

Get the Facts

New Jersey's Public Charter Schools

December 2023

What Is a Public Charter School?

Charter schools are **free, nonprofit public schools** that are open to all students. They operate with more flexibility than traditional public schools in exchange for increased accountability including rigorous financial, academic and operational standards.

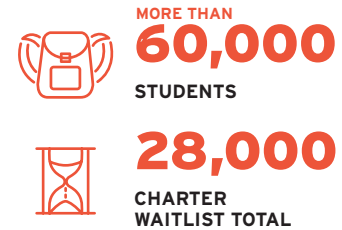
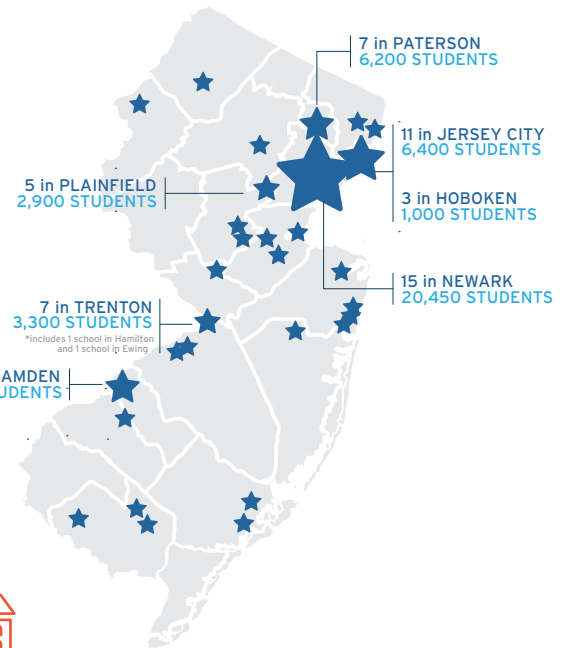
NEW JERSEY HAS

85 

CHARTER SCHOOLS

IN **44** CITIES

AND **18** COUNTIES



SOURCES: School count (2023-24 aid notices), Cities/Counties (NJDOE Public School Directory, pulled July 2023), SDA Market Share (FY23 State-aid Notices)



KEY DEMOGRAPHICS



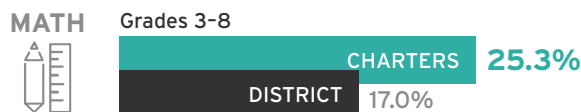
Public charter and renaissance schools serve **1 in 5 public school students** in NJ's 31 poorest communities (former Abbott/SDA districts).

Charter schools serve **14%** of all public school **Black students**.
Charter schools serve **6%** of all public school **Latino students**.

SOURCES: Enrollment Counts (2022-23 NJDOE Fall Enrollment File(ENR)), Waitlist (2021-22 Charter School Annual Reports)

PERFORMANCE

2021-22 Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations



Charter students are **43%** more likely to read at grade level, and **49%** more likely to do math at grade level.

Black and Latino and low-income Students are thriving in New Jersey's public charter schools and **outperforming** their district and statewide counterparts.

Economically Disadvantaged Charter Students

+14% in ELA
+9% in math

Black and Latino Charter Students

+15% in ELA
+9% in math

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES

Public charter schools, on average, spend \$2,000 per student for school buildings – money that would otherwise be spent on teachers or students in the classroom – but they have been excluded from most state facilities funding.



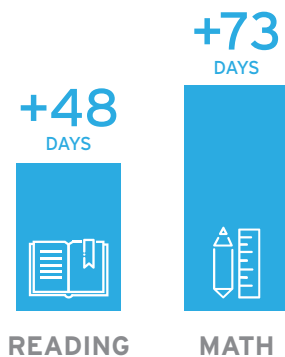
NEWARK'S CHARTER SCHOOLS

Providing a World Class Education

75% of Newark's charter school students are enrolled in a school beating the odds vs. 16% in the district.*

*2020 study from MarGrady Research

Newark charter schools post best student learning gains in the nation



Students learn more in Newark public charter schools with gains of **48 additional days per year in reading** and **73 additional days per year in math** when compared to the state average accounting for student characteristics. This outpaces the national finding that public charter school students nationally gained 16 days in reading and 6 days in math.

Source: 2022 Newark City Study; 2023 Stanford CREDO Report

FUNDING

Public Charter Schools Are Deeply Underfunded

More than 60,000 public school students in charter schools are not funded equitably in New Jersey. On average, public charter schools receive approximately \$4,600 less per student per year when compared to traditional district schools. Public charter schools also spend, on average, \$2,000 per student on facilities, and while the State has provided \$18.6 billion since 2001 to traditional district schools for school construction, public charter schools have received only \$35 million for minor building improvements.



CHARTERS RECEIVE
\$4,600
LESS PER STUDENT
Compared to traditional school districts

CHARTERS NEED OVER
\$1 BILLION
OVER THE NEXT DECADE FOR
SAFE AND SECURE FACILITIES

ACCOUNTABILITY TO FAMILIES

Public charter schools have **greater flexibility** to bring in new and creative approaches, and with that flexibility comes **greater accountability**. Public charter schools:



Provide **financial reports** to the state and conduct an annual audit



Must meet all state and federal **education standards**



Must be **renewed every five years**—and face closure if not delivering results

AUTONOMY EMPOWERS CREATIVITY

Public charter schools have more autonomy over their budgets, curriculum, and personnel than traditional districts. Teachers at public charter schools are empowered to use **creative approaches** to meet the individual needs of students in their classroom. Public charter schools include incredibly **diverse learning models**, including:



Hoboken Dual Language Charter School

Hoboken Dual Language Charter School provides an exceptional education in Spanish and English to develop engaged, well-rounded bilingual citizens with a global and multicultural perspective.



CAPS Asbury Park, which serves 95% Black and Latino students, had the third largest gains in the state last year in English Language Arts (ELA), significantly outperforming peers throughout the state. CAPS improved in every single grade level in the core subjects thanks to a deep focus on small-group, intensive tutoring.



Unity Charter School in Morristown infuses Education for Sustainability throughout the school culture. Student agency drives critical thinking and inspires advocacy through a constructivist learning approach so that students graduate ready to change the world for the better.



NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION

NJCharters.org