# **Student Achievement in Florida's Charter Schools:**

A Comparison of the Performance of Charter School Students with Traditional Public School Students



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 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 <u>http://fcat.fldoe.org/retrofitted.asp</u>. Historical data can be found in the 2010-11 Student Achievement Report at <u>http://</u> 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)(1), 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**

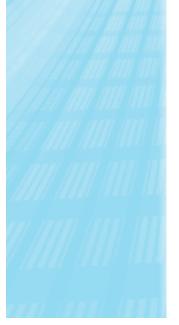
The ultimate proof of success for any charter school is the achievement of its students. The 2011-12 student achievement data demonstrates that charter schools offer parents and policy makers a viable option for improving education in the state.

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 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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### 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.

	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 Eligible	46.87%	56.89%
Exceptional Student Education	9.22%	13.06%

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



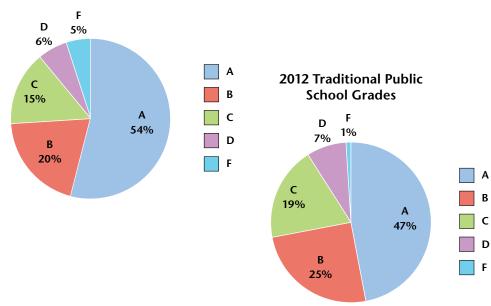
### **Grading Charter Schools**

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.

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

### 2011-12 School Grades for Charter and Traditional Schools

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

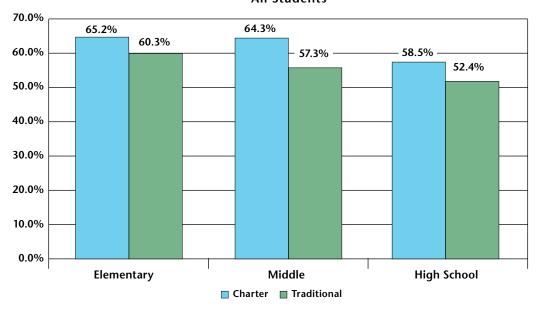


### 2012 Charter School Grades

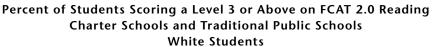
### FCAT Reading Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools

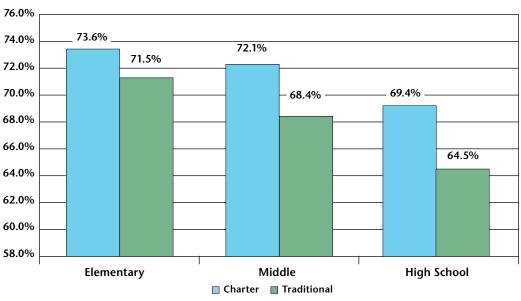
ALL-STUDENTS COMPARISONS 2012

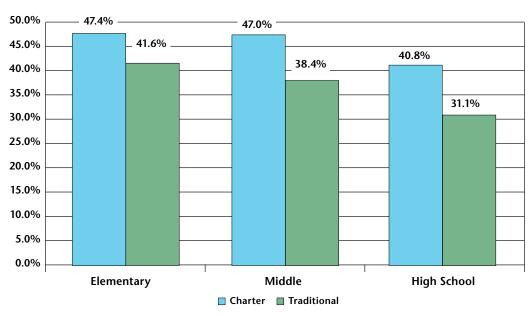
Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools All Students



### SUB-GROUP COMPARISONS 2012

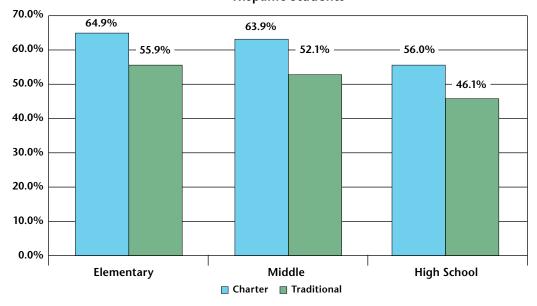


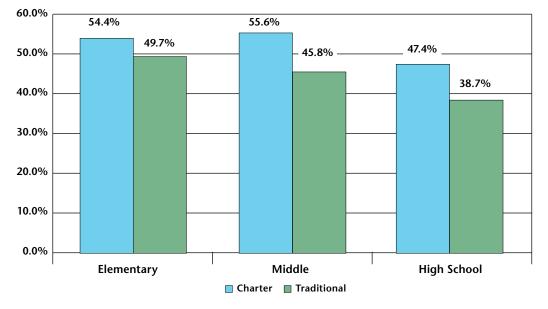




### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools African-American Students

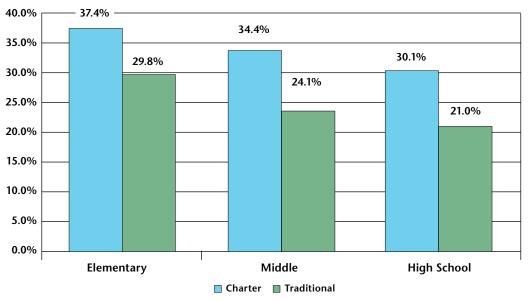
Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students

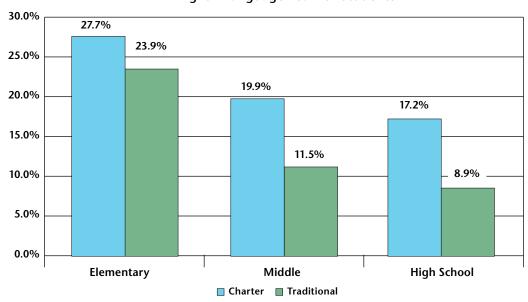




### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Reading Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL)

### 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

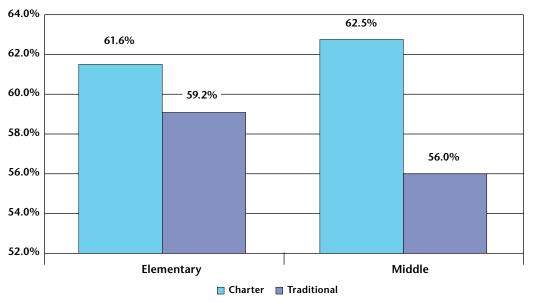


Reading

### FCAT Math Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools

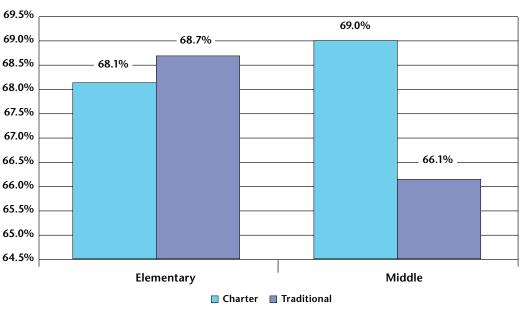
### ALL STUDENTS COMPARISONS 2012

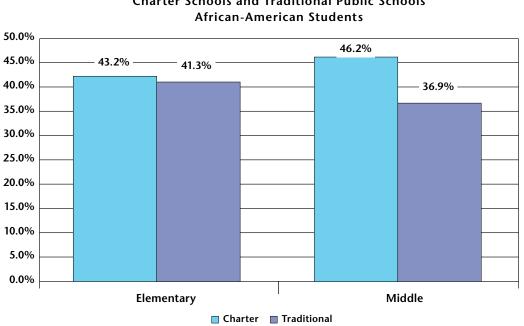
#### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools All Students



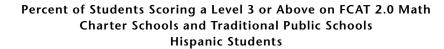
### SUB-GROUP COMPARISONS 2012

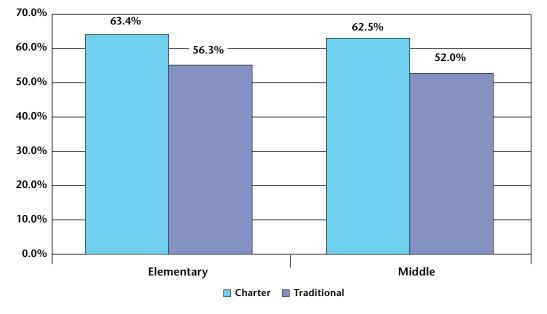
Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools White Students

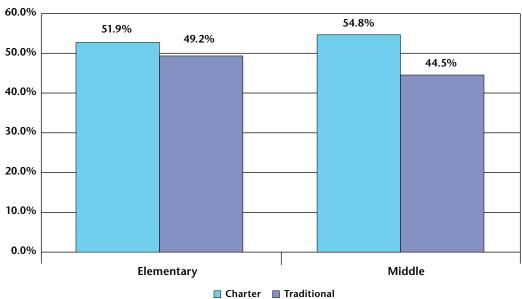




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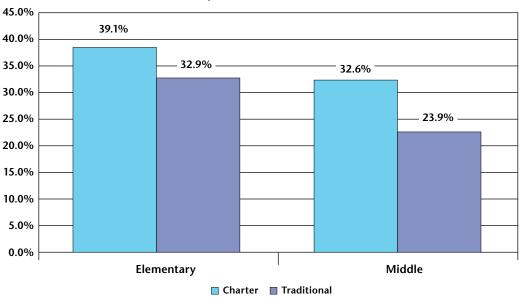


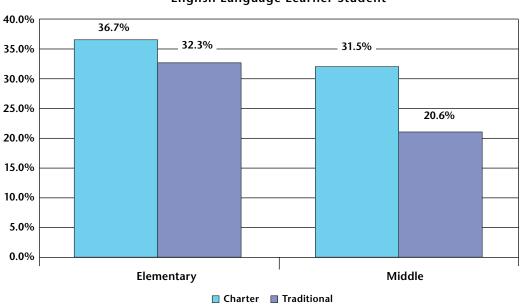




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#### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Exceptional Education Students





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

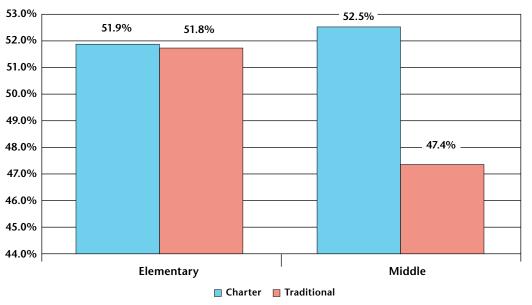


### FCAT Science Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools

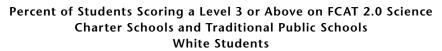
### ALL STUDENTS COMPARISONS 2012

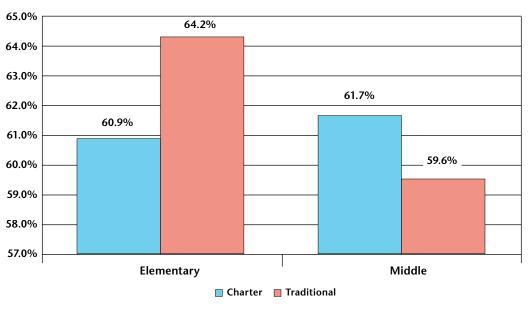
#### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools All Students

Science

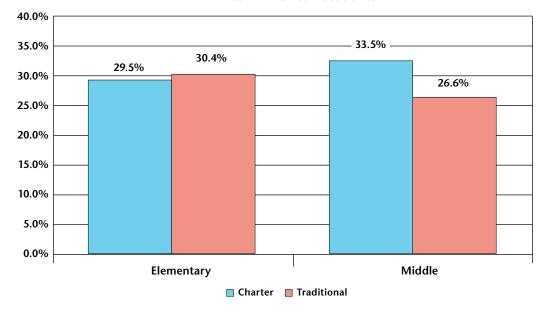


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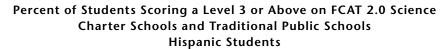


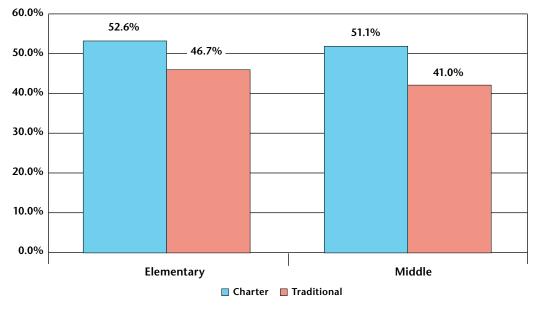


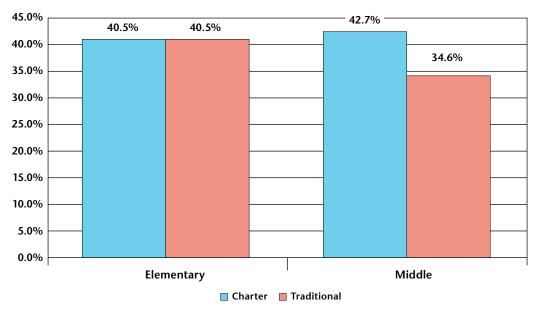
cience



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

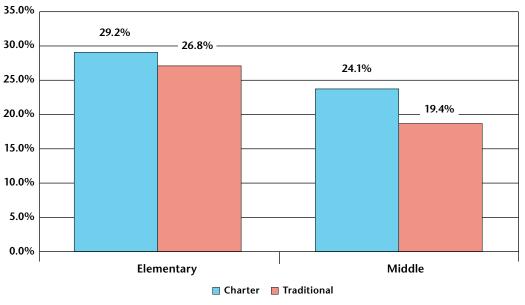




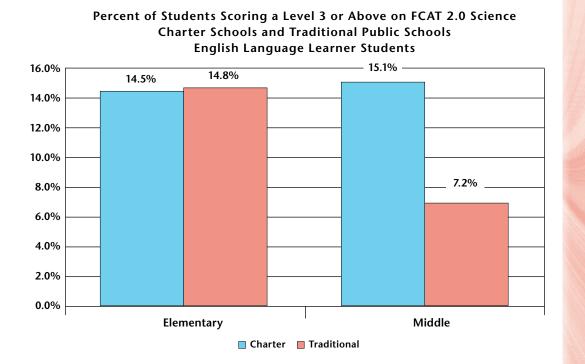


#### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on FCAT 2.0 Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools FRL Students

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



Science



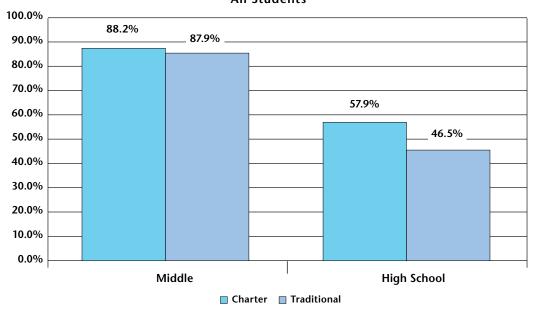


### Algebra End of Course Exam Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools

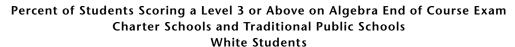
### ALL STUDENTS COMPARISONS 2012

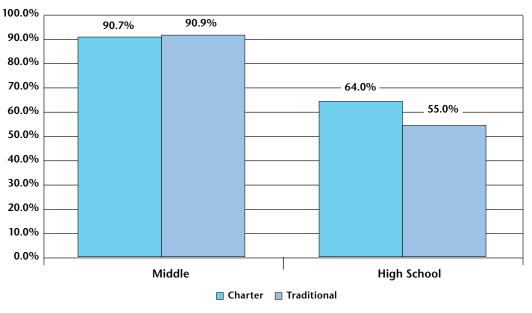
Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools All Students

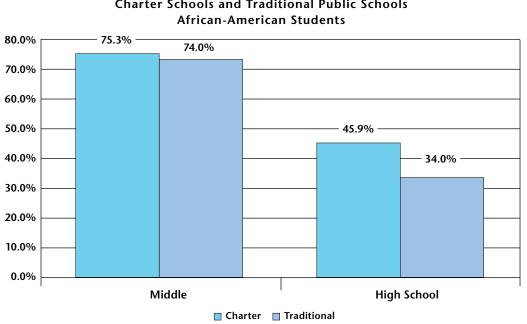




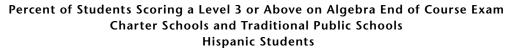
### S U B - G R O U P C O M P A R I S O N S 2 0 1 2

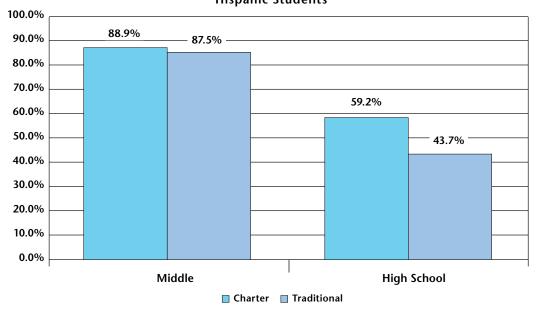




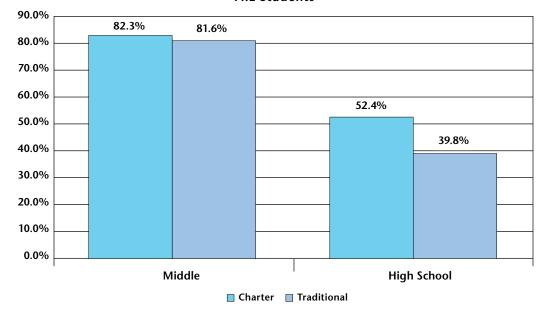


#### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools African-American Students



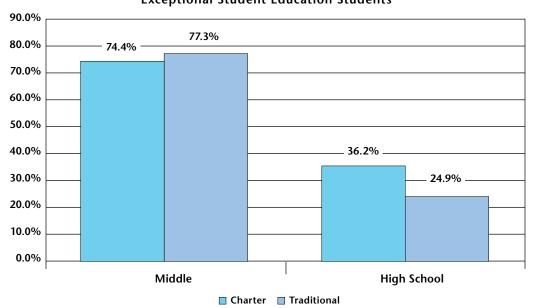


Algebra

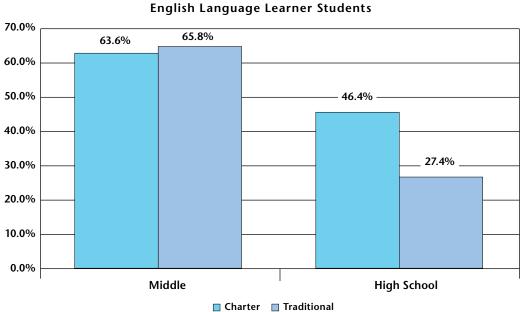


#### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools FRL Students

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



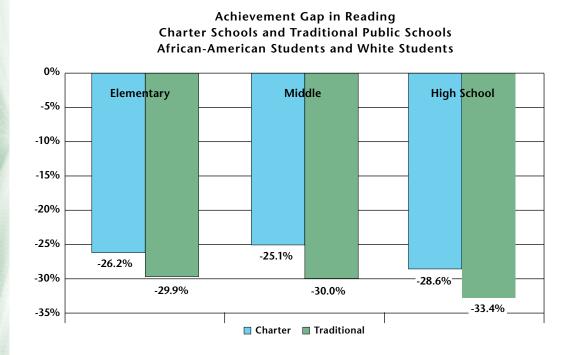




#### Percent of Students Scoring a Level 3 or Above on Algebra End of Course Exam Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools English Language Learner Students

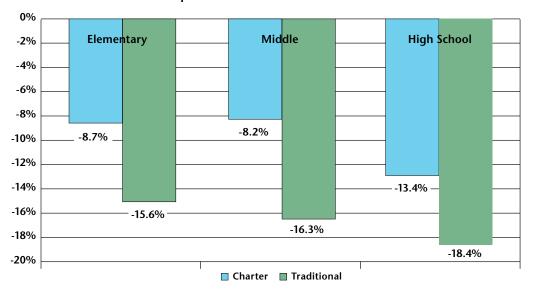


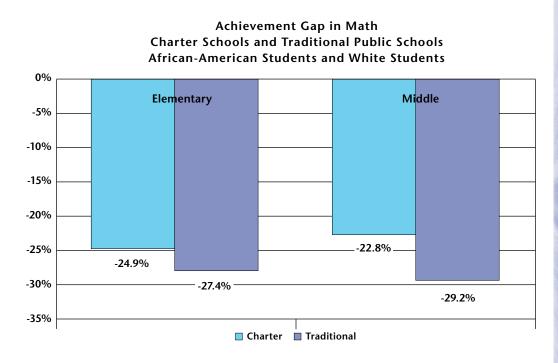
### Achievement Gap Summary Data 2011-12 School Year



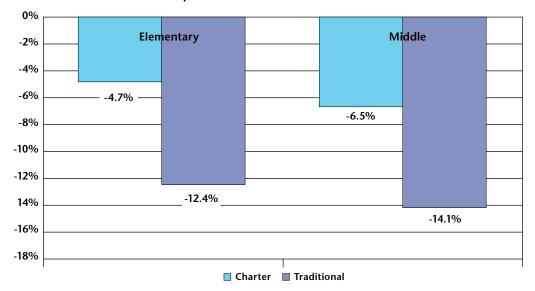
Reading

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



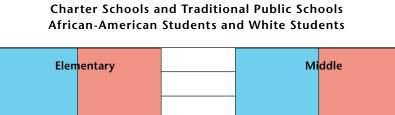


Achievement Gap in Math Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students and White Students



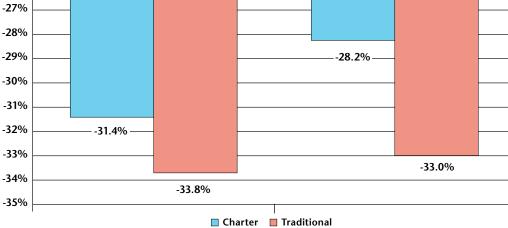
-25%

-26%

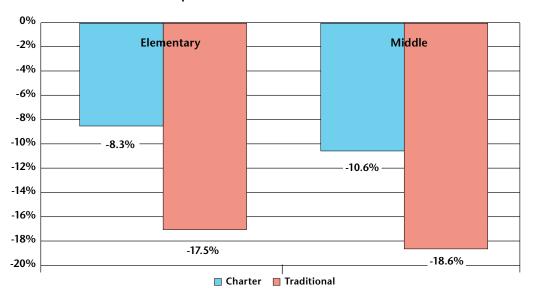


Achievement Gap in Science

Science

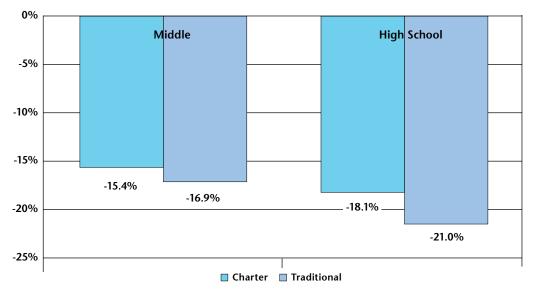


Achievement Gap in Science Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students and White Students

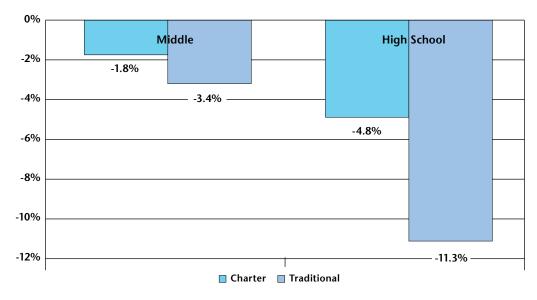


lgebra

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

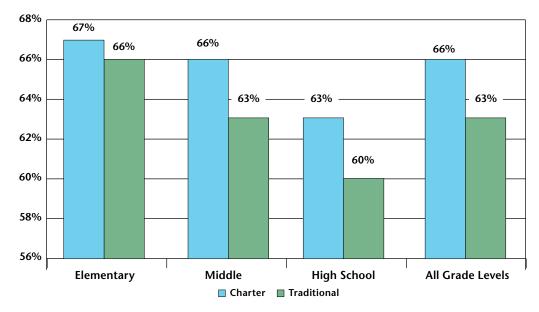


Achievement Gap in Algebra Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Hispanic Students and White Students

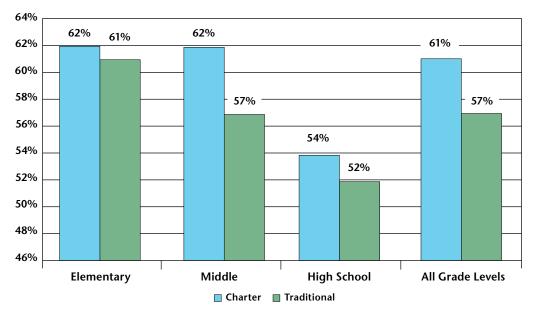


### Learning Gains Comparison 2011-2012 School Year

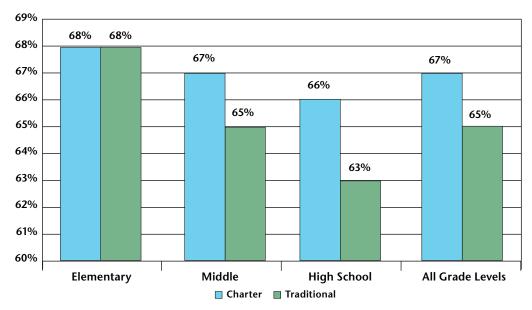
Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading All Students



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

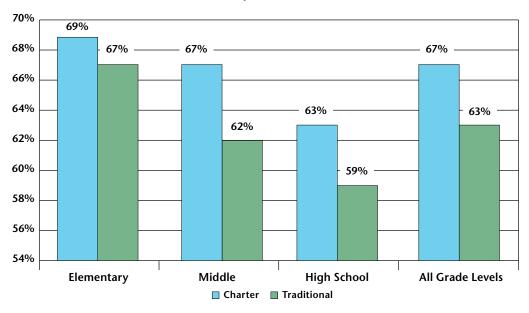


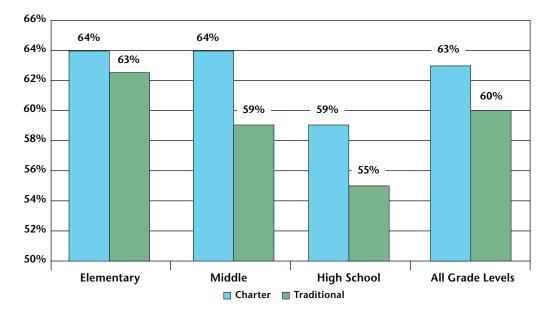
Reading



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

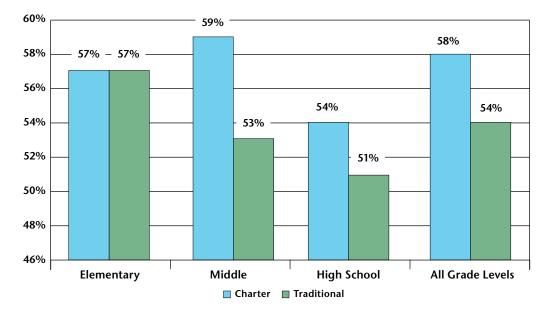
Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading Hispanic Students



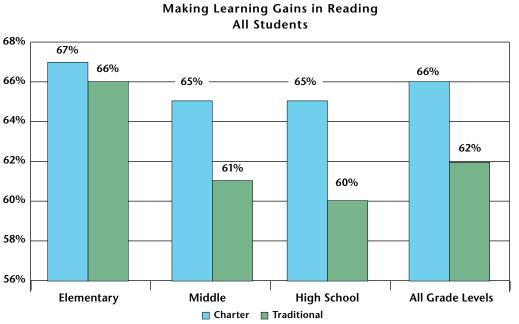


### Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading FRL Students

Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Reading Exceptional Education Students

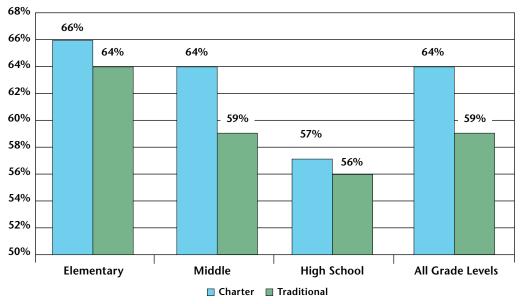




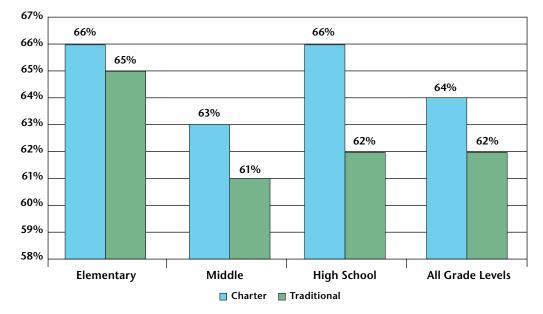


## Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile

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

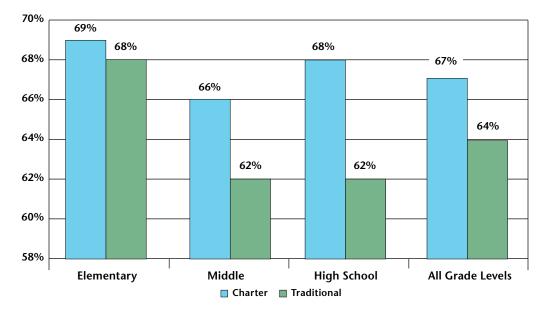


Reading

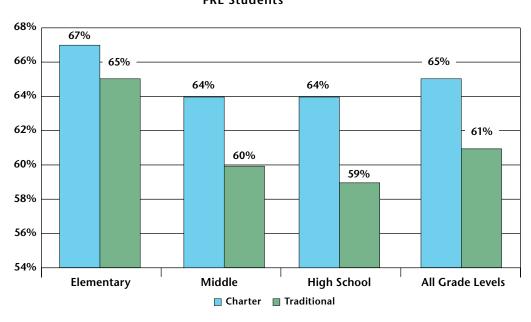


Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Reading White Students

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

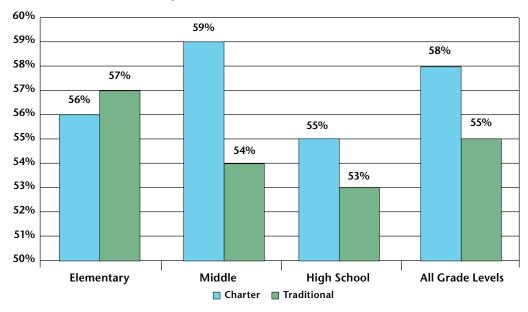


Reading

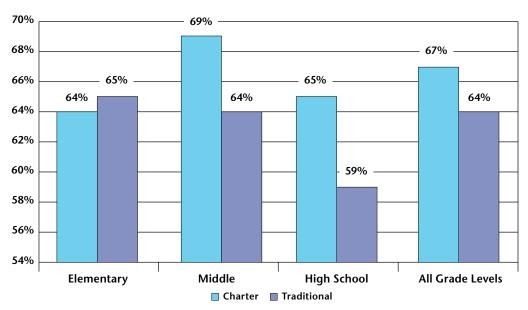


#### Percent of Students in Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Reading FRL Students

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

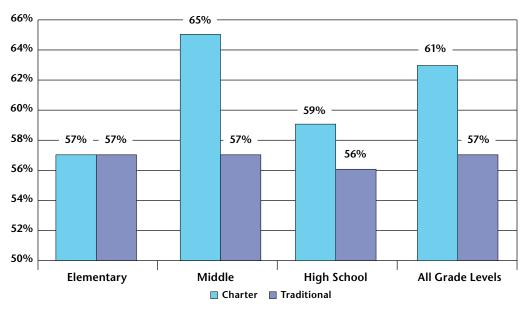


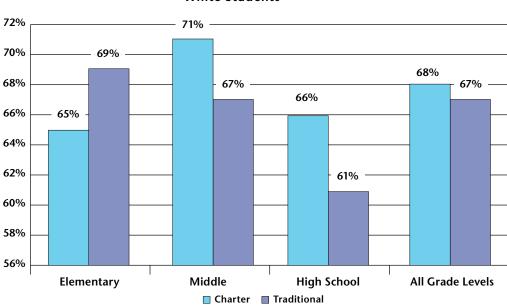
Reading



Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math All Students

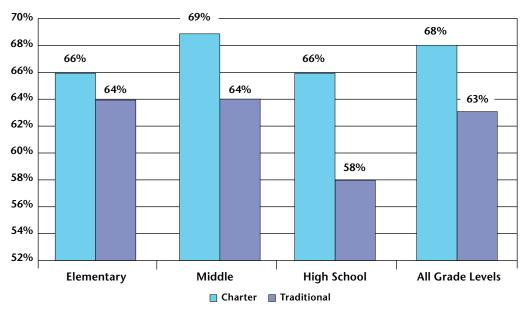
Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math African-American Students

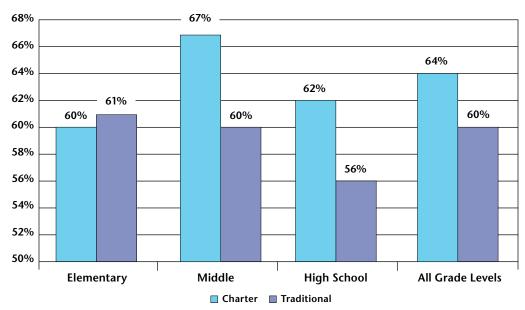




## Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math White Students

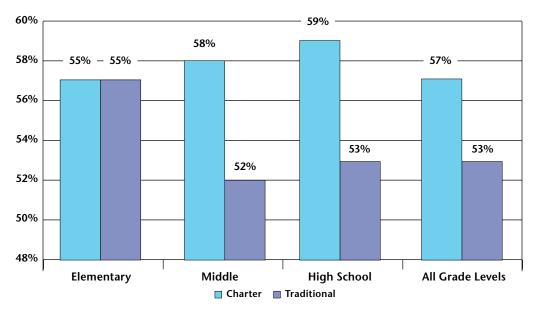
Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math Hispanic Students

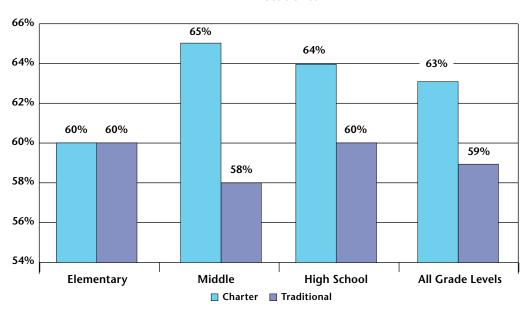




#### Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math FRL Students

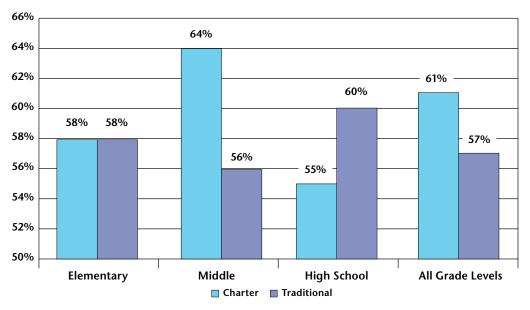
## Percent of Students Making Learning Gains in Math Exceptional Education Students



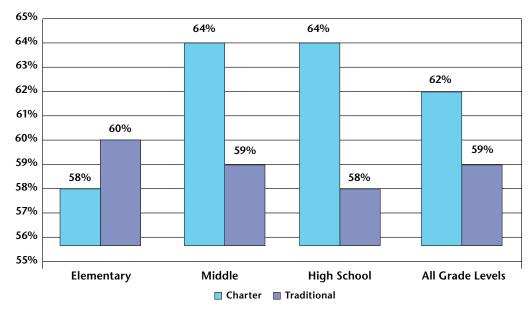


#### Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Math All Students

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

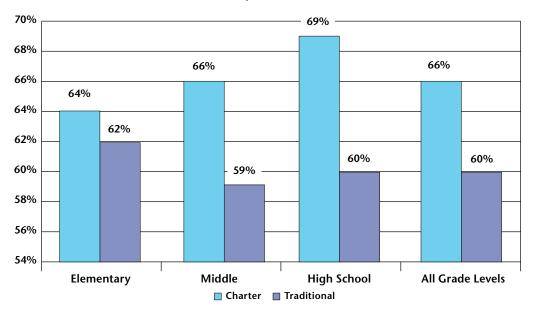


Math

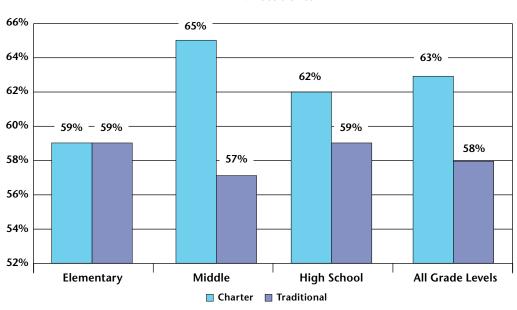


### Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile Making Learning Gains in Math White Students

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

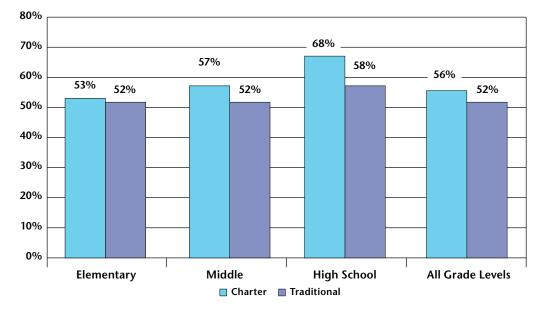


Math



#### Percent of Students In Lowest Quartile 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
	Reading	97,977	1,379,153
Total # of Students with	Math	83,542	1,037,732
FCAT results	Science	25,460	344,722
	Algebra	9,579	181,391

Total % Proficient					
	Reading	%	<b>Total Students</b>	%	<b>Total Students</b>
	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							
-	Reading - Whit	te					
	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 - White						
	Elem	68.1	11,078	68.7	162,398		
	Mid	69.0	12,193	66.1	157,539		
White	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
Students	Science - White						
	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 - Whit	e					
	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		

Data

	Reading - Afric	can 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 - African	Am.			
	Elem	43.2	3,485	41.3	48,894
	Mid	46.2	3,909	36.9	41,996
African-American	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Students	Science - Afric	an 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 - Afric	an 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

	Reading - Hisp	anic			
	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 - Hispan	ic			
	Elem	63.4	8,743	56.3	86,322
	Mid	62.5	10,598	52.0	74,758
Hispanic	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Students	Science - Hispa	Science - Hispanic			
	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 - Hisp	anic			
	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

		C	harter	Tra	ditional
Total % Proficient by Free and Reduced Lunch					
	Reading				
	Elem	54.4	10,825	49.7	166,312
	Mid	55.6	12,486	45.8	141,163
	High	47.4	3,291	38.7	68,802
	Math				
	Elem	51.9	10,315	49.2	165,215
	Mid	54.8	12,308	44.5	137,441
	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Science				
	Elem	40.5	2,527	40.5	44,944
	Mid	42.7	2,712	34.6	33,987
	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Algebra				
	Elem	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Mid	82.3	1,400	81.6	18,685
	High	52.4	1,448	39.8	29,459
Total % Proficient by ESE					
	Reading				
	Elem	37.4	1,230	29.8	19,963
	Mid	34.4	1,155	24.1	14,461
	High	30.1	295	21.0	7,443
	Math				
	Flem	301	1 287	320	22 115

Elem	37.4	1,230	29.8	19,963
Mid	34.4	1,155	24.1	14,461
High	30.1	295	21.0	7,443
Math				
Elem	39.1	1,287	32.9	22,115
Mid	32.6	1,105	23.9	14,377
High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Science				
Elem	29.2	312	26.8	6,014
Mid	24.1	230	19.4	3,717
High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Algebra				
Elem	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mid	74.4	93	77.3	1,338
High	36.2	179	24.9	4,208

Total % Proficient by ELL					
	Reading				
	Elem	27.7	676	23.9	11,922
	Mid	19.9	336	11.5	2,993
	High	17.2	97	8.9	1,472
	Math				
	Elem	36.7	899	32.3	16,202
	Mid	31.5	534	20.6	5,364
	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Science				
	Elem	14.5	73	14.8	1,928
	Mid	15.1	64	7.2	584
	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Algebra				
	Elem	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Mid	63.6	14	65.8	290
	High	46.4	91	27.4	2,163

READING	All Students % who made learning gains	African American % who made learning gains	<b>White</b> % who made learning gains	<b>Hispanic</b> % who made learning gains	<b>FRL</b> % who made learning gains	SWD % 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 Schoo	ls					
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 DATA

## LEARNING GAINS OF THE LOWEST QUARTILE

READING	All Students % in the low 25% who made learning gains	African American % in the low 25% who made learning gains	White % in the low 25% who made learning gains	<b>Hispanic</b> % in the low 25% who made learning gains	<b>FRL</b> % in the low 25% who made learning gains	SWD % 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 Schoo	ls					
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

МАТН	All Students % who made learning gains	African American % who made learning gains	<b>White</b> % who made learning gains	<b>Hispanic</b> % who made learning gains	<b>FRL</b> % who made learning gains	<b>SWD</b> % 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
Carena (						
Traditional Schoo	ls					
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**

матн	All Students % in the low 25% who made learning gains	African American % in the low 25% who made learning gains	White % in the low 25% who made learning gains	Hispanic % in the low 25% who made learning gains	FRL % in the low 25% who made learning gains	SWD % 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
<i>78,11           </i>						
Traditional Schoo	ls					
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.

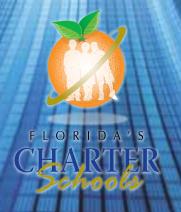






Florida Department of Education Dr. Tony Bennett, Commissioner www.fldoe.org

# S C H O O L UPOICG Florida Department of Education



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