

# National Alliance for Public Charter Schools: Annual enrollment share report finds charter school enrollment has tripled since report first issued

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Washington, D.C.—A Growing Movement: America's Largest Public Charter School Communities is the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools' (National Alliance) twelfth annual report on charter school enrollment. Since the report's first release in 2006, national charter school enrollment has tripled, growing from one million to more than three million students. When examined at a district level even more significant growth is revealed:

- **More than 200 school districts have 10 percent or more charter school enrollment share.** In 2016-17, there were 208 districts with at least 10 percent of their students in charter schools—a net increase of 18 districts over the 2015-16 school year.
- **Nineteen districts have at least 30 percent charter school enrollment share.** When this report was first published, only one district, had at least 30 percent of their students enrolled in charter schools.
- **Seven districts have at least 40 percent charter school enrollment share.** In 2016-17, the share of students who attend charter schools was 40 percent or more in seven districts, more than double the number from five years ago.

“Public charter schools are growing because communities are demanding them,” said Nina Rees, president and CEO of the National Alliance. “The results are in, and they’re clear: charter schools are leading to increased student achievement. It makes sense, then, that families are increasingly selecting charter schools when they have public school choice. The National Alliance is excited to join the millions of families seeking these game-changing schools.”

A recent survey by Phi Delta Kappa and Gallup found that 17 percent of parents would send their child to a charter school if location and capacity were not an issue—meaning that the potential number of students who may opt to attend a charter school is nearly 9 million. In addition, a 2016 survey commissioned by the National Alliance shows that nearly 80 percent of parents would support a new charter school opening in their neighborhood.

Other major report findings include:

- **Los Angeles again tops the list for total number of students enrolled in charter schools.** In 2016-17, more than 163,000 students attended charter schools in Los Angeles—an increase of more than 7,000 students since 2015-16, and the highest number for any district in the country.
- **New York City charter enrollment surpassed 100,000 students.** Between 2015-16 and 2016-17, charter school enrollment in New York City increased by nearly 10,000 students, surpassing 100,000 for the first time.
- **Four of the five districts with unified enrollment systems have a charter school enrollment share of greater than 30 percent.** Five large urban districts currently use unified enrollment systems in which parents can apply to any public school within the system (charter or district), regardless of where they live in the district. In four of these five districts (New Orleans, the District of Columbia, Camden, and Newark) charter schools enrolled more than 30 percent of all public school students in 2016-17. In the fifth district with a unified enrollment system, Denver, the charter school enrollment share hit 20 percent for the first time.

### **About Public Charter Schools**

Public charter schools are independent, public, and tuition-free schools that are given the freedom to be more innovative while being held accountable for advancing student achievement. Since 2010, many research studies have found that students in charter schools do better in school than their traditional school peers. For example, one study by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes

at Stanford University found that charter schools do a better job teaching low income students, minority students, and students who are still learning English than traditional schools. Separate studies by the Center on Reinventing Public Education and Mathematica Policy Research have found that charter school students are more likely to graduate from high school, go on to college, stay in college and have higher earnings in early adulthood.

### **About the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools**

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools is the leading national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the public charter school movement. Our mission is to lead public education to unprecedented levels of academic achievement by fostering a strong charter sector. For more information, please visit [www.publiccharters.org](http://www.publiccharters.org)