## Student Ashlievement in Florida's Charter Schools:

A Comparison of the Rerformance of Sharterscisold Siuclents with Iraditional Piblis Sshool Students


FLORIDA DEPARTMENTOFEDUCATION Improving K-12 Educational Choice Options


## About This Report

Section 1002.33(23), Florida Statutes, requires the Florida Department of Education to prepare an annual statewide analysis of student achievement in charter schools versus the achievement of comparable students in traditional public schools. This report of charter school student performance fulfills the statutory requirement for the 2011-12 school year. The analysis examines the average performance of charter school students and traditional public school students using 2011-12 state assessment data from the FCAT 2.0 Reading, Math, and Science, and the Algebra end-of-course exams. Only students who were enrolled in a charter school or a traditional public school for an entire school year are included in the analysis. Limiting the analysis to include only full-year students is consistent with the state's school accountability system for awarding school grades. The report compares charter and traditional public schools in terms of proficiency, learning gains, and achievement gap. The data included in this report is based on over 3.1 million test scores from the 2011-12 school year, and includes all state assessment test scores reported to the Department.

Previous versions of this report included historical data on FCAT proficiency. This year's report does not include the historical data due to the introduction of revised score scales and achievement standards for the 2011-12 FCAT 2.0. While the published FCAT Equivalent Scores reported in 2011 for FCAT 2.0 Reading and Mathematics cannot be compared to the 2012 FCAT 2.0 Reading and Mathematics scores because they use different score scales with different achievement standards, the retrofitted scores for 2011 can be compared to the scores reported in 2012. The retrofitted scores are at http://fcat.fldoe.org/retrofitted.asp. Historical data can be found in the 2010-11 Student Achievement Report at http:// www.floridaschoolchoice.org/pdf/Charter_Student_Achievement_2011.pdf.

The analysis and production of this report was a coordinated effort between the Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice and the Bureau of Evaluation and Reporting in the Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement. Additional information about charter schools and other school choice options is available on the Department's Web site at: www.floridaschoolchoice.org.

Section 1002.33(23), Florida Statutes (23) ANALYSIS OF CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE.--Upon receipt of the annual report required by paragraph (9)(I), the Department of Education shall provide to the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives an analysis and comparison of the overall performance of charter school students, to include all students whose scores are counted as part of the statewide assessment program, versus comparable public school students in the district as determined by the statewide assessment program currently administered in the school district, and other assessments administered pursuant to s. 1008.22(3).

## Key Achievement Findings

The ultimate proof of success for any charter school is the achievement of its students. The 2011-12 student achievement data demonstrates that charter schools offer parents and policy makers a viable option for improving education in the state.

The data contained in this report, based on over 3 million test scores, is derived from student performance on the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT 2.0) and Algebra end-of-course exams. This report is designed to allow a comparative analysis of the academic achievement of students attending charter schools versus students attending traditional public schools. Using data from the 2011-12 school year the report makes 177 comparisons using three metrics: proficiency, achievement gaps, and learning gains. Each of these metrics is further broken down to offer a more nuanced view of student achievement.

The FCAT 2.0 proficiency percentages are used to measure both overall rates of proficiency by grade groupings, and comparisons of subgroup performance. This section of the report contains 63 separate comparisons of student achievement. Charter school students outperformed traditional public school students in 55 of the 63 comparisons, with one tie.

The achievement gap section of the report contains data that are used to analyze the gap between white students and African American students, and white students and Hispanic students, in reading, math, and science. This section of the report includes 18 separate comparisons of current achievement gaps. The achievement gap was lower for charter school students in 18 of the 18 comparisons.

The learning gains section of the report includes 96 comparisons. The report compares the percentage of students in charter schools making learning gains against the percentage of students in traditional public schools making learning gains, by subject, grade level, and subgroup. The percentage of students making learning gains was higher in charter schools in 83 of the 96 comparisons. The percentage of students making learning gains was higher in traditional public schools in 6 of the 96 comparisons. There was no difference in the percentage of students making learning gains in 7 of the 96 comparisons.

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F L O R \| D A' S
CHARTER
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## Student Achievement in Florida's Charter Schools: A Comparison with Achievement in Traditional Public Schools

Charter schools are independent public schools created on the basis of an agreement between a group of school organizers and a sponsoring body. Florida's charter schools have been growing by near record numbers since the first five charter schools were opened in 1996. During the 2011-12 school year, 518 operated throughout the state in 43 school districts and at two state universities. While each charter school is unique in its educational approach, charter schools are generally classified as independent schools, schools managed by educational management organizations, conversion public schools, or University charter lab schools. Each charter school has its own governing board that is responsible for setting policies and procedures. Charter schools have the autonomy and flexibility to provide expanded learning experiences to meet students' individual educational needs. In return, they are held accountable for achieving results. Although provided more freedom than traditional public schools, charter schools are held accountable on multiple levels. The charter contract delineates expectations of the governing board and the sponsor regarding the school's academic and financial performance. As part of their contract, charter schools are held accountable for academic and financial results, embodied in the following three guiding principles:

- Meet high standards of student achievement while providing parents flexibility to choose among diverse educational opportunities within the state's public school system;
- Promote enhanced academic success and financial efficiency by aligning responsibility with accountability; and
- Provide parents with sufficient information on whether or not the child gains at least a year's worth of learning for every year spent in the charter school.


## Students Served by Florida Charter Schools

Charter schools provide parents with additional choices for selecting the most effective educational programs for their children and offer creative solutions for improving student achievement in Florida. The charter school movement in Florida began as an avenue to improve student learning, increase parental choice, influence the traditional public school system, and foster innovative instructional practices. Charter school enrollment has grown steadily over the last decade. As shown below, charter schools served over 183,000 students in the 2011-12 school year, which translates to more than $7 \%$ of Florida's total public school population.

## 2011-12 Charter School and Traditional School Student Populations

|  | Charter | Traditional |
| :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Student Membership | 183,926 | $2,589,662$ |
| Gender |  |  |
| Male | $49.78 \%$ | $51.56 \%$ |
| Female | $50.22 \%$ | $48.44 \%$ |


| Race |  |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| White | $36.10 \%$ | $43.23 \%$ |
| African American | $22.99 \%$ | $22.83 \%$ |
| Hispanic | $35.81 \%$ | $27.85 \%$ |
| English Language Program | $10.68 \%$ | $11.64 \%$ |
| Free and Reduced Lunch <br> Eligible | $46.87 \%$ | $56.89 \%$ |
| Exceptional Student Education | $9.22 \%$ | $13.06 \%$ |

## Grading Charter Schools

Like traditional public schools, charter schools are assigned a performance grade if they meet the eligibility criteria and are not an alternative school. To receive a school grade a public school (charter or traditional) must have at least 30 full-time students that have two years worth of FCAT performance data in both reading and mathematics.

2011-12 School Grades for Charter and Traditional Schools

|  | Charter |  | Traditional |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Grade | Number | \% Graded | Number | \% Graded |
| A | 193 | $54 \%$ | 1,280 | $47 \%$ |
| B | 72 | $20 \%$ | 691 | $25 \%$ |
| C | 53 | $15 \%$ | 530 | $19 \%$ |
| D | 23 | $6 \%$ | 204 | $7 \%$ |
| F | 18 | $5 \%$ | 34 | $1 \%$ |
| Total A-F | 359 | $100 \%$ | 2,739 | $100 \%$ |

*High school grades are preliminary. Percentages may not equal $100 \%$ due to rounding.

## 2012 Charter School Grades



## Reading

## FCAT Reading Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools

ALL-STUDENTS COMPARISONS 2012
Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools
All Students


SUB-GROUP COMPARISONS 2012

Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools
White Students


## Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools African-American Students



Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students


## Reading



## Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Exceptional Education Students



# Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools English Language Learner Students 



## FCAT Math Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools

A L L S T U<br>D E N T S<br>C O M PARISONS<br>2012

Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools All Students


SUB-GROUP COMPARISONS 2012
Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools White Students


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools African-American Students


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students



Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL)


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Exceptional Education Students


## Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math

 Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools English Language Learner Student
$\square$ Charter $\square$ Traditional

# FCAT Science Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools 

ALL STUDENTS COMPARISONS 2012

Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools All Students

S U B - G R O U P
COMPARISONS
2012

Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools White Students


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools African-American Students


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools FRL Students

## Science



Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools

Exceptional Education Students


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools English Language Learner Students


## Algebra End of Course Exam Tiraditional Public Schools and Charter Schools

A L L STU
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D E N T S
C O M P A R I S O N
2012

## Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools <br> All Students



SUB-GROUP COMPARISONS2012
Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools White Students



Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools

Hispanic Students


Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools FRL Students

## Algebra



Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools

Exceptional Student Education Students


## Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools English Language Learner Students



# Achievement Gap Summary Data 2011-12 School Year 

## Achievement Gap in Reading

Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools African-American Students and White Students


Achievement Gap in Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools

Hispanic Students and White Students


Achievement Gap in Math
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools
African-American Students and White Students


Achievement Gap in Math
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students and White Students


Achievement Gap in Science
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools
African-American Students and White Students


Achievement Gap in Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools

Hispanic Students and White Students


Achievement Gap in Algebra
Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools African-American Students and White Students


Achievement Gap in Algebra Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students and White Students


## Learning Gains Comparison 2011-2012 School Year



Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading African-American Students


## Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading White Students



Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading Hispanic Students


Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading
FRL Students

## Reading



Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading Exceptional Education Students


## Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Reading All Students



Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Reading African-American Students


## Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Reading White Students

## Reading



Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Reading Hispanic Students


Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile
Making Learning Gains in Reading
FRL Students


Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Reading Exceptional Education Students



Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math White Students


Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math Hispanic Students


Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math
FRL Students


Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math Exceptional Education Students


## Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Math All Students



Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Math African-American Students


## Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile <br> Making Learning Gains in Math <br> White Students



Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Math Hispanic Students


## Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile <br> Making Learning Gains in Math FRL Students



Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile
Making Learning Gains in Math Exceptional Education Students


| FCAT PROFICIENCY DATA 2011-2012 |  |  | Charter |
| :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: |
| Traditional |  |  |  |
| Total \# of Students with | Reading | 97,977 | $1,379,153$ |
|  | Math | 83,542 | $1,037,732$ |
|  | Science | 25,460 | 344,722 |
|  | Algebra | 9,579 | 181,391 |


| Total \% Proficient |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Reading | \% | Total Students | \% | Total Students |
|  | Elem | 65.2 | 25,668 | 60.3 | 316,347 |
|  | Mid | 64.3 | 28,452 | 57.3 | 293,303 |
|  | High | 58.5 | 8,402 | 52.4 | 179,553 |
|  | Math |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 61.6 | 24,219 | 59.2 | 310,914 |
|  | Mid | 62.5 | 27,650 | 56.0 | 286,930 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Science |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 51.9 | 6,487 | 51.8 | 91,414 |
|  | Mid | 52.5 | 6,796 | 47.4 | 79,718 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Algebra |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Mid | 88.2 | 3,744 | 87.9 | 49,717 |
|  | High | 57.9 | 2,978 | 46.5 | 55,581 |


| Total \% Proficient by Race |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| White Students | Reading - White |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 73.6 | 12,000 | 71.5 | 168,919 |
|  | Mid | 72.1 | 12,726 | 68.4 | 162,875 |
|  | High | 69.4 | 3,671 | 64.5 | 106,649 |
|  | Math - |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 68.1 | 11,078 | 68.7 | 162,398 |
|  | Mid | 69.0 | 12,193 | 66.1 | 157,539 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Science |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 60.9 | 3,230 | 64.2 | 51,739 |
|  | Mid | 61.7 | 3,203 | 59.6 | 47,186 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Algebra |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Mid | 90.7 | 1,612 | 90.9 | 29,333 |
|  | High | 64.0 | 1,114 | 55.0 | 28,370 |


| African-American Students | Reading - African Am. |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Elem | 47.4 | 3,817 | 41.6 | 49,154 |
|  | Mid | 47.0 | 3,979 | 38.4 | 43,675 |
|  | High | 40.8 | 1,115 | 31.1 | 22,930 |
|  | Math - |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 43.2 | 3,485 | 41.3 | 48,894 |
|  | Mid | 46.2 | 3,909 | 36.9 | 41,996 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Science | Am. |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 29.5 | 742 | 30.4 | 11,931 |
|  | Mid | 33.5 | 815 | 26.6 | 9,680 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Algebra | Am. |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Mid | 75.3 | 414 | 74.0 | 5,904 |
|  | High | 45.9 | 559 | 34.0 | 10,359 |


| Hispanic Students | Reading - Hispanic |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Elem | 64.9 | 8,966 | 55.9 | 85,622 |
|  | Mid | 63.9 | 10,838 | 52.1 | 74,878 |
|  | High | 56.0 | 3,376 | 46.1 | 42,314 |
|  | Math - |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 63.4 | 8,743 | 56.3 | 86,322 |
|  | Mid | 62.5 | 10,598 | 52.0 | 74,758 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Science |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | 52.6 | 2,271 | 46.7 | 23,801 |
|  | Mid | 51.1 | 2,546 | 41.0 | 19,326 |
|  | High | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Algebra |  |  |  |  |
|  | Elem | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|  | Mid | 88.9 | 1,550 | 87.5 | 11,539 |
|  | High | 59.2 | 1,239 | 43.7 | 15,194 |



## LEARNING GAINS DATA

| READING | All Students <br> \% who made learning gains | African American \% who made learning gains | White <br> \% who made learning gains | Hispanic <br> \% who made learning gains | FRL <br> \% who made learning gains | SWD <br> \% who made learning gains |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Charter Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 67 | 62 | 68 | 69 | 64 | 57 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 66 | 62 | 67 | 67 | 64 | 59 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 63 | 54 | 66 | 63 | 59 | 54 |
| All Grade levels | 66 | 61 | 67 | 67 | 63 | 58 |
| Traditional Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 66 | 61 | 68 | 67 | 63 | 57 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 63 | 57 | 65 | 62 | 59 | 53 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 60 | 52 | 63 | 59 | 55 | 51 |
| All Grade levels | 63 | 57 | 65 | 63 | 60 | 54 |

## LEARNING GAINS OF THE LOWEST QUARTILE

| READING | All Students <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | African American \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | White <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | Hispanic <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | FRL <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | SWD <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Charter Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 67 | 66 | 66 | 69 | 67 | 56 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 65 | 64 | 63 | 66 | 64 | 59 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 65 | 57 | 66 | 68 | 64 | 55 |
| All Grade levels | 66 | 64 | 64 | 67 | 65 | 58 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Iraditional Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 66 | 64 | 65 | 68 | 65 | 57 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 61 | 59 | 61 | 62 | 60 | 54 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 60 | 56 | 62 | 62 | 59 | 53 |
| All Grade levels | 62 | 59 | 62 | 64 | 61 | 55 |

Note: Retained 3rd grade students eligible for gains therefore included with grades 4 and 5.

LEARNING GAINS DATA

| MATH | All Students <br> \% who made learning gains | African American \% who made learning gains | White <br> \% who made learning gains | Hispanic <br> \% who made learning gains | FRL <br> \% who made learning gains | SWD <br> \% who made learning gains |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Charter Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 67 | 62 | 68 | 69 | 64 | 57 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 66 | 62 | 67 | 67 | 64 | 59 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 63 | 54 | 66 | 63 | 59 | 54 |
| All Grade levels | 66 | 61 | 67 | 67 | 63 | 58 |
| Traditional Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 66 | 61 | 68 | 67 | 63 | 57 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 63 | 57 | 65 | 62 | 59 | 53 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 60 | 52 | 63 | 59 | 55 | 51 |
| All Grade levels | 63 | 57 | 65 | 63 | 60 | 54 |

LEARNING GAINS OF THE LOWEST QUARTILE

| MATH | All Students <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | African American \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | White <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | Hispanic <br> \% in the low 25\% who made learning gains | FRL <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains | SWD <br> \% in the low $25 \%$ who made learning gains |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Charter Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 67 | 66 | 66 | 69 | 67 | 56 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 65 | 64 | 63 | 66 | 64 | 59 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 65 | 57 | 66 | 68 | 64 | 55 |
| All Grade levels | 66 | 64 | 64 | 67 | 65 | 58 |
| Traditional Schools |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Grades 4 and 5 | 66 | 64 | 65 | 68 | 65 | 57 |
| Grades 6, 7 and 8 | 61 | 59 | 61 | 62 | 60 | 54 |
| Grades 9 and 10 | 60 | 56 | 62 | 62 | 59 | 53 |
| All Grade levels | 62 | 59 | 62 | 64 | 61 | 55 |

Note: Retained 3rd grade students eligible for gains therefore included with grades 4 and 5 .



