

What are Charter Schools?

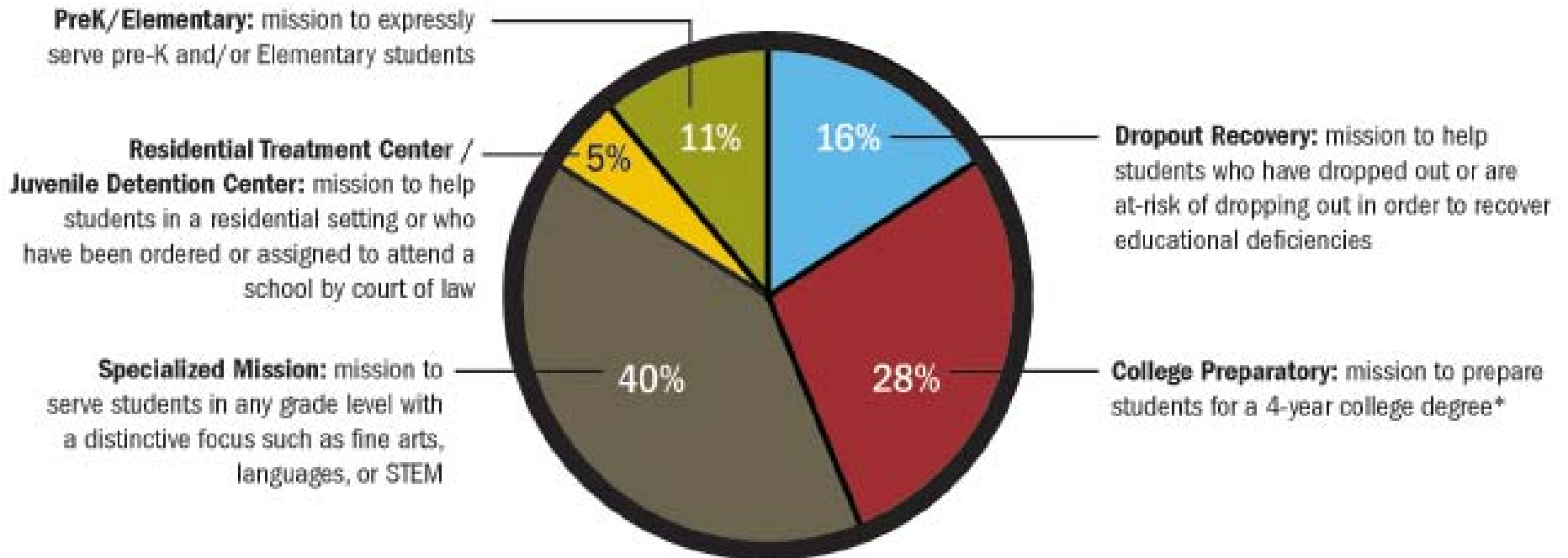
What is the *purpose* of charter schools?

1. Improve student learning
2. Increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system
3. Create professional opportunities that will attract new teachers to the public school system
4. Establish a new form of accountability for public schools
5. Encourage different and innovative learning methods



Texas Education Code § 12.001

FIVE CHARTER SCHOOL TYPES IN TEXAS





Charter Schools are Public Schools

Open Enrollment Charter Schools

Academic Accountability

- State AEIS System
- Federal NCLB

Financial Accountability

Teacher Retirement System

Immunity from Tort

Open Meetings

Open Records

Mandatory Board Training

State Curriculum & Graduation

PEIMS Reporting

Criminal History Background Checks

Conflicts of Interest

Nepotism

Traditional School Districts

Academic Accountability

- State AEIS System
- Federal NCLB

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Highlights from the 2013 TCSA Legislative Priorities

Charter School Quality & Accountability

- Accurate Measure of Student Achievement and Drop-out Recovery Designation- to more accurately measure the achievement for this population of students with emphasis on growth measure, and RTC Designation to measure this highly mobile population.
- Work with TEA to use its statutory and regulatory authority to close charter schools that are not meeting the needs of their students.

Charter Growth, Renewal & Replication

- Lifting the Arbitrary Cap on Charters and allowing for managed growth of effective charters.
- Update and Streamline the renewal and Replication Process for High-Quality, Existing Charter Schools who are demonstrating success for students.

Equal Funding for Charter Students & Facilities

- Facilities Funding and Equitable Funding: Providing the necessary resources for charter students and schools.
- Use of Local School Facilities: To best use taxpayer funds which have already been expended, underutilized, or unused school district facilities should be leased or sold to charter schools.



Common Charter School Myths

MYTH: Charter schools perform worse than traditional schools and there are many less charters in the exemplary or recognized categories than traditional schools.

- FACT : 2011 data shows that 83% of charter districts are acceptable, recognized or exemplary and 80% of charter campuses are acceptable, recognized or exemplary.
- FACT: Charter schools account for 30% of the states most fiscally efficient schools public in even though we represent only 4% of the student population.

MYTH: Charter schools can boast higher parent engagement because it is a condition of admission that a parent sign a contract to pledge a specific amount of campus involvement.

- FACT : Charter schools work to make their campuses welcoming to parents. They request, but do not require, extra commitment from parents.



Common Charter School Myths

MYTH: Charter schools boards are appointed and not elected and therefore not accountable to taxpayers for the public dollars they are responsible for.

•FACT : Charter school boards are subject to regulation under the Texas Education and Government Codes similar to an elected traditional ISD board, and must abide by Open Meetings Laws.

MYTH: Charter schools take money out of the traditional public school system yet are not subject to the same level of oversight.

•FACT : Charter schools are subjected to virtually all of the same state regulations and oversight that applies to every other public school. Their students are subject to the same state-testing, and are rated under the same accountability system as traditional public schools.

Issue: Equal Funding for Charter Students

Charters receive at least \$1,500 less per student in state funds. This funding gap is unfair and may be unconstitutional.

Charters are public schools and they deserve the same funding as any other public school.

Our students shouldn't receive less just because they attend a charter school.

We want fair funding, not more or less than other neighborhood schools.

When you fix school finance – don't forget public charter schools!

Issue: Improve Charter School Campuses

Charters receive zero funding for school facilities, and don't have access to state and local funds that pay for public school construction.

Many charters are housed in spaces built for other purposes while some public schools are half full.

Charter campuses are often too small and lack the facilities of neighborhood schools.

Students attend charters because of what goes on inside the classrooms but that doesn't mean they should be unsafe or makeshift.

Charters are denied access to state and local funds that other public schools use to build and expand.

Issue: Open More Charter Schools

More than 101,000 students are waiting to attend a charter school. We could double the number of charters and still have families on waiting lists.

Charters are making a real difference – why can't there be more?

Texas families want more public school choice NOW!

We are lucky our child got in, but we shouldn't have to rely on luck to get a quality public education for our kids.

After 17 years its time to lift the cap so parents, teachers, and taxpayers can open more schools.

Issue: Rate Charter Schools Fairly

The academic progress of charters is measured like all other public schools, yet they often educate students with more needs and greater challenges.

Charters serving at-risk students or those that have already dropped out should be measured fairly.

Drop out recovery or residential treatment center students deserve an accurate measure of their progress.

All public schools, including charters should be held accountable for the academic growth.

Our students are making real gains – we need a system that is accurate, fair, and tied to real progress.