may be more involved in their children’s schooling and provide greater support and encouragement. These children may be academically far in front their classmates. Without additional information, there is no way to determine how patterns of self-selection may have affected the outcomes presented here.

A limitation of this work centers on the fact that approximately 20 charter schools have been in operation over the most recent five-year period and only 16 charter schools were in operation for the full 2021-22 school year. Recently approved charter schools will commence operations in the coming years and the overall enrollment of the charter schools will likely increase. The meaningfulness of the statistical analyses will increase with the additional years of data, larger student counts, and additional schools.

Summary of Findings on the Performance of the Charter Schools

- On average, the charter schools’ Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF) scores are similar the average WSIF score for the state.
- Official graduation rates were reportable for five of the six charter schools issuing diplomas in 2022. The OSPI is expected to correct the graduation rates for two charter schools with erroneously low graduation rates in a report to the Commission. Among the other three charter schools with reportable graduation rates, the rates for two charter schools were similar to the state average and the rate for one charter school was a little higher than the state rates.
- On the spring 2022 statewide assessments, some charter schools performed a little better than or similar to the home school districts, depending on the content area assessed. In some cases, the charter school performance was a little lower than the home school district.
- Based on the matched peers comparison using the spring 2022 statewide assessments, charter school students performed a little better than their TPS peer group on four of the six measures and similar to TPS students on two of the six measures.
- Charter school students identifying as Black, students who are English learners, and students who qualify for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch program (FRL) outperform their matched TPS peers.
- The percentage of charter school students regularly attending school is lower than the rate for the students in the home school districts.

- The percentage of first time, 9th grade, charter school students who earned credit for all courses attempted (9th Graders On-Track) is a little higher than the rate for the students in the home school districts.
- The percentage of charter school students participating in dual credit courses is considerably lower than the rate for the students in the home school districts.

Part A – Performance of Charter Schools

RCW 28A.710.250 directs the SBE to report on the performance of the state's charter schools during the preceding school year, and include a comparison of the performance of charter school students with the performance of academically, ethnically, and economically comparable groups of students in traditional public schools. This report is to elaborate on the academic performance of the charter schools operating during the 2021-22 school year.

Statewide Assessments

The OSPI cancelled spring 2020 summative statewide assessment administration after the [U.S. Department of Education \(ED\) approved](#) the OSPI waiver request on March 27, 2020 because of the COVID-related physical closure of school buildings. On March 21, 2021, the OSPI submitted a proposal to the ED to, among other things, administer the spring 2021 statewide summative assessment to a representative sample of students to minimize the health risks to students. In spring 2021, the ED did not agree to an OSPI request to assess a sample of students, but authorized the OSPI to administer the spring 2021 assessment in fall 2021 and to administer shortened assessments.

The fall 2021 assessment administration student outcomes were for the 2020-21 school year, so students sat for the grade level assessment for the grade they were enrolled in for the 2020-21 school year. For the spring 2022 administration, students were assessed at the grade level assessment in which they were currently enrolled. For 2021-22 school year, students sat for the statewide assessments twice in the same school year, once in the fall 2021 and again in the spring 2022 and each in different grade levels.

Simply comparing the assessment results, educational inputs, or educational outcomes of students enrolled in a charter school to those of students in the home school district or another traditional public school can be misleading. In choosing to attend a charter school, the student demonstrates the motivation to seek an educational opportunity outside the norm. Students enrolling in charter schools do so for a variety of reasons making them different from students attending a TPS based on school choice at a minimum. With the knowledge of the existence of unobserved student differences, it becomes a challenge to determine whether test score differences reflect the student population differences or something about the school.

The conclusions drawn from the evaluation of the performance charter school in comparison to the home school districts are limited. The reader should bear in mind that the level of

comparison is not equivalent. Each charter school is a Local Educational Agency (LEA), which in many respects is roughly equivalent to a school district. This means that for this analysis, the performance of a charter school is compared to the performance a school district. Such a comparison has the potential to be misleading in a number of ways:

- A charter school serving high school grades (for example) is sometimes compared to a school district serving all grade levels. Measures like the percentage of students who regularly attend school differs by grade level and school level. In this work, the performance comparisons between the charter school and the home school district are for the same grades, improving comparability.
- Individual charter school enrollment ranges from approximately 100 to 600 students, whereas the home districts for the majority of charter schools (Seattle PS, Spokane PS, and Tacoma SD) serve approximately 30,000 to 55,000 students. The comparisons would be more meaningful if the group sizes were more comparable.
- Charter schools most often enroll higher percentages of systemically marginalized students (e.g., from low-income households or who are students of color) than are enrolled in the traditional school districts. The most meaningful comparisons are made when the performance of like groups is the basis for the analysis.
- It is common for students enrolled in a charter school to come from more than one home school district. For example, students enrolled in Spokane International Academy may come from Spokane PS, Mead SD, and Central Valley SD, and in this case, the Spokane International performance is compared to the Mead SD because the charter school is physically situated within that school district.

Table 9: summarizes the performance of charter schools in comparison to the home school district based on the spring 2022 statewide assessment administration.

	English Language Arts	Math	Science
Charter school results are mostly higher than the home school district results.	Catalyst, Impact Puget Sound ES, and Rainier Prep	Catalyst, Impact Puget Sound ES, and Rainier Prep	Catalyst, Impact Puget Sound ES, Rainier Valley, and Rainier Prep
Charter school results are similar to the home school district results.	Pinnacles Prep, PRIDE Prep, Rainier Valley, Spokane International, Summit Olympus, and Summit Sierra	Pinnacles Prep, PRIDE Prep, Spokane International, and Summit Sierra	PRIDE Prep, Spokane International, Summit Olympus, Summit Sierra
Charter school results are mostly lower than the home school district results.	Pullman Montessori, Summit Atlas, and Whatcom IHS	Pullman Montessori, Rainier Valley, Summit Atlas, Summit Olympus, and Whatcom IHS	Summit Atlas

There were no reportable assessment results for Impact Commencement Bay ES, Impact Salish Sea ES, Lumen High School, and the Why Not You Academy.

The most recent results for the performance of students at charter schools as compared to students in the home school district on the spring 2022 statewide assessments are summarized in Table 9 and are tabulated in Appendix A. In summary, a solid majority of charter schools performed higher than or similar to the home school district on all three content area assessments administered on the spring 2022 administration.

Washington School Improvement Framework

The OSPI published the first version of the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF) in the winter 2018. After a two-year hiatus, the OSPI computed the winter 2023 WSIF based on educational data elements from the 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, and the 2021-22 school years. The decile averages and the WSIF scores are limited and mixed, as only nine charter schools earned a WSIF rating. The average decile rating for the charter schools on each of the WSIF indicators is mostly similar to the state average (Table 10).

Table 10: shows the winter 2023 WSIF school rating in decile points for the All Students group by indicator for the charter schools in which a final decile could be computed.

School Name	Prof. Decile	Other Academic Indicator Decile	Graduation Rate Decile	EL Progress Decile	SQSS Decile	Total Decile*
Catalyst Public School	7.5	8.0			2.0	7.5
Impact Puget Sound	7.0	8.0		8.0	7.0	7.6
PRIDE Prep School	4.0	3.5	4.0		4.3	3.9
Rainier Prep	7.0	8.0		10.0	7.0	7.7
Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	2.0	4.0			3.7	3.3
Spokane International Academy	7.0	6.3			7.0	6.6
Summit Atlas*	6.0	7.8	N.R.		5.7	5.9
Summit Olympus*	4.0		N.R.		5.0	4.7
Summit Sierra	5.5		3.0		5.3	4.2
Charter Schools (Average)	5.6	6.5	3.5	9.0	5.2	5.7
Washington Public Schools (Average)	5.5	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.6	5.7

The Total Decile is the final WSIF rating based on a weighted average of each of the individual decile ratings. Charter schools omitted from this table did not have enough reportable data from which to compute a final WSIF score. *Note: The graduation rates for the two Summit Schools were incorrectly reported. Updated graduation outcomes will be provided to the Commission in a separate OSPI report.

The WSIF data file provides final decile ratings for student groups if the minimum reporting requirements are met. The winter 2023 WSIF final decile ratings for student groups at the charter schools (Table 11) are limited and mixed. For the charter schools in which a final decile could be computed, the charter school average score was similar to the state average.

Table 11: shows the winter 2023 WSIF school ratings (final total decile) for all reportable student groups for the charter schools earning a final decile rating*.

School Name	All Students	Native American or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	Limited English	Low-Income	Special Education
Catalyst Public Schools	7.5						7.6		6.6		
Impact Puget Sound	7.6			6.8	5.3		9.9		4.5	5.9	
PRIDE Prep	3.9				3.7		4.3	4.1		3.4	2.3
Rainier Prep	7.7		8.8	6.7	6.7		9.7	9.5	3.9	6.9	2.7
Rainier Valley Leadership Academy	3.3			3.0			2.7	5.6		2.8	2.8
Spokane International Academy	6.6		7.6	5.1	3.7		7.0	6.7		5.3	2.2
Summit Atlas	5.9			4.4	5.6		7.5	6.7	4.2	4.5	3.4
Summit Olympus	4.7				4.4		4.0	4.4		4.5	3.5
Summit Sierra	4.2			3.0			5.5	4.7	4.2	3.6	3.9
Charter Schools (Average)	5.7	N.D.	8.2	4.8	4.9	N.D.	6.5	6.0	4.7	4.6	3.0
Washington Public Schools (Average)	5.7	2.9	8.0	4.1	4.4	3.3	6.5	6.1	2.7	4.1	2.7

Note: N.D. indicates No Data, as the decile was not reportable. Charter schools omitted from this table did not have enough reportable data from which to compute a final WSIF score.

High School Graduation Results

Simply comparing the high school graduation rates of students enrolled in a charter school to graduation rates for students in the home school district or another traditional public school can be misleading. As mentioned earlier and because the students at charter schools are not exactly the same as their TPS peers because of their decision to opt for an alternative educational experience, it is impossible to know whether differences in the high school graduation rates reflect the student differences or something about the charter school. In addition, it is not unusual for a student to enroll in a charter high school, be successful, and then to transfer to his or her traditional high school to walk in graduation with long-time childhood friends. In this case, the "credit" for graduation goes to the final school of record and not to the school where the student was enrolled the longest. Finally, graduation rates in the comparison school districts vary across different schools within each district. Overall, the graduation rates for the charter schools are similar to or a little lower than the home school districts but a little higher than the state rates (Table 12).

- Summit Olympus is within the Tacoma School District boundaries and Summit Atlas is within the Seattle PS boundaries. The high school graduation rates for both charter schools are a little lower than the corresponding state graduation rates and are a little lower than the corresponding rates for the home school districts. However, the Commission reported that the reported rates for the two charter schools were incorrectly reported and that the OSPI is providing the Commission with a separate report.
- Summit Sierra is also within the Seattle PS boundaries. The high school graduation rates of the reportable student groups are a little higher than the corresponding state graduation rates and a little higher than the corresponding rates for the Seattle PS.
- Rainier Valley is within the Seattle PS boundaries. The high school graduation rate for the All Students student group at Rainier Valley is similar to the corresponding graduation rate for the state and for the Seattle PS.
- PRIDE Prep is within the Spokane PS boundary. PRIDE Prep students' graduation rates are similar to the corresponding graduation rates for the state and for the Spokane PS.

Table 12: shows the official class of 2022 four-year graduation rates for reportable student groups for the charter schools, the home school districts, and Washington public schools.

	All Students	Native American or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	English Learners	Low-income*	Special Education*
Summit Atlas**	78.0	N.R.	N.R.	71.4	>90	N.R.	81.1	N.R.	>90	72.4	50.0
Rainier Valley	90.0	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.
Summit Sierra	95.4	N.R.	N.R.	>90	>90	N.R.	>90	>90	>90	>93	>90
Seattle PS	87.6	67.9	91.5	86.3	75.0	84.2	90.7	89.8	72.3	81.6	70.6
PRIDE Prep	89.3	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	86.4	N.R.	N.R.	>90	N.R.
Spokane PS	90.2	87.0	89.5	80.3	93.2	87.0	91.0	87.5	81.8	87.4	73.8
Summit Olympus**	75.0	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	81.8	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	72.7	90.0
Tacoma SD	90.2	75.9	92.8	89.9	89.7	80.4	90.9	90.3	85.2	87.6	73.5
Charter School Ave.	85.5	N.R.	N.R.	>81	>87	N.R.	>86	>90	>90	82.0	>77
Home District Ave.	89.3	76.9	91.3	85.5	86.0	83.9	90.9	89.2	79.8	85.5	72.6
Washington	82.3	67.8	92.0	81.3	78.5	77.9	82.8	83.8	69.8	75.3	65.3

*Note: N.R. means Not Reportable, as the data were suppressed to protect personal information or the student group was not represented in the graduation cohort for the school. Low-Income means the students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) program. Special Education refers to students with a disability (SWD) who are receiving special educational services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). English learners (ELs) are students receiving bilingual educational supports. **Note: rates are from the Washington State Report Card, but the Commission reports that the graduation rates for Summit Atlas and Summit Olympus are in the process of being corrected.

Regular Attendance

On the measure the percentage of students regularly attending school (fewer than two absences per month) for the 2021-22 school year, the average for the charter school LEAs is a little lower than the corresponding measures for the home school districts and the state (Table 13).

Table 13: shows the percentage of students who regularly attend school for the 2021-22 school year by race, ethnicity, and program participation status.

Regular Attendance	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	English Learners*	Low-Income*	Special Education*
Whatcom IHS	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	28.6	N.D.	21.7	N.D.	N.D.	27.3	N.D.
Bellingham SD	50.5	74.2	65.5	54.2	66.7	69.4	67.1	53.2	52.0	55.2
Catalyst Public School	N.D.	70.0	70.0	63.2	N.D.	72.5	78.0	N.D.	61.5	51.4
Bremerton SD	45.2	76.6	58.3	53.5	43.8	59.4	51.4	58.0	52.5	52.2
Rainier Prep	N.D.	73.9	79.0	69.3	N.D.	63.6	66.7	79.6	73.4	64.0
Why Not You Academy	N.D.	N.D.	67.8	52.6	N.D.	69.2	N.D.	N.D.	61.8	57.9
Highline SD	45.6	72.6	62.2	51.8	35.4	64.7	56.4	56.2	53.9	50.7
Spokane International	N.D.	>90	59.1	50.7	N.D.	70.5	63.1	81.0	62.4	63.4
Mead SD	46.2	83.1	69.7	69.4	46.4	75.8	69.3	60.1	63.3	66.1
Pullman Comm. Montessori	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	42.1	N.D.	N.D.	38.9	57.1
Pullman SD	75.0	94.8	70.8	63.3	86.7	75.4	74.2	77.3	58.0	59.7
Rainier Valley	N.D.	N.D.	52.0	57.9	N.D.	N.D.	81.3	50.0	52.3	47.7
Summit Atlas	N.D.	80.0	51.7	45.2	N.D.	63.4	42.4	46.9	45.8	41.1
Summit Sierra	N.D.	30.0	45.6	31.3	N.D.	52.3	38.6	50.0	37.0	50.7
Seattle PS	51.3	84.5	62.9	63.4	43.6	84.2	77.5	68.6	61.6	68.3
Lumen High School	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	45.5	N.D.	N.D.	47.2	N.D.
PRIDE Prep	38.5	N.D.	21.4	37.6	N.D.	41.1	27.5	N.D.	32.8	35.6
Spokane PS	61.7	86.6	78.2	67.3	64.1	73.5	68.7	72.4	65.5	64.0
Impact Commencement Bay	N.D.	N.D.	52.7	49.2	N.D.	61.8	58.5	N.D.	49.7	42.9
Summit Olympus	N.D.	N.D.	20.0	21.7	N.D.	20.8	45.3	21.4	22.8	29.6
Tacoma SD	48.6	74.0	57.4	52.8	40.8	64.0	56.6	54.5	51.5	51.7
Impact Puget Sound	N.D.	84.1	78.3	65.3	N.D.	74.3	80.0	77.0	74.5	72.0
Impact Salish Sea	N.D.	60.9	57.1	27.8	N.D.	52.9	50.0	61.9	46.9	N.D.
Tukwila SD	25.0	78.3	62.5	56.1	51.8	60.8	60.0	66.0	60.5	54.1
Pinnacles Prep	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	84.8	N.D.	78.0	N.D.	83.3	75.9	58.3
Wenatchee SD	59.4	86.6	67.6	57.0	N.D.	68.3	66.8	56.0	55.6	54.0
Charter School Average	38.5	>66	54.6	48.9	N.D.	55.5	57.4	61.2	50.6	51.7
Home District Average	53.7	81.1	65.5	58.9	53.3	69.6	64.8	62.2	57.4	57.6
Washington	45.0	83.2	65.7	59.5	46.3	69.8	65.9	60.3	57.0	58.2

Note: Low-Income means the students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) program.

Special Education refers to students with a disability (SWD) who are receiving special educational services

through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). English learners (ELs) are students receiving bilingual educational supports. From the Washington State Report Card.

9th Grade On-Track

On the measure the percentage of first time 9th graders who are on-track (passed all of their classes) for the 2021-22 school year, the average for the charter school LEAs is a little higher than the corresponding measures for the home school districts and the state Table 14.

Table 14: shows the percentage of first time 9th graders who are on-track for the 2021-22 school year by race, ethnicity, and program participation status.

9 th Grade On-Track	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	English Learners*	Low-Income*	Special Education*
Whatcom IHS	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	>90	N.D.	N.D.	>90	N.D.
Bellingham SD	N.D.	85.4	80.0	61.6	N.D.	75.3	74.4	52.5	54.5	54.0
Why Not You Academy	N.D.	N.D.	91.5	78.9	N.D.	>90	N.D.	N.D.	85.3	84.2
Highline SD	57.1	88.3	76.9	66.6	60.0	79.2	75.7	62.8	70.6	67.6
Spokane International	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	80.0	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Mead SD	N.D.	85.0	80.0	82.0	50.0	85.0	71.6	64.7	68.4	63.0
Rainier Valley	N.D.	N.D.	52.6	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	56.0	N.D.
Summit Atlas	N.D.	N.D.	>90	>90	N.D.	>90	>90	90.0	>92	>90
Summit Sierra	N.D.	N.D.	>90	90.0	N.D.	>90	80.0	>90	90.0	>90
Seattle PS	72.2	87.5	74.1	71.7	70.8	93.3	86.0	69.6	72.4	78.4
Lumen High School	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
PRIDE Prep	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	76.5	N.D.	78.0	N.D.	N.D.	80.6	75.0
Spokane PS	39.3	91.2	71.6	61.7	29.4	75.4	67.0	55.0	59.7	57.6
Summit Olympus	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	85.7	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	81.0	N.D.
Tacoma SD	28.6	71.1	52.3	50.7	27.8	70.6	59.6	42.0	49.8	52.7
Charter Schools (Average)	N.D.	N.D.	>81	84.2	N.D.	>86	>85	>90	82.1	>85
Home Districts (Average)	49.3	84.8	72.5	65.7	47.6	79.8	72.4	57.8	62.6	62.2
Washington	50.7	88.0	64.6	55.6	45.6	76.2	69.7	47.4	55.5	59.2

Note: Low-Income means the students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) program. Special Education refers to students with a disability (SWD) who are receiving special educational services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). English learners (ELs) are students receiving bilingual educational supports. From the Washington State Report Card.

Dual Credit

On the measure the percentage of high school students completing a dual credit course for the 2021-22 school year, the average for the charter school LEAs is considerably lower than the corresponding measures for the home school districts and the state (Table 15).

Table 15: shows the percentage of high school students completing a dual credit course for the 2021-22 school year by race, ethnicity, and program participation status.

Dual Credit	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	English Learners*	Low-Income*	Special Education*
Whatcom IHS	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	<10	N.D.	<10	N.D.	N.D.	<9	N.D.
Bellingham SD	60.5	85.6	72.6	73.8	N.D.	80.1	77.5	69.5	71.0	53.2
Why Not You Academy	N.D.	N.D.	<5	<10	N.D.	<10	N.D.	N.D.	<4	<10
Highline SD	60.4	70.4	66.4	60.2	63.0	71.2	70.1	54.2	62.7	51.0
Spokane International	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	90.0	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Mead SD	11.1	41.5	19.6	25.8	<5	31.0	28.8	<4	21.0	3.5
Rainier Valley	N.D.	N.D.	33.3	25.0	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	41.2	35.1	33.3
Summit Atlas	N.D.	N.D.	33.9	45.7	N.D.	26.4	28.0	39.5	35.9	32.7
Summit Sierra	N.D.	60.0	53.5	69.6	N.D.	49.6	52.3	52.1	53.5	48.5
Seattle PS	48.7	62.3	52.6	43.6	48.9	58.2	55.3	37.3	49.5	30.8
Lumen High School	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	<10	N.D.	N.D.	<8	N.D.
PRIDE Prep	N.D.	N.D.	27.3	37.2	N.D.	32.6	40.7	N.D.	32.0	14.5
Spokane PS	34.7	53.3	40.9	43.1	26.6	50.8	45.1	30.8	40.9	24.4
Summit Olympus	N.D.	N.D.	75.0	55.8	N.D.	90.2	60.9	78.6	71.8	84.6
Tacoma SD	89.7	89.5	84.2	85.1	80.2	88.6	86.2	79.8	85.8	78.1
Charter Schools (Average)	N.D.	60.0	<38	<36	N.D.	<40	45.5	52.9	<31	<42

Dual Credit	American Indian or Alaskan	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latinx	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Two or More Races	English Learners*	Low-Income*	Special Education*
<i>Home Districts (Average)</i>	50.9	67.1	56.1	55.3	<45	71.4	60.5	<46	55.2	40.2
<i>Washington</i>	44.3	78.7	63.6	58.3	58.8	62.4	63.6	50.5	55.9	43.1

Note: Low-Income means the students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) program. Special Education refers to students with a disability (SWD) who are receiving special educational services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). English learners (ELs) are students receiving bilingual educational supports. From the Washington State Report Card.

Part B – Academic Performance of Charter School Students and Similar Students

For the analyses that follow, the charter school group and the TPS group represent the aggregation of the charter schools open in the 2021-22 school year. In other words, all of the charter school students are combined into one large group to assess for differences in the groups’ performance, and those students are all from the charter schools in operation for the entire 2021-22 school year. The ensuing discussion of student performance is based on the fall 2021 and spring 2022 assessment administrations. The results of the analyses are summarized below, while the statistics and other details are included in Appendix A.

Overview of Results for the All Students Group

Of the six academic measures examined and based on the spring 2022 statewide assessments, charter school group performed different and higher than TPS group on four of the measures. On the two remaining measures, the charter school group performed similarly to the TPS group (Table 16). The following results are evident:

- For the **ELA, math, and science scale scores**, charter school students performed different and higher than the TPS student group
- For the **percent meeting standard rates**, charter school students performed different and higher than the TPS group on ELA percent meeting standard rate, and similar to TPS group on the math and science percent meeting standard rates.

Table 16: summarizes the performance of the charter school students compared to the performance of demographically and academically similar TPS group.

Academic Measure	Charter School Students Perform Different and Higher than TPS Students	Charter School Students Perform Similar to TPS Students	Charter School Students Perform Different and Lower than TPS Students
ELA Assessment	Average Scale Score & Percent Meeting Standard Rate		
Math Assessment	Average Scale Score	Percent Meeting Standard Rate	
Science Assessment	Average Scale Score	Percent Meeting Standard Rate	

*Note: The ELA, math, and science average scale scores reflect data from the spring administration of the 2021-22 school year.

Overview of Results by Race/Ethnicity and Program Participation

The charter school student group performed as well or better than the TPS groups on all six of the measures analyzed here (Table 17). Charter school students identifying as Black African American, students who are English learners, and students who qualify for FRL (low-income) consistently outperform their TPS matched peers.

- **Native American and Alaskan Natives:** on all six measures, the count of matched students with valid results was too small (less than 20) to report on.
- **Asian:** charter school attendees identifying as Asian performed similar to TPS students on average ELA, math, and science scale scores, and similar to TPS students on the ELA, math, and science percent meeting standard.
- **Black or African American:** students identifying as Black at charter schools performed higher TPS students on average ELA and math scale scores, higher on the ELA and math percent meeting standard and similar to TPS students on the science average scale score and percent meeting standard.
- **Hispanic or Latinx:** students at charter schools performed higher than the corresponding TPS group on the ELA average scale score and similar to the TPS students on all of the other measures.
- **White:** charter school students performed similar to TPS students on all of the measures.
- **Two or More Races:** charter school students performed similar to TPS students on all of the measures.
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:** on all the measures, the count of matched students with valid results was too small (less than 20) to report on.

- **English Learners:** charter school students performed higher than the TPS group on the ELA and math average scale scores, higher than the TPS students on the ELA percent meeting standard, and similar to TPS students on the math percent meeting standard and the science measures.
- **Low-Income:** students at charter schools performed higher TPS students on average ELA and math scale score, higher on the ELA and math percent meeting standard and similar to TPS students on the science average scale score and percent meeting standard.
- **Special Education:** charter school attendees receiving special education services perform similar to TPS students on all of the measures analyzed here.

Table 17: summary of group performance on ELA and math assessments by race/ethnicity and program participation by charter school enrollment.

Academic Measure	Charter School Students Perform Different and Higher than TPS Students	Charter School Students Perform Similar to TPS Students	Charter School Students Perform Different and Lower than TPS Students
ELA Assessment (Scale Score)	Black, <i>English Learners</i> , and <i>Low-Income</i>	Asian, Hispanic, White, Two or More Races, <i>Special Education</i>	
ELA Proficiency (Percent Meeting Standard)	Black, <i>English Learners</i> . and <i>Low-Income</i>	Asian, Hispanic, White, Two or More Races, <i>English Learners</i> , and <i>Special Education</i>	
Math Assessment (Scale Score)	Black, Hispanic, <i>English Learners</i> , and <i>Low-Income</i> ,	Asian, White, Two or More Races, and <i>Special Education</i>	
Math Proficiency (Percent Meeting Standard)	Black and <i>Low-Income</i>	Asian, Hispanic, White, Two or More Races, <i>English Learners</i> , and <i>Special Education</i>	
Science Assessment (Scale Score)		Asian, Black, Hispanic, White, Two or More Races, <i>English Learners</i> , <i>Low-Income</i> , and <i>Special Education</i>	
Science Proficiency (Percent Meeting Standard)		Asian, Black, Hispanic, White, Two or More Races, <i>English Learners</i> , <i>Low-Income</i> , and <i>Special Education</i>	

For purposes here, Low Income and FRL are interchangeable and means the students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) program. Special Education refers to students with a disability (SWD)

who are receiving special educational services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). English learners (ELs) are students receiving bilingual educational supports.

Section II – Meeting the purposes of Washington’s Charter Schools Act

28A.710.250 directs the SBE to include in this annual report its assessment of the successes, challenges, and areas for improvement in meeting the purposes of the Washington Charter Public Schools Act (RCW 28A.710), including the Board's assessment of the sufficiency of funding for charter schools, and the efficacy of the formula for authorizer funding.

The Board approves school districts as charter school authorizers pursuant to RCW 28A.710.090. The Spokane PS is the only local educational authority (LEA) or school district to file an application and then to be approved as a charter public school authorizer. All charter school authorizer applications must include:

- Vision for chartering,
- Plan to support that vision including budget information and commitment to quality authorizing,
- Draft application for charter schools to apply with the authorizer,
- Draft performance framework that would guide the establishment of a charter contract,
- Draft of the proposed renewals, revocation, and nonrenewal process,
- Statement of assurance that the authorizer is committed to meeting expectations of a charter authorizer and will engage in training with the state if provided or required, and
- Statement assuring public accountability and transparency for all authorizing practices, decisions, and expenditures.

The Washington State Charter School Commission (CSC) and Spokane PS are the only charter school authorizers in the state. Together, the Washington Charter School Commission and Spokane PS oversaw 16 charter public schools operating in Washington during the 2021-22 school year. Per the Washington State Report Card, 4,642 students attended one of the 16 Washington public charter schools on the official count day for the 2021-22 school year (Table 2). The total charter school enrollment represents an increase of approximately 650 students from the 2020-21 school year and the total charter school enrollment represents approximately 0.4 percent of all public school K-12 students.

RCW 28A.710 directs the CSC to authorize high quality charter public schools throughout the state, especially schools that are designed to expand opportunities for “at-risk (systemically marginalized) students”. As defined in statute, an at-risk student is one who has an academic or economic disadvantage that requires assistance or special services to succeed in educational programs. The term includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Students not meeting minimum standards of academic proficiency,
- Students who are at risk of dropping out of high school,

- Students in chronically low-performing schools, students with higher than average disciplinary sanctions,
- Students with lower participation rates in advanced or gifted programs,
- Students who are limited in English proficiency,
- Students who are members of economically disadvantaged families, and
- Students identified as having special educational needs.

The demographics of students enrolled in charter schools during the 2021-22 school year (Table 5) indicate that, for the most part, the Washington charter public schools serve systemically marginalized students at a rate higher than the home school districts.

Key Developments for Charter School Authorizers

Charter School Commission – Authorizer Developments

Fourteen CSC authorized charter public schools were in operation during the 2021-22 school year, which represents an increase of four schools from the 2020-21 school year. All of the CSC authorized charter schools were subject to stringent oversight from the CSC and the OSPI.

Impact Commencement Bay ES, Whatcom Intergenerational High School, Pinnacles Prep, Pullman Community Montessori, and Why Not You Academy commenced operation in the 2021-22 school year. Fourteen public charter schools are in operation for the 2021-22 school year through CSC authorization. Two additional schools are approved and scheduled to commence operations for the 2022-23 school year.

The Commission completed a renewal process for Rainier Valley Leadership Academy and Summit Atlas. Rainier Valley Leadership was renewed for a full five years, while Summit Atlas was renewed for two years with conditions. In the 2021-22 school year, the Commission’s portfolio of 14 schools served approximately 3,900 students.

- Like this report, the Commission was unable to report on the operational charter public school’s financial performance for the 2021-22 school year because the OSPI had not yet completed and made available school financial analyses and the State Auditor’s Office (SAO) had not yet completed the required accountability audits. The Commission committed to updating the authorizer report later in 2023 once the financial statement audits have been received and analyzed. In lieu of the 2021-22 charter public school financial data, the Commission provided the SBE with 2020-21 data.

Using the 2020-21 financials, the CSC determined that Catalyst Public School was the only school not meeting standard on the enrollment variance measure of the Financial Performance Framework. The enrollment variance indicates whether the school is meeting its enrollment projections. A school that does not meet its enrollment targets may not be able to meet its budgeted expenses. As enrollment is a key driver of revenue, variance is important to track the

sufficiency of revenues generated to fund ongoing operations. All other CSC charter schools met standard for all of the other financial performance measures.

Summit Public Schools Washington

In March 2022, the State Auditor issued [three accountability audit reports](#) with findings for the Summit Public Schools, one report each for Summit Atlas, Summit Olympus, and Summit Sierra for the 2019-20 school year. For each of the Summit Charter Schools, two findings were identified.

1. Students were taught by non-certificated teachers, which resulted in the school receiving unallowable funding.
2. The charter public school's Board of Directors did not fully comply with the requirements for timely review and approval of payments.

After the Auditor found that the schools failed to obtain temporary licenses for teachers applying for Washington certification, the state Charter Commission shortened [the renewal of Summit Atlas' charter](#) from five to two years and attached several other conditions to the operating agreement.

On October 10, 2022, the State Auditor issued reports for Summit Atlas and Summit Sierra. The finding for each of the schools was that students were taught in the 2020-21 school year by non-certificated teachers, which resulted in the school receiving unallowable funding. Due to the timing of the prior audit recommendations, the local school board could not take steps to address the certification issues for the 2020-21 school year.

Impact | Puget Sound Elementary School

In May 2022, a local news series came out alleging that Impact | Puget Sound Elementary School was not providing services for English learners, students with a disability, and highly capable students, and raising questions about the school's grade retention policy. The news report consisted largely of excerpts from parent interviews describing incidences or events supporting the allegations. The journalist interviewed selected parents, school staff, school leaders, and other education advocates for the story.

In mid-June, the Charter School Commission initiated an inquiry into concerns at Impact Public Schools regarding the allegations. The Letter of Inquiry is the first step when the Commission receives information indicating there may be a violation of the school's charter contract or the law. The Commission informed legislators of the inquiry and issued a [press release](#) to further broaden awareness of the actions it was taking to hold Impact Public Schools accountable.

In the spring 2022, the OSPI received two community complaints from parents of students enrolled in Impact Puget Sound regarding the delivery of special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Following a comprehensive investigation into the allegations, the OSPI directed the school to comply with two separate corrective actions, which were combined into one corrective action plan. At the time of this writing, the OSPI

confirmed that Puget Sound ES complied with one of the corrective actions and the second corrective action was ongoing and will continue to be in effect until completion.

As part of its ongoing inquiry into Impact Public Schools, the Commission contracted with a third-party consultant, Flint Educational Consulting, to conduct a review of special education services and delivery at all three Impact schools. At the beginning of November 2022, Flint Educational Consulting delivered a report to the Commission on the condition of the special education program at Impact Puget Sound.

In September 2022, the Commission posted [materials](#) in consideration for Impact Puget Sound ES's contract renewal, and opened the public comment period. Additional materials were posted on a rolling basis until the Commission's renewal resolution vote. The additional materials included the 2022 Supplemental performance report for Impact Puget Sound that included observations and recommendations from the Flint Consulting report to the Commission's website. With respect to the provision of special education services, the Commission's report found:

- "Impact | PSE is welcoming of students with disabilities.
- Impact | PSE serves a much lower percentage of students with disabilities than do neighboring districts, and the school is still developing strategies for recruiting and retaining students with disabilities.
- Impact | PSE faces some challenges with respect to special education. These challenges appear to be capacity related.
- Any prospective shift in Impact | PSE's special education services to being entirely self-managed is not imminent and therefore not material to the current charter renewal cycle."

It is evident that the dissatisfaction voiced by parents and guardians with the delivery of special education services at Impact Puget Sound was investigated by the OSPI and addressed through a Corrective Action Plan. It is also evident that the Commission took the community complaints and Corrective Action Plan from OSPI seriously into account in making a renewal decision for Impact Puget Sound. [The Commission approved](#) Impact Puget Sound in February 2023 for a two-year renewal contract (shorter than the typical five-year renewal), along with required conditions. The conditions required Impact to fully resolve the OSPI Corrective Action Plan on time and to report quarterly to the Commission on this matter. In addition, the conditions required Impact to develop and deliver special education services to improve:

- the process for initiating and documenting referrals of students for special education evaluation,
- the scope, content and format of IEPs, including specially-designed instruction and accommodations,
- the MTSS/RTI process as it pertains to students with disabilities,
- special education-related professional development for co-teaching, specially designed instruction, and curricular programs at Impact Puget Sound; and
- Board engagement with the school community such as through surveys and community meetings.

Spokane Public Schools – Authorizer Developments

During the 2021-22 school year, two district-authorized charter schools (PRIDE Prep and Lumen High School) were in operation. These schools were subject to oversight from the Spokane PS and the OSPI.

PRIDE Prep served over 500 students in the 6th through 12th grades in the 2021-22 school year. In the 2019-20 school year, PRIDE Prep began to have challenges in meeting certain performance indicators, but the implementation of action plans and increased monitoring lowered the authorizer's concerns. PRIDE Prep is working closely with the Spokane PS to improve areas of academic and financial concern. Because of the school's low academic performance on the winter 2020 WSIF, PRIDE Prep did not meet the Washington State academic performance requirements. PRIDE Prep was notified in their Renewal Report of their ineligibility for renewal status under RCW 28A.710.200 (2), unless they were able to demonstrate exceptional circumstances that the Authorizer finds justifiable. PRIDE Prep submitted a response to demonstrate exceptional circumstances on June 15, 2020, as well as a renewal application on July 1, 2020. The Spokane charter school authorizer determined that PRIDE Prep demonstrated exceptional circumstances that were deemed justifiable, and the PRIDE Prep charter contract was renewed on July 1, 2021 and will be in effect through June 2024.

Lumen High School commenced operations for the 2020-21 school year under partial COVID-related pandemic closures but delivered in-person instruction for the full 2021-22 school year. Lumen High School is in downtown Spokane and serves pregnant and parenting teens in Spokane and the surrounding community. Lumen High School enrolled 39 students in grades 9 through 12 for the fall 2021 count day, which was lower than anticipated. The school intends to serve 120 students at full capacity.

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) made effective for the 2021-22 fiscal year a new reporting standard (GASB 87), requiring governmental organizations (including charter schools) to change the accounting of operating leases. This new accounting standard requires the capitalization of the net present value of each school's facilities lease, and for that amount to be presented as long-term debt on the F-196. The capitalization of each district's facilities lease caused both of the Spokane PS charter schools' debt to asset ratios to be higher than the ratio specified in the benchmark. Charter schools budget for lease obligations annually and in multi-year forecasting. The required change has greatly affected the long-term debt reported by each charter school. As a result, both PRIDE and Lumen are not meeting their debt to asset ratio financial performance benchmarks. SPS recommends additional funding for school facility construction or acquisition, as this would greatly assist with charter school fiscal stability.

Funding Sufficiency for Charter Schools

In recent years, the legislature acted to increase state funding for education and eliminate school district reliance on local levy funds for basic education. The legislature intends that state funding for charter schools be distributed equitably with state funding provided for other public

schools (RCW 28A.710.280(1)), but RCW 28A.710.030(3) does not entitle public charter schools to receive local levy funds. Charter schools receive state funding as specified through the prototypical school funding model on the same basis as traditional school districts although the monies originate from a different funding source.

Charter schools must report student enrollment to the OSPI in the same manner and based on the same definitions of enrolled students and annual average full-time equivalent enrollment as other public schools. OSPI allocates funding for charter schools including general apportionment, special education, categorical, and other non-basic education moneys in the same manner and based on the same funding formulas as school districts in the state. While the equitable funding of charter schools is the intent of the legislature, the charter schools are not entitled to any local levy funds, nor do the schools have access to facilities or capital bonds, as do traditional public schools.

Charter schools face three unique funding challenges with regard to funding.

- **Startup funding:** because funding is provided to charter schools based on enrollment, there are substantial front-end costs that must be addressed through other sources (e.g., private philanthropy, local fundraising, federal grants, or some combination of these sources). This makes it challenging for schools to start-up, particularly as schools move from the planning phase to implementation, finding and outfitting a space, and hiring staff.
- **Capital funding:** charter schools do not have access to local bonds or state capital funds typically used to finance the purchase of land and school construction. As a result, charter schools generally acquire leased space paid for through their operating budget. Per WA Charters and the CDC and because of the manner in which charter school funds are allotted, charter schools spend a substantial portion of their basic education allocation on facilities, which results in a reduction of the monies available to support teaching and learning.
- **Authorizer oversight fee:** Charter schools receive an allotment through the OSPI based on student enrollment and the prototypical school funding model. For the purposes of the funding allotment, each charter public school is a local education agency. The state funding allotment, and any private funds received by the school must cover both capital and all operating costs. A portion of the per pupil funding allotment (three percent for both the CSC and Spokane PS authorizers) is also provided to the authorizer for specified oversight purposes outlined in RCW [28A.710.100](#).
- **Timing of apportionment payments:** Another concern identified by Spokane PS subsequent to their 2019 annual report relates to disbursement policies rather than sufficiency. A challenge stems from the fact that apportionment is paid out unevenly across the 12 months. School districts receive a lower amount from the state in November and May because they receive tax levy dollars in those months, but charter public schools do not receive levy funds. This creates a significant cash flow challenge for

charter school LEAs. These disparate payment percentages can result in a charter school LEA appearing to fail to meet financial performance indicators in those two months, where they would otherwise meet the indicators if the apportionment payment percentages were the same across all months.

- **Debt ratio calculation:** the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) made effective a new reporting requirement (GASB 87) in the 2021-22 school year, whereby governmental organizations (including charter schools) are required a change in reporting of operating lease. This new accounting standard implemented requires the capitalization of the net present value of each school's facilities lease, and for that amount to be presented as long-term debt on the F-196. The capitalization of each charter schools' facilities lease caused both schools' debt to asset ratios to be higher than the ratio specified in the benchmark. This change greatly affected the long-term debt reported by each charter school, causing both PRIDE and Lumen to not meet their debt to asset ratio financial performance benchmarks.

Summary of Findings on Revenues and Expenditures

As was noted in the authorizer reports, these findings are based on the 2020-21 school year because the 2021-22 fiscal information had not yet been made publicly available on the OSPI website at the time of this writing.

- In the 2020-21 school year, per student revenue for nearly all of the charter schools is approximately \$2,000 to \$6,000 lower than the home district when the Outside revenues (gifts, grants, donations, and support from foundations) are excluded.
- The charter school LEAs per student average expenditure was a little lower than the home school district average expenditure (approximately \$15,800 vs. \$17,150) even after considering access to outside grant funding and donations. However, the categorical spending by the charter school LEAs and home school districts are considerably different.
 - The charter school LEA Administration expenditures are more than double the home school districts (approximately \$4,800 vs. \$2,200 per student).
 - The charter school LEA per student expenditures attributed to Maintenance and Operations are substantially higher than that of the home school districts (\$1,855 vs. \$1,239).
 - The charter school LEA per student expenditures attributed to Teaching are substantially lower than the Teaching costs for the home school district (approximately \$8,850 vs. \$12,400).

SBE Review of Revenues

The SBE examined the 2020-21 revenues and expenditures reported on the OSPI Student Apportionment and Fiscal Services ([SAFS](#)) [website](#) for the charter LEAs and the home school districts. The most up to date version of the allocation of state funding to support the

instructional program of basic education is described in [RCW 28A.150.260](#). The basic education allocation or allotment is a dollar amount derived from the prototypical school model based on school district full time enrollment by grade level, and distributed to school districts each month throughout the year. This review is limited to revenues coming from state, local and other sources and intentionally excludes the revenue contributions from federal sources.

The conclusions drawn from this preliminary evaluation of the efficacy of funding of charter schools are limited, and the reader should bear in mind that the level of comparison available is not equivalent. Each charter school is a Local Educational Agency (LEA), which in many respects is roughly equivalent to a school district for OSPI SAFS reporting. This means that for fiscal reporting, per pupil revenue (or expenditure) for a charter school is compared to per pupil revenue (or expenditure) for a school district. Such a comparison has the potential to be misleading in at least a couple of ways:

- A charter school serving high school grades (for example) is compared to a school district serving all grade levels. High school grades get a greater allocation than other grade levels, so it might appear that a charter high school is receiving a larger allocation than the home school district when, in fact, the per student allocation for the high school students is roughly equivalent.
- Individual charter school enrollment ranges from approximately 100 to 500 students, whereas the home districts for the majority of charter schools (Seattle PS, Spokane PS, and Tacoma SD) serve 30,000 to 55,000 students. When considering per student expenditures, regular school districts benefit from economy of scale as compared to the standalone charter school LEAs.

For purposes here, the following discussion uses the concept of “per pupil” and “per student” interchangeably. In addition, per student or per pupil revenues and expenditures are computed using the total dollar amount for a category divided by the number of full-time enrollment (FTE) reported by the OSPI on the SAFS webpage. The full-time enrollment will differ from the official count day enrollment data provided by the OSPI on the Washington State Report Card.

The OSPI publication titled [Organization and Financing of Washington’s Public Schools](#) provides an overview of the manner in which K-12 public schooling is funded. The document describes the changes to how school districts were funded for school staff salaries in the 2017 and 2018 legislative sessions by the Washington Legislature. Most importantly, the document explains how the Legislature discontinued the “staff mix” factor after the 2017–18 school year and no longer provides funding to each school district for teacher salary and benefits tied to the teachers’ education level and certificated years of experience.

For this analysis, revenues are described as coming from State sources, Local sources, or Outside sources. State revenues are subdivided into General Purpose Apportionment or Special Purpose revenue (Table 18). The State General Purpose Apportionment revenue represents the sum the basic apportionment, and add-ins for special education and for local effort assistance. The State

Special Purpose revenue represents the sum of monies for special education services, learning assistance, bilingual education, highly capable services, food services, transportation operations, and other line items. In 2020-21, some school districts received additional state funding (e.g. infant special education funds, institutional, child-care funding, pilot program funding, funding from other state agencies, and other assigned state monies) that the charter schools did not receive.

- Across the state and excluding federal funding sources, approximately 75 to 85 percent of the total per student revenue for school districts and charter school LEAs come from the State General Purpose and the State Special Purpose Apportionment. The remaining 15 to 25 percent of the total per student revenue for the charter school LEAs most often comes from other Outside sources and Local sources for the home school districts.
- The state apportionment is similar for the charter school LEAs and the home school districts, typically ranging from approximately \$10K to \$13K per student. Regarding the total State revenue (per student average), the apportionment for four charter schools is similar to the home school district, five charter school LEAs are lower than the home school district, and three charter school LEAs are higher than the home school district.

Table 18: summary of revenues (expressed as per pupil dollars) for the 2020-21 school year for the charter school LEAs and the home school districts.

District (LEA) Name	Total State Revenue \$/Pupil	Total Local* Revenue \$/Pupil	Outside** Revenue \$/Pupil	Total Revenue Includes Outside** \$/Pupil	Total Revenue Excludes Outside** \$/Pupil
Catalyst	12,540.	35	907	13,481	11,668
Bremerton SD	13,256	2,498	23	15,777	15,731
Rainier Prep	11,421	1,677	1,661	14,759	11,437
Highline SD	13,161	2,656	65	15,881	15,752
Summit Sierra	11,075	95	2,647	13,817	8,524
Summit Atlas	11,940	62	3,088	15,090	8,915
Rainier Valley	20,679	848	4,869	26,396	16,659
Seattle PS	12,344	3,384	193	15,922	15,536
Spokane Inter.	10,905	79	391	11,376	10,593
Lumen HS**	40,172	3,707	12,090	55,969	31,789
PRIDE Prep	10,264	71	175	10,510	10,161
Spokane PS	12,079	1,638	71.	13,788	13,646
Summit Olympus	12,760	129	3,517	16,407	9,372
Tacoma SD	12,080	2,770	26	14,877	14,824
Impact Puget Sound	13,463	2	1	13,465	13,464
Impact Salish Sea	12,896	1	-	12,897	12,897
Tukwila SD	13,195	2,812.	241	16,247	15,766

*Note: total Local revenue amount excludes Outside revenues (Source Category 2500 - Gifts, Grants and Donations). **Note: Outside revenue includes Gifts, Grants and Donations (Source Category 2500 – Local Non-Tax Source) and support from Foundations (Source Category 8200 – Other Financial Revenues). **Note: the large per pupil dollar amount for Lumen HS results from the combination of low enrollment, state enhancements for small secondary schools, and significant revenue from Outside sources described immediately above.

Local and Other revenues are divided into Local Property Tax, Local Non-Tax, and Other revenue categories by the OSPI. The Local Property Tax is just that, with small contributions from sale of property and timber excise tax. The Local Non-Tax is a broad category, in which the revenue is the sum of miscellaneous tuition/fees, childcare tuition/fees, sales of good/services, school food sales, and the grouping of gifts, grants, and donations. The Other revenue is a catchall that includes monies from other governmental agencies, equipment sales, money transfers, and monies from private foundations. For this analysis, the grouping of gifts, grants, and donations and monies from private foundations is broken out as a separate revenue source (Outside Revenues) and described in the next section.

- Across the state, approximately 15 percent of the total per student revenue for a school district comes from the Local Tax and Local Non-Tax, categories. An average of two percent of the total per student revenue for a charter school LEA comes from the Local Tax and Local Non-Tax categories
- The average student support from the Local and Other revenue source is approximately \$2500 for the home school districts and is approximately \$151 for the charter LEAs

Funding of School Staff

The state allocates funding for charter school LEAs in the same manner and based on the same prototypical funding formulas as the traditional public school districts. Charter schools report enrollments to the OSPI in the same manner as the public school districts, and then the enrollments are used to compute the annual average full-time equivalent number of students, which dictates the number of allocated certificated instructional, certificated administrative and classified staff units. Based on the FTE and the corresponding staff determination, money is transferred to the school district or LEA at regular intervals throughout the school year.

State salary allocations are updated annually as necessary to provide market-rate salaries throughout the state, while regionalization adjustments are applied to reflect economic differences between school districts, such as housing costs for staff. Districts with median residential value exceeding the statewide average receive a regionalization factor of 1.00 to 1.24 in 0.06 increments.

Certificated instructional staff (CIS) unit salary allocations are calculated by multiplying the statewide salary allocation rate for CIS (\$68,937 for 2021-22) times the school district's regionalization factor for that school year. Beginning in the 2019–20 school year, a 0.04 experience factor added for school districts with above-average education and experience for their certificated instructional staff.

School districts and charter schools are provided a predetermined amount of revenue for each staffing unit, but may actually staff a school differently. For example, the prototypical school model might allocate \$690K for 10 classroom teachers (\$68,937 x 10) and the school might choose to employ 12 teachers with lesser experience at an average salary of \$50K per year for a total expense of \$600K. It would be acceptable to do this and use the remaining \$90K for other expenses such as facilities costs. School districts and charter schools are afforded considerable latitude in the manner in which they spend their allocations, which has the potential to create substantial salary disparities between charter schools and the home school districts (Table 19).

- With a couple of exceptions, the average total salary for charter school instructional staff is approximately \$3,000 to \$41,000 lower than the salary allocation from the state.
- The average total salary for charter school instructional staff is approximately \$15,000 to \$61,000 lower than the average total salary paid by the home school district.

Table 19: shows the 2021-22 instructional staff salary allocation, average salary and differences by charter school and home school district.

Organization	Regionalization Adjustment (RA)* 2022	Salary Allocation Includes RA 2022	Average Total Salary 2022	Allocation vs. Salary Difference* 2022	Charter/Home District Difference* 2022
Whatcom IHS	1.10	\$75,870	\$70,523	-\$5,347	-\$27,586
Bellingham SD	1.10	\$75,870	\$98,109	\$22,239	
Catalyst	1.18	\$81,346	\$53,305	-\$28,041	-\$42,254
Bremerton SD	1.18	\$81,346	\$95,559	\$14,213	
Rainier Prep	1.18	\$79,750	\$75,738	-\$4,012	-\$18,167
Why Not You	1.18	81,346	\$72,422	-\$8,946	-\$21,483
Highline SD	1.18	\$81,346	\$93,905	\$12,559	
Spokane International	1.04	\$70,964	\$58,690	-\$12,274	-\$34,374
Mead SD	1.04	\$70,964	\$93,064	\$22,100	
Pullman Comm. Montessori	1.00	\$68,937	\$55,727	-\$13,210	-\$19,645
Pullman SD	1.00	\$68,937	\$75,372	\$6,435	
Summit Sierra	1.18	\$81,346	\$75,395	-\$5,951	-\$20,953
Summit Atlas	1.18	\$81,346	\$81,188	-\$158	-\$15,160
Rainier Valley	1.18	\$81,346	\$64,282	-\$17,064	-\$32,066
Seattle PS	1.18	\$81,346	\$96,348	\$15,002	
Lumen HS	1.04	\$71,694	\$67,905	-\$3,789	-\$22,666
PRIDE Prep	1.04	\$71,694	\$66,381	-\$5,313	-\$24,190
Spokane PS	1.04	\$71,694	\$90,571	\$18,877	
Impact Commence. Bay	1.12	\$77,209	\$46,276	-\$30,993	-\$56,117

Organization	Regionalization Adjustment (RA)* 2022	Salary Allocation Includes RA 2022	Average Total Salary 2022	Allocation vs. Salary Difference* 2022	Charter/Home District Difference* 2022
Summit Olympus	1.12	\$77,209	\$79,588	\$2,379	-\$22,775
Tacoma SD	1.12	\$77,209	\$102,363	\$25,154	
Impact Puget Sound	1.18	\$81,346	\$40,129	-\$41,217	-\$61,517
Impact Salish Sea	1.18	\$81,346	\$40,846	-\$40,500	-\$60,800
Tukwila SD	1.18	\$81,346	\$101,646	\$20,300	
Pinnacles Prep		\$71,694	\$68,604	-\$3,090	-\$19,009
Wenatchee SD	1.04	\$71,694	\$87,613	\$15,919	

Note: the 2022 Regionalization Adjustment includes the experience adjustment, which was 0.00 for these home school districts and LEAs. The Allocation vs. Salary Difference is computed as the Average Total Salary minus the Salary Allocation for 2022. A negative value means the Average Total Salary was lower than the Salary Allocation. A positive value means the Average Total Salary was greater than the Salary Allocation. The Charter/Home District Difference is computed as the charter school Average Total Salary minus the home school district Average Total Salary for 2022. A negative difference means that the Average Total Salary for the charter school was lower than the Average Total Salary for the home school district. Modified from the [OSPI Personnel Summary Reports](#).

Outside Revenues: Grants, Donations, and Gifts for Charter Schools

Outside revenues includes monies from gifts, grants, and donations (source category = 2500) and private foundations (source category = 8200). This Outside revenue source is examined separately, an approach endorsed by the CSC in previous charter school reports. While the Outside revenues can be substantial for some charter schools (Table 20), the revenue source is most often awarded for a limited period and designated for a specific purpose (e.g. start-up costs or building improvements). For example, the Washington Charter School Association (CSA) was awarded nearly \$20M through the federal Charter Schools Program Grant. Most of the monies will be sub-granted to schools for supporting the opening of new charter schools and expanding existing high-quality charter schools. Beginning in July 2020, the CSA awarded grants totaling \$1.25M to \$1.5M to [10 charter schools](#) opening or expanding school operations. These types of grants can increase revenues and expenditures by more than \$3000 per student per year but are limited in scope and duration.

- Across the state, approximately \$45 (0.3 percent of the total) per student revenue for a school district comes from Outside sources.
- For the charter school LEAs and for the 2020-21 school year and excluding an outlier, an average of approximately \$1827 (13 percent on the total) per student revenue comes from Outside sources.

Table 20: shows some examples of the contributions, grants, and donations provided to charter schools. These do not include monies for charter schools from an affiliated charter management organization.

Charter School LEA	Fiscal Year Ending	Contributions and Grants
Rainier Valley	August 2019	\$11,857,412
Spokane International	August 2020	\$3,408,295
PRIDE Prep	August 2020	\$223,328
Rainier Prep	August 2020	\$810,916
Catalyst Public School	December 2020	\$1,467,227
Lumen High School	December 2020	\$805,381
Impact Public Schools	July 2020	\$2,829,459
Pinnacles Prep	December 2020	\$568,553
Pullman Community Montessori	December 2020	\$267,858
Rooted School	March 2021	\$1,500,000
Why Not You Academy	April 2021	\$1,300,000
Whatcom IHS	April 2021	\$1,300,000
Spokane International	April 2021	\$1,250,000

Note: charter school LEAs awarded grants of \$1.25M to \$1.5M from the Washington Charter School Association in spring 2021. Contribution and grant data come from the organizations' IRS Form 990 filing.

Total Revenue (Excluding Outside Revenue)

This preliminary analysis does not include Federal revenues, which increases revenues by an average of approximately \$1,900 per pupil to the total revenue for the home school districts and \$2,545 per pupil for the charter school LEAs. This amount represents approximately 11 percent of the total revenue for home school districts and 14 percent of the total for charter school LEAs.

This category includes State and Local revenue, while excluding Outside (gifts, grants, and donations (source category = 2500) and Private Foundations (source category = 8200)) revenues (Table 21). The charter school LEAs received an average revenue of approximately \$11,800 per student, while the home school districts yield an average of approximately \$15,000. Per student, revenue for most of the charter schools is approximately \$2,000 to \$6,000 lower than the home district after excluding the Outside revenues.

Table 21: summary of the 2020-21 per pupil revenues for school district and charter school LEAs. Dollar amounts shown are the average for home school districts and charter school LEAs.

Group	Total State Revenue \$/Pupil	Total Local* Revenue \$/Pupil	Outside** Revenue \$/Pupil	Total Revenue Includes Outside** \$/Pupil	Total Revenue Excludes Outside** \$/Pupil
Charter School LEAs	13,135	151	1,827	15,086	11,763
Home School Districts	12,571	2,532	94	15,195	15,009
Washington	11,378	2,070	45	13,493	13,403

Note: the Total Local Revenue for charter school LEAs does not include the data for Innovations School, which was identified as an outlier.

SBE Review of Expenditures

Charter school LEA and school district expenditures are broken out into the categories of expenses attributed to Administration, Teaching, Maintenance and Operations, School Food Service, Student Transportation, and Other expenses (Table 22).

Administration expenditures include costs attributed to the board of directors, superintendent’s office, business office, human resources, public relations, supervision of instruction, school principal’s office, and supervision of food services, transportation, and maintenance and operations. The home school districts expend approximately \$2,195 (13 percent of the total) per student on administration, while the charter school LEAs expend approximately \$4,819 per student (32 percent of the per student total) on administration. Lumen High School posted the highest administration expenses (approximately \$16,100 per student), which was identified as an outlier and was excluded from the calculation of averages.

The Teaching expenditures include a wide range of activities attributed to instruction, which include but are not limited to learning resources, guidance and counseling, student health services, classroom instruction, extracurricular activities, professional learning, and curriculum. The charter school LEAs reported teaching expenditures far less than the home school districts (approximately \$8,850 vs. \$12,400) per student. All of the charter school LEAs spent approximately \$1,000 to \$5,300 per student less than the home school district.

The Maintenance and Operations expenditure category includes activities such as grounds maintenance, operations of buildings, building maintenance, cost of utilities, and costs attributed to building and property security. On average, the charter school LEAs spend approximately \$1,855 per student, as compared to \$1,239 per student for the home school districts. The home school districts spend approximately 7.2 percent of total expenditures on Maintenance and Operations, while the charter school LEAs rate was 12.2 percent of the total per student expenditures.

Table 22: summary of expenditures (expressed as per pupil dollars) for the 2020-21 school year for the charter school LEAs and the home school districts.

District (LEA) Name	Total Admin. \$/Pupil	Total Teaching \$/Pupil	Maintenance Operations \$/Pupil	School Food Service \$/Pupil	Student Transport. \$/Pupil	Other \$/Pupil	Total \$/Pupil
Catalyst	4,432	9,936	1,044	1,057	81	285	16,834
Bremerton SD	2,270	12,543	1,244	451	332	655	17,495
Rainier Prep	3,241	8,930	867	299	506	105	13,948
Highline SD	2,331	12,908	1,143	304	223	535	17,445
Summit Sierra	4,125	8,388	1,313	171	35	101	14,134
Summit Atlas	4,601	8,762	1,458	129	304	104	15,358
Rainier Valley	7,926	12,145	4,262	353	324	647	25,658
Seattle PS	2,334	13,498	1,412	293	345	505	18,387
Lumen HS*	16,147	26,105	13,386	364	106	1,433	57,541
PRIDE Prep	1,949	6,316	1,515	285	796	254	11,115
Spokane Intl.	2,407	7,168	2,833	818	386	288	13,899
Spokane PS	1,631	11,639	1,024	486	328	643	15,750
Summit Olympus	5,832	8,772	2,081	657	8	136	17,485
Tacoma SD	2,341	11,978	1,247	427	305	522	16,820
Impact Puget Sound	3,112	7,180	2,150	389	125	156	13,112
Impact Salish Sea	6,057	9,815	537	72	52	50	16,583
Tukwila SD	2,364	13,488	1,308	420	250	644	18,473

Note: school district and LEA expenditures exceed the revenues shown on Table 21 because the revenue amounts do not include federal funds and cash on hand at the start of the school year. *Outliers (Lumen HS) are not included in the Charter school average expenditure calculations.

The School Food Service expenditure category includes the cost of school food and food service operations. The home school districts spent approximately \$398 (2.3 percent of the total) per student on School Food Service, which is similar to the state average of \$323 (2.1 percent of the total) per student. The charter school LEAs spent a little more on school food service \$509 (3.4 percent of the total) per student.

The Student Transportation expenditure category includes costs attributed to transportation operations, maintenance, and insurance. The charter school LEAs spent an average of approximately \$241 (1.6 percent of the total) per student on transportation, while the home school districts spent approximately \$290 (1.7 percent of the total) per student on transportation.

The catchall category of Other expenditures includes but is not limited to costs attributed to certain insurance, information systems, printing, warehousing/distribution, motor pool, interest, principal, debt service, and public activities. Most of the charter school LEAs spend

approximately \$50 to \$1,100 (0.3 to 4.5 percent of the total) per student expenditures and the home school districts spend an average of approximately \$610 per student representing 3.6 percent of the total per student expenditures.

Total Expenditures

In the 2020-21 school year, the charter school LEAs expended approximately \$15,813 per student (Table 23), which is approximately \$1,300 lower than the home school districts expenditure of approximately \$17,147. Charter school LEA per student costs attributed to Administration are more than double that of the home school districts (\$4,819 vs. \$2,195). The charter school LEA per student costs attributed to Teaching are far less than the costs for the home school district (\$8,849 vs. \$12,416). The charter school LEA per student costs attributed to Maintenance and Operations are approximately 50 percent higher than that of the home school districts (\$1,855 vs. \$1,239). The expenditures related to Food Service, Student Transportation, and Other expenses for charter school LEAs (\$1,042 total) and home school districts (\$1,298 total) are similar.

Table 23: summary of the 2020-21 per pupil expenditures for home school district and charter school LEAs. Dollar amounts shown are the average for home school districts and charter school LEAs.

Group	Total Admin \$/Pupil	Total Teaching \$/Pupil	Maintenance Operations \$/Pupil	School Food Service \$/Pupil	Student Transport. \$/Pupil	Other \$/Pupil	Total \$/Pupil
Charter School LEAs	4,819	8,849	1,855	509	241	292	15,813
Home School Districts	2,195	12,416	1,239	398	290	610	17,147
Washington	1,982	11,475	1,069	324	388	480	15,719

Charter school LEAs must budget for an expenditure not applicable to the traditional public school districts, the authorizer oversight fee. In the 2020-21 school year and as provided for in RCW 28A.710.110, the CSC collected three percent of the state funds allocated to the charter schools under the CSC authority and Spokane Public Schools. The authorizer must use the oversight fee exclusively for fulfilling the authorizer’s duties specified in statute, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Soliciting, evaluating, and approving charter applications,
- Monitoring the performance and legal compliance of charter schools,
- Determining whether each charter contract merits renewal, nonrenewal, or revocation.

Equitable Funding of Charter Schools

Two of the 21 essential components comprising the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools' model law are: 1) equitable operational funding and equal access to all state and federal categorical funding, and 2) equitable access to capital funding and facilities. Washington's Charter School Act is rated low on both of these components.

Equitable operational funding and equal access to all state and federal categorical funding is an important element of the model law. An equitable model means monies flow to the school in a timely fashion and in the same amount as district schools following eligibility criteria similar to all other public schools. The state's low rating likely reflects lower per student revenues resulting from the lack of a local (levy) funding stream. On a Likert-type (0 to 6) rating scale with "6" being the best, Washington was rated a "1". Exemplars include Colorado, Illinois, New Mexico, and Utah.

Equitable access to capital funding and facilities, including multiple provisions such as facilities funding, access to public space, and access to financing tools. On the "0" to "6" rating scale with a higher number indicating more equitable access, again, Washington was rated as a "1". Exemplars include California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, New Mexico, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah.

Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah are highlighted as exemplars of states providing equitable operation funding, equal access to all state and federal categorical funding, equitable access to capital funding, and equitable access to facility financing tools. More research is needed to learn more about exactly what sets the exemplars apart from lower rated state systems, like ours.

Efficacy of the Funding for Charter School Authorizers

In accordance with RCW 28A.710.110, the SBE has, through rulemaking, established a statewide formula for an authorizer oversight fee, not to exceed four percent of each charter school's annual funding ([WAC 180-19-060](#)). Under the new rule, the SBE sets the authorizer fee annually in consultation with the authorizers. The authorizer fee for the 2021-22 school year was set at three percent for both of the charter school authorizers.

State law (RCW 28A.710.110 (4)) stipulates that an authorizer must use its oversight fee exclusively for fulfilling its charter school authorizing duties (under RCW 28A.710.100). The Spokane PS suggests a statutory change that would allow more flexibility in the allowable uses of the authorizer fee to enable the authorizer to assist the charter schools in areas of mutual benefit to both the authorizer and the school if excess funds are available.

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools cites Washington as an exemplar on the topic of adequate authorizer funding. Having a uniform statewide formula that guarantees annual

authorizer funding that is not subject to annual legislative appropriations. The January 2021 rule change should not negatively affect Washington’s exemplar status because the authorizer fee cannot fall below a certain level and is mutually agreed upon by the authorizer and the SBE.

Section III - Recommended Changes to State Law or Policy

Charter School Commission

The Washington Charter School Commission provided two specific recommendations in order to improve the Charter School Act.

Washington State Charter School Commission Recommendations
Support any legislation that would re-open the authorizing window for charter schools to operate in Washington State, meeting the intent of the original citizen initiative and subsequent Charter School Act passed by the legislature.
Continue to explore the sufficiency of charter public school funding in combination with an authorizer’s oversight fee. The oversight fee is a tax that only charter public school must pay and this increases the inequity of public funding between charter public schools and traditional public schools.

Spokane Public Schools Charter Authorizer

Potential changes to RCW 28A.710 that the Spokane Charter School Authorizer believes would strengthen the state’s charter schools and authorizing practices are as follow.

Spokane Charter School Authorizer Recommendations
28A.710.110(4): Increase the flexibility in the allowable use of the authorizer fee to enable the authorizer to assist the charter schools in areas of mutual benefit to both the authorizer and the school.
The timing of school district apportionment has lower payments in the months that levy dollars are received by traditional districts. Given charter schools do not receive levy dollars this creates cash flow challenges in those months. We would recommend evaluation and adjustment of the payment schedule and adjust the payment schedule to address cash flow challenges.
Both charters we authorize had previously reported their facilities lease as an operating lease. With the introduction of GASB 87, each charter school was required to capitalize their operating lease. This greatly affected the long-term debt reported by each charter school. As a result, both PRIDE Prep and Lumen are not meeting their debt to asset ratio financial performance benchmarks. We would recommend additional funding for school facility construction or acquisition, as this would greatly assist with charter school fiscal stability.

Over the most recent years, the Charter School Commission, Spokane Public School Authorizer, and the SBE have been identifying language in statute and rule that do not align with practice and a number of these were addressed in rule by the SBE. In January 2021, the Board approved changes to Chapter 180-19 WAC to align rule to current policy or practice, correct references to law, improve readability of the rule, align rule to SBE's recommendations in the annual charter

school report, and make other changes identified by staff in collaboration with authorizers. As adopted, the final rules streamline the application process for authorizers, transition to a performance based authorizer fee structure, and adjust reporting dates to align with recent legislation.

The [National Alliance for Public Charter Schools](#) ranks the Washington Charter School Act as one of the strongest in the nation, but highlights two major weaknesses. First, the law includes a cap of 40 charter schools over the first five years after enactment of the Charter School Act, and the window to authorize new charter schools closed in spring 2021. The second perceived weakness is in regards to the inequitable funding for students in public charter schools. These two weaknesses are central to the recommendations made this year and in previous years.

Authorizing Additional Charter Schools

Since the enactment of the 2016 Charter School Act, new charter schools opened in each school year and the total charter school total enrollment increased each year. In addition, approximately 1,200 students are on waiting lists to enroll in the charter schools currently operating. This is good evidence that parents and guardians continue to seek out alternatives to traditional public schools to find the best educational fit for their children. The Charter School Act allowed for the authorization of up to 40 schools within the first five years of the Act. After a handful of charter schools closed in the previous years, 16 charter schools operated in the 2021-22 school year. The count of operating charter schools is well below the cap of 40 schools authorized in statute.

During the 2021 and 2022 legislative sessions, legislation was introduced that would have extended the timeframe for establishing up to 40 total charter schools by another five years but the bills were unsuccessful. No bills have been introduced in the 2023 legislative session that would extend or reopen the authorization window. No additional charter schools will be approved or authorized unless the Legislature and the Governor pass and approve legislation to do so.

RECOMMENDATION 1: The SBE and CSC recommend that the window for authorization be extended to allow additional charter schools, up to 40 total, to operate in Washington.

Equitable Funding of Charter Schools

The SBE finds that charter schools face unique challenges with regard to funding due to lack of access to public funding for capital and lower appropriation per student due to a lack of access to local funding. The CSC continues to advocate for more equitable student apportionment and access to public funding for capital expenditures to ensure the sustainability of charter schools over time.

The SBE supports equitable funding for all Washington students in public schools. When the school apportionment model fails to include locally sourced levy funding for charter schools, charter school funding differs from and is lower than the funding of traditional public schools.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The SBE recommends a close examination of the sufficiency of charter school funding and approaches used in other states in order to bring about equitable educational funding for all students.

Authorizer Oversight Fees and Usage

Another focus of recommendations over the last several years centers on the authorizer oversight fees. In January 2021, the SBE finalized rules authorizing the SBE to adjust the authorizer oversight fee rate in consultation with the charter school authorizers. After consulting with authorizers, the SBE set the authorizer oversight fee rate and three percent for the 2021-22 school year, a decrease from the rate of four percent used in the previous school year.

While consulting with charter school authorizers, three additional issues arose regarding the authorizer oversight fees. The legislature could consider taking action to address the three issues briefly described below.

- Issue 1: What would be necessary to make it allowable for authorizers to use the authorizer oversight fees for purposes other than those specified in statute, provided the other purposes directly benefit the charter schools under its authority?
- Issue 2: When a charter school contract is transferred from one authorizer to another, how could it be made allowable for the originating authorizer to transfer all or a portion of unused authorizer fees to the receiving authorizer?
- Issue 3: The oversight fee is an expenditure unique to the charter schools that is diverted from the state apportionment. It would be more equitable if the charter schools were to receive the full apportionment for its students and the authorizers receive their authorizer fees directly through a state funding stream.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Explore options to create more flexibility in the use of authorizer fees and/or direct appropriation to cover charter school oversight fees paid to authorizers.

Other Recommendations

SBE recently hired a temporary contractor to review of all of WAC 180-19. The purpose of the review is to identify opportunities to clarify and streamline the WAC to ensure it aligns with current RCW and practice, and to remove unnecessary timelines and steps for approval and monitoring.

The timing of school district apportionment includes lower payments in the months that levy dollars are received by traditional districts. Given charter schools do not receive levy dollars this creates cash flow challenges in those months. The SBE and Spokane PS would recommend evaluation and adjustment of the payment schedule to address cash flow challenges.

Beginning in the 2021-22 fiscal year, GASB requires the capitalization of the net present value of each school's facilities lease, and for that amount to be presented as long-term debt on the F-196. The capitalization of Spokane's charter schools' facilities leases caused the schools' debt to asset ratios to be higher than the ratio specified in the charter school financial performance benchmark. The SBE and Spokane PS would recommend additional funding for school facility construction or acquisition, as this would greatly assist with charter school fiscal stability.

Appendix A: Detailed Performance Analysis

Part A: Academic Performance of the Charter Schools

On March 13, 2020, the Governor required the physical closure of all Washington school buildings as part of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Through a subsequent action on April 6, the Governor directed that both public and private schools remain physically closed through the regular 2019-20 school year. As a result, the OSPI cancelled spring 2020 summative statewide assessment administration after the [U.S. Department of Education \(ED\) approved](#) the OSPI waiver request on March 27.

Many K-12 schools remained physically closed for the fall 2020 start of school due to the COVID pandemic and remained closed into the winter 2021. Many schools began to open their doors to students for in-person instruction in January 2021, while continuing to offer online instruction for those opting to do so. On March 21, 2021, the OSPI submitted a proposal to ED to, among other things, administer the spring 2021 statewide summative assessment to a representative sample of students to minimize the health risks to students. The ED did not agree to the OSPI sampling plan but authorized the OSPI to administer the spring 2021 assessment in fall 2021 and to administer shortened assessments.

The fall 2021 assessment administration represents student outcomes for the 2020-21 school year, so students sat for the grade level assessment for the grade they were enrolled in for the 2020-21 school year. For the spring 2022 administration, students were assessed again, but this time on the grade level assessment in which they were currently enrolled. In the 2021-22 school year, students sat for the statewide assessments twice in the same school year, once in the fall 2021 and again in the spring 2022.

In the following tables, the percentage of students meeting standard on the content area assessments is shown for charter schools and their corresponding home school districts. To make the comparison more meaningful, the home school district data is for the same grade levels as the charter school. In other words, if a charter school tested students in the 7th and 8th grades only, the corresponding home school district data is also for the 7th and 8th grades only. In addition, the results for each are for the Smarter Balanced assessments and the Washington Comprehensive Assessments of Science (WCAS) only. Results from the WA-AIM are not included in the aggregations.

There were no reportable assessment results on the Washington State Report Card for Impact Commencement Bay ES, Impact Salish Sea ES, Lumen High School, and the Why Not You Academy.

Table A1: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Catalyst Public School and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 3, 5-7	Catalyst PS ELA	Catalyst PS Math	Catalyst PS Science	Bremerton SD ELA	Bremerton SD Math	Bremerton SD Science
All Students	57.5%	49.2%	44.4%	33.0%	24.3%	36.7%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	56.7%	42.2%	63.6%
Black or African American	27.3%	N.D.	N.D.	20.6%	<12.3%	15.8%
Hispanic or Latinx	61.5%	N.D.	N.D.	18.4%	14.3%	25.6%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	40.0	30.0%	N.D.%
White	62.2%	56.1%	50.0%	41.7%	31.5%	47.1%
Two or More Races	52.6%	21.1%	N.D.	31.1%	21.7%	27.5%
English Learners	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	<10%	<10%	<10%
Low-Income	53.6%	50.7%	46.2%	26.4%	17.9%	27.4%
Students with Disabilities	N.D.	35.7%	N.D.	<10%	<10%	7.7%

Notes: Catalyst PS is the shortened version of Catalyst Public School and Bremerton is the home school district. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A2: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Impact Puget Sound and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 3-4	Impact PS ELA	Impact PS Math	Impact PS Science	Tukwila SD ELA	Tukwila SD Math	Tukwila SD Science
All Students	56.8%	52.4%	N.D.	23.3%	20.9%	N.D.
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Asian	47.4%	47.4%	N.D.	30.4%	33.1%	N.D.
Black or African American	52.9%	51.5%	N.D.	19.7%	<15%	N.D.
Hispanic or Latinx	46.4%	35.7%	N.D.	15.8%	18.3%	N.D.
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	30.0%	<10%	N.D.
White	89.3%	78.6%	N.D.	26.3%	21.1%	N.D.
Two or More Races	60.0%	50.0%	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
English Learners	39.3%	37.5%	N.D.	12.8%	13.5%	N.D.
Low-Income	48.9%	45.4%	N.D.	19.6%	16.3%	N.D.
Students with Disabilities	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	<12.5%	<12.5%	N.D.

Notes: Impact PS is the shortened version of Impact | Puget Sound ES and the home school district is Tukwila. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A3: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Pinnacles Prep and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 6-7	Pinnacles Prep ELA	Pinnacles Prep Math	Pinnacles Prep Science	Wenatchee SD ELA	Wenatchee SD Math	Wenatchee SD Science
All Students	51.9%	33.0%	N.D.	42.3%	24.6%	N.D.
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Black or African American	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Hispanic or Latinx	35.5%	16.1%	N.D.	28.4%	13.4%	N.D.
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
White	56.9%	38.9%	N.D.	60.4%	39.7%	N.D.
Two or More Races	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	58.4%	36.7%	N.D.
English Learners	16.7%	<10%	N.D.	6.9%	<3%	N.D.
Low-Income	41.5%	18.9%	N.D.	30.3%	13.5%	N.D.
Students with Disabilities	<10%	<10%	N.D.	12.0%	<6.2%	N.D.

Notes: Pinnacles Prep is the shortened version of Pinnacles Prep Academy and the home school district is Wenatchee SD. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A4: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for PRIDE Prep and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 6-11	PRIDE Prep ELA	PRIDE Prep Math	PRIDE Prep Science	Spokane PS ELA	Spokane PS Math	Spokane PS Science
All Students	45.7%	23.8%	39.8%	48.5%	29.7%	36.1%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	29.0%	<12.8%	<11.5%
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	55.7%	41.1%	40.4%
Black or African American	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	30.8%	12.8%	19.0%
Hispanic or Latinx	42.1%	19.3%	28.6%	38.7%	18.3%	26.1%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	<14.3%	<7.5%	<7%
White	49.2%	24.6%	43.2%	54.1%	35.4%	41.7%
Two or More Races	37.0%	23.9%	34.6%	40.7%	20.5%	27.3%
English Learners	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	8.1%	<4.3%	<3.5%
Low-Income	41.6%	19.1%	36.6%	35.0%	16.9%	23.7%
Students with Disabilities	9.4%	<6%	18.4%	11.2%	5.2%	9.3%

Notes: PRIDE Prep is the shortened version of PRIDE Prep Academy and the home school district is Spokane Public Schools. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A5: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Pullman Community Montessori and the home school district.

Student Group Grade 4	Pullman Montessori ELA	Pullman Montessori Math	Pullman Montessori Science	Pullman SD ELA	Pullman SD Math	Pullman SD Science
All Students	37.5%	16.7%	N.D.	60.2%	57.7%	N.D.
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	83.3%	83.3%	N.D.
Black or African American	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Hispanic or Latinx	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	33.3%	21.2%	N.D.
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
White	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	65.1%	65.1%	N.D.
Two or More Races	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	75.0%	75.0%	N.D.
English Learners	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Low-Income	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	37.3%	26.9%	N.D.
Students with Disabilities	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	19.2%	26.9%	N.D.

Notes: Pullman Montessori is the shortened version of Pullman Community Montessori and the home school district is Pullman SD. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A6: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Rainier Prep and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 5-8	Rainier Prep ELA	Rainier Prep Math	Rainier Prep Science	Highline SD ELA	Highline SD Math	Highline SD Science
All Students	50.6%	37.7%	34.4%	31.1%	17.1%	28.2%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	16.7%
Asian	56.6%	65.2%	N.D.	47.7%	32.8%	43.5%
Black or African American	50.6%	33.9%	30.9%	24.3%	11.1%	18.1%
Hispanic or Latinx	43.9%	32.7%	23.4%	20.8%	8.2%	17.1%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	<14.9%	<6.5%	<11.5%
White	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	48.6%	33.7%	51.9%
Two or More Races	70.3%	66.7%	N.D.	38.2%	19.6%	32.9%
English Learners	14.0%	9.0%	10.9%	5.6%	3.2%	5.9%
Low-Income	48.7%	33.6%	29.8%	24.8%	11.4%	21.5%
Students with Disabilities	<10%	<10%	<10%	9.2%	5.7%	12.6%

Notes: Rainier Prep is the shortened version of Rainier Prep Academy and the home school district is Highline. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A7: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Rainier Valley Leadership Academy and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 6-8, 10-11	Rainier Valley ELA	Rainier Valley Math	Rainier Valley Science	Seattle PS ELA	Seattle PS Math	Seattle PS Science
All Students	26.2%	8.7%	20.9%	63.2%	47.4%	41.8%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	36.2%	<22.2%	<10%
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	70.0%	55.2%	46.3%
Black or African American	25.0%	4.1%	18.2%	28.8%	13.8%	11.9%
Hispanic or Latinx	<10%	<10%	N.D.	41.9%	24.5%	25.9%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	35.2%	<14.7%	<15%
White	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	77.1%	61.6%	53.5%
Two or More Races	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	66.7%	50.5%	48.0%
English Learners	<10%	<10%	N.D.	11.1%	8.5%	8.0%
Low-Income	26.8%	5.6%	18.2%	36.9%	21.1%	20.7%
Students with Disabilities	<10%	<10%	<10%	29.6%	19.0%	19.0%

Notes: Rainier Valley is the shortened version of Rainier Valley Leadership Academy and the home school district is Seattle Public Schools. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A8: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Spokane International Academy and the home school district.

Student Group	SIA ELA	SIA Math	SIA Science	Mead SD ELA	Mead SD Math	Mead SD Science
All Students	59.2%	44.5%	58.1%	60.2%	51.8%	53.1%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Asian	78.9%	52.6%	N.D.	>70.0%	>60.0%	N.D.
Black or African American	56.3%	37.5%	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Hispanic or Latinx	40.9%	29.5%	21.4%	53.0%	40.0%	45.5%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
White	61.0%	46.2%	63.0%	61.8%	53.6%	54.5%
Two or More Races	61.1%	46.3%	52.6%	56.0%	50.4%	52.6%
English Learners	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	<11.4%	<15.7%	N.D.
Low-Income	53.0%	37.6%	49.2%	44.8%	35.9%	37.8%
Students with Disabilities	26.1%	10.9%	N.D.	19.9%	17.3%	15.3%

Notes: SIA is the shortened version of Spokane International Academy and the home school district is Spokane Public Schools. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A9: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Summit Atlas and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 6-11	Summit Atlas ELA	Summit Atlas Math	Summit Atlas Science	Seattle PS ELA	Seattle PS Math	Seattle PS Science
All Students	50.7%	32.1%	50.4%	63.2%	47.4%	41.8%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	36.2%	<21.9%	<10%
Asian	66.7%	50.0%	N.D.	70.0%	55.2%	46.3%
Black or African American	36.0%	20.0%	36.7%	28.8%	13.8%	11.9%
Hispanic or Latinx	44.2%	18.6%	44.4%	41.9%	24.5%	25.9%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	35.2%	<14.7%	<20%
White	63.6%	47.3%	58.5%	77.1%	61.6%	53.5%
Two or More Races	47.5%	30.8%	62.5%	66.7%	50.5%	48.0%
English Learners	20.6%	14.7%	11.1%	11.1%	8.5%	8.0%
Low-Income	34.7%	18.6%	37.0%	39.5%	21.1%	20.7%
Students with Disabilities	20.0%	<7.0%	15.0%	29.6%	19.0%	19.0%

Notes: Summit Atlas is the shortened version of Summit Public School: Atlas and the home school district is Seattle Public Schools. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A10: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Summit Olympus and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 10-11	Summit Olympus ELA	Summit Olympus Math	Summit Olympus Science	Tacoma SD ELA	Tacoma SD Math	Tacoma SD Science
All Students	49.1%	7.3%	37.8%	47.9%	19.9%	30.2%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	55.6%	11.1%	16.7%
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	58.2%	32.5%	32.7%
Black or African American	N.D.	N.D.	18.2%	29.6%	4.6%	17.8%
Hispanic or Latinx	45.0%	<10%	N.D.	39.5%	12.0%	26.1%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	29.8%	<5%	11.1%
White	64.7%	11.8%	50.0%	61.4%	30.6%	38.7%
Two or More Races	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	42.4%	17.2%	32.6%
English Learners	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	13.4%	2.4%	4.4%
Low-Income	54.1%	<8%	31.8%	35.5%	9.7%	21.1%
Students with Disabilities	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	7.6%	1.5%	10.4%

Notes: Summit Olympus is the shortened version of Summit Public School: Olympus and the home school district is Tacoma School District. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A11: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Summit Sierra and the home school district.

Student Group Grades 10-11	Summit Sierra ELA	Summit Sierra Math	Summit Sierra Science	Seattle PS ELA	Seattle PS Math	Seattle PS Science
All Students	56.3%	25.4%	37.8%	68.1%	41.1%	30.6%
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	60.0%	25.0%	<10%
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	71.8%	44.9%	33.9%
Black or African American	50.0%	12.5%	17.4%	31.8%	9.2%	10.2%
Hispanic or Latinx	61.5%	23.1%	28.6%	50.1%	20.9%	20.9%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	35.0%	<10%	<10%
White	61.9%	42.9%	60.0%	83.0%	55.8%	38.1%
Two or More Races	40.0%	20.0%	30.0%	69.3%	44.6%	39.0%
English Learners	45.5%	<10%	15.4%	9.4%	4.6%	10.3%
Low-Income	39.1%	17.4%	16.7%	42.1%	15.9%	17.2%
Students with Disabilities	22.2%	11.1%	<10%	33.6%	11.3%	14.3%

Notes: Summit Sierra is the shortened version of Summit Public School: Sierra and the home school district is Seattle Public Schools. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Table A12: shows the spring 2022 assessment results for Whatcom Intergenerational High School and the home school district.

Student Group Grade 10	Whatcom IHS ELA	Whatcom IHS Math	Whatcom IHS Science	Bellingham SD ELA	Bellingham SD Math	Bellingham SD Science
All Students	42.9%	<10%	N.D.	73.5%	39.5%	N.D.
Native American or Alaskan	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Asian	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	81.0%	46.6%	N.D.
Black or African American	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	52.6%	10.5%	N.D.
Hispanic or Latinx	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	51.5%	18.2%	N.D.
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
White	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	79.0%	45.2%	N.D.
Two or More Races	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	83.1%	46.5%	N.D.
English Learners	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	22.7%	<7%	N.D.
Low-Income	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	52.2%	15.5%	N.D.
Students with Disabilities	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	24.3%	7.9%	N.D.

Notes: Whatcom IHS is the shortened version of Whatcom Intergenerational High School and the home school district is the Bellingham. N.D. means No Data most often due to data suppression techniques applied to protect student-identifying information. In other cases, data suppression is evident when the less than (<) or greater than (>) symbol is used. Data from the Washington State Report Card and the OSPI Data Portal.

Limitations

Because students in the charter schools differ from the students in the home school districts, simply comparing the test results of students enrolled in a charter school to results for students in the home school district or another traditional public school would be misleading. In choosing to attend a charter school, the students demonstrate the motivation to seek an educational opportunity outside the norm, an educational alternative making them different from peers in traditional public schools. With the knowledge that the students are different, it becomes impossible to know whether test score differences reflect the student differences or something about the school.

Another limiting factor is that the assessment results pulled from the Washington State Report Card and reported on here do not provide any information about the length of time spent in the home school district or the charter school, just that the test record came from that entity. Therefore, the attribution of scores to one entity over another may not be entirely appropriate. In a larger school district, these records have little impact when averaging. However, for a charter school with lower student counts, every student record has greater impact on the overall performance.

Part B: Performance of Charter School Students and Similar Students.

Methodology

RCW 28A.710.250 (2) requires that the charter school performance include a comparison of the academic performance of students at charter schools to demographically and academically similar TPS students. The best manner in which to generate causal estimates of program effects would be to analyze the educational outcomes of lottery-generated, randomly selected, charter school attendees in comparison to those students not selected through the over-subscribed charter school lottery. The Washington Charter School Association (WSCA) reported that a number of charter schools were oversubscribed at some point in their operations and conducted lotteries to select enrollment for some grades. However, the inconsistent need to conduct lotteries and the unavailability of lottery results make it impossible to use lottery selection as a basis for the group analyses.

When the random selection of participants is not possible, the next best approach (as used here) is to control for differences between charter school and TPS students in a study relying on student-to-student matching. The overarching idea of such a design is to create two groups differing only by charter school enrollment status and then to analyze the performance of the groups on the assessments and other metrics. Any difference in performance is evidence of but not proof that attending a traditional public school versus a charter school is associated with a different performance on an educational outcome.

It is very important to note that these findings are **non-causal** because the design does not include randomized group assignment and does not take into

account other confounding factors. It would be misleading to report that attending a charter school **causes** or **results** in a higher performance on educational outcomes. For this reason, we use non-causal terminology (e.g., associated, related, and correlated) to describe the result that attending a charter school is **associated** with a higher performance on educational outcomes.

Even this non-causal approach makes it possible to estimate the strength of the relationship between charter school attendance and the outcome measures. However, even with the most precise matching protocol, some selection bias will always exist because the students making up the matched groups will differ in unobservable ways. Differences in group performance could be attributable to unobserved student traits, but could also be attributable to other confounding factors not considered in this report, some of which include the following:

- Differences in educator quality or effectiveness,
- Differences in educational materials, technology, and other facilities of the school,
- Differences in student engagement and or parent/guardian engagement,
- Differences in student motivation,
- Differences in access to and attendance of before- and after-school support programs and other enrichment activities, and
- Differences in the curriculum delivered and the learning opportunities provided to students.

In the design used here, a comparison group was created following a student-by-student matching process to be as identical as possible to the treatment group of charter school students (Appendix A). In such a design, each charter school student is matched to or paired with a demographically and academically similar TPS student (“TPS twin”), followed by the evaluation of group means using the Independent Samples *t*-Test. The effect size of the difference is reported as Cohen’s *d*.

- The treatment group is comprised of students enrolled in charter schools.
- The comparison group is comprised of demographically and academically similar students enrolled in a traditional public school (TPS) usually, but not always, in the charter schools’ home district.

Changes in Reporting from Previous Years

In the results that follow, the performance of the groups is described as being different or similar. It is important to understand that differences in the performance between two groups typically exist, may appear to be quite large, and yet, be characterized as similar. In other cases, scores can appear to be similar, the difference between the averages may be quite small, and be indicative of a different performance. The nature or the distribution of the data or scores for smaller vs. larger groups explains the paradox.

A **similar** performance describes group means that do **not differ statistically**. The data tables that follow include a row showing the mean difference as a positive or negative value. More often than not, a mean difference exists, but the analyses do not show with a high degree of confidence that the difference is related to the test variable after evaluating the distribution and number of scores.

When the performance of the groups is **different**, the group means were **statistically different**. In this case, the researcher can say with a high degree of confidence that the difference is related in some way to the test variable after evaluating the distribution and number of scores. Statistically different outcome measures are noted by the presence of a double asterisk (**).

Data Sources and Data Processing

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Office of School Information provided the SBE with separate de-identified student enrollment, assessment, absence, exclusionary discipline, and other data files for the 2021-22, school year to complete the required analyses. The assessment files provided by the OSPI contained results for the Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM) and the statewide Smarter Balanced assessments. A very small percentage of students at charter schools participated in the WA-AIM, the assessment for selected students with severe disabilities. The WA-AIM differs greatly from the SBA and WA-AIM scores vary considerably based on disability type. Because of this, the SBE made the decision to exclude the WA-AIM results from the analyses presented here. The findings in Part B come solely from the SBA ELA and math and the WCAS science assessments for the charter school and TPS student groups. Group mean differences were evaluated using the Independent Samples *t*-Test. The group differences are reported as follows.

- A statistically similar performance between groups is a *t*-test of the group means resulting in a value of $p > 0.050$. In this case, the researcher cannot reject the null hypothesis of no difference between the means. **The researcher must conclude that the means do not differ and the performance is statistically similar.**
- A statistically different performance between groups is a *t*-test of the group means resulted in a value of $p \leq 0.050$. In this case, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis of no difference between the means. **The researcher concludes that the means differ and the performance is statistically different.**

While it is important to report on the statistical significance of group means in work of this nature, it is at least equally important to quantify the magnitude of the effect associated with the treatment or experimental variable (Table A13). When reporting on *t*-test results, Cohen's *d* is a standardized measure of effect size, which provides context regarding the magnitude of the difference between group means. For the Independent Samples *t*-test, Cohen's *d* is the mean

difference between the two groups, divided by the pooled standard deviation. Results are characterized as “practically significant” when the difference is medium or large.

Table A13: describes the effect size (Cohen’s *d*) provides additional context as to the practical significance or meaningfulness of an experimental treatment.

Cohen’s <i>d</i> From	Cohen’s <i>d</i> To	Description of Effect Size from the Experimental Variable
	≤ 0.20	Effect from the treatment is trivial, negligible, or very small
0.20	< 0.50	Effect from the treatment is small.
0.50	< 0.80	Effect from the treatment is medium.
≥ 0.80		Effect from the treatment is large.

This work primarily relies on the statewide assessments in ELA and math developed by the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium \(SBAC\)](#). Based on the items answered correctly, a scale score of approximately 2300 to 2800 is computed for each student. A [scale score](#) of approximately 2425 to 2675 (depending on grade level and content area) is required to meet standard or be deemed as proficient. On the [science assessments](#), scale scores range from approximately 340 to 1190 and a scale score of 700 is required to meet standard or be deemed as proficient. Because the range of scale scores differs by grade level, it is valuable to evaluate for scale score differences by grade level in addition to the whole group.

In addition to the average scale score by group, the scale score mean difference provides a meaningful measure of charter school, student performance in comparison to the TPS student performance. The mean difference is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school group. A negative mean difference indicates that the mean scale score for the treatment group (charter school students) was higher than the mean scale score for the comparison group (TPS students). A positive mean difference indicates that the mean scale score for the treatment group (charter school students) was lower than the mean scale score for the comparison group (TPS students).

The Independent Samples *t*-Tests determined whether the treatment group (charter school students) performed differently than the comparison group (TPS students) on the statewide ELA, math, and science assessments. For the analyses in Part B, the comparison and treatment groups are aggregated from all of the charter schools. In other words, all of the charter school students are combined into one large group to assess for overall group differences.

Design and Statistical Methods

The overarching idea of the design is to create two groups differing only by charter school enrollment status and then to analyze the performance of the groups on the assessments. Any difference in performance may then be associated to attending a traditional public school versus a charter school. However, differences in performance can also be attributed to other factors not considered here, some of which include the following:

- Differences in educator quality or effectiveness,
- Differences in educational materials, technology, and other facilities of the school,
- Differences in student engagement and or parent/guardian engagement,
- Differences in access to and attendance of before- and after-school support programs and other enrichment activities, and
- Differences in the curriculum delivered and the learning opportunities provided to students.

In the design, a comparison group was created following a student-by-student matching process to be as identical as possible to the treatment group of charter school students. In such a design, each charter school student is matched to or paired with a demographically similar TPS student ("TPS twin") and the group means are then compared using the Independent Samples *t*-Test.

- The treatment group is comprised of students enrolled in charter schools with valid scores for either or both of the Smarter Balanced (SBA) English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments. Most, but not all of the treatment group members, also have valid results for the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) in the grade levels, which are tested.
- A comparison group comprised of demographically and academically similar students enrolled in traditional public schools (TPS) was created through a one-by-one matching process.

Exact matching criteria included grade level, gender, federal race and ethnicity coding, Free and Reduced Price Lunch program (FRL) status, English Learner (EL) status, and special education (SWD) status (Table A14). The matching criteria included prior year SBA scale scores in ELA and math in the 4th through 8th grades. In order to be matched or paired, the ELA or math scores could not differ by more than 25 scale score points, which is relatively small as typical SBA scores range from approximately 2300 to 2800.

Other matching criteria considered in the protocol included Section 504 status, the aggregated number of absences during the school year, the number of exclusionary discipline events, the number of days out of school related to exclusionary disciplinary events, and the language spoken at home. In the matching process, each student's home district was considered and used as matching criteria. As examples, a student at a Spokane charter school was matched to a

similar student in a Spokane TPS, and a student at a Tacoma charter school was matched to a similar student in a Tacoma TPS and each would have scored approximately the same on the ELA and math assessments in the prior year. In order to achieve more matches, some matched TPS students attended school in a different, but nearby school district.

Table A14: shows the matching criteria used in creating the control group of TPS students.

Matching Criteria	3rd Grade Students	4th to 8th Grade Students	10th Grade Students*	11th Grade Students*
Grade	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact
Gender	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact
Race/Ethnicity	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact
Low-Income (FRL) Status	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact
English Learner (EL) Status	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact
Special Education (SWD) Status	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact	Yes, exact
Previous Assessment Results	No	Yes, prior year (+/- 25 points)	No	No
Number of Days Out of School*	Yes, approximately the same	Yes, approximately the same	Yes, approximately the same	Yes, approximately the same
Home Language	Yes, exact or similar	Yes, exact or similar	Yes, exact or similar	Yes, exact or similar
Home School District	Yes, exact or nearby	Yes, exact or nearby	Yes, exact or nearby	Yes, exact or nearby

*Note: The number of days out of school is the sum of days absent and days related to exclusionary discipline events.

Unfortunately, not all charter school students could be matched or paired based on exactly the same criteria (Table A14) but most are matched or paired on similar criteria. For purposes here, four distinct groups result when the matching criteria are applied to the charter school enrollees.

- The largest group is comprised of 4th to 8th grade students matched on demographics and prior assessment results.
- Because the 3rd grade is the first year of statewide testing, students do not have previous assessment results from which to establish academic peers.
- Because 9th graders are not assessed, academic peers for the 10th graders could not be established based on the spring 2020 8th grade assessment results because the administration was cancelled due to the COVID pandemic.
- Science testing occurs every three years (5th, 8th, and 11th grades) which is not conducive to establishing academic peers based on prior science assessment results.

Table A15 and Table A16 show that the demographic characteristics of the comparison group (TPS students) are identical to the demographic characteristics of the treatment group (charter school students). Table A16 shows that the attendance patterns for each group is essentially the same and that the comparison and treatment groups are academically similar as indicated by the average prior ELA and math scores.

Table A15: Race and ethnicity composition of the comparison and treatment student groups for the 3rd through 10th grade students addressed in this analysis.

Student Group*	Native Amer. (%)	Asian (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	White (%)	Pacific Islander (%)	Two or More (%)
Comparison Group (TPS Students)	0.3	4.3	24.2	17.8	43.9	0.3	9.2
Treatment Group (Charter School Students)	0.3	4.3	24.2	17.8	43.9	0.3	9.2

Note: "Native Amer." is the shortened name for Native American or Alaskan, "Pacific Islander" is the shortened name for Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and "Black" is the shortened name for Black or African American.

Table A16: Program participation, attendance, and prior score patterns for the comparison and treatment groups for the 3rd through 10th grader students addressed in this analysis.

Student Group	FRL (%)	EL (%)	SWD (%)	Section 504 (%)	Days Out of School* (M)	Average Prior ELA Score	Average Prior Math Score
Comparison Group (TPS Students)	58.5	11.8	9.4	3.1	12.8	2506.8	2481.1
Treatment Group (Charter School Students)	58.5	11.8	9.4	3.1	12.8	2506.6	2481.7

*Note: the days out of school is the sum of absences and exclusionary discipline days. Absences data comes from the student absence file, which describes each absence as excused or unexcused and full day or part day. For this work, no distinction was made between excused or unexcused absences. Full day absences were coded as 1.0 day and a part day absence was coded as 0.25 days. The total days absent were summed from the individual absence events.

A number of charter school students with valid SBA results could not be matched with a TPS student due to an unusual number of days out of school in combination with other matching criteria. In addition, a number of matches were impossible to make as the required coding (e.g. race/ethnicity or FRL status) was not included in the various data files. For the comparison group, approximately 97 percent of the students were enrolled at the school for at least 150 days, while the corresponding measure for the treatment group was approximately 94 percent. Student results were included in this comparison regardless of the continuously enrolled status in a manner similar to the Washington State Report Card reporting.

Data and Findings from the Statistical Analyses

English Language Arts (ELA) Overall Results

On the spring 2022 statewide ELA assessment results, the charter school students group performed statistically higher than the TPS student group (Table A17). However, the effect sizes for each of the measures indicate a negligible or very small effect associated with attendance at a charter school.

- The charter school students group posted a different and higher average scale score than the TPS student group (2537 vs. 2525).
- The percent meeting standard on the ELA assessments for the charter school group was different and higher than the TPS group rate (57.8 vs. 52.3 percent).

Table A17: summary of the differences for the ELA measures from the spring 2022, statewide assessments for 3rd to 10 grade students based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Assessments	Scale Score**	Percent Meeting Standard**
TPS Group	2525.2	52.3
Charter School Group	2536.9	57.8

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment measures where the group performances were statistically different.

Mathematics Overall Results

On the spring 2022 statewide math assessment results, the charter school students group performed statistically higher than the TPS student group on the math scale score measure and similar to the TPS group on the percent meeting standard in math measure (Table A18). The effect sizes for each of the measures indicate a negligible or very small effect associated with attendance at a charter school.

- The charter school students group posted an average scale score different and approximately 12 scale score points higher than the TPS student group (2515 vs. 2503).
- The percent meeting standard for the charter school students group is similar to the corresponding rate for the TPS group (40.0 vs. 36.9).

Table A18: summary of the differences for the math measures from the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10 grade students based on charter school enrollment.

Math Assessments	Scale Score**	Percent Meeting Standard
TPS Group	2503.3	36.9
Charter School Group	2515.2	40.0

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment measures where the group performances were statistically different.

Science Overall Results

On the spring 2022 statewide science assessment results, the charter school students group performed statistically higher than the TPS student group on the scale score measure, and similar to the TPS group on the percent meeting standard measure (Table A19). The effect sizes for each of the measures indicate a negligible or very small effect associated with attendance at a charter school.

- The group means derived from the science scale scores are different with the charter school students group posting an average scale score approximately 9.0 scale score points higher (689 vs. 680). The effect sizes indicate a negligible to very small effect associated with attendance at a charter school.
- The science percent meeting standard for the charter school students group is similar to the corresponding rate for the TPS group (48.8 vs. 44.9).

Table A19: summary of the differences for the science measures from the spring 2022 statewide assessments based on charter school enrollment.

Science Assessment	Scale Score**	Percent Proficient
TPS Group	679.7	44.9
Charter School Group	688.7	48.8

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment measures where the group performances were statistically different.

Summary Statistics for the All Students Group

Overall, the charter school student group performed better than the TPS student group on four of the six measures, and similar to the TPS group on the remaining two measures. However, the effect sizes for each of the measures are less than 0.20, indicating a negligible or very small effect associated with attendance at a charter school (Table A20).

Table A20: summary statistics for the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10 grade students based on charter school enrollment.

Assessment	ELA** Scale Score	ELA** Percent Meeting Standard	Math** Scale Score	Math Percent Meeting Standard	Science** Scale Score	Science Percent Meeting Standard
TPS Group (Standard Deviation)	2525.2 (112.988)	52.3 (50.0)	2503.3 (108.449)	36.9 (48.3)	679.7 (76.022)	44.9 (49.8)
CS Group (Standard Deviation)	2536.9 (107.464)	57.8 (49.4)	2515.2 (103.422)	40.0 (49.0)	688.7 (74.958)	48.4 (50.0)
Mean Difference*	-11.744	-5.5	-11.878	-3.1	-8.977	-4.0

Assessment	ELA** Scale Score	ELA** Percent Meeting Standard	Math** Scale Score	Math Percent Meeting Standard	Science** Scale Score	Science Percent Meeting Standard
<i>T</i>	-2.945	-3.038	-3.086	-1.755	-1.979	-1.321
<i>P</i>	0.003**	0.002**	0.002**	0.079	0.048**	0.187
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.06	0.12	0.07
Number of students in each group	1528	1528	1516	1516	553	553

*Note: the mean difference is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean value for the charter school students was higher than the mean value for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessments where the group performances were statistically different.

Statistics for ELA by Grade Level

Table A21: spring 2022 ELA scale score differences on the statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by grade level and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Scale Score	3 rd Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade	6 th Grade**	7 th Grade**	8 th Grade	10 th Grade
TPS Group Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	2413.7 (93.811)	2482.1 (88.572)	2515.2 (94.572)	2519.0 (88.938)	2547.9 (98.674)	2558.8 (99.614)	2604.1 (115.098)
CS Group Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	2428.7 (85.037)	2496.7 (81.530)	2518.1 (93.875)	2535.6 (87.918)	2564.1 (94.628)	2575.8 (93.042)	2600.7 (110.196)
Mean Difference*	-14.954	-14.648	-2.888	-16.616	-16.216	-17.035	3.399
<i>T</i>	-1.784	-1.377	-0.262	-2.211	-2.023	-1.891	0.329
<i>P</i>	0.081	0.170	0.793	0.027**	0.043**	0.059	0.742
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.17	0.16	< 0.01	0.19	0.17	0.18	0.03
Number of students in each group	219	128	145	276	291	229	238

*Note: the mean difference in ELA scale score (SS) is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean scale score for the charter school group was higher than the mean scale score for the TPS student group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean scale score for the charter school group was lower than the mean scale score for the TPS student group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the grades where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A22: shows the ELA percent meeting standard rate differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by grade level and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Percent Meeting Standard	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade**	7th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (Standard Deviation)	43.4 (49.7)	58.6 (49.4)	57.2 (49.6)	46.0 (49.9)	53.6 (50.0)	49.3 (50.1)	62.6 (48.5)
CS Group Percent Meeting Standard (Standard Deviation)	52.5 (50.1)	63.3 (48.4)	58.8 (49.4)	55.1 (49.8)	59.1 (49.2)	56.8 (49.6)	61.3 (48.8)
Mean Difference*	-9.1	-4.7	-1.5	-9.0	-5.5	-7.4	1.3
<i>T</i>	-1.917	-0.766	-0.267	-2.130	-1.337	-1.593	0.283
<i>P</i>	0.056	0.444	0.790	0.034**	0.182	0.112	0.778
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.20	0.09	0.04	0.18	0.10	0.16	0.04
Number of students in each group	219	128	145	276	291	229	238

*Note: the mean difference in ELA percent meeting standard rate is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean percent meeting standard rate for the charter school group was higher than the mean percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean rate for the charter school group was lower than the mean rate for the TPS student group **Note: the double asterisk denotes the grades where the group performances were statistically different.

Statistics for ELA by Race/Ethnicity

On the Smarter Balanced ELA assessment scale score, the Asian, Hispanic or Latinx, White, and Two or More Races student groups at charter schools yielded group means students that were similar to the corresponding group means of the TPS students (Table A23). The Black or African American students at the charter schools posted scale scores different and higher than the average scale score for the corresponding TPS students. The effect sizes indicate a very small effect is associated with attendance at a charter school.

Table A23: ELA scale score on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by race/ethnicity and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Scale Score	Asian	Black**	Hispanic	White	Two or More Races
TPS Group Mean Scale Score	2526.5	2489.9	2508.1	2548.0	2546.5
Charter School Group Mean Scale Score	2551.7	2509.0	2525.0	2554.0	2549.5

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the student groups where the group performances were statistically different.

On the spring 2022 statewide ELA assessment, Asian, Hispanic or Latinx, White, and Two or More Races student groups at charter schools posted ELA percent meeting standard means similar to the corresponding means for the TPS students (Table A24). The Black or African American student group at charter schools posted an ELA percent meeting standard rate different and higher than the TPS student group. The effect sizes indicate a small effect is associated with attendance at a charter school.

Table A24: shows the ELA percent meeting standard rate differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessment administration by race/ethnicity and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Percent Meeting Standard	Asian	Black**	Hispanic	White	Two Or More Races
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard	54.5	42.4	43.8	59.3	60.0
Charter School Group Percent Meeting Standard	65.2	50.5	50.0	63.6	62.9

**Note: the double asterisk denotes where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A25: summary statistics for the ELA scale score differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by race/ethnicity and charter school enrollment.

ELA Scale Score	Asian	Black**	Hispanic	White	Two or More Races
TPS Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	2526.5 (115.769)	2489.9 (119.389)	2508.1 (107.718)	2548.0 (106.056)	2546.5 (106.584)
CS Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	2551.7 (130.718)	2509.0 (108.624)	2525.0 (100.848)	2554.0 (104.744)	2549.5 (98.732)
Mean Difference*	-25.167	-19.059	-16.941	-6.063	-2.957
<i>T</i>	-1.171	-2.271	-1.893	-1.053	-0.241
<i>P</i>	0.244	0.023**	0.059	0.292	0.810
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.20	0.17	0.16	0.06	0.03
Number of students in each group	66	370	272	670	140

*Note: the mean difference in scale score (SS) points is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean ELA scale score for the charter school group was higher than the mean ELA scale score for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the student groups where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A26: ELA percent meeting standard rate differences and statistics on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for students by race/ethnicity and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Percent Meeting Standard	Asian	Black**	Hispanic	White	Two Or More Races
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	54.5 (50.2)	42.4 (49.5)	43.8 (49.7)	59.3 (49.2)	60.0 (49.2)
CS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	65.2 (48.0)	50.5 (50.1)	50.0 (50.1)	63.6 (48.1)	62.9 (48.5)
Mean Difference*	-10.6	-8.1	-6.3	-4.4	-2.9
<i>T</i>	-1.241	-2.215	-1.461	-1.649	-0.490
<i>P</i>	0.217	0.027**	0.145	0.099	0.625
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.22	0.16	0.12	0.09	0.06
Number of students in each group*	66	370	272	670	140

*Note: the mean difference in percent meeting standard rate is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean for the charter school students was higher than the mean for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes where the group performances were statistically different.

Statistics for ELA by Program Participation

Students receiving special education services at charter schools posted an average scale score similar to that for special education students at the TPS. However, both the English learner student group and the students qualifying for the FRL program at charter schools yielded average ELA scale scores that were different and higher than the corresponding scale scores for the TPS students (Table A27). The effect sizes indicate a very small effect is associated with attendance at a charter school.

Table A27: ELA scale score differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Scale Score	English Learners**	Low-Income**	Special Education
TPS Group Mean Scale Score	2428.0	2498.3	2451.9
Charter School Group Mean Scale Score	2449.5	2517.1	2453.3

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the student groups where the group performances were statistically different.

The English learner and low-income students attending charter schools posted ELA percent meeting standards means higher those posted for TPS students (Table A28). Students receiving

special education services at charter schools posted ELA percent meeting standards means similar to those posted for TPS students. However, the effect size associated with charter school attendance on the measure is very small.

Table A28: ELA percent meeting standard rate differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for students by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Percent Meeting Standard	English Learners**	Low-Income**	Special Education
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard	15.6	41.6	21.0
Charter School Group Percent Meeting Standard	23.9	50.6	16.8

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A29: ELA scale score differences from the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Scale Score	English Learners**	Low-Income**	Special Education
TPS Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	2428.0 (92.463)	2498.3 (110.123)	2451.9 (111.930)
CS Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	2449.5 (94.209)	2517.1 (103.823)	2453.5 (102.347)
Mean Difference*	-21.467	-18.827	-1.671
<i>T</i>	-2.182	-3.719	-0.132
<i>P</i>	0.030**	< 0.001**	0.895
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.23	0.18	0.01
Number of students in each group	180	892	143

*Note: the mean difference in scale score (SS) points is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean ELA scale score for the charter school group was higher than the mean scale score for the TPS student group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the school years where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A30: ELA percent meeting standard rate differences from the spring 2022 statewide assessments for students by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

ELA Percent Meeting Standard	English Learners**	Low-Income**	Special Education
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	15.6 (36.3)	41.6 (49.3)	21.0 (40.9)

ELA Percent Meeting Standard	English Learners**	Low-Income**	Special Education
CS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	23.9 (42.8)	50.6 (50.0)	16.8 (37.5)
Mean Difference*	-8.3	-9.0	4.2
<i>T</i>	-1.992	-3.839	0.905
<i>P</i>	0.047**	< 0.001**	0.366
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.21	0.18	0.11
Number of students in each group*	180	892	143

*Note: the mean difference in percent meeting standard rate is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean for the charter school students was higher than the mean for the TPS students. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean for the charter school students was lower than the mean for the TPS students.

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Statistics for Math by Grade Level

Table A31: Math scale score differences from spring 2017, spring 2018, and spring 2019 statewide assessments by grade and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Scale Score	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade**	6th Grade**	7th Grade	8th Grade**	10th Grade
TPS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	2423.4 (90.550)	2498.2 (79.395)	2505.0 (88.895)	2509.2 (95.991)	2522.3 (103.236)	2528.3 (108.845)	2531.5 (131.118)
CS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	2434.7 (76.057)	2492.9 (71.515)	2517.5 (81.197)	2528.0 (98.615)	2529.1 (100.902)	2549.8 (104.502)	2534.5 (119.884)
Mean Difference*	-11.267	5.276	-22.541	-18.851	-6.861	-21.553	-3.131
<i>T</i>	-1.404	0.548	-2.271	-2.349	-0.795	-2.114	-0.271
<i>P</i>	0.161	0.584	0.024**	0.019**	0.427	0.036**	0.797
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.14	0.07	0.15	0.19	0.07	0.20	0.02
Number of students in each group	217	123	146	293	280	219	236

*Note: the mean difference in scale score points is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math scale score for the charter school students was higher than the mean math scale score for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean math scale score for the charter school students was lower than the mean math scale score for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A32: Math percent meeting standard rate differences from the spring 2022 statewide assessments by grade level and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Percent Meeting Standard	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	10th Grade
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (Standard Deviation)	49.3 (50.1)	59.3 (49.3)	35.6 (48.1)	35.9 (48.1)	33.6 (47.3)	30.6 (46.2)	25.8 (43.9)
CS Group Percent Meeting Standard (Standard Deviation)	52.1 (50.1)	50.4 (50.2)	45.9 (50.0)	42.0 (49.4)	34.6 (47.7)	38.8 (48.8)	25.0 (43.4)
Mean Difference*	-2.8	8.9	-10.3	-6.0	-1.1	-8.2	0.8
<i>T</i>	-0.575	1.409	-1.806	-1.504	-0.267	-1.809	0.211
<i>P</i>	0.566	0.180	0.072	0.133	0.790	0.071	0.833
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.06	0.18	0.21	0.13	0.02	0.17	0.02
Number of students in each group	217	123	146	293	280	219	236

*Note: the mean difference in percent meeting standard is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Statistics for Math by Race/Ethnicity

On the spring 2022 statewide math assessments, the Asian, White, and Two or More Races groups of charter school students posted average scale scores similar to the TPS student groups (Table A33). The Black or African American and Hispanic or Latinx student groups in charter schools posted different and higher scale scores than the TPS student group. The effect sizes indicate a small to very small effect is associated with attendance at a charter school.

Table A33: math scale score differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by race/ethnicity and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Scale Score	Asian	Black**	Hispanic**	White	Two or More Races
TPS Group Mean Scale Score	2531.3	2464.1	2482.3	2551.3	2553.4
Charter School Group Mean Scale Score	2548.3	1495.0	2505.6	2549.4	2561.4

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the student groups where the group performances were statistically different.

Regarding the math percent meeting standard rates, the Black or African American and Hispanic or Latinx student groups posted math mean rates that were different and higher than the TPS group rates (Table A34). Asian, White, and the Two or More student groups at charter schools posted percent meeting standard rates similar to the TPS student group. The effect sizes indicate a small to very small effect is associated with attendance at a charter school.

Table A34: math percent meeting standard rate differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments by race/ethnicity and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Percent Meeting Standard	Asian	Black**	Hispanic**	White	Two or More Races
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	51.7	25.7	25.9	44.1	48.2
Charter School Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	58.6	35.7	31.2	43.6	43.8

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A35: math scale score differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grades by race/ethnicity and charter school enrollment.

Math Scale Score	Asian	Black**	Hispanic**	White	Two or More Races
TPS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	2531.3 (120.197)	2464.1 (104.513)	2482.3 (97.753)	2529.0 (105.080)	2514.8 (112.277)
CS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	2548.3 (125.611)	2495.0 (100.117)	2505.6 (98.390)	2525.5 (104.576)	2528.2 (94.074)
Mean Difference*	-17.034	-30.900	-23.342	3.485	-13.401
<i>T</i>	-0.746	-4.107	-2.745	0.611	-1.071
<i>P</i>	0.457	< 0.001**	0.006**	0.541	0.285
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.14	0.30	0.24	0.03	0.13
Number of students in each group	58	370	266	676	137

*Note: the mean difference in math scale score points is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean scale score for the charter school group was higher than the mean scale score for the TPS student group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean scale score for the charter school group was lower than the mean scale score for the TPS student group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the groups where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A36: math percent meeting standard on the spring 2022 statewide assessments by race/ethnicity and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Percent Meeting Standard	Asian	Black**	Hispanic	White	Two or More Races
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	51.7 (50.4)	25.7 (43.7)	25.9 (43.9)	44.1 (49.7)	48.2 (50.2)
CS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	58.6 (49.7)	35.7 (48.0)	31.2 (46.4)	43.6 (49.6)	43.8 (49.8)
Mean Difference*	-6.90	-10.0	-5.3	0.4	4.4
<i>T</i>	-0.742	-2.963	-1.343	0.164	0.725
<i>P</i>	0.460	0.003**	0.180	0.870	0.469
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.10	0.22	0.12	0.01	0.09
Number of students in each group*	58	370	266	676	137

*Note: the mean difference in percent meeting standard is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Statistics for Math by Program Participation

On the math scale score measure, the special education students at charter schools posted a mean scale score that was similar to that for similar TPS students (Table A37). The charter school English learners and low-income students groups posted mean scale scores different and higher than the corresponding scale scores for the TPS students. The effect size associated with charter school attendance is small to very small.

Table A37: math scale score differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Scale Score	English Learners**	Low-Income**	Special Education
TPS Group Mean Scale Score	2423.9	2477.9	2424.1
Charter School Group Mean Scale Score	2448.2	2499.5	2429.8

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the student groups where the group performances were statistically different.

On the math percent meeting standard rate, the special education students and English learner students at charter schools posted a rates that was similar to that for similar TPS students (Table A38). The charter school low-income students groups posted a mean percent meeting standard rate different and higher than that for the TPS students. The effect size associated with charter school attendance is small to very small.

Table A38: math proficiency rate differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for students by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Percent Meeting Standard	English Learners	Low-Income**	Special Education
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard	12.6	26.3	15.4
Charter School Group Percent Meeting Standard	17.0	32.9	7.8

**Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A39: math scale score differences on the spring 2022 statewide assessments for 3rd to 10th grade students by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Scale Score	English Learners**	Low-Income**	Special Education**
TPS Group Mean Scale Score (SD)	2423.9 (86.888)	2477.9 (101.921)	2424.1 (119.556)
CS Group Mean Scale Score (SD)	2448.2 (86.843)	2499.5 (99.665)	2429.8 (97.409)
Mean Difference*	-24.319	-21.656	-5.637
<i>T</i>	-2.671	-4.501	-0.416
<i>P</i>	0.008**	< 0.001**	0.678
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.28	0.21	0.05
Number of students in each group	182	877	129

*Note: the mean difference in scale score points is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math scale score for the charter school students was higher than the mean math scale score for the TPS students. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the student groups where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A40: math percent meeting standard on the spring 2022 statewide assessment by program participation and based on charter school enrollment.

Math Percent Meeting Standard	English Learners	Low-Income**	Special Education
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	12.6 (33.3)	26.3 (44.1)	15.4 (36.2)
CS Group	17.0	32.9	7.8

Math Percent Meeting Standard	English Learners	Low-Income**	Special Education
Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	(37.7)	(47.0)	(26.8)
Mean Difference*	-4.4	-6.5	7.0
<i>T</i>	-1.179	-3.007	1.928
<i>P</i>	0.239	0.003**	0.055
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.12	0.14	0.24
Number of students in each group*	182	877	129

*Note: the mean difference in percent meeting standard is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Science Summary Statistics

Table A41: Science mean differences from spring 2022 statewide assessments for 5th, 8th, and 11th grade students based on charter school enrollment.

Science Assessment	Scale Score**	Percent Meeting Standard
TPS Group Mean (Standard Deviation)	679.7 (76.022)	44.9 (49.8)
CS Group Mean (Standard Deviation)	688.7 (74.958)	48.8 (50.0)
Mean Difference*	-8.977	-4.0
<i>T</i>	-1.979	-1.321
<i>P</i>	0.048**	0.187
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.12	0.08
Number of students in each group	553	553

*Note: the mean difference is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean value for the charter school students was higher than the mean science scale score for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Statistics for Science by Grade Level

Table A42: Science mean scale score differences from spring 2022 statewide assessments for 5th, 8th, and 11th grade students based on charter school enrollment.

Science Scale Score	5 th Grade	8 th Grade	11 th Grade
TPS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	692.6 (77.088)	673.7 (75.892)	676.1 (73.940)
CS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	705.8 (77.593)	677.1 (74.149)	690.1 (70.222)
Mean Difference*	-13.182	-3.371	-13.974
<i>T</i>	-1.512	-0.500	-1.670
<i>P</i>	0.131	0.855	0.096
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.17	0.05	0.19
Number of students in each group	157	248	148

*Note: the mean difference in science scale score is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean science scale score for the charter school students was higher than the mean science scale score for the TPS group. **Note: the double asterisk denotes the assessment years where the group performances were statistically different.

Table A43: Science percent meeting standard rate differences from spring 2022 statewide assessments for 5th, 8th, and 11th grade students based on charter school enrollment.

Science Percent Meeting Standard	5 th Grade	8 th Grade	11 th Grade
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	51.9 (50.1)	41.1 (49.3)	43.6 (49.8)
CS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	58.0 (49.5)	40.3 (49.2)	53.4 (50.1)
Mean Difference*	-6.1	0.8	-9.8
<i>T</i>	-1.080	0.182	-1.684
<i>P</i>	0.281	0.855	0.093
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.12	0.02	0.20
Number of students in each group	157	248	148

*Note: the mean difference in science scale score is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean science scale score for the charter school students was higher than the mean science scale score for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean percent meeting standard rate in science for the charter school students was higher than the corresponding rate for the TPS group.

Statistics for Science by Race/Ethnicity

Table A44: Science mean scale score differences from spring 2022 statewide assessments for 5th, 8th, and 11th grade students based on race/ethnicity by charter school enrollment.

Science Scale Score	Asian	Black or African Amer.	Hispanic or Latinx	White	Two or More Races
TPS Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	697.3 (82.132)	655.8 (69.128)	669.0 (62.553)	696.5 (78.864)	690.4 (80.112)
CS Mean SS (Standard Deviation)	733.6 (60.029)	661.4 (67.662)	667.0 (63.687)	707.4 (75.957)	708.0 (76.690)
Mean Difference*	-36.222	-5.578	2.081	-10.976	-17.645
<i>T</i>	-1.511	-0.712	0.216	-1.522	-1.253
<i>P</i>	0.140	0.477	0.829	0.129	0.213
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.50	0.08	0.03	0.14	0.22
Number of students in each group	18	152	86	230	62

*Note: the mean difference in science scale score is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean science scale score for the charter school students was higher than the mean science scale score for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean science scale score for the charter school students was lower than the mean science scale score for the TPS group.

Table A45: Science percent meeting standard rate differences from spring 2022 statewide assessments for 5th, 8th, and 11th grade students based on race/ethnicity by charter school enrollment.

Science Percent Meeting Standard	Asian	Black or African Amer.	Hispanic or Latinx	White	Two or More Races
TPS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	61.1 (50.2)	28.8 (45.4)	39.5 (49.2)	54.1 (49.9)	54.8 (50.2)
CS Group Percent Meeting Standard (SD)	83.3 (38.3)	32.9 (47.1)	38.4 (48.9)	58.3 (49.4)	59.7 (49.5)
Mean Difference*	-22.2	-4.1	1.2	-4.2	-4.8
<i>T</i>	-1.493	-0.780	0.155	-0.896	-0.541
<i>P</i>	0.145	0.436	0.877	0.371	0.590
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.50	0.09	0.02	0.08	0.10
Number of students in each group	18	152	86	230	62

*Note: the mean difference in percent meeting standard is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean math percent

meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group.

Statistics for Science by Program Participation

Table A46: Science mean scale score differences from spring 2022 statewide assessments for 5th, 8th, and 11th grade students based on program participation and charter school enrollment.

Science Scale Score	English Learners	Low-Income	Special Education
TPS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	620.4 (51.637)	668.4 (71.095)	627.1 (59.359)
CS Group Mean Scale Score (Standard Deviation)	634.0 (54.986)	673.1 (72.244)	637.1 (52.035)
Mean Difference*	-13.632	-4.704	-10.304
<i>T</i>	-1.485	-0.844	-0.999
<i>P</i>	0.140	0.399	0.320
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.25	0.07	0.18
Number of students in each group	67	330	58

*Note: the mean difference in scale score points is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math scale score for the charter school students was higher than the mean math scale score for the TPS students.

Table A47: Science percent meeting standard rate differences from spring 2022 statewide assessments for 5th, 8th, and 11th grade students based on program participation and charter school enrollment.

Science Percent Meeting Standard	English Learners	Low-Income	Special Education
TPS Proficiency Rate (Standard Deviation)	8.8 (28.6)	37.8 (48.6)	15.5 (38.5)
CS Proficiency Rate (Standard Deviation)	14.9 (35.9)	40.0 (49.1)	15.3 (36.3)
Mean Difference*	-6.1	-2.2	0.3
<i>T</i>	-1.093	-0.589	0.039
<i>P</i>	0.277	0.556	0.969
Cohen's <i>d</i>	0.19	0.05	0.01
Number of students in each group*	67	330	58

*Note: the mean difference in percent meeting standard is the value for the TPS group minus the value for the charter school (CS) group. The negative mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group. The positive mean difference indicates that the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the charter school students was higher than the mean math percent meeting standard rate for the TPS group.

Appendix B: Charter Management Organizations

Overview

Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) are not-for-profit educational entities that hold the charter and directly manage multiple public charter schools. Educational Management Organizations (EMOs) are for-profit entities that manage charter schools and perform similar functions as CMOs. CMOs and EMOs differ primarily by the organizations' tax status, and are similar in that both have considerable influence over the instructional design and operations of their affiliated charter schools. Both CMOs and EMOs contract with charter schools to provide specific services. Summit (Atlas, Olympus, and Sierra Charter Schools) and Impact schools (Puget Sound Elementary, Salish Sea Elementary, and Commencement Bay Elementary Schools) in Washington are contracted with CMOs.

CMOs were developed to address issues limiting the numbers and quality of charter schools. Charter schools are usually expected to pay for the buildings they occupy, purchase business services, instructional support, and recruit their own staff, but often receive fewer dollars per pupil than traditional district operated schools. CMOs were developed for the purpose of capturing economies of scale for groups of charter schools and supporting the performance and improvement efforts of groups of schools with similar approaches to teaching and learning.

CMOs are designed to help charter schools overcome the challenges of school start-up and uneven school quality in order to accelerate the expansion of high performing charter schools. CMOs are intended to gain efficiencies associated with scale and to capture and spread organizational learning across school units. CMOs exercise operational control over affiliated schools, and provide a broad range of assistance, such as curriculum development, teacher training, student assessment, legal, and financial services.

The majority of CMOs are prescriptive, as they seek to ensure that all affiliated schools follow a set design for curriculum and instructional techniques, human resource functions, student behavior, and support programs. Overall, CMOs are most prescriptive regarding the provision of supports for struggling students, teacher evaluation, and teacher compensation. CMOs are generally least prescriptive on the provision of professional development and teacher hiring.

The [*National Study of Charter Management Organization \(CMO\) Effectiveness*](#) was published in 2010 by the Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE). The study was designed around a series of nested samples capable of producing complementary data through case studies. Interviews of traditional school district staff, surveys of CMO staff, reviews of CMO business plans, and analysis of fiscal documents. The study provided a number of observations on how CMOs compare to one another, the nature of interactions between CMOs and school districts, and the economics of CMOs.

In 2012, Mathematica published a report titled [*Evaluating the Effectiveness of Charter Management Organizations \(CMOs\)*](#), which was conducted with the CRPE. The evaluation found that many CMOs have a significant positive impact on students' academic achievement, as

captured by test scores, while others have significant negative impacts. Each CMO's impact on test scores is often consistent across schools, suggesting some degree of uniformity. In addition, some, but not all, CMOs substantially boost students' chances of graduating from high school and enrolling in postsecondary education.

In 2017, a report titled [Charter Management Organizations 2017](#) was published by CREDO. The report examined the performance of charter networks compared to traditional public schools (TPS) and independent charter schools. While acknowledging the many complexities, the report concludes that students attending a charter school, which is part of a network or CMO, have stronger growth than they would in TPS or an independent charter school.

Charter Management Organizations with a Washington Presence

[Impact Public Schools](#) is a CMO with the overarching goal of expanding the number of high quality charter schools in Washington. More specific, Impact Public Schools (IPS) articulate the goal of eliminating the opportunity gap in Washington. The organization's website describes the development of transformative and lasting relationships between students and adult mentors who will help guide the way to college. The IPS team reportedly organizes their classrooms, curricula, program, and support with the expectation that each individual's learning journey is unique.

For the fiscal year ending August 2019, Impact's IRS Form 990 reported contributions, gifts, and grants totaling approximately \$1.99M, of which \$522K was indicated to be government grants and approximately \$1.47M to be other grants or contributions. In 2019 and 2020, Impact | Puget Sound Elementary was awarded a total of \$425K from the Louis Calder Foundation to support grade level growth and to pilot a transitional kindergarten program. In October 2020, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation committed approximately \$125K to Impact Public Schools Washington for the purpose of providing support for professional development partnerships in Washington. In July 2020, Impact | Salish Sea was awarded a \$1.30M grant from the Washington Charter School Association. In September 2020, Impact | Commencement Bay was awarded a \$1.50M grant from the Washington Charter School Association.

[Summit Public Schools](#) is a leading network of public schools that prepares a diverse student population for success in a four-year college and to be thoughtful, contributing members of society. Summit's first school opened in 2003 and the CMO operates seven schools in the San Francisco Bay area and three charter schools in the Puget Sound area.

The pedagogy employed at Summit schools, dubbed "Summit Learning," is a personalized, project-based learning (PBL) curriculum that puts students "in charge" of their own learning. Courses are built around projects done at students' own paces instead of traditional coursework modules, and teachers focus their energy on tutoring individual students.

Projects are the foundation of the academic experience and give students hands-on experience with real-world scenarios they'll encounter after graduation, like collaborating with a team,

interpreting data, and presenting a persuasive argument. In the classroom, teachers teach cognitive skills and content through real-world projects and help students apply their knowledge to the world around them.

In August 2020, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation committed approximately \$1.86M to Summit Public Schools Washington for the purpose of providing support to Summit Public Schools, create Summit Washington, and continue to launch high quality public schools in Washington.