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May 2012

Arkansas Public Charter Schools: Evaluation of Service Impact and Student Achievement

2010–2011 Evaluation Report

SUBMITTED TO:

Mary Ann Duncan, Former Program Director of
Charter Schools



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Executive Summary

During the 2009–2010 school year, 29 public charter schools serving approximately 10,200 students were operating in Arkansas (17 open-enrollment and 12 conversion schools); of these 29 schools, 27 were still in operation at the time of this evaluation. Oversight of the public charter schools is provided by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). Since 2001, evaluations of these schools prior to Metis’s previous four annual evaluations have indicated that they are outperforming regular public schools in Arkansas. This evaluation focuses on the characteristics of the Arkansas public charter schools that are having the greatest impact on student achievement, overall customer satisfaction, and also looks at schools’ efficacy in carrying out the charter school philosophy. These findings could have implications not only for public charter schools but also for traditional district schools in the state.

The ADE retained Metis Associates, Inc., a research and evaluation firm based in New York City, Atlanta, and Philadelphia, to conduct an independent evaluation of the Arkansas Public Charter School Program for the 2010–2011 school year. The evaluation used a variety of data collection methodologies, yielding both qualitative and quantitative data. These methodologies included the following:

- Surveys of school administrators (N = 27 respondents), parents (N = 1,118 respondents), and students (N = 5,948 respondents);
- Analyses of student achievement data from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in reading and math (Grade 2), the Arkansas Benchmark exams in literacy and math (Grades 3–8), and End-of-Course (EOC) exams in geometry, algebra, and literacy (Grades 9–12); and
- Review of detailed project documentation.

The study revealed evidence of schools’ specific focus on strong academic leadership, effective academic programming, and relevant professional development for staff. The documentation reviewed for this evaluation included schools’ academic plans, along with meeting agendas and minutes that aligned with these plans. These materials demonstrated the efforts taken by the charter schools to meet the high accountability standards written in their comprehensive school plans and charters. A high percentage of schools further documented their use of technology, project-based learning, and individualized instruction—all of which show schools’ efforts to provide effective academic programming to students.

Teacher professional development was also shown to be a particular focus in 2010–2011. Each school provided very detailed material on its professional development practices, including annual professional development plans, agendas from professional development committee meetings, and training and materials (such as curriculum training guides and staff needs-assessment surveys).



This evaluation, like those previously carried out by Metis, found that parents and students reported high degrees of satisfaction with their schools, especially with opportunities to be involved. It is possible that parents' satisfaction is tied to the charter schools' efforts to cultivate a high level of parent involvement, as demonstrated by detailed documentation provided that supports a commitment to parent involvement strategies.

While the greatest challenge school administrators described in 2009–2010, managing public perceptions, decreased substantially in 2010–2011, lower by 16 percentage points (57 percent vs. 41 percent, respectively), concerns with facility costs among open-enrollment schools still persisted in 2010–2011,

Regression analyses suggest that certain public charter school characteristics may have resulted in higher student achievement in 2010–2011. In Grade 2, smaller school size and the implementation of theme-based curriculum and team teaching were associated with increased student achievement on the ITBS reading and math tests. In Grade 3, small school size and the use of team teaching were associated with improved student achievement on the Benchmark literacy and math exams. In Grades 4–8, fewer suspensions and the implementation of reduced/small class sizes were associated with improved student achievement on the Benchmark literacy and math exams. Parental satisfaction was associated with improved performance on the Benchmark literacy exam in Grades 4–8 as well. Finally, in Grades 9–12, the use of multigrade classrooms was associated with higher achievement on the algebra EOC exam, the presence of an extended school day was associated with higher achievement on the geometry EOC exam, and the use of theme-based curriculum was associated with higher achievement on the 11th-grade literacy EOC exam.

An analysis of student achievement data using No Child Left Behind (NCLB) comparisons indicated a higher prevalence of subgroup differences in literacy and math achievement compared to 2009–2010 across all grade levels.

Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative data suggest that Arkansas public charter schools successfully implemented the charter school program and achieved their goals during the 2010–2011 school year.

The following recommendations, based on the evaluation's findings and conclusions, may be useful to the Arkansas Public Charter School Program and its stakeholders as they move forward and make decisions for the future.

- **Explore the increasing gap between NCLB subgroups.** More than in previous years, regression analyses showed that White ethnic students and female students were more often associated with higher achievement in 2010–2011. In addition, ANCOVA analyses showed that students that were White, general education, and not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch consistently outperformed their counterparts across most grades. Future evaluations can determine whether these issues are growing, what their impact is, and how schools are—and ought to be—addressing them.



- **Continue to encourage the use of innovative curricular instruction.** A number of innovative instructional practices, such as theme-based instruction, team teaching, and reduced class size, were associated with improved student achievement. The ADE could continue supporting the public charter schools in implementing these practices and could also encourage further study of their impact.
- **Look further into the effect of school size on lower grade levels.** Smaller school size was associated with higher achievement in Grades 2 and 3 on reading/literacy and math. Future evaluations can determine whether this trend continues going forward and if it is an issue worth further exploring.
- **Continue addressing facility challenges experienced by open-enrollment public charter schools.** While the concern over facility costs among administrators of open-enrollment schools has declined over the last two evaluations, and while parents at these schools have expressed greater satisfaction with their schools' facilities, we would again recommend that the ADE continue exploring the financial support that is provided to the public charter schools used for facility management and provided technical assistance to schools who wish to seek outside funding to address this challenge (e.g., in the form of grant writing). It might also be possible to offer incentives to entities (e.g., districts, local businesses) that give public charter schools the opportunity to either colocate with them or lease appropriate facilities from them.



I. Introduction

In August 2001, Arkansas established a statewide public charter school program, which grew from 4 schools in its first year to 29 schools serving approximately 10,200 students in 2010–2011 (17 open-enrollment and 12 conversion schools). Under the program, new open-enrollment schools and adapted district conversion schools offered flexible curricular programming and promised higher degrees of accountability to the communities they serve. Arkansas state law specifies that public charter schools must also demonstrate to the State Board of Education that they are producing gains in student achievement and adhering to the charter authorization. The Division of Learning Services' Public Charter School Office of the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) hired Metis Associates¹ to design and carry out the evaluation for the 2010–2011 school year. The independent evaluation was intended to assist the state in meeting its requirements to annually evaluate its charter school program and to address key research areas of interest to the ADE and to achieve the following:

- Contribute to the overall knowledge base about public charter schools, including their impact on student achievement;
- Obtain qualitative data on the program's impact from key stakeholders (administrators, students, and parents) across the target schools and assess the stakeholders' satisfaction with all aspects of program implementation; and
- Begin to identify the innovations and practices within and across the target public charter schools that might be having an impact on student academic achievement.

The evaluation period ran from October 2011 to March 2012. An interim report provided to the ADE in February 2012 indicated high levels of parent and student satisfaction with the quality of schools' curricula and instruction, student remediation and support, and opportunities for parental involvement. Student achievement analyses also revealed various significant statistical differences between No Child Left Behind (NCLB) subgroups in their performance on state exams.

The next two sections of this report describe the research methods used in the study and present the findings, which are organized by the three major research questions contained in the evaluation proposal. The last section presents conclusions and recommendations for future implementation. Five appendices follow the main report; they include an evaluation matrix that aligns research questions to the data collection methods used to address them (Appendix A), a data collection summary sheet (Appendix B), outputs for student-achievement data distributions (Appendix C), detailed evaluation survey results (Appendix D), and copies of the evaluation surveys (Appendix E).

¹ Metis Associates is an employee-owned, national social services research and evaluation consulting organization headquartered in New York City, with 35 years of expertise in program evaluation, grants development, and information technology.



II. Research Methods

Drawing on the scope of work described in the ADE request for proposal, Metis worked closely with the Public Charter School Office during the evaluation period to develop an evaluation implementation plan covering activities between October 2011 and March 2012. During initial progress meetings, a set of research questions was finalized for both the implementation and the outcome components of the 2010–2011 evaluation. The final research questions developed were as follows:

- What is the overall efficacy of the charter schools with respect to various attributes, including strong academic leadership, high academic standards/expectations, mastery-oriented instruction, classroom management skills, a positive learning climate, and parental support and involvement?
- To what extent are the parents and the students of the public charter schools satisfied with their schools?
- What is the impact of the Arkansas public charter schools on student performance?
 - What are the characteristics of the public charter schools that have the greatest impact on academic achievement (e.g., student/parental satisfaction, school size, type of curricula used, etc.)?
 - What other indicators of improved school success are evident for public charter school students (e.g., increased attendance, fewer discipline reports, improved grades)?
 - What can the public charter schools learn from disaggregating the student outcome data by the different NCLB subgroups (special education status, Title I status, free/reduced-price lunch eligibility, gender, and racial/ethnic background)?

The Metis team used the following methods to collect data relevant to the evaluation questions.

Administration of surveys to school administrators, parents, and students. Beginning in November 2011, the evaluation team asked administrators at each of the public charter schools to complete an online charter school implementation survey, assist in disseminating a classroom-based student survey, and facilitate the administration of a parent survey, which the schools sent home with students for completion. Survey data for 2010–2011 were collected only for schools that were still in operation during the evaluation data collection period (November 2011–March 2012; $N = 27$ schools).

- The school implementation survey collected systematic information about public charter school operations. Administrator surveys for all 27 schools still in operation were completed by March 2012.

- The parent survey was sent home with each public charter school student and included a cover letter, a parent consent form for student participation in the student survey, and an addressed, postage-paid survey return envelope. To ensure the greatest response rate possible, no sampling methods were used and all parents were sent a questionnaire. The parent survey asked questions related to parents' satisfaction with certain aspects of their child's school, including the quality of instruction, parental support and communication, and school climate and safety. In total, 1,118 parent surveys were returned for the 2010–2011 school year (a 14 percent return rate). However, only surveys where parents reported having a child enrolled at the same school in 2010–2011 were retained for the analyses of parent survey data. After modifications to the survey data file, 851 survey entries for the 2010–2011 school year evaluation were available for analysis. The number of parent surveys returned from each school ranged from 3 to 167, with a median of 25.
- Students in Grades 3 and higher at all of the public charter schools completed a student survey. Parental consent for children's participation was obtained by means of a consent form included with the parent survey. School staff administered the surveys in the target-grade classrooms and students inserted the completed questionnaires into a peel-and-seal envelope to ensure anonymity. The student survey asked questions related to students' satisfaction with various aspects of their school, including quality of instruction, educational support, and school climate and safety, and it also collected basic background information. In total, 5,948 student surveys were returned (a 76 percent return rate). Among these, Metis conducted the analysis for only those students who reported being present at their school in 2010–2011, which resulted in 4,040 surveys being retained. The number of student surveys returned from each school ranged from 17 to 622, with a median of 152.

Analysis of student achievement data and demographic information. Student achievement data and demographic information were obtained from the ADE for each target school year for all 29 public charter schools that were in operation during the 2010–2011 school year, and an analytic file was constructed. Demographic information included racial/ethnic background, gender, title I status, poverty status (free/reduced-price lunch eligibility), and special needs status. In addition, the file contained the results of the:

- Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program (ACTAAP), which includes results for the Stanford Achievement Test 10 (SAT-10) in language and math;
- The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) in reading and math (for Grades 1, 2, and 9);²
- The Arkansas Benchmark exams in literacy and math (for Grades 3–8); and
- End-of-Course exams in geometry, algebra, and literacy (for Grades 9–12) for the 2010–2011 school year.

² Pretest scores were not available for Grade 1 (i.e., there were no kindergarten scores), so the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) could not be conducted for this grade. ANCOVA makes it possible to compare a given outcome in two or more categorical groups while controlling for the variability of important continuous predictors/covariates (e.g., prior achievement).

Review of extant data. The evaluation team collected relevant documentation on schoolwide public charter school implementation for 2010–2011. The list of requested program documentation included

- Professional development opportunity schedules;
- Evidence of parental support/involvement (including parent newsletters, agendas of parent events, etc.);
- Evidence of strong academic leadership, high academic standards, positive school climate, and effective classroom management (including materials such as meeting agendas/minutes, local survey results, and a list of programs implemented at the school);
- Forms that demonstrate class scheduling and student grouping practices;
- Arkansas Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (ACSIP) for the 2009–2010 school year; and
- Annual reports to the public.

III. Findings

This section of the report presents findings of the evaluation and is organized according to the major research questions. Where there were notable or interesting differences, the discussion and interpretation of findings includes comparisons to results from the 2009–2010 evaluation.

A. Overall Efficacy of Public Charter Schools

For this study, Metis sought to examine how the public charter schools fostered growth in the key areas vital to running an effective charter school. Through the school administrator implementation survey and a detailed collection of school documents, the study addressed schools' steps in developing strong academic leadership, implementing a rigorous and effective instructional program, cultivating their staffs, and involving and communicating effectively with families. Sections addressing each of these areas follow.

Table 1 lists the 29 public charter schools that were open during the 2010–2011 school year and includes information about the school type, grades served, and year opened.

Table 1. Overview of the Arkansas Public Charter Schools (2010–2011 Evaluation)

School	Grades Served	Year Opened
Badger Academy Charter School	7–12	2007–2008
Blytheville Charter School and ALC	7–12	2001–2002
Cabot Academic Center of Excellence	7–12	2004–2005
Cloverdale Aerospace and Technology Conversion Charter Middle School	6–8	2010–2011
Arthur Bo Felder Alternative Learning Academy	6–12	2005–2006 (Closed June 2011)
Lincoln Academic Center of Excellence	K–12	2009–2010
Lincoln Middle Academy of Excellence	5–6	2010–2011
Mountain Home High School Career Academies	10–12	2003–2004
Oak Grove Elementary Health, Wellness, and Environmental Science	K–4	2009–2010

School	Grades Served	Year Opened
Ridgeroad Middle Charter School	7-8	2003-2004
Vilonia Academy of Technology	2-4	2004-2005
Vilonia Academy of Service and Technology	5-6	2007-2008
Academics Plus Charter School	K-12	2001-2002
Arkansas Virtual Academy	K-8	2004-2005
Benton County School of the Arts	K-12	2001-2002
Covenant Keepers College Preparatory Charter School	6-9	2008-2009
Dreamland Academy of Performing & Communication Arts	K-5	2007-2008
e-STEM Elementary Public Charter School	K-4	2008-2009
e-STEM Middle Public Charter School	5-8	2008-2009
e-STEM High Public Charter School	9-10	2008-2009
Haas Hall Academy	8-12	2004-2005
Imboden Area Charter School	K-8	2002-2003
Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter School	K-6	2009-2010
KIPP Blytheville College Preparatory	5	2010-2011
KIPP Delta Public Schools	K-1, 5-12	2002-2003
LISA Academy	6-12	2004-2005
LISA Academy-North Little Rock	K-9	2008-2009
Little Rock Preparatory Academy	5-8	2009-2010
Osceola Communication, Arts, and Business School	7-12	2008-2009 (Closed June 2011)

Open-Enrollment



Among the 29 public charter schools open in 2009–2010, the grade configurations varied considerably, including elementary school grades only (five schools), elementary through middle school grades (seven schools), middle school through high school grades (eight schools), middle school grades only (two schools), high school grades only (two schools), and all three schooling levels (five schools). Table 1 also shows that 12 of these schools were conversion schools and 17 were open-enrollment schools. Three schools (Blytheville, Academics Plus, and Benton) were the first to open (in the 2001–2002 school year), and three schools (Cloverdale, Lincoln Middle, and KIPP Blytheville) were the latest to open (in the 2009–2010 year).

School Operations and Academic Leadership

In 2010–2011, as in previous years, the public charter schools put into practice various waivers allowed under state and district education laws, regulations, and policies. Data were received from administrators from all 27 public charter schools still in operation during the evaluation period and were analyzed to determine what waivers the public charter schools utilized. Table 2 shows the most common areas in which the schools obtained and implemented waivers.

Table 2. Public Charter School Waivers

Waiver	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
Teacher certification requirements	19	76%
Teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices	12	48%
School calendar	8	32%
Other	7	28%
Establishing curriculum	6	24%
School day length	5	20%
Collective bargaining provisions	5	20%
School year length	4	16%
Student discipline policies	2	8%
Purchasing procedures	2	8%
Contractual services	1	4%

Teacher certification requirements were the most common waivers put in place by the public charter schools in 2010–2011 (76 percent of charter schools), as they were in 2009–2010. A little less than half of the schools also implemented waivers for teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices (48 percent).

A great deal of information regarding the practices carried out at the charter schools during the 2010–2011 school year was contained in the program documentation the schools provided. Master schedules had information on class schedules, and accompanying documents had information on student grouping practices. Information on schools’ academic practices was available in curriculum

outlines, listings and descriptions of academic programs, and numerous agendas and minutes for meetings dealing with academics, school operations, and policies.

Schools provided the following program documentation to enable Metis to assess their progress in efficacious public charter school management and academic leadership:

- Master schedules, weekly schedules, and school calendars;
- Documents concerning student grouping practices;
- Teacher observation schedules;
- Multiyear strategic plans;
- School board and/or school leadership team meeting agendas and minutes (with information on annual goals; curricula; teacher effectiveness and teacher evaluations; student assessment; professional development; data analysis; special academic programs; student conduct policies and implementation of “intervention programs,” including the use of therapists, mentors, and social workers; the use of consultants for instruction, scheduling, attendance, and discipline; the updating of school handbooks; and schoolwide events);
- Faculty and academic department meeting agendas (with information on unit and lesson planning, the use of student data, SMART goals, special projects, addressing the needs of low performers, professional development turnkeying, academic events like writing celebrations, and report cards);
- Curriculum outlines;
- Monthly staff newsletters and schoolwide newsletters;
- Copies of student surveys (to research academic accessibility and effectiveness);
- Copies of teacher surveys (to examine academic practices and curricular effectiveness);
- Copies of parent surveys (to assess school effectiveness in areas of academic support for students, school climate, and parent communication);
- Agendas for special committees to address school objectives (scheduling committees, discipline committees, core subject committees, testing committees, special needs instruction committees, ACSIP committees, etc.);
- School climate program materials (positive behavior supports, behavior progress reports, etc.);
- School remodeling plans—meeting notes;
- Lunch menus;
- Newspaper articles outlining academic successes and leadership of schools; and
- Student behavior incentive program outlines.

Open-enrollment schools were also separately asked to indicate the most common practices carried out by their school boards during the 2010–2011 year. Of the boards at the 17 participating open-enrollment schools, at least 90 percent did the following:

- Held open board meetings (100 percent);
- Shared agendas and other important information before board meetings (100 percent);
- Maintained clear, up-to-date bylaws (100 percent);
- Established clear procedures for the selection of board members (100 percent);
- Maintained written descriptions of board members’ roles and responsibilities (94 percent);
- Maintained open lines of communication between the board and school administration (94 percent);
- Maintained a commitment to strategic planning (94 percent);
- Established a formal plan for the training of board members (93 percent);
- Established a formal plan for family and community involvement (92 percent); and
- Used available funds for continued board development (91 percent).

Program documentation collected from the open-enrollment schools—which included the materials listed on page 9 as well as board-specific documents (meeting agendas and minutes, school policy handbooks, and data reports to the school)—demonstrated transparency in boards’ activities, roles, and responsibilities as well as in their communication with the school community.

School administrators were asked to indicate what facility arrangements existed for their school in 2010–2011. The largest proportion of respondents (42 percent) indicated using rented/leased facilities that were independent of the school district. The second highest proportion (39 percent) indicated using existing district facilities at no cost, while a notable 15 percent of schools indicated purchasing their own facilities. As can be seen, the majority of school facilities were not school-ready buildings, a situation that led to challenges in some school offerings (similarly to 2009–2010 and explained further under “Issues and Challenges,” below).

Academic Program and Instruction

Administrator survey respondents indicated the use of various methods of instructional delivery in 2010–2011. The list of options included all instructional methods known to be implemented across the public charter school program in 2010–2011.

Table 3. Primary Methods of Instructional Delivery

Instructional Method	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
Regular integration of technology	20	77%
Project-based or hands-on learning	20	77%

Instructional Method	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
Character education	19	73%
Individualized or tailored instruction	19	73%
Reduced or small class size	18	69%
Direct instruction	17	65%
Interdisciplinary instruction	16	62%
Cooperative learning	16	62%
Regular integration of fine arts	14	54%
Multigrade classrooms	12	46%
Alternative or authentic assessment	12	46%
Extended school day (before, after, summer, and/or vacation)	12	46%
Team teaching	9	35%
School-to-work concepts and strategies	8	31%
Theme-based curriculum	7	27%
Distance learning and/or instruction via Internet	7	27%
Year-round or extended schooling	7	27%
Work-based or field-based learning	6	23%
Independent study	6	23%
Home-based learning with parent as primary instructor	1	4%

As with the 2009–2010 evaluation findings, the prevalence of technology integration in the charter schools' instructional methodology was high. Approximately 77 percent of schools indicated regularly integrating technology, along with an equal 77 percent of schools that indicated implementing project-based or hands-on learning in their schools. At least two thirds of schools also indicated implementing character education (73 percent), individualized or tailored instruction (73 percent), and reduced or small class size (69 percent). Few schools (less than 25 percent) indicated the implementation of work-based or field-based learning (23 percent), independent study (23 percent), foreign language immersion (19 percent), and home-based learning (15 percent).

When asked about special education instruction, 100 percent of schools reported providing some type of accommodation for students with special needs (similar to 2009–2010). The two most common accommodations reported, pull-out services and inclusive classrooms, were offered by 89 percent of charter schools, up from 79 percent the previous year. In addition, approximately 42 percent of these charter schools had self-contained special education classes (similar to the previous year). When asked about instruction for English language learner (ELL) students, 46 percent of schools indicated offering English as a second language instruction, a figure that is slightly up from



39 percent the previous year, and that is explained by the increase in the number of schools with ELL students in 2010–2011 (58 percent compared to 48 percent of schools the previous year).

All of the public charter schools appeared to use a range of assessment strategies in addition to the state and national assessments required of all Arkansas public schools. At least half of schools reported using student demonstrations/exhibitions (69 percent), behavioral indicators (69 percent), student portfolios (62 percent), and student interviews or surveys (50 percent) in addition to teacher-assigned grades and the required standardized achievement test and Benchmark exam.

Schools provided detailed program documentation to support their reports of the various instructional methodologies used. Documentation included curriculum outlines and materials; descriptions of general education, special education, elective/enrichment courses, advanced placement, and gifted programs; and school course listings. The documentation also provided evidence of strong instructional support for teachers and students across the charter school program, including pacing guides and scope and sequence documents, tutoring and after-school schedules, and evidence of postsecondary support programs.

The following is a summary list of documents provided by schools that indicate the implementation of strong instructional programming and support across the public charter school program.

- Sample curricula and curriculum outlines for core subject areas (some grade specific);
- Instructional pacing guides;
- Lists of course offerings (general education, special education, elective/enrichment courses, advanced placement, gifted programs, and special programs like community initiatives for students);
- Class schedules;
- Descriptions of alternative learning environment programs (as well as agendas for related meetings);
- Student mentorship program guides and lists;
- Remediation course rosters/schedules;
- Interdisciplinary projects and interdisciplinary instructional plans;
- Descriptions/lists of online learning opportunities used;
- Charter school annual reports to the public;
- Inventory lists of educational software and technology-related equipment;
- Evidence of strong postsecondary preparation support and college-readiness programs (e.g., program pamphlets, career fairs, materials for school-based postsecondary support offices, etc.);
- Scope and sequence documents;
- Student assessment guides and samples;

- Student advisory group plans;
- Inclusion classroom guides;
- Core-subject events (Literacy Night agendas, writing celebration flyers, etc.);
- Sample instructional and assessment rubrics;
- Student portfolio guides for teachers/students;
- Sample student portfolios, student projects, and student work;
- Sample unit and lesson plans and copies of lesson plan books;
- Sample unit and gradewide assessments;
- Testing tools and schedules;
- Tutoring and after-school schedules; and
- Student Progress Report Notebook guides.

Staff-Related Practices

Arkansas public charter schools take advantage of laws that allow them to implement staff practices that are not possible under a traditional school structure. Results of the online administrator survey, which asked about the various alternative staff practices that the charter schools implemented through the flexibility in their charter school contracts, are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Public Charter School Alternative Staff Practices

Practice	Number of Schools	Percentage of Schools
Ongoing, targeted professional development	14	58%
Dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory performance	13	54%
Lack of tenure for teachers	10	42%
Professional development services contracts with nondistrict providers	9	38%
Rewards for exemplary performance	8	33%
Performance-based bonuses for teachers	7	29%
Private fund-raising/grants development	4	17%
Higher teacher salaries (than public school)	4	17%
Other	4	17%

Ongoing targeted professional development was the most common alternative practice among all schools (cited by 58 percent of schools), followed by dismissal of teachers for poor performance (54 percent), lack of tenure for teachers (42 percent), and professional development service contracts with nondistrict providers (38 percent).

The survey findings revealed that public charter schools offered approximately 10 dedicated days of professional development in 2010–2011, equal to the number of days offered in 2009–2010. Program documentation provided information on the content of the professional development that the public charter schools offered during the 2010–2011 year. It also revealed professional development practices and planning to support implementation.

- Documents that offered evidence of implementation included the following:
- Professional development schedules;
- School year professional development plans;
- Curriculum training guides;
- School web page announcements (copies);
- Faculty and department meeting agendas focused on professional development implementation;
- Professional development materials;
- Conference workshop materials/agendas;
- Staff needs-assessment surveys;
- Professional development sign-in sheets;
- Individual professional development plans and personalized professional-development verification forms;
- Internship opportunity lists;
- Leadership team meeting agendas and minutes related to professional development plans
- Professional development committee meeting agendas;
- Professional learning community meeting agendas;
- Team Action Planning (TAP) meeting agendas; and
- Documents illustrating the alignment of professional development offerings to schoolwide goals.

The following were the general topics covered by professional development sessions across multiple charter schools:³

- Subject-specific curriculum implementation (e.g., literacy, history, math, science, writing, health);
- Data-related topics (e.g., data walks, data disaggregation, data walls, data backup procedures, data security, and data-driven decision making);

³ This list consists of general topic areas found in the documentation provided; there were too many specific titles to list them.

- Parent involvement and communication strategies;
- Classroom management and behavior-related trainings (e.g., behavior intervention, cultural sensitivity, ethics in teaching, teaching with poverty in mind, crisis management, classroom management approaches, teen conflict, teen communication);
- Instructional delivery trainings (e.g., research-based instruction, instructional best practices, cognitive research, cooperative learning, homework assignment best practices, common core, instructional differentiation, unit pacing);
- Curriculum-related training (e.g., curriculum mapping and instructional/curriculum alignment);
- Student testing, accountability, and achievement;
- The use of technology to support instruction (e.g., virtual learning, computing, software, SmartBoards, document cameras);
- Staff collaboration, teaming, mentoring, coaching, advocacy, and building collaborative learning communities;
- Conference participation (regional and national)—multiple topics covered; and
- Administration-related trainings (e.g., instructional leadership, parental involvement data disaggregation, fiscal management, supervision, staff assessment, progress monitoring, teacher effectiveness).

Parent Communication and Involvement

The school administrator survey asked respondents to rate the level of parental and community involvement in the charter school program. Table 5 presents these findings for 25 responding charter schools.

Table 5. Level of Parental and Community Involvement

Indicator	Total N	Level of Involvement		
		Excellent or Good	Average	Poor or Unsatisfactory
Level of parental involvement concerning students' academic achievement, attendance, and/or behavior	25	68%	24%	8%
Level of parental involvement concerning participation in schoolwide events or activities (e.g., Parents Club)	25	60%	32%	8%
Level of community involvement at this school	25	52%	28%	20%

As can be seen in Table 5, the majority of school administrators rated parental involvement in students' academic achievement, attendance, and/or behavior in 2010–2011 as *good* to *excellent* (68 percent); nearly a quarter (24 percent) of parents rated it *average*, and only 8 percent rated it *poor* or *unsatisfactory*. These findings show a slight increase in the rating for parental involvement from the previous school year (2009–2010), when 62 percent of schools rated parents' involvement as *good* to

excellent (a 6-percentage-point difference). Generally, schools rated parental involvement in schoolwide events and activities a bit lower than their involvement in students’ academics, with 24 percent rating parents’ involvement in schoolwide events as *excellent*. However, this finding reflects an increase from 2009–2010, when only 13 percent rated this item as *excellent*.

Schools also indicated using similar strategies and activities to promote parent involvement in 2010–2011 as in 2009–2010. At least 95 percent of schools in each of the past two school years indicated having parent-teacher conferences and involving parents in monitoring student academic progress. However, a slightly higher percentage of schools in 2010–2011 indicated scheduling school events during times that accommodated parents’ schedules and involved parents in discipline-related discussions (92 percent each) compared to the previous year (83 and 88 percent, respectively). No other notable increases were observed in the use of parent involvement strategies between 2009–2010 and 2010–2011 (see the complete list of parent involvement strategies used under “Administrator Survey” copy in Appendix E). However, data from the 2009–2010 evaluation reveal that schools’ use of community resources rose 38 percentage points from the previous year (2008–2009), the most dramatic increase between 2008–2009 and 2010–2011 in any method used.

Program documentation contained additional examples of strategies used by the schools to promote parent involvement and communication, including schoolwide parent involvement plans, monthly parent newsletters, parent trainings or workshops, annual parent feedback surveys, and materials on other school functions. All schools that provided copies of their 2010–2011 school improvement plan (ACSIP) indicated the implementation of parent orientation events and Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings. The following is a complete list of all documentation provided to Metis that spoke to schools’ efforts at promoting a high level of parent involvement.

- Charter school annual reports to the public;
- Schoolwide parent involvement plans (outlines of strategies for communication, for building parental capacity, for generating partnership between parents and schools, for collaboration with community stakeholders, and for recruiting parent volunteers);
- Community collaboration initiative plans;
- Open-house agendas;
- Parent events documents (e.g., agendas, handouts, sign-in sheets, calendars);
- Permission slips for special student assemblies or events;
- Parent communication documents (e.g., letters and memos sent home, parent newsletters, flyers and notices of special events, email blasts of upcoming events), information about parent activities, academic programming, academic events [e.g., literacy nights], fund-raising, testing schedules, community-related resources, contact lists, lists of special programs [academic/remedial and extracurricular], including documents translated into other languages, etc.);
- Parental guides for at-home educational support;
- Community stakeholder collaboration plans;

- Schoolwide lists of parent involvement activities for school;
- Parent-teacher conference sign-in sheets and related communiques;
- Parent volunteering forms and lists of opportunities;
- School-parent compacts;
- Parent survey samples and survey results (e.g., school implementation surveys and needs assessment surveys);
- Student/parent handbooks;
- Resources provided to parents, including lists of websites; and
- Teacher call logs (to parents).

Issues and Challenges

Public charter school administrators were asked about what issues and challenges (if any) they encountered in operating their school during the 2010–2011 year. Previous evaluation reports have outlined the various challenges faced by charter schools in procuring the proper facilities to allow operation at full capacity, and have noted in particular the difficulties of implementing extracurricular activities in certain facilities and the financial burden of transforming physical spaces to handle activities such as sports programs. As such, one of the two most common areas that were identified as particular challenges by the charter schools in 2010–2011 was facility costs; the other was managing public perceptions and public relations (indicated by 41 percent of schools in each case). The latter, however, is an improvement over the 59 percent of schools that felt that managing public perceptions was a challenge the previous year (a difference of 18 percentage points). Beyond these two areas, nearly a third (32 percent) of schools also reported finding it challenging to increase parental involvement in 2010–2011; a similar share of schools (33 percent) reported the same challenge in 2009–2010. Complete data can be found on Table 89 in Appendix D.

When the data are disaggregated by type of school (open-enrollment vs. conversion), it can be seen that the challenges were most pronounced by either type of school. To be sure, all 9 schools that indicated being challenged by facility costs were open-enrollment (the figure represents 64 percent of open-enrollment schools, 10 percentage points above what it was in 2009–2010). In addition, only 15 percent of open-enrollment schools indicated having trouble with increasing parent involvement, compared to 56 percent of conversion schools. Furthermore, 22 percent of conversion schools struggled with managing public perceptions and public relations, compared to 54 percent of open-enrollment schools.

B. Satisfaction of Students and Parents with Public Charter Schools

Retrospective surveys were used to assess parent and student satisfaction with the public charter schools. Parents were queried about the reasons for their charter school selection; parents and students alike were asked about the overall quality of the school and their experiences and/or satisfaction with the instruction, student support, school environment and climate, and family involvement. Both sets of respondents were also asked about prior experiences with other schools. Main findings from the survey analyses are presented in the subsections below. Complete parent and student survey responses can be found in Appendix D.

Charter School Selection

When asked about their reasons for their charter school selection, parent survey respondents attributed it to the particular school's quality of instruction and environment. Specifically, parents most frequently cited the following reasons:

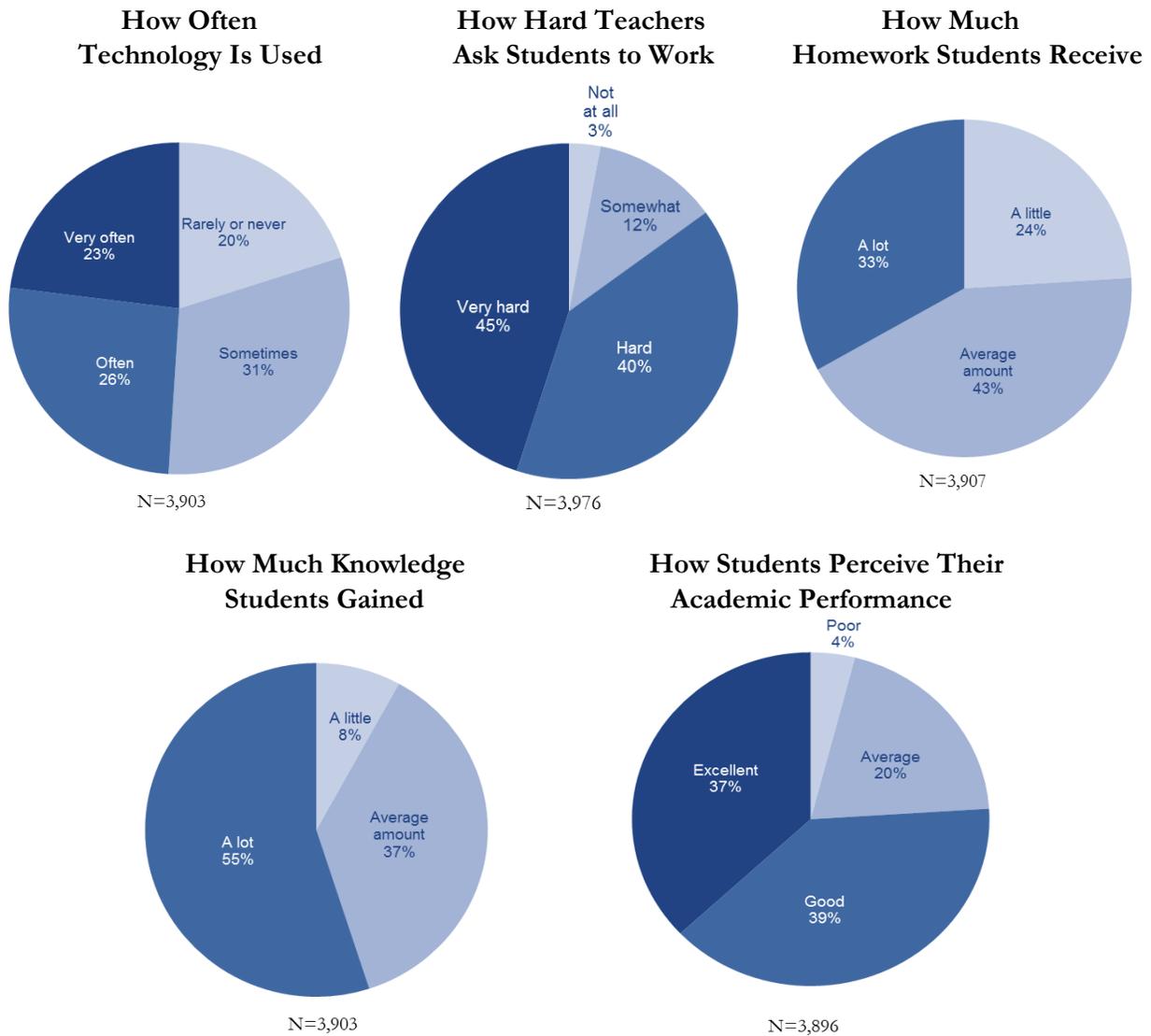
- Interest in the charter school's instructional or academic program (69 percent);
- Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options/safety (62 percent);
- Interest in the charter school's educational mission or philosophy (61 percent);
- Small size of the charter school or small classes (41 percent);
- Better teachers at the charter school (37 percent);
- Greater opportunities for parental involvement at the charter school (30 percent); and
- Respondent's child wanted to come to the charter school (28 percent).

Also, while only 28 percent of parents named their child's interest as a reason for enrollment, it is noteworthy to mention that over three quarters (76 percent) of students reported being interested in their charter school during the 2010–2011 school year.

Instruction

Student survey findings on various aspects of instruction are represented in Figure 1; it shows students' estimations of how frequently they used technology in the classroom, how much homework they received, how hard their teachers expected them to work, how much knowledge they felt they gained during the school year, and how well they performed academically overall.

Figure 1. Student Perceptions of Charter School Instruction



The data in in Figure 1 show the following:

- The majority of student respondents (85 percent) indicated that their teachers expected them to work hard (*hard* or *very hard*). Notably, when compared to 2009–2010, this is 12 percentage points higher than the proportion of those students who believed their teachers expected them to work *hard* or *very hard*.
- The greatest proportion of students (49 percent) used computers and other electronics in class on a regular basis (*often* or *very often*).

- Although most students (43 percent) thought they received an *average amount* of homework, a third of students (33 percent) thought they received *a lot* of homework.
- Over half of student respondents (55 percent) reported that they learned *a lot*, while over a third (37 percent) stated that they learned an *average amount*.
- Importantly, the majority of students (76 percent) felt they earned *good* or *excellent* grades during the 2010–2011 school year.
- Differences in students' reported use of technology were also higher in 2010–2011, with 49 percent reporting using technology *often* or *very often*, compared to 40 percent of responding students in 2009–2010.

Parents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their child's school in various areas related to instruction. Table 6 illustrates the findings from the parent survey across all 27 charter schools.

Table 6. Parent Satisfaction with Charter School Instruction

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction Reported			
		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Curriculum	828	74%	22%	3%	1%
Quality of reading instruction	812	74%	21%	3%	2%
Quality of math instruction	819	72%	22%	5%	1%
Quality of writing instruction	814	72%	22%	4%	2%
Use of technology within the instructional program	810	71%	22%	4%	3%
Performance of the teachers	822	70%	22%	6%	2%

Table 6 shows that most survey respondents were satisfied (*very satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied*) with all elements of instruction at the charter schools. The greatest proportion of parents indicated satisfaction with their charter school's curriculum (96 percent), followed by the quality of reading instruction (95 percent), the quality of math instruction (94 percent), the quality of writing instruction (94 percent), technology use within the instructional program (93 percent), and teacher performance (92 percent). No notable differences were observed when compared to findings from 2009–2010.

Student Support

Table 7 represents survey findings on parents' satisfaction with charter schools' support for students. The survey asked parents about their satisfaction with various areas of support, including special services available, individualized attention received by students, guidance counseling and tutoring, and extracurricular activities.

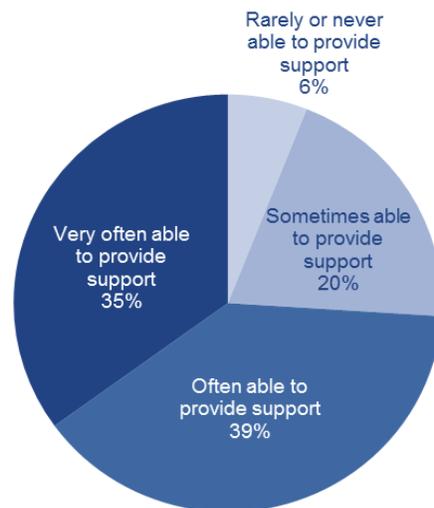
Table 7. Parent Satisfaction with Charter School Student Support

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction Reported			
		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Extra help or special services when needed	715	74%	18%	4%	4%
Individualized attention	818	71%	21%	6%	2%
Quality of student support services such as guidance counseling and tutoring	772	71%	21%	5%	3%
Extracurricular activities	752	59%	24%	11%	6%

Findings from Table 7 suggest that the charter schools performed strongly in the area of student support. The majority of parents reported being *very satisfied* or *somewhat satisfied* with the extra help/special services provided by the school (92 percent), individualized attention given to their child (92 percent), quality of student support services (92 percent), and extracurricular activities (83 percent). These findings were found to be consistent with the parent survey findings from 2009–2010.

Students were also asked to rate their teachers’ ability to provide support when needed. Figure 2 shows that 74 percent of student respondents thought that their teachers were able to do so *often* or *very often*, a figure that was very similar to the 73 percent of students that indicated the same in 2009–2010.

Figure 2. Student Perception of Teachers’ Ability to Provide Support

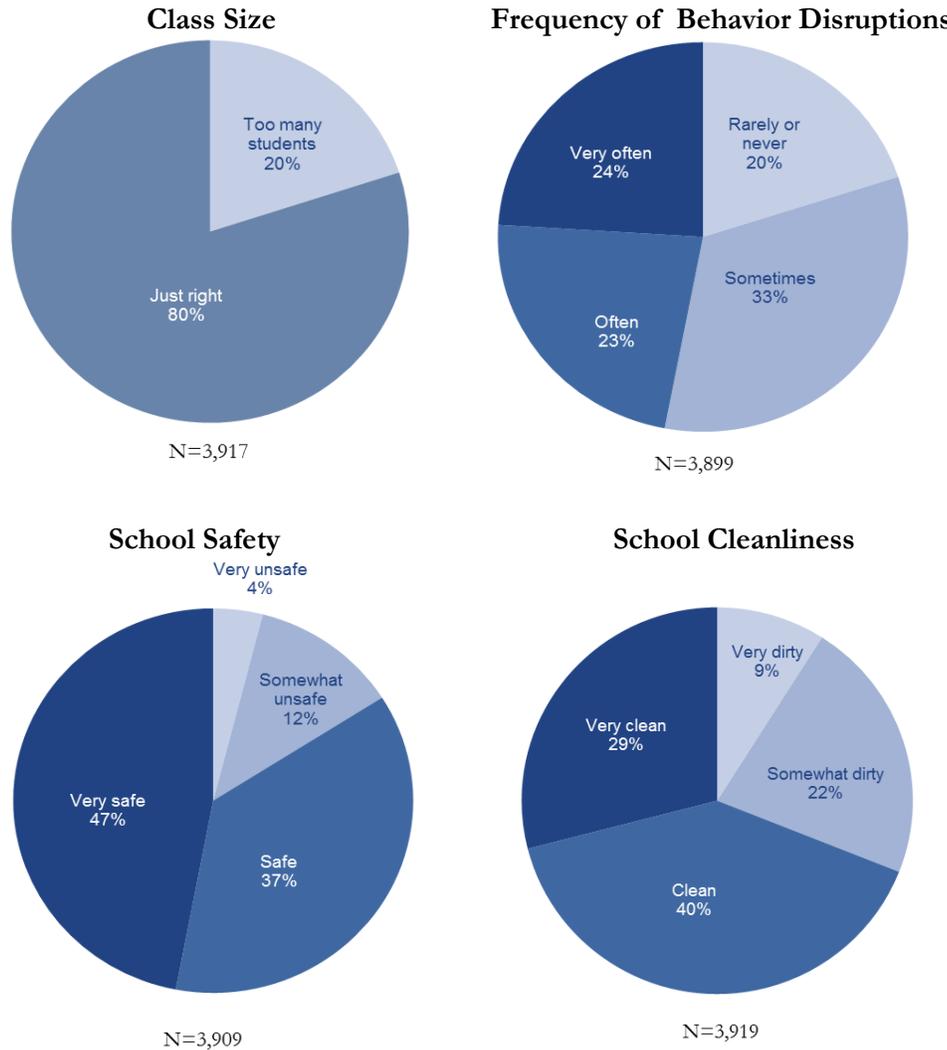


N=3,938

School Environment and Climate

Figure 3 and Table 8 outline the student and parent survey findings on charter schools' environment and climate.

Figure 3. Student Perception of School Environment/Climate



As shown in Figure 3, the majority of student survey respondents thought that:

- Their charter school was safe (safe and very safe) (84 percent);
- Their class size was just right (80 percent);
- Their school was clean (clean and very clean) (69 percent); and
- Behavior disruptions occurred sometimes or rarely/never (53 percent).

Table 8. Parent Satisfaction with Charter School Environment and Climate

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction Reported			
		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
School safety	769	75%	20%	3%	2%
School size	801	74%	22%	3%	1%
Class size	808	73%	21%	5%	1%
School climate (i.e., the feel or tone of everyday life at the school)	776	71%	22%	5%	2%
School discipline policies and practices	787	69%	21%	6%	3%
Quality of the building in which the school is located	736	67%	24%	6%	3%
Quality of the school facilities (i.e., school library, gymnasium, and science labs)	691	55%	28%	11%	6%

In alignment with the positive student survey findings, Table 8 shows that parent survey respondents were generally satisfied with the environment and climate of their child's charter school. At least 83 percent of parents reported satisfaction with each of the indicators. Specifically, the greatest proportion of parents were *somewhat* to *very satisfied* with the charter schools' size (96 percent), followed by safety (95 percent), class size (94 percent), climate (93 percent), quality of the building (91 percent), and quality of the facilities (83 percent). In previous evaluations, satisfaction with the quality of school facilities was notably lower among open-enrollment school parents than among conversion school parents, so the two school types disaggregated data for the last two items in Table 8. The results showed that in 2010–2011, there were no notable differences between the groups (i.e., there was only a maximum 5-percentage-point difference in the share of parents in both groups giving a rating of *dissatisfied* for each item). Combined, no area showed any marked difference between 2010–2011 and 2009–2010.

Family Involvement

Table 9 presents survey findings on parents' satisfaction with family involvement at the charter schools.

Table 9. Parent Satisfaction with Charter School Family Involvement

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction Reported			
		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	827	79%	18%	2%	1%
Communication with child's teacher	834	73%	20%	4%	3%

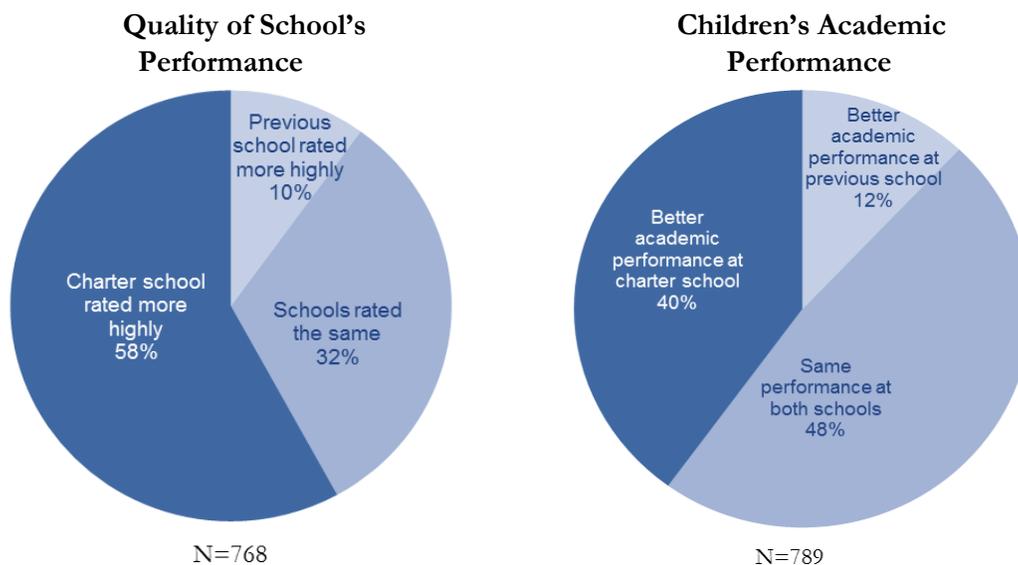


Similar to findings on school instruction, support, and environment/climate, most parent survey respondents were satisfied (*somewhat to very satisfied*) with family involvement at their charter school. The majority of parents were *somewhat to very satisfied* with the opportunities available for parent participation (97 percent) and communication with teachers (93 percent). Notably, very few (between 1 and 4 percent) were *somewhat or very dissatisfied* with either of these items. Again, no marked differences were found when compared to the share of parents that were satisfied/not satisfied in 2008–2009 in either item.

Previous School Experience

Most student survey respondents (86 percent) attended another school prior to enrollment at their current charter school. The majority of those students previously attended a regular public school (83 percent); the rest attended a private school (7 percent), attended another charter school (6 percent), or were home schooled (5 percent).

Figure 4. Parent Comparisons of the Charter School Versus the Previous School



Although most students (58 percent) thought that their previous school was of *good or excellent* quality, parents tended to prefer their child's current charter school over the previous school. As shown in Figure 4, the majority (58 percent) of parent survey respondents thought that their child's current charter school was of better quality than their child's previous school. Moreover, 40 percent of parent survey respondents reported better academic performance for their child at the current charter school than at the previous school. These data were not distinctly different from those in the 2009–2010 data.

Table 10. Parent Satisfaction with Current Charter School Versus Previous School

Area	Indicator	Total N	Satisfaction With Current School		
			More Than With Previous	Same as With Previous	Less Than With Previous
Instruction	Quality of math instruction	745	43%	46%	12%
	Quality of reading instruction	737	40%	49%	11%
	Quality of writing instruction	742	40%	51%	10%
Student Support	Extra help or special services for students when needed	639	42%	49%	9%
School Environment and Climate	School safety	709	36%	54%	10%
	School facilities	640	33%	46%	22%
Family Involvement	Parent involvement or participation	744	41%	51%	9%

Table 10 presents the differences in parents’ satisfaction with their child’s current charter school and the previous school. Parents were asked to rate their child’s current school and previous school in each of the areas listed in the table above. Ratings were then compared between the two questions. As can be seen, overall, a much larger percentage of parents provided higher satisfaction ratings with their child’s current charter school in areas of instructional quality compared to their ratings of satisfaction with their child’s previous school. Parents were also generally more satisfied with their child’s current school in the areas of student support, school environment, and family involvement than with their child’s previous school.

Challenges

Although parent survey respondents reported general satisfaction with the charter schools, 419 expressed concerns regarding specific elements through open-ended responses. The most frequently mentioned concerns include the following:

- The need for the expansion of schools to include the upper grade levels;
- A lack of extracurricular activities for students;
- A lack of school transportation;
- The quality of teachers;
- Large class size;
- Teacher turnover;
- Bullying/behavioral issues;
- School safety;
- The quality of the school facilities;

- Students' academic progress;
- Insufficient challenges for students; and
- Insufficient communication with parents.

C. Impact of Arkansas Public Charter Schools on Student Achievement

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) reading and math data were used to analyze student achievement in Grade 2;⁴ Benchmark literacy and math exam data were used to analyze student achievement in Grades 3–8; and EOC algebra 1, geometry, and 11th-grade literacy exam data were used to analyze student achievement in Grades 9–12.⁵

The ITBS administered in Grades 1, 2, and 9 in Arkansas in the 2010–2011 school year, is a standardized, norm-referenced test that includes different literacy- and math-related subtests that are combined into overall literacy and math test scores. The Benchmark literacy and math exams are criterion-referenced tests mandated by the state of Arkansas. They have been customized around the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks, meaning that the test items are based on the academic standards in the frameworks and are developed by committees of Arkansas teachers with support from the ADE and the testing contractor.

The EOC algebra 1, geometry, and 11th-grade literacy exams were used to compare the performance of students in Grades 9–12 in spring 2010 and spring 2011. All three of these examinations are criterion-referenced tests with questions that have been aligned with the goals and subject-specific competencies described by the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. Thus, student performance on these exams is directly aligned with the statewide frameworks and statewide curriculum goals.⁶

Predictors of Improved Student Outcomes

Multiple regression analyses were used to examine the different factors that might influence student achievement. Multiple regression can be a useful tool when there is an interest in accounting for the variation in an outcome (i.e., the dependent variable) based on combinations of different factors and conditions (i.e., the independent variables). Multiple regression analysis can establish a set of independent variables that explains a proportion of the variation in a dependent variable at a significant level (significance test of R^2) and can establish the relative predictive importance of the individual independent variables (comparing beta weights).

Regressions were conducted to predict 2011 student achievement scores from several programmatic and demographic variables, measures of satisfaction,⁷ 2010 achievement scores (when available),⁸

⁴ There were no pretest scores available for students in Grade 1 in 2010–2011.

⁵ Note that ITBS reading and math data were also used for Grade 9 for the ANCOVA analyses of NCLB designations.

⁶ This information is from the ADE website: <http://arkansased.gov>

⁷ Student and parent satisfaction measures were derived by summing ratings across various items in each survey, creating an overall level of satisfaction for each group.

and attendance. Several models were constructed using a range of variables to maximize the number of observed cases and the number of input variables. The list below shows the starting set of variables for all of the models. Note that NCLB subgroups⁹ were also included in the full regression models to further control for potential confounding factors and to improve model fit.

- School size,
- School attendance ratio,
- Number of suspensions,
- Spring 2010 test scores (SAT-10 and Benchmark exams),
- Student satisfaction total,
- Parent satisfaction total,
- 2011 grade point average (GPA),
- Student NCLB subgroups,
- Presence of extended school day,
- Implementation of reduced/small class size,
- Use of team teaching,
- Use of theme-based instruction, and
- Use of multigrade classrooms.

Based on initial R^2 values and the corresponding significance tests conducted, all of the above listed variables were retained in the final models.

The following tables summarize the resulting regression models. Presented in each table is the amount of variation explained by the independent variables (i.e., the R^2 value) as well as the set of variables that appears to contribute significantly and substantially to that variation. The tables also include the beta weight (standard coefficient [SC] beta), from which each variable's direction of association (i.e., positive or negative) with the outcome can be discerned.

⁸ For high school grades (9–12), student grade point average in 2011 was used as an achievement predictor for the state exam performance.

⁹ For these analyses, NCLB subgroups include gender, ethnicity, Title I status, special education status, and an indicator of socioeconomic status (e.g., eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch).

Table 11. Stepwise Regression Results for the Final Model Predicting Spring 2011 ITBS Reading and Math Scale Scores (Grade 2)

Test	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R ²)
ITBS Reading N = 584 F = 69.056	SAT-10 spring 2010 language scale score	.510	.374*
	School size	-.273	
	White race/ethnicity	.224	
	Use of theme-based curriculum	.131	
	Use of team teaching	.111	
ITBS Math N = 587 F = 71.409	SAT-10 spring 2010 math scale score	.574	.425*
	Use of team teaching	.227	
	School size	-.193	
	Use of theme-based curriculum	.123	
	Female gender	-.079	
	Special education status	-.072	

* $p < .05$. The p -value refers to the odds that the regression model does not appropriately predict the outcome.

Table 11 presents the resulting regression models predicting 2011 ITBS reading and math scores for Grade 2. Both final models retained the pretest (i.e., 2010) SAT-10 achievement as a significantly positive predictor for the outcomes. Further, several demographic and programmatic variables also were significantly associated with the achievement outcomes. Higher ITBS reading achievement in Grade 2 was associated with the following:¹⁰

- Higher pretest performance;
- Smaller school size;
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity¹¹);
- The use of theme-based curriculum; and
- The use of team teaching.

For ITBS math, higher achievement in Grade 2 was associated with the following:

- Higher pretest performance;

¹⁰ Note that the final regression model was able to explain only approximately 37 percent of variation in the ITBS reading outcome (R²). This model fit was less satisfactory than that of other models with higher R² values.

¹¹ Minority students included those who were Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American/Alaskan, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or multiracial.

- The use of team teaching;
- Smaller school size;
- The use of theme-based curriculum;
- Female gender of students (compared to male gender); and
- General education status of students (compared to special education status).

The positive association of pretest performance with both achievement outcomes was expected. In the final models for ITBS achievement, it was notable that the use of team teaching and theme-based curriculum were positively associated with both reading and math outcomes. In addition, both models indicated that smaller school size was associated with higher achievement. White students scored significantly higher than minority students in ITBS reading. With regard to ITBS math, male students significantly outperformed their female counterparts, and general education students performed significantly better than special needs students.

Table 12. Stepwise Regression Results for the Final Model Predicting Spring 2011 Benchmark Literacy and Math Scale Scores (Grade 3)

Test	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R ²)
Benchmark Literacy N = 487 F = 112.256	SAT-10 spring 2010 language scale score	.671	.584*
	Female gender	.149	
	School size	-.122	
	White race/ethnicity	.089	
	Special education status	-.087	
	Use of team teaching	.064	
Benchmark Math N = 497 F = 150.951	SAT-10 spring 2010 math scale score	.729	.649*
	School size	-.142	
	Female gender	.082	
	White race/ethnicity	.100	
	Use of team teaching	.074	
	Special education status	-.069	

* $p < .05$. The p -value refers to the odds that the regression model does not appropriately predict the outcome.

Table 12 shows the resulting regression models predicting 2011 Benchmark literacy and math scores for Grade 3.¹² Note that some of the significant predictors that appeared in the Grade 2 analyses were also retained in the final models for Grade 3, particularly the use of team teaching and school size. As shown in Table 12, higher literacy achievement in Grade 3 was associated with the following:

- Higher pretest performance;
- Female gender of students (compared to male gender);
- Smaller school size;
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity);
- General education status of students (compared to special education status); and
- The use of team teaching.

The following set of variables was associated with higher math achievement in Grade 3:

- Higher pretest performance;
- Smaller school size;
- Female gender of students (compared to male gender);
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity);
- The use of team teaching; and
- General education status of students (compared to special education status).

It was notable that both models retained the same set of predictors: Pretest performance served as a positive predictor of the outcomes, as anticipated; the use of team teaching was associated with higher literacy and math achievement; and smaller school size was associated with better performance. In addition, female students significantly outperformed their male counterparts on both literacy and math, and White students scored significantly higher than other racial/ethnic groups in both outcomes. Not surprisingly, general education students significantly outperformed those with special needs on literacy and math as well.

¹² The analysis of Grade 3 data was not combined with either the analysis of Grade 2 data or that of data from Grades 4–8 because of the unique combination of outcome (Benchmark test) and pretest (SAT-10).

Table 13. Stepwise Regression Results for the Final Model Predicting Spring 2011 Benchmark Literacy and Math Scale Scores (Grades 4–8)

Test	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R ²)
Benchmark Literacy N = 4,765 F = 937.396	Benchmark spring 2010 literacy scale score	.734	.719*
	Number of suspensions	-.084	
	White race/ethnicity	.054	
	Special education status	-.066	
	Female gender	.062	
	Implementation of reduced/small class size	.030	
	Free/reduced-price lunch eligibility	-.037	
	Parental satisfaction total	.020	
	School attendance ratio	.021	
Benchmark Math N = 4,783 F = 1,120.317	Benchmark spring 2010 math scale score	.769	.701*
	White race/ethnicity	.086	
	Number of suspensions	-.058	
	Special education status	-.055	
	Free/reduced-price lunch eligibility	-.054	
	Implementation of reduced/small class size	.023	
	Title I status	-.017	
	School attendance ratio	.017	

* $p < .05$. The p -value refers to the odds that the regression model does not appropriately predict the outcome.

Table 13 presents the resultant regression models predicting 2011 Benchmark literacy and math scores for students in Grades 4 through 8. In addition to pretest performance, the two models included several demographic and programmatic variables.

As shown in Table 13, higher literacy achievement in Grades 4 through 8 was associated with the following:

- Higher pretest performance;
- Fewer suspensions;
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity);

- General education status of students (compared to special education status);
- Female gender of students (compared to male gender);
- The implementation of class size reduction initiatives;
- Higher family socioeconomic status (i.e., ineligibility for free/reduced-price lunch);
- Higher parental satisfaction total; and
- Higher school attendance ratio.

For the Benchmark math exam, higher achievement at these grade levels was associated with the following:

- Higher pretest performance;
- Fewer suspensions;
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity);
- General education status of students (compared to special education status);
- The implementation of class size reduction initiatives;
- Higher family socioeconomic status (i.e., ineligibility for free/reduced-price lunch);
- Title I status (compared to non–Title I status); and
- Higher school attendance ratio.

Notably, the literacy and math regression models for Grades 4–8 shared a common set of significant predictors:

- Higher pretest performance consistently predicted better achievement, as expected.
- The implementation of class size reduction initiatives turned out to be a positive predictor of higher performance.
- The number of student suspensions unsurprisingly had a negative association with achievement outcomes.
- White students significantly outperformed their minority counterparts.
- Students with general education status scored significantly higher than those with special needs.
- Those who were ineligible for free/reduced-price lunch performed significantly better than eligible students.
- Higher school attendance ratio was positively associated with better performance.

In addition, while higher parental satisfaction and female gender of students was associated with a better literacy outcome, the Title I status of students was associated with better math achievement.

Table 14. Stepwise Regression Results for the Final Model Predicting Spring 2011 End-of-Course Exam Scores (Grades 9–12)

Test	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R ²)
EOC Algebra I N = 399 F = 64.493	Grade point average	.482	.451*
	Special education status	-.276	
	White race/ethnicity	.204	
	Use of multigrade classrooms	.135	
EOC Geometry N = 717 F = 89.342	Grade point average	.512	.559*
	White race/ethnicity	.178	
	Special education status	-.119	
	Presence of extended school day	.111	
	Student satisfaction total	.107	
	Female gender	-.088	
	Number of suspensions	-.058	
11th-Grade Literacy N = 650 F = 103.373	Grade point average	.569	.491*
	Special education status	-.241	
	Use of theme-based curriculum	.167	
	Parental satisfaction total	.121	
	White race/ethnicity	.063	

* $p < .05$. The p -value refers to the odds that the regression model does not appropriately predict the outcome.

Table 14 presents the final regression models predicting 2011 EOC algebra 1, geometry, and literacy for Grades 9 through 12. Because EOC exams are taken only once, pretest scores were unavailable to include in high school models. Instead, student GPA in 2011 was included in the models as an achievement indicator. The analyses showed that higher achievement in EOC algebra 1 in Grades 9 through 12 was associated with the following:

- Higher GPA;
- General education status of students (compared to special education status);
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity); and
- The use of multigrade classrooms.

For EOC geometry, higher achievement at these grade levels was associated with the following:

- Higher GPA;
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity);
- General education status of students (compared to special education status);
- The presence of an extended school day;
- Higher student satisfaction total;
- Male gender of students (compared to female gender); and
- Fewer suspensions.

For 11th-grade literacy, higher achievement was associated with the following:

- Higher GPA;
- General education status of students (compared to special education status);
- The use of theme-based curriculum;
- Higher parental satisfaction total; and
- White race/ethnicity of students (compared to minority race/ethnicity).

For all three EOC exams, higher GPA served as a significant predictor of better performance, as expected. White students significantly outperformed minority students, and students with general education status significantly outperformed special education students on all three exams. Notably, a few programmatic variables were respectively associated with different outcomes: The use of a multigrade classroom was a significant positive predictor of algebra 1; the presence of an extended school day served as a significant positive predictor of student geometry performance; and the use of theme-based curriculum was positively associated with literacy achievement. While higher student satisfaction total was associated with higher geometry performance, higher parental satisfaction total was a positive predictor of better literacy outcome. In addition, male students significantly outperformed their female counterparts on geometry, and the number of suspensions was negatively associated with geometry performance.

Student Outcome Data Disaggregated by NCLB Subgroups

To examine the academic performance of various subgroups of students, the Metis team conducted a series of analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs) on the results of the ITBS for Grades 2 and 9 and the Benchmark exams for Grades 3–8. ANCOVA makes it possible to compare a given outcome in two or more categorical groups while controlling for the variability of important continuous predictors/variables (e.g., prior achievement). Specifically, the analyses conducted here controlled for variability in pretest achievement so that any observed posttest achievement differences could be attributed to group membership instead of “starting point.” Note that analyses were not conducted on Grade 1 because no pretest scores were available. Nor were analyses conducted for Grades 10–12 because they, too, lacked the requisite pretest scores (since EOC exams are administered once a

year). The subgroups of students for which these analyses were conducted were based on the following characteristics:

- Racial/ethnic background;
- Gender;
- Special education status;
- Title I status; and
- Free/reduced-price lunch eligibility.

Tables 15–17 present a summary of the results of these analyses. The complete set of findings can be found in Appendix C.

Table 15. Summary of ANCOVA Analyses of ITBS Reading and Math Skills Across Student Subgroups for Grade 2 in 2010–2011

Comparison Groups		ITBS: Overall Reading Skills	ITBS: Overall Math Skills
Race/ Ethnicity	Black	<i>Significant difference</i>	No significant difference
	<i>White</i>		
	Others		
Gender	<i>Male</i>	No significant difference	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Female		
Title I Status	Non–Title I	No significant difference	<i>Significant difference</i>
	<i>Title I</i>		
Education Status	<i>General education</i>	No significant difference	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Special education		
Free/ Reduced- Price Lunch Eligibility	<i>Not eligible</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Eligible		

Note. Findings are based on ANCOVA results. Pretest scores were not available for Grade 1, so the ANCOVAs could not be conducted for this grade. Higher-achieving groups are presented in italicized bold type when a statistically significant difference with the probability (or *p*-value) of less than .05 is observed. In simpler terms, the *p*-value (shown explicitly in the tables in Appendix C) refers to the odds that the observed difference is erroneous.

As shown in Table 15, many NCLB comparisons in Grade 2 produced statistically significant results. It is notable that the ITBS reading analyses indicated less of a gap among subgroups, as compared to the ITBS math analyses. The analyses show the following:

- For math, male students in Grade 2 significantly outperformed their female counterparts.
- General education students in Grade 2 performed significantly better than special education students in math.
- Notably, Grade 2 Title I students significantly outperformed non–Title I students in math.
- White students in Grade 2 had the highest reading achievement of all racial/ethnic groups.
- Finally, Grade 2 students who were not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch scored significantly higher in both reading and math than those who were eligible.

Table 16. Summary of ANCOVA Analyses of Benchmark Reading and Math Skills Across Student Subgroups for Grades 3–8 in 2010–2011

Comparison Groups		Target Grade	Benchmark: Overall Literacy Skills	Benchmark: Overall Math Skills
Race/ Ethnicity	Black	3	No significant difference	No significant difference
	White			
	Others			
	Black	4	Significant difference	Significant difference
	White			
	Others			
	Black	5	Significant difference	Significant difference
	White			
	Others			
	Black	6	Significant difference	Significant difference
	White			
	Others			
Black	7	Significant difference	Significant difference	
White				
Others				
Black	8	Significant difference	Significant difference	
White				
Others				
Gender	Male	3	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Female			
	Male	4	Significant difference	No significant difference
	Female			
	Male	5		No significant difference

Comparison Groups		Target Grade	Benchmark: Overall Literacy Skills	Benchmark: Overall Math Skills
	Female		Significant difference	
	Male	6		No significant difference
	Female		Significant difference	
	Male	7		
	Female		Significant difference	Significant difference
	Male	8	No significant difference	No significant difference
Title I Status	Non–Title I	3	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
	Non–Title I	4	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
	Non–Title I	5	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Title I			
	Non–Title I	6	No significant difference	Significant difference
	Title I			
	Non–Title I	7	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
	Non–Title I	8	No significant difference	Significant difference
	Title I			
Education Status	General education	3	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Special education			
	General education	4	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Special education			
	General education	5	Significant difference	No significant difference
	Special education			
	General education	6	No significant difference	Significant difference
	Special education			
	General education	7	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Special education			
	General education	8	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Special education			
Free/	Not eligible	3	Significant difference	Significant difference



Comparison Groups		Target Grade	Benchmark: Overall Literacy Skills	Benchmark: Overall Math Skills
Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility	Eligible			
	Not eligible	4	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Eligible			
	Not eligible	5	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Eligible			
	Not eligible	6	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Eligible			
	Not eligible	7	No significant difference	Significant difference
	Eligible			
	Not eligible	8	No significant difference	No significant difference
Eligible				

Note. Findings are based on ANCOVA results. Higher-achieving groups are presented in italicized bold type when a statistically significant difference with the probability (or *p*-value) of less than .05 is observed. In simpler terms, the *p*-value (shown explicitly in the tables in Appendix C) refers to the odds that the observed difference is erroneous.

Table 16 also shows that there were many subgroup differences in Grades 3 through 7, while slightly fewer significant results were found for Grade 8.

- Non–Title I students achieved significantly higher scores than Title I students in math in Grades 6 and 8 and in both literacy and math in Grade 5. In addition, students who were ineligible for free/reduced-price lunch significantly outperformed eligible students in math in Grade 7 and in both literacy and math in Grades 3 through 6.
- While females achieved significantly higher literacy scores than males in Grades 3 through 7, they outperformed male students in math only in Grades 3 and 7. No differences in the literacy or math performance of the two genders were detected in Grade 8.
- General education students performed significantly better than special education students in literacy in Grade 5, in math in Grade 6, and in both literacy and math in Grades 3, 4, 7, and 8.

With respect to racial/ethnic background, the ANCOVA analysis showed the following:

- In Grades 5 and 6, White students achieved the highest scores in both literacy and math among all racial/ethnic groups.
- In Grades 4 and 8, students other than White or Black performed the best in both literacy and math among all racial/ethnic groups.
- In Grade 7, White students achieved the highest math scores among all racial/ethnic groups, while students other than White or Black performed the best in literacy.

Table 17. Summary of ANCOVA Analyses of ITBS Reading and Math Skills Across Student Subgroups for Grade 9 in School Year 2010–2011

Comparison Groups		ITBS: Overall Reading Skills	ITBS: Overall Math Skills
Race/ Ethnicity	Black	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	White		
	<i>Others</i>		
Gender	Male	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Female		
Title I Status	<i>Non–Title I</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Title I		
Education Status	<i>General education</i>	No significant difference	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Special education		
Free/ Reduced- Price Lunch Eligibility	Not eligible	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Eligible		

Note. Findings are based on ANCOVA results. Higher-achieving groups are presented in italicized bold type when a statistically significant difference with the probability (or *p*-value) of less than .05 is observed. In simpler terms, the *p*-value (shown explicitly in the tables in Appendix C) refers to the odds that the observed difference is erroneous.

Table 17 shows that slightly fewer subgroup differences were found in Grade 9, as compared to Grades 2–7. Notable findings from the ITBS subgroup analyses include the following:

- Non–Title I students in Grade 9 achieved higher scores in both reading and math than Title I students.
- General education students significantly outperformed special education students in math but not reading.
- Students other than White or Black achieved the highest scores in reading and math among all racial/ethnic groups.
- No statistically significant differences were found for gender groups or free/reduced-price lunch eligibility in Grade 9 achievement.

IV. Discussion and Recommendations

Findings from various data sources collected by Metis indicate that the public charter schools are effectively implementing academic programs using a wide array of instructional practices, providing professional development to staff, engaging parents and the community, facilitating students' academic progress, and providing safe school environments.

An analysis of the various data used in this study leads to the following conclusions:

- Arkansas public charter schools are working hard to maintain high academic standards and to offer a range of instruction to meet students' needs (including remedial support and special programs).
- Parents and students were very satisfied with their public charter schools during the 2010–2011 school year.
- Certain characteristics of the public charter schools—the use of theme-based curricula, the use of team teaching, smaller school size, class size reduction, and fewer suspensions—were associated with improved student achievement in 2010–2011.
- NCLB comparisons indicated a much higher prevalence of subgroup differences in literacy and math achievement at all grade levels than was the case in 2009–2010.
- There was a substantial drop in the percentage of schools that were concerned about managing public relations in 2010–2011 compared to 2009–2010, though budget management and facility costs continued to be concerns.

As was found in the 2009–2010 evaluation, the study saw a great deal of evidence of schools' focus on strong academic leadership (e.g., agendas and detailed minutes for meetings associated with carrying out schools' academic plans and instructional programs, school board meeting minutes outlining decision-making processes). The most prevalent instructional methods used in 2010–2011 were the regular integration of technology and project-based or hands-on learning, indicating that the charter schools were being progressive with their instructional programs. Parents also reported high levels of satisfaction with technology use in their children's schools, as only 7 percent of parent survey respondents indicated feeling dissatisfied with the use of technology within the instructional program. Additionally, nearly half of surveyed students (49 percent) reported using technology often or very often, a 9-percentage-point increase from the previous year. Although at rates slightly lower than in 2009–2010, survey data also showed that special programs (including character education, reduced or small class size, and individualized instruction) were present in more than two thirds of the public charter schools.

Although the charter school program focuses on providing rigorous academic instruction to students, schools also aim to provide rigorous professional development to teachers. The evaluation found that teacher professional development continued to be an important focus of the charter schools in 2010–2011. Evidence for the importance of professional development was provided in

very detailed documentation, including annual professional development plans and materials such as curriculum training guides, staff needs-assessment surveys, and agendas from professional development committee meetings.

Rigor was a theme also seen at the student level in 2010–2011, as 85 percent of students indicated that their teachers expected them to work hard or very hard. This rating is 12 percentage points higher than their rating of the same survey question in the previous year (2009–2010)—an indication that students are feeling more challenged than ever by the academic programming at their schools. This also further shows that the intensive focus on professional development and the accountability of teachers is reflected in parents’ and students’ survey responses. Moreover, nearly three quarters of parents (74 percent) indicated feeling very satisfied with the quality of the curriculum at their child’s school. This is a critical finding, as 69 percent of parents indicated in the survey that they had placed their child in a charter school because of their interest in the school’s instructional and academic program—the most popular reason chosen by parents. It is also evidence that many parents who enrolled their child at an Arkansas charter school are having their expectations met.

Recognizing that parents and the community are an important part of a school’s academic success, the charter schools also made a concerted effort to continue involving parents and the community in school-related activities. In 2010–2011, this is supported by the 80 percent of schools that reported facilitating parent workshops and in the 92 percent of schools that reported scheduling events that accommodated parents’ schedules. Schools continued using various other strategies at high levels from 2009–2010, including involving parents in student academic progress monitoring and in discipline-related discussions (over 92 percent of schools each). Clearly, parents were pleased with schools’ efforts. All of these efforts led parents to report a high degree of satisfaction with the schools’ efforts to involve them: 79 percent of parents indicated feeling very satisfied with opportunities to be involved or to participate in school-related activities, and 93 percent of parents indicated feeling somewhat to very satisfied with the communication with their child’s teacher (73 percent were very satisfied). Parents also indicated feeling more satisfied with their child’s current public charter school than with their child’s previous school, and a large percentage thought that the quality of the math, reading, and writing instruction was better at the public charter school than at the previous school.

Successes in achieving high parent satisfaction and implementing effective innovative instructional practices can be linked to the schools’ charter status, which has allowed schools the flexibility to implement a wide array of practices that speak to each community’s educational needs. In 2010–2011, these practices included greater control over methods of instructional delivery, the implementation of open board meetings, formal plans for family and community involvement, the hiring and dismissing of staff (because of the absence of teacher contracts), targeted professional development, and performance-based bonuses for teachers.

Despite the high degree of satisfaction among parents, they did indicate some concerns about their children’s schools. The most common concerns listed in response to an open-ended question were these: the limited grade levels offered (parents wished schools to add grade levels), the limited extracurricular offerings, the inexperience of teachers and high teacher turnover rates, the lack of transportation for students to the school, and bullying/behavioral issues.

The greatest challenge school administrators described in 2009–2010, managing public perceptions, decreased substantially in 2010–2011, lower by 16 percentage points (57 percent vs. 41 percent, respectively). This is important to note because the 57 percent of schools that marked this item as a challenge in 2009–2010 was a 10-percentage-point increase over 2008–2009, which indicates that schools were able to address this challenge quite well after the 2009–2010 school year. Issues with facility costs, however, continued to be an ongoing challenge for public charter schools in 2010–2011, as they had been over the past five years (especially for open-enrollment schools), as indicated by 41 percent of schools in 2010–2011.

Regression analyses suggest that certain public charter school characteristics may have resulted in higher student achievement in 2010–2011. In Grade 2, smaller school size and the implementation of theme-based curriculum and team teaching were associated with increased student achievement on the ITBS reading and math tests. In Grade 3, small school size and the use of team teaching were associated with improved student achievement on the Benchmark literacy and math exams. In Grades 4–8, fewer suspensions and the implementation of reduced/small class sizes were associated with improved student achievement on the Benchmark literacy and math exams. Parental satisfaction was associated with improved performance on the Benchmark literacy exam. Finally, in Grades 9–12, the use of multigrade classrooms was associated with higher achievement on the algebra EOC exam, the presence of an extended school day was associated with higher achievement on the geometry EOC exam, and the use of theme-based curriculum was associated with higher achievement on the 11th-grade literacy EOC exam.

Across all grades, the most common variables found to be associated with improved performance on the ITBS, Benchmark, and EOC exams were grade point average (GPA), female gender, White ethnicity, and general education status. In the lower grades (2 and 3), small school size was associated with higher student achievement. Parental or student satisfaction did not seem to be as generally associated with higher achievement in most grades in 2010–2011 compared to its prevalence in previous evaluations. Also differently from 2009–2010, higher attendance ratios were associated with higher achievement only in the middle grades (4–8), but not in the lower grades (2 and 3) or upper grades (9–12).

Finally, comparative analyses of NCLB subgroups revealed that general education students generally outperformed special education students in both literacy and math, female students generally outperformed male students in literacy, and students not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch generally outperformed eligible students in literacy and math. The most notable trends were observed in Grades 3–8 for race/ethnicity, gender, and free/reduced-price lunch status. Highlights of the findings in these areas include the following:

- Females significantly outperformed males on the literacy exam in Grades 3–7;
- Students not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch outperformed eligible students in Grades 2–6 in literacy and math and in Grade 7 in math; and
- Finally, general education students significantly outperformed special education students in literacy in Grades 3–5 and 7–9, and in math in Grades 2–4 and 6–8.

Recommendations

The following recommendations apply collectively to all public charter schools rather than to any specific school. It is hoped that these recommendations will be useful to the Arkansas Public Charter School Program and its stakeholders as they move forward and make decisions in the future.

- **Explore the increasing gap between NCLB subgroups.** More than in previous years, regression analyses showed that White ethnic students and female students were more often associated with higher achievement in 2010–2011. In addition, ANCOVA analyses showed that students that were White, general education, and non-free/reduced-price lunch consistently outperformed their counterparts across most grades. Future evaluations can determine whether these issues are growing, what their impact is, and how schools are—and ought to be—addressing them.
- **Continue to encourage the use of innovative curricular instruction.** A number of innovative instructional practices, such as theme-based instruction, team teaching, and reduced class size, were associated with improved student achievement. The ADE could continue supporting the public charter schools in implementing these practices and could also encourage further study of their impact.
- **Look further into the effect of school size on lower grades.** Smaller school size was associated with higher achievement in Grades 2 and 3 on reading/literacy and math. Future evaluations can determine whether this trend continues going forward and if it is an issue worth further exploring.
- **Continue addressing facility challenges experienced by open-enrollment public charter schools.** While the concern over facility costs among administrators of open-enrollment schools has declined over the last two evaluations, and while parents at these schools have expressed greater satisfaction with their schools’ facilities, we would again recommend that the ADE continue exploring the financial support that is provided to the public charter schools for facility management and provide technical assistance to schools who wish to seek outside funding to address this challenge (e.g., in the form of grant writing). It might also be possible to offer incentives to entities (e.g., districts, local businesses) that give public charter schools the opportunity to either co-locate with them or lease appropriate facilities from them.

Appendices

A. Evaluation Design Matrix

Table 18. Evaluation Research Questions and Associated Data Collection Strategies

Evaluation Questions	Data Collection Strategies				
	Document Review	Implementation Survey	Parent Satisfaction Survey	Student Satisfaction Survey	Student Record Data
Implementation Evaluation Questions					
1. What is the overall efficacy of the charter schools with respect to various attributes, such as strong academic leadership, high academic standards/expectations, mastery-oriented instruction, classroom management skills, positive learning climate, and parental support and involvement?	X	X			
2. To what extent are the parents and the students of the public charter schools satisfied with their school?			X	X	
Outcome Evaluation Questions					
3. What is the impact of the Arkansas public charter schools on student performance?	X	X	X	X	X
a. What characteristics of the public charter schools are having the greatest positive impact on academic achievement (e.g., student/parental satisfaction, school size, provider, management organization, type of curricula used, etc.)?	X	X	X	X	X
b. What other indicators of improved school success are evident for public charter school students (e.g., increased attendance, fewer discipline reports)?	X	X	X	X	X
c. What can be learned from disaggregating the student outcome data by the NCLB subgroups (special education status, Title I status, free/reduced-price lunch eligibility, gender, English language proficiency, and racial/ethnic background)?					X

B. Data Collection Results

Table 19. Data Collection Tallies (Surveys and Program Documentation Received)

	School	Student Surveys Received	Parent Surveys Received	Online Administrator Survey Completed	Program Documents Received
Conversion	Badger Academy Conversion Charter School	18	3	√	√
	Blytheville Charter School and ALC	50	6	√	√
	Cabot Academic Center of Excellence	107	23	√	√
	Cloverdale Aerospace and Technology	443	21	√	√
	Lincoln Academic Center of Excellence	50	16	√	√
	Lincoln Middle Academy of Excellence	369	41	√	√
	Mountain Home High School Career Academies	622	37	√	√
	Oak Grove Elementary Health, Wellness, and Environmental Science	186	27	√	√
	Ridgeroad Middle Charter School	354	13	√	√
	Vilonia Academy of Service and Technology	87	7	√	√
	Vilonia Academy of Technology	47	11	√	√
Open-Enrollment	Academics Plus Charter School	380	94	√	√
	Arkansas Virtual Academy	59	163	√	√
	Benton County School of Arts	459	59	√	√
	Covenant Keepers College Preparatory Charter School	152	108	√	√
	Dreamland Academy of Performing & Communication Arts	49	15	√	—
	e-STEM Elementary Public Charter School	328	25	√	√
	e-STEM Middle Public Charter School	139	53	√	√
	e-STEM High Public Charter School	17	14	√	√



School	Student Surveys Received	Parent Surveys Received	Online Administrator Survey Completed	Program Documents Received
Haas Hall Academy	292	167	√	√
Imboden Area Charter School	40	10	√	√
Jacksonville Lighthouse Charter School	269	38	√	√
KIPP Blytheville College Preparatory School	107	4	√	√
KIPP Delta College Preparatory School	434	35	√	√
LISA Academy	486	82	√	—
LISA Academy–North Little Rock	260	35	√	√
Little Rock Preparatory Academy	144	11	√	√
Total	5,948	1,118	27	25

— = No data received.



C. ANCOVA Analyses of Student Achievement Using NCLB Subgroups

Table 20. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 586)	Black	156.59	8.45	2	5.671	0.004*
	White	165.04				
	Black	156.59	6.99	2	5.671	0.004*
	Others	163.58				
	White	165.04	1.46	2	5.671	0.004*
	Others	163.58				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 21. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 589)	Black	167.54	2.77	2	1.710	0.182
	White	164.77				
	Black	167.54	0.73	2	1.710	0.182
	Others	168.27				
	White	164.77	3.50	2	1.710	0.182
	Others	168.27				

Table 22. Benchmark Literacy ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 490)	Black	544.90	27.83	2	2.493	0.084
	White	572.73				
	Black	544.90	35.01	2	2.493	0.084
	Others	579.91				
	White	572.73	7.18	2	2.493	0.084



Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
	Others	579.91				
Grade 4 (N = 508)	Black	643.49	40.03	2	8.876	0.000*
	White	683.52				
	Black	643.49	65.90	2	8.876	0.000*
	Others	709.39				
	White	683.52	25.87	2	8.876	0.000*
	Others	709.39				
Grade 5 (N = 882)	Black	658.12	29.09	2	8.164	0.000*
	White	687.21				
	Black	658.12	19.65	2	8.164	0.000*
	Others	677.77				
	White	687.21	9.44	2	8.164	0.000*
	Others	677.77				
Grade 6 (N = 1,177)	Black	670.54	27.45	2	8.573	0.000*
	White	697.99				
	Black	670.54	15.62	2	8.573	0.000*
	Others	686.16				
	White	697.99	11.83	2	8.573	0.000*
	Others	686.16				
Grade 7 (N = 1,102)	Black	685.66	12.87	2	8.066	0.000*
	White	698.53				
	Black	685.66	35.30	2	8.066	0.000*
	Others	720.96				
	White	698.53	22.43	2	8.066	0.000*
	Others	720.96				
Grade 8 (N = 1,147)	Black	756.55	31.97	2	17.727	0.000*
	White	788.52				
	Black	756.55	32.56	2	17.727	0.000*
	Others	789.11				
	White	788.52	0.59	2	17.727	0.000*
	Others	789.11				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 23. Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 500)	Black	571.34	15.83	2	2.908	0.056
	White	587.17				
	Black	571.34	0.78	2	2.908	0.056
	Others	570.56				
	White	587.17	16.60	2	2.908	0.056
	Others	570.56				
Grade 4 (N = 510)	Black	610.80	31.84	2	13.149	0.000*
	White	642.64				
	Black	610.80	38.25	2	13.149	0.000*
	Others	649.05				
	White	642.64	6.41	2	13.149	0.000*
	Others	649.05				
Grade 5 (N = 883)	Black	626.38	30.51	2	29.335	0.000*
	White	656.89				
	Black	626.38	29.39	2	29.335	0.000*
	Others	655.77				
	White	656.89	1.12	2	29.335	0.000*
	Others	655.77				
Grade 6 (N = 1,183)	Black	674.80	17.58	2	9.398	0.000*
	White	692.38				
	Black	674.80	7.54	2	9.398	0.000*
	Others	682.34				
	White	692.38	10.04	2	9.398	0.000*
	Others	682.34				
Grade 7 (N = 1,109)	Black	691.78	22.37	2	16.753	0.000*
	White	714.15				
	Black	691.78	20.10	2	16.753	0.000*
	Others	711.88				

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
	White	714.15	2.27	2	16.753	0.000*
	Others	711.88				
Grade 8 (N = 1,149)	Black	700.15	21.51	2	22.650	0.000*
	White	721.66				
	Black	700.15	25.11	2	22.650	0.000*
	Others	725.26				
	White	721.66	3.60	2	22.650	0.000*
	Others	725.26				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 24. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 805)	Black	263.62	9.67	2	11.744	0.000*
	White	273.29				
	Black	263.62	13.73	2	11.744	0.000*
	Others	277.35				
	White	273.29	4.06	2	11.744	0.000*
	Others	277.35				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 25. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 806)	Black	267.32	4.46	2	3.007	0.050*
	White	271.78				
	Black	267.32	5.65	2	3.007	0.050*
	Others	272.97				
	White	271.78	1.19	2	3.007	0.050*
	Others	272.97				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 26. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 586)	Male	161.28	1.52	1	1.516	0.219
	Female	162.80				

Table 27. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 589)	Male	167.73	3.46	1	5.677	0.018*
	Female	164.27				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 28. Benchmark Literacy ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 490)	Male	536.97	52.92	1	24.252	0.000*
	Female	589.89				
Grade 4 (N = 508)	Male	659.10	30.76	1	10.379	0.001*
	Female	689.86				
Grade 5 (N = 882)	Male	660.78	17.98	1	7.211	0.007*
	Female	678.76				
Grade 6 (N = 1,177)	Male	670.00	22.84	1	14.911	0.000*
	Female	692.84				
Grade 7 (N = 1,102)	Male	675.97	36.20	1	37.014	0.000*
	Female	712.17				
Grade 8 (N = 1,147)	Male	765.89	10.12	1	3.778	0.052
	Female	776.01				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 29. Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
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Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 500)	Male	572.07	18.06	1	9.802	0.002*
	Female	590.13				
Grade 4 (N = 510)	Male	631.05	6.64	1	1.470	0.226
	Female	637.69				
Grade 5 (N = 883)	Male	641.00	2.94	1	0.593	0.442
	Female	638.06				
Grade 6 (N = 1,183)	Male	681.35	0.69	1	0.037	0.847
	Female	682.04				
Grade 7 (N = 1,109)	Male	696.43	9.57	1	6.933	0.009*
	Female	706.00				
Grade 8 (N = 1,149)	Male	712.55	4.41	1	1.930	0.165
	Female	708.14				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 30. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 805)	Male	269.93	2.24	1	1.355	0.245
	Female	272.17				

Table 31. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 806)	Male	270.05	1.23	1	0.600	0.439
	Female	271.28				

Table 32. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 586)	Title I	162.80	1.24	1	0.964	0.327
	Non–Title I	161.56				

Table 33. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 589)	Title I	168.28	3.78	1	6.451	0.011*
	Non–Title I	164.50				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 34. Benchmark Literacy ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 490)	Title I	558.94	9.84	1	0.689	0.407
	Non–Title I	568.78				
Grade 4 (N = 508)	Title I	681.91	11.55	1	1.326	0.250
	Non–Title I	670.36				
Grade 5 (N = 882)	Title I	660.98	15.74	1	5.350	0.021*
	Non–Title I	676.72				
Grade 6 (N = 1,177)	Title I	677.47	6.59	1	1.152	0.283
	Non–Title I	684.06				
Grade 7 (N = 1,102)	Title I	687.50	9.02	1	1.811	0.179
	Non–Title I	696.52				
Grade 8 (N = 1,147)	Title I	767.16	5.25	1	0.815	0.367
	Non–Title I	772.41				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 35. Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 500)	Title I	573.50	12.04	1	3.779	0.052
	Non–Title I	585.54				
Grade 4 (N = 510)	Title I	641.32	10.80	1	3.577	0.059
	Non–Title I	630.52				
Grade 5 (N = 883)	Title I	629.48	17.24	1	19.992	0.000*
	Non–Title I	646.72				

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 6 (N = 1,183)	Title I	675.60	9.41	1	6.448	0.011*
	Non–Title I	685.01				
Grade 7 (N = 1,109)	Title I	697.50	5.04	1	1.467	0.226
	Non–Title I	702.54				
Grade 8 (N = 1,149)	Title I	699.12	15.28	1	18.368	0.000*
	Non–Title I	714.40				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 36. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 805)	Title I	265.52	12.85	1	47.308	0.000*
	Non–Title I	278.37				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 37. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 806)	Title I	267.14	8.17	1	27.559	0.000*
	Non–Title I	275.31				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 38. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Education Status, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 586)	Special Ed	161.09	1.02	1	0.163	0.687
	General Ed	162.11				

Table 39. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Education Status, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2	Special Ed	160.56	5.81	1	3.905	0.049*

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
(N = 589)	General Ed	166.37				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 40. Benchmark Literacy ANCOVA Results by Education Status, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 490)	Special Ed	518.57	50.86	1	5.608	0.018*
	General Ed	569.43				
Grade 4 (N = 508)	Special Ed	626.45	52.13	1	7.869	0.005*
	General Ed	678.58				
Grade 5 (N = 882)	Special Ed	615.96	58.23	1	17.979	0.000*
	General Ed	674.19				
Grade 6 (N = 1,177)	Special Ed	661.22	21.82	1	2.869	0.091
	General Ed	683.04				
Grade 7 (N = 1,102)	Special Ed	659.33	37.38	1	9.200	0.002*
	General Ed	696.71				
Grade 8 (N = 1,147)	Special Ed	721.37	52.52	1	19.765	0.000*
	General Ed	773.89				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 41. Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Education Status, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 500)	Special Ed	559.87	23.77	1	4.873	0.028*
	General Ed	583.64				
Grade 4 (N = 510)	Special Ed	599.66	37.81	1	14.324	0.000*
	General Ed	637.47				
Grade 5 (N = 883)	Special Ed	643.05	3.85	1	0.245	0.621
	General Ed	639.20				
Grade 6 (N = 1,183)	Special Ed	659.67	23.48	1	9.685	0.002*
	General Ed	683.15				
Grade 7 (N = 1,109)	Special Ed	678.37	24.59	1	11.205	0.001*
	General Ed	702.96				

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 8 (N = 1,149)	Special Ed	685.05	26.73	1	14.068	0.000*
	General Ed	711.78				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 42. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Education Status, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 805)	Special Ed	266.69	4.65	1	0.974	0.324
	General Ed	271.34				

Table 43. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Education Status, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 806)	Special Ed	262.34	8.79	1	5.569	0.019*
	General Ed	271.13				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 44. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 586)	Free/Reduced Lunch	161.28	8.44	1	16.003	0.000*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	169.72				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 45. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grade 2

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N = 589)	Free/Reduced Lunch	165.40	6.46	1	6.229	0.013*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	171.86				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 46. Benchmark Literacy ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 490)	Free/Reduced Lunch	561.05	55.61	1	7.670	0.006*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	616.66				
Grade 4 (N = 508)	Free/Reduced Lunch	670.00	36.08	1	6.223	0.013*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	706.08				
Grade 5 (N = 882)	Free/Reduced Lunch	668.76	33.65	1	3.848	0.050*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	702.41				
Grade 6 (N = 1,177)	Free/Reduced Lunch	680.04	36.43	1	6.869	0.009*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	716.47				
Grade 7 (N = 1,102)	Free/Reduced Lunch	693.49	20.48	1	1.498	0.221
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	713.97				
Grade 8 (N = 1,147)	Free/Reduced Lunch	770.62	8.53	1	0.475	0.491
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	779.15				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 47. Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 3–8

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N = 500)	Free/Reduced Lunch	579.54	26.23	1	5.990	0.015*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	605.77				
Grade 4 (N = 510)	Free/Reduced Lunch	631.47	23.34	1	7.462	0.007*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	654.81				
Grade 5 (N = 883)	Free/Reduced Lunch	638.51	24.34	1	6.086	0.014*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	662.85				
Grade 6 (N = 1,183)	Free/Reduced Lunch	679.12	55.46	1	43.716	0.000*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	734.58				
Grade 7 (N = 1,109)	Free/Reduced Lunch	700.24	30.89	1	8.894	0.003*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	731.13				
Grade 8 (N = 1,149)	Free/Reduced Lunch	710.63	6.87	1	0.809	0.369
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	703.76				

* Statistically significant difference with the probability less than .05.

Table 48. ITBS Reading ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 805)	Free/Reduced Lunch	271.45	1.63	1	0.474	0.491
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	269.82				

Table 49. ITBS Math ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grade 9

Grade	Subgroup	Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Degrees of Freedom	F Value	Significance
Grade 9 (N = 806)	Free/Reduced Lunch	270.05	0.82	1	0.172	0.679
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	270.87				

D. Parent, Student, and School Administrator Survey Findings

Parent Survey

Table 50. Length of Children’s Charter School Enrollment

	(N = 838)
Number of Years (Including This Year)	Percentage
2	35%
3	31%
4	21%
5	7%
6	3%
7	2%
8	2%

Table 51. Children’s Previous School

	(N = 792)
Previous School	Percentage
Regular/traditional public school	72%
Private school	13%
Home school	9%
Another charter school	6%

Table 52. Number of Children per Family Enrolled at the Charter School

	(N = 832)
Number of Children	Percentage
1	59%
2	33%
3	6%
4	2%

Table 53. Parent Education Level

Education Level	(N = 818)
	Percentage
High school diploma	22%
Associate's or 2-year degree	16%
Bachelor's or 4-year degree	31%
Graduate degree	25%
Other	6%

Table 54. Main Reasons for Charter School Selection

Reason	(N = 804)
	Percentage*
Interest in the charter school's instructional or academic program	69%
Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety	62%
Interest in the charter school's educational mission or philosophy	61%
Small size of this charter school or small classes	41%
Better teachers at this charter school	37%
Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school	30%
Respondent's child wanted to come to this charter school	28%
More convenient location than previous school	19%
Extended-day hours/before- and after-school programs available	18%
Child was doing poorly in previous school	16%
Child has special needs that the previous school was not addressing/meeting	11%
Not applicable	3%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 55. Student Academic Performance: Previous and Current Schools

Indicator	Total N	Academic Performance				
		Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Failing
Previous school	807	41%	32%	19%	7%	1%
2009–2010 charter school	829	60%	29%	10%	1%	0%

Table 56. Parent Satisfaction with Charter School

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction			
		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	827	79%	18%	2%	1%
School safety	769	75%	20%	3%	2%
Curriculum (i.e., what the school teaches)	828	74%	22%	3%	1%
School size	801	74%	22%	3%	1%
Quality of reading instruction	812	74%	21%	3%	2%
Class size	808	73%	21%	5%	1%
Communication with respondent's child's teacher	834	73%	20%	4%	3%
Quality of math instruction	819	72%	22%	5%	1%
Quality of writing instruction	814	72%	22%	4%	2%
Use of technology within the instructional program	810	71%	22%	4%	3%
School climate (i.e., the feel or tone of everyday life at the school)	776	71%	22%	5%	2%
Extra help or special services for students when needed	715	74%	18%	4%	4%
The individualized attention respondent's child gets	818	71%	21%	6%	2%
Quality of student support services such as guidance counseling and tutoring	772	71%	21%	5%	3%
Performance of the teachers (i.e., how well the school teaches)	822	70%	22%	6%	2%
Quality of the building in which the school is located	736	67%	24%	6%	3%
School discipline policies and practices	787	69%	21%	6%	3%
Extracurricular activities (i.e., sports programs, after-school clubs or activities)	752	59%	24%	11%	6%
Quality of the school facilities (i.e., school library, gymnasium, and science labs)	691	55%	28%	11%	6%

Table 57. Parent Satisfaction with Child's Previous School

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction			
		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Quality of reading instruction	763	47%	32%	12%	9%
Quality of math instruction	765	42%	35%	12%	11%
School facilities	750	45%	32%	14%	9%



Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction			
		Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Parent involvement/participation	756	49%	28%	13%	10%
Quality of writing instruction	766	45%	31%	14%	10%
School safety	757	52%	22%	12%	14%
Extra help or special services for students when needed	688	45%	24%	15%	16%

Table 58. Quality of Previous and Current Schools

Indicator	Total N	Quality			
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Previous school	791	24%	40%	24%	12%
2009–2010 charter school	818	65%	26%	7%	2%

Student Survey

Table 59. Distribution of Students by Grade Level

Grade	(N = 3,982)
	Percentage
3	9%
4	9%
5	7%
6	16%
7	13%
8	15%
9	4%
10	9%
11	10%
12	8%

Table 60. Students' Years at the Charter School

Number of Years	(N = 3,997)
	Percentage
2 years	35%
3 years	26%
4 or more years	39%

Table 61. Students' Previous School

Previous School	(N = 2,576)
	Percentage
Regular/traditional public school	71%
Current school is student's first	14%
Private school	6%
Another charter school	5%
Home school	4%

Table 62. Student Interest in Charter School

Indicator	Total N	Interest			
		Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Just a Little Interested	Not at All Interested
Student interest	3,908	39%	37%	16%	8%

Table 63. Student Rating of Previous School

Indicator	Total N	Rating			
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Previous school	3,419	28%	30%	27%	15%

Table 64. Student Grades at Charter School

Indicator	Total N	Rating			
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Grades	3,896	37%	39%	20%	4%

Table 65. Student Perception of Teachers' Expectations

Indicator	Total N	Expected to Work ...			
		Very Hard	Hard	Somewhat	Not at All
How hard did your teachers expect you to work?	3,976	45%	40%	12%	3%

Table 66. Student Perception of Teachers' Helpfulness

Indicator	Total N	Available to Help ...			
		Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely or Never
How often were your teachers able to help you when you needed help?	3,938	35%	39%	20%	6%

Table 67. Student Perception of Class Size

Indicator	Total N	Number of Students in Class	
		Too Many	Just Right
How did you feel about the number of students in your class(es)?	3,917	20%	80%

Table 68. Student Perception of Knowledge Gained

Indicator	Total N	Knowledge Gained		
		A Lot	Average Amount	A Little
How much did you feel you learned?	3,903	55%	37%	8%

Table 69. Student Perception of Homework

Indicator	Total N	Rating		
		A Lot	Average Amount	A Little
How much homework did you get?	3,907	33%	43%	24%

Table 70. Student Perception of Technology Use

Indicator	Total N	Technology Used ...			
		Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
How often did you get to use computers and other electronics in your classes?	3,903	23%	26%	31%	20%

Table 71. Student Perception of Behavior Disruptions

Indicator	Total N	Disruptions Occurred ...			
		Very Often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never
How often were there behavior disruptions in your classes?	3,899	24%	23%	33%	20%

Table 72. Student Perception of School Safety

Indicator	Total N	Level of Safety			
		Very Safe	Safe	Somewhat Unsafe	Very Unsafe
How safe was your school?	3,909	47%	37%	12%	4%

Table 73. Student Perception of School Cleanliness

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction Reported			
		Very Clean	Clean	Somewhat Unclean	Very Dirty
How clean was your school?	3,919	29%	40%	22%	9%

School Administrator Survey

Table 74. Number of Years at Current Position

Number of Years	(Total N = 27)
	Percentage
This is my first year	19%
1 year	7%
2 years	33%
3 years	4%
4 years	11%
5+ years	26%

Table 75. Number of Years at Charter School

Number of Years	(Total N = 27)
	Percentage
This is my first year	15%
1 year	4%
2 years	11%
3 years	7%
4 years	26%
5+ years	37%

Table 76. Charter School Exemptions and Waivers

Exemptions/Waivers	(Total N = 25)
	Percentage*
Teacher certification requirements	76%
Teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices	48%
School calendar	32%
Exemptions/waivers specified in school	28%
Establishing curriculum	24%
School day length	20%

Exemptions/Waivers	(Total N = 25)
	Percentage*
Collective bargaining provisions	20%
School year length	16%
Purchasing procedures (e.g., outside bidding, more timely purchases)	8%
Student discipline policies	8%
Contractual services	4%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 77. Charter School Enrollment Methods

Enrollment Methods	(Total N = 25)
	Percentage*
Lottery	68%
Use of zoning laws (i.e., all zoned students welcome)	28%
First-come, first-served basis (until maximum capacity is reached)	16%
Other	4%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 78. Charter School Facilities Arrangements

Arrangements	(Total N = 26)
	Percentage
Rented/leased facilities that were independent of the district	42%
Used district facility at no cost	39%
Purchased facilities	15%
Other	4%

Table 79. Open-Enrollment Charter Schools: Charter School Board Practices

School Board Practices	Total N	Percentage
Implementation of open board meetings	17	100%

School Board Practices	Total N	Percentage
Sharing of agendas and other important information prior to board meetings	16	100%
Clear, up-to-date bylaws	14	100%
Clear procedures for the selection of board members	15	100%
Open lines of communication	16	94%
Commitment to strategic planning	15	94%
Written descriptions of board members' roles and responsibilities	16	94%
Formal orientation and training sessions for board members	13	93%
Use of available funds for continued board development	11	92%
Formal plan for family and community involvement	12	92%
Use of advisory committees	12	86%
Identification of a board director	12	80%
Formal processes for the development of school policy	11	79%
Functioning executive committee	10	77%
Responsibility of fund-raising	4	29%
Decision-making flow charts	3	27%

Table 80. Primary Methods for Instruction Delivery

Methods	(Total N = 26)
	Percentage
Regular integration of technology	77%
Project-based or hands-on learning	77%
Character education	73%
Individualized or tailored instruction	73%
Reduced or small class size	69%
Direct instruction	65%
Interdisciplinary instruction	62%
Cooperative learning	62%
Regular integration of fine arts	54%
Multigrade classrooms	46%



Methods	(Total N = 26)
	Percentage
Alternative or authentic assessment	46%
Extended school day (before, after, summer, and/or vacation)	46%
Team teaching	35%
School-to-work concepts and strategies	31%
Theme-based curriculum	27%
Distance-learning and/or instruction via Internet	27%
Year-round or extended schooling	27%
Independent study	23%
Work-based or field-based learning	23%
Home-based learning with parent as primary instructor	4%
Other	4%

Table 81. Extended School Instructional Hours

Extended School Arrangement	(Total N = 26)
	Percentage
No, we used a traditional school day and year	54%
Yes, we had an extended school year, but not an extended school day	4%
Yes, we had an extended school day, but not an extended school year	19%
Yes, we had an extended school day and year	23%

Table 82. Accommodations for Special Needs Students

Accommodations	(Total N = 26)
	Percentage*
Pull-out services	89%
Inclusive classrooms	89%
Self-contained special education classes	42%
Other	4%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 83. Services for English Language Learners

Services	(Total N = 26)
	Percentage
ESL instruction	47%
This school did not have students with limited English–proficient students	42%
Other	4%
Self-contained bilingual education	4%
None	4%

Table 84. Student Assessment Methods

Assessment Methods	(Total N = 26)
	Percentage*
State benchmark exams	96%
Standardized achievement tests	96%
Teacher-assigned grades	92%
State End-of-Course exams	69%
Behavioral indicators, such as attendance and suspension	69%
Student demonstrations or exhibitions	65%
Other performance-based tests	65%
Student portfolios	62%
Student demonstrations or exhibitions	50%
Other	8%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 85. Instructional Staff Practices Under Charter School Status

Practices	(Total N = 24)
	Percentage*
Ongoing, targeted professional development	58%
Dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory performance	54%
Lack of tenure for teachers	42%



Practices	(Total N = 24)
	Percentage*
Rewarding teachers for exemplary performance	33%
Contracts for PD services with non-district providers	38%
Performance-based bonuses for teachers	29%
Private fund-raising/grants development	17%
Other	17%
Higher teacher salaries (than public schools)	17%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 86. Satisfaction With Parent/Community Involvement

Indicator	Total N	Level of Satisfaction Reported				
		Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Unsatisfactory
The level of parental involvement at this school concerning students' academic achievement, attendance, and/or behavior	25	32%	36%	24%	4%	4%
This school's level of parental involvement concerning participation in schoolwide events or activities (e.g., Parents Club)	25	24%	36%	32%	8%	0%
The level of community involvement at this school	25	16%	36%	28%	16%	4%

Table 87. Parent/Community Involvement Strategies

Strategies	(Total N = 25)
	Percentage*
Implementing parent-teacher conferences	96%
Involving parents in monitoring students' academic progress	96%
Scheduling school events to accommodate parents' schedules	92%
Involving parents in discipline-related discussions	92%
Conducting parent workshops	80%
Using community resources (e.g., museums, parks, gyms) to enhance students' learning	76%
Establishing parent and community advisory committees	68%
Creating learning partnerships with community-based organizations	68%
Using parents and community volunteers to provide special instruction	64%



Strategies	(Total N = 25)
	Percentage*
Hiring a parent involvement coordinator and/or community liaison	56%
Implementing parent involvement contracts	56%
Using community sites for service learning or work-based learning opportunities	48%
Using the school as a community center	20%
Inviting parents to attend staff trainings	12%
Other	12%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 88. Parent Requirements

Requirements	(Total N = 25)
	Percentage*
Sign a contract with the school	56%
Attend parent meetings	44%
Participate in a minimum number of hours at the school	24%
Other	24%
Participate on committees or the governance board	20%

*Percentages may not total 100 percent as respondents were allowed to select more than one response.

Table 89. Charter School Issues/Challenges

Issues/Challenges	Total N	Percentage
Managing public perceptions and public relations	22	41%
Facility costs	22	41%
Increasing parent and community involvement	22	32%
Facility management	22	27%
Designing/delivering professional development	22	27%
Fiscal and business management	23	22%
Personnel (e.g., retaining teachers)	22	18%
Selecting and implementing curricula	23	17%
General school administration	23	13%

Issues/Challenges	Total N	Percentage
Other	20	10%
Charter school organization	21	5%
Charter school board operations	21	0%

7. How hard did your teachers expect you to work...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? Very hard Hard Somewhat Not at all
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? Very hard Hard Somewhat Not at all

8. How often were your teachers able to help you when you needed help...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? Very often Often Sometimes Rarely or Never
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? Very often Often Sometimes Rarely or Never

9. How did you feel about the number of students in your class(es)...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? Too many students in my classes Just right
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? Too many students in my classes Just right

10. How much did you feel you learned...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? A lot An average amount Little
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? A lot An average amount Little

11. How much homework did you get...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? A lot An average amount Little
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? A lot An average amount Little

12. How often did you get to use computers and other electronics in your classes...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? Very often Often Sometimes Rarely or Never
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? Very often Often Sometimes Rarely or Never

13. How often were there behavior disruptions in your classes...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? Very often Often Sometimes Rarely or Never
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? Very often Often Sometimes Rarely or Never

14. How safe was your school...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? Very safe Safe Somewhat unsafe Very unsafe
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? Very safe Safe Somewhat unsafe Very unsafe

15. How clean was your school...

- ...last year (2010–2011 school year)? Very clean Clean Somewhat unclean Very dirty
 ...two years ago (2009–2010 school year)? Very clean Clean Somewhat unclean Very dirty

Thank you for completing this survey!

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION—CHARTER SCHOOL EVALUATION
Parent Survey

Directions: The Arkansas Department of Education is asking that you complete this survey as part of a study of the public charter schools for the **2009–2010 and 2010–2011 school years**. Your experiences with your child’s charter school will be an important part of the study. Please know that the information you provide is confidential and that you will not be identified with any of your answers. Your participation is voluntary and there are no known risks in participating in this study. You may withdraw from participating at any time. Please complete and mail this survey using the postage-paid envelope within two weeks of receiving it. If you wish to complete this survey online instead, please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CharterParentSurvey2011>. Please complete only one survey per parent unless you have children enrolled in multiple charter schools.

- 1) Do you agree to participate in this research study? Yes

Background Information

- 2) For how many years (including this year) have you had a child enrolled in [SCHOOL NAME]? _____ Years
- 3) Where did your child attend school before enrolling in this charter school?
- Regular/traditional public school
 - Private school
 - Home school
 - Another charter school
- 4) How many of your children were enrolled in this charter school during the **2009–2010** year? ____
- 5) How many of your children were enrolled in this charter school during the **2010–2011** year? ____
- 6) What is your highest educational degree?
- High school diploma
 - Associate’s or 2-year degree
 - Bachelor’s or 4-year degree
 - Graduate degree
 - Other, please describe: _____
- 7) What were the main reasons for choosing this charter school for your child? (Check **all** that apply.)
- Interest in the charter school’s educational mission or philosophy
 - Child was doing poorly in his or her previous school
 - Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety
 - Interest in the charter school’s instructional or academic program
 - More convenient location than previous school
 - Child has special needs that the previous school was not addressing/meeting
 - Better teachers at this charter school
 - My child wanted to come to this charter school
 - This charter school offers extended day hours/before- and after-school programs
 - Small size of this charter school or small classes
 - Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school
 - Not applicable
 - Other, please describe: _____

- 8) How did your child do academically at his or her previous school?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing
- 9) How did your child do academically at this charter school during the **2009–2010** year?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing Not applicable
- 10) How did your child do academically at this charter school during the **2010–2011** year?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing Not applicable

Charter School Satisfaction

11) How satisfied were you with the following areas of your child(ren)’s charter school during the **2009–2010 school year?**

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Sure	Not Applicable
a. Curriculum (i.e., what the school teaches).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b. Performance of the teachers (i.e., how well the school teaches).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c. Class size	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d. The individualized attention your child gets	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e. Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	<input type="checkbox"/>					
f. Communication with your child’s teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g. Quality of the building in which the school is located.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
h. Quality of the school facilities (i.e., school library, gymnasium, and science labs).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i. Use of technology within the instructional program	<input type="checkbox"/>					
j. School discipline policies and practices.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
k. Quality of student support services such as guidance counseling and tutoring	<input type="checkbox"/>					
l. Extracurricular activities (i.e., sports programs, after-school clubs or activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
m. School size	<input type="checkbox"/>					

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Sure	Not Applicable
n. School climate (i.e., the feel or tone of everyday life at the school).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
o. Quality of reading instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
p. Quality of math instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
q. Quality of writing instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
r. School safety.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
s. Extra help or special services for students when needed.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					

12) How satisfied were you with the following areas of your child(ren)'s charter school during **2010–2011**?

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Sure	Not Applicable
a. Curriculum (i.e., what the school teaches).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b. Performance of the teachers (i.e., how well the school teaches).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c. Class size	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d. The individualized attention your child gets.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e. Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	<input type="checkbox"/>					
f. Communication with your child's teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g. Quality of the building in which the school is located.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
h. Quality of the school facilities (i.e., school library, gymnasium, and science labs).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i. Use of technology within the instructional program.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
j. School discipline policies and practices.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Sure	Not Applicable
k. Quality of student support services such as guidance counseling and tutoring	<input type="checkbox"/>					
l. Extracurricular activities (i.e., sports programs, after-school clubs or activities)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
m. School size	<input type="checkbox"/>					
n. School climate (i.e., the feel or tone of everyday life at the school)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
o. Quality of reading instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
p. Quality of math instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
q. Quality of writing instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
r. School safety	<input type="checkbox"/>					
s. Extra help or special services for students when needed	<input type="checkbox"/>					

13) How satisfied were you with your child(ren)'s prior school in terms of:

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not applicable
a. Quality of reading instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
b. Quality of math instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c. Quality of writing instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d. School safety	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e. School facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
f. Parent involvement or participation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
g. Extra help or special services for students when needed	<input type="checkbox"/>				

14) How would you rate the overall quality of your child's previous school?

- Excellent Good Fair Poor

15) How would you rate the overall quality of this charter school?

- Excellent Good Fair Poor

16) How would you rate the overall quality of this charter school...

- | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ...for the 2009–2010 school year? | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| ...for the 2010–2011 school year? | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |

17) What issues most concerned you about this charter school during the **2009–2010** year?

18) What issues most concerned you about this charter school during the **2010–2011** year?

Thank you for completing this survey.

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

Introduction: The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) has asked Metis Associates, an independent research and evaluation firm, to conduct a study of Arkansas' Public Charter Schools for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years. The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of charter schools on student performance and the effects of innovative teaching and learning practices. Because your opinions are valuable, we are asking that you take about 30 minutes to complete this survey. All responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Responses to the items will be reported in the aggregate and never attributed to any one individual. There are no known risks in participating in this study, and you may withdraw your participation at anytime. The information you provide is greatly appreciated and will be used to improve future implementation of the program.

IMPORTANT: Since you cannot return to the survey once you have closed your browser, it must be completed in one sitting. Be certain to click the "SAVE AND COMPLETE THE SURVEY" button at the end of the survey before closing the survey window in order to ensure that your responses are saved.

***1. Do you agree to participate in this research study?**

- Yes
 No (You will be redirected to another page)

***2. What is the name of your school?**

***3. What is your position at this school?**

- Principal/Director
 Assistant Principal/Director
 Superintendent
 Other (please specify)

***4. Number of years at current position in this charter school (including current year):**

- This is my first year
 1 year
 2 years
 3 years
 4 years
 5+ years

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

***5. Number of overall years in this school (including current year):**

- This is my first year 3 years
 1 year 4 years
 2 years 5+ years

***6. What exemptions/waivers from the state and district education laws, regulations, and policies were specified in your school's charter AND put into practice during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years at your school?**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Teacher certification requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collective bargaining provisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establishing curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purchasing procedures (e.g., outside bidding, more timely purchases)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contractual services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resource allocations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student discipline policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School calendar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School year length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School day length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

***7. Which of the following enrollment methods were used at your school during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years? (Check all that apply)**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Use of zoning laws (i.e., all zoned students welcome)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admissions criteria (i.e., competitive application process)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First-come, first-served basis (until maximum capacity is reached)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lottery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

***8. During the 2009-10 and 2010-2011 school years, what arrangements were made for your schools facilities? (Only choose ONE arrangement per school year)**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Used district facility at no cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Used district facility at a reduced cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rented/leased facilities from the district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rented/leased facilities that were independent of the district	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Purchased facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Open Enrollment Schools only: Which of the following were regular practices of the charter school board during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years for this school?

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Written descriptions of board members roles and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identification of a board director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear procedures for the selection of board members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal orientation and training sessions for Board members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision-making flow charts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal processes for the development of school policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Functioning executive committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open lines of communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of open Board meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharing of agendas and other important information prior to Board meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitment to strategic planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear, up-to-date by-laws	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal plan for family and community involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of advisory committees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responsibility of fund-raising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of available funds for continued board development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

***10. What were the primary methods for delivering instruction to students at your charter school during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years? (Check all that apply for each school year)**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Interdiscipline instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Team teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Project-based or hands-on learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular integration of technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Character education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individualized or tailored instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign language immersion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Theme-based curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mutli-grade classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School-to-work concepts & strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular integration of fine arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative or authentic assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work-based or field based learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cooperative learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduced or small class size	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year-round or extended schooling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extended school day (before, after, summer, and/or vacation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home-based learning with parent as primary instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distance-learning and/or instruction via Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Independent study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

***11. Did the design for this charter school include instructional hours that went beyond the typical school year (e.g., 180 days) or the typical school day (e.g., 6.5 hours) during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years? (Choose only one response per year)**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
No, we used a traditional school day and year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes, we had an extended school year, but not extended school day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes, we had an extended school day, but not extended school year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes, we had an extended school day and year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

12. What accommodations were available for students with special needs during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years? (check all that apply for each year)

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Self-contained special education classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pull-out services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusive classrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This school did not have students with special needs during the 2009-2010 school year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*13. During the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years, what services were available for English Language Learners (ELLs)?

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Self-contained bilingual education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ESL instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This school did not have students with limited English proficiency during the 2009-2010 school year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*14. Which of the following student assessment strategies or methods were used at this school in 2009-2010 and in 2010-2011?

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Teacher assigned grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student portfolios	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standardized achievement tests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State benchmark exams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State end-of-course exams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student demonstrations or exhibitions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student interviews or surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behavioral indicators, such as attendance and suspension	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other performance-based tests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

15. Please give us an estimate of the percentage (%) of staff that fall into each racial/ethnic background category among your school's 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 paid instructional staff, including both full-time and part-time staff: (Note: each school year should add up to 100%)

	2009-2010	2010-2011
White	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
African American	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Hispanic/Latino	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Asian/Pacific Islander	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

***16. Does your school have a waiver for teacher certification?**

- Yes
 No

***17. Among the full-time instructional staff, how many had full state certification for the subjects/areas they taught in your school during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years?**

2009-2010

2010-2011

***18. During the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years, what did the charter status allow you to do with respect to your instructional staff that you could not have done under the traditional school/district structure?(Check all that apply for each school year)**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Higher teacher salaries (than public school)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private fund raising/grants development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of tenure for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance-based bonuses for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ongoing, targeted professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reward teachers for exemplary performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dismiss teachers for unsatisfactory performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contract for PD services with non-district providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

***19. Including the summer, how many teacher professional development days did your charter school offer during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years?**

2009-2010

2010-2011

***20. Please rate the following areas for each of the past two school years (2009-2010 and 2010-2011):**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
The level of parental involvement at this school concerning students' academic achievement, attendance, and/or behavior?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
This school's level of parental involvement concerning participation in school-wide events or activities (e.g., Parents Club)?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
The level of community involvement at this school?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

***21. During the 2009-2010 school year, which of the following strategies used at this school involved parents or other members of the community? (Check all that apply for each school year)**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Conducting parent workshops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inviting parents to attend staff trainings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using parents and community volunteers to provide special instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using community sites for service learning or work-based learning opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using the school as a community center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing parent involvement contracts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing parent-teacher conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving parents in discipline-related discussions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involving parents in monitoring students' academic progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scheduling school events to accommodate parents' schedules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creating learning partnerships with community-based organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using community resources (e.g., museums, parks, gyms) to enhance students learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Establish parent and community advisory committees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hiring a parent involvement coordinator and/or community liaison	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

***22. In school years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, did your school require parents (or other adult family members of your students) to do any of the following? (Check all that apply for each school year)**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Sign a contract with the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in a minimum number of hours at the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in a minimum number of activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate on committees or the governance board	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attend parent meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

***23. There are issues and challenges which might be encountered when implementing a charter school. For each potential problem listed below, check yes if you believe it was an issue or challenge for this school, or no if it was not an issue or challenge for this school in 2009-2010 and/or 2010-2011.**

	2009-2010	2010-2011
Charter school organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charter school board operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General school administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fiscal and business management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personnel (e.g., retaining teachers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing public perceptions & public relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facility management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selecting and implementing curricula	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing parent & community involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Designing/delivering professional development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facility costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. Are there any additional issues or concerns you would like to add about the 2009-2010 Charter School Program that you think might help inform the evaluation?

Arkansas Charter Schools - Administrator Survey (2009-2011)

25. Are there any additional issues or concerns you would like to add about the 2010-2011 Charter School Program that you think might help inform the evaluation?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

