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**Arkansas Department of Education
Division of Learning Services' Charter School Office**

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Metis Associates

Arkansas Charter Schools: Evaluation of Service Impact and Student Achievement

2006-2007 Evaluation Report



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I. Introduction

Arkansas, like other states across the country, joined the charter school movement in an effort to increase school choice and improve educational quality. The passage of Arkansas' first charter school legislation occurred in 1995 and was viewed as one of the most stringent charter school laws in the country. The legislation was revised in 1999, which allowed the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to approve the establishment of four charter schools that opened in the fall of 2001. Since then, a number of open enrollment and conversion schools have been chartered in the state. Conversion schools are public schools that have been converted to charter public schools. Open enrollment schools are completely new schools that have been chartered by the state. Conversion schools can only admit students within their own school districts, while open enrollment schools are allowed to draw and admit students from across the state.

As specified by Arkansas Law, charter schools are accountable to the State Board of Education to yield gains in student achievement and adhere to the charter authorization. At the same time, the charter public schools are afforded increased autonomy, which is realized through requests for exemptions from Title 6 of the Arkansas Education Code and State Board of Education rules. The charter public schools are held responsible for educational results and fiscal practices to several groups, including the entity that grants them, the parents who choose them, and the public that funds them.

At the end of the 2006–2007 school year, there were 14 public charter schools in operation in Arkansas (six open enrollment and eight conversion schools), serving nearly 4,000 students. Oversight of the public charter schools is provided by the Charter School Office of the Arkansas Department of Education. Previous evaluation reports of Arkansas public charter schools revealed that while some Arkansas charter schools are performing better than the state average in math and literacy, others have demonstrated below average student achievement (Huron Mountain Research Services Final Evaluation Report, 2006). Disciplinary records showed that Arkansas charter schools were on par with other Arkansas schools and, in addition, a school climate survey administered to teachers, students, and parents of most of the target schools indicated generally favorable results.

Given its investment in public charter schools and the 2005-2006 evaluation findings, the ADE was interested in learning about the characteristics of existing charter schools that were having a positive effect on students. The ADE also aimed to develop additional benchmarks and parameters for program provision.

In order to continue to study the Arkansas Charter Schools Program, in September 2007 ADE asked Metis Associates to design and carry out an evaluation that would begin to address key areas of research identified by ADE in order to:

- Contribute to the overall knowledge base about 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 14 target schools and assess the stakeholders’ satisfaction with all aspects of program implementation; and
- Begin to identify the innovations and practices that are being implemented within and across the 14 target charter schools and what effect these might be having on student academic achievement.

The next two sections of this report describe the research methods used throughout the study and present the findings, organized by the three major research questions presented in the proposal. The last section presents conclusions and recommendations for future implementation. The Appendices follow the main report and include outputs for student achievement data distributions (Appendix A and B), detailed evaluation survey results (Appendix C), and copies of the evaluation surveys (Appendix D).

II. Research Methods

The Metis evaluation team worked closely with the Charter School Director, Dr. Mary Ann Brown, over the course of the evaluation period and facilitated several progress meetings with ADE staff. The progress meetings served as a vehicle to finalize the evaluation research questions, discuss instrument development and other data sources, and share formative evaluation information with ADE between September 2007 and February 2008. The team developed the following research questions:

1. What is the overall efficacy of the charter schools?
2. To what extent are the parents and the students of the charter schools satisfied with their charter school?
3. What is the impact of the Arkansas charter schools on student performance?
 - a. What are the characteristics of the charter schools that are having the greatest impact on academic achievement?
 - b. What other indicators of improved school success are evident for charter school students?
 - c. What can be learned from disaggregating the student outcome data by different No Child Left Behind (NCLB) subgroups?

The Metis team used the following methods to collect data relevant to the research questions of the evaluation:

- Surveys of school administrators, parents, and students
- Analysis of student achievement data
- Review of extant data
- Collection of data from former charter school parents

Surveys of School Administrators, Parents, and Students

Beginning in November 2007, the evaluation team asked site leaders at each of the charter public schools to complete an online Charter School Administrator Survey, assist in disseminating a classroom-based student survey, and facilitate the administration of a parent survey. All 14 charter schools completed the survey, which collected systematic information about charter school operations.

The parent survey was sent home with each charter school student (regardless of grade level), and included a cover letter, a parent consent form for student participation in the student survey, and a self-addressed, postage-paid survey return envelope. To ensure the greatest response rate possible, no sampling methods were used and all parents should have received a questionnaire. In total, 415 parent surveys were returned, which represented 12 of the 14 charter schools. The number of parent surveys returned from each school ranged from 1 to 112, with a median of 28.

The student surveys were given to students in Grades 3 and higher at all of the charter schools. The surveys were completed in the target grade classrooms (homerooms or first-period classrooms for middle and high schools), and each survey included an attached peel-and-seal envelope to ensure anonymity. Schools were instructed to have teachers read the directions to students in their classrooms, collect the sealed surveys, and designate an individual to mail the completed surveys back to Metis using a pre-paid UPS label. In total, 2,678 student surveys were returned, accounting for 13 of 14 schools. The number of student surveys returned from each school ranged from 28 to 763, with a median of 210.

Table 1 shows the sample size and response rates for all three surveys.

Table 1
Sample Size and Response Rates for School-Based Surveys

Stakeholder Group	Target Population	Achieved Sample	Response Rate
Administrators/Principals	14	16 ^a	114.3%
Students	3,960	2,678	67.6%
Parents	3,960	415	10.5%

^aTwo schools also had their Assistant Principals complete the administrator survey.

Analysis of Student Achievement Data and Demographic Information

Student achievement data and demographic information were obtained from the ADE, and an analytic file was constructed. Demographic information included racial/ethnic background, poverty status, and special needs status. In addition, the file contained the results of the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and Accountability Program (ACTAPP), which includes results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in reading and math (for Grades K–3); the Arkansas Benchmark exams in literacy and math (for Grades 4–8); and End-of-Course exams (EOC) in geometry, algebra, and literacy (for Grades 9–12).

Review of Extant Data

The evaluation team requested, collected, and reviewed relevant documentation on school-wide charter school implementation. The sampling of information obtained included:

- Fall 2006 Annual School Report to the Public (obtained from four schools);
- Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plans (ACSIP; obtained from six schools); and
- Other school-related documentation, including evidence of parental support/involvement, strong academic leadership, high academic standards, positive school climate, and effective classroom management (obtained from 10 schools).

Collection of Data from Former Charter School Parents

In an attempt to learn why former charter school parents had opted to withdraw their children from a charter school, Metis requested that each target school provide a list of parents (with their contact information) in order to conduct short interviews to ask for the reasons why they withdrew their children from the school. In total, seven schools provided parent contact information, which included 278 former charter school parents. Among these, the data collection yielded the following results:

- Completed interviews: 37
- Disconnected/wrong numbers: 129
- Unable to reach (no answer/left message): 64

In addition, some schools provided information on family withdrawals that they had previously collected. These two data sources were combined to determine the most frequent reasons for student withdrawal across the charter schools.

III. Findings

This section of the report presents findings of the evaluation and is organized according to the major research questions.

Overall Efficacy of Charter Schools

School operations.

Table 2 lists the 14 public charter schools in the 2006–2007 evaluation and includes information about the school type, school management, grades served, and year opened.

Table 2
Overview of the Arkansas Public Charter Schools (2006–2007 Evaluation)

Charter School	School Type	School Management	Grades Served	Year Opened
Academic Center of Excellence	Conversion	School district	4–9	2002–2003
Blytheville Charter School	Conversion	School district	7–12	2001–2002
Cabot Academic Center of Excellence	Conversion	School district	7–12	2004–2005
Felder Alternative Learning Academy	Conversion	School district	7–12	2005–2006
Mountain Home High School	Conversion	School district	9–12	2003–2004
Raider Open-Door Academy	Conversion	School district	4–8	2003–2004
Ridgeroad Middle School	Conversion	School district	3–8	2003–2004
Vilonia Academy of Technology ^a	Conversion	School district	2–4	2004–2005
Academics Plus	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	3–8	2001–2002
Benton County School of the Arts	Open enrollment	School district	K–8	2001–2002
Haas Hall Academy	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	10–12	2004–2005
Imboden Area Charter School	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	K–8	2002–2003
KIPP: Delta College Preparatory	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	5–9	2002–2003
LISA Academy	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	9–10	2004–2005

^aVilonia Academy serves Grades K–5, but only Grades 2–4 are part of the charter school in 2006–2007.

Among the 14 charter schools participating in the evaluation, the grade configurations varied considerably, including elementary school grades only (one school), elementary through middle school grades (five schools), middle school to high school grades (three schools), high school grades only (three schools), and all three school levels (two schools). Table 2 also shows that eight of these schools were conversion schools and six were open enrollment schools. Three schools (Blytheville, Academics Plus, and Benton) were first to open during the 2001–2002 school year, and Felder was the latest to open in the 2005–2006 year.

During the 2006–2007 year, the Charter Schools put into practice various exceptions/waivers from the state and district education laws, regulations, and policies. These data were received from administrators from all 14 charter schools during the evaluation and were analyzed to determine what wavers were utilized by the Charters. Table 3 shows the most common areas in which the schools obtained and implemented exceptions/waivers.

Table 3
Charter School Exceptions/Waivers

Exception/Waiver	Number of Schools	Percent^a
Teacher certification requirements	10	71.4
Collective bargaining provisions	3	21.4
Establishing curriculum	8	57.1
Teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices	8	57.1
Student discipline policies	2	14.3
Resource allocations	1	7.1
School calendar	3	21.4
School year length	3	21.4
School day length	4	28.6

^aTotal percentage for each group does not equal 100% because respondents were able to choose multiple responses.

It can be seen from Table 3 that teacher certification requirements were the most common exceptions/waivers that were put into place by the charter schools in 2006–2007, as noted by 11 of the 14 charter schools.

Open enrollment schools were also asked to indicate the most common practices carried out by their charter school board during the 2006–2007 year. Of the six participating open enrollment schools, it was learned that their charter school boards most frequently implemented the following practices:

- Commitment to strategic planning
- Open lines of communication
- Open board meetings
- Sharing of important materials (e.g., agendas) prior to board meetings
- Formal plan for family and community involvement
- Use of available funds for continued development
- Clear procedures for selection of board members
- Formal orientation and training sessions for board members

According to respondents, all open enrollment school boards shared materials before board meetings and were committed to strategic planning. Interestingly, according to the school

administrators, only half of open enrollment school boards had formal processes for the development of school policies or clear, up-to-date laws.

Staff-related practices.

During the 2006–2007 year, the conversion charter schools employed an average of 24 full-time instructional staff, which was notably higher than the open enrollment schools, which employed an average of 18 full-time instructional staff. It should be noted that on the average, student membership in the conversion charters is larger than that of their open-enrollment partners. Across both types of schools, the racial/ethnic background of the staff was described as approximately 85% white, 14% African American, and 1% Hispanic or Latino.

Charter school law often allows schools to implement practices with staff that would not be possible under a traditional school structure. Results of the online administrator survey indicated that this was indeed true within the Arkansas charter schools. The data in Table 4 show that ongoing, targeted professional development (six schools) was the practice used most frequently among all schools, followed by the absence of teacher tenure (four schools) and the practice of dismissing teachers for poor performance (four schools). There were also some notable differences regarding the staffing practices used at both conversion and open-enrollment schools, with the open enrollment schools generally reporting more innovative staff-related practices than the conversion schools. For example, three open enrollment charter schools offered performance-based bonuses for teachers, but this was not offered by any of the conversion schools.

Table 4
Charter School Alternative Staff Practices

Area	Number of Schools	Percent ^a
Higher teacher salaries	2	14.3
Private fundraising/grants development	3	21.4
Lack of tenure of teachers	4	28.6
Performance-based bonuses for teachers	3	21.4
Ongoing, targeted professional development	6	42.9
Rewards for teachers for exemplary performance	2	14.3
Dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory performance	4	28.6
Contract for professional development services with non-district providers	2	14.3
Other charter status	1	7.1

^a Percentages do not equal 100% because respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses.

Charter schools seemed to implement targeted professional development that went beyond the scope present in traditional school structures. The survey findings revealed that open enrollment schools offered slightly more professional development days compared with conversion schools (9.86 and 9.44 days, respectively). A review of the program documentation provided information

on the content of the professional development that the charter schools offered during the 2006–2007 year, such as training related to core academic subjects, technology (including the use of web-based lessons, online grade books, and Smartboard), teacher mentoring and academic coaching, special education teaching strategies, cross curricular approaches, attendance at conferences, curriculum audits, and use of rubrics.

Parent involvement and choice.

There are many different reasons why parents choose to enroll their children in a charter school over a traditional school. This study aimed to investigate the main reasons why Arkansas parents were choosing to send their children to a charter school, with the expectation that these findings could have implications on the practices of traditional district schools in the state. Findings from these survey items, which were asked of parents and administrations, are presented in Table 5, below.

Table 5
Main Reasons Why Parents Choose Charter Schools

Reason	Parent Survey (N = 411)	Administrator Survey (N = 15)
Interest in the charter school’s education mission or philosophy	209 (50.9%)	10 (66.7%)
Child was doing poorly in previous school	40 (9.8%)	9 (60.0%)
Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety	155 (37.7%)	10 (66.7%)
Interest in the charter school’s instructional or academic program	238 (57.9%)	10 (66.7%)
More convenient location than previous school	49 (11.9%)	1 (6.7%)
Child has special needs that previous school was not addressing	32 (7.8%)	5 (33.3%)
Better teachers at this charter school	105 (25.5%)	7 (46.7%)
My child wanted to come to this charter school	94 (22.9%)	6 (40.0%)
This charter school offers extended day hours/before- and after-school program	41 (10.0%)	2 (13.3%)
Small size of this charter school or small classes	180 (43.8%)	9 (60.0%)
Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school	95 (23.1%)	7 (46.7%)
It is the only school available for my child to attend/not applicable	45 (10.9%)	1 (6.7%)
Other primary reasons	66 (16.1%)	4 (26.7%)

*This calculation removed the 45 conversion parents who reported the school as the only available option for their child.

The data in Table 5 show that, across the charter schools, more than half of the respondents believed that parents were choosing to enroll their children in a charter public school for the following reasons:

- Interest in the charter school's instructional program,
- Small size of the charter school or small class size,
- Interest in the charter school's education mission and philosophy, and
- Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety.

It can also be seen from Table 5 that charter school administrators were much more likely than the parents themselves to believe that parents took into account the following factors when choosing a charter school:

- Child was doing poorly in previous school,
- Dissatisfaction with the traditional public school options and/or safety,
- Child has special needs that the previous school was not addressing,
- Better teachers at this charter school, and
- Greater opportunities for parental involvement at their charter school.

The survey also investigated about the parental/community involvement of charter school parents. As such, administrators were asked to rate the level of parental/community involvement in various aspects of charter school implementation, using ratings of *excellent*, *good*, *average*, and *poor/unsatisfactory*. The results revealed that:

- Although most administrators rated parental involvement as *good* or *excellent* concerning academic, attendance, behavior, and school-wide activities (between 56% and 63%), a notable percentage also rated parental involvement as *average* or *poor* (between 44% and 37%).
- Similarly, community involvement was also split on each side, where 56% gave a rating of *good* or *excellent* while 44% indicated a rating of *average* or *poor*.

When asked about the various strategies used to involve parents and other community members, administrators from more than half of the charter schools indicated that they used the following strategies: carrying out parent-teacher conferences, holding school events during times that accommodated parents' schedules, involving parents in monitoring students' academic progress, using parents and other community volunteers to provide special instruction, creating learning partnerships with local community-based organizations, and establishing community advisory committees. Notably, open enrollment schools were substantially more likely than conversion schools to have used community resources to enhance student learning. On the other hand, the

conversion schools were more likely than open enrollment schools to have hired a parent involvement coordinator or community liaison.

A review of the program documentation provided some additional examples of strategies used by the schools to promote parent involvement, including regular invitations to school advisory council meetings, trainings or workshops, and other school functions. For schools that provided calendars, there was also evidence of regularly scheduled PTA meetings and other opportunities for parental involvement. The majority of the schools also provided samples of parent newsletters that were regularly distributed throughout the school year.

Finally, at least half of the 14 charter schools reported that they *require* parents (or other adult family members of the students) to sign a contract with the school and/or attend parent meetings throughout the school year.

Instruction.

According to respondents of the administrator survey, the target charter schools used various methods of instructional delivery in 2006–2007. Notably, at least two-thirds of the charter schools (i.e., 10 or more schools) used interdisciplinary instruction, project-based learning, character education, direct instruction, technology integration, cooperative learning, and reduced or small class size. Other instructional approaches used less frequently (i.e., four or fewer schools) were foreign language immersion, school-to-work concepts, regular integration of fine arts, alternative or authentic assessment, work- or field-based learning, year-round schooling or extended day, home-based learning with parent, and distance learning via the Internet.

When asked about special education instruction, all but two schools indicated that they provide some type of accommodation for students with special needs. More than two-thirds of these charter schools contained inclusive classrooms, which was the most common accommodation reported. In addition, more than half of the charter schools indicated the use of pull-out services for students with special needs, and another four schools indicated having self-contained special education classes.

In terms of instruction for English language learners (ELL), only 6 of 14 schools indicated having English as a second language (ESL) instruction and two additional schools reported having other language instruction on an as-needed basis. However, the student information data provided by ADE showed that less than 2% of all charter school students were identified as ELL, which provides an explanation for the few instructional opportunities available at the charter schools for this population.

All of the charter schools appeared to use a range of assessment strategies in addition to adhering to the state and national assessments required of all Arkansas public schools. At least three-quarters of the schools reported using assessments strategies such as teacher assigned grades (all 14 schools), behavioral indicators (12 schools), and student portfolios (11 schools). In addition, other charter schools noted that student demonstrations or exhibitions (nine schools) and student interviews or surveys (six schools) were used as part of their student assessment program. Analysis of the data by type of school did not reveal any notable differences.

Issues and challenges.

Charter school administrators were asked about what issues and challenges (if any) they encountered in operating their charter school during the 2006–2007 year. At least half of the administrators reported managing public perceptions and public relations as a challenge for their school. Among the open enrollment schools, the issues cited most frequently were facility costs and fiscal and business management. These were notably different from the challenges or issues cited most often by conversion school administrators, which were increasing parental/community involvement and selecting and implementing curricula (four schools).

Satisfaction of Parents and Students with Their Charter School

Parent satisfaction.

Overall, data from the parent survey suggest that parental satisfaction with the Arkansas charter schools for the 2006–2007 year was generally high. Three-quarters of the responding parents (75.2%) rated their child’s current school as *very good* to *excellent* compared with less than half (41.8%) who provided the same rating for the child’s previous school, a difference of 33.4 percentage points. Interestingly, there were no discernable differences when looking at these data by school type.

Provided with options for rating of *better*, *about the same*, and *worse*, responding parents were asked to compare their child’s current school to their previous school on various areas of instruction. These data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
Parents’ Perception of Instructional Quality

Area of Instruction	Total	Better (%)	About the Same (%)	Worse (%)
Quality of school’s reading instruction	367	54.8	37.3	7.9
Quality of school’s math instruction	366	58.2	32.0	9.8
Quality of school’s writing instruction	365	54.2	40.3	5.5

The findings in Table 6 show that parents were generally more positive about their child’s current charter school than they were about their previous school. As can be seen, over 54% of parents believed that the quality of the math, reading, and writing instruction at their child’s current school was better than at their child’s prior school. In contrast, few parents (less than 10%) felt their child’s current school was *worse* than their previous school.

Parents were also asked to provide their opinions of various components present in their child’s charter school, using the following scale: *very satisfied*, *somewhat satisfied*, *uncertain*, *not too satisfied*, and *quite dissatisfied* (Table 7). The parents’ responses were combined to illustrate their general satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the different components. Overall, the data in

Table 7 indicate that charter school parents were generally satisfied with instructional practices, communication, school/class size, and school climate.

The data in Table 7 show that:

- The great majority of parents (at least 80%) indicated that they were either very or somewhat satisfied with the curriculum, performance of teachers, individualized attention their child receives, opportunities for involvement, school discipline practices, class size, school size, and school climate.
- Parents seemed to report their lowest satisfaction with the quality of school facilities, extracurricular activities, and quality of student support services. Nevertheless, at least two thirds of parents still indicated being very or somewhat satisfied with these areas.

Table 7
Parents' Satisfaction with Specific Components of the Charter School

Component	Total N	Very/Somewhat Satisfied		Not Too Satisfied/Quite Dissatisfied		Not Sure or N/A	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Curriculum	410	373	(91.0)	25	(6.1)	12	(2.9)
Performance of the teachers	410	360	(87.8)	32	(7.8)	18	(4.4)
Class size	412	366	(88.8)	29	(7.0)	17	(4.1)
Individualized attention your child gets	411	346	(84.2)	50	(12.2)	15	(3.6)
Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	412	352	(85.4)	37	(9.0)	23	(5.6)
How much the school expects from parents	413	333	(80.6)	36	(8.7)	44	(10.7)
Communication with your child's teacher	412	346	(84.0)	49	(11.9)	17	(4.1)
Quality of the bldg in which the school is located	409	339	(82.9)	56	(13.7)	14	(3.4)
Quality of the school facilities such as the gym, library and labs	413	274	(66.3)	76	(18.4)	63	(15.3)
Use of tech within the instructional program	411	331	(80.5)	37	(9.0)	43	(10.5)
School discipline policies and practices	412	350	(85.0)	52	(12.6)	10	(2.4)
Quality of student support services such as guidance counseling and tutoring	413	306	(74.1)	48	(11.6)	59	(14.3)
Extra-curricular activities	408	294	(72.1)	61	(15.0)	53	(13.0)
School size	410	375	(91.5)	20	(4.9)	15	(3.7)
School climate	407	353	(86.7)	40	(9.8)	14	(3.4)

Two other areas of charter school implementation—school safety and school facilities—were also assessed using ratings provided by surveyed parents. Parents were asked to compare their child’s current school to their previous school on various areas of charter school implementation, choosing from ratings of *better*, *about the same*, or *worse* (Table 8).

Table 8
Parents' Perception of School Safety and Facilities

School Area	Total	Better (%)	About the Same (%)	Worse (%)
School safety	369	44.6	37.8	6.5
School facilities	365	33.5	36.9	17.6

The data in Table 8 indicate overall, a generally similar percentage of parents felt that the safety and quality of the school facilities at their child's current school was 'better' or 'about same' as their previous school. In addition, although only 7% of parents felt that school safety was worse at their current school than at their previous school, a notable 18% believed that the quality of school facilities in worse at their current school.

Finally, when parents were asked what they believed were the most positive aspects of their child's charter school, they most frequently mentioned the following:

- Positive and prompt communication with office staff and school administration (i.e., an "open-door" policy);
- Teacher's communication and availability, dedication, and overall focus on education;
- Small class size/school size resulting in personalized attention/treatment as individuals;
- Opportunity and desire for parental involvement in the school; and
- Strong curriculum, particularly in the areas of math and science.

Among parents' greatest concerns about their child's charter public school were the following:

- Educational program too rigorous, with some parents noting that the charter schools assign too much homework or push students too hard;
- Difficulty in reaching teachers and/or school administrators about questions or scheduling conferences (via phone or email);
- Too few extracurricular activities;
- Too many inexperienced teachers and too much teacher mobility from one year to the next; and
- Lack of funding, especially compared to regular public schools.

Former charter school parents.

Despite the high level of satisfaction of current charter school parents, each charter school had a number of parents who withdrew their child after the 2006–2007 year. Metis conducted short

phone interviews with parents who withdrew their child after the school year, using lists provided by half of the 14 target schools. As stated earlier in this report, 37 parents were reached and spoken with. Some schools provided lists of withdrawn students with the reasons included and no contact information. Of the 85 total former charter school students for whom data were available or collected, the most common reasons for student withdrawal were the following:

- Moved to another school district or to a location too far from the charter school (24.7%),
- Dissatisfied because of poor student attendance (16.5%),
- Enrolled student in a GED program (11.8%),
- Dissatisfied with the charter school curriculum (10.6%),
- Dissatisfied because of poor student performance/charter school instruction too rigorous (8.2%),
- Dissatisfied with the lack of available extracurricular activities (5.9%), and
- Opted for home schooling (5.3%).

Moreover, according to the charter school administrators, the main reasons parents may have withdrawn a student after the 2006–2007 school year included parent dissatisfaction with the charter school structure, poor academic performance that caused the parents to return to or try a traditional public school, and general dissatisfaction with charter school teachers, instruction, or curriculum.

Student satisfaction.

Students were asked various questions about different elements that contribute to school success. Using a Likert-type scale that included *excellent*, *very good*, *good*, *fair*, and *poor*, students rated the overall quality of their current school to their previous school, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9
Students’ Perceptions of Overall School Quality

School	Total	Excellent/Very Good (%)	Good (%)	Fair/Poor (%)
Current school	2,654	59.6	25.3	15.1
Previous school	2,567	38.0	29.9	32.1

Table 9 shows that:

- Overall, more than half of the students (59.6%) gave their current school a rating of *very good* to *excellent* compared with 38.0% who provided similar ratings for their previous school.

Students were asked to rate overall teacher quality at their current school in comparison to their teachers at their previous school. As shown in Table 10, the findings indicated that, overall, students were only somewhat more satisfied with teachers at their current school than with teachers at their previous school:

- Less than half of all students (44.1%) indicated that the teachers at their current school were better than the teachers at their previous school.

Table 10
Students' Perceptions of Teacher Quality

Total	Better than Previous School (%)	About Same as Previous School (%)	Worse than Previous School (%)	Not Been to Any Other School (%)
2,640	44.1	11.3	35.6	9.0

Across all of the charter schools, students' perceptions of their academic progress at their current school were generally similar to when they attended their prior school. Findings also showed that students' interest in their schoolwork was fairly similar when asked to compare their engagement at their current school to that of when they attended their former school. However, school size was the aspect of their current school with which students' were most satisfied. Over 87% of students reported that the number of students enrolled in their current school was 'about right'. (See Appendix C for specific findings).

Finally, when asked about school facilities, students were generally positive. Nearly three-fourths (74%) of students rated the quality of their current school facility as good, very good, or excellent, compared to 26% who rated it as fair or poor.

Impact of the Arkansas Charter Schools on Student Achievement

The ITBS reading and math data were used to analyze longitudinal student achievement in Grades K–3; Benchmark reading and math exam data were used to analyze longitudinal student achievement in Grades 4–8; and EOC algebra 1, geometry, and 11th grade literacy exam data were used to analyze student achievement in Grades 9–12.

The ITBS, administered in Grades K–9 in Arkansas, is a standardized, norm-referenced test that includes different literacy- and math-related subtests that are combined into overall literacy and math test scores. However, for the ITBS analyses in this report, the vocabulary subtest was used for students in Grades K–1 because that is the only literacy test taken in those grades. In addition, the math problem-solving subtest was also used for Grades K–3 because a total math score is not available in those grades.

The Benchmark reading and math exams, used to assess longitudinal performance for students in Grades 4–8, are Arkansas state-mandated criterion-referenced tests that have been customized around the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. In Arkansas, the test items are based on the

academic standards in the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks and are developed by committees of Arkansas teachers with support from the ADE and the testing contractor.¹

The EOC algebra 1, geometry, and 11th grade literacy exams were used to compare the performance of students in Grades 9–12 from spring 2006 to spring 2007. 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. As such, student performance on these exams is directly aligned with the statewide frameworks and statewide curriculum goals.¹

Characteristics of charter schools having greatest impact on academic achievement and other indicators of improved school success for charter school students.

Multiple regression analyses were used to examine the different factors in the Arkansas charter schools 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., dependent variable) based on combinations of different factors and conditions (i.e., independent variables). Multiple regression analysis can establish that a set of independent variables 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 2007 achievement scores from several programmatic and demographic variables, measures of satisfaction, 2006 achievement scores (when available), and attendance. Several models were constructed using a range of variables to maximize the number of observed cases as well as the number of input variables. The list below shows the starting set of variables for all of the models.

- School size
- School attendance ratio
- Number of suspensions
- Spring 2006 test scores (ITBS, Benchmark, and EOC exams)
- Student satisfaction total²
- Parent satisfaction total²
- Type of school (conversion vs. open enrollment)
- Type of governance structure (district vs. nonprofit)
- Use of team teaching
- Use of multigrade classrooms
- Use of theme-based instruction
- Presence of extended school day
- Implemented reduced/small class size

Based on initial R^2 values and the corresponding significance tests conducted, only a subset of the above listed variables were retained. Specifically, type of governance structure, student satisfaction total, parent satisfaction total, and use of theme-based instruction did not significantly predict spring 2007 outcomes and were therefore removed from the analyses. The list below shows the final variable set used for all regressions presented herein.

¹ Information obtained from the ADE website: <http://arkedu.state.ar.us>

² Student and parent satisfaction were derived by summing ratings across various items in each survey, creating an overall level of school satisfaction.

- School size
- School attendance ratio
- Spring 2006 ITBS scores
- Spring 2006 Benchmark exam scores
- Spring 2006 EOC exam scores
- Type of school (conversion vs. open enrollment)
- Use of team teaching
- Use of multigrade classrooms
- Presence of extended school day
- Implemented reduced/small class size
- Number of suspensions

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

Table 11 presents the resultant regression models predicting 2007 vocabulary/total reading and problem solving ITBS scores for Grades K–3. While both models are statistically significant, neither includes any of the programmatic or demographic variables associated with the charter schools. Rather, both models present student variables—pretest (i.e., 2006) achievement and attendance—that are well known to be associated with achievement.

Table 11
Stepwise Regression Results for Predicted Spring 2007 ITBS Vocabulary (Grades K–1)/Total Reading (Grades 2–3) and Problem Solving Scale Scores (Grades K–3)

Test	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R^2)
ITBS vocabulary/ total reading <i>N</i> = 335 <i>F</i> = 124.807	ITBS spring 2006 vocabulary score	.638	.428*
	Attendance rate for 2006–2007	.100	
ITBS problem solving <i>N</i> = 238 <i>F</i> = 114.218	ITBS spring 2006 problem solving score	.570	.325*

* $p < .05$.

Table 12 presents the resultant models predicting 2007 Benchmark literacy and math scores for Grades 4–8. Like the ITBS vocabulary/total reading model, both models include pretest performance and attendance as significant predictors. However, both models also included some demographic and programmatic variables.

Table 12
Stepwise Regression Results for Predicted Spring 2007 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 = 1,247 F = 513.466	Benchmark spring 2006 literacy score	.777	
	Implemented reduced/small class size	-.089	
	School type (open enrollment or conversion)	.090	.673*
	Attendance rate for 2006–2007	.078	
	School size	.044	
Benchmark math N = 1,247 F = 416.727	Benchmark spring 2006 math score	.745	
	Attendance rate for 2006–2007	.132	
	Use of team teaching	-.038	.667*
	School type (open enrollment or conversion)	.117	
	Use of multigrade classrooms	-.119	
	Number of suspensions	-.053	

* p < .05.

As shown in Table 12, in addition to the aforementioned performance indicators (pretest performance and attendance), higher literacy achievement in Grades 4–8 is associated with the following:

- *Not* implementing class size reduction initiatives,
- Open enrollment schools over conversion schools, and
- Larger school size.

In addition, for math, higher achievement at these same grade levels is associated with the following:

- *Not* using team-teaching techniques,
- Open enrollment schools over conversion schools,
- *Not* using multigrade classrooms, and
- Fewer suspensions.

The negative association of number of suspensions to achievement is not surprising. However, the negative association of achievement to the three programmatic variables (i.e., class size

reduction, team-teaching, and multigrade classrooms) is somewhat counterintuitive and may be related more to fidelity of implementation of these strategies than to the effectiveness of the techniques themselves.

Table 13
Stepwise Regression Results for Predicted Spring 2007 EOC Exam Scores (Grades 9–12)

Test ^a	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R ²)
EOC geometry N = 438 F = 49.029	Attendance rate for 2006–2007	.350	.253*
	Implemented reduced/small class size	-.227	
	Presence of extended school day	.115	

^aAlgebra 1 and literacy EOC exams are not shown because each showed a low explainable variance (below .125).

* p < .05.

Table 14 presents the regression models predicting 2007 EOC geometry for Grades 9–12. As seen with three of the four models presented above, attendance is included as a significant predictor of performance. Note that because EOC exams are taken only once, pretest scores were unavailable to include in high school models. Furthermore, similar to the literacy model presented for Grades 4–8, implementation of reduced class size initiatives is negatively associated with higher achievement. Notably, implementation of extended school day initiatives is associated with higher achievement in Grades 9–12.

Student outcome data disaggregated by different NCLB subgroups.

In order to examine the academic progress of different subgroups of students, a series of ANCOVAs were conducted on the results of the ITBS for Grades K–3 and the Benchmark Exams for Grades 4–8. Note that analyses were not conducted on Grades 9–12 because EOC exams are administered once a year and therefore do not have the requisite pretest scores needed for this analysis. The subgroups of students for whom these analyses were conducted include the following:

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

Tables 15 and 16 present a summary of the results of these analyses. The complete set of findings can be found in Appendix B.

Table 14**Summary of Longitudinal ITBS Analyses of Reading and Math Skills across Student Subgroups**

Comparison Groups		Target Grade	ITBS: Overall Reading Skills	ITBS: Overall Math Skills
Race/ethnicity	Black	1	No significant difference	NA ^a
	White			
	Other			
	Black	2	No significant difference	No significant difference
	White			
	Other			
	Black	3	No significant difference	No significant difference
	White			
	Other			
Sex	Male	1	No significant difference	NA ^b
	Female			
	Male	2	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Female			
	Male	3	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Female			
Title I status	Non-Title I	1	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
	Non-Title I	2	Significant difference	Significant difference
	Title I			
	Non-Title I	3	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
Education status	General education	1	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Special education			
	General education	2	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Special education			
	General education	3	Significant difference	No significant difference
	Special education			
Free/reduced lunch status	Not free/reduced	1	No significant difference	NA ^b
	Free/reduced			
	Not free/reduced	2	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Free/reduced			
	Not free/reduced	3	No significant difference	Significant difference
	Free/reduced			

Note. Findings are based on repeated measures ANCOVAs. Higher achieving groups are presented in bold type when a statistically significant difference under .05 is observed.

^aThere were fewer than 10 matched black or “other” students in Grade 1; therefore, too few numbers were available to run a reliable analysis. ^bAll Grade 1 students were in one comparison group.

Notably, it can be seen from Table 15 that most of the NCLB comparisons did not produce statistically significant results, suggesting less of a gap between NCLB subgroups in these grades than usually expected. The few instances where there were notable findings from the ITBS subgroup analyses include the following:

- With respect to measures of poverty, differences can be observed for two of the three grades. Specifically, in Grade 2, non-Title I students significantly outperformed their lower-income peers in both reading and math. In addition, in average math performance, Grade 3 students who are not eligible for free/reduced lunches significantly outperformed students who were eligible for free/reduced lunches.
- When looking at sex, Grade 3 girls had significantly higher achievement scores in math and reading than did boys.
- With respect to education status, Grade 3 general education students achieved significantly higher reading scores than their special education peers.

Table 16 shows that there were many more subgroup differences in Grades 4–8 than were evident at the lower elementary grades. These differences include the following:

- With respect to poverty, non-Title I students significantly outperformed their counterparts in reading in Grade 4 and in both reading and math in Grades 5, 7, and 8. In addition, students who were ineligible for free/reduced lunches achieved significantly higher scores than did their lower-income peers in Grade 4 in reading and Grade 6 in math.
- When looking at sex, girls achieved significantly higher reading scores than did boys in Grades 5–7.
- General education students had significantly higher achievement scores compared with special education students in math in Grades 4–6 and 8, and in reading in Grades 4, 5, and 8.
- With respect to racial/ethnic background:
 - In Grade 5, white students achieved significantly higher reading scores than did black students and students with some other racial/ethnic background. However, at the same time, black students in Grade 5 significantly outperformed their peers of other racial/ethnic background in reading.
 - Also in Grade 5, black students achieved significantly higher math scores than did their peers who were white or some other racial/ethnic background. At the same time, Grade 5 white students significantly outperformed the group of students with some other racial or ethnic background in math.
 - In Grade 7, white students achieved significantly higher math scores than did their peers who were black or other racial/ethnic background.

Table 15

Summary of Longitudinal Analyses of Benchmark Reading and Math Skills across Student Subgroups

Comparison Groups		Target Grade	Benchmark: Overall Literacy Skills	Benchmark: Overall Math Skills	
Race/ethnicity	White/black	4	No significant difference	No significant difference	
	White/other				
	Black/other				
	White/black	5	Significant difference (whites)	Significant difference (blacks)	
	White/other				
	Black/other				
	White/black	6	No significant difference	No significant difference	
	White/other				
	Black/other				
	White/black	7	No significant difference	Significant difference	
	White/other				
	Black/other				
White/black	8	No significant difference	No significant difference		
White/other					
Black/other					
Sex	Male	4	No significant difference	No significant difference	
	Female				
	Male	5	Significant difference	No significant difference	
	Female				
	Male	6	Significant difference	No significant difference	
	Female				
	Male	7	Significant difference	No significant difference	
	Female				
	Male	8	No significant difference	No significant difference	
	Female				
	Title I status	Non-Title I	4	Significant difference	No significant difference
		Title I			
Non-Title I		5	Significant difference	Significant difference	
Title I					
Non-Title I		6	No significant difference	No significant difference	
Title I					
Non-Title I		7	Significant difference	Significant difference	
Title I					
Non-Title I		8	Significant difference	Significant difference	
Title I					

Table 15 cont.

Summary of Longitudinal Analyses of Benchmark Reading and Math Skills across Student Subgroups

Comparison Groups		Target Grade	Benchmark: Overall Literacy Skills	Benchmark: Overall Math Skills	
Education status	General education Special education	4	Significant difference	Significant difference	
	General education Special education	5	Significant difference	Significant difference	
	General education Special education	6	No significant difference	Significant difference	
	General education Special education	7	No significant difference	No significant difference	
	General education Special education	8	Significant difference	Significant difference	
	Free/reduced lunch status	Not free/reduced Free/reduced	4	Significant difference	No significant difference
		Not free/reduced Free/reduced	5	No significant difference	No significant difference
		Not free/reduced Free/reduced	6	No significant difference	Significant difference
Not free/reduced Free/reduced		7	No significant difference	No significant difference	
Not free/reduced Free/reduced		8	No significant difference	No significant difference	

Note. Findings are based on repeated measures ANCOVAs. Higher achieving groups are presented in bold type when a statistically significant difference under .05 is observed.

IV. Conclusions/Recommendations

Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative data suggest that Arkansas public charter schools were efficacious during the 2006–2007 year, providing a viable educational alternative to the state’s traditional public schools. At the time of the study, the charter public schools were implementing academic programs using a wide array of instructional practices, providing professional development, engaging parents and the community, reporting on students’ academic progress, and providing safe school environments. These efforts were occurring at varied levels of intensity and in a variety of ways.

An analysis of the various forms of data used in this study has led to the following conclusions:

- Parents and students were indeed satisfied with the implementation of the charter schools during the 2006–2007 school year.
- Characteristics of the charter schools, such as better attendance rates, type of school implementation (open enrollment versus conversion), larger school size, the non-use of class size reduction and multigrade classrooms, and fewer suspensions, were associated with improved student achievement in 2006–2007.
- The most notable trends in comparisons of NCLB subgroups were observed in Grades 4–8 for sex, Title-I status, and special needs status.

Differences in charter school implementation may be resulting in higher student achievement with open enrollment schools. Arkansas charter school legislation permits schools to implement practices with staff that would not be possible under a traditional school structure. In addition, we believe that the oversight of open enrollment schools by a charter school board/non-profit organization may be having an effect on the implementation of the charter school philosophy. When asked to indicate the regular practices carried out by their charter school board, nearly all open enrollment school principals indicated open board meetings, formal plans for family and community involvement, commitment to strategic planning, open lines of communication, and use of available funds for continued development.

Overall, parents and students indicated high levels of satisfaction with the charter schools, especially in the areas of curriculum, class size, school size/quality, school climate, and quality/performance of teachers. In terms of the overall characteristics of the charter schools that can most strongly predict student achievement, regression analyses showed that across all grade levels, in addition to students’ pretest scores, student attendance was the most common variable that predicted improvements at the time of the post-test for Grades K–3 ITBS vocabulary, Grades 4-8 Benchmark literacy and math exams, and the EOC geometry exam in high school. (This is not surprising given the well-documented importance of school attendance on student achievement.) In addition, in the Grades 4-8 Benchmark exam, variables such as larger school size and non-use of reduced small class size strongly predicted literacy scores, while other variables such as few suspensions and non-use of team teaching and multigrade classrooms

strongly predicted math exam scores. Other variables that were studied, such as parent and student satisfaction or type of governance structure, did not predict student achievement results.

Finally, comparative analyses of NCLB subgroups revealed trends in Grades 4–8 in three major areas: sex, Title I status, and special needs status. Differences were found on the Benchmark literacy exam in Grades 5–7, where females significantly outperformed males. Non-Title I students significantly outperformed Title-I students in reading and math in Grades 4–8, and general education students significantly outperformed special education students in Grades 4–8 on the Benchmark literacy and math exam.

Recommendations

The following recommendations apply collectively to all charter public schools as opposed to any specific school. It is hoped that these recommendations will provide the Arkansas charter school program and its stakeholders with beneficial information to consider in their decision-making process as they move forward:

- ***Address facilities challenges that exist primarily among the open enrollment charter schools.*** It is recommended that the ADE charter school office examine the innovative practices that have been developed in other states to help charter school operators within non-conversion schools access additional resources to purchase, lease, and/or renovate facilities. For example, ADE may want to consider offering incentives to entities (e.g., districts, local businesses) that offer charter schools the opportunity to either co-locate or lease appropriate facilities.
- ***Provide technical assistance opportunities.*** Starting a new school is a very difficult proposition, particularly when there may be limited resources available to support, guide, and assist charter schools. As such, it is suggested that the ADE establish an infrastructure, perhaps with the help of local universities or community-based proponents of charter schools, for assisting new and existing charter schools in the following ways:
 - Serving the needs of students with educational disabilities or with limited proficiency in English (where needed);
 - Securing appropriate facilities;
 - Establishing policies and procedures;
 - Engaging in program development and grant writing;
 - Selecting/developing and implementing curricula;
 - Sharing successful and promising practices;
 - Hiring, developing, and retaining staff;
 - Establishing governance mechanisms; and
 - Conducting formative and summative program evaluations to drive program/school improvement.

- ***Strengthen charter school data management and accountability.*** Arkansas charter schools are accountable for the standards established by NCLB and for adhering to the state’s assessment system, as are all public schools. However, it is recommended that Arkansas charter schools develop the necessary support training of fiscal and data management systems that will facilitate the development of accountability.

Areas of Future Research

It is important to understand that this evaluation was conducted over a limited period of time in which we were able to observe some positive practices and outcomes. Clearly, there are strong charter schools in Arkansas, but at the same time there are some schools that are facing major challenges, which is not dissimilar to traditional public schools. The Arkansas charter school initiative is a bold effort of educational reform and should be continually evaluated and judged on the merits and benefits it provides for the most important stakeholder of any public school—the students. Potential areas for future research include the following:

- It is recommended that future evaluations or research be conducted to determine what factors or combinations of factors have the greatest impact on student achievement or school success.
- Another area that deserves additional research is innovations in school management and operation.

APPENDICES

**Appendix A:
Longitudinal Analyses of Student Achievement
Using Comparisons by School Type**

Table 16
Benchmark Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA Results, Conversion vs. Open-Enrollment, Grades 4-8

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Conversion	583.54	1	13.796	0.000*
	Open-Enrollment	679.22	169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Conversion	570.97	1	14.248	0.000*
	Open-Enrollment	683.33	191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Conversion	652.59	1	0.203	0.653
	Open-Enrollment	695.42	253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Conversion	635.75	1	33.865	0.000*
	Open-Enrollment	761.24	264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Conversion	689.96	1	25.965	0.000*
	Open-Enrollment	823.85	399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 17
Benchmark Math Mixed Model ANCOVA Results, Conversion vs. Open-Enrollment, Grades 4-8

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Conversion	604.10	1	0.283	0.595
	Open-Enrollment	622.41	169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Conversion	585.02	1	11.300	0.001*
	Open-Enrollment	637.62	191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Conversion	672.95	1	0.523	0.470
	Open-Enrollment	682.51	253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Conversion	650.43	1	15.692	0.000*
	Open-Enrollment	725.86	264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Conversion	658.64	1	28.640	0.000*
	Open-Enrollment	737.71	399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Appendix B:
Longitudinal Analyses of Student Achievement
Using NCLB Comparisons**

Table 18
ITBS Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 1-3

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 1** (N=104)	Black	49.21	2	0.828	0.440	
	White	54.85	101			
	Black	49.21	13.12	2	0.828	0.440
	Others	62.33	101			
	White	54.85	7.48	2	0.828	0.440
	Others	62.33	101			
	Black	55.69	6.31	2	1.804	0.169
	White	62.00	129			
Grade 2 (N=132)	Black	55.69	4.02	2	1.804	0.169
	Others	51.67	129			
	White	62.00	10.33	2	1.804	0.169
	Others	51.67	129			
	Black	56.12	3.32	2	0.602	0.549
	White	59.44	169			
	Black	56.12	4.32	2	0.602	0.549
	Others	60.44	169			
Grade 3 (N=172)	White	59.44	1.00	2	0.602	0.549
	Others	60.44	169			

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Grade 1 scores only include the vocabulary subtest

Table 19
*ITBS Math (Problem Solving Subtest) Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 1-3***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 2 (N=131)	Black	40.40	16.68	2	2.869	0.060
	White	57.08	128			
	Black	40.40	12.6	2	2.869	0.060
	Others	53.00	128			
	White	57.08	4.08	2	2.869	0.060
	Others	53.00	128			
	Black	51.45	6.48	2	0.112	0.894
	White	57.93	168			

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Black	51.45	10.77	2	0.112	0.894
Others	62.22		168		
White	57.93	4.29	2	0.112	0.894
Others	62.22		168		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**There were less than 10 matched black or 'other' students in Grade 1, therefore too few to run a reliable analysis.

Table 20
Benchmark Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 4-8

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 4 (N=171)	Black	554.95	111.75	2	2.706	0.070
	White	666.70		168		
	Black	554.95	63.30	2	2.706	0.070
	Others	618.25		168		
	White	666.70	48.45	2	2.706	0.070
	Others	618.25		168		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Black	620.17	49.19	2	3.896	0.022*
	White	669.36		190		
	Black	620.17	62.97	2	3.896	0.022*
	Others	557.20		190		
	White	669.36	112.16	2	3.896	0.022*
	Others	557.20		190		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Black	651.19	61.08	2	2.747	0.066
	White	712.27		252		
	Black	651.19	153.31	2	2.747	0.066
	Others	804.50		252		
	White	712.27	92.23	2	2.747	0.066
	Others	804.50		252		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Black	656.85	112.65	2	1.955	0.144
	White	769.50		263		
	Black	656.85	139.65	2	1.955	0.144
	Others	796.50		263		
	White	769.50	27.00	2	1.955	0.144
	Others	796.50		263		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Black	706.61	92.40	2	0.123	0.884
	White	799.01		398		
	Black	706.61	98.01	2	0.123	0.884

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Others	804.62		398		
White	799.01	5.61	2	0.123	0.884
Others	804.62		398		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 21
Benchmark Math Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 4-8

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 4 (N=171)	Black	552.33	84.12	2	1.846	0.161
	White	636.45		168		
	Black	552.33	40.80	2	1.846	0.161
	Others	593.13		168		
	White	636.45	43.32	2	1.846	0.161
	Others	593.13		168		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Black	622.26	2.87	2	10.823	0.000*
	White	619.39		190		
	Black	622.26	26.46	2	10.823	0.000*
	Others	595.80		190		
	White	619.39	23.59	2	10.823	0.000*
	Others	595.80		190		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Black	649.79	56.49	2	1.972	0.141
	White	706.28		252		
	Black	649.79	127.84	2	1.972	0.141
	Others	777.63		252		
	White	706.28	71.35	2	1.972	0.141
	Others	777.63		252		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Black	661.56	65.03	2	4.334	0.014*
	White	726.59		263		
	Black	661.56	108.51	2	4.334	0.014*
	Others	770.07		263		
	White	726.59	43.48	2	4.334	0.014*
	Others	770.07		263		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Black	663.72	58.40	2	0.463	0.630
	White	722.12		398		
	Black	663.72	102.75	2	0.463	0.630
	Others	766.47		398		
	White	722.12	44.35	2	0.463	0.630
	Others	766.47		398		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 22***ITBS Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 1-3***

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1** (N=104)	Male	54.08	1	0.736	0.393
	Female	53.50	102		
Grade 2 (N=132)	Male	57.84	1	1.181	0.279
	Female	62.89	130		
Grade 3 (N=172)	Male	54.06	1	6.480	0.012*
	Female	62.12	170		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Grade 1 scores only include the vocabulary subtest

Table 23***ITBS Math (Problem Solving Subtest) Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 1-3*****

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N=131)	Male	56.54	1	2.927	0.090
	Female	51.35	129		
Grade 3 (N=171)	Male	53.58	1	10.946	0.001*
	Female	59.15	169		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Please note that all students in grade 1 with math scores were female.

Table 24***Benchmark Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA by Gender Comparisons, Grades 4-8***

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Male	605.42	1	0.852	0.357
	Female	670.86	169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Male	596.33	1	5.838	0.017*
	Female	682.59	191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Male	645.40	1	7.208	0.008*
	Female	720.99	253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Male	697.41	1	8.230	0.004*
	Female	746.89	264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Male	712.54	1	2.988	0.085
	Female	769.60	399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 25***Benchmark Math Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 4-8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Male	604.56	20.86	1	2.728	0.100
	Female	625.42		169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Male	607.01	22.69	1	2.985	0.086
	Female	629.70		191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Male	666.99	25.31	1	1.611	0.206
	Female	692.30		253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Male	707.34	8.98	1	0.110	0.740
	Female	698.96		264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Male	695.84	11.13	1	1.027	0.311
	Female	684.71		399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 26***ITBS Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Title-I Status, Grades 1-3***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1** (N=104)	Title I	55.49	3.01	1	2.401	0.124
	Non-Title I	52.48		102		
Grade 2 (N=132)	Title I	57.07	6.06	1	5.139	0.025*
	Non-Title I	63.13		130		
Grade 3 (N=172)	Title I	57.52	2.01	1	0.006	0.937
	Non-Title I	59.53		170		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Grade 1 scores only include the vocabulary subtest

Table 27***ITBS Math (Problem Solving Subtest) Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Title-I Status, Grades 1-3***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1 (N=5)	Title I	30.00	23.00	1	1.558	0.300
	Non-Title I	53.00		3		
Grade 2 (N=131)	Title I	47.29	11.35	1	4.694	0.032*
	Non-Title I	58.64		129		
Grade 3 (N=171)	Title I	55.81	1.66	1	3.198	0.076
	Non-Title I	57.47		169		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 28***Benchmark Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA by Title-I Status, Grades 4-8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Title I	522.53	1	12.303	0.001*
	Non-Title I	693.29	169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Title I	560.57	1	16.739	0.000*
	Non-Title I	681.98	191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Title I	629.41	1	1.132	0.288
	Non-Title I	697.39	253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Title I	626.77	1	28.738	0.000*
	Non-Title I	762.24	264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Title I	689.29	1	14.770	0.000*
	Non-Title I	819.15	399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 29***Benchmark Math Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Title-I Status, Grades 4-8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Title I	565.58	1	1.142	0.287
	Non-Title I	639.12	169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Title I	578.69	1	9.074	0.003*
	Non-Title I	637.61	191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Title I	667.24	1	0.078	0.780
	Non-Title I	683.07	253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Title I	643.97	1	18.021	0.000*
	Non-Title I	726.89	264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Title I	658.08	1	18.531	0.000*
	Non-Title I	735.17	399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 30***ITBS Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Special/General Education Status, Grades 1-3***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1** (N=104)	Special Ed	47.30	1	0.753	0.388
	General Ed	54.45	102		
Grade 2 (N=132)	Special Ed	48.90	1	0.299	0.586
	General Ed	61.48	130		

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score			Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N=172)	Special Ed	37.80	22.35	1	5.212	0.024*
	General Ed	60.15		170		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Grade 1 scores only include the vocabulary subtest

Table 31

ITBS Math (Problem Solving Subtest) Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Special/General Education Status, Grades 1-3

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score			Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1 (N=5)	Special Ed	29.67	31.33	1	1.889	0.263
	General Ed	61.00		3		
Grade 2 (N=131)	Special Ed	50.27	3.88	1	0.102	0.750
	General Ed	54.15		129		
Grade 3 (N=171)	Special Ed	41.40	16.47	1	1.116	0.292
	General Ed	57.87		169		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 32

Benchmark Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA by Special/General Education Status, Grades 4-8

Test Administration and Mean Scale Score			Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Special Ed	373.50	288.01	1	4.045	0.046*
	General Ed	661.51		169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Special Ed	462.85	203.85	1	4.548	0.034*
	General Ed	666.70		191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Special Ed	493.76	204.17	1	3.371	0.068
	General Ed	697.93		253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Special Ed	556.29	176.12	1	0.914	0.340
	General Ed	732.41		264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Special Ed	461.45	314.30	1	38.034	0.000*
	General Ed	775.75		399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 33***Benchmark Math Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Special/General Education Status, Grades 4-8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Special Ed	539.56	81.96	1	1.990	0.012*
	General Ed	621.52		169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Special Ed	553.75	73.86	1	4.519	0.035*
	General Ed	627.61		191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Special Ed	560.06	128.52	1	12.411	0.001*
	General Ed	688.58		253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Special Ed	625.00	82.29	1	0.222	0.638
	General Ed	707.29		264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Special Ed	573.07	130.48	1	16.313	0.000*
	General Ed	703.55		399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 34***ITBS Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 1-3***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1** (N=104)	Free/Reduced Lunch	53.10	1.57	1	0.598	0.441
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	54.67		102		
Grade 2 (N=132)	Free/Reduced Lunch	58.29	4.59	1	1.017	0.315
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	62.88		130		
Grade 3 (N=172)	Free/Reduced Lunch	57.34	2.65	1	0.415	0.521
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	59.99		170		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Grade 1 scores only include the vocabulary subtest

Table 35***ITBS Math (Problem Solving Subtest) Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 1-3***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 2 (N=131)	Free/Reduced Lunch	47.99	11.86	1	3.251	0.074
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	59.85		129		
Grade 3 (N=171)	Free/Reduced Lunch	56.09	1.44	1	5.961	0.016*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	57.53		169		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

** All grade 1 students with math scores received free/reduced lunch.

Table 36***Benchmark Reading Mixed Model ANCOVA by Poverty Status, Grades 4-8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Free/Reduced Lunch	548.18	1	4.268	0.040*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	688.59	169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Free/Reduced Lunch	595.06	1	0.442	0.507
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	726.00	191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Free/Reduced Lunch	644.14	1	0.063	0.803
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	727.88	253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Free/Reduced Lunch	671.63	1	0.652	0.420
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	777.49	264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Free/Reduced Lunch	703.79	1	2.475	0.116
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	819.43	399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 37***Benchmark Math Mixed Model ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 4-8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Mean Difference	Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=171)	Free/Reduced Lunch	573.62	1	1.054	0.306
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	638.97	169		
Grade 5 (N=193)	Free/Reduced Lunch	603.87	1	3.854	0.051
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	645.57	191		
Grade 6 (N=255)	Free/Reduced Lunch	659.65	1	5.258	0.023*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	702.09	253		
Grade 7 (N=266)	Free/Reduced Lunch	674.96	1	0.086	0.770
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	732.50	264		
Grade 8 (N=401)	Free/Reduced Lunch	665.77	1	2.723	0.100
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	737.15	399		

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

**Appendix C:
Survey Findings**

Parent Survey Findings

Table 38
Respondent Education Level

Type of School	Total N	(%)
High school diploma	129	(32.4)
Associate's or 2 year degree	68	(17.1)
Bachelor's or 4 year degree	102	(25.6)
Graduate degree	53	(13.3)
Other	46	(11.6)
Total	398	(100.0)

Table 39
Previous School Attended by Child

Previous Type of School	Type of School	Total N	Avg. (%)
Regular/traditional public school	Open-Enrollment	158	(77.1)
	Conversion	141	(85.5)
Home school	Open-Enrollment	15	(7.3)
	Conversion	7	(4.2)
Private school	Open-Enrollment	27	(13.2)
	Conversion	3	(1.8)
Another charter school	Open-Enrollment	5	(2.4)
	Conversion	14	(8.5)

Table 40
Performance of Child at Previous School

Total N	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor		Failing	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
382	161	(42.1)	130	(34.0)	62	(16.2)	24	(6.3)	5	(1.3)

Table 41
Performance of Child at Current School

Total N	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor		Failing	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
408	189	(46.3)	158	(38.7)	52	(12.7)	8	(2.0)	1	(.2)

Table 42
Quality Rating of Child's Previous School

Total N	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
368	60	(16.3)	94	(25.5)	129	(35.1)	63	(17.1)	22	(6.0)

Table 43
Quality Rating of Child's Current School

Total N	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
404	135	(33.4)	169	(41.8)	72	(17.8)	18	(4.5)	10	(2.5)

Table 44
Main Reasons Why Parents Choose Charter Schools

Reason	Parent Survey (N = 411)	Administrator Survey (N = 15)
Interest in the charter school's education mission or philosophy	209 (50.9%)	10 (66.7%)
Child was doing poorly in previous school	40 (9.8%)	9 (60.0%)
Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety	155 (37.7%)	10 (66.7%)
Interest in the charter school's instructional or academic program	238 (57.9%)	10 (66.7%)
More convenient location than previous school	49 (11.9%)	1 (6.7%)
Child has special needs that previous school was not addressing	32 (7.8%)	5 (33.3%)
Better teachers at this charter school	105 (25.5%)	7 (46.7%)
My child wanted to come to this charter school	94 (22.9%)	6 (40.0%)
This charter school offers extended day hours/before- and after-school program	41 (10.0%)	2 (13.3%)
Small size of this charter school or small classes	180 (43.8%)	9 (60.0%)
Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school	95 (23.1%)	7 (46.7%)
It is the only school available for my child to attend/not applicable	45 (10.9%)	1 (6.7%)
Other primary reasons	66 (16.1%)	4 (26.7%)

*Percentages are calculated from total number of respondents that answered the question.

Table 45
Quality of Current School Compared to Previous School

Exemption	Total	Better		About the Same		Worse	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
The quality of school's reading instruction	363	199	(54.8)	136	(37.5)	28	(7.7)
The quality of school's math instruction	362	211	(58.3)	116	(32.0)	35	(9.7)
The quality of school's writing instruction	361	196	(54.3)	146	(40.4)	19	(5.3)
School safety	365	183	(50.1)	156	(42.8)	26	(7.1)
School facilities	361	138	(38.2)	151	(41.8)	72	(19.9)
Parent involvement or participation	360	169	(46.9)	167	(46.4)	24	(6.7)
Extra help or special services for students when needed	357	182	(51.0)	143	(40.1)	32	(9.0)

Table 46
Satisfaction with Specific Components of Child's Charter School

Component	Total	Very/Somewhat Satisfied		Not Too Satisfied/Quite Dissatisfied		Not Sure or N/A	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%
Curriculum	410	373	(91.0)	25	(6.1)	12	(2.9)
Performance of the teachers	410	360	(87.8)	32	(7.8)	18	(4.4)
Class size	412	366	(88.8)	29	(7.0)	17	(4.1)
Individualized attention your child gets	411	346	(84.2)	50	(12.2)	15	(3.6)
Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	412	352	(85.4)	37	(9.0)	23	(5.6)
How much the school expects from parents	413	333	(80.6)	36	(8.7)	44	(10.7)
Communication with your child's teacher	412	346	(84.0)	49	(11.9)	17	(4.1)
Quality of the bldg in which the school is located	409	339	(82.9)	56	(13.7)	14	(3.4)
Quality of the school facilities such as the gym, library and labs	413	274	(66.3)	76	(18.4)	63	(15.3)
Use of tech within the instructional program	411	331	(80.5)	37	(9.0)	43	(10.5)
School discipline policies and practices	412	350	(85.0)	52	(12.6)	10	(2.4)
Quality of student support services such as guidance counseling and tutoring	413	306	(74.1)	48	(11.6)	59	(14.3)
Extra-curricular activities	408	294	(72.1)	61	(15.0)	53	(13.0)
School size	410	375	(91.5)	20	(4.9)	15	(3.7)
School climate	407	353	(86.7)	40	(9.8)	14	(3.4)

Student Survey

Table 47
Quality Rating of Previous School

Total N	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
2567	422	(16.4)	554	(21.6)	768	(29.9)	537	(20.9)	286	(11.1)

Table 48
Quality Rating of Current School

Total N	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
2654	780	(29.4)	801	(30.2)	672	(25.3)	269	(10.1)	132	(5.0)

Table 49
Academic Success at Previous School

Total N	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
2556	802	(31.4)	940	(36.8)	574	(22.5)	164	(6.4)	76	(3.0)

Table 50
Academic Success at Current School

Total N	Excellent		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
2656	687	(25.9)	1256	(47.3)	578	(21.8)	96	(3.6)	39	(1.5)

Table 51
Students' Teacher Rating

Total N	Better than my previous school		About the same as my previous school		Worse than my previous school		I have not been to any other school	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
2640	1165	(44.1)	297	(11.3)	941	(35.6)	237	(9.0)

Table 52
Interest in School Work

Total N	More than at my previous school N (%)	About the same as my previous school N (%)	Less than at my previous school N (%)
2558	1157 (45.2)	358 (14.0)	1043 (40.8)

Table 53
Number of Students in Classroom

Total N	Too many students in my class N (%)	It is about right N (%)
2659	332 (12.5)	2327 (87.5)

Table 54
Rating of Building Where School is Located

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Very Good N (%)	Good N (%)	Fair N (%)	Poor N (%)
2658	470 (17.7)	634 (23.9)	860 (32.4)	456 (17.2)	238 (9.0)

Administrator Survey

Table 55
Years at Current School

Years	Total N	(%)
First yr	1	(6.3)
1 yr	1	(6.3)
2 yrs	3	(18.8)
3 yrs	3	(18.8)
4 yrs	2	(12.5)
5+ yrs	6	(37.5)
Total	16	(100.0)

Table 56
Respondents' Level of Education

Education Level	N	%*
Bachelor's or 4-year degree	1	(6.3)
Masters degree	3	(18.8)
Doctoral or advanced degree	8	(50.0)
Other	4	(25.0)
Total	16	(100.0)

Table 57
Charter School Exceptions/Waivers

Exception/Waiver	Number of Schools	Percent ^a
Teacher certification requirements	10	71.4
Collective bargaining provisions	3	21.4
Establishing curriculum	8	57.1
Teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices	8	57.1
Student discipline policies	2	14.3
Resource allocations	1	7.1
School calendar	3	21.4
School year length	3	21.4
School day length	4	28.6

^aTotal percentage for each group does not equal 100% because respondents were able to choose multiple responses.

Table 58
Effectiveness of School in Carrying Out Roles and Responsibilities

Type of School	Total	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
	N	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Total	16	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	9 (56.3)	5 (31.3)

Table 59
Practices of Charter School Board in 2006-2007, Open-Enrollment Schools Only

Practices	Total	Yes	No	Not Sure
	N	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
Written description of board members roles and responsibilities	8	4 (50.0)	4 (50.0)	0 (.0)
Identification of a board director	8	4 (50.0)	4 (50.0)	0 (.0)
Clear procedures for the selection of board members	8	6 (75.0)	2 (25.0)	0 (.0)
Formal orientation and training sessions for board members	8	5 (62.5)	3 (37.5)	0 (.0)
Decision making flow charts	8	3 (33.3)	5 (62.5)	0 (.0)
Formal processes for the development of school policy	8	5 (62.5)	3 (37.5)	0 (.0)
Functioning exec committee	8	1 (12.5)	6 (75.0)	1 (12.5)
Open lines of communication	8	8 (100.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)
Implementation of open board meetings	8	8 (100.0)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)
Sharing of agendas and other important info prior to board meetings	8	8 (88.9)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)

Practices	Total N	Yes		No		Not Sure	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Commitment to strategic planning	8	8	(100.0)	0	(.0)	0	(.0)
Clear, up to date by laws	8	5	(62.5)	3	(37.5)	0	(.0)
Formal plan for family and community involvement	8	6	(75.0)	2	(25.0)	0	(.0)
Use of advisory committees	8	6	(75.0)	2	(25.0)	0	(.0)
Responsibility of fund raising	8	5	(62.5)	3	(37.5)	0	(.0)
Use of available funds for continued development	8	6	(75.0)	2	(25.0)	0	(.0)

Table 60
Ethnicity of Charter School Staff

Racial/Ethnic Background of Staff	Type of School	%
White	Open-Enrollment	79.4
	Conversion	82.3
African-American	Open-Enrollment	10.5
	Conversion	16.4
Hispanic/Latino	Open-Enrollment	0.8
	Conversion	1.3

Table 61
Percentage of Staff That Had Full State Certification

Type of School	N of Respondents	%
Open-Enrollment	8	10.1
Conversion	5	45.2

Table 62
What Charter Status Allowed Schools to do That Could Not Be Done In Traditional Structure

Area	Number of Schools	Percent ^a
Higher teacher salaries	2	14.3
Private fundraising/grants development	3	21.4
Lack of tenure of teachers	4	28.6
Performance-based bonuses for teachers	3	21.4
Ongoing, targeted professional development	6	42.9
Rewards for teachers for exemplary performance	2	14.3
Dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory performance	4	28.6

Area	Number of Schools	Percent ^a
Contract for professional development services with non-district providers	2	14.3
Other charter status	1	7.1

*Total % does not equal 100% as respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses

Table 63
Number of Professional Development Days Offered

Type of School	Total N	Avg. (%)
Open-Enrollment	8	9.86
Conversion	8	9.44

Table 64
Administrator Rating of Parental/Community Involvement

Type of Involvement	Poor/Unsatisfactory		Avg.		Good		Excellent	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Level of parental involvement at this school concerning students' academic achievement, attendance, and behavior (N=16)	1	(6.3)	6	(37.5)	5	(31.3)	4	(25.0)
Level of parental involvement concerning participation in school wide events or activities (N=16)	3	(18.8)	3	(18.8)	7	(43.8)	3	(18.8)
Level of community involvement at this school (N=16)	4	(25.0)	3	(18.8)	6	(37.5)	3	(18.8)

Table 65
Main Reasons Why Parents Choose Charter Schools

Reason	Parent Survey (N = 411)	Administrator Survey (N = 15)
Interest in the charter school's education mission or philosophy	209 (50.9%)	10 (66.7%)
Child was doing poorly in previous school	40 (9.8%)	9 (60.0%)
Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety	155 (37.7%)	10 (66.7%)
Interest in the charter school's instructional or academic program	238 (57.9%)	10 (66.7%)
More convenient location than previous school	49 (11.9%)	1 (6.7%)
Child has special needs that previous school was not addressing	32 (7.8%)	5 (33.3%)

Reason	Parent Survey (N = 411)	Administrator Survey (N = 15)
Better teachers at this charter school	105 (25.5%)	7 (46.7%)
My child wanted to come to this charter school	94 (22.9%)	6 (40.0%)
This charter school offers extended day hours/before- and after-school program	41 (10.0%)	2 (13.3%)
Small size of this charter school or small classes	180 (43.8%)	9 (60.0%)
Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school	95 (23.1%)	7 (46.7%)
It is the only school available for my child to attend/not applicable	45 (10.9%)	1 (6.7%)
Other primary reasons	66 (16.1%)	4 (26.7%)

*This calculation removed the 45 conversion parents who reported the school as the only available option for their child.

Table 66
Strategies at School that Involved Parents or Community Members, N=16

Strategies	N	%*
Conducting parent workshops	5	(31.3)
Inviting parents to attend staff trainings	6	(37.5)
Using parents and community volunteers to provide special instruction	9	(56.3)
Using community sites for service learning or work based learning opportunities	6	(37.5)
Using the school as a community center	5	(31.3)
Implementing parent involvement contracts	8	(50.0)
Implementing parent teacher conferences	15	(93.8)
Involving parents in discipline related discussions	11	(68.8)
Involving parents in monitoring students' academic progress	13	(81.3)
Scheduling school events to accommodate parents' schedules	13	(81.3)
Creating learning partnerships with CBO	12	(75.0)
Using community resources to enhance students' learning	8	(50.0)
Establish parent and community advisory committees	9	(56.3)
Hiring a parent involvement coordinator and/or community liaison	6	(37.5)
Other strategies	8	(50.0)

*Total % does not equal 100% as respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses

Table 67
Requirements of Parents, N=16

Requirement	N	%*
Sign a contract with the school	7	(43.8)
Participate in a min number of hrs at the school	2	(12.5)
Participate in a min number of activities	1	(6.3)
Participate on committees or the governance board	2	(12.5)

Requirement	N	%*
Attend parent meetings	11	(68.8)
Other requirements	2	(12.5)

*Total % does not equal 100% as respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses

Table 68
Primary Methods for Delivering Instruction, N=16

Methods	N	%*
Interdisciplinary instruction	11	(68.8)
Team teaching	7	(43.8)
Project based or hands on learning	13	(81.3)
Regular integration of tech	12	(75.0)
Character Ed	12	(75.0)
Individualized/tailored instruction	8	(50.0)
Direct instruction	14	(87.5)
Foreign language immersion	0	(0.0)
Theme based curriculum	6	(37.5)
Multi grade classrooms	10	(62.5)
School to work concepts and strategies	3	(18.8)
Regular integration of fine arts	3	(18.8)
Alternative or authentic assess	4	(25.0)
Work based or field based learning	2	(12.5)
Cooperative learning	14	(87.5)
Reduced or small class size	10	(62.5)
Year round or extended schooling	4	(25.0)
Extended school day	8	(50.0)
Home based learning with parent as primary instructor	0	(0.0)
Distance learning and/or instruction via Internet	3	(18.8)
Independent study	5	(31.3)
None	0	(0.0)
Other methods	0	(0.0)

*Total % does not equal 100% as respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses

Table 69
Instructional Hours Offered By School Type

Total N	Traditional school day and year		Extended school year, but not extended day		Extended school day, but not extended school year		Extended school day and year	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
16	7	(43.8)	3	(18.6)	2	(12.5)	4	(25.0)

Table 70***Accommodations Available for Students with Special Needs***

Total N	Self contained special education		Pull-out services		Inclusive classrooms		None		Other	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
16	5	(31.3)	9	(56.3)	11	(68.6)	0	(.0)	1	(6.3)

*Total % does not equal 100% as respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses

Table 71***Services Available for ELL Students***

Total N	Self contained bilingual education		ESL instruction		None		Other	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
15	0	(.0)	6	(40.0)	6	(40.0)	3	(20.0)

Table 72***Assessment Strategies Used by Type of School***

Strategies	N	(%)*
Teacher assigned grades	15	(93.8)
Student portfolios	11	(68.8)
Standardized achievement tests	16	(100.0)
State benchmark exams	15	(93.8)
State end of course exams	11	(68.8)
Student demos or exhibitions	9	(56.3)
Student interviews or surveys	6	(37.5)
Behavioral indicators	12	(75.0)
Other performance based tests	4	(25.0)
Other assessment	0	(0.0)

*Total % does not equal 100% as respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses

Table 73***Reported Issues/Challenges in Implementing the Charter School***

Area	Total		Yes		No		Not sure	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Charter school organization	16		5	(31.3)	11	(68.8)	0	(.0)
Charter school board of operations	16		5	(31.3)	11	(68.8)	0	(.0)
General school admin	16		4	(25.0)	12	(75.0)	0	(.0)
Fiscal and business mgmt	16		7	(43.8)	9	(56.3)	0	(.0)
Personnel	16		7	(43.8)	9	(56.3)	0	(.0)
Managing public perceptions and public relations	16		10	(62.5)	5	(31.3)	1	(6.3)
Facility management	16		7	(43.8)	9	(56.3)	0	(.0)
Selecting and implementing curricula	16		6	(37.5)	10	(62.5)	0	(.0)
Increasing parent and community	16		7	(43.8)	9	(56.3)	0	(.0)

Area	Total		Yes		No		Not sure	
	N		N	%	N	%	N	%
involvement								
Designing/ delivering PD	16		4	(25.0)	12	(75.0)	0	(.0)
Facility costs	16		9	(56.3)	7	(43.8)	0	(.0)
Other challenges	16		4	(25.0)	7	(43.8)	5	(31.3)

**Appendix D:
Survey Instruments (Student, Parent, and Administrator)**

Student Survey

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – 2006-2007 CHARTER SCHOOL EVALUATION

Directions: Using a pencil or black pen, please answer the following questions by completely filling in the circle next to your choice. After finishing, seal your survey in the envelope provided.

1. What grade are you in? _____ 2. School name: _____

3. Including this year, how many years have you gone to this school?
 1 Year 2 Years 3 Years 4 or More Years

4. Before coming to this school, where did you go to school?
 Attended a regular public school Attended a different charter school
 Attended a private school Was home schooled

5. How are the teachers in this school?
 Better than my previous school About the same as my previous school
 Worse than my previous school I have not been to any other school

6. How interested are you in your school work?
 More than at my previous school About the same as my previous school
 Less than at my previous school

7. How did you do at your previous school?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing

8. How are you doing at this school?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing

9. How would you rate your previous school?
 Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

10. How would you rate this school?
 Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

11. How do you feel about the number of students in your classes?
 Too many students are in my classes It is about right

12. How would you rate the building where this school is located?
 Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

13. Will you return to this school next year?

- Yes, I'll definitely be back
- Yes, I'll probably be back
- Don't know or not sure

- No, definitely not
- No, probably not
- Can't, graduating to another school level

Parent Survey

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION - CHARTER SCHOOL EVALUATION

Directions: The Arkansas Department of Education is asking that you complete this survey as part of a study of the public charter schools. 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. 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 www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=uW5MeH_2b7LlqXkAnyRpoRSw_3d_3d.

Background Information

1. Name of your child's school? _____
2. For how many years have you had a child enrolled in this charter public school? _____ Years
3. Where did your child attend school before enrolling in this charter school?
 Regular/traditional public school Home school
 Private school Another charter school
4. How many of your children were enrolled in this charter school last year (2006-2007)? _____
5. 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:
6. 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
 Other, please describe:
7. How did your child do academically at his or her previous school?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing
8. How is your child doing academically at this charter school?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing

Charter School Satisfaction

9. How satisfied are you with specific features of this charter school?

a. Curriculum (i.e., what the school teaches)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

b. Performance of the teachers (i.e., how well the school teaches)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

c. Class size

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

d. The individualized attention your child gets

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

e. Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

f. How much the school expects from parents

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

g. Communication with your child's teacher

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

h. Quality of the building in which the school is located

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

i. Quality of the school facilities such as the gymnasium, school library, and science labs

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

j. Use of technology within the instructional program

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

k. School discipline policies and practices

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain/not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not too satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Quite dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not apply |

l. Quality of student support services such as guidance counseling and tutoring

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Uncertain/not sure
- Not too satisfied
- Quite dissatisfied
- Does not apply

m. Extracurricular activities (i.e., sports programs, after school clubs or activities)

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Uncertain/not sure
- Not too satisfied
- Quite dissatisfied
- Does not apply

n. School size

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Uncertain/not sure
- Not too satisfied
- Quite dissatisfied
- Does not apply

o. School climate (i.e., the feel or tone of every day life at the school)

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Uncertain/not sure
- Not too satisfied
- Quite dissatisfied
- Does not apply

10. How would you compare this charter school with your child’s prior school in terms of:

a. The quality of school’s reading instruction

- Better
- About the same
- Worse

b. The quality of school’s math instruction

- Better
- About the same
- Worse

c. The quality of school’s writing instruction

- Better
- About the same
- Worse

d. School safety

- Better
- About the same
- Worse

e. School facilities

- Better
- About the same
- Worse

f. Parent involvement or participation

- Better
- About the same
- Worse

g. Extra help or special services for students when needed

- Better
- About the same
- Worse

11. How would you rate the overall quality of your child’s previous school?

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

12. How would you rate the overall quality of this charter school?

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

13. What have been the most positive aspects of your experiences with this charter school?

14. What issues most concern you about this charter school?

Thank you for completing this survey.

1. Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

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 2006-2007 school year. 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. 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.

I. Background Information

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

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

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

*** 3. Number of years at current position in this charter school:**

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> This is my first year | <input type="radio"/> 3 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 year | <input type="radio"/> 4 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 years | <input type="radio"/> 5+ years |

*** 4. Number of overall years in this school:**

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> This is my first year | <input type="radio"/> 3 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 year | <input type="radio"/> 4 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 2 years | <input type="radio"/> 5+ years |

*** 5. Type of charter school:**

- District conversion
 New start/open-enrollment
 Virtual

*** 6. What is your highest educational degree?**

- Bachelor's or 4-year degree
 Masters degree
 Doctoral or advanced degree
 Other (please specify)

2.

II. Operations

*** 7. Please select the type of entity that best describes the group that manages your school.**

- Educational Management Organization (for-profit service provider)
- Non-profit organization
- School district superintendent
- Chief Operating Officer of the charter
- Other (please specify):

*** 8. In what areas were there exemptions/waivers from the state and district education laws, regulations, and policies that were specified in the charter AND put into practice during the 2006-2007 school year?**

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

*** 9. Please rate the following question:**

From your perspective, please rate the effectiveness of your school's management group in carrying out their roles and responsibilities in 2006-2007?

Poor Fair Good Very Good

Please explain your response

*** 10. What arrangements were made for your schools facilities?**

- Used district facility at no cost
- Used district facility at a reduced cost
- Rented/leased facilities from the district
- Rented/leased facilities that were independent of the district
- Purchased facilities
- Other (please specify)

11. Open Enrollment Schools only: Which of the following were regular practices of the charter school board during the 2006-2007 school year for this school?

	Yes	No	Don't know/ not sure
<u>Written descriptions of board members roles and responsibilities</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Identification of a board director</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Clear procedures for the selection of board members</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Formal orientation and training sessions for Board members</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Decision-making flow charts</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Formal processes for the development of school policy</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Functioning executive committee</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Open lines of communication</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Implementation of open Board meetings</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Sharing of agendas and other important information prior to Board meetings</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Commitment to strategic planning</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Clear, up-to-date by-laws</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Formal plan for family and community involvement</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Use of advisory committees</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Responsibility of fund-raising</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Use of available funds for continued board development</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

III. Teachers

*** 12. Please indicate the number of paid instructional staff that your school employed during 2006-2007, including both part-time and full-time staff?**

Full-time

Part-time

13. Please give us an estimate of the percentage (%) of staff that fall into each racial/ethnic background category among your school's 2006-2007 paid instructional staff, including both full-time and part-time staff:

White

African American

Hispanic/Latino

Asian/Pacific Islander

Other

*** 14. Among the full-time instructional staff, how many had full state certification for the subjects/areas they taught in your school during the 2006-2007 school year?**

*** 15. What has the charter status allowed you to do with respect to your instructional staff that you could not have done under the traditional school/district management structure?(check all that apply)**

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

*** 16. How many teacher professional development days did your charter school offer during the 2006-2007 year?**

During the school year:

During the summer following:

IV. Students/Parents

*** 17. In your opinion, what are the primary reasons or factors why parents choose to enroll their children at your school (choose all that apply)?**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interest in the charter school's educational mission or philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Better teachers at this charter school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child was doing poorly in his or her previous school | <input type="checkbox"/> My child wanted to come to this charter school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety | <input type="checkbox"/> This charter school offers extended day hours/before and after school programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interest in the charter school's instructional or academic program | <input type="checkbox"/> Small size of this charter school or small classes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More convenient location than previous school | <input type="checkbox"/> Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child has special needs that the previous school was not addressing/meeting | <input type="checkbox"/> It is the only school available for my child to attend (i.e., it is in your zone or no other elementary/middle/or HS in town) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |
| <input type="text"/> | |

*** 18. Which of the following factors can prevent new students from being admitted to your school?**

- Space limitation or enrollment cap
- Residency outside of school or district boundaries
- Student ethnicity – charter school considers the racial/ethnic background of students in order to comply with desegregation orders
- Students' special needs because this school does not provide special education services
- Students' language abilities because this school does not provide English as a second language or bilingual instruction
- Evidence that parent/family can not fulfill involvement requirements
- Student and/or parent is not committed to school's philosophy
- Other (please specify)
-

*** 19. Please rate the following questions:**

	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
How would you rate the level of parental involvement at this school concerning students' academic achievement, attendance, and/or behavior?	<input type="radio"/>				
How would you rate this school's level of parental involvement concerning participation in school-wide events or activities (e.g., Parents Club)?	<input type="radio"/>				
How would you rate the level of community involvement at this school?	<input type="radio"/>				

*** 20. Which of the following strategies used at this school involved parents or other members of the community during the 2006-2007 school year? (Check ALL that apply)**

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

*** 21. In 2006-2007, did your school require parents (or other adult family members of your students) to do any of the following? (check all that apply)**

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

*** 22. For parents who withdrew their child from your school after the 2006-2007 school year, what would you say were the main reasons why, besides moving to another District (choose all that apply)?**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Academic performance of school</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>School size too large</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>School structure</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Class schedule</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unhappy with teachers or instruction</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Length of school year</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Unhappy with school leadership</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Their child performed poorly at this school so they are trying a traditional school instead</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Instructional choices (i.e., number of programs, extracurricular activities or electives available for students)</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Instruction was too rigorous for their child</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Class-size</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>School safety</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>School size too small</u> | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Other (please specify)</u>
<input type="text"/> | |

V. Educational Program

*** 23. Last year (2006-2007), what were the primary methods for delivering instruction to students at your charter school? (Check ALL that apply)**

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

*** 24. Does the design for this charter school include instructional hours that go beyond the typical school year (e.g., 180 days) or the typical school day (e.g., 6.5 hours)?**

- Traditional school day and year
 Extended school year, but not extended school day
 Extended school day, but not extended school year
 Extended school day and year

*** 25. Does this school serve students with disabilities?**

- Yes
 No

26. If you answered "YES" to the previous question:

Approximately how many of your students received special education services during 2006-2007?

What is the student-teacher ratio for special education?

27. If you answered "YES" to Q.25, what accommodations are available for students with special needs?

- Self-contained special education classes
 Pull-out services
 Inclusive classrooms
 None
 Other (please specify)

*** 28. How many of your students were identified as having limited English proficiency during the 2006-2007 year?**

*** 29. What services are available for students with limited English proficiency?**

- Self-contained bilingual education
- ESL instruction
- None
- Other (please specify)

*** 30. Which of the following student assessment strategies or methods were used at this school in 2006-2007?**

- Teacher assigned grades
- Student portfolios
- Standardized achievement tests
- State benchmark exams
- State end-of-course exams
- Other (please specify)

- Student demonstrations or exhibitions
- Student interviews or surveys
- Behavioral indicators, such as attendance and suspension
- Other performance-based tests

6.

VI. Wrap Up

*** 31. 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 06-07.**

	Yes	No	Not sure
<u>charter school organization</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>charter school board operations</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>general school administration</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>fiscal and business management</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>personnel (e.g., retaining teachers)</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>managing public perceptions & public relations</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>facility management</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>selecting and implementing curricula</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>increasing parent & community involvement</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>designing/delivering professional development</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Facility costs</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Other</u>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<u>Other (please specify)</u> <input type="text"/>			

32. Are there any additional issues or concerns you would like to add about the Chart School Program that you think might help inform the evaluation?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!