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SUBMITTED TO

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

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Metis Associates

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Arkansas Charter Schools: Evaluation of Service Impact and Student Achievement

2007–2008 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 and can only admit students within their own school districts. Open enrollment schools are completely new schools that have been chartered by the state and 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 2007–2008 school year, there were 19 public charter schools in operation in Arkansas (ten open enrollment and nine conversion schools) serving close to 5,500 students. Oversight of the public charter schools is provided by the ADE Charter School Office. Findings from the 2006–2007 technical report revealed parent and student satisfaction with the quality of teaching, school and class sizes, curricula, and opportunities for parental involvement. Achievement data analyses also indicated that characteristics such as higher attendance rates, type of school implementation (open enrollment versus conversion), larger school size, and fewer suspensions were associated with improved student achievement.

As a continuation to findings reported in the 2006-2007 annual evaluation report, the ADE was interested in again 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.

To continue to study the Arkansas Charter Schools Program, in September 2008 ADE asked Metis Associates to design and carry out an evaluation that would begin to address key areas of research identified by ADE to achieve the following:

- 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 19 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 19 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 2006–2007 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 (Appendices 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 and demographic information; and
- Review of extant data.

Surveys of School Administrators, Parents, and Students

Beginning in April 2009, 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 19 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, 413 parent surveys were returned, which represented all 19 charter schools. The number of parent surveys returned from each school ranged from 3 to 89, with a median of 13.

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 set of class surveys was inserted into a peel-and-seal envelope to ensure anonymity. Schools were instructed to have teachers read the directions to students in their classrooms, have students insert their surveys into the large sealable envelope, and designate an individual to mail the completed surveys back to Metis using a pre-paid UPS label. In total, 2,876 student surveys were returned, accounting for 18 of 19 schools. The number of student surveys returned from each school ranged from 13 to 798, with a median of 72.

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	19	23 ^a	121.1%
Students	5,431	2,876	53.0%
Parents	5,431	413	7.6%

^a Some schools also had their Assistant Principals or Superintendent 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 for the Stanford Achievement Test 10 (SAT) in reading (for Grades 1–3) and math (for Grade 3 only); 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 from a total of 13 schools included:

- Fall 2007 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, and professional training (obtained from seven 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 19 public charter schools in the 2007–2008 evaluation and includes information about the school type, school management, grades served, and year opened.

Table 2
Overview of the Arkansas Public Charter Schools (2007–2008 Evaluation)

Charter School	School Type	School Management	Grades Served	Year Opened
Academic Center of Excellence	Conversion	School district	4–9	2002–2003
Badger Academy	Conversion	School district	7–12	2007-2008
Blytheville Charter School	Conversion	School district	7–12	2001–2002
Cabot Academic Center for 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
Ridgeroad Middle School	Conversion	School district	3–8	2003–2004
Vilonia Academy of Technology ^a	Conversion	School district	2–4	2004–2005
Vilonia Academy of Service & Technology	Conversion	School district	5-6	2007-2008
Academics Plus	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	3–8	2001–2002
Arkansas Virtual Academy	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	K–8	2004-2005
Benton County School of the Arts	Open enrollment	School district	K–8	2001–2002
Dreamland Academy of Performing & Communication Arts	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	K-5	2007-2008
Haas Hall Academy	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	10–12	2004–2005
HOPE Academy	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	5–8	2007-2008
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
Northwest Arkansas Academy of Fine Arts	Open enrollment	Nonprofit organization	9–12	2007-2008

^a Vilonia Academy of Technology serves Grades K–4, but only Grades 2–4 were part of the charter school in 2007–2008

Among the 19 charter schools participating in the evaluation, the grade configurations varied considerably, including elementary school grades only (two schools), elementary through middle school grades (six schools), middle school to high school grades (five schools), middle school grades only (two schools), and high school grades only (four schools). Table 2 also shows that

nine of these schools were conversion schools and ten were open enrollment schools. Three schools (Blytheville, Academics Plus, and Benton) were the first to open during the 2001–2002 school year, and five schools (Badger, Vilonia Service and Technology, Dreamland, HOPE, and Northwest) were the latest to open in the 2007–2008 year.

During the 2007–2008 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 19 charter schools during the evaluation and were analyzed to determine what waivers were utilized by the charter schools. 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 Respondents	Percent ^a
Teacher certification requirements	19	90.5
Collective bargaining provisions	2	9.5
Establishing curriculum	7	33.3
Teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices	12	57.1
Student discipline policies	2	9.5
Resource allocations	2	9.5
Purchasing procedures	4	19.0
School calendar	7	33.3
School year length	5	23.8
School day length	6	28.6

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

As shown in Table 3, teacher certification requirements were the most common exceptions/waivers that were put into place by the charter schools in 2007–2008 (similarly to 2006–2007), as noted by 91% of respondents. In addition, 57% also received exceptions/waivers for teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices.

Open enrollment schools were also asked to indicate the most common practices carried out by their charter school board during the 2007–2008 year. Of the 10 participating open enrollment schools, it was learned that their charter school boards most frequently implemented the following practices:

- Identification of a board director,
- Open lines of communication,
- Open board meetings,

- Written descriptions of board members’ roles and responsibilities,
- Clear procedures for selecting board members,
- Formal processes for developing school policy, and
- Clear, up-to-date by-laws.

A review of program documentation collected from open enrollment schools did not demonstrate transparency in boards’ activities, roles and responsibilities, or communication with the school community. However, in a stark improvement over 2006–2007, more than 90% of respondents indicated that having formal processes for developing school policy and having clear, up-to-date by-laws were regular board practices in 2007–2008, compared to the 50% who reported so the previous year.

Staff-related practices.

During the 2007–2008 year, the conversion charter schools employed an average of 30 full-time instructional staff, which was notably higher than the open enrollment schools, which employed an average of 19 full-time instructional staff (in 2006–2007, they were 24 and 18 full-time staff, respectively). It should be noted that, on average, student membership in the conversion charter schools is larger than that of the open enrollment schools. Across both types of schools, the racial/ethnic background of the staff was described as approximately 82% white, 16% African American, and 2% Hispanic or Latino (very similar to 2006–2007).

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 (nine schools) was the practice used most frequently among all schools, followed by the practice of dismissing teachers for poor performance (eight schools), performance-based bonuses (six schools), and rewards for teachers with exemplary performance (six 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, six open enrollment charter schools offered performance-based bonuses for teachers, but this was not offered by any of the conversion schools. Another eight open-enrollment schools practiced the dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory performance, compared to only one conversion school.

Table 4
Charter School Alternative Staff Practices

Area	Number of Schools	Percent ^a
Higher teacher salaries	2	13.3
Private fundraising/grants development	2	13.3
Lack of tenure of teachers	4	26.7

Area	Number of Schools	Percent ^a
Performance-based bonuses for teachers	6	40.0
Ongoing, targeted professional development	9	60.0
Rewards for teachers for exemplary performance	6	40.0
Dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory performance	8	53.3
Contract for professional development services with non-district providers	5	33.3

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

The survey findings also revealed that charter schools offered approximately one more day of professional development in 2007–2008 than in 2006–2007. In 2007–2008, conversion and open enrollment schools offered 10.8 and 11.2 days of professional development, respectively, compared to 9.44 and 9.86, respectively, in the previous year. A review of the program documentation provided information on the content of the professional development that the charter schools offered during the 2007–2008 year, such as training related to the alignment of instruction, core academic subjects (including addressing needs of low-performing students), incorporating technology, training master teachers, attendance at conferences, manipulating student assessment data to inform instruction, teacher mentoring and academic coaching, use of rubrics, incorporating new research-based curricula, and other innovative approaches such as education and kinesiology.

Parent involvement.

There are many different reasons why parents choose to enroll their children in a charter school instead of 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 = 409)	Administrator Survey (N = 21)
Interest in the charter school’s education mission or philosophy	221 (54.0%)	13 (61.9%)
Child was doing poorly in previous school	61 (14.9%)	14 (66.7%)
Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety	185 (45.2%)	13 (61.9%)
Interest in the charter school’s instructional or academic program	260 (63.6%)	17 (81.0%)
More convenient location than previous school	48 (11.7%)	3 (14.3%)

Reason	Parent Survey * (N = 409)	Administrator Survey (N = 21)
Child has special needs that previous school was not addressing	37 (9.0%)	9 (42.9%)
Better teachers at this charter school	108 (26.4%)	8 (38.1%)
My child wanted to come to this charter school	123 (30.1%)	9 (42.9%)
This charter school offers extended day hours/before- and after-school program	49 (12.0%)	6 (28.6%)
Small size of this charter school or small classes	144 (35.2%)	12 (57.1%)
Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school	121 (29.6%)	8 (38.1%)
It is the only school available for my child to attend/not applicable	48 (11.7%)	1 (4.8%)
Other primary reasons	14 (3.4%)	1 (4.8%)

The data in Table 5 show that, across the charter schools, more than half of the parent 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 education mission and philosophy, and
- Interest in the charter school’s instructional program.

Table 5 also shows 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,
- Child has special needs that the previous school was not addressing, and
- Small size of the school or classes.

The survey also asked 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:

- Most administrators rated parental involvement as *good* or *excellent* concerning academic, attendance, behavior, and school-wide activities (between 64% and 73%).
- Community involvement was viewed less positively, with 50% of survey respondents giving a rating of *good* or *excellent* and 46% giving a rating of *average*.

When asked about the various strategies used to involve parents and other community members, administrators from more than two thirds 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, and involving parents in discipline-related discussions. Approximately half of the schools also reported using strategies such as: conducting parent workshops, using parents and other community volunteers to provide special instruction, using community sites for service or work-based learning opportunities, and establishing community advisory committees.

Notably, as in 2006–2007, 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 and communication, including development of informational packets, monthly parent newsletters, hiring of parent facilitators, regular invitations to alumni/parent committee meetings, trainings or workshops, annual parent feedback surveys, and other school functions. The majority of the schools also provided samples of parent newsletters that were regularly distributed throughout the school year. All schools that provided copies of their 2007–2008 school improvement plan (ACSIP) indicated the implementation of parent orientation events and PTA meetings.

Finally, six of the ten open enrollment schools reported that they *require* parents (or other adult family members of the students) to sign a contract with the school, compared to two of nine conversion schools. However, at least two thirds of both conversion and open enrollment schools require parents to attend parent meetings throughout the school year.

Instruction.

Administrator survey respondents indicated the use of various methods of instructional delivery in 2007–2008. The highest reported method of instruction delivery was project-based learning, as indicated by 82% of schools. Interestingly, more schools reported integrating technology in the curriculum (68%) than reported using interdisciplinary instruction (54%). Other methods of instructional delivery reported by at least half of the schools included character education, individualized/tailored instruction, cooperative learning, and reduced or small class size. Conversely, foreign language immersion, school-to-work concepts, multi-grade classrooms, and independent study were implemented by three or fewer schools.

When asked about special education instruction, 89% of schools reported providing some type of accommodation for students with special needs. More than 80% of these charter schools contained inclusive classrooms (up from 69% last year), which was the most common accommodation reported. In addition, close to two thirds (62%) of charter schools indicated the use of pull-out services for students with special needs, and about half (52%) of the schools

indicated having self-contained special education classes. In terms of instruction for English language learners, eight of 19 schools indicated having English as a second language instruction.

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. More than half of the schools reported using student portfolios (10 schools), behavioral indicators (nine schools), and student demonstrations/exhibitions (13 schools) in addition to teacher assigned grades and the required standardized achievement test and benchmark exam. 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 2007–2008 year. Overall, only parental involvement was a particular challenge for at least one third of all respondents. However, when disaggregated by type of school, the data reveal that open enrollment schools faced many more challenges than conversion schools in 2007–2008. In fact, 75% of open enrollment schools believed that managing public perceptions and public relations was a challenge this school year, about half reported retaining teachers and facility costs as a challenge, and another 40% reported fiscal and business management as a particular challenge. An open-ended question asking administrators to add any comments regarding challenges revealed the belief that the open-enrollment charter schools do not believe that they are being fiscally supported in the same way that the traditional public schools are being supported.

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 2007–2008 year was high. More than three quarters of the responding parents (81.6%) rated their child's current school as *very good* to *excellent*, compared with less than half (45.3%) who provided the same rating for the child's previous school, which is a difference of 36.3 percentage points. Looking at these data by school type revealed that respondent-parents whose children attended open enrollment schools were more likely to have been dissatisfied with their child's previous school and more likely to be satisfied with the charter school in which their child was enrolled in the 2007–2008 school year (see Table 6, below).

Table 6
Satisfaction with Current and Previous School

School Type		Total	Excellent/Very Good (%)	Good (%)	Fair/Poor (%)
Conversion	Satisfaction with previous school	109	57.8	25.7	16.5
	Satisfaction with current school	115	80.9	14.8	4.3
Open Enrollment	Satisfaction with previous school	100	40.5	30.8	28.7
	Satisfaction with current school	212	84.1	10.3	5.6

Parents were also asked to provide a rating of *better*, *about the same*, or *worse* when asked to compare their child’s current school to their previous school on various areas of instruction. These data are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Parents’ Perception of Instructional Quality

Area of Instruction	Total	Better (%)	About the Same (%)	Worse (%)
Quality of school’s reading instruction	394	69.3	26.1	4.6
Quality of school’s math instruction	395	71.6	21.8	6.6
Quality of school’s writing instruction	394	70.1	26.6	3.3

The findings in Table 7 show that parents were considerably more positive about their child’s current charter school than they were about their previous school. More than two thirds 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 that 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 8). Overall, the data indicate that charter school parents were generally satisfied with instructional practices, communication, school/class size, and school climate. The data in Table 8 show that:

- The great majority of parents (at least 80%) indicated that they were either *very* or *somewhat satisfied* with their opportunities to be involved and participate, the curriculum, class size, school size, communication with their child’s teacher, the individual attention their child gets, and the use of technology.

- Approximately 41% of parents were *very satisfied* with extra-curricular activities, but a notable 39% of parents indicated that they were either *somewhat satisfied* or *dissatisfied* with this component of their child’s charter school.
- Parents seemed to report their lowest satisfaction with the quality of school facilities (e.g., library, gym), extracurricular activities, and the quality of the building in which the school is located. Nevertheless, more than half of parents still indicated being *very* or *somewhat satisfied* with the above components.

Table 8
Parents’ Satisfaction with Specific Components of the Charter School

Component	Total	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Not Too Satisfied/ Quite Dissatisfied		Not Sure or N/A	
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Curriculum	407	266	(65.4)	109	(26.8)	19	(4.7)	13	(3.2)
Performance of the teachers	408	253	(62.0)	113	(27.7)	33	(8.1)	9	(2.2)
Class size	406	275	(67.7)	71	(17.5)	17	(4.2)	43	(10.6)
Individualized attention your child gets	407	256	(62.9)	102	(25.1)	30	(7.4)	19	(4.7)
Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	407	278	(68.3)	81	(19.9)	28	(6.9)	20	(4.9)
Communication with your child’s teacher	406	261	(64.3)	97	(23.9)	41	(10.1)	7	(1.7)
Quality of the building in which the school is located	406	181	(44.6)	100	(24.6)	44	(10.8)	81	(20.0)
Quality of the school facilities, such as the gym, library, and labs	406	127	(31.3)	106	(26.1)	57	(14.0)	116	(28.6)
Use of technology within the instructional program	406	228	(56.2)	119	(29.3)	30	(7.4)	29	(7.1)
School discipline policies and practices	407	228	(56.0)	88	(21.6)	43	(10.6)	48	(11.8)
Quality of student support services, such as guidance counseling and tutoring	405	211	(52.1)	94	(23.2)	31	(7.7)	69	(17.0)
Extra-curricular activities	407	166	(40.8)	111	(27.3)	48	(11.8)	82	(20.1)
School size	403	269	(66.7)	78	(19.4)	11	(2.7)	45	(11.2)
School climate	399	237	(59.4)	84	(21.1)	26	(6.5)	52	(13.0)

Two other areas of charter school implementation—school safety and school facilities—were assessed using ratings provided by surveyed parents. The results are provided in the table below.

Table 9
Parents' Perception of School Safety and Facilities

School Area	Total	Better (%)	About the Same (%)	Worse (%)
School safety	390	67.2	27.4	5.4
School facilities	394	56.3	29.9	13.7

The data in Table 9 indicate that parents believed that safety was about the same or better at the charter school than at their child's previous school (94.6%). On the subject of facilities, only 13.7% of parents who responded to the survey indicated that the charter school their child attends had worse facilities, but a closer look at the data showed that among the seven schools from which at least 20 parent surveys were received, two schools in particular found the facilities of the school comparatively lacking. Sixteen of 23 parents from Academics Plus and 10 of 28 parents from LISA Academy rated the facilities at their current school as *worse*.

Finally, when parents were asked in an open-ended question what they believed were the most positive aspects of their child's charter school, they most frequently mentioned the following (about 300 parents responded to this question):

- Small school size and class size that results in a flexible program with personalized attention for students and parents;
- Strong and engaging curriculum;
- Dedication of teachers and other school staff;
- Positive and prompt communication with office staff and school administration (i.e., an "open-door" policy); and
- Opportunity and desire for parental involvement in the school and in their children's education.

When asked as part of an open-ended question what issues were of most concern regarding the charter school, 287 parents responded and approximately one in five said that they had no concerns. Among parents' greatest concerns about their child's charter public school were the following:

- Problems with school facilities, in particular the small size of the facilities and the lack of gyms;
- Too many inexperienced teachers;
- Difficulty in reaching teachers and/or school administrators about questions or scheduling conferences (via phone or email);
- Discipline problems dealt with in ways that are harsh, inconsistent, or disruptive to the educational program;

- Too few extracurricular activities;
- Program is too difficult, with some parents noting that long hours and a lot of homework can put a strain on family life and other activities outside of school; and
- Lack of funding, especially compared to traditional public schools.

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, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10
Students’ Perceptions of Overall School Quality

Total	Excellent (%)	Very Good (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)
1,824 ¹	27.3	27.2	24.8	13.4	7.3

Table 10 shows that overall, more than half of the students (54.5%) gave their current school a rating of *very good* to *excellent*. The students were split evenly between those who rated their school excellent and those who rated their school good.

Students were asked how they felt about the number of students in their classes. As shown in Table 11, the findings indicate that most students were satisfied with the number of students in their classes. About nine in ten students (90.1%) indicated that they were satisfied with the number of students in their classes.

Table 11
Students’ Perceptions of Class Size

Total	The number of students in my classes is about right. (%)	There are too many students in my classes. (%)
1,818 ¹	90.1	9.9

Finally, when asked if they wanted to return to the same school next year, of the 1,400 students who did not indicate that they were graduating, almost half (661) said that they definitely want to return. Still, about one in five students (290) said that they did not want to return to the same school, and about one in three students said that they *kind of* wanted to come back.

¹ Only students that attended their current school in 2007–2008 were included in the analyses.

Impact of the Arkansas Charter Schools on Student Achievement

The SAT-10 reading and math data were used to analyze student achievement in Grades 1–3; Benchmark reading and math exam data were used to analyze 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 Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), administered in Grades K–9 in Arkansas in the 2006–2007 school year, is a standardized, norm-referenced test that includes different literacy- and math-related subtests that are combined into overall literacy and math test scores. 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 student performance 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.²

The EOC algebra 1, geometry, and 11th-grade literacy exams were used to compare the performance of students in Grades 9–12 from spring 2007 to spring 2008. 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.²

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 2008 student achievement scores from several programmatic and demographic variables, measures of satisfaction, 2007 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.

² Information obtained from the ADE website: <http://arkedu.state.ar.us>

- School size
- School attendance ratio
- Number of suspensions
- Spring 2007 test scores (ITBS and Benchmark exams)
- Student satisfaction total³
- Use of team teaching
- Use of multigrade classrooms
- Use of theme-based instruction
- Presence of extended school day
- Implemented reduced/small class size
- Parent satisfaction total³

Based on initial R^2 values and the corresponding significance tests conducted, only a subset of the above listed variables were retained. Specifically, student satisfaction total and parent satisfaction total did not significantly predict spring 2008 outcomes and were therefore removed from the analyses. The list below shows the final variable set used for all regressions presented herein.

- School size
- School attendance ratio
- Number of suspensions
- Spring 2007 ITBS scores
- Spring 2007 Benchmark exam scores
- Use of team teaching
- Use of multigrade classrooms
- Use of theme-based instruction
- Presence of extended school day
- Implemented reduced/small class size

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 12 presents the resultant regression models predicting 2008 SAT-10 reading scores for Grades 1–3 and 2008 SAT-10 math scores for Grade 3. Both final models retained the pretest (i.e., 2007) achievement as a significantly positive predictor for the outcomes. The model for SAT-10 reading also indicated that the presence of an extended school day was negatively associated with student achievement in reading. Further examination of the data showed that students in the schools that did not implement extended school day performed better on the 2007 ITBS vocabulary test than those in the schools with an extended school day. However, lower prior achievement might be the reason why those schools chose to have an extended school day and contributes to schools' lower overall performance. The model for SAT-10 math also indicated that school attendance served as a significantly positive predictor of student outcome.

³ Student and parent satisfaction were derived by summing ratings across various items in each survey, creating an overall level of school satisfaction.

Table 12

Stepwise Regression Results for the Final Model Predicting Spring 2008 SAT-10 Reading (Grades 1–3) and Math NCE Scores (Grade 3)

Test	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R ²)
SAT-10 reading N = 285 F = 152.851	ITBS spring 2007 vocabulary score	.700	.520*
	Presence of extended school day	-.100	
SAT-10 math N = 162 F = 63.402	ITBS spring 2007 problem solving score	.628	.444*
	Attendance ratio for 2007–2008	.188	

* $p < .05$.

Table 13 presents the resultant regression models predicting 2008 Benchmark literacy and math scores for students in Grades 4–8. In addition to pretest performance and school attendance, the two models apparently included more demographic and programmatic variables than the SAT-10 models.

Table 13

Stepwise Regression Results for the Final Model Predicting Spring 2008 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 = 1,615 F = 651.750	Benchmark spring 2007 literacy score	.800	.709*
	Attendance ratio for 2007–2008	.053	
	Presence of extended school day	-.078	
	Number of suspensions	-.039	
	Use of theme-based curriculum	.069	
	School size	.059	
Benchmark math N = 1,615 F = 740.993	Benchmark spring 2007 math score	.786	.697*
	Attendance ratio for 2007–2008	.124	
	Number of suspensions	-.055	
	Use of team teaching	.031	
	Presence of extended school day	-.041	

* $p < .05$.

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

- Higher pretest performance,

- Higher attendance ratio,
- *No* extended school day,
- *Fewer* suspensions,
- Using theme-based curriculum, and
- Larger school size.

As for Benchmark math, higher achievement at these same grade levels was associated with the following:

- Higher pretest performance,
- Higher attendance ratio,
- *Fewer* suspensions,
- Using team-teaching techniques, and
- *No* extended school day.

The positive association of pretest performance and school attendance to achievement was expected. In addition, the negative association of number of suspensions to achievement was not surprising. Both models also indicated a positive association of achievement to some programmatic variables (i.e., theme-based curriculum and team-teaching). Like the SAT-10 reading model, the models for Benchmark literacy and math indicated that the presence of an extended school day was negatively associated with student outcomes. The explanation for this negative association was similar to that described above, because students in the schools that did not implement an extended school day performed better on 2007 Benchmark tests than those in the schools with an extended school day.

Table 14 presents the final regression model predicting 2007 EOC algebra 1 for Grades 9–12. Note that because EOC exams are taken only once, pretest scores were unavailable to include in high school models.

Table 14***Stepwise Regression Results for the Final Model Predicting Spring 2008 EOC Exam Scores (Grades 9–12)***

Test ^a	Independent Variables Included in Final Model	SC Beta	Variance Explained (R ²)
EOC algebra 1 N = 307 F = 20.346	Attendance ratio for 2007–2008	.216	
	Implemented reduced/small class size	.677	.212*
	Use of multigrade classrooms	.814	
	Presence of extended school day	.317	

^a Geometry and literacy EOC exams are not presented because each showed a low explainable variance (below .150).

* $p < .05$.

Table 14 shows that higher achievement in EOC algebra 1 in Grades 9–12 was associated with the following:

- Higher attendance ratio,
- Implementing class size reduction initiatives,
- Using multigrade classrooms, and
- Implementing an extended school day.

For high school students, it seemed that implementation of reduced class size initiatives and multigrade classrooms were positively associated with EOC algebra 1 outcome, and implementation of an extended school day also contributed positively to student achievement in algebra. However, this finding was different from those detected with lower grades. Because pretest information was not available, we do not know if any difference in prior achievement existed between the schools with an extended school day and those without.

Student outcome data disaggregated by different NCLB subgroups.

A series of analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs) was conducted on the results of the SAT-10 for Grades 1–3 and the Benchmark Exams for Grades 4–8 to examine the academic progress of different subgroups of students. 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,
- Gender,

- 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 15
Summary of ANCOVA Analyses of SAT-10 Reading and Math Skills across Student Subgroups

Comparison Groups		Target Grade	SAT-10: Overall Reading Skills	SAT-10: Overall Math Skills ^a
Race/ethnicity	Black	1	No significant difference	NA
	White			
	Others			
	Black	2	No significant difference	NA
	White			
	Others			
	Black	3	No significant difference	No significant difference
	White			
	Others			
Gender	Male	1	No significant difference	NA
	Female			
	Male	2	<i>Significant difference</i>	NA
	<i>Female</i>			
	Male	3	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	<i>Female</i>			
Title I status	Non-Title I	1	No significant difference	NA
	Title I			
	Non-Title I	2	No significant difference	NA
	Title I			
	Non-Title I	3	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
Education status	General education	1	No significant difference	NA
	Special education			
	General education	2	No significant difference	NA
	Special education			
	General education	3	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Special education			
Free/reduced lunch status	Not free/reduced	1	No significant difference	NA
	Free/reduced			

Comparison Groups	Target Grade	SAT-10: Overall Reading Skills	SAT-10: Overall Math Skills ^a
Not free/reduced	2	No significant difference	NA
Free/reduced			
<i>Not free/reduced</i>	3	No significant difference	<i>Significant difference</i>
Free/reduced			

Note. Findings are based on ANCOVA results. Higher achieving groups are presented in italicized bold type when a statistically significant difference less than .05 is observed.

^aSAT-10 math scores were not available for Grades 1 and 2, so the ANCOVAs could not be conducted on math skills for these two grades.

Notably, Table 15 shows 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 SAT-10 subgroup analyses include the following:

- With respect to measures of poverty, differences could only be observed for free/reduced-price lunch eligibility, but not for Title I status. Specifically, in math, Grade 3 students who were not eligible for free/reduced-price lunches significantly outperformed those who were eligible for free/reduced-price lunches.
- When looking at sex, Grade 2 girls had significantly higher achievement scores in reading than did boys, and Grade 3 girls outperformed their male counterparts in both reading and math.
- No statistically significant differences were found for different race/ethnic or special/general education groups.

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 Grades 6 and 7. In addition, students who were ineligible for free/reduced-price lunches achieved significantly higher scores than did their lower-income peers in Grades 6 and 7 in both reading and math.
- When looking at gender, girls achieved significantly higher reading scores than did boys in Grades 4 and 7.
- General education students had significantly higher achievement scores compared with special education students in reading in Grade 8 and in both reading and math in Grades 5 and 7.
- With respect to racial/ethnic background:
 - In Grades 4 and 6, students other than White or Black performed the best in both reading and math among all racial/ethnic groups.

- In Grade 7, White students achieved the highest reading scores among all racial/ethnic groups, whereas students other than White or Black achieved the highest math scores.

Table 16
Summary of ANCOVA Analyses of Benchmark Reading and Math Skills across Student Subgroups

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

Table 16 (cont.)

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

Title I status	Non-Title I	4	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
	Non-Title I	5	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
	<i>Non-Title I</i>	6	<i>Significant difference</i>	No significant difference
	Title I			
	<i>Non-Title I</i>	7	<i>Significant difference</i>	No significant difference
	Title I			
	Non-Title I	8	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Title I			
Education status	General education	4	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Special education			
	<i>General education</i>	5	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Special education			
	General education	6	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Special education			
	<i>General education</i>	7	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Special education			
	<i>General education</i>	8	<i>Significant difference</i>	No significant difference
	Special education			
Free/reduced-price lunch status	Not free/reduced	4	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Free/reduced			
	Not free/reduced	5	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Free/reduced			
	<i>Not free/reduced</i>	6	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Free/reduced			
	<i>Not free/reduced</i>	7	<i>Significant difference</i>	<i>Significant difference</i>
	Free/reduced			
	Not free/reduced	8	No significant difference	No significant difference
	Free/reduced			

Note. Findings are based on ANCOVA results. Higher achieving groups are presented in italicized bold type when a statistically significant difference less than .05 is observed.

IV. Conclusions/Recommendations

The Arkansas public charter schools demonstrated during the 2007–2008 school year that they provide a quality educational alternative to the state’s traditional public schools. Parents and students indicated a high degree of satisfaction with school implementation, and the schools’ use of innovative instructional practices has led to increased student achievement. These successes can be linked back to the schools’ charter status, which has allowed them the flexibility to implement a wide array of practices that speak to each community’s educational needs. This year, these included greater control over methods of instructional delivery, staff practices such as performance-based bonuses, the hiring and dismissing staff, targeted professional development including the hiring of non-district professional development service providers, engaging parents and the community, and the seeking of private grant funding. Taken together, the quantitative and qualitative data suggest that Arkansas public charter schools were efficacious and proficient at carrying out the implementation of the program and the goals they set out to achieve during the school year. These efforts occurred 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 2007–2008 school year.
- Characteristics of the charter schools, such as higher attendance ratios, type of school implementation (open enrollment vs. conversion), larger school size, the use of class size reduction and multigrade classrooms, use of team-teaching, and fewer suspensions, were associated with improved student achievement in 2007–2008.
- The most notable trends in comparisons of NCLB subgroups were observed in Grades 4–8 in each one of the categories, but mostly for race/ethnicity and education status (i.e., general vs. special education).

As in 2006–2007, the differences in charter school implementation may have resulted in higher student achievement with open enrollment schools in 2007–2008. Arkansas charter school legislation permits schools to implement practices with staff that would not be possible under a traditional school structure. In addition, it is possible 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, written descriptions of board members’ roles and responsibilities, open lines of communication, formal processes for developing policy, and clear and up-to-date by-laws.

In one piece of evidence linking parent choice to student achievement, when asked why they chose to enroll their child in a charter school, parents said they were most interested in the school’s educational mission/philosophy and the school’s instructional program. The regression analyses demonstrates that their interests were warranted, because certain instructional practices

such as the use of theme-based curricula, use of team-teaching, and implementation of smaller class sizes, are associated with increased student achievement on the benchmark literacy, math, and EOC algebra exams, respectively, and were methods being employed across various charter schools.

The regression analyses also revealed that attendance ratio was the most common variable that predicted improved student achievement across all grades for the SAT-10 reading and math exams, the Benchmark literacy and math exams, and the EOC algebra 1 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, few suspensions, and the non-presence of an extended school day strongly predicted literacy scores, and few suspensions and school type predicted math exam scores. In high school, the use of small class size, school type, presence of extended school day, and multigrade classrooms strongly predicted increased EOC algebra 1 scores. Other variables that were studied, such as parent and student satisfaction, did not predict student achievement results at any grade level.

Finally, comparative analyses of NCLB subgroups revealed trends in Grades 1–3 in the sex/gender category, where females significantly outperformed males in reading in Grade 2 and reading and math in Grade 3. The most notable trends, however, were observed in Grades 4–8 in four major areas: race/ethnicity, Title I status, education level status, and free/reduced-price lunch status. Highlights of the findings in these areas include:

- In Grades 4, 6, and 7, “Other” ethnic students significantly outperformed both white and African American students in literacy and math (with the exception of 7th-grade literacy, where white students outperformed other groups);
- Non-Title 1 students in Grades 4, 6, and 7 significantly outperformed Title 1 students in literacy;
- Grade 5, 7, and 8 general education students significantly outperformed special education students in literacy and math (with the exception of 8th-grade math); and
- Non-free/reduced-price lunch students in Grades 6 and 7 outperformed free/reduced-price lunch students in literacy and math.

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 perceived inequities in the financial support of charter schools.*** A number of administrators believed that there was a great deal of inequity in the allocation of financial support to the charter schools in comparison to traditional public schools. In addition, open-enrollment schools expressed many challenges (physical and financial) with their facilities. In order to address these concerns, the ADE could recommend to the legislature to explore

financial modifications to the support that is provided to the charter schools. The charter schools could also be provided additional resources to purchase, lease, and/or renovate facilities by offering incentives to entities (e.g., districts, local businesses) that offer charter schools the opportunity to either co-locate or lease appropriate facilities.

- ***Encourage the use of innovative curricular instruction.*** Regression analyses indicated that the use of innovative instruction such as theme-based instruction, team-teaching, and multigrade classrooms were positively associated with improved achievement at different grade levels. The ADE could continue supporting the charter schools in conducting inquiries into the use of these methods and encourage the schools to implement them.
- ***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 a collaborative partnership 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.

APPENDICES

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

Table 17

Benchmark Reading ANCOVA Results: Conversion vs. Open Enrollment, Grades 4–8

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=213)	Conversion	680.75	1	0.734	0.393
	Open Enrollment	617.37			
Grade 5 (N=312)	Conversion	738.71	1	3.119	0.078
	Open Enrollment	650.17			
Grade 6 (N=304)	Conversion	556.56	1	5.147	0.024*
	Open Enrollment	730.19			
Grade 7 (N=521)	Conversion	584.97	1	11.515	0.001*
	Open Enrollment	746.05			
Grade 8 (N=493)	Conversion	683.96	1	4.843	0.028*
	Open Enrollment	829.59			

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

Table 18

Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results: Conversion vs. Open Enrollment, Grades 4–8

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=213)	Conversion	641.83	1	6.260	0.013*
	Open Enrollment	604.73			
Grade 5 (N=312)	Conversion	666.68	1	10.908	0.001*
	Open Enrollment	615.76			
Grade 6 (N=304)	Conversion	644.88	1	0.374	0.541
	Open Enrollment	710.26			
Grade 7 (N=521)	Conversion	647.18	1	4.438	0.036*
	Open Enrollment	718.61			
Grade 8 (N=493)	Conversion	659.92	1	11.309	0.001*
	Open Enrollment	755.96			

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

Appendix B:
ANCOVA Analyses of Student Achievement
Using NCLB Comparisons

Table 19
SAT-10 Reading ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 1–3

		Test Administration and Mean NCE	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1 (N=140)	Black	46.16	4.88	2	0.043	0.958
	White	51.04				
	Black	46.16	7.49	2	0.043	0.958
	Others	53.65				
	White	51.04	2.61	2	0.043	0.958
	Others	53.65				
Grade 2 (N=173)	Black	33.54	18.31	2	2.160	0.118
	White	51.85				
	Black	33.54	10.06	2	2.160	0.118
	Others	43.60				
	White	51.85	8.25	2	2.160	0.118
	Others	43.60				
Grade 3 (N=217)	Black	39.27	14.94	2	1.684	0.188
	White	54.21				
	Black	39.27	9.45	2	1.684	0.188
	Others	48.72				
	White	54.21	5.49	2	1.684	0.188
	Others	48.72				

Table 20
SAT-10 Math ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grade 3^a

		Test Administration and Mean NCE	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N=219)	Black	29.57	19.14	2	2.819	0.062
	White	48.71				
	Black	29.57	7.07	2	2.819	0.062
	Others	36.64				
	White	48.71	12.07	2	2.819	0.062
	Others	36.64				

^a SAT-10 math scores were not available for Grades 1–2.

Table 21

Benchmark Reading ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 4–8

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 4 (N=213)	Black	570.48	91.82	2	3.050	0.049*
	White	662.30				
	Black	570.48	107.52	2	3.050	0.049*
	Others	678.00				
	White	662.30	15.70	2	3.050	0.049*
	Others	678.00				
Grade 5 (N=312)	Black	573.48	170.44	2	2.698	0.069
	White	743.92				
	Black	573.48	135.77	2	2.698	0.069
	Others	709.25				
	White	743.92	34.67	2	2.698	0.069
	Others	709.25				
Grade 6 (N=304)	Black	622.09	123.00	2	15.347	0.000*
	White	745.09				
	Black	622.09	258.95	2	15.347	0.000*
	Others	881.04				
	White	745.09	135.95	2	15.347	0.000*
	Others	881.04				
Grade 7 (N=521)	Black	600.84	163.57	2	13.132	0.000*
	White	764.41				
	Black	600.84	118.90	2	13.132	0.000*
	Others	719.74				
	White	764.41	44.67	2	13.132	0.000*
	Others	719.74				
Grade 8 (N=493)	Black	701.19	91.35	2	1.182	0.308
	White	792.54				
	Black	701.19	143.50	2	1.182	0.308
	Others	844.69				
	White	792.54	52.15	2	1.182	0.308
	Others	844.69				

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

Table 22
Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Race/Ethnicity Comparisons, Grades 4–8

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 4 (N=213)	Black	564.56	68.01	2	7.765	0.001*
	White	632.57				
	Black	564.56	126.33	2	7.765	0.001*
	Others	690.89				
	White	632.57	58.32	2	7.765	0.001*
	Others	690.89				
Grade 5 (N=312)	Black	580.93	83.72	2	0.908	0.404
	White	664.65				
	Black	580.93	50.57	2	0.908	0.404
	Others	631.50				
	White	664.65	33.15	2	0.908	0.404
	Others	631.50				
Grade 6 (N=304)	Black	673.70	31.69	2	4.656	0.010*
	White	705.39				
	Black	673.70	138.74	2	4.656	0.010*
	Others	812.44				
	White	705.39	107.05	2	4.656	0.010*
	Others	812.44				
Grade 7 (N=521)	Black	651.65	71.37	2	3.235	0.040*
	White	723.02				
	Black	651.65	102.54	2	3.235	0.040*
	Others	754.19				
	White	723.02	31.17	2	3.235	0.040*
	Others	754.19				
Grade 8 (N=493)	Black	669.12	60.12	2	1.097	0.335
	White	729.24				
	Black	669.12	125.77	2	1.097	0.335
	Others	794.89				
	White	729.24	65.65	2	1.097	0.335
	Others	794.89				

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

Table 23***SAT-10 Reading ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 1–3***

	Test Administration and Mean NCE		Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1 (N=140)	Male	49.29	0.17	1	0.245	0.622
	Female	49.12				
Grade 2 (N=173)	Male	44.05	6.39	1	7.640	0.006*
	Female	50.44				
Grade 3 (N=217)	Male	44.61	8.84	1	5.477	0.020*
	Female	53.45				

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

Table 24***SAT-10 Math ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grade 3^a***

	Test Administration and Mean NCE		Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N=219)	Male	38.89	6.32	1	10.132	0.002*
	Female	45.21				

^a SAT-10 math scores were not available for Grades 1–2.

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

Table 25***Benchmark Reading ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 4–8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=213)	Male	577.33	109.77	1	4.263	0.040*
	Female	687.10				
Grade 5 (N=312)	Male	660.74	36.06	1	0.871	0.351
	Female	696.80				
Grade 6 (N=304)	Male	645.78	106.95	1	0.610	0.435
	Female	752.73				
Grade 7 (N=521)	Male	610.27	101.71	1	5.182	0.023*
	Female	711.98				
Grade 8 (N=493)	Male	711.34	71.50	1	1.281	0.258
	Female	782.84				

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

Table 26***Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Gender Comparisons, Grades 4–8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score		Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=213)	Male	611.07	11.84	1	0.078	0.780
	Female	622.91				
Grade 5 (N=312)	Male	627.56	9.51	1	3.505	0.062
	Female	637.07				
Grade 6 (N=304)	Male	693.88	11.37	1	0.124	0.725
	Female	705.25				
Grade 7 (N=521)	Male	669.70	23.99	1	0.539	0.463
	Female	693.69				
Grade 8 (N=493)	Male	697.37	7.81	1	0.078	0.780
	Female	705.18				

Table 27***SAT-10 Reading ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grades 1–3***

	Test Administration and Mean NCE		Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1 (N=140)	Title I	50.80	2.67	1	3.654	0.058
	Non-Title I	48.13				
Grade 2 (N=173)	Title I	42.48	6.47	1	2.700	0.102
	Non-Title I	48.95				
Grade 3 (N=217)	Title I	44.58	6.78	1	0.246	0.621
	Non-Title I	51.36				

Table 28***SAT-10 Math ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grade 3^a***

	Test Administration and Mean NCE		Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N=219)	Title I	34.42	11.11	1	0.641	0.424
	Non-Title I	45.53				

^a SAT-10 math scores were not available for Grades 1–2.

Table 29***Benchmark Reading ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grades 4–8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 4 (N=213)	Title I	636.16	5.25	1	0.023	0.878
	Non-Title I	641.41				
Grade 5 (N=312)	Title I	633.88	56.91	1	1.007	0.317
	Non-Title I	690.79				
Grade 6 (N=304)	Title I	604.29	143.94	1	26.641	0.000*
	Non-Title I	748.23				
Grade 7 (N=521)	Title I	607.95	134.48	1	13.541	0.000*
	Non-Title I	742.43				
Grade 8 (N=493)	Title I	698.91	109.31	1	1.262	0.262
	Non-Title I	808.22				

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

Table 30***Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Title I Status, Grades 4–8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 4 (N=213)	Title I	609.09	12.97	1	1.010	0.316
	Non-Title I	622.06				
Grade 5 (N=312)	Title I	624.56	9.87	1	1.487	0.224
	Non-Title I	634.43				
Grade 6 (N=304)	Title I	676.50	34.26	1	1.392	0.239
	Non-Title I	710.76				
Grade 7 (N=521)	Title I	659.89	53.67	1	0.006	0.940
	Non-Title I	713.56				
Grade 8 (N=493)	Title I	673.85	62.76	1	1.475	0.225
	Non-Title I	736.61				

Table 31***SAT-10 Reading ANCOVA Results by Special/General Education Status, Grades 1–3***

	Test Administration and Mean NCE	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 1 (N=140)	Special Ed	40.62	8.96	1	0.561	0.455
	General Ed	49.58				
Grade 2 (N=173)	Special Ed	20.07	29.39	1	1.212	0.272
	General Ed	49.46				
Grade 3 (N=217)	Special Ed	30.30	19.86	1	1.107	0.294
	General Ed	50.16				

Table 32***SAT-10 Math ANCOVA Results by Special/General Education Status, Grade 3^a***

	Test Administration and Mean NCE	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N=219)	Special Ed	21.81	1	2.651	0.105
	General Ed	43.11			

^a SAT-10 math scores were not available for Grades 1–2.**Table 33*****Benchmark Reading ANCOVA Results by Special/General Education Status, Grades 4–8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=213)	Special Ed	494.20	1	0.327	0.568
	General Ed	646.85			
Grade 5 (N=312)	Special Ed	401.04	1	10.232	0.002*
	General Ed	705.46			
Grade 6 (N=304)	Special Ed	520.68	1	0.184	0.668
	General Ed	716.98			
Grade 7 (N=521)	Special Ed	389.43	1	19.527	0.000*
	General Ed	694.61			
Grade 8 (N=493)	Special Ed	532.65	1	22.881	0.000*
	General Ed	770.19			

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

Table 34***Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Special/General Education Status, Grades 4–8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=213)	Special Ed	533.50	1	0.458	0.499
	General Ed	621.95			
Grade 5 (N=312)	Special Ed	522.30	1	15.435	0.000*
	General Ed	642.84			
Grade 6 (N=304)	Special Ed	624.18	1	0.383	0.536
	General Ed	705.85			
Grade 7 (N=521)	Special Ed	570.28	1	5.600	0.018*
	General Ed	694.73			
Grade 8 (N=493)	Special Ed	601.57	1	1.242	0.266
	General Ed	712.22			

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

Table 35***SAT-10 Reading ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 1–3***

	Test Administration and Mean NCE	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 1 (N=140)	Free/Reduced Lunch	45.84	1	0.514	0.475
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	53.95			
Grade 2 (N=173)	Free/Reduced Lunch	40.91	1	2.622	0.107
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	52.64			
Grade 3 (N=217)	Free/Reduced Lunch	42.21	1	3.577	0.060
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	55.89			

Table 36***SAT-10 Math ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 3^a***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 3 (N=219)	Free/Reduced Lunch	32.87	1	6.741	0.010*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	51.01			

^a SAT-10 math scores were not available for Grades 1–2.

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

Table 37***Benchmark Reading ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 4–8***

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance
Grade 4 (N=213)	Free/Reduced Lunch	605.05	1	3.217	0.074
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	666.53			
Grade 5 (N=312)	Free/Reduced Lunch	613.53	1	0.047	0.828
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	743.04			
Grade 6 (N=304)	Free/Reduced Lunch	609.51	1	13.206	0.000*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	786.71			
Grade 7 (N=521)	Free/Reduced Lunch	608.83	1	22.160	0.000*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	753.75			
Grade 8 (N=493)	Free/Reduced Lunch	703.23	1	1.354	0.245
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	812.84			

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

Table 38
Benchmark Math ANCOVA Results by Poverty Status, Grades 4–8

	Test Administration and Mean Scale Score	Absolute Mean Difference	Numerator Df	F Value	Significance	
Grade 4 (N=213)	Free/Reduced Lunch	602.36	27.40	1	0.478	0.490
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	629.76				
Grade 5 (N=312)	Free/Reduced Lunch	603.49	57.10	1	0.055	0.815
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	660.59				
Grade 6 (N=304)	Free/Reduced Lunch	665.63	65.18	1	5.433	0.020*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	730.81				
Grade 7 (N=521)	Free/Reduced Lunch	653.26	75.92	1	9.195	0.003*
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	729.18				
Grade 8 (N=493)	Free/Reduced Lunch	676.19	63.29	1	0.331	0.565
	No Free/Reduced Lunch	739.48				

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

**Appendix C:
Survey Findings**

Parent Survey Findings

Table 39
Respondent Education Level

Type of School	Total N	(%)
High school diploma	129	31.2
Associate's or 2-year degree	69	16.7
Bachelor's or 4-year degree	103	24.9
Graduate degree	59	14.3
Other	30	7.3
Total	413	100.0

Table 40
Previous School Attended by Child

Previous Type of School	Type of School	Total N	Avg. (%)
Traditional public school	Open Enrollment	167	65.7
	Conversion	92	78.6
Home school	Open Enrollment	45	17.7
	Conversion	2	1.7
Private school	Open Enrollment	25	9.8
	Conversion	4	3.4
Another charter school	Open Enrollment	7	2.8
	Conversion	9	7.7

Table 41
Performance of Child at Previous School

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Good N (%)	Average N (%)	Poor N (%)	Failing N (%)
396	167 (42.2)	123 (31.1)	71 (17.9)	26 (6.6)	9 (2.3)

Table 42
Performance of Child at Current School

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Good N (%)	Average N (%)	Poor N (%)	Failing N (%)
406	230 (56.7)	128 (31.5)	41 (10.1)	5 (1.2)	2 (.5)

Table 43
Quality Rating of Child's Previous School

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Very Good N (%)	Good N (%)	Fair N (%)	Poor N (%)
397	66 (16.6)	114 (28.7)	112 (28.2)	78 (19.6)	27 (6.8)

Table 44
Quality Rating of Child's Current School

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Very Good N (%)	Good N (%)	Fair N (%)	Poor N (%)
408	213 (52.2)	120 (29.4)	51 (12.5)	17 (4.2)	7 (1.7)

Table 45
Main Reasons Why Parents Choose Charter Schools

Reason	Parent Survey (N = 409)	Administrator Survey (N = 21)
Interest in the charter school's education mission or philosophy	221 (54.0%)	13 (61.9%)
Child was doing poorly in previous school	61 (14.9%)	14 (66.7%)
Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety	185 (45.2%)	13 (61.9%)
Interest in the charter school's instructional or academic program	260 (63.6%)	17 (81.0%)
More convenient location than previous school	48 (11.7%)	3 (14.3%)
Child has special needs that previous school was not addressing	37 (9.0%)	9 (42.9%)
Better teachers at this charter school	108 (26.4%)	8 (38.1%)
My child wanted to come to this charter school	123 (30.1%)	9 (42.9%)
This charter school offers extended day hours/before- and after-school program	49 (12.0%)	6 (28.6%)
Small size of this charter school or small classes	144 (35.2%)	12 (57.1%)
Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school	121 (29.6%)	8 (38.1%)
It is the only school available for my child to attend/not applicable	48 (11.7%)	1 (4.8%)
Other primary reasons	14 (3.4%)	1 (4.8%)

Table 46
Quality of Current School Compared to Previous School

Exemption	Total N	Much Better or Better		About the Same		Worse or Much Worse	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
The quality of school's reading instruction	394	273	(69.3)	103	(26.1)	18	(4.6)
The quality of school's math instruction	395	283	(71.6)	86	(21.8)	26	(6.6)
The quality of school's writing instruction	394	276	(70.1)	105	(26.6)	13	(3.3)
School safety	390	262	(67.2)	107	(27.4)	21	(5.4)
School facilities	394	222	(56.3)	118	(29.9)	54	(13.7)
Parent involvement or participation	394	256	(65.0)	115	(29.2)	23	(5.8)
Extra help or special services for students when needed	388	250	(64.4)	117	(30.2)	21	(5.4)

Table 47
Satisfaction with Specific Components of Child's Charter School

Component	Total N	Very/Somewhat Satisfied		Not Too Satisfied/Quite Dissatisfied		Not Sure or N/A	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Curriculum	407	375	(92.1)	19	(4.7)	13	(3.2)
Performance of the teachers	408	366	(89.7)	33	(8.1)	9	(2.2)
Class size	406	346	(85.2)	17	(4.2)	43	(10.6)
Individualized attention your child gets	407	358	(88.0)	30	(7.4)	19	(4.7)
Opportunities for parents to be involved or participate	407	359	(88.2)	28	(6.9)	20	(4.9)
How much the school expects from parents	406	358	(88.2)	41	(10.1)	7	(1.7)
Communication with your child's teacher	406	281	(69.2)	44	(10.8)	81	(20.0)
Quality of the building in which the school is located	406	233	(57.4)	57	(14.0)	116	(28.6)
Quality of the school facilities, such as the gym, library, and labs	406	347	(85.5)	30	(7.4)	29	(7.1)
Use of technology within the instructional program	407	316	(77.6)	43	(10.6)	48	(11.8)
School discipline policies and practices	405	305	(75.3)	31	(7.7)	69	(17.0)
Quality of student support services, such as guidance counseling and tutoring	375	277	(68.1)	48	(11.8)	82	(20.1)
Extra-curricular activities	403	347	(86.1)	11	(2.7)	45	(11.2)
School size	399	321	(80.5)	26	(6.5)	52	(13.0)
School climate							

Table 48
Satisfaction with Outcomes from Stated Concerns to School

Component	Total N	Very/Somewhat Satisfied		Not Too Satisfied/Quite Dissatisfied		Not Sure or N/A	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Outcome satisfaction	175	124	(70.9)	42	(24.0)	9	(5.1)

Student Survey

Table 49
Year in Current School

Total N	One N (%)	Two N (%)	Three N (%)	Four N (%)
2,838	989 (34.8)	826 (29.1)	356 (12.5)	667 (23.5)

Table 50
Type of Previous School

Total N	This Is My First School N (%)	Traditional Public School N (%)	Home School N (%)	Private School N (%)	Different Charter School N (%)
2,826	312 (11.0)	2,123 (75.1)	97 (3.4)	126 (4.5)	168 (5.9)

Table 51
Student Self-Reported Interest in School Work

Total N	Very N (%)	Somewhat N (%)	Just a Little N (%)	Not at All N (%)
2,845	868 (30.5)	1,262 (44.4)	475 (16.7)	240 (8.4)

Table 52
Academic Success at Current School

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Good N (%)	Average N (%)	Poor N (%)	Not Sure/NA N (%)
2,842	597 (21.0)	1,051 (37.0)	632 (22.2)	150 (5.3)	412 (14.5)

Table 53
Rating of Previous School

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Good N (%)	Average N (%)	Poor N (%)	Not Sure/NA N (%)
2,815	503 (17.9)	758 (26.9)	665 (23.6)	384 (13.6)	505 (17.9)

Table 54
Rating of Current School

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Very Good N (%)	Good N (%)	Fair N (%)	Poor N (%)
2,850	790 (27.7)	746 (26.2)	700 (24.6)	409 (14.4)	205 (7.2)

Table 55
Number of Students in Classroom

Total N	Too Many Students in My Class N (%)	It Is about Right N (%)
2,838	346 (12.2)	2492 (87.8)

Table 56
Rating of Building Where School Is Located

Total N	Excellent N (%)	Very Good N (%)	Good N (%)	Fair N (%)	Poor N (%)
2,851	540 (18.9)	632 (22.2)	874 (30.7)	547 (19.2)	258 (9.0)

Table 57
Desire to Return to Current School Next Year

Total N	Yes, Definitely N (%)	Kind of N (%)	No N (%)	Graduating to Another School N (%)
2,832	1,092 (38.6)	755 (26.7)	494 (17.4)	491 (17.3)

Administrator Survey

Table 58
Years at Current School

Years	Total N	(%)
First year	2	(8.7)
Two years	5	(21.7)
Three years	1	(4.3)
Four years	5	(21.7)
Five+ years	10	(43.5)
Total	23	(100.0)

Table 59
Respondents' Level of Education

Education Level	N	%
Bachelor's or 4-year degree	4	(17.4)
Master's degree	15	(65.2)
Doctoral or advanced degree	3	(13.0)
Other	1	(4.3)
Total	23	(100.0)

Table 60
Charter School Exceptions/Waivers

Exception/Waiver	Number of Respondents	Percent ^a
Teacher certification requirements	19	90.5
Collective bargaining provisions	2	9.5
Establishing curriculum	7	33.3
Teacher hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices	12	57.1
Student discipline policies	2	9.5
Resource allocations	2	9.5
School calendar	7	19.0
School year length	5	33.3
School day length	6	23.8

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

Table 61
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	12	11	(91.7)	1	(8.3)	0	(.0)
Identification of a board director	12	11	(91.7)	1	(8.3)	0	(.0)
Clear procedures for the selection of board members	11	10	(90.9)	1	(9.1)	0	(.0)
Formal orientation and training sessions for board members	11	7	(63.6)	3	(27.3)	1	(9.1)
Decision-making flow charts	11	5	(45.5)	5	(45.5)	1	(9.1)
Formal processes for developing school policy	11	10	(90.9)	1	(9.1)	0	(.0)
Functioning executive committee	11	7	(63.6)	4	(36.4)	0	(.0)
Open lines of communication	11	11	(100.0)	0	(.0)	0	(.0)
Implementation of open board meetings	11	11	(100.0)	0	(.0)	0	(.0)
Sharing of agendas and other important information before board meetings	11	9	(81.8)	2	(18.2)	0	(.0)
Commitment to strategic planning	11	7	(63.6)	4	(36.4)	0	(.0)
Clear, up-to-date by-laws	11	10	(90.9)	1	(9.1)	0	(.0)
Formal plan for family and community involvement	11	9	(81.8)	2	(18.2)	0	(.0)
Use of advisory committees	11	8	(72.7)	3	(27.3)	0	(.0)
Responsibility of fund raising	10	8	(80.0)	2	(20.0)	0	(.0)
Use of available funds for continued development	11	7	(63.6)	4	(36.4)	0	(.0)

Table 62
Ethnicity of Charter School Staff

Racial/Ethnic Background of Staff	Type of School	%
White	Open Enrollment	71.6
	Conversion	64.5
African American	Open Enrollment	19.1
	Conversion	6.1
Hispanic/Latino	Open Enrollment	2.2
	Conversion	0.4

Table 63
Percentage of Staff That Had Full State Certification

Type of School	N of Respondents	%
Open Enrollment	12	18.8
Conversion	11	43.7

Table 64
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	11.8
Private fundraising/grants development	2	11.8
Lack of tenure of teachers	4	23.5
Performance-based bonuses for teachers	6	35.3
Ongoing, targeted professional development	10	58.8
Rewards for teachers for exemplary performance	7	41.2
Dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory performance	9	52.9
Contract for professional development services with non-district providers	5	29.4
Other charter status	0	0

^aTotal % does not equal 100% because respondents were allowed to choose multiple responses.

Table 65
Number of Professional Development Days Offered

Type of School	Total N	Avg. (%)
Open Enrollment	12	11.2
Conversion	11	10.8

Table 66
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=22)	1	(4.5)	7	(31.8)	10	(45.5)	4	(18.2)
Level of parental involvement concerning participation in school-wide events or activities (N=22)	1	(4.5)	5	(22.7)	11	(50.0)	5	(22.7)
Level of community involvement at this school (N=22)	1	(4.5)	10	(45.5)	5	(22.7)	6	(27.3)

Table 67
Main Reasons Why Parents Choose Charter Schools

Reason	Parent Survey (N = 1419)	Administrator Survey (N = 113)
Interest in the charter school's education mission or philosophy	221 (54.0%)	13 (61.9%)
Child was doing poorly in previous school	61 (14.9%)	14 (66.7%)
Dissatisfaction with traditional public school options and/or safety	185 (45.2%)	13 (61.9%)
Interest in the charter school's instructional or academic program	260 (63.6%)	17 (81.0%)
More convenient location than previous school	48 (11.7%)	3 (14.3%)
Child has special needs that previous school was not addressing	37 (9.0%)	9 (42.9%)
Better teachers at this charter school	108 (26.4%)	8 (38.1%)
My child wanted to come to this charter school	123 (30.1%)	9 (42.9%)
This charter school offers extended day hours/before- and after-school program	49 (12.0%)	6 (28.6%)
Small size of this charter school or small classes	144 (35.2%)	12 (57.1%)
Greater opportunities for parental involvement at this charter school	121 (29.6%)	8 (38.1%)
It is the only school available for my child to attend/not applicable	48 (11.7%)	1 (4.8%)
Other primary reasons	14 (3.4%)	1 (4.8%)

Table 68
Strategies at School That Involved Parents or Community Members, N=168

Strategies	N	%*
Conducting parent workshops	11	(50.0)
Inviting parents to attend staff trainings	7	(31.8)
Using parents and community volunteers to provide special instruction	11	(50.0)
Using community sites for service learning or work-based learning opportunities	12	(54.5)
Using the school as a community center	6	(27.3)
Implementing parent involvement contracts	5	(22.7)
Implementing parent teacher conferences	20	(90.9)
Involving parents in discipline related discussions	17	(77.3)
Involving parents in monitoring students' academic progress	19	(86.4)
Scheduling school events to accommodate parents' schedules	19	(86.4)
Creating learning partnerships with community-based organizations	10	(45.5)
Using community resources to enhance students' learning	10	(45.5)
Establishing parent and community advisory committees	11	(50.0)
Hiring a parent involvement coordinator and/or community liaison	10	(45.5)
Other strategies	0	0 (0)

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

Table 69
Requirements of Parents, N=27

Requirement	N	%*
Sign a contract with the school	8	(50.0)
Participate in a minimum number of hours at the school	3	(18.8)
Participate in a minimum number of activities	1	(6.3)
Participate on committees or the governance board	4	(25.0)
Attend parent meetings	11	(68.8)
Other requirements	0	0 (0)

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

Table 70
Primary Methods for Delivering Instruction, N=16

Methods	N	%*
Interdisciplinary instruction	12	(54.5)
Team teaching	6	(27.3)
Project-based or hands-on learning	18	(81.8)
Regular integration of technology	15	(68.2)
Character education	11	(50.0)
Individualized/tailored instruction	11	(50.0)
Direct instruction	12	(54.5)
Foreign language immersion	2	(9.1)

Methods	N	%*
Theme-based curriculum	7	(31.8)
Multigrade classrooms	3	(13.6)
School-to-work concepts and strategies	3	(13.6)
Regular integration of fine arts	5	(22.7)
Alternative or authentic assessing	7	(31.8)
Work-based or field-based learning	5	(22.7)
Cooperative learning	14	(63.6)
Reduced or small class size	13	(59.1)
Year round or extended schooling	5	(22.7)
Extended school day	8	(36.4)
Distance learning and/or instruction via Internet	4	(18.2)
Independent study	2	(9.1)
None	0	0 (0)
Other methods	0	0 (0)

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

Table 71
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	(%)
22	11	(50.0)	4	(18.2)	2	(9.1)	5	(22.7)

Table 72
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	(%)
41	11	(52.4)	13	(61.9)	17	(81.0)	0	(0)	0	(0)

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

Table 73
Services Available for English Language Learner Students

Total N	Self-Contained Bilingual Education		English as a Second Language Instruction		None		Other	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
19	0	(0)	10	(52.6)	9	(47.4)	0	(0)

Table 74
Assessment Strategies Used

Strategies	N	(%)*
Teacher assigned grades	18	(81.8)
Student portfolios	13	(59.1)
Standardized achievement tests	18	(81.8)
State benchmark exams	20	(90.9)
State EOC exams	15	(68.2)
Student demonstrations or exhibitions	14	(63.6)
Student interviews or surveys	7	(31.8)
Behavioral indicators	10	(45.5)
Other performance-based tests	10	(45.5)
Other assessment	0	0 (0)

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

Table 75
Reported Issues/Challenges in Implementing the Charter School

Area	Total		Yes		No		Not Sure	
	N		N	%	N	%	N	%
Charter school organization	22		4	(18.2)	17	(77.3)	1	(4.5)
Charter school board of operations	22		2	(9.1)	19	(86.4)	1	(4.5)
General school administration	22		2	(9.1)	19	(86.4)	1	(4.5)
Fiscal and business management	22		5	(22.7)	16	(72.7)	1	(4.5)
Personnel	22		14	(63.6)	14	(63.6)	0	(.0)
Managing public perceptions and public relations	22		9	(40.9)	13	(59.1)	0	(.0)
Facility management	22		5	(22.7)	16	(72.7)	1	(4.5)
Selecting and implementing curricula	22		4	(18.2)	18	(81.8)	0	(.0)
Increasing parent and community involvement	22		8	(36.4)	14	(63.6)	0	(.0)
Designing/ delivering professional development	22		5	(22.7)	17	(77.3)	0	(.0)
Facility costs	22		6	(27.3)	16	(72.7)	0	(.0)
Other challenges	22		4	(18.2)	11	(50.0)	7	(31.8)

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

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2007-2008 CHARTER SCHOOL EVALUATION
Student Survey

Directions: Using a pencil or pen, please answer the following questions by completely filling in the circle next to your choice. These questions should be answered about your previous school year, 2007–2008. After finishing, please insert your survey in the envelope your teacher has.

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?
 This is my first school Attended a traditional public school Was home schooled
 Attended a private school Attended a *different* charter school

5. How interested were you in your school work last year (2007–2008 school year)?
 Very Somewhat Just a little Not at all

6. How were your grades at this school last year (2007–2008)?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Not sure or I was not at this school last year

7. If you went to another school before this one, how would you rate your previous school?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Not sure This is my first school

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

9. How did you feel about the number of students in your classes last year (2007–2008)?
 Too many students are in my classes It is about right

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

11. Do you want to return to this school next year?
 Yes, definitely Kind of No 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 during the **2007–2008 school year**. 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=2Vljg2UQyaGI61lIZGvCLQ_3d_3d.

Background Information

1. Name of your child’s school in 2007–2008?

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?
 Traditional public school Home school
 Private school Another charter school
4. How many of your children were enrolled in this charter school last year (2007–2008)? _____
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:
 NOT APPLICABLE
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 in 2007–2008?
 Excellent Good Average Poor Failing

Charter School Satisfaction

9. How satisfied were you with specific features of this charter school during 2007–2008?

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. 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 |

g. 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 |

h. 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 |

i. 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 |

j. 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 |

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

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <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. Extracurricular activities (i.e., sports programs, after-school clubs or activities)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <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 |

m. School size

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

n. School climate (i.e., the feel or tone of everyday life at the school)

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

10. Did you express any concerns or issues to your child's school during the 2007–2008 school year?

- Yes No

- If yes, how satisfied were you with the outcome?

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

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

a. The quality of school's reading instruction

- Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

b. The quality of school's math instruction

- Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

c. The quality of school's writing instruction

- Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

d. School safety

- Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

e. School facilities

- Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

f. Parent involvement or participation

- Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

g. Extra help or special services for students when needed

- Much better Somewhat better About the same Somewhat worse Much worse

12. How would you rate the overall quality of your child's previous school?

- Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

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

- Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

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

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

Thank you for completing this survey.

Arkansas Charter School Administrator 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 2007-2008 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:

This is my first year

1 year

2 years

3 years

4 years

5+ years

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

*** 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):

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

*** 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 2007-2008 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. 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)

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

10. Open Enrollment Schools only: Which of the following were regular practices of the charter school board during the 2007-2008 school year for this school?

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

3.

III. Teachers

*** 11. Please indicate the number of paid instructional staff that your school employed during 2007-2008, including both part-time and full-time staff?**

Full-time

Part-time

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

12. Please give us an estimate of the percentage (%) of staff that fall into each racial/ethnic background category among your school's 2007-2008 paid instructional staff, including both full-time and part-time staff:

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

* 13. Among the full-time instructional staff, how many had full state certification for the subjects/areas they taught in your school during the 2007-2008 school year?

* 14. 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 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) | |

* 15. How many teacher professional development days did your charter school offer during the 2007-2008 year?

During the school year:

During the summer following:

4.

[IV. Students/Parents](#)

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

*** 16. 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"/> | |

*** 17. 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
- None
- Other (please specify)
-

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

*** 18. 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"/>				

*** 19. Which of the following strategies used at this school involved parents or other members of the community during the 2007-2008 school year?**

(Check ALL that apply)

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

*** 20. In 2007-2008, 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"/> Sign a contract with the school | <input type="checkbox"/> Participate on committees or the governance board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in a minimum number of hours at the school | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend parent meetings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in a minimum number of activities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
_____ | |

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

* 21. For parents who withdrew their child from your school after the 2007-2008 school year, what would you say were the main reasons why, besides moving to another District (choose all that apply)?

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

5.

V. Educational Program

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

*** 22. Last year (2007-2008), what were the primary methods for delivering instruction to students at your charter school? (Check ALL that apply)**

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

*** 23. 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

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

- Yes
- No

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

25. If you answered "YES" to Q.24, what accommodations are available for students with special needs?

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

*** 26. How many of your students were identified as having limited English proficiency during the 2007-2008 year?**

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

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

*** 28. Which of the following student assessment strategies or methods were used at this school in 2007-2008?**

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

6.

[VI. Wrap Up](#)

Arkansas Charter School Administrator Survey

* 29. 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 2007-2008.

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

Other (please specify)

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

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!