

CHARTER SCHOOL BASICS: THE FACTS

1 Educate Before you Advocate

With a national narrative that continues to perpetuate myths about charter schools, we want to help you advocate not only for your charter school, but the entire Colorado charter community.

MYTHS

- Are Private
- Are for profit
- Take money from public schools
- Charge tuition
- Only serve some students
- Are too strict, run like prisons
- Are religious schools

FACTS

- Public not private
- Nonprofit organizations
- Tuition free
- For ALL students, not just some
- Held to the same standards and assessments as other public schools
- Not religious
- Publicly funded

2 Charter Flexibility and Accountability

Charter schools have the freedom to:

- choose their mission and vision
- choose their curricula
- determine the length of their school day and year
- hire teachers and staff without contract limitations
- spend resources in ways that make sense for their program

Charter schools are accountable:

- for academic results measured against state standards and assessments
- for compliance with state and federal laws
- for audited financials as a nonprofit
- to a local board of directors
- to parents, local board and their authorizer
- for the terms of their charter contract

3 What is a Charter?

A charter school in Colorado is a tuition-free public school established by a group of parents, teachers and/or community members as a semi-autonomous public school of choice that operates via a contract or "charter" between the school's board and an authorizer, such as the local school district or, in some cases, the Colorado Charter School Institute.



How We Compare

Key Metrics	Charter Run	District Run
Academic standards and assessments	●	●
Compliance with state and federal laws	●	●
School-level flexibility	●	⊘
Equitable access to state funds	●	●
Equitable access to federal and local funds	⊘	●
Financial transparency requirements	●	●
Have performance-based contracts that can be taken away	●	⊘



Colorado Charter Schools

Charter Growth

1993: Charter law passed
 1997: 51 schools
 2003: 98 schools
 2013: 202 schools
2021: 261 schools

Data – Our Reach

130,000+ students
15% of all public school students
44 districts + CSI authorize all Colorado charter schools

Impact – Our Results

Across nearly all achievement categories, charter schools outperform state averages

Get Involved

ACT Advocacy Network – Join Us!

ACT is an action-oriented network of public charter school families, staff, and community supporters building knowledge and skills to leverage our collective power as a charter school community. We're protecting what we have, making sure our schools have what we need and what our students deserve. Our advocacy efforts are focusing on state policy, district initiatives, and on electing school board members and state legislators who agree that ALL Colorado children deserve access to high-quality public school options, including charter schools.

ACT Advocacy Network

- A strong and active community of supporters
- Issue education
- Skill building
- Regular and accessible communication
- Different and easy ways to take action
- Leverage influence and power of scale

Use your phone's camera to take a picture of this QR code which will take you to the ACT sign up page, or visit the below link.

