National Conference of State Legislatures: Lessons Learned From Charter Schools

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Charter School Landscape

State Charter School Laws

How many?

42 states and the District of Columbia

Where?

Everywhere but Alabama, Kentucky, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia

Charter Schools

	1991	2011
No. of Charter Schools	0	5,300
No. of Students	0	1.8 Million
Charter share of K-12 public school market	0	5%

The Condition of Education 2013, National Center for Education Statistics
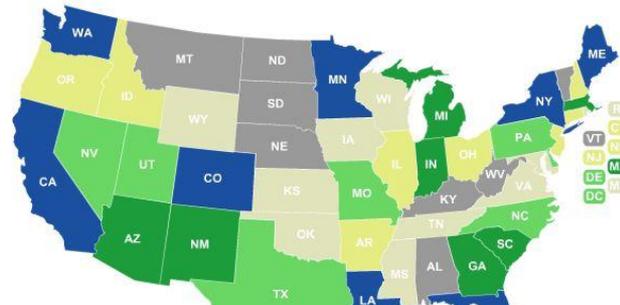
Model Law, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS)

Model Law Excerpts

- Fiscally and legally autonomous schools with independent charter school boards

- Authorizer and overall program accountability required

- Performance-based charter contracts required

- Clear student recruitment, enrollment, and lottery procedures (open enrollment)

- Equitable operational funding and equal access to all state and federal categorical funding

National Charter School Study 2013, Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO)

Compares charter school student performance in 26 states and New York City to traditional public schools those students would have attended.

- In reading, 25 percent of charters showed significantly stronger learning gains, 56 percent showed no significant difference, 19 percent were significantly weaker.
- In mathematics, 29 percent of charters showed significantly stronger learning gains, 40 percent showed no significant difference, 31 percent were significantly weaker.

Succeed or Close . . . or Turn Around

[The Role of Charter Restarts in School Reform](), August 2013, Public Impact/NewSchools Venture Fund, review of landscape and examples

[Fordham Sponsorship Accountability Report, 2011–2012](), 2012, Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, experience with Edison Schools, Inc., school improvement effort in Dayton, Ohio

Charter Intervention Spotlight I

State-Led Turnaround Models

Louisiana Recovery School District

- The Recovery School District (RSD) was established in 2003 as a special school district run by the LDOE to intervene in the management of persistently low-performing schools.

- Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) grades every public school on an A–F scale to provide families and educators with clear information on school performance.

Louisiana Recovery School District

- The RSD consists of 80 schools (68 in New Orleans), including direct-run schools and charter schools, and has agreements with school districts for managing schools that are eligible to be moved into the RSD. This turnaround model is designed to support school autonomy, accountability, and innovation.

- Charter school boards are comprised of parents, educators, alumni, community leaders, and local business leaders who ensure the schools thrive under the charter schools' leadership.

# Louisiana's Believe and Succeed School Transformation Initiative

In August 2013, the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education awarded over $5.7 million in grants to support the launch of new autonomous schools, school turnaround efforts, and leadership development initiatives.

It provides matching grants to local education agencies (LEAs), nonprofits, and individuals seeking to:

- Turnaround existing D and F schools or
- Create new high-quality autonomous schools for students who would otherwise attend underperforming schools.

Louisiana's Believe and Succeed School Transformation Initiative

Since 2007, the percent of students performing at grade level on state assessments in RSD schools in New Orleans has more than doubled.
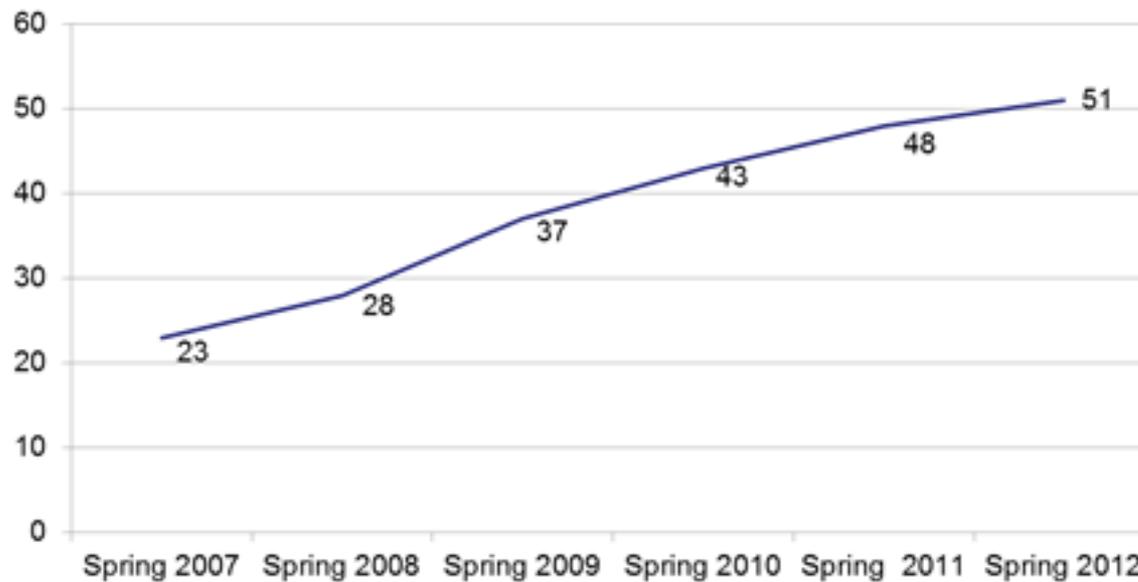
Tennessee's Achievement School District

- Modeled after the RSD in Louisiana, which took over the vast majority of poorly performing schools in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, Tennessee's ASD has the ability to take over and operate persistently poor-performing schools and LEAs across the state.

- ASD's first superintendent, Chris Barbic, founder of YES Prep Public Schools, was hired in 2011 and serves as a member of the Tennessee Department of Education's Senior Executive team.

Tennessee's Achievement School District

- Schools—16 in Memphis and Nashville—are held accountable for student performance across the following indicators:

  - Annual assessments in mathematics, reading, science, and social studies
  - Growth in student performance in mathematics and reading
  - Student perceptions of school culture and safety
  - Student attendance, discipline, and reenrollment

Tennessee's Achievement School District

ASD School Performance

MEMPHIS SCHOOLS

School	Sub	GrLev	2011 Rate	2012 Rate	DIFF	Sub	2011 Rate	2012 Rate	DIFF
Corning Elementary	Math	3-8	17.1%	16.2%	-0.9	RLA	11.8%	18.7%	6.9
Frayser Elementary	Math	3-8	10.7%	9.0%	-1.7	RLA	14.7%	16.9%	2.2
Humes Middle	Math	3-8	11.7%	15.2%	3.5	RLA	12.8%	18.6%	5.8
Lester School	Math	3-8	8.1%	12.6%	4.5	RLA	7.9%	13.4%	5.5
Westside Middle	Math	3-8	10.2%	18.6%	8.4	RLA	9.8%	16.9%	7.1

NASHVILLE SCHOOLS

School	Sub	GrLev	2011 Rate	2012 Rate	DIFF	Sub	2011 Rate	2012 Rate	DIFF
Brick Church Middle	Math	3-8	13.9%	17.7%	3.8	RLA	18.9%	19.9%	1.0

ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Charter Intervention Spotlight II

Charter Conversions

Charter Conversion: D.C. Charter Board Approves Howard Road Academy's Request to Restructure

- The D.C. Public Charter School Board approved Howard Road Academy Public Charter School's request to restructure its program and focus on early childhood. Beginning in the 2013–14 school year, now called Cedar Tree PCS, the school now serves only PK-3 through kindergarten students. It has terminated its management contract with CMO Mosaica Education, closed its middle school campus, and ceased offering Grades 1–6. Students currently enrolled in PK-3 or PK-4 were guaranteed enrollment in the restructured school.

Charter Conversion: D.C. Charter Board Approves Transaction Between Septima Clark PCS and Achievement Prep Academy PCS

- D.C. Public Charter School Board (PCSB) approved the acquisition of Septima Clark PCS by [Achievement Prep Academy PCS](). Septima Clark, the city's first all-boys school, relinquished its charter and closed at the end of the 2012–13 school year. Achievement Prep is a Tier 1 school that serves students in fourth through eighth grades. Both schools were located in Ward 8.

- As part of the acquisition agreement, Achievement Prep received Septima's assets and enrolled Septima students in Grades K–6 for the 2013–14 school year. Achievement Prep will provide deferred admission into kindergarten until the 2014–15 school year.

Charter Conversion: D.C. Charter Board Approves Transaction Between Septima Clark PCS and Achievement Prep Academy PCS

- Septima Clark's Board of Trustees decided on this conversion after scoring below the state average on the District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) for the last three years. It was rated a low Tier 2 school in 2012, earning only 37.1 percent on PCSB's Performance Management Framework (PMF). The school's lease expired in June 2012, and it was difficult for the school to receive financial assistance to rent or buy a permanent facility.

- PCSB approved Achievement Prep's separate request to expand its charter to serve Grades PK through 3, adopt the PMF for its performance goals, and increase its enrollment ceiling from 315 students to 765 students.

STRIVE Preparatory Schools

- Chartered by the Denver Public Schools (DPS) Board of Education, STRIVE Preparatory Schools was founded as one public charter school called West Denver Preparatory Charter School on August 14, 2006, with a mission to provide a rigorous, college-preparatory public education for underserved middle school students in Southwest Denver.

- Starting with a sixth-grade class, the school grew one grade each year through eighth grade. A second middle school opened in 2009.

- In 2010, STRIVE Prep opened four cohorts of schools, each composed of two middle schools and one high school. **Lake Campus**, formerly a district school that was designated as a re-start through SIG, was one of those schools.

STRIVE Preparatory Schools

- In August 2012, the network adopted a new name of STRIVE Preparatory Schools to better reflect its seven public charter schools across the Denver metro area, where 1,730 students and 185 staff learn and work.

- The schools represent the neighborhoods they serve, with over 90 percent of students qualifying for federal free or reduced-price lunch and over 95 percent students of color across the network.

- In 2012, STRIVE Prep has four of the top nine secondary schools in the district on the DPS School Performance Framework, and four of the top 11 secondary schools in the district for academic growth on the Colorado Growth Model.

STRIVE Preparatory Schools – Network Support

The STRIVE Prep CMO provides centralized services and oversight to each of the schools through a Central Office. This structure supports consistency in the replication of the STRIVE Prep program through centralized coaching and management of school leaders, network-level facilitation of finances, operations and supports lower costs for contracted services. Below are specific support areas:

- Management and evaluation of school leaders

- Finance and budgeting

- Operations and contracted services

- CMO fees

- School site visit

STRIVE Preparatory Schools – Lake Campus

Each campus implements a series of best practices among high-performing urban charter schools serving low-income students of color with a college preparatory education. Those practices include the following:

- A longer school day

- A discipline system with clear rewards and consequences

- Two hours of nightly homework

- Ample use of technology in the classroom

- Enrolling students primarily through a door-to-door recruitment campaign

- A parent engagement plan that includes home visits

- A three-week teacher training program

- A system of regular assessments and data-driven interventions

STRIVE Preparatory Schools – Lake Campus

- Founded: August 2010

- Facility: Leased, shared district facility on the Lake Campus

- Grades Served and 2012 Enrollment: 6–8; 307 open enrollment with district attendance boundary preference

- 2012–13 Demographics: 96% FRL; 97% students of color; 45% ELL; 15% SPED

- 2012–13 Reenrollment Rate: 73%

- 2011–12 Average Daily Attendance: 93%

STRIVE Preparatory Schools – Lake Campus

2011–12 Achievement Highlights:

- No. 7 secondary school in DPS on the 2011 School Performance Framework; "Distinguished" rating

- No. 20 school in DPS for academic growth on the Colorado Department of Education's 2012 Colorado Growth Model

2012–13 Achievement Highlights:

- Ranked as either a "Distinguished" (Blue) or a "Meets Expectations" (Green) school on the DPS School Performance Framework each year since its opening in 2010

- More information can be found online in the annual report: http://spf.dpsk12.org/

Charter Intervention Spotlight III

Collaboration

Denver Public Schools

Mission:

"To provide all students the opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to become contributing citizens in our society."

Vision:

"Every Child Succeeds."

Denver Public Schools

Schools	Students	Languages	Employees
Total Schools: 185 for 2013–14 school year **ECE: 3** **Elementary: 85** **K–8: 18** **K–12: 4** **Middle: 26** **6–12: 14** **High (traditional): 35**	Student Enrollment: 84,424 1% American Indian 3% Asian 15% Black 58% Hispanic 20% White 3% Other Free/reduced lunch: 72% (2012–13)	▪ English language learners ECE+: 29,192 students (35%) ▪ Spanish-speaking students (includes non-ELLs): 33,002 students (39%) Top languages spoken by students: Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Somali, Amharic, Nepali, and Russian	Total employees: 14,792 ▪ Full-time: 8,271 (56%) ▪ Part-time: 6,521 (44%) ▪ Teachers: 5,245 (35%) Starting teacher salary (SY 2012–13): $37,928 Average teacher salary (SY 2012–13): $53,247 ProComp bonus amount received for a ProComp employee in 2011–12: $6,000–$7,000

Denver Public Schools

The Office of School Reform and Innovation (OSRI)

The mission of OSRI is to create transformational change in public education by improving outcomes for all Denver students, through r*ecruiting and supporting a diverse portfolio of high-performing charter and innovation schools* that are accountable for results. OSRI also identifies, shares, and facilitates the implementation of innovative, *best-in-class policies and practices* in all schools and central office departments. OSRI oversees the charter and innovation schools within DPS and *provides programming to all schools* interested in innovative practices.

DPS Key OSRI Programs

- **Compact Blue:** Five highly effective mentor schools (Blue and High-Green schools on the SPF) will be paired with five mentee schools (Low-Green and High-Yellow schools) that are strongly motivated to improve leadership and instructional practices to accelerate student achievement.

- **Short Cycle Assessment:** The goal of the Short Cycle Assessment Network is to assemble a committed, collaborative team of district-run, innovation, and charter schools to engage in a rigorous formative assessment program. This team collaborates in the creation of common formative assessments that are equitable, standards driven, and aligned to the Common Core State Standards.

DPS Key OSRI Programs

School Development and Support

- **Call for New Quality Schools:** DPS releases a call annually to request applications to open new schools in Denver, be they district run or charter. The call outlines the DPS's need for new schools and supplies details such as the grade levels, approximate size, and general location for these proposed new schools. In addition, DPS supplies neighborhood demographic information and analysis to assist the new school applicants in designing a school that truly meets the needs of the students it will serve.

DPS Key OSRI Programs

- **The Residency for Educational Development of DPS "Intrapreneurs" (REDDI):** Principal residency program that allows residents to spend one year learning in a high-performing charter school before entering the DPS principal pool for the following year.

- **Strategic School Design (SSD):** SSD is a DPS program that helps school leaders and their teams rethink, reorganize, and redesign their schools to make them more intentionally designed. SSD is for any principal and leadership team in DPS who is interested in school design, redesign, and efficiency improvement. SSD is model neutral; any DPS school (traditional, charter, innovation) can apply to participate and work on improving school efficiency.

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