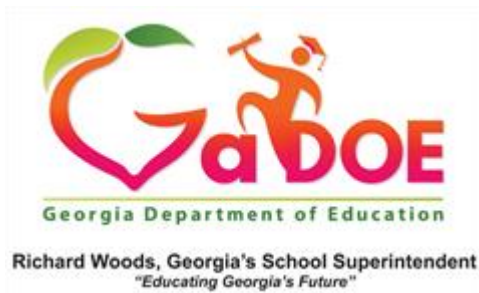


Georgia Charter Schools and Charter Systems

2014-2015 and 2015-2016

An overview of Georgia's charter schools and charter systems



The Georgia Department of Education's District Flexibility and Charter Schools Division Annual Report submitted on behalf of the State Board of Education



Georgia General Assembly
State Capitol Building
Atlanta, GA 30334

December 31, 2015

Dear Members of the Georgia General Assembly,

Georgia law requires all charter schools and charter systems to submit an annual report to the Department of Education each year and the State Board of Education to report to the General Assembly each year on the status of the charter school program [see O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2067.1(c) and § 20-2-2070]. To facilitate the meeting of these requirements, the Georgia Department of Education's District Flexibility and Charter Schools Division each summer conducts an Annual Report process for charter schools and charter systems. The Department then compiles the Annual Report data along with academic assessment data and prepares and conveys to the General Assembly this report on behalf of the State Board of Education.

It is my privilege to chair the State Board of Education's Charter Schools and District Flexibility Committee. During the past nine years I have seen significant innovation within public education in Georgia. Charter schools and charter systems are an integral part of the educational mission in Georgia.

The State Board of Education in September 2015 adopted revised Charter Rules to combine the charter rules and guidelines and implement legislative changes from the 2015 session. The new rules provide stakeholders with greater clarity regarding the charter schools petition process and authorizer roles and responsibilities. The weighted lottery provision passed during the 2015 legislative session was also incorporated, giving charter schools the opportunity to accept a greater proportion of educationally disadvantaged students.

State School Superintendent Richard Woods this fall released the Georgia Department of Education's new strategic plan. The strategic priorities are designed to ensure every child in Georgia is ready to learn, lead, and live. This mission is achieved through five pillars:

1. Guaranteed and Viable Standards
2. Challenging Goals, Effective Feedback and Supports
3. Collegiality and Professionalism
4. Safe and Healthy Environment
5. Family and Community Engagement

Charter schools, charter systems and strategic waiver school systems are woven into the strategic plan with each strategic priority. They each set challenging goals that are aligned with Georgia performance standards during their charter application process. Their progress is monitored through the annual report and audit process and they have opportunities for feedback and support through monitoring visits, and their desk audits, and the probation process.

Family and community engagement is the bedrock of all charter schools, charter systems and successful strategic waiver school systems (SWSS). Without families and concerned community members, charter schools and charter systems would not exist. It is communities that have bonded together to address their own needs through chartering.

Georgia now has 441 charter schools, including 97 start-up charter schools (three of which are statewide virtual schools), 18 conversion charter schools, and 326 charter system schools in 32 charter systems.

Georgia's charter schools on average have consistently outperformed non-charter schools on the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) during the past three years. Only start-up charter schools perform lower overall on the CCRPI than do other public schools. That is because they serve higher-need students than other schools. The CCRPI is the state-driven accountability system that replaced the federal government's No Child Left Behind system based on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Charter schools also outperformed non-charters in the last year of the EOG and EOC administration.

Please note that this annual report includes definitions in an Appendix. Additional information on individual charter school, charter system or strategic waiver school system performance may be requested from the District Flexibility and Charter Schools Division of the Georgia Department of Education or through the annual Report Card published by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication and hard work in helping to strengthen Georgia's public education system.

Sincerely,

Brian K. Burdette, Chair
District Flexibility and Charter Schools Committee
State Board of Education

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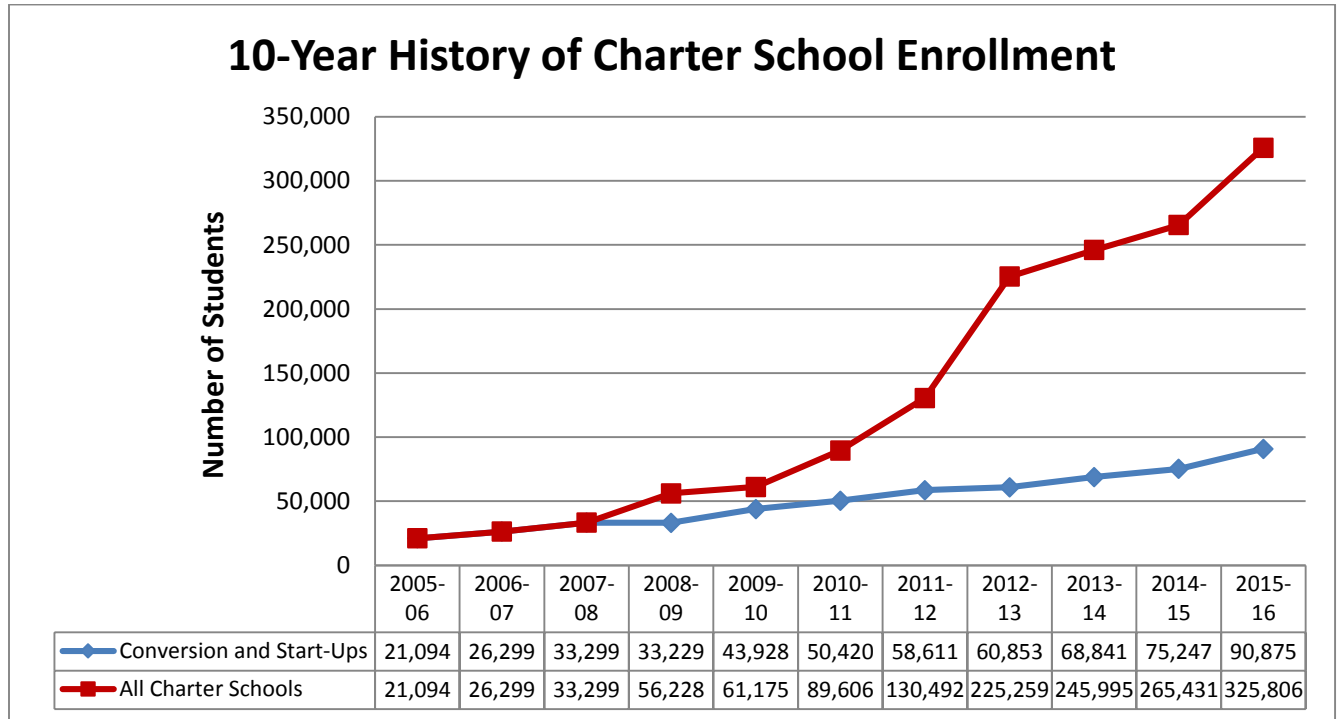
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Characteristics: Charter Students and Charter Schools

Charter School Enrollment

For the 2015-2016 school year, 325,806 (or 18% of) Georgia public school students are enrolled in a start-up or conversion charter school or a charter system school. This is 18.5% higher than in 2014-15. Student enrollment in conversion and start-up charter schools (excluding charter system students) is 5.1% of the student population, up 21% since 2014-15 and up 32% since 2013-14.

Figure 1: Charter School Student Enrollment Growth



Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

The distribution of students by grade within charter schools mirrored that of non-charter schools within the state. For the 2015-2016 school year, 44.6% of charter school students are enrolled in elementary school grades, 21.3% in middle school grades, and 34.1% in high school.

Figure 2: 2015-16 Charter School Student Enrollment by Grade Level

Grades Served	Georgia Charter Schools Enrollment		Non-Charter Schools Enrollment	
	Number of Students	% of Total Charter School Enrollment	Number of Students	% of Total Non-Charter School Enrollment
Elementary Grades: K-5	145,206	44.6%	682,454	47%
Middle Grades: 6-8	69,382	21.3%	330,118	23%
High School Grades: 9-12	111,218	34.1%	429,186	30%
Total Enrollment	356,142	18%	1,441,758	82%

Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

Charter School Enrollment (Continued)

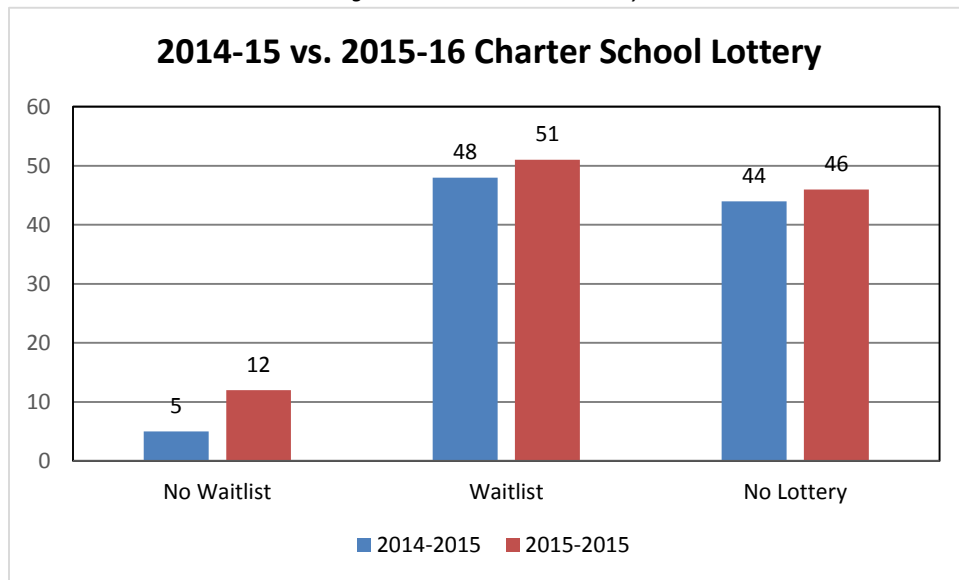
Charter school lottery has grown from 12,045 students for the 2014-2015 school year to 14,922 students for the 2015-2016 school year.

There were 12 schools without a waitlist at the opening of the 2015-2016 school year, up 7 from last year.

There were 51 schools with a waitlist at the opening of the 2015-2016 school year, up 3 from last year.

There were 46 schools without a lottery at the opening of the 2015-2016 school year, up 2 from last year.

Figure 3: Charter School Lottery



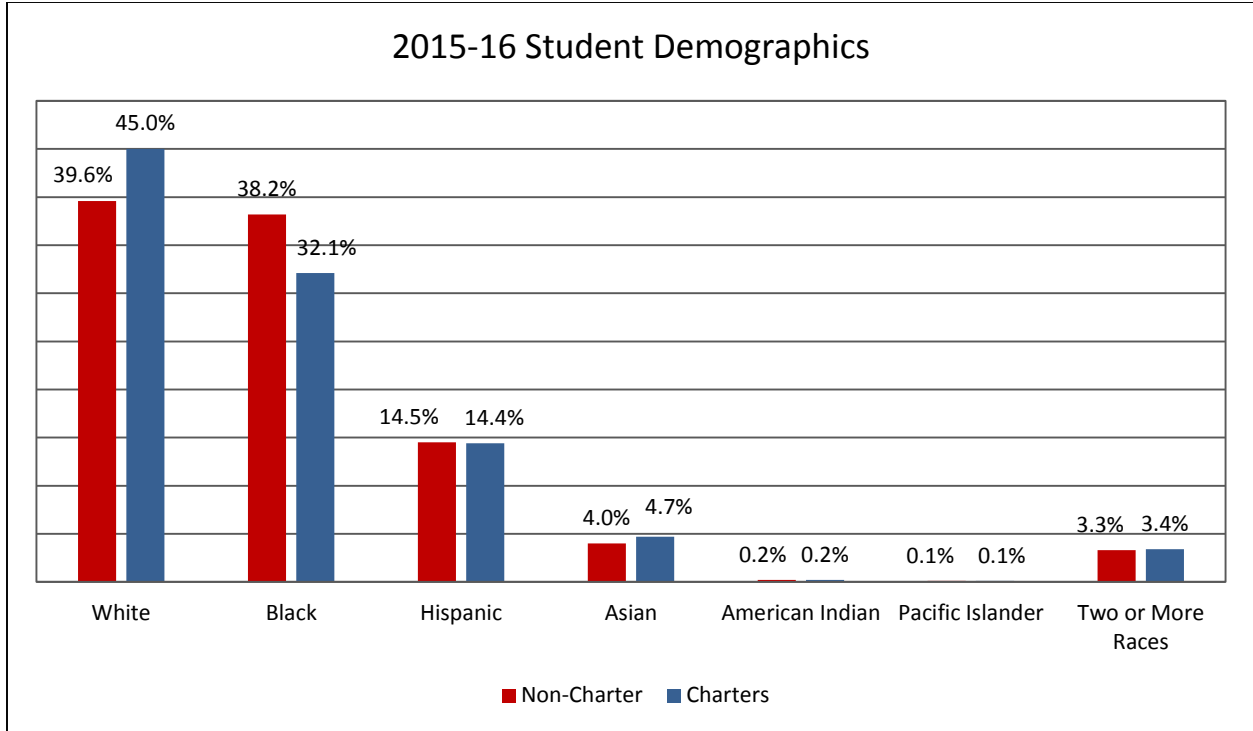
Source: Charter Schools 2015 Annual Reports

Charter School Demographics

The racial and ethnic composition of Georgia charter schools also mirrored that of non-charter schools.

However, charter schools, in the aggregate serve a higher percent of White and Asian students and a lower percent of Black students than non-charter schools

Figure 4: 2015-16 Student Demographics – Charter and Non-Charter

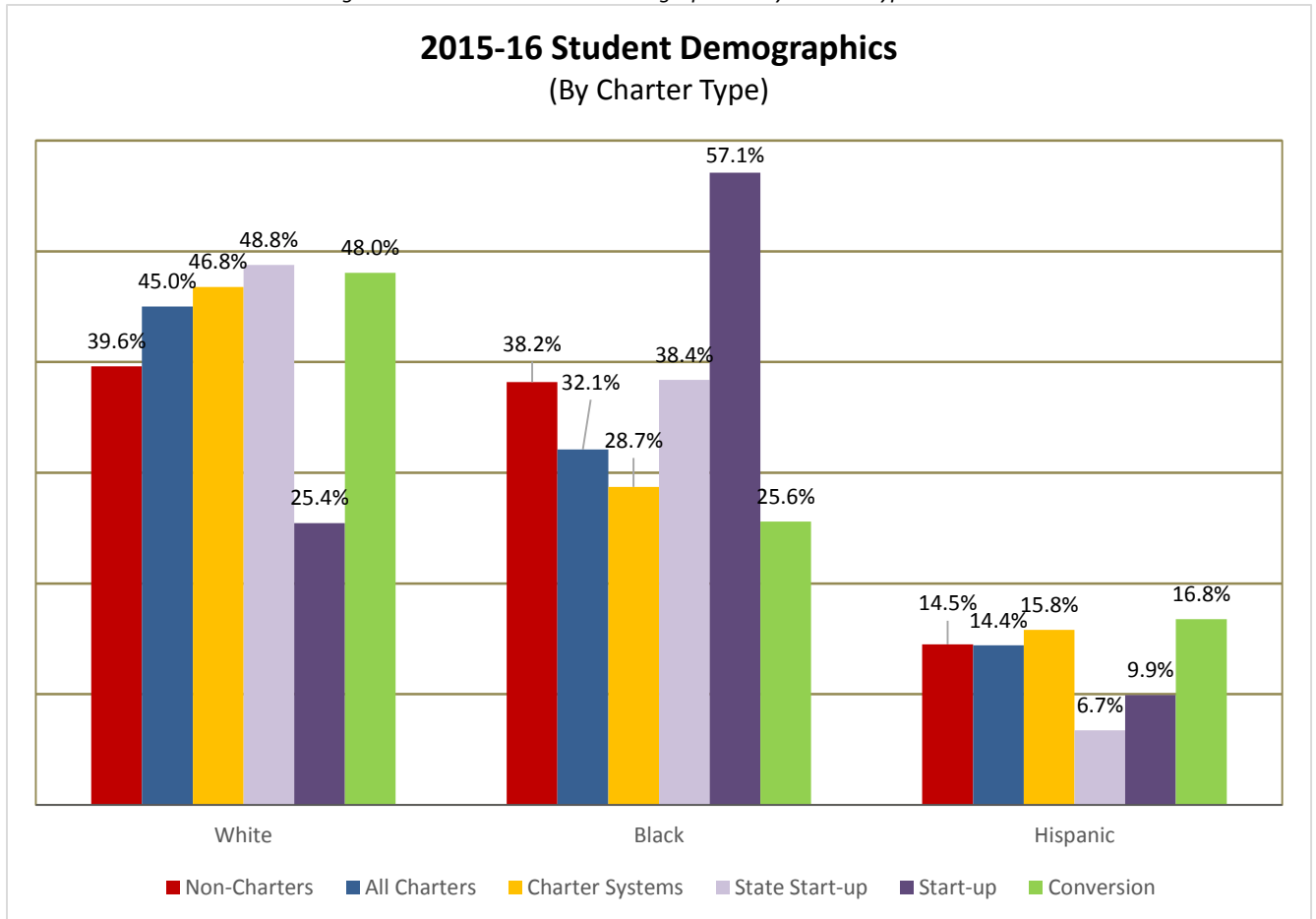


Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

Charter School Demographics (continued)

Start-up charter schools serve a significantly higher proportion of Black students (57.1%) than all other types of public schools, and serve the lowest proportion of White students (25.4%).

Figure 5: 2014-2015 Student Demographics – By Charter Type



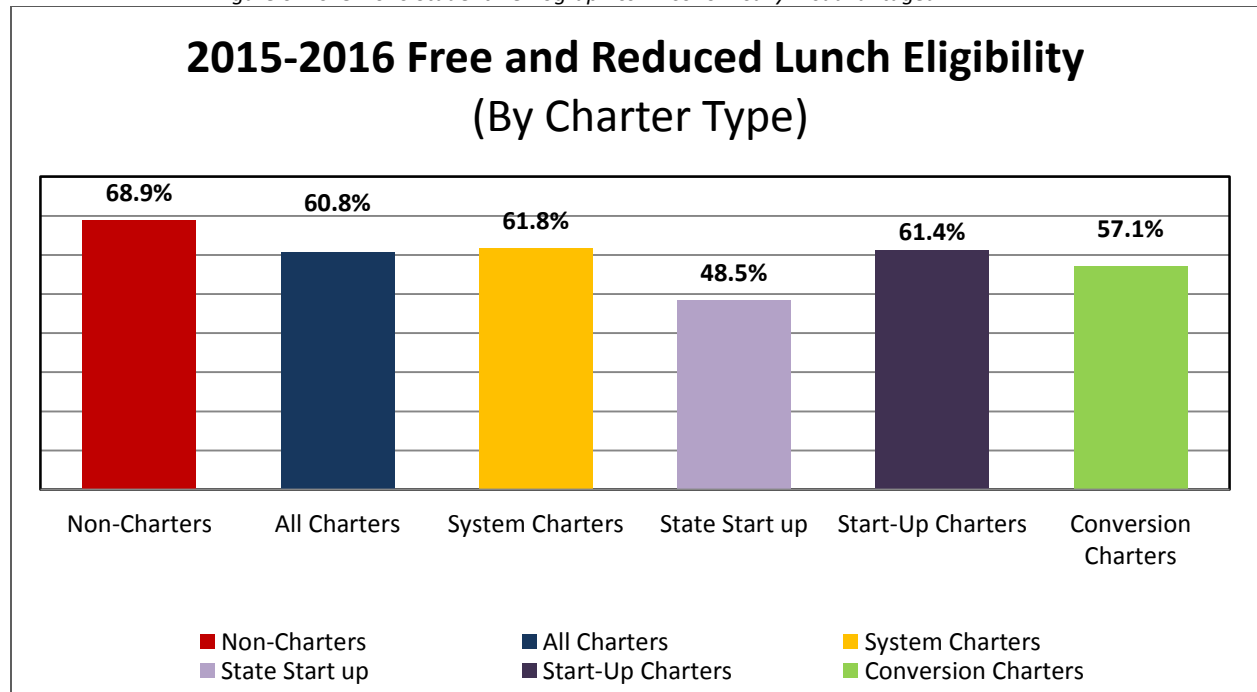
Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

Charter School Demographics (continued)

Georgia charter schools served a slightly lower percentage of economically disadvantaged students than non-charters – 60.8% of charter school students were eligible for free and reduced price meals compared to 68.9% of non-charter school students. Each category of school had an increase in the number of students eligible for free and reduced price meals.

Charter System schools serve the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students (61.8%) and State Start-up charter schools served the least (48.5%).

Figure 6: 2015-2016 Student Demographics – Economically Disadvantaged

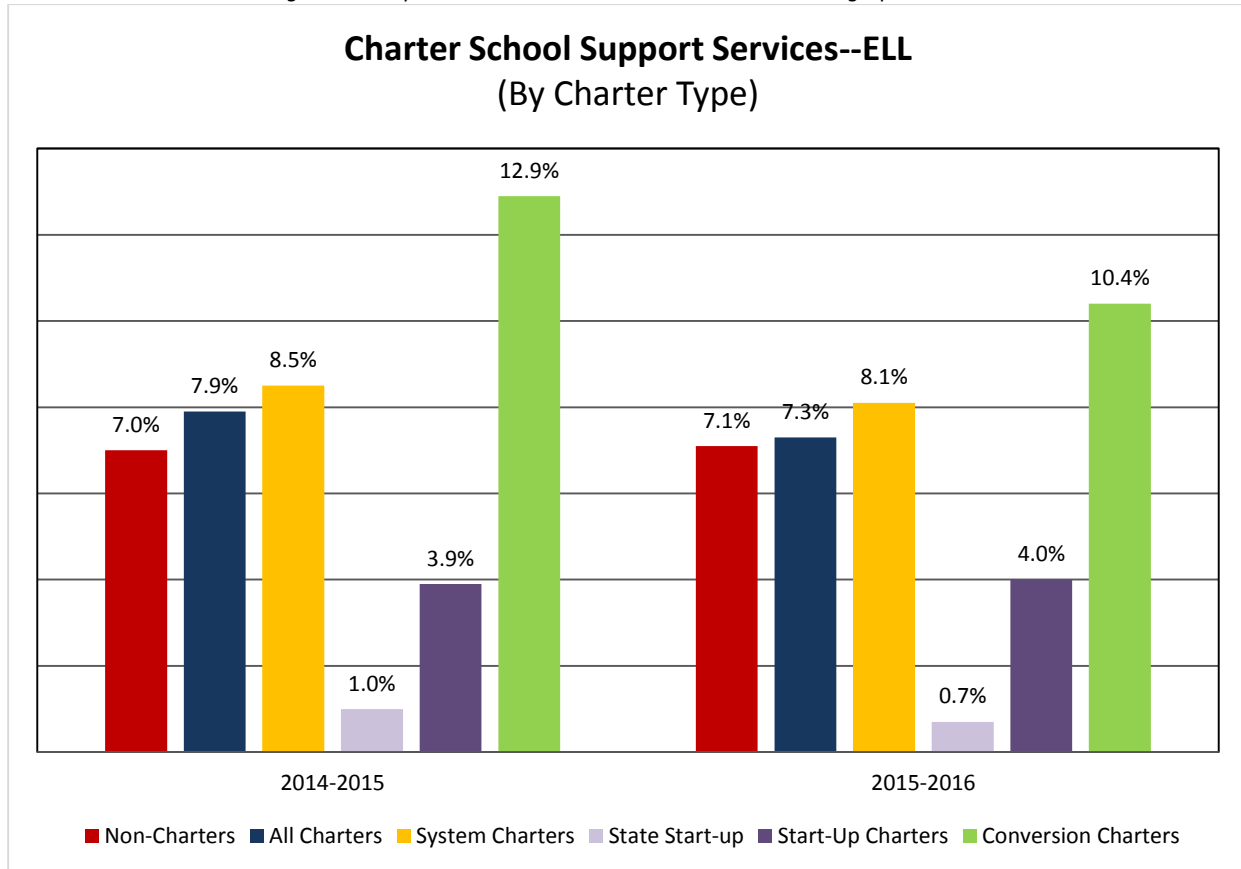


Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

Charter School Demographics (continued)

Georgia charter schools serve similar percentages of students as non-charters English language learner students. Georgia charter schools had a slight decrease, 7.9% to 7.3% English language learner students from 2014-15 to 2015-16.

Figure 7: Comparison 2014-15 vs 2015-2016 Student Demographics – ELL

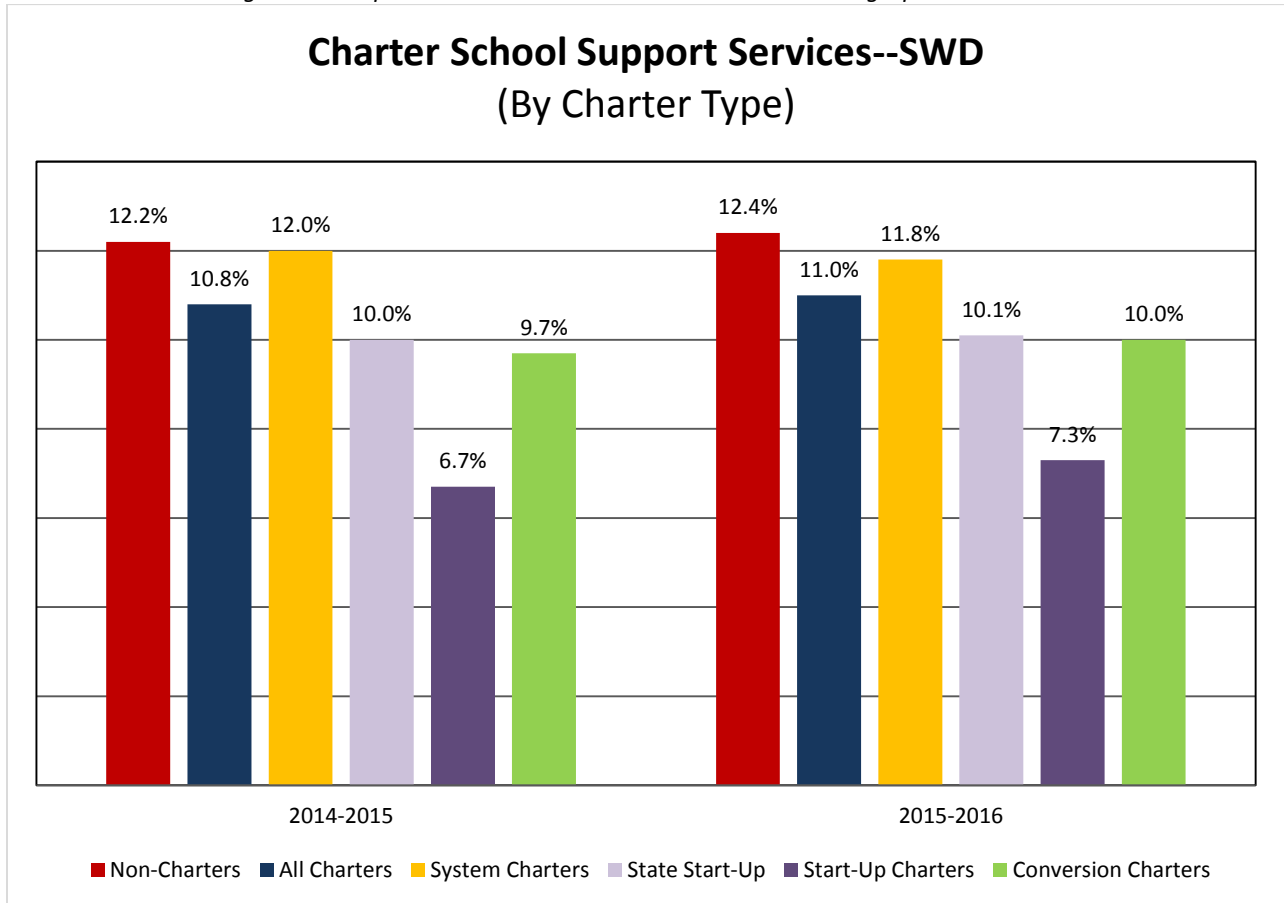


Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

Charter School Demographics (continued)

Georgia charter schools serve a slightly smaller percentage of students with disabilities as non-charters students with disabilities. Georgia charter schools had a slight increase, 10.8% to 11.0% students with disabilities from 2014-15 to 2015-16.

Figure 8: Comparison 2014-15 vs 2015-2016 Student Demographics – SWD

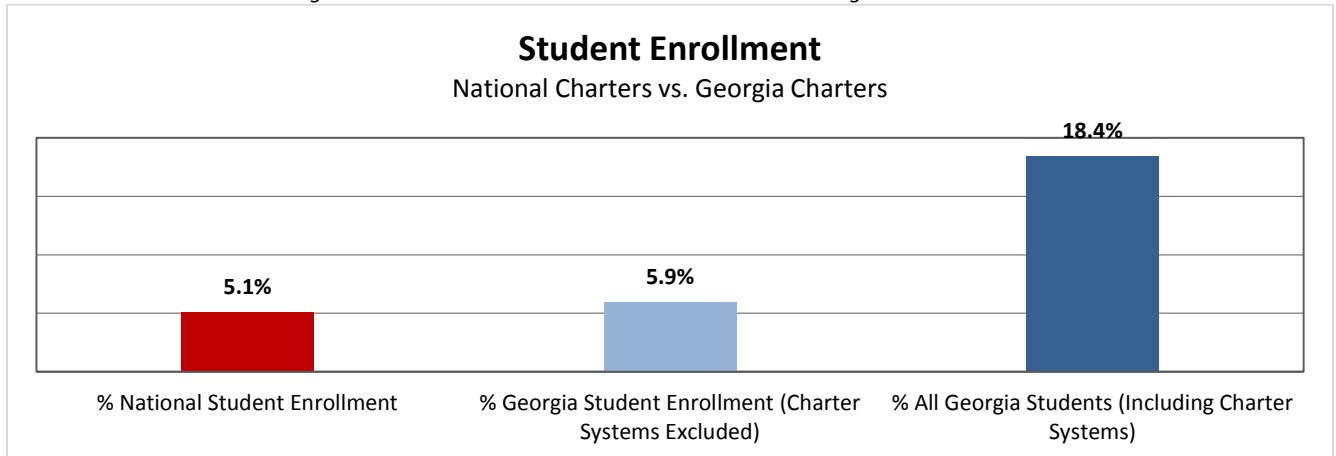


Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

Georgia Charters vs. Charters Nationally

Charter school students nationally represent 5.1% of all public school students in the 2013-14 school year (the most recently available national data).¹ Using Georgia's most recent data, charter school students (with charter system schools excluded for national comparability) in 2015-16 is 5.9% of all students in the state – which is higher than the national percent of charter school students. Note that including charter system school students the percentage increases to 18.4% of the public school population in Georgia for the 2015-16 school year.²

Figure 9: Student Enrollment – National Charters vs. Georgia Charters



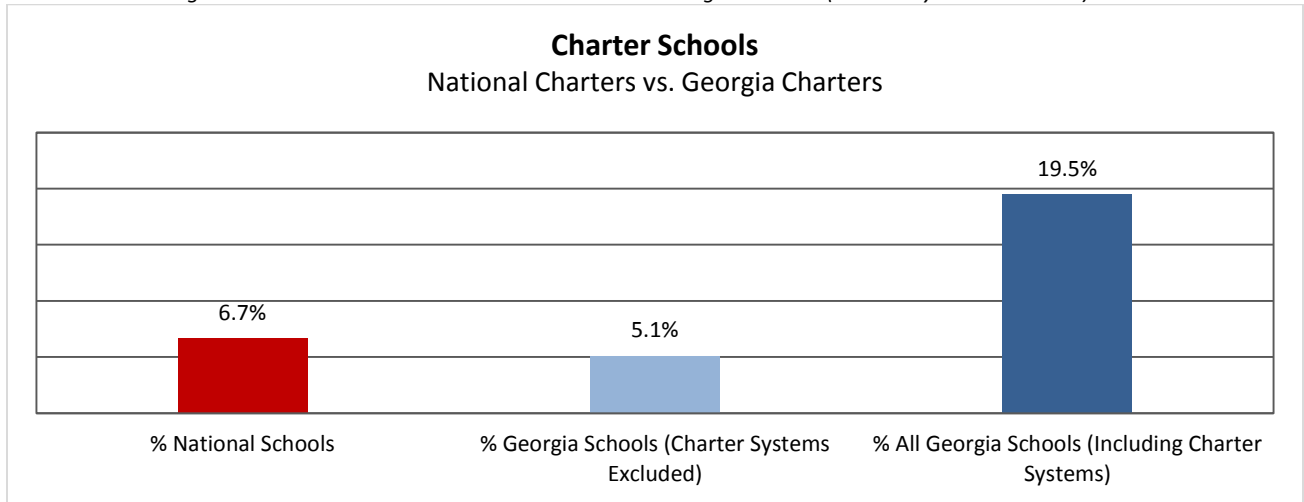
¹ The Public Charter Schools Dashboard, A Comprehensive Data Resource from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Retrieved from: <http://www.publiccharters.org/dashboard/students/page/overview/year/2014>

² Enrollment based on October 2015 (FTE 2016-1) count and can be retrieved from: https://app3.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fte_pack_enrollgrade.entry_form

Charter School Counts – National Charters vs. Georgia Charters (charter system schools excluded)

Charter school numbers nationally represent 6.7% of the nearly 100,000 public schools³, Georgia charter schools (excluding charter systems) represents 5.1% of just over 2200 schools in Georgia.⁴

Figure 10: Charter Schools – National Charters vs. Georgia Charters (Charter Systems Excluded)



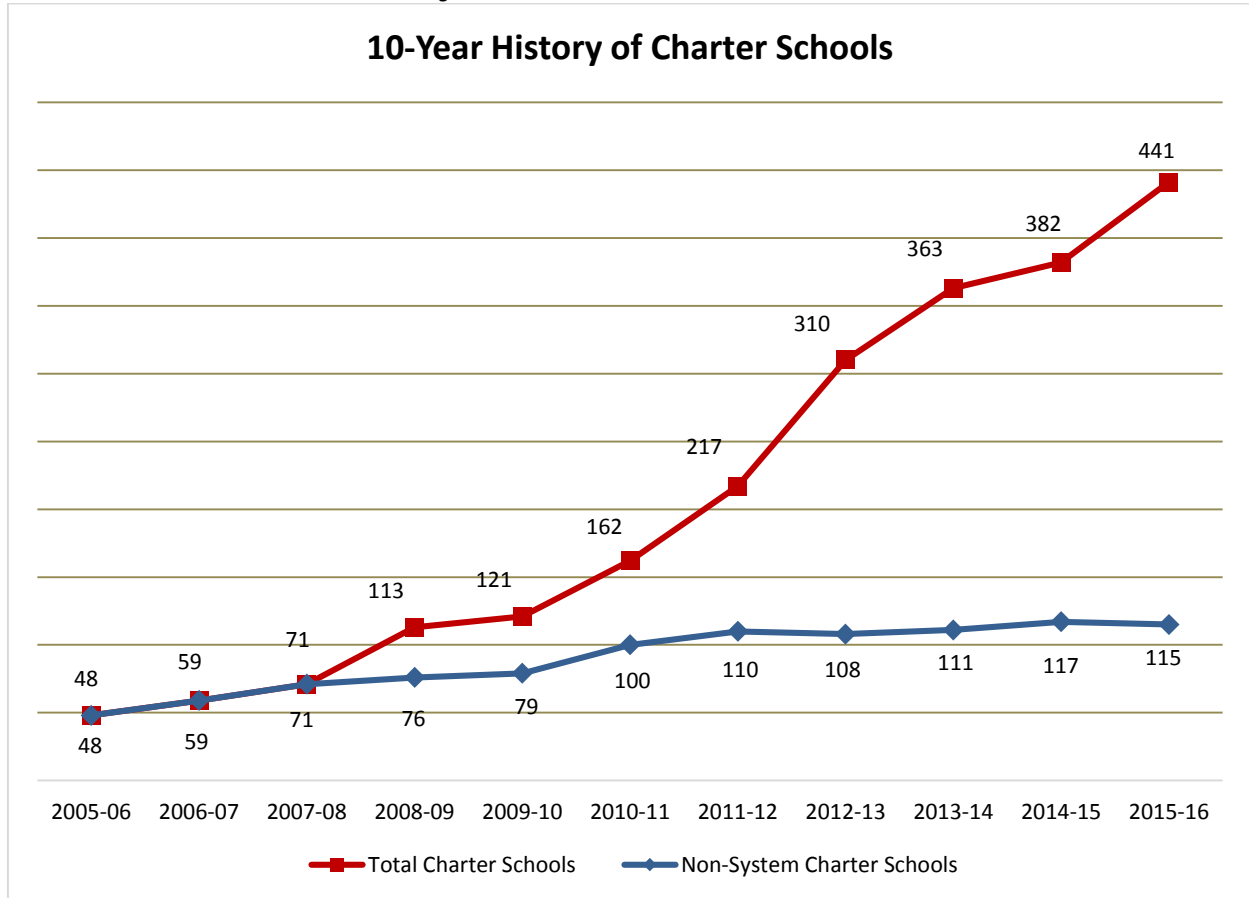
³ The Public Charter Schools Dashboard, A Comprehensive Data Resource from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Retrieved from: <http://www.publiccharters.org/dashboard/students/page/overview/year/2014>

⁴ Georgia School count retrieved from: https://app3.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fte_pack_school_count.display_count

Charter Schools by the Numbers

The growth of Georgia charter schools continued in the 2015-2016 school year. The total number of charter schools increased 14.7% from 382 to 438 schools – including system charter schools – between 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Figure 11: Ten-Year Charter School Growth



The 2015-16 school year saw a loss of 10 conversion charter schools, with half (5) joining a charter system, an increase of 12 new start-up charter schools, split equally with 6 locally-approved and 6 state charter schools, and the addition of 4 charter systems with 36 schools total. There are 153 charter campuses across the state, excluding charter system schools.

Charter School Locations in Georgia

There are 136 charter school campuses spread across 59 counties in Georgia, reflecting the distribution of students throughout the state.

The nine districts that make up Metro Atlanta comprise 50% of charter school campuses (68 of 136).

Figure 12: Percentage of School Campuses that are Charter Schools, 2015-16

System Name	Non-System Charter School Counts	Total School Count	Percent Charter School
Atlanta Public Schools	17	106	16.04%
Baldwin County	2	7	28.57%
Barrow County	1	16	6.25%
Bartow County	1	20	5.00%
Berrien County	1	5	20.00%
Bibb County	4	39	10.26%
Bleckley County	1	5	20.00%
Bulloch County	1	16	6.25%
Calhoun County	1	4	25.00%
Carroll County	1	24	4.17%
Chatham County	5	55	9.09%
Cherokee County	1	38	2.63%
Clarke County	2	21	9.52%
Clayton County	5	62	8.06%
Cobb County	5	111	4.50%
Coweta County	3	31	9.68%
DeKalb County	16	141	11.35%
Dougherty County	1	23	4.35%
Douglas County	2	36	5.56%
Effingham County	1	14	7.14%
Elbert County	1	4	25.00%
Fannin County	1	5	20.00%
Floyd County	1	19	5.26%
Forsyth County	1	35	2.86%
Fulton County	11	101	10.89%
Gilmer County	1	7	14.29%
Glynn County	1	17	5.88%
Grady County	1	7	14.29%
Greene County	2	5	40.00%
Gwinnett County	6	136	4.41%
Habersham County	1	14	7.14%
Hall County	6	36	16.67%
Henry County	3	49	6.12%
Houston County	1	37	2.70%
Jackson County	1	13	7.69%
Lamar County	1	4	25.00%
Laurens County	1	9	11.11%
Liberty County	1	14	7.14%
Lowndes County	1	12	8.33%
Lumpkin County	1	6	16.67%
Madison County	1	8	12.50%
Mitchell County	1	5	20.00%
Muscogee County	2	54	3.70%
Newton County	1	22	4.55%
Pickens County	1	8	12.50%
Polk County	1	11	9.09%
Rabun County	1	5	20.00%
Richmond County	3	52	5.77%
Rockdale County	1	18	5.56%
Stephens County	1	7	14.29%
Sumter County	1	7	14.29%
Thomas County	1	6	16.67%
Toombs County	1	6	16.67%
Troup County	1	19	5.26%
Union County	1	6	16.67%
Washington County	1	5	20.00%
Wheeler County	1	3	33.33%
White County	1	8	12.50%
Whitfield County	1	23	4.35%

Figure 13: Percentage of School Campuses that are Charter Schools in Metro Atlanta, 2015-16

System Name	Non-System Charter School Counts	Total School Count	Percent Charter School
Atlanta Public Schools	17	106	16.04%
DeKalb County	16	141	11.35%
Fulton County	11	101	10.89%
Coweta County	3	31	9.68%
Clayton County	5	62	8.06%
Henry County	3	49	6.12%
Douglas County	2	36	5.56%
Cobb County	5	111	4.50%
Gwinnett County	6	136	4.41%

Figure 14: Statewide and multi-district charter schools, 2015-16

School Name	Districts Served
Pataula Charter Academy	Baker, Clay, Calhoun, Early, Randolph Counties
Foothills Charter High School	Clarke, Madison, & Jackson Counties & Statewide
Heart of Georgia College and Career Academy	Dublin City, Bleckley, Laurens, Wheeler Counties
International Charter School of Atlanta	Fulton County & Statewide
Southeastern Early College & Career Academy	Vidalia City, Toombs, Treutlen, & Montgomery Counties
Mountain Education Charter High School	Elbert, Fannin, Forsyth, Gilmer, Habersham, Lumpkin, Pickens, Rabun, Stephens, Union & White & Statewide
Georgia School for Innovation & the Classics	Richmond County & Statewide
Georgia Connections Academy	State-wide Virtual
Georgia Cyber Academy	State-wide Virtual
Graduation Achievement Center Charter High School	State-wide Virtual

Charter School Student Enrollment Distribution (Including Virtual School Enrollment)

System	Percent Enrolled in Charter School
Greene County	45.7%
Mitchell County	28.7%
Grady County	25.2%
Hall County	19.8%
Calhoun County	18.9%
Randolph County	18.8%
Clay County	18.3%
Atlanta Public Schools	15.7%
Montgomery County	13.2%
DeKalb County	10.4%
Rome City	10.4%
Toombs County	9.6%
Carroll County	9.3%
Floyd County	8.7%
Bibb County	8.6%
Sumter County	8.5%
Towns County	8.2%
Baker County	7.4%
Bartow County	6.6%
Liberty County	6.5%
Coweta County	6.2%
Cobb County	6.2%
Clayton County	6.1%
Chatham County	6.0%
Jackson County	5.6%
Lowndes County	4.6%
Fulton County	4.6%
Richmond County	4.5%
Douglas County	4.5%
Pickens County	4.4%
Brooks County	4.4%
Dougherty County	4.2%
Thomas County	4.2%
Henry County	4.2%

System	Percent Enrolled in Charter School
Muscogee County	4.1%
Chattooga County	3.9%
Cherokee County	3.9%
Habersham County	3.8%
Worth County	3.6%
Franklin County	3.2%
Baldwin County	3.2%
Berrien County	3.1%
Crawford County	3.0%
Twiggs County	2.8%
Rabun County	2.7%
Monroe County	2.6%
Gwinnett County	2.5%
Talbot County	2.4%
Elbert County	2.4%
Polk County	2.4%
Bulloch County	2.3%
Early County	2.3%
Treutlen County	2.3%
McIntosh County	2.2%
Meriwether County	2.2%
Jasper County	2.2%
Walton County	2.2%
Clarke County	2.1%
Spalding County	2.0%
Newton County	2.0%
Atkinson County	2.0%
Wilkinson County	1.9%
Paulding County	1.9%
Long County	1.9%
Tattall County	1.9%
Quitman County	1.8%
Rockdale County	1.8%
Screven County	1.8%

Charter School Student Enrollment Distribution (Including Virtual School Enrollment)- *continued*

System	Percent Enrolled in Charter School
Emanuel County	1.7%
Forsyth County	1.7%
Macon County	1.6%
Lamar County	1.6%
Hancock County	1.6%
Wheeler County	1.6%
Peach County	1.5%
Heard County	1.5%
Terrell County	1.5%
Oglethorpe County	1.4%
Butts County	1.4%
Dade County	1.4%
Taylor County	1.4%
Columbia County	1.4%
Stewart County	1.4%
Jefferson County	1.4%
Webster County	1.4%
Pike County	1.3%
Fayette County	1.3%
Bremen City	1.3%
Burke County	1.3%
Walker County	1.3%
Seminole County	1.3%
Charlton County	1.3%
Murray County	1.3%
Wayne County	1.2%
Johnson County	1.2%
Ben Hill County	1.2%
Thomaston-Upson County	1.2%
Irwin County	1.2%
Wilcox County	1.2%
Lee County	1.2%
Brantley County	1.2%
Camden County	1.1%

System	Percent Enrolled in Charter School
Decatur County	1.1%
Bryan County	1.1%
Evans County	1.1%
Wilkes County	1.1%
Lanier County	1.1%
Washington County	1.1%
Bacon County	1.1%
Pierce County	1.1%
Jeff Davis County	1.0%
Ware County	1.0%
Pulaski County	1.0%
Laurens County	1.0%
Chattahoochee County	1.0%
Houston County	1.0%
Effingham County	1.0%
Miller County	1.0%
Tift County	0.9%
Jones County	0.9%
Buford City	0.9%
Troup County	0.9%
Thomasville City	0.9%
McDuffie County	0.9%
Dooly County	0.9%
Glynn County	0.9%
Jefferson City	0.9%
Cook County	0.8%
Whitfield County	0.8%
Oconee County	0.8%
Jenkins County	0.8%
Catoosa County	0.7%
Taliaferro County	0.7%
Bleckley County	0.7%
Dodge County	0.7%
Marion County	0.6%

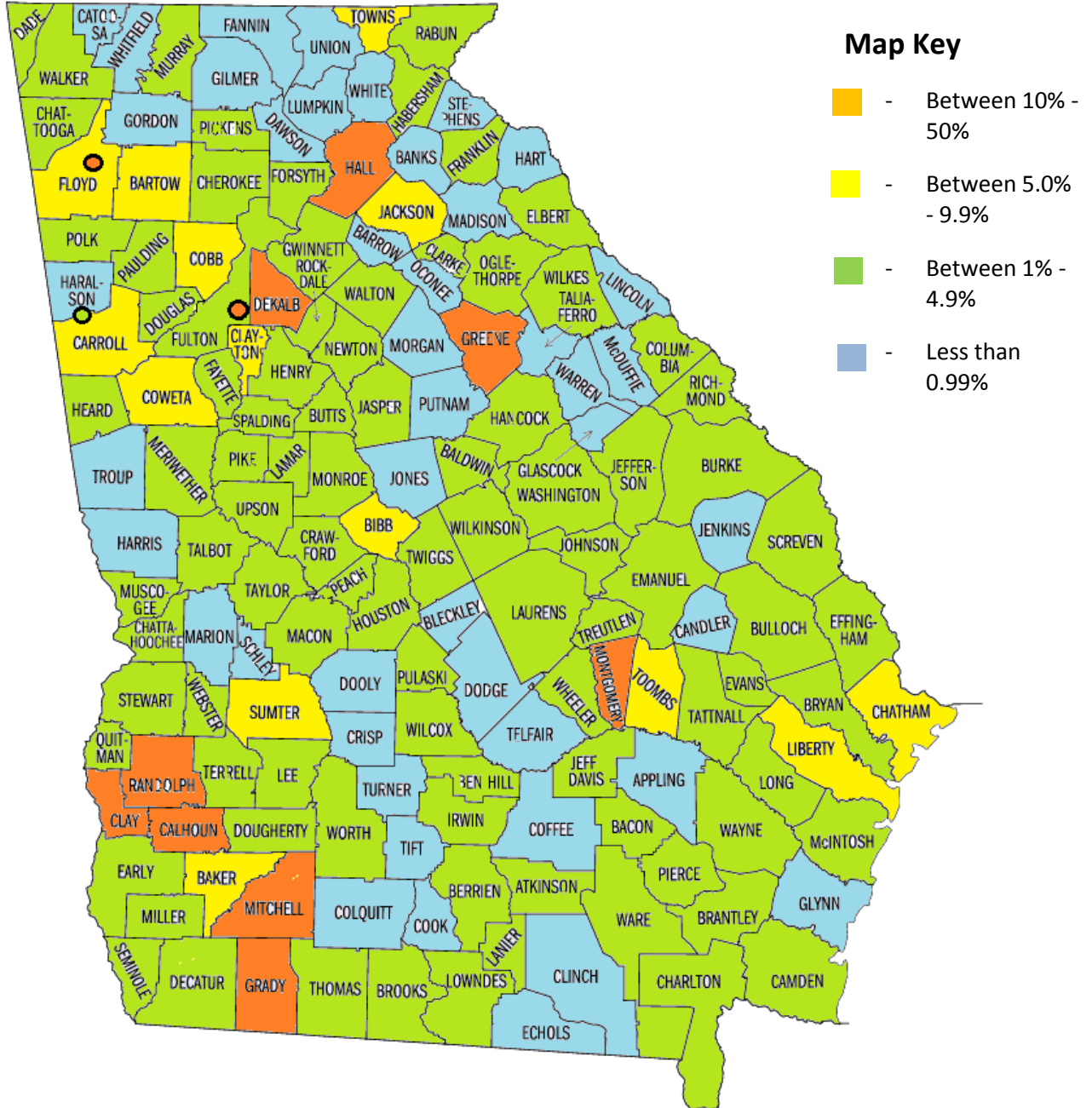
Charter School Student Enrollment Distribution (Including Virtual School Enrollment)- *continued*

System	Percent Enrolled in Charter School
Clinch County	0.6%
Lincoln County	0.6%
Pelham City	0.5%
Harris County	0.5%
Turner County	0.5%
Echols County	0.5%
Valdosta City	0.5%
Telfair County	0.4%
Crisp County	0.4%
Appling County	0.4%
Social Circle City	0.3%
Trion City	0.2%
Dalton City	0.2%
Schley County	0.2%
Chickamauga City	0.2%

Charter School Student Enrollment Distribution

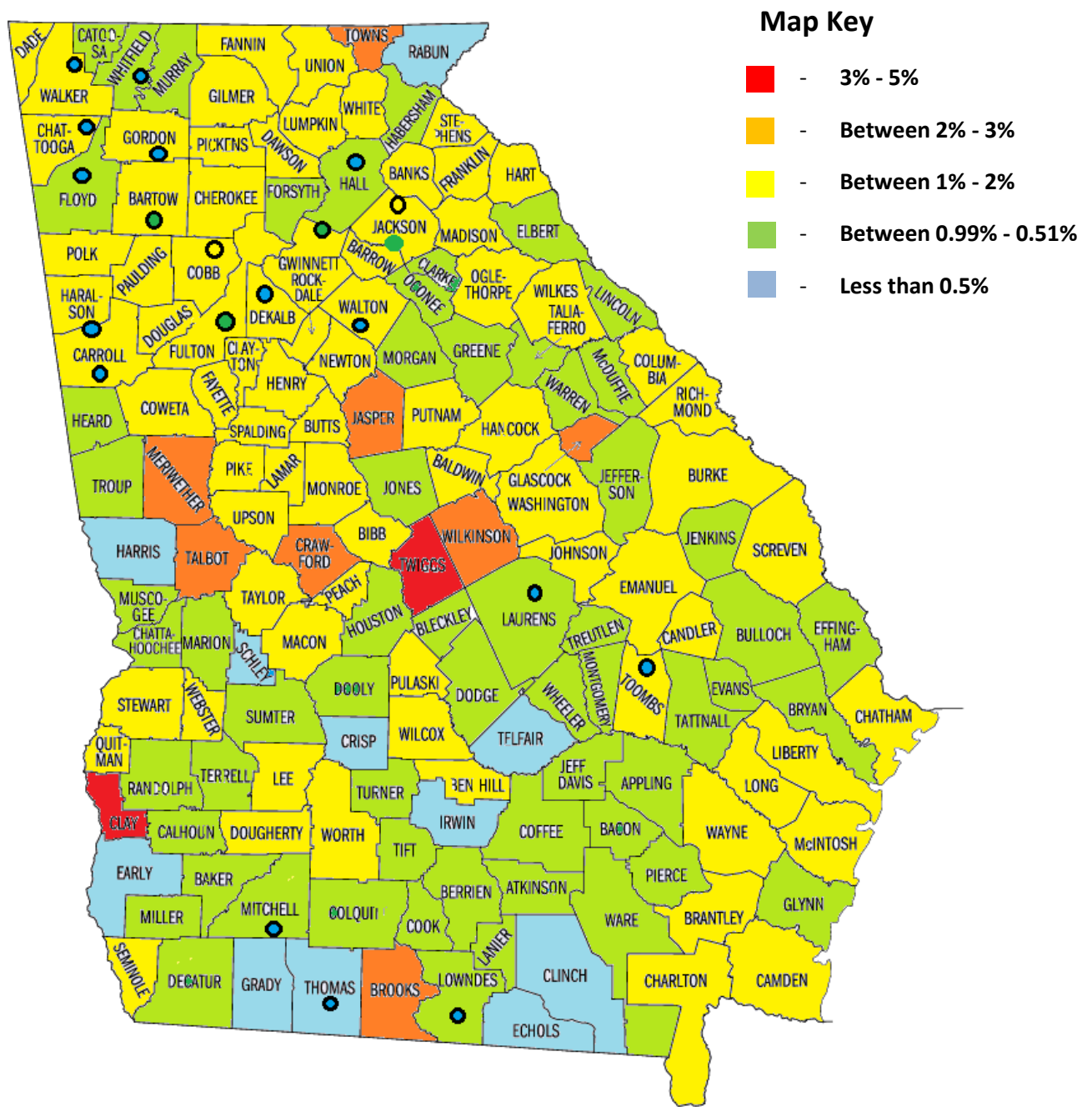
(Including Virtual School Enrollment)

Percentage of Students by County that are enrolled in a Charter School, 2015-16



Virtual Charter School Student Distribution

Percentage of Students by County that are enrolled in an Online Charter School, 2015-16



College and Career Academies in Georgia

There are 24 College and Career Academies created by a separate three-party charter contract and 9 College and Career Programs created by a Charter System contract in Georgia. They are three-party contracts between the charter school, a school system(s) and local businesses. These College and Career Contracts offer unique opportunities to students. Local businesses and business leaders assist the academies with internship programs, curriculum, teachers, donations, and numerous additional resources. Below is a list of just a few of the various industry partners:

College and Career Academy Partners, 2015-16 (selected)		
Kia	Caterpillar	Georgia United Credit Union
Power Partners	Bartow County Sheriff Department	Newton County IT Department
Gulfstream	Georgia Power	Anheuser-Busch
Sugar foods	Fairview Park Hospital	Chicken of the Sea
Frito Lay	City of Lyons	City of Vidalia

Newton County College and Career Academy

An example of the unique innovative opportunities provided by a College and Career Academy is the Desktops 4 Ed Program at Newton County College and Career Academy (NCCA). The NCCA IT Essentials and Networking classes have partnered with the Newton County IT department to refurbish retired county computers. The refurbished computers are then sold to Newton County students that participate in the free and reduced lunch program for just \$25. Before the students can take the computers home, they, along with their parents must participate in a one hour safety training and computer set-up class taught by the NCCA IT Essentials and Networking associates. Through this program a total of 11 NCCA students have refurbished 90 desktop computers and have provided a CPU, monitor, keyboard, mouse, cords, mouse pad and training to 82 families, with the proceeds (\$25 per computer) going back into the program.

Central Education Center

Another innovation success is Central Education Center (CEC) implementation of the purest approach to high school age German Apprenticeship that is currently found in the United States.

CEC accomplished this replication of a German Apprenticeship during the past three years using charter flexibility to provide longer-term internships with this German company and partners to help CEC get to the "purer" form of German Apprenticeship.

For example, CEC has worked with Grenzebach Corporation, a German family-owned turnkey provider of systems that move glass, handle glass, place glass, and install glass. While the company provides many other manufactured solutions, the work in glass handling is their signature solution. CEC works with Grenzebach since their North American manufacturing is headquartered in Newnan, where CEC is located. Grenzebach manufacturers in Europe, North America and China. CEC also works with Grenzebach because their COO was nominated to the CEC Board by the Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Coweta County Development Authority. That nomination was approved by the Central Educational Center (CEC) Board. This nomination-approval process for charter

school board members is a feature of the CEC charter application-petition. CEC believes this approach to nomination-approval best mimics a "community election" for a special-purpose charter school. Once the COO became a part of the CEC Board, Grenzebach began the effort to first approximate, then begin to plan implementation of the German Apprenticeship program.

In addition, CEC works with Grenzebach because the German-based company has a long history of success in providing apprenticeship programs in Germany, as well as a significant history of providing university-level internships in Newnan. Finally, CEC works with Grenzebach because they have attained one of the highest levels of safety accreditation among all companies in Georgia.

Some of the innovative practices CEC has developed with Grenzebach so far include:

1. CEC identifies promising CEC pre-engineering (high school program) and promising CEC welding (dual enrollment technical college program) students who express a desire to focus on manufacturing careers. Grenzebach has indicated that the first indicator of potential success is that the student has made a very conscious choice to attend CEC to focus on career studies.
2. CEC developed a pool of such students from which Grenzebach interviews to select long-term interns.
3. CEC worked with Grenzebach to develop appropriate criteria that can be used to define finalists for the intern roles.
4. CEC worked with Grenzebach to bring in parents to visit with Grenzebach management to understand the opportunities and requirements of the internship.
5. CEC worked with Grenzebach to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with students identifying clearly the responsibilities of students and the responsibilities of Grenzebach during the internship.
6. Grenzebach has paid these interns throughout a beginning (summer) rotation that allows students to identify the department in which they are most interested, or identified the departments in which they also wish to learn beyond the department (for example, welding) to which they are most logically assigned.
7. Grenzebach has then paid these interns throughout at least a one-year long (generally 15-20 hours per week) experience.
8. Grenzebach has made job offers to the students at the end of the year when students have indicated they wish to move directly into the workforce.
9. During the internship, Grenzebach has assigned a manager/supervisor as a mentor and teacher so that the major purpose of the internship is to provide a true "learning" experience for the student. CEC has assigned an intern instructor to work with the student and with Grenzebach on a formal training and evaluation plan, and to maintain progress toward high school completion.

In a most recent example of this program in action, a CEC welding student had completed one technical college welding certificate during his junior year of high school. Because of that, and because of his documented work ethic and performance, this student was chosen among a pool of qualifying students. The welding student's senior year schedule included a half-day of paid work with Grenzebach. At the end of the year, upon his high school on-time graduation, Grenzebach offered a full-time welding position to this 17-year old. He then passed Grenzebach's bi-year international welding testing quality control program.

Gordon County College and Career Academy

The Gordon Co. CCA has developed an extremely strong partnership with Mohawk Industries. As the CCA was looking to develop a new Mechatronics program this year, Mohawk agreed to provide an employee to teach the course at no cost to the CCA. This will ensure that the students get real-world experience/examples from a major local employer and help them make direct contact as they prepare themselves for the future workforce.

Academy for Advanced Studies (Henry County)

As part of their effort to bring real-world opportunities to their students, the Academy for Advanced Studies (the CCA in Henry Co.) has worked with a local Credit Union to develop and imbed a fully functioning Credit Union branch inside the school itself. The branch is run by the students themselves with minimal supervision/oversight from Credit Union employees. It provides real-world experience as part of their Work-Based Learning efforts, and it give several of their programs (marketing, Broadcast & Video, etc.) an additional opportunity to work with a real-world client on various class projects.

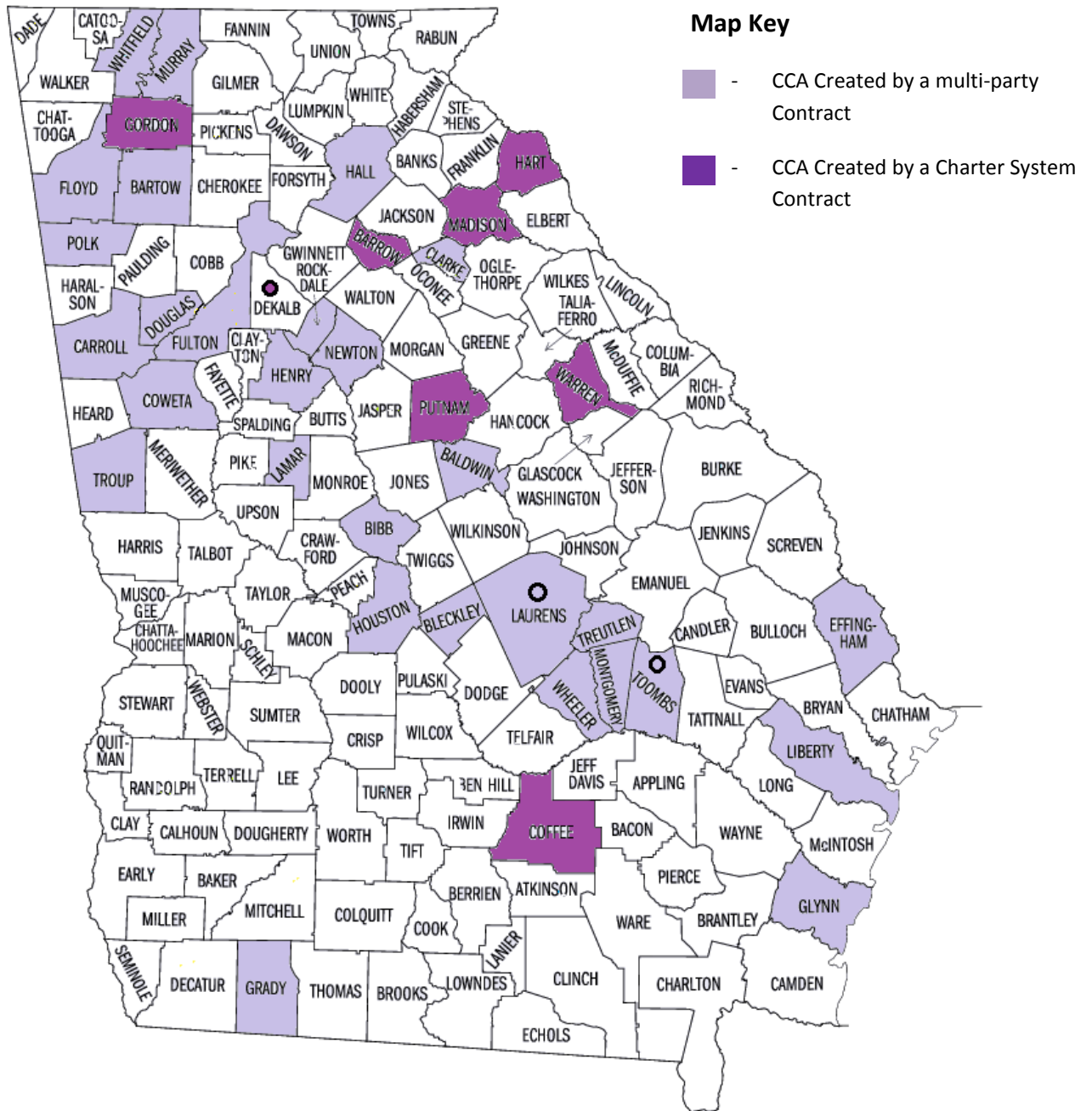
Cairo High School Charter College and Career Academy

As part of their wall-to-wall transformation of Cairo High School into the Cairo High School College and Career Academy, the CCA has worked to completely and comprehensively integrate its CTAE and Academic courses. As an example, the school is now teaching its Healthcare/CAN program in Spanish. Once a student completes the program, he/she is then awarded both a CTAE credit for Healthcare as well as an Academic/Foreign Language credit for Spanish. They are planning a Math/Drafting combination for the coming year, and are looking at other programs for similar integration in the future.

Figure 15: 2015-16 College and Career Academies

2015 - 16 College and Career Academies		
Created by Separate Multi-Party Charter Contracts		
College and Career Academies	District Served	Location
Academy for Advanced Studies	Henry County	McDonough
Athens Community Career Academy	Clarke County	Athens
Baldwin County Career Academy	Baldwin County	Milledgeville
Bartow County College and Career Academy	Bartow County	Cartersville
Cairo High Charter School	Grady County	Cairo
Carroll County College and Career Academy	Carroll County	Carrollton
Central Educational Center	Coweta County	Newnan
Douglas County College & Career Institute	Douglas County	Douglasville
Floyd County College and Career Academy	Floyd County	Rome
Effingham College and Career Academy	Effingham County	Rincon
Golden Isles Career Academy	Glynn County	Brunswick
Hapeville College and Career Academy	Fulton County	Atlanta
Heart of Georgia College and Career Academy	Dublin City, Bleckley County, Laurens County and Wheeler County	Dublin
Houston County Career Academy	Houston County	Warner Robbins
Lamar County College and Career Academy	Lamar County	Barnesville
Lanier Charter Career Academy	Hall County	Gainesville
Liberty College and Career Academy	Liberty County	Hinesville
Newton College and Career Academy	Newton County	Covington
Northwest Georgia College and Career Academy	Whitefield County and Murray County	Dalton
Polk County College and Career Academy	Polk County	Cedartown
Rockdale Career Academy	Rockdale County	Conyers
Southeastern Early College & Career Academy	Vidalia City, Toombs County, Montgomery County and Treutlen County	Vidalia
THINC	Troup County	LaGrange
William S. Hutchings College and Career Academy	Bibb County	Macon
<i>*Griffin Region College and Career Academy will open in Fall 2016</i>		
Created by Charter System Contract		
Broad River College and Career Academy	Madison County	Danielsville
Coffee County College and Career Academy	Coffee County	Douglas
Decatur Career Academy	Decatur City	Decatur
Gordon County College and Career Academy	Gordon County	Calhoun
Hart County College and Career Academy	Hart County	Hartwell
Putnam County College and Career Academy	Putnam County	Eatonton
Sims Academy of Innovation	Barrow County	Winder
Warren County Career Academy	Warren County	Warrenton

College & Career Academy School Distribution, 2015-16



Charter Systems in Georgia

Georgia now has 33 approved charter systems, 32 of which are operating a charter system in the 2015-16 school year. This is up five from 28 charter systems in 2014-15.

Figure 16: List of Charter Systems (2015-16)

#	Charter System	First Year as Charter System
1	Atlanta Public Schools	2016
2	Banks County Schools	2013
3	Barrow County Schools	2011
4	Calhoun City Schools	2011
5	Candler County Schools	2015
6	Carrollton City Schools	2014
7	Cartersville City Schools	2010
8	City Schools of Decatur	2008
9	Coffee County Schools	2013
10	Colquitt County Schools	2015
11	Commerce City Schools	2014
12	Dawson County Schools	2011
13	Dublin City Schools	2011
14	Fannin County Schools	2015
15	Floyd County Schools	2010
16	Fulton County Schools	2012
17	Gainesville City Schools	2008
18	Gilmer County Schools	2014
19	Glascok County Schools	2014
20	Gordon County Schools	2011
21	Haralson County Schools	2013
22	Hart County Schools	2014
23	Lumpkin County School	2014
24	Liberty County Schools	2015
25	Madison County Schools	2012
26	Marietta City Schools	2008
27	Morgan County Schools	2011
28	Putnam County Schools	2010
29	Stephens County Schools	2014
30	Union County Schools	2014
31	Vidalia City Schools	2014
32	Warren County Schools	2008
33	White County Schools	2010

District Flexibility

Per Official Code of Georgia Annotated § 20-2-84 no later than June 30, 2015, each local school system was required to notify the Georgia Department of Education it would operate as a Strategic Waiver School System (SWSS, formerly known as IE2), a Charter System, or a Title 20/No Waivers School System (formerly known as Status Quo). Those that chose SWSS or Charter System sign a performance contract that offers flexibility for higher accountability. The performance contracts consist of two main parts, academic and other targets and waivers granted by the State Board of Education (SBOE).

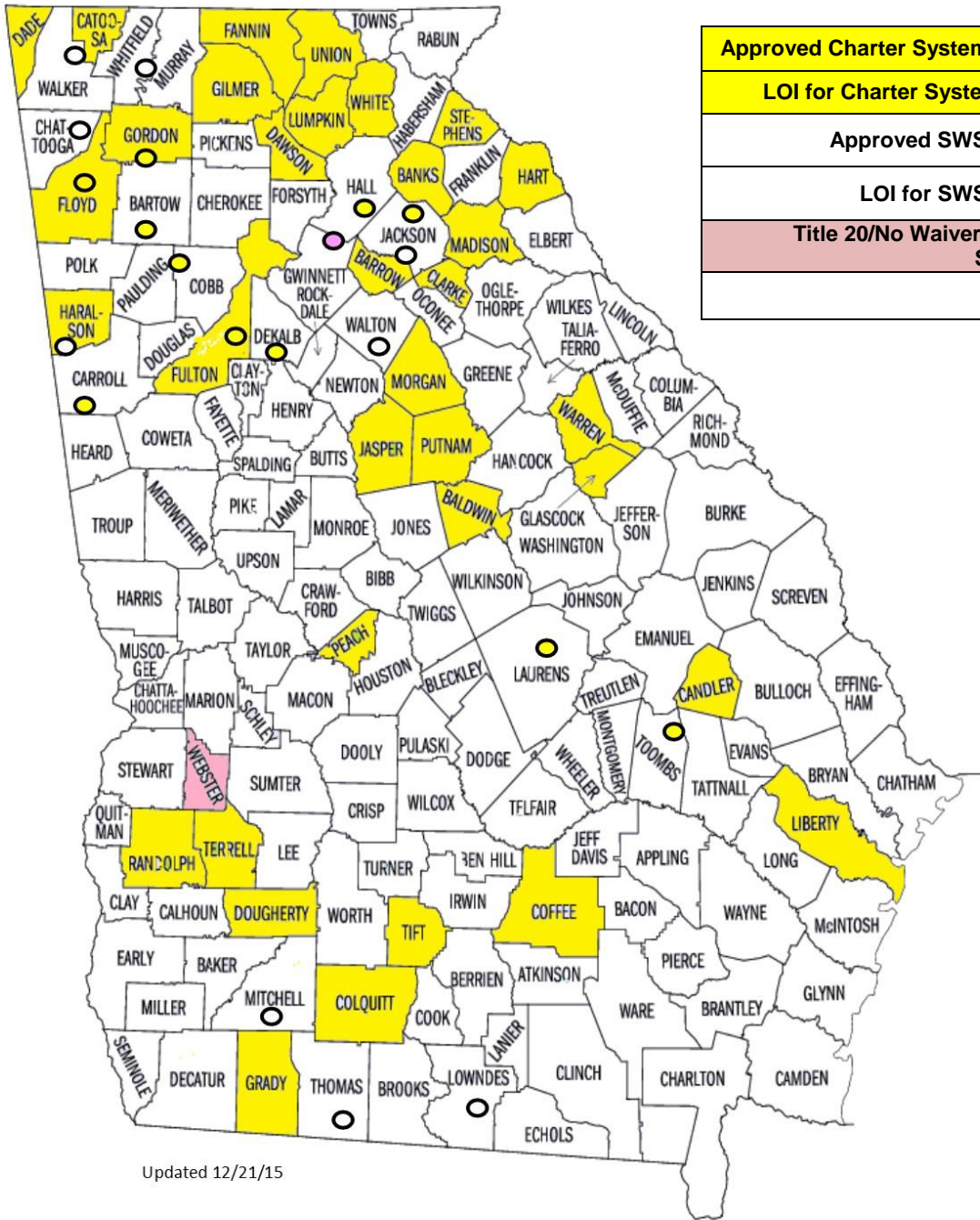
A Strategic Waiver School System (SWSS) is a local district that has a SWSS performance contract with the State Board of Education giving the district freedom from specific Title 20 provisions and related SBOE rules and GaDOE guidelines. This contract allows for the flexibility to innovate and may provide financial savings from waivers.

A Charter School System is a local district that has a Charter System performance contract with the SBOE granting it freedom from almost all of Title 20, SBOE rules, and GaDOE guidelines. This contract allows for the flexibility to innovate, may provide financial savings from waivers, has additional per pupil funding, and requires school level governance.

The Title 20/No Waivers School System does not receive flexibility in exchange for increased accountability and defined consequences and has opted to remain under all current laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

All Systems, regardless of flexibility status must comply with all federal laws and regulations and all state laws, rules and regulations not waived in flexibility contract.

District Flexibility Approved and Intended



Approved Charter Systems	33	44
LOI for Charter System	11	
Approved SWSS	72	134
LOI for SWSS	62	
Title 20/No Waivers School Systems*		2
Total		180

Updated 12/21/15

Charter School Enrollment Trends

The range of student enrollment within Georgia charter schools varies widely, from Berrien Academy Performance Learning Center with 70 full-time students to Georgia Cyber Academy with 13,916 students. The average charter school enrolled 784 students (or 745 including charter system schools)

Start-up charter schools averaged 763 students (or 567 when removing the Georgia Cyber Academy), conversion charter schools averaged 864 students (Walton High School in Cobb County was the largest with 2,710 students), and charter system schools averaged 734 students.

Figure 17: 2015-16 Number of Charter Schools by Student Enrollment

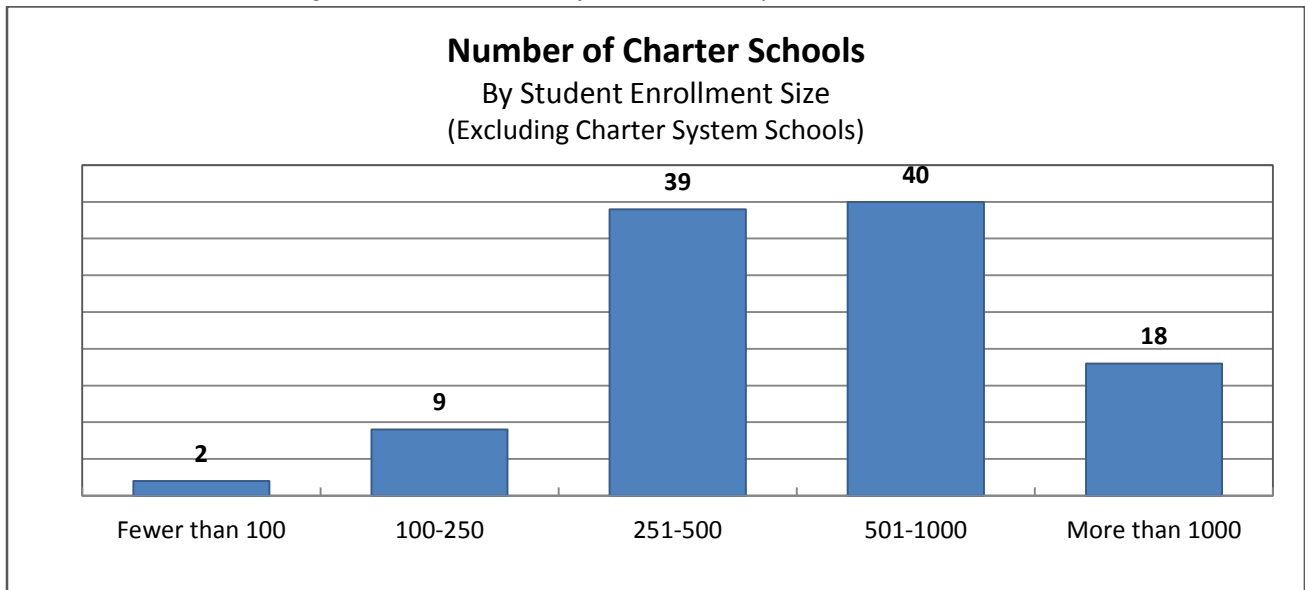
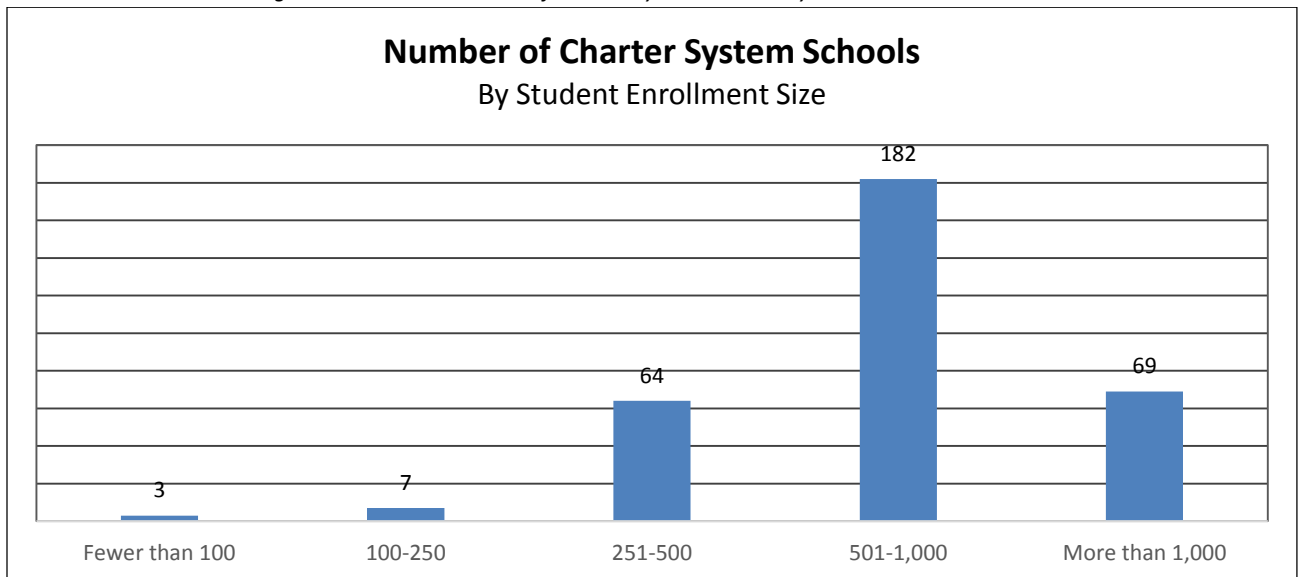
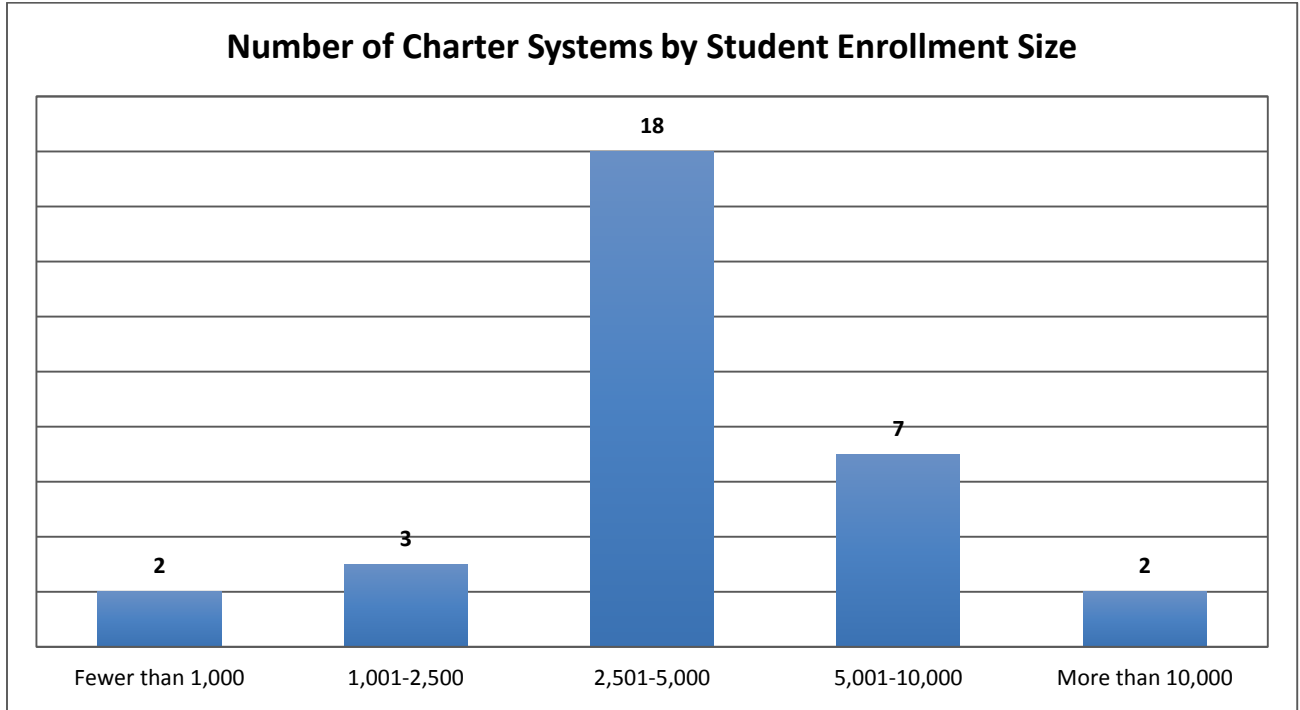


Figure 18: 2015-16 Number of Charter System Schools by Student Enrollment



Charter School Enrollment Trends (continued)

Figure 19: 2015-16 Student Enrollment by Charter System



Charter Schools and Accountability

In previous years, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) served as federal accountability for all schools within the Georgia. In February 2012, Georgia was approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education for a flexibility waiver from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – commonly known as No Child Left Behind – as well as the Waiver of Requirements to Determine AYP.

Due to this flexibility, GaDOE implemented the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) as a state-driven replacement accountability system.

In place of the AYP determinations, and to satisfy federal accountability for the 2013-2014 school year, GaDOE calculated three lists of schools: 1) Priority Schools; 2) Focus Schools; and 3) Reward Schools.

Priority Schools are the lowest 5% of the Title I schools (81 schools), SIG (School Improvement Grant) schools, or high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60% for two consecutive years.

- Twelve Georgia charter schools are designated as a Priority School. This is up by 12 from zero last year.

Focus Schools are the 10% of Title I schools (165 schools) who have the largest within-school gap between subgroup performance on statewide assessments and graduation rate.

- Twenty-four charter schools are designated as Focus Schools for having the “gap within school gap”. This is up by twenty-two from two last year.

Reward Schools (243 schools) can be classified as:

Highest-Performing (among the 5% of Title I schools in the state that have the highest absolute performance over three years for the “all students” group on the statewide assessments that also made AYP for the “all students” group and all of its subgroups in 2013-2014).

- Eighteen Georgia charter schools were identified as Reward Schools for their high performance. This is up by seven from 11 last year.

High-Progress (among the 10% of Title I schools in the state that are making the most progress in improving the performance of the “all students” group over three years on the statewide assessments).

- Thirty-four charter schools received a Reward School distinction for making substantial progress in their student achievement. This is up by nine from 25 last year.

Figure 19: Charter Schools – Accountability Distinctions as of fall 2015

Reward Schools

81 Highest-Performing Schools	
15	Charter System Schools
0	State Start-up Schools
0	Conversion Schools
3	Start-up Schools

18 Total Charter Schools

162 High-Progress Schools	
26	Charter System Schools
2	State Start-up Schools
3	Conversion Schools
3	Start-up Schools

34 Total Charter Schools

81 Priority Schools	
5	Charter System Schools
3	State Start-up Schools
1	Conversion Schools
3	Start-up Schools

13 Total Charter Schools

165 Focus Schools	
20	Charter System Schools
1	State Start-up Schools
3	Conversion Schools
0	Start-up Schools

24 Total Charter Schools

Accountability Distinction – Schools

Figure 20: Charter Schools – Highest-Performing as of fall 2015

System Name	School Name	Charter Type
Atlanta Public Schools	Charles R. Drew Charter School	Start-up
Atlanta Public Schools	KIPP Strive Academy	Start-up
Cartersville City	Cartersville Primary School	System
Coffee County	Ambrose Elementary	System
Commerce City	Commerce Elementary	System
Commerce City	Commerce Primary	System
Fulton County	Hembree Springs Elementary	System
Fulton County	KIPP South Fulton Academy	Start-up
Lumpkin County	Long Branch Elementary	System
Madison County	Hull-Sanford Elementary	System
Madison County	Ila elementary	System
Morgan County	Morgan County Primary	System
Morgan County	Morgan County Elementary	System
Putnam County	Putnam County Primary	System
Union County	Union County Elementary	System
Union County	Union County Middle	System
Union County	Union County Primary	System
White County	Mount Yonah Elementary	System

Accountability Distinction – Schools (continued)

Figure 21: Charter Schools – High-Progress as of fall 2015

System Name	School Name	Charter Type
Atlanta Public Schools	The Kindezi School	Start-up
Atlanta Public Schools	KIPP West Atlanta Young Scholars Academy	Start-up
Banks County	Banks County Elementary	System
Barrow County	Holsenbeck Elementary	System
Barrow County	Yargo Elementary	System
Barrow County	Statham Elementary	System
Barrow County	Russell Middle	System
Clayton County	Elite Scholars Academy School	Start-up
Coffee County	Broxton-Mary Hayes Elementary	System
Commission Charter	Fulton Leadership Academy	SCSC
Dougherty County	International Studies Elementary	Conversion
Fannin County	Blue Ridge Elementary	System
Floyd County	Cave Spring Elementary	System
Forsyth County	Chestatee Elementary	Conversion
Gilmer County	Gilmer Middle	System
Gordon County	Sonoraville Elementary	System
Gordon County	Tolbert Elementary	System
Gordon County	Belwood Elementary	System
Gordon County	Red Bud Elementary	System
Gordon County	Fairmount Elementary	System
Haralson County	Buchanan Elementary	System
Hart County	Hart County Middle	System
Hart County	Hartwell Elementary	System
Henry County	Hickory Flat Elementary	Conversion
Liberty County	Joseph Martin Elementary	System
Liberty County	Button Gwinnett Elementary	System
Lumpkin County	Lumpkin County Elementary	System
Lumpkin County	Blackburn Elementary	System
Madison County	Danielsville Elementary	System
Commission Charter	Pataula Charter Academy	SCSC
Putnam County	Putnam County Elementary	System
Putnam County	Putnam County Middle	System
White County	White County Intermediate	System
White County	Mossy Creek Elementary	System

Accountability Distinction – Schools (continued)

Figure 22: Charter Schools – Focus Status as of fall 2015

SYSTEM NAME	SCHOOL NAME	2015 Focus School Status
Atlanta Public Schools	Centennial Place Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Colquitt County	Odom Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Colquitt County	Okapilco Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Colquitt County	Sunset Elementary School	Achievement Gap
DeKalb County	Smoke Rise Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Dublin City	Dublin Middle School	Achievement Gap
Dublin City	Susie Dasher Elementary	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Bethune Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Gullatt Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Hamilton E. Holmes Elementary	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Hapeville Charter Middle School	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	High Point Elementary School	DNE - Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Jackson Elementary School	DNE - Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Lake Forest Elementary	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Lee Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Mount Olive Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Nolan Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Sandtown Middle School	Achievement Gap
Fulton County	Woodland Middle School	Achievement Gap
Gainesville City	Centennial Arts Academy	Achievement Gap
Gordon County	Swain Elementary School	Achievement Gap
Marietta City	Marietta High School	DNE - Achievement Gap
State Charter Schools	Ivy Preparatory Young Men's Leadership Academy School	Achievement Gap
Vidalia City	J. R. Trippe Middle School	DNE - Achievement Gap

Accountability Distinction – Schools (continued)

Figure 23: Charter Schools – Priority Status as of fall 2015

SYSTEM NAME	SCHOOL NAME	2015 Priority School Status
Berrien County	Berrien Academy Performance Learning Center	Achievement
DeKalb County	Destiny Achievers Academy of Excellence	Achievement
Dublin City	Moore Street School	Graduation Rate
Fulton County	Banneker High School	Achievement
Fulton County	Hapeville Charter Career Academy	Achievement
Fulton County	Tri-Cities High School	Achievement
Gainesville City	Wood's Mill Non-Traditional School	Achievement
Richmond County	Jenkins-White Elementary Charter School	Achievement
State Charter Schools	Georgia Connections Academy	Graduation Rate
State Charter Schools	Mountain Education Center School	Graduation Rate
State Charter Schools	Provost Academy Georgia	Graduation Rate
Union County	Woody Gap High/Elementary School	Achievement

Charter School Climate Star Rating

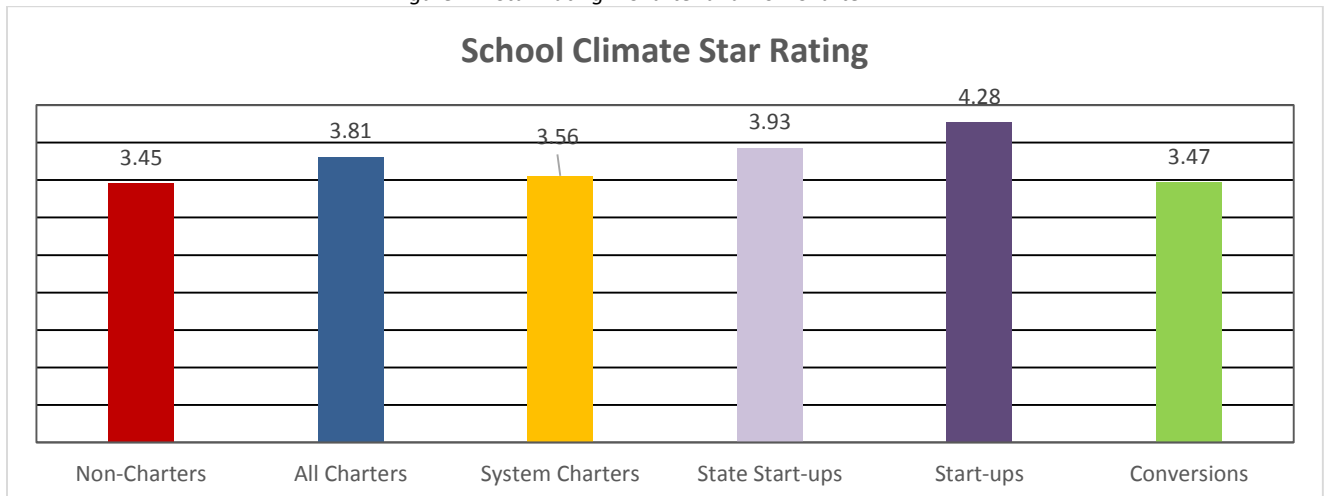
The National School Climate Center defines school climate as “the quality and character of school life” that is based on the “patterns of students’, parents’, and school personnel’s experiences of school life.”⁵ School climate can be influenced by the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, instructional practices, and organizational structures within a school. Research has found that schools with positive school climates tend to have better test scores and graduation rates; in contrast, schools with negative school climates as a result of unsafe or hostile environments tend to have lower academic performance.⁶

A sustainable, positive school climate supports people feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe. In a positive school climate people are engaged and respected. By contrast, disruptive and aggressive behavior such as threats, bullying, teasing and harassment creates a hostile school environment that interferes with academic performance. A hostile school environment fosters increased absenteeism and truancy because students feel unsafe at school. If a child is not physically and mentally in attendance, learning cannot take place.

Georgia is the first state in the nation to include school climate as an early indicator in its academic accountability system, the *College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)*. The School Climate Star Rating is a diagnostic tool to determine if a school is on the right path to school improvement.⁷

Start-up charter schools have the highest school climate rating with 4.28 out of 5, followed by State Start-ups at 3.93 out of 5, charter systems at 3.56 out of 5, and conversion charter schools at 3.47 out of 5 compared to all other non-charter systems with a 3.45 out of 5 rating.

Figure 24: Star Rating – Charter and Non-Charter



⁵ National School Climate Center. (2014). School Climate. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/>.

⁶ Thapa, Amrit, Jonathan Cohen, Shawn Guffey, and Ann Higgins-D’Alessandro. 2013. “A Review of School Climate Research.” *Review of Educational Research* 83(3): 357-385.

⁷ Retrieved from Georgia Department of Education website: <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/School-Climate.aspx>

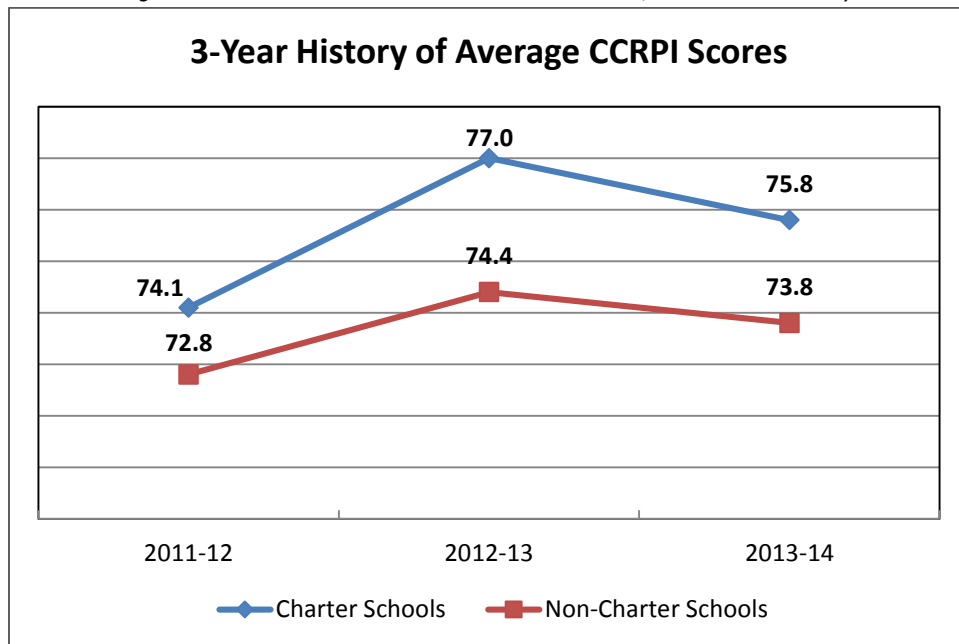
Charter Schools and Academic Performance

Please note that once the 2014-15 CCRPI data is released, we will update the report.

CCRPI Comparison

Overall, including charter systems, charter schools have done better than non-charters on CCRPI over the past three years. Please note that some CCRPI data for some school districts is incomplete and will be revised later when their data is completed.

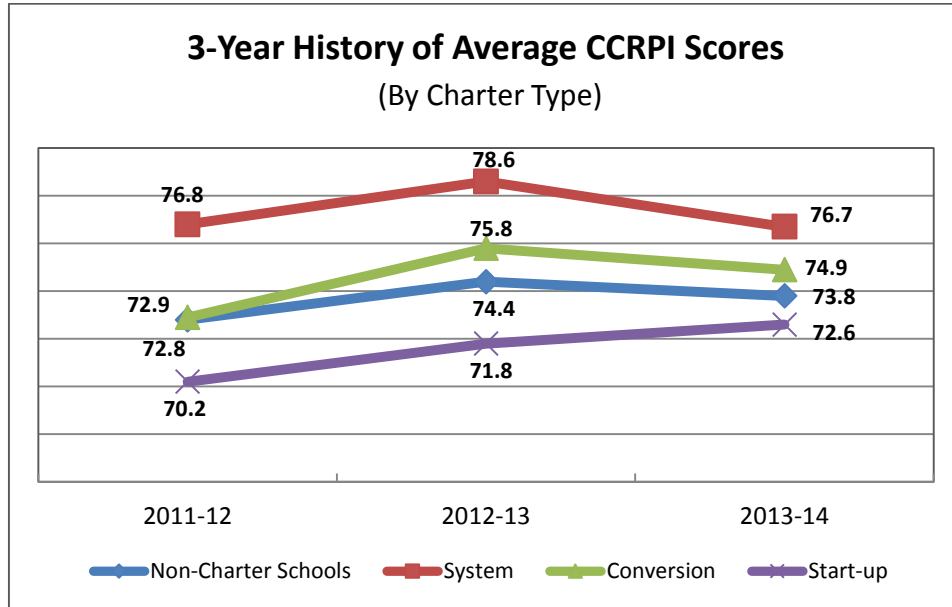
Figure 25: Charter Schools –Charters vs. Non-Charterers, 3-Year CCRPI History



However, charter systems and conversion charter schools are ahead of non-charter schools on CCRPI, with start-up charters below non-charter schools on average.

CCRPI Comparison (continued)

Figure 26: Charter Schools –3-Year CCRPI History by Charter School Type



Charter Schools and Academic Performance *(continued)*

2014-15 Georgia Milestones

The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) is a comprehensive summative assessment program spanning grades 3 through high school. Georgia Milestones measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Students in grades 3 through 8 will take an end-of-grade assessment in each content area, while high school students will take an end-of-course assessment for each of the eight courses designated by the State Board of Education.

Features the Georgia Milestone Assessment System include:

- open-ended (constructed-response) items in language arts and mathematics (all grades and courses);
- a writing component (in response to passages read by students) at every grade level and course within the language arts assessment;
- norm-referenced items in all content areas and courses, to complement the criterion-referenced information and to provide a national comparison; and
- transition to online administration over time, with online administration considered the primary mode of administration and paper-pencil as back-up until the transition is complete.

The Georgia Milestones Assessment System is designed to provide information about how well students are mastering the state-adopted content standards in the core content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Importantly, Georgia Milestones is designed to provide students with critical information about their own achievement and their readiness for their next level of learning – be it the next grade, the next course, or endeavor (college or career). Informing parents, educators, and the public about how well students are learning important content is an essential aspect of any educational assessment and accountability system. Parents, the public, and policy makers, including local school districts and boards of education, can use the results as a barometer of the quality of educational opportunity provided throughout the state of Georgia. As such, Georgia Milestones serves as a key component of the state’s accountability system – the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI).

Students in grades 3 through 8 will take an end-of-grade assessment in the content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies. These tests are administered towards the end of the school year, typically in April or early May. Each school district selects a local testing window from within the state designated timeframe to administer the end-of-grade measures.

Students at the high school level will take an end-of-course assessment in the following ten courses:

- Language Arts
 - Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
 - American Literature and Composition
- Mathematics
 - Algebra I (Beginning Winter 2015)
 - Geometry (Beginning Winter 2015)
 - Coordinate Algebra

- Analytic Geometry
- Science
 - Biology
 - Physical Science
- Social Studies
 - United States History
 - Economics/Business/Free Enterprise

The end-of-course measures are administered at the completion of the course, regardless of the grade level. These measures serve as the final exam for the course, and contribute 20% to the student's final course grade. Each school district selects a local testing window, based on their local school calendar, from within the state-designated testing window. Middle school students who are enrolled in one or more of these courses are required to take the associated end-of-course (EOC) measure. If enrolled in a mathematics and/or science EOC course, these middle school students will not take the corresponding content area end-of-grade (EOG) measure.

2014-15 Georgia Milestones – Results

End of Grade:

English Language Arts:

Charter schools out performed non-charter schools in all grade levels in Language Arts end of grade assessments.

Mathematics:

Charter schools out performed non-charter schools in all grade levels except 8th grade in Mathematics end of grade assessments. The 8th grade charter school score almost equal to non-charter schools.

Science:

Charter schools out performed non-charter schools in all grade levels in science end of grade assessments.

Social Studies:

Charter schools out performed non-charter schools in all grade levels except 8th grade in social studies end of grade assessments. The 8th grade charter school score almost equal to non-charter schools.

End of the Course:

Language Arts:

Charter schools out performed non-charter schools in both American Literature (40.6 to 35.3) and 9th Grade Literature & Composition (42.5 to 38.4).

Mathematics:

Charter schools outperformed non-charter schools in geometry (34.6 to 27.5) and was almost equal to non-charter schools in coordinated algebra (33.6 to 33.7).

Science:

Charter schools outperformed non-charter schools in biology (40.5 to 37.8) and was outperformed by non-charter schools in physical science (29.5 to 31.2).

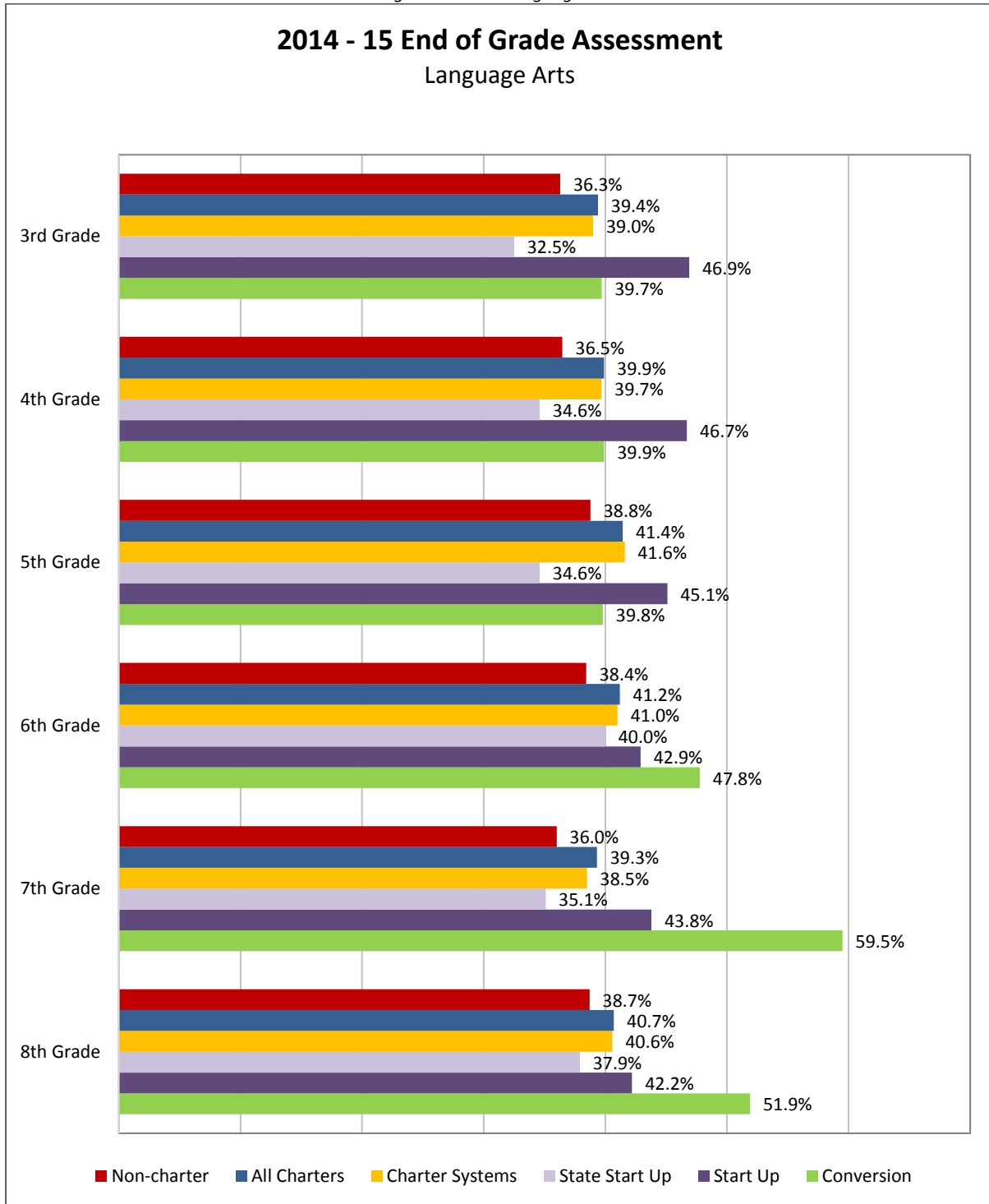
Social Studies:

Charter schools out performed non charter schools in economics (38.5 to 36.4) and was almost equal to non-charter schools (38.4 to 39.8).

Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Grade Assessments:

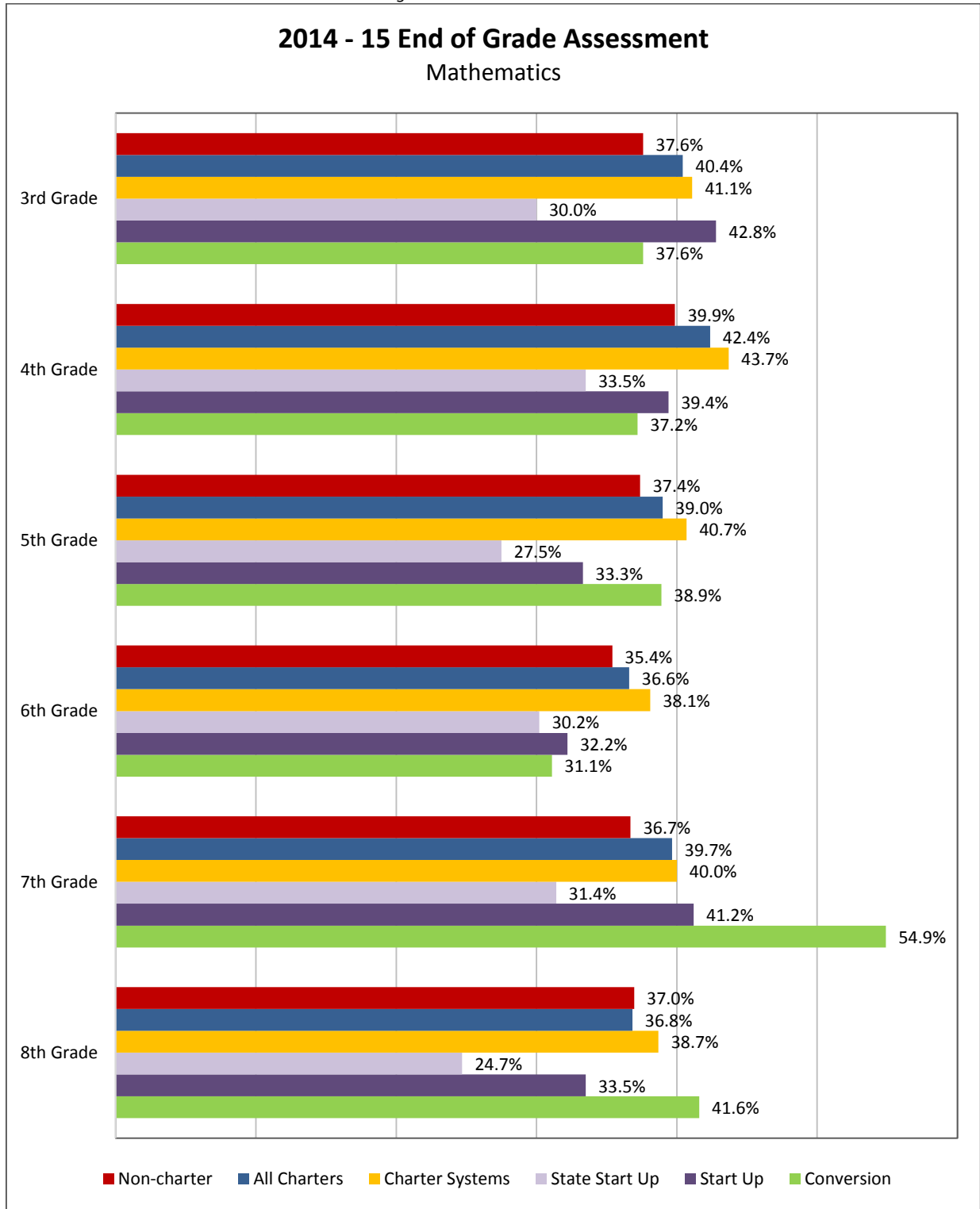
Figure 27: EOG Language Arts



Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Grade Assessments:

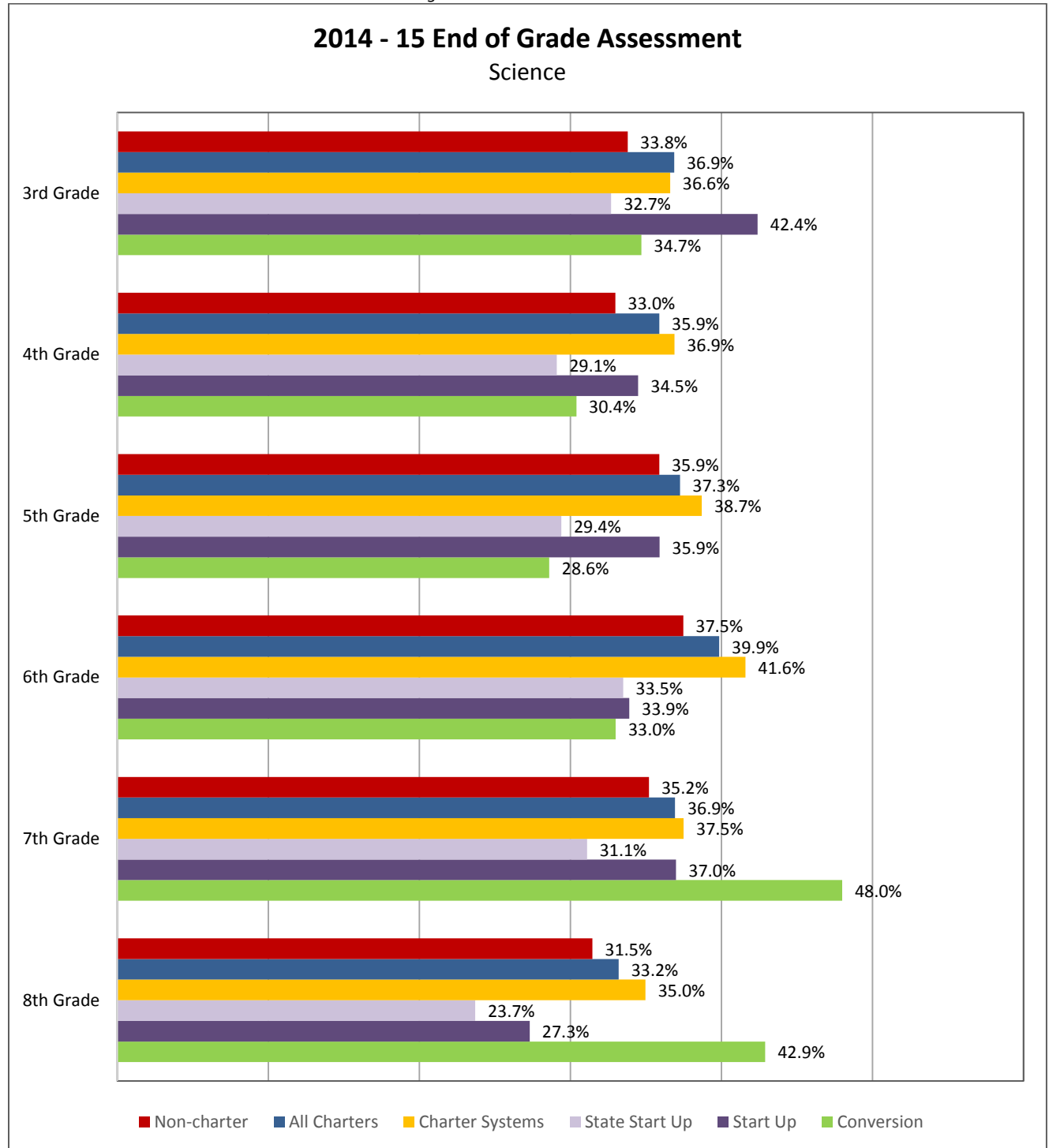
Figure 28: EOC Mathematics



Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Grade Assessments:

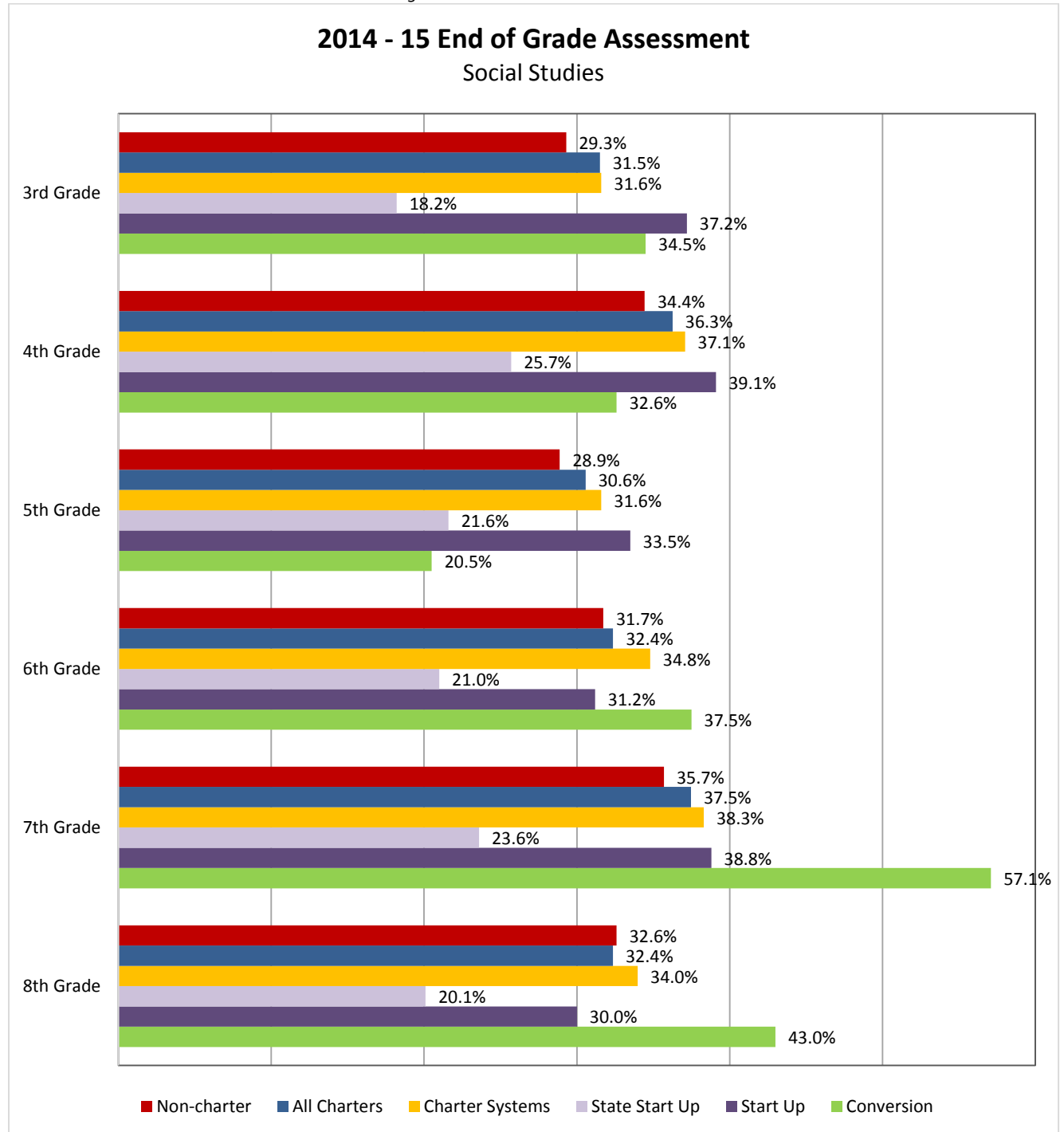
Figure 29: EOC Science



Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Grade Assessments:

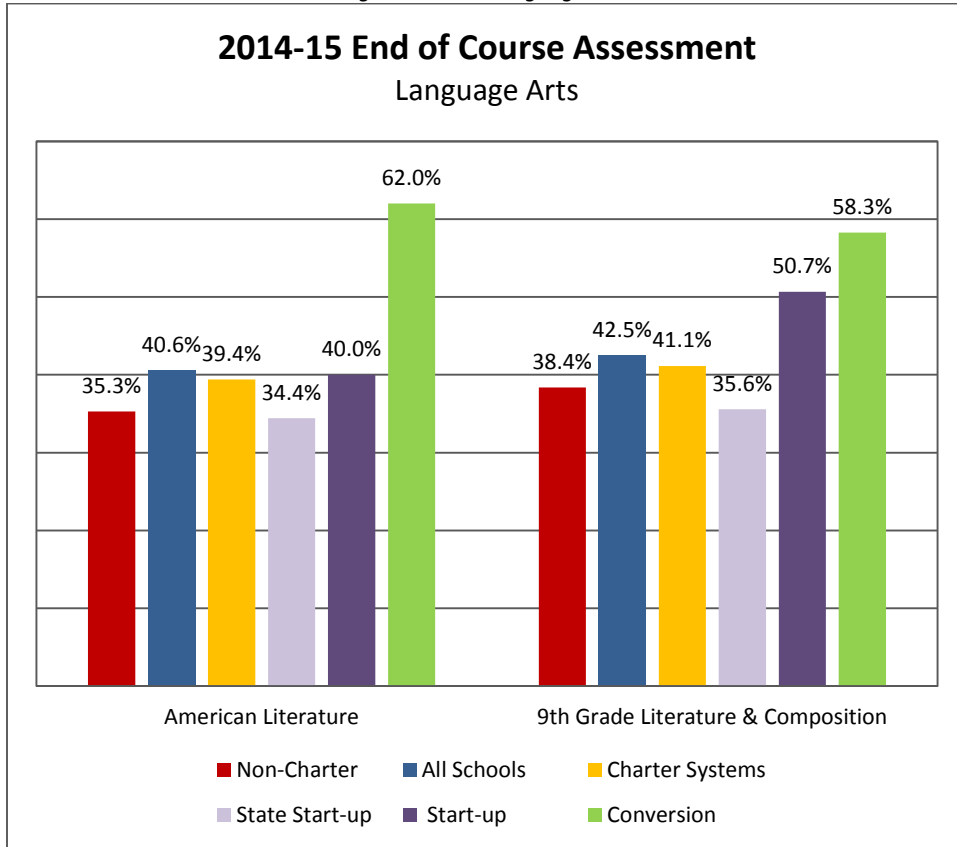
Figure 30: EOC Social Studies



Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Course Assessments:

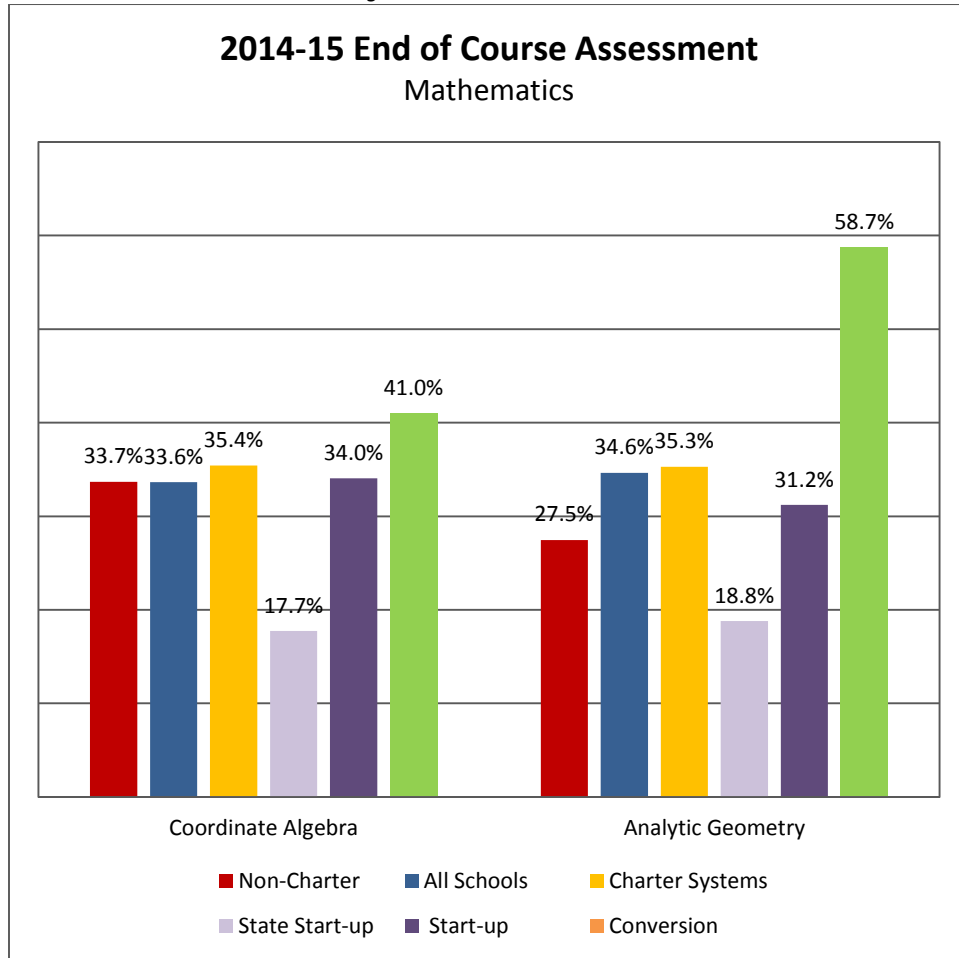
Figure 31: EOC Language Arts



Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Course Assessments:

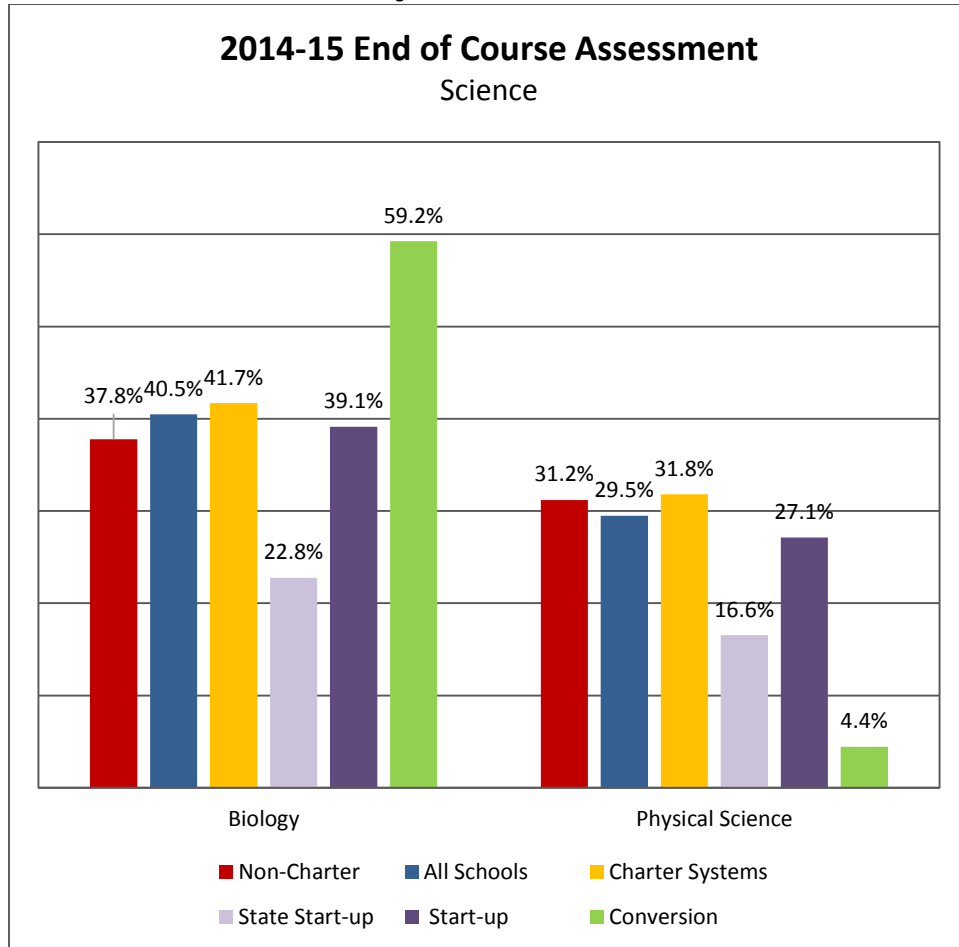
Figure 32: EOC Mathematics



Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Course Assessments:

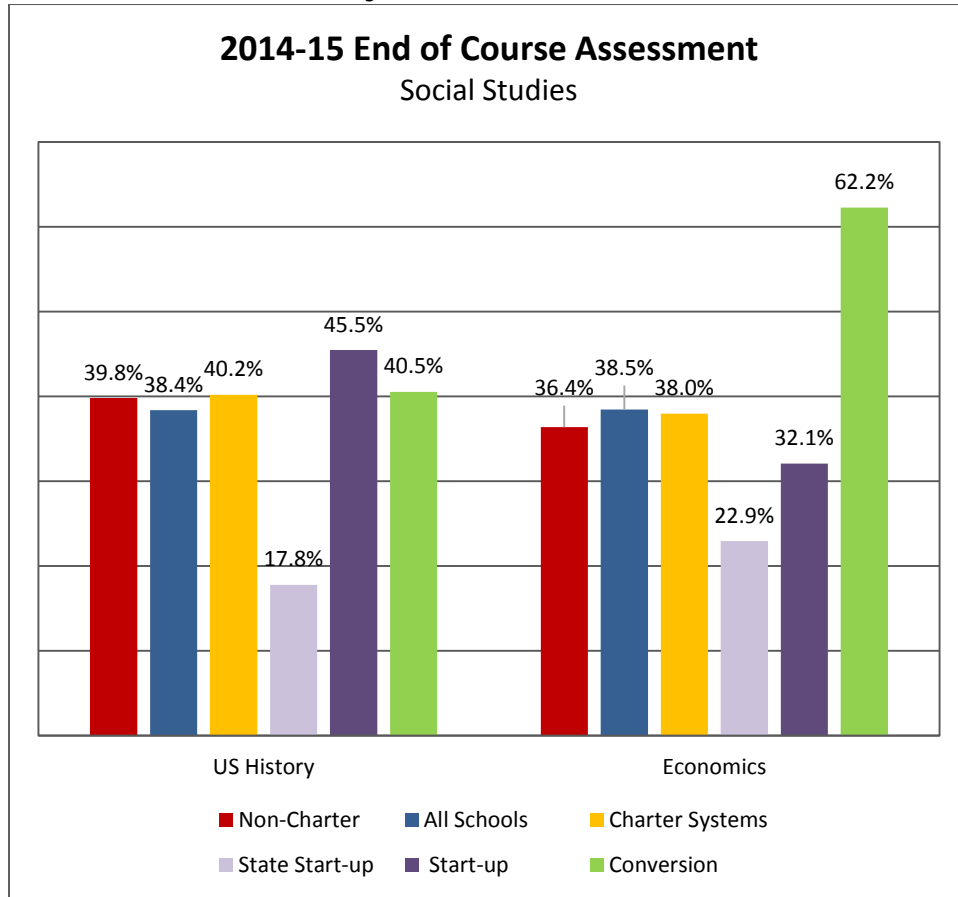
Figure 33: EOC Science



Georgia Milestones (continued)

End of Course Assessments:

Figure 34: EOC Social Studies



Charter Partners

The success of Georgia Charter Schools and Systems rely on the support of the following:

Charter Advisory Committee

The Charter Advisory Committee (CAC) is a nine-member appointed committee that reviews charter system petitions, provides recommendations to the State Board on approvals, and provides technical assistance to charter systems.

The CAC was created by the Charter Systems Act of 2007. Three members each are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the Chair of the State Board of Education.

Charter Advisory Committee Members *(As of September 14, 2015)*

SBOE Chairperson Appointees

1. Allen Mueller *(replaced Marissa Key, who replaced Linda Zechmann, who served since the inception of the CAC)*
2. Brian Cooksey *(served since the inception of the CAC)*
3. David Jernigan *(replaced Marina Volanakis)*

Speaker of the House Appointees

4. Melanie Stockwell *(replaced Dr. Ben Scafidi)*
5. Keith Everson *(replaced Lynn Plunkett, who replaced Dr. Holly Robinson, who served since the inception of the CAC)*
6. Dr. Fred Williams *(replaced Dr. Chuck Ledbetter, who replaced Kwame Griffith, who replaced Dr. Michael Bull)*

Lieutenant Governor Appointees

7. Preston Howard *(replaced Dr. Charles Knapp)*
8. Kenneth Zeff *(replaced Sen. Dan Weber, who replaced Otis Brumby, Jr.)*
9. Mark Whitlock, Chair *(served since the inception of the CAC)*

Notes:

- a. Initial appointment was in June 2007 and first meeting was July 31, 2007
- b. Terms are not time limited

The CAC meets every two months and cover items as shown in the following meeting agenda:



CHARTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Stanhope Room, Renaissance Atlanta Waverly, 2450 Galleria Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30339

December 4, 2015 • 9:00-10:30 A.M.

AGENDA

- I. **Welcome and Introductions**
- II. **Purpose of the Meeting:** *The Charter Advisory Committee, Department of Education, and State Board of Education are committed to increasing student achievement through academic and organizational innovations by encouraging local school systems to utilize the flexibility offered by chartering. Today's meeting will focus on an update regarding DOE flexibility planning, a report on the Pilot Effort to link AdvancED District Accreditation, the Charter System Pipeline, consulting activities, updates to all Georgia School District Flexibility decisions to date, an update on relevant Legislative and rule-making activity, and an update from the Charter System Foundation Initiative.*
- III. **Approve CAC Agenda 12/10/15**
- IV. **Approve Minutes for 10/10/15 Regular Meeting**
- V. **Updates from District Flexibility and Charter Schools Division**
 - A. **Flexibility working group – Title I**
 - B. **AdvancED District Accreditation Pilot-Calhoun City**
 - C. **Charter System Rule/Guidance-Update?**
 - D. **Charter System Application/Deadlines-Update?**
 - E. **Beating the Odds and Accountability-Update?**
 - F. **Pipeline Report including upcoming renewals and new systems and summary of flexibility decisions statewide**
 - G. **Legislative/Rule-Making Update**
 - H. **SBOE District Flexibility and Charter Schools Comm.**
 - I. **Charter Commission Update**
 - J. **Consulting Activities**
- VI. **CAC Recommendations to SBOE: As Needed**
- VII. **Update from Charter System Foundation initiative**
- VIII. **Adjournment:** Next meeting February 12, 2016 at GaDOE

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Approved Calendar for 2016 (Approved October 9, 2015)

Fridays: 2nd Friday every other month except for December, most meetings at GaDOE Twin Towers, most meetings include teleconference capability. Most meetings from 10:00 – 11:30 AM

(February 12, April 8, June 10, August 12, October 14)

December 2 (at Waverly Renaissance, in conjunction with GSBA/GSSA Annual Conference 2016)

Georgia Charter Schools Association



Your advocate for better schools.

Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) is a statewide, non-profit, 501c3 membership organization. It operates with a staff of 13 FTE employees and is led by a 15-member board of directors comprised of respected community and corporate leaders as well as leaders in education both from the public charter school and larger fields of education.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Georgia Charter Schools Association is to improve student achievement and promote educational choice by serving and advocating for public charter schools in Georgia.

Values

The Georgia Charter Schools Association values innovation, school choice, parental involvement, student achievement, accountability, communication, and collaboration.

Major Activities

- Advancing public awareness of public charter schools and their mission.
- Communicating charter school issues and concerns to governmental, political, and legislative leaders.
- Advocating for policy and legislation to strengthen charter school effectiveness in Georgia.
- Facilitating networking and collaboration among public charter schools as well as between charter and traditional public schools.
- Recruiting, training and supporting both volunteer and paid leadership for charter schools.
- Training and providing state-level certification for teachers and school leaders through GaTAPP.
- Supporting school level volunteer and staff support through the Georgia Parent Teachers Organization (PTO).
- Supporting the growth and replication of high quality charter schools through New Schools for Georgia.

Georgia Charter Schools Association has offices located at 211 Perimeter Center Parkway, Suite 1000, Atlanta, GA 30346. Website: www.gacharters.org. Main phone: 404.835.8901. Fax: 888.799.0837

New Schools for Georgia

As Georgia's Charter School Incubator, New Schools for Georgia works with emerging innovative schools, developing board capacity, training future school leaders and providing essential ongoing support to ensure that students have access to high-quality educational options. New Schools for Georgia also works with existing high-performing charter schools and emerging CMOs as they scale up to serve new students.

New Schools for Georgia's current cohort will open six new charter schools across the Atlanta Metro area in 2017. New Incubator cohorts start each June. For more information, please contact Allen Mueller at amueller@gacharters.org or call 404-835-8917.

Charter System Foundation



www.charter-system.org

The Charter System Foundation, Inc. was founded on the belief that meaningful change in education can occur only if principals, teachers, parents, and community partners are empowered with the authority and flexibility to make decisions at the school house level to best meet the individual needs of each student.

Executive Director: Dan Weber (404-808-6670); Dan@Charter-System.org

Executive Assistant: Pam Tallmadge (770-354-7653); Pam@Charter-System.org

Reasons for a Foundation

- a. Conduit for Innovation. Georgia's 180 school systems operate as independent silos. The Foundation serves as a platform for superintendents to share ideas and provide mutual support.
- b. Protect Flexibility and Funding. The Foundation works to show state policymakers that charter systems are making meaningful change.
- c. Collaborate with Education Funders and Support Groups. The Foundation provides funders and support groups with access a cross section of systems.
- d. Streamline the Process. Work with DOE to streamline the application or renewal process and address flexibility roadblocks.

Overview of the Foundation

- e. Idea proposed to Lieutenant Governor early 2012 and to the 16 Charter Systems later in 2012.
- f. Incorporated February 2013
- g. 501(c)(3) Nonprofit
- h. 17 Systems are "Affiliates" (contributions = \$2/FTE or other amount)
- i. Board of Directors
 - i. Emily Lembeck, Marietta, Chair
 - ii. Allen McCannon, Madison County, Vice Chair
 - iii. Michelle Taylor, Calhoun City
 - iv. Fred Williams, Dublin City
 - v. Ken Zeff, Fulton County
 - vi. Carole Carey, Warren County
 - vii. Howard Hinesley, Cartersville City

- j. Other “Affiliates”:

 - i. Bubba Longgear, Candler County Schools
 - ii. Kent Edwards, Carrollton City Schools
 - iii. Morris Leis, Coffee County Schools
 - iv. Damon Gibbs, Dawson County Schools
 - v. David Dude, Decatur City Schools
 - vi. Wanda Creel, Gainesville City Schools
 - vii. Shanna Wilkes, Gilmer County Schools
 - viii. Jim Holton, Glascock County Schools
 - ix. Susan Remillard, Gordon County Schools
 - x. Jerry Bell, Haralson County Schools
 - xi. James Woodard, Morgan County Schools
 - xii. Eric Arena, Putnam County Schools
 - xiii. Jeffrey Wilson, White County Schools

- k. Budget: Approx. \$140k per year.

Accomplishments/Initiatives

- l. Worked to protect flexibility and funding during 2013 and 2014-2015 legislative sessions
- m. Workshops
 - i. June 19, 2013
 - 1. Marietta City Schools
 - 2. Conversation with key DOE managers.
 - ii. September 18, 2013
 - 1. Gainesville City Schools
 - 2. Discussion concerning Partnerships, Flexibility, Governance and Autonomy
 - iii. December 6, 2013
 - 1. GSBA Convention – Breakout Sessions
 - 2. *The Value of Charter Status to Your System*
 - iv. February 6, 2014
 - 1. Georgia State Capitol – Room 125
 - 2. Legislative Workshop
 - v. June 4, 2014
 - 1. Dublin City Schools
 - 2. New Charter Systems/Applicants (South Ga.)
 - vi. June 25, 2014
 - 1. Calhoun City Schools
 - 2. Superintendent “Coffee Pot” Workshop
 - vii. July 25, 2014
 - 1. Calhoun City Schools
 - 2. New Charter Systems/Applicants (North Ga.)

- viii. September 17, 2014
 - 1. Fulton County
 - 2. Superintendent “Coffee Pot” Workshop #2
- ix. November 7, 2014
 - 1. Georgia State Capitol – Room 125
 - 2. FTE Funding & Graduation Requirements
- x. December 5, 2014
 - 1. GSBA Convention – Breakout Sessions
 - 2. *The Value of Charter Status to Your System*
- xi. January 28, 2015
 - 1. Putnam County
 - 2. Application Writing & Procedures Workshop
- xii. February 4, 2015
 - 1. Georgia State Capitol – Room 125
 - 2. Legislative Workshop
- xiii. March 18, 2015
 - 1. Dublin City Schools
 - 2. Application Writing & Procedures Workshop
- xiv. June 24, 2015
 - 1. Hyatt Atlanta Perimeter at Villa Christina
 - 2. Maximizing Your Flexibility Workshop
- xv. September 30, 2015
 - 1. Morgan County Schools
 - 2. Exercising Your Flexibility Workshop
- xvi. January 28, 2016
 - 1. Georgia State Capitol – Room 125
 - 2. Legislative Workshop
- n. Legislative Issues as it pertains to Charter Systems and Education
- o. Website
 - i. Newsletter to share ideas
 - ii. Ask the Expert
 - iii. Events Calendar
 - iv. Knowledge Data Base
- p. Constant Contact Monthly Newsletters
- q. Training
 - i. Three experts
 - ii. Training modules
 - iii. Individual, Joint, or Workshop
 - iv. Five LSGT Training sessions throughout Georgia – see attached information
- r. Other Initiatives

- i. Partnership with REACH scholarship (patterned after Cartersville's Gate Key scholarship program)
- ii. 2nd Awards Luncheon and Fundraiser, to be hosted by the Lieutenant Governor
 1. June 22, 2016
 2. Hyatt Atlanta Perimeter at Villa Christina
- iii. GAEL Conference in July

Upcoming Charter System Foundation Training Workshops:

Local School Governance Training Workshop - Hosted by Calhoun City Schools

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

7:30 am Coffee

8:00 am to 2:00 pm Workshop

Calhoun High School - 255 South River Street – Calhoun, Georgia 30701

PLC- Professional Learning Center

Local School Governance Training Workshop - Hosted by Dougherty County Schools

Monday February 22, 2016

7:30 am Coffee

8:00 am to 2:00 pm Workshop

The Isabella Complex - 300 Cason Street - Albany, GA 31701

Local School Governance Training Workshop - Hosted by Fulton County Schools & Marietta City Schools

Friday February 26, 2016

7:30 am Coffee

8:00 am to 2:00 pm Workshop

Fulton County Schools Administration Center - 6201 Powers Ferry Road Atlanta, Georgia 30339

Room 176 A

Local School Governance Training Workshop - Hosted by Madison County Schools

Friday March 3, 2016

7:30 am Coffee

8:00 am to 2:00 pm Workshop

Madison County Board of Education - 800 Madison Street - Danielsville, GA 30633

Room location - PLC 2

Local School Governance Training Workshop - Hosted by Liberty County Schools

Friday March 11, 2016

7:30 am Coffee

8:00 am to 2:00 pm Workshop

Liberty County Board of Education - 200 Bradwell St. - Hinesville, GA. 31320

New and Revised Charter School and Charter System Rules

The State Board of Education in September 2015 adopted revised Charter Rules to combine the charter rules and guidelines and implement legislative changes from the 2015 session. The new rules provide stakeholders with greater clarity regarding the charter schools petition process and authorizer roles and responsibilities.

160-4-9-.04 CHARTER SCHOOLS AND CHARTER SYSTEMS DEFINITIONS

The revised rule provides an additional definition for “educationally disadvantaged” to provide greater clarification and alignment with HB 372.

160-4-9-.05 CHARTER SCHOOLS PETITION PROCESS

The revised rule includes the following changes and/or additions:

- Added requirement that local boards must provide charter schools with an in-person meeting or interview during the petition process to answer questions and provide clarification.
- Added language requiring local districts to put petitioners into four groups after initial petition review. Those four groups are:
 - Rejection: Application is flawed in a way that is irreparable;
 - Revision: Application demonstrates minimum quality and potential issues with legal compliance. These applications require material revisions before the local board can recommend them for approval to the State Board of Education;
 - Clarification: Application has moderate quality and legal compliance, but additional information is needed before the application can be recommended for approval to the State Board of Education;
 - Approval: Application is near perfect and will be recommended for approval without and further applicant action.
- Based on changes to law since last rules were adopted, petitioners to the local board or the State Charter Schools Commission must also submit their petition to the Georgia Department of Education within 30 days of submission to the local board.
- Based on changes to state law pursuant to HB 372, petitioners must include a statement detailing whether they intend to use a weighted lottery.
- Added language from law clarifying that charter schools are not exempt from any law, rule, regulation, or court order related to civil rights, insurance, protecting the physical health and safety of school students, employees, and visitors, conflicts of interest, unlawful conduct, or any reporting requirements of O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-320, 20-2-211.1, 20-2-210, 20-2-327(c), 20-2-133.

160-4-9-.06 CHARTER AUTHORIZERS, FINANCING, MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE TRAINING

The revised rule includes the following changes and/or additions:

- Based on changes to state law, adds a clarification that charter schools that have passed the Department of Education's facility inspection and hold a certificate of occupancy do not need any additional licensure to operate the school.
- Based in changes to state law, changes the due date for annual reports from charter schools to the charter schools division from October 1 to November 1.
- Added as a cause for probation, the charter school's failure to disclose material contract violations or legal violations.
- Clarifies that College and Career Academies have different governance board training and specifies those requirements.

160-4-9-.07 CHARTER SYSTEMS

The charter systems rule was revised to combine the guidelines and rule and provide consistent language throughout the rule.

Appendix

Charter Types

Conversions, start-ups, and charter system schools are under the management and control of their local board and their charters are three-party contracts between the State Board of Education, the local board and the charter school's governing board.

State Charter Schools manage themselves and are treated as LEAs (local education agencies) and their charters are two-party contracts between the State Charter Schools Commission and the charter school's governing board.

1. Conversion Charter School: A charter school that existed as a local public school prior to becoming a charter school. To apply as a conversion, a majority of the faculty and instructional staff members and a majority of parents or guardians of students enrolled in the petitioning school must vote by secret ballot to apply for a charter.

18 Conversion Charter Schools	
Centennial Park Elementary School	International Studies Elementary Charter School
Chamblee Charter High School	Jenkins-White Elementary School
Chesnut Elementary	Mount Vernon Exploratory School
Chestnut Mountain Creative Schools of Inquiry	Peachtree Charter Middle School
Clubview Elementary School	Sedalia Park Elementary School
Flowery Branch High School, a Global Studies and Leadership Academy	Spout Springs Elementary School of Enrichment
George Walton Comprehensive High School	World Language Academy at Chestnut Mountain
Hampton Elementary	Wynnton Arts Academy
Hickory Flat	Lanier Charter Career Academy

2. Start-Up Charter School: A charter school created by a petition brought forth by private individuals, private organizations, or a state or local public entity.
 - a. State Charter School: A charter school created as an independent school that operates under terms of a charter between the charter petitioner and the State Charter Schools Commission. Petitioners apply to become a State Charter School if their petition was denied by a local board of education or if they will draw students from five or more counties.

20 State Charter Schools	
Atlanta Heights Charter School	Graduation Achievement Center Charter High School
Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts & Technology (CCAT)	International Charter School of Atlanta
Cherokee Charter Academy	Ivy Preparatory Academy
Coweta Charter Academy	Ivy Preparatory Academy At Gwinnett
Dubois Integrity Academy	Ivy Preparatory Young Men's Leadership Academy
Foothills Charter High School	Mountain Education Charter High School
Fulton Leadership Academy	Odyssey School
Georgia Connections Academy	Pataula Charter Academy
Georgia Cyber Academy	Scintilla Charter Academy
Georgia School for Innovation and the Classics	Utopian Academy for the Arts Charter School

- b. Locally Approved Start-Up: A charter school operating under the terms of a charter between the charter petitioner, the local district, and the State Board of Education.

78 Locally Approved Start-up Charter Schools			
Academy for Classical Education	International Academy of Smyrna	North Metro Academy for Performing Arts	Douglas County College & Career Institute
Amana Academy	International Community School	Oglethorpe Charter School	Effingham College and Career Academy
Atlanta Classical Academy	Kennesaw Charter Science and Math Academy	Savannah Classical Academy	Floyd County College and Career Academy
Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School	Kingsley Charter Elementary School	Smoke Rise Elementary	Golden Isles Career Academy
Baconton Community Charter School	KIPP South Fulton Academy	Tapestry Public Charter School	Griffin Region College and Career Academy
Berrien Academy Performance Learning Center	KIPP Atlanta Collegiate	The GLOBE Academy	Hapeville College and Career Academy
Bishop Hall Charter School	KIPP STRIVE - Primary	The Kindezi School	Heart of Georgia College and Career Academy
Brighten Academy	KIPP STRIVE Academy	The Museum School of Avondale Estates	Houston County Career Academy
Charles R. Drew Charter School	KIPP Vision	Tybee Island Maritime Academy	Lamar County College and Career Academy
Chattahoochee Hills Charter School	KIPP Vision - Primary	Unidos Dual Language Charter School	Liberty College and Career
Coastal Empire Montessori	KIPP WAYS	Union Point STEAM Academy	Newton College and Career Academy
DeKalb Academy of Technology & the Environment (D.A.T.E.)	KIPP WAYS - Primary	Wesley International Academy	Northwest Georgia College and Career Academy
DeKalb PATH Academy	Lake Oconee Academy	Westside Atlanta	Rockdale Career Academy
DeKalb Preparatory Academy	Latin Academy Charter School	Academy for Advanced Studies	Southeastern Early College & Career Academy
Destiny Achievers Academy of Excellence	Latin Grammar Charter School	Athens Community Career Academy	Troup County College and Career Academy (THINC)
Elite Scholars Academy	Latin College Prep Charter School	Baldwin County Career Academy	William S. Hutchings College and Career Academy
Furlow Charter School	Leadership Preparatory Academy	Bartow County College and Career Academy	Polk County College and Career Academy
Gwinnett Charter School of Advanced Mathematics, Science, & Technology	Macon Charter Academy	Cairo High Charter School	
Gwinnett County Online Campus	Main Street Academy	Carroll County College and Career Academy	
Hapeville Middle School	New Life Academy of Excellence Inc.	Central Educational Center	

Charter Types (continued)

3. Approved and Pending Charter Schools

Approved Charters for 2016-17 Opening
1 Charter System
Atlanta Public Schools
6 State Charter Schools
Byron Peach Charter High School
Brookhaven Innovation Academy
Cirrus Academy
Liberty Tech Charter School
Southwest Georgia STEM Charter
2 Locally Approved Start-up Charter Schools
Georgia High School for Accelerated Learning
Marietta Dual Language

Pending Charter Approvals
10 Charter Systems
Clarke County Schools
Dougherty County Schools
Randolph County Schools
Baldwin County Schools
Catoosa County Schools
Grady County Schools
Jasper County Schools
Peach County Schools
Terrell County Schools
Tift County Schools
3 Locally Approved Start-up Charter Schools
Commander Conyers College and Career Academy
Alliance Academy for Innovation of Cumming-Forsyth
Fulton Academy of Science and Technology (FAST)

**As of December 31, 2015*

Testing History

In 2000, Georgia instituted the first year of the state assessment, the Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT), for grades four, six, and eight. Spring 2002 and 2004 marked the first operational administrations in all grades, which included English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and Reading in grades 1 through 8. Science and Social Studies are covered in grades 3 through 8.

Milestones Data

In 2014, Georgia instituted the first year of a new state assessment, the Georgia Milestones Assessment System. The Georgia Milestones measures how well a student has learned about the state-adopted content standards in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Students in grades 3 through 9 will take an end-of- grade assessment in each content area, while high school students will take an end-of-course assessment for each of the eight courses designated by the State Board of Education.

Academic Data

Data on academic performance was extracted from the GaDOE data warehouse. Please note that the 2013-14 school year assessment (CRCT and EOCT) and CCRPI data utilized in the derivation of the various results presented is incomplete for some schools and school districts. Once a more finalized version of the aforementioned data is release, an addendum will be released in the form of an attachment for this report.

Acronyms

Throughout the report, a number of acronyms appear. Among these are: AYP or Adequate Yearly Progress; CCRPI or the College and Career Ready Performance Index; CRCT or Criterion Reference Competency Test; ELL or English Language Learner; EOC or End of Course; EOCT or End of Course Test; EOG or End of Grade; GHSGT or Georgia High School Graduation Test; GaDOE or Georgia Department of Education; LEA or Local Educational Agency; SBOE or State Board of Education; SWD or Student with Disability.

Acknowledgements

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State Board of Education Charter Schools Committee

Mr. Brian Burdette, Chair
Mr. Kenneth Mason, Vice Chair
Mr. Scott Johnson
Ms. Lisa Kinnemore
Mr. Kevin Boyd

Georgia Department of Education

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