



NORTH CAROLINA
COALITION FOR
CHARTER SCHOOLS

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

We protect and promote public charter schools.

Contents

From the Board Chair	1
Mission & Vision	2
Advocacy	3
2025 Charter Advocacy Summit	4
Communications	6
Education	7
Finances	8
Member Schools	10
Coalition Team	12
From the Executive Director	13
Thank you to our Coalition Champions!	BACK COVER

“The Coalition has had a tremendous impact. They do a lot of work to fight for policies that support the growth of quality charter schools.”

– BRUCE FRIEND, Chair, Charter Schools Review Board (CSRB), and Head of School, Pine Springs Preparatory Academy



Our mission still inspires us.



JONATHAN BRYANT

I'm excited to share the Coalition's 2024 Annual Report with you. As you'll see in these pages, the past year was one of action and change, culminating in our first major leadership transition since the Coalition's 2018 launch.

Lindalyn Kakadelis, a

Coalition founder, retired in February 2025 as our executive director. Already, her successor Dave Machado has his strong and steady hand at the helm.

Dave is a veteran charter leader and a familiar face to many Coalition members and supporters. A talented, savvy, and inspirational charter operator, Dave led Lincoln Charter for 14 years, and I was fortunate to work with him during this time. He later headed up the state's Office of Charter Schools and served as the state superintendent for Charter Schools USA. Clearly, the breadth of Dave's experience in the charter sector makes him uniquely qualified to lead the Coalition, and it will ensure our leadership transition is smooth.

Throughout 2024, the Coalition also continued much fruitful advocacy work at the General Assembly—and since this was an election year, we engaged in voter education efforts as well. I would like to highlight just a few accomplishments in these areas. At the legislature, we secured growth funding for charter schools on a recurring basis and worked to safeguard charter

flexibility. During the election, we solicited and shared the candidates' views on charters, and we recommended a slate of pro-charter legislative candidates. These efforts were highly effective: Most candidates we recommended prevailed at the polls.

In addition, we hosted our third annual Charter Advocacy Summit in early 2025—with a sold-out crowd! Over 250 industry experts, sponsors, and charter leaders registered to attend this year's Summit, representing 89 North Carolina charter schools.

As I and other Coalition Board members reflect on 2024, we are reminded of this reality: Change is inevitable in any organization. As charter school leaders, we already know how to be agile and innovative; it is part of our charter school DNA. Yet, we also understand the importance of holding fast to what is good and true. Such a description certainly fits the Coalition's mission. Amid a season of change, that very good mission and the mandate it inspires still endure: *We protect and promote public charter schools.*

As always, none of our accomplishments would be possible without your partnership and support. Thank you for allowing us to be your charter school voice in Raleigh.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JB'.

JONATHAN BRYANT, ED.D.

Board Chair, North Carolina Coalition for Charter Schools
Chief Administrator, Lincoln Charter School, Lincolnton, NC

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jonathan Bryant, Chair

Chief Administrator, Lincoln Charter School

Shelly Shope, Vice Chair

Headmaster, Pinnacle Classical Academy

Helen Nance, Secretary

Chief Administrative Officer, Gray Stone Day School

Gregg Sinderson, Treasurer

Board Member, Pine Springs Preparatory Academy
North Carolina Development Director, Charter One

Sandeep Aggarwal

Assistant Director, Sallie B. Howard School of Arts & Science

Donald Bryson

Chief Executive Officer, John Locke Foundation

Megan DeKraker

Director of Growth & Corporate Development,
National Heritage Academies

Paula Jackson

Vice President of Government Policy & Board Relations,
Charter Schools USA

Garrett McNeill

Board Member, Sugar Creek Charter School
Real Estate Acquisition & Development,
Movement Foundation

Andrew Mocer

Executive Director, Pine Lake Preparatory

Shannon Stein

Superintendent, Lake Norman Charter School

Robert (Bob) Touchton

Sales Specialist Charter Schools,
Anthony Property Group (APG)

Michael Way

Southeast Division President, Charter One

Dave Machado

Executive Director,
North Carolina Coalition for Charter Schools

Mission

The Coalition serves member schools by keeping charter school stakeholders actively informed of legislative issues, advocating for equal charter school funding, and seeking autonomy of schools at both statutory and regulatory levels.

Vision

The Coalition is the leading voice in North Carolina's school choice movement, while keeping charter school leaders apprised of policy and legislative issues affecting their success. We work to communicate, educate, and advocate.



Advocacy

The Coalition secured big wins at the North Carolina General Assembly in 2024, pushing to safeguard charter autonomy and obtain favorable charter funding provisions.

Legislative achievements:

- Securing charter enrollment growth funding in a contingency reserve, on a recurrent basis.
- Ensuring charter school teachers received uniform benefits and funding, regardless of their employment structure.
- Creating a new opportunity for all charter schools to participate in the State Health Plan—and providing for four named charter schools to join the State Health Plan during 2024.
- Ensuring passage of provisions favorable to charter schools impacted by Hurricane Helene, including hold harmless guarantees, calendar and remote instruction flexibility, enrollment protections for displaced students, and more.
- Protecting Charter Schools Review Board (CSRB) authority by eliminating the State Superintendent's role in appealing CSRB decisions.

*North Carolina House Speaker
Destin Hall presents opening remarks
at the Coalition's Advocacy Summit.*

Regulatory advocacy:

- Pushing to retain reasonable and fair academic comparability standards in charter renewal guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.
- Ensuring flexibility for charter schools with students' high school transcripts.
- Securing clarification in State Board of Education policy that offering a three-year pathway to graduation is optional for charter schools.



Other advocacy efforts:

- Advocating for rapid distribution of growth funding to the state's charter schools by the Department of Public Instruction.
- Filing an amicus brief in a court case (*SchooldevEast, LLC v. Town of Wake Forest*) impacting charter development and land use decisions. In December 2024, the N.C. Supreme Court ruled in favor of SchooldevEast, LLC, representing an important win for charter schools engaged in land use disputes.
- Working with education researchers to gauge the level of need for charter facility funding through an online survey to the state's charter operators.
- Organizing a group of Durham charter schools and providing resources to help them pursue fair local funding.

“Some of the best environments for innovation that we've seen across North Carolina and across the country have been charter schools.”

– HOUSE SPEAKER DESTIN HALL
(R-Caldwell)

2025 Charter Advocacy Summit

The Coalition hosted the third annual Charter Advocacy Summit in Raleigh in February 2025, with record participation from North Carolina's charter school stakeholders. More than 250 attendees, speakers, and sponsors registered to participate in the 2025 Summit, with representation from 89 charter schools. Generous support from 35 corporate sponsors made the Summit possible.



Dave Machado, the Coalition's new executive director, speaks at the Summit.

The event launched with an evening reception honoring state lawmakers. The next day, North Carolina House Speaker Destin Hall (R-Caldwell) opened the Summit, sharing remarks about school choice and recent legislation creating the CSRB.

In addition, Senator Brad Overcash (R-Gaston), Rep. Hugh Blackwell (R-Burke), and Rep. James Roberson (D-Wake) spoke to attendees about legislative advocacy and the power of charter school innovation. Charter leaders and industry experts shared insights about charter school excellence, Student Information Systems, state and local funding, CSRB trends, and more.

During the Summit, outgoing Coalition Executive Director Lindalyn Kakadelis and Coalition founder Richard Vinroot presented Cheryl Turner with the Coalition's Leadership Award. One of the most successful and tenured charter leaders in North Carolina, Turner is the superintendent of Sugar Creek Charter School.

At the conclusion of the Summit, Coalition Board Chair Jonathan Bryant presented Lindalyn Kakadelis with the Coalition's Lifetime Leadership Award—citing appreciation and awe for her decades of tireless advocacy supporting charter schools.



TOP: Lindalyn Kakadelis and Richard Vinroot present Cheryl Turner with the Coalition's Leadership Award.



BOTTOM: Accompanied by Coalition Board member Paula Jackson, Board Chair Jonathan Bryant presents Lindalyn Kakadelis with the Coalition's Lifetime Leadership Award.

RIGHT PAGE: A sold-out crowd attends the Coalition's third annual Advocacy Summit.



“Public charter schools are not our enemy. They are part of our community. It’s a new way of thinking, a new way of engaging—and it’s a wonderful opportunity to enhance educational opportunities for our young ones.”

– REP. JAMES ROBERSON (D-Wake)



The color guard team of Paul R. Brown Leadership Academy performs at the Summit.



Communications

Coalition communications efforts focused on promoting charter and legislative successes—and sharing North Carolina’s charter school story.

Key achievements:

- Promoting charter schools extensively in the media. The Coalition drove media coverage by distributing press releases, placing op-eds, pitching stories, and participating in media interviews.
- Garnering numerous Coalition media mentions in outlets including the *Charlotte Observer*, *News & Observer*, *EdNC*, *North State Journal*, *Carolina Journal*, and more.
- Publishing original Q&A interviews and articles on the Coalition blog featuring charter school leaders, teachers, industry experts, and other stakeholders.
- Sending nearly 100 email campaigns to charter school leaders through *Coalition Connection* and *Charter Chatter* newsletters. *Connection* newsletters provided members with updates on State Board of Education and CSRB actions, along with legislative summaries from the N.C. General Assembly.
- Sending a legislative media kit to communications directors for North Carolina House and Senate leaders during National Charter Schools Week.
- Publishing a monthly parent newsletter, *CharterBeat*, to inform charter parents about policy debates impacting charter schools and build a database of parent advocates.

“You all bring that information [about charter schools] to us, and it's invaluable.”

**– REP. HUGH BLACKWELL
(R-Burke)**



Rep. Hugh Blackwell shares the legislative forecast at the Summit.

Education

Education work encompassed sharing candidates' views on charter schools and keeping charter leaders and key stakeholders apprised of major legislative and policy developments.

Voter education:

- Soliciting candidates' views on charter schools through a charter questionnaire, distributed in partnership with the N.C. Association for Public Charter Schools. Candidate responses were published on the Coalition website on a 2024 Election page.
- Conducting outreach to Council of State candidates and hosting virtual town halls with four candidates who responded: Maurice "Mo" Green and Michele Morrow for State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Brad Briner for State Treasurer; and Hal Weatherman for Lieutenant Governor.
- Recommending a non-partisan slate in the primary election of 18 candidates who supported charter schools; conducting outreach to charter parents in four targeted counties to share local candidate recommendations prior to the primary election.
- Releasing a non-partisan slate of recommendations in the general election of 77 N.C. House and 30 N.C. Senate candidates who supported charter schools. For the House seats, 74 recommended candidates won; for the Senate seats, 29 recommended candidates won.

Other education initiatives:

- Hosting bi-weekly updates for Coalition member schools during the legislative session, covering legislation with charter school impacts.
- Keeping charter leaders informed about issues impacting their success through Zoom sessions addressing hurricane relief, enrollment growth funding, Title IX updates, and election results.
- Ensuring lawmaker awareness of charter successes—through student recognition during National Charter Schools Week and letters to lawmakers in districts with top-ranked charter schools.
- Honoring former State Superintendent Catherine Truitt as a "Champion for Charter Schools."
- Holding a dance video contest for National School Choice Week 2024, with the winner—Community Charter School (CCS)—submitting a video that attracted national attention. CCS produced the dance video tutorial for National School Choice Week 2025.

"What this group does is so important in helping educate us as legislators on what's happening in the charter school space ... I'm very grateful for this group."

**– SENATOR BRAD OVERCASH
(R-Gaston)**



Senator Brad Overcash speaks at the Summit about legislation and charter schools.

Finances

REVENUE

Independent school dues	\$255,320
CMO/EMO* dues	75,660
Corporate partnerships/sponsorships	107,450
Donations	28,000
Events	14,804
Interest [▲]	4,328
Total Revenue	\$485,562

School member dues account for 68% of revenue.

*CMOs are charter management organizations and EMOs are education management organizations.

[▲]Interest is from money market, savings, and checking accounts. Funds in the money market account totaled \$161,817 at the end of 2024.

EXPENSES

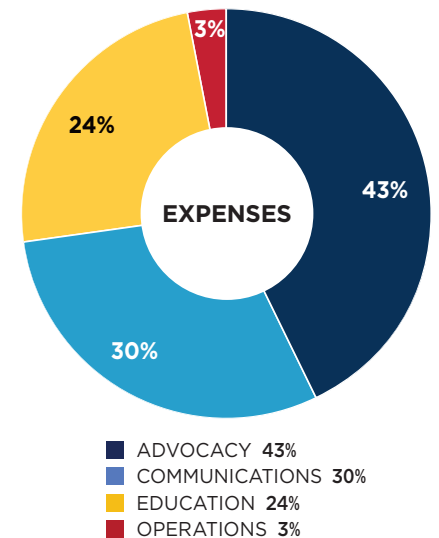
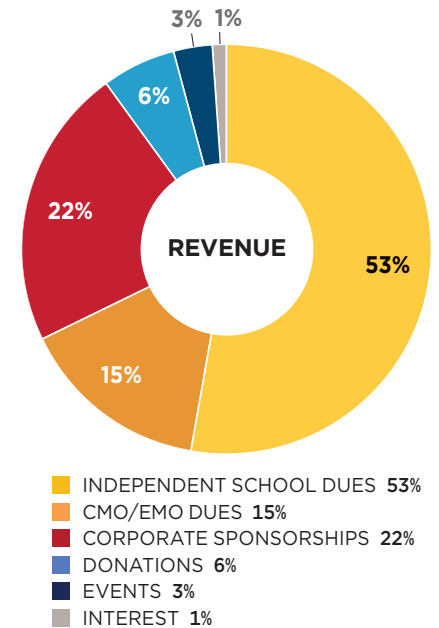
Advocacy	\$191,025
Communications	135,641
Education	106,592
Operations	14,710
Total Expenses	\$447,968

Advocacy expenses targeted lobbying fees and expenses; legal fees; and half of the executive director's salary.

Communications costs included funding public relations and communications consultants; website hosting and development; email marketing and Zoom services; Adobe software; and video and photo costs.

Education expenses went to planning and execution of the Advocacy Summit; voter education for the 2024 election, including candidate surveys, town hall events, and social media ads; school awards; half of the executive director's salary; annual report costs; and a contribution to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools.

Operations spending included a Coalition Board retreat; travel expenses; accounting and other software; insurance; conference fees; meals; office supplies and gifts; and bank fees.





Member Schools

Coalition membership includes independent schools as well as schools that partner with EMOs or CMOs. Member schools are both large and small. Some opened nearly three decades ago—while others are relatively new. We are proud of how diverse our Coalition member schools are!

The Year in Numbers

94 COALITION MEMBER SCHOOLS

44 EMO/CMO SCHOOLS

40 INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

10 READY TO OPEN SCHOOLS/
FIRST-YEAR OPERATING SCHOOLS

72k+ STUDENTS SERVED
BY COALITION MEMBER SCHOOLS

85k+ STUDENTS ON 2023-24
CHARTER SCHOOL WAITLISTS



Northeast Academy for Aerospace and Advanced Technologies (NEAAAT) marks recognition as a 2024 Yass Prize Semifinalist. Photo credit: NEAAAT.



Monica Dellinger (second from left) of Community Charter School and other leaders celebrate school recognition through Gaston Gazette's Community Choice awards. Photo credit: Community Charter School.

"We joined the Coalition this year, and I can honestly say it was the best decision that I could have made in my second year as the head of school ... The information that the Coalition has put out has been extremely helpful. Their legal guidance and webinars have been fantastic—and I know that our board is thrilled that we're part of the Coalition."

– PAUL REZZO, Headmaster, Millennium Charter Academy



Six students from TMSA meet with Rep. Erin Paré (R-Wake) at the General Assembly in a visit organized by the Coalition. Photo credit: TMSA Public Charter Schools.



CCS-Whiteville students cheer each other on during the school's annual FASTAR® testing competition. Photo credit: CCS-Whiteville.



Members of Union Academy's Varsity Cheerleading team pause for a photo. Photo credit: Union Academy.

“With the Coalition, schools can now say, ‘I’m not in this by myself. I truly have an organization that is fighting for me.’”

– DAVE MACHADO, Executive Director,
North Carolina Coalition for Charter Schools

Coalition Team

- Leadership in 2024 included Lindalyn Kakadelis, the Coalition's executive director, and thirteen directors—elected by Coalition member schools—who serve on the Coalition Board. Upon Lindalyn Kakadelis' retirement in February 2025, Dave Machado became the Coalition's new executive director.*
- Advocacy efforts in 2024 were led by lobbyists Harry Kaplan and Amanda Falkenbury of McGuireWoods Consulting as well as Lee Teague of Teague Advocacy. Matthew Tilley, a partner at Womble Bond Dickinson, serves as the Coalition's counsel. Dylan Reel and Story Oliver of Kilpatrick Townsend joined Harry Kaplan and Amanda Falkenbury on the Coalition's Government Relations Team in early 2025, following Lee Teague's departure.
- Communications initiatives are led by Kristen Blair, the Coalition's communications director, and Pat Ryan, the founder of Ryan Public Relations.

**The executive director is the Coalition's only regular, full-time employee. The Coalition's lobbyists, legal counsel, communications director, and public relations consultant all serve on a contractual basis.*

“The Coalition is the best thing that has happened to charter schools in North Carolina in the twenty-something years I’ve been here.”

– CHERYL TURNER, Superintendent,
Sugar Creek Charter School



Coalition Board member Paula Jackson and outgoing Coalition Executive Director Lindalyn Kakadelis share some heartfelt appreciation at the Summit.

We are your voice and partner in Raleigh.



DAVE MACHADO

Dear Coalition Friends:

Thank you for your trust in the Coalition and your support of our work. I am honored to lead this organization as its new executive director, and I truly value your partnership.

These are both auspicious and challenging times for public charter schools in North Carolina. State lawmakers passed legislation creating charter schools nearly three decades ago; since that time, charter schools have become a vital and respected part of North Carolina's K-12 education landscape. Extensive waitlists bear witness to soaring charter popularity and ongoing demand from families for high-quality charter school options.

But there are myriad challenges, too: How can we meet and maintain demand? Parents have many options and opportunities now—not only with charter schools, but also with private schools, homeschools, or even choices within the traditional public school system. It is thus imperative that charter schools continue to provide the best education they can.

Charter leaders must also operate in a difficult regulatory and funding environment. Regulatory creep can feel especially burdensome, and it stymies charter schools' mandate to innovate. Inequitable funding can hobble charter school

expansion and services, even as schools try to do more with less. These problems are precisely why the Coalition exists. Our organization was created to serve as a strong advocacy voice in Raleigh, safeguarding charter autonomy, deterring regulatory creep—and pushing for fair funding.

If you are a member school, I want you to know this: We are here to advocate for you. In the Coalition, you have a voice and partner in Raleigh.

If you are not yet a member, I invite you to become one. I also want you to know this: We need your support. The Coalition has accomplished great things so far, but we have a lot more to do. We must work tirelessly to retain charter-friendly legislators in the General Assembly. And we need to ensure that charter families and leaders, who have diverse beliefs politically, are all working together for the good of the charter school movement.

I know the Coalition is up to the task. Stand with us in the year ahead as we continue our work to protect and promote public charter schools.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Machado'.

DAVE MACHADO

Executive Director, North Carolina Coalition for Charter Schools

Thank you to our Coalition Champions!



“A huge part of why we want to serve as a sponsor for this organization is because we actually see real results.”

– ASHLEY CARY, Business Director, Hubrich Contracting



NORTH CAROLINA
COALITION FOR
CHARTER SCHOOLS

Learn more about the Coalition at
chartercoalition.org