



Chartering in Georgia

2011-2012

*An overview of the academic performance of Georgia's
charter schools*

The Charter
Schools Division
Annual Report
for 2011-2012

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 by October 1 of each year, and the state board must then to report to the General Assembly no later than December 31 of 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 Charter Schools Division each year conducts an online Annual Report Survey of charter schools and charter systems. The 2012 survey was open from August 1 to October 1. Each charter school's and charter system's annual report requirement is satisfied by completing this survey. In addition to meeting the legal requirements, the survey also provides several opportunities for charter schools and charter systems to highlight their accomplishments, including a section for schools and systems to provide details, examples and success stories which may not otherwise be captured through the annual report requirement. The Department then compiles the survey data, including financial data submitted by each charter school, adds in academic assessment data, including local district and statewide academic comparisons, and prepares and conveys to the General Assembly the attached report for the State Board of Education.

During the 2011-2012 school year, Georgia had 217 charter schools serving 56 school districts. Of these charter schools, 12 were identified as Reward Schools through the new accountability distinction. In addition, several of Georgia's charter schools were recognized nationally for academic excellence and innovative practices. This report will highlight many of these accomplishments.

During 2011-2012, the State Board of Education and the Georgia Department of Education adopted new Charter Schools Rules and Guidelines that focus on accountability and transparency. We also launched a comprehensive training program for new and existing charter schools and charter systems. The Georgia Department of Education also developed additional resources for local school districts to strengthen their authorizer practices.

Please note that this annual report includes definitions in Appendix A, information on each of Georgia's start-up and conversion charter schools in Appendix B, and information on Georgia's charter systems in Appendix C.

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

Sincerely,

Louis Erste
Charter Schools Division Director

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Highlights from the 2011-2012 School Year

The 2011-2012 school year was a successful one for many of Georgia's charter schools, with several recognized locally and nationally for academic success and innovative practices. Examples include:

1. Chamblee Charter High School's German language program caught the attention of officials in the German government and was selected as a PASCH Partnership School – one of only a handful of PASCH programs worldwide, a designation that comes directly from Berlin, Germany.
2. 25 Walton High School students were named National Merit Semi-Finalists.
3. World Language Academy second grade students won the national ACTFL video competition focusing on the importance of learning additional languages.
4. Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science and Technology had five Robotics teams (including one all-girls team) compete in Anaheim, CA at the VEX Worlds Competition
5. Out of 100 students competing worldwide, two students were selected from Elite Scholars Academy for the "Disney Dream" program.
6. Georgia charter high schools performed well on the SAT and Advanced Placement (AP) tests:
 - a. 18 of Georgia's charter high schools exceeded the state average on the SAT, with the Gwinnett School of Mathematics Science and Technology and Walton Charter High School ranking #1 and #3 respectively (an AP score of 3-5 qualifies the student to receive college credit or advanced college placement).
 - b. Nine charter high schools exceeded the state average of students scoring a 3 or higher on AP exams.

Figure 1: 2011-2012 SAT Performance of Charter High Schools

Charter High Schools	SAT Performance	
	Average Composite SAT Score	State Rank
Gwinnett Charter School of Mathematics, Science and Technology	1941	1
Walton Charter High School	1743	3
Riverwood International Charter School	1631	15
Chamblee Charter High School	1613	18
Decatur High School (charter system)	1570	33
Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts & Technology	1564	36
Armuchee High School (charter system)	1536	Top 15%
Coosa High School	1532	Top 15%
Technology Enriched Accelerated Charter High School (TEACH)	1513	Top 15%
Pepperell High School (charter system)	1506	Top 20%
Cartersville High School (charter system)	1490	Top 20%
Morgan County Charter High School	1477	Top 20%
Model High School (charter system)	1476	Top 20%
Putnam County High School (charter system)	1474	Top 20%
White County High School (charter system)	1465	Top 25%
Marietta High School (charter system)	1459	Top 25%
North Springs Charter High School	1459	Top 25%
Bacanton Community Charter School	1458	Top 25%
State Average	1437	

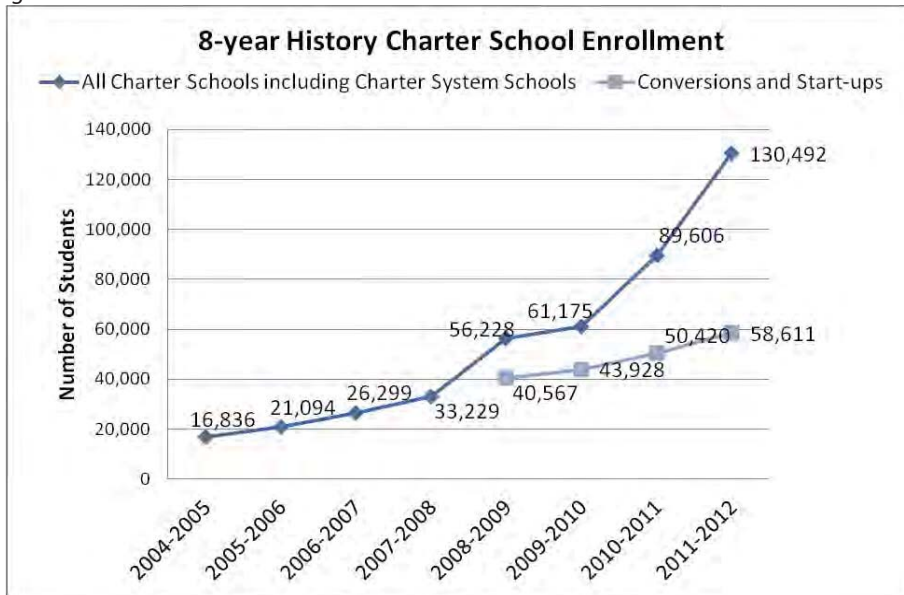
Figure 2: 2011-2012 AP Performance of Charter High Schools

Charter High Schools	AP Performance	
	# of AP Test Takers	% Scoring 3 or Higher
Gwinnett School of Mathematics Science and Technology	402	81.21%
Walton Charter High School	1,270	81.20%
Technology Enriched Accelerated Charter High School (TEACH)	42	75.36%
Winder-Barrow High School (charter system)	100	75.19%
Chamblee Charter High School	486	69.26%
North Springs Charter High School	431	62.34%
Apalachee High School (charter system)	174	59.50%
Riverwood International Charter School	593	55.08%
Armuchee High School (charter system)	44	54.05%
State Average		53.90%

Characteristics: Charter Students and Charter Schools

During the 2011-2012 school year, 130,492 Georgia public school students were enrolled in either a conversion or start-up charter school or a charter system school. In the past three years, charter school enrollment increased by over 100% from 61,175 students. Much of the student enrollment growth is concentrated within the charter systems; however, student enrollment in conversion and start-up charter schools continues its annual trend upward – increasing more than 16% from the previous year.

Figure 3: 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 2011-2012 school year, 49% of charter school students were enrolled in elementary school grades, 24% in middle school grades, and 27% in high school.

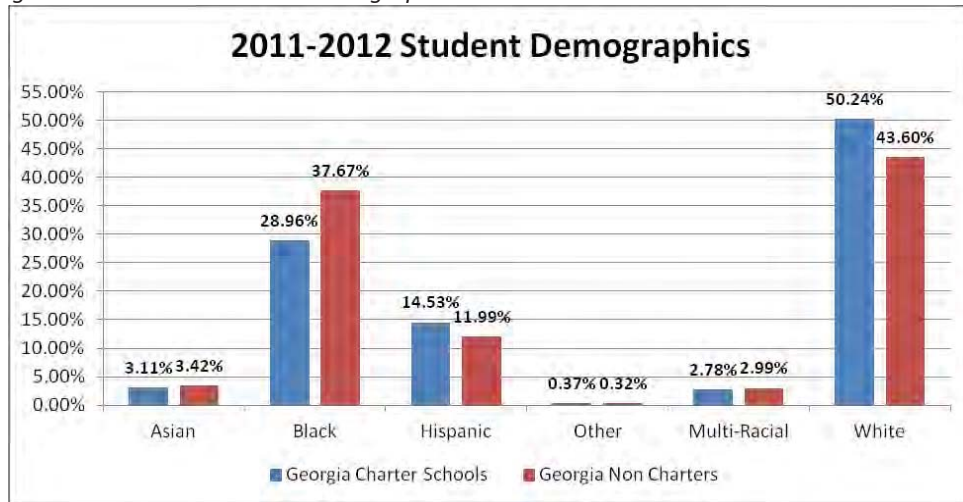
Figure 4: 2012 Charter School Student Enrollment by Grade Level

Grades Served	Georgia Charter Schools Enrollment		Non-Charter Schools Enrollment	
	Number of Students	% of Total Charter School Enrollment	Number of Students	% of Total Charter School Enrollment
Elementary Grades: K-5	65,942	49.28%	760,688	48.95%
Middle Grades: 6-8	30,948	24.32%	353,549	22.75%
High School Grades: 9-12	33,602	26.40%	439,701	28.30%
Total Enrollment	130,492	7.7%	1,553,938	92.3%

Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

The racial and ethnic composition of Georgia charter schools also mirrored that of the non-charter schools. However, charter schools as a whole (conversion, start-ups, and charter system schools) served a higher percent of Hispanic and White students and a lower percentage of Black students than non-charter schools.

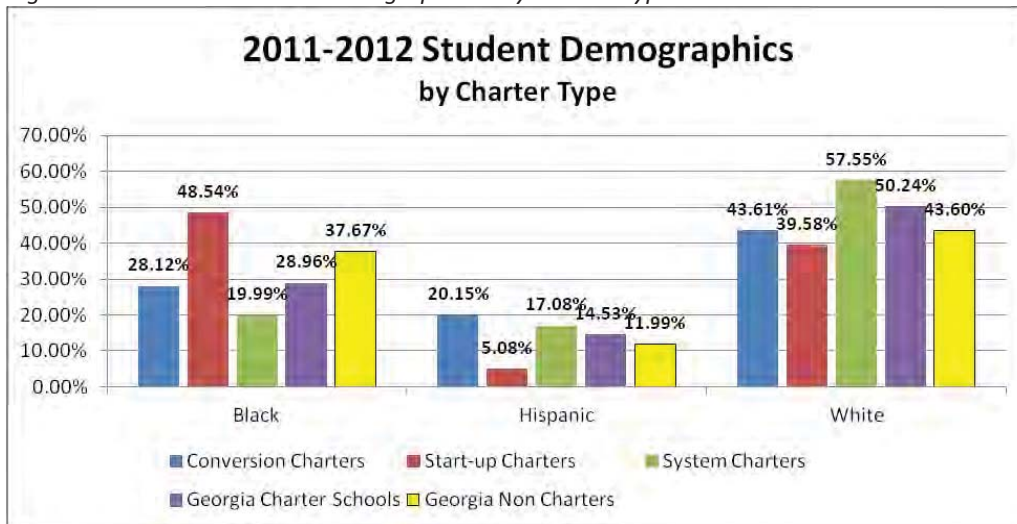
Figure 5: 2011-2012 Student Demographics – Charter and Non-Charter



Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

The advent of additional charter system schools has shifted the racial and ethnic composition of the Georgia charter schools – charter system schools serve a higher proportion of White students than non-charters. Start-up charter schools serve a higher proportion of Black students but serve the lowest proportion of Hispanic students than any other charter option and non-charter schools.

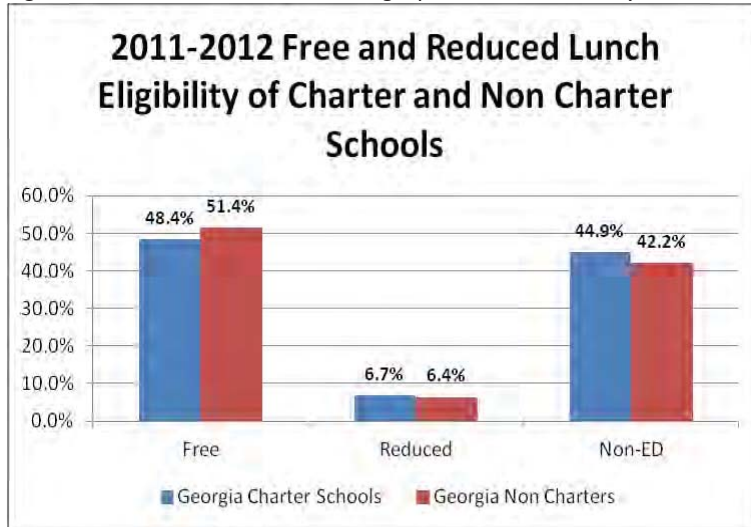
Figure 6: 2011-2012 Student Demographics – By Charter Type



Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

Services to economically disadvantaged students within Georgia charter schools also mirrored that of the state, although Georgia charter schools served a slightly lower percentage of economically disadvantaged students than non-charters – 55.1% of charter school students were eligible for free and reduced price meals compared to 57.8% of non-charter school students.

Figure 7: 2011-2012 Student Demographics – Economically Disadvantaged

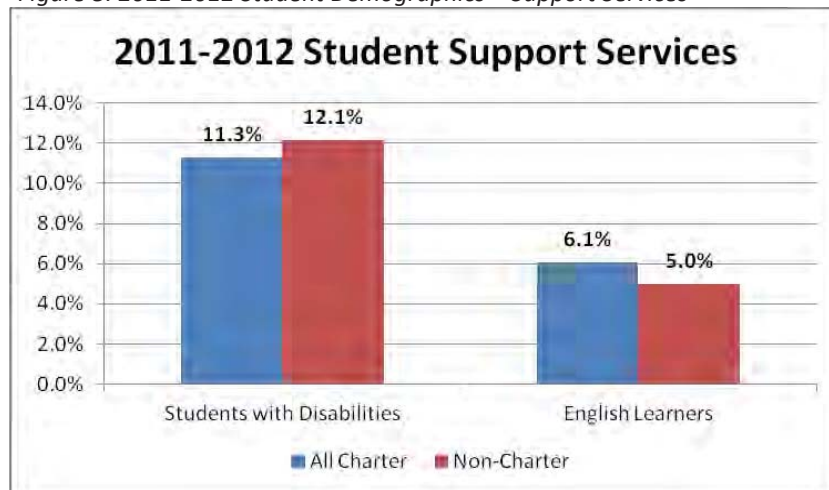


Source: GaDOE Student FTE Collection Period 1

In terms of student support services, Georgia charter schools serve similar percentages of students as non-charters for both special needs and second language populations. Students with disabilities were another program service area where Georgia charter schools are similar compared to non-charter schools – 11% to 12% respectively. Among charter schools, 13% of charter system school students, 11% of conversion school students, and 9% of start-up charter schools students received special education services.

While serving a slightly lower population of students with disabilities, Georgia charter schools served a higher percentage of students needing language support. In particular, 6% of Georgia charter school students received second language (ELL or English language learner) services compared to 5% for non-charter school students. Conversion charter schools possessed the largest percentage of ELL students at 8%, followed by system charters 7.5% and start-up charter 2%.

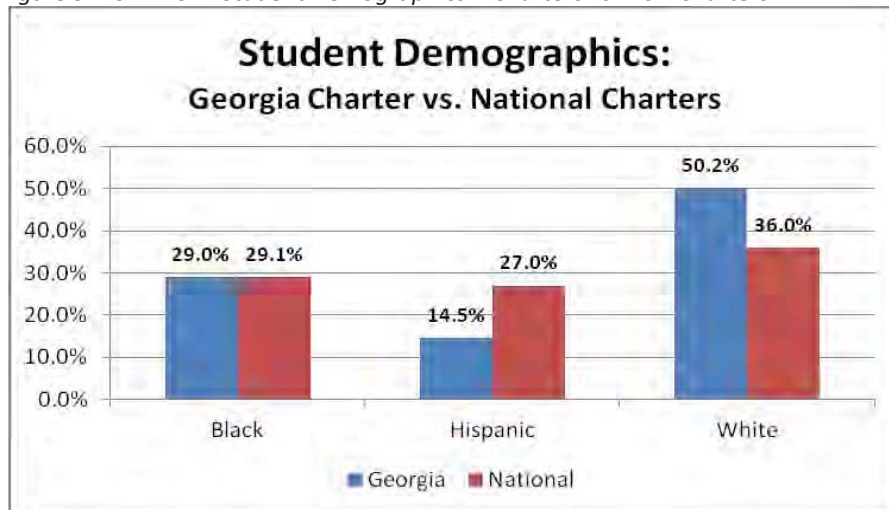
Figure 8: 2011-2012 Student Demographics – Support Services



Georgia Charters vs. Charters Nationally

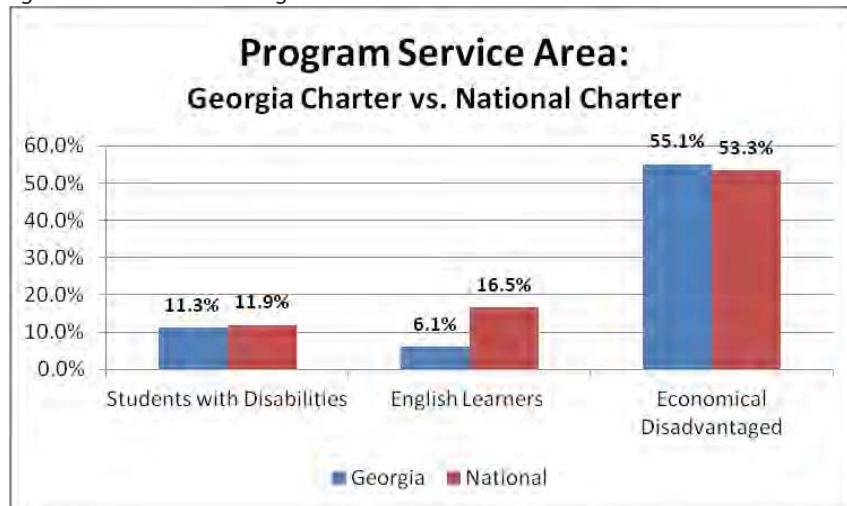
Nationally, charter school students represent 4.2% of all public school students in the 2011-12 school year.¹ Georgia charter school students represent 7.7% of the public school population in Georgia.² Additionally, Georgia charter schools serve the same percentage (29%) of Black students as charter schools nationally. However, Georgia charter schools serve a significantly higher percentage of White students (50% to 36% nationally) and only half as many Hispanic students (14% to 27% nationally) as do charter schools in the United States.

Figure 9: 2011-2012 Student Demographics – Charters vs. Non-Charters



Georgia charter schools serve a higher percent of economically disadvantaged students than do charter schools nationally, but serve a significantly lower percentage of students needing language support. Note that Georgia’s population of English Language Learners is lower than the national average, which impacts the number of students served. Georgia serves a similar percentage of students needing special education support as national charter schools.

Figure 10: 2011-2012 Program Service Areas – Charters vs. Non-Charters



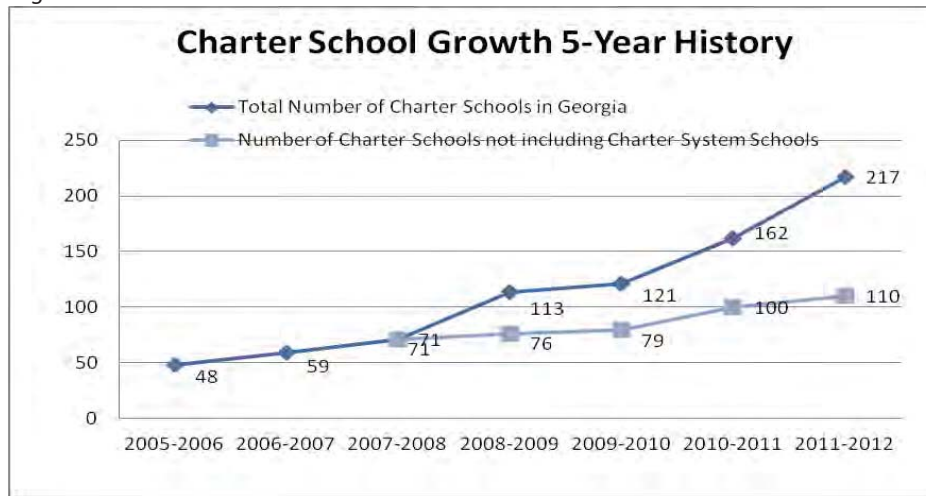
¹ The Public Charter Schools Dashboard, A Comprehensive Data Resource from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Accessed online via <http://dashboard.publiccharters.org/dashboard/schools/year/2012>.

² Enrollment is based on the October 5, 2010 (FTE 2012-1) count and can be accessed online from the Georgia Department of Education’s website http://app3.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fte_pack_ethnicsex.entry_form.

Charter Schools by the Numbers

The growth of Georgia charter schools continued in the 2011-2012 school year. The total number of charter schools increased 34% from 162 to 217 schools – including system charter schools. Charters in 2011-12 comprised 9.5% of all schools in Georgia, higher than the national average of 5.8%. Georgia’s percentage of charter schools is more than twice that of the neighboring states of North Carolina (4.0%), South Carolina (4.0%) and Tennessee (2.3%). Florida represented the only geographic neighbor with a higher percentage of charter schools at 12.3%. Georgia’s remaining neighbor, Alabama, is one of ten states that did not have a charter law in 2011-12.

Figure 11: Five-Year Charter School Growth



During the 2011-2012 school year, 11 new start-up charter schools and one new conversion charter school opened their doors.

Figure 12: Brand New Charter Schools for 2011-2012

Charter School	County / District Served	Type
Athens Community Career Academy	Clarke County	Start-up/Career Academy
Baldwin County Career Academy	Baldwin County	Start-up/Career Academy
Destiny Achievers Academy of Excellence	DeKalb County	Start-up
Gwinnett County Online Campus	Gwinnett County (virtual)	Start-up
Hapeville Charter Career Academy	Fulton County	Start-up
Heart of Georgia College and Career Academy	Bleckley, Laurens, and Wheeler Counties, Dublin City	Start-up/Career Academy
Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood for Boys	DeKalb County	Start-up/State chartered special school (SCSS)
Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood for Girls	DeKalb County	Start-up/SCSS
KIPP Atlanta Collegiate	Atlanta Public Schools	Start-up
Lamar County College and Career Academy	Lamar County	Start-up/Career Academy
Newton College and Career Academy	Newton County	Start-up/Career Academy
Spout Springs School of Enrichment	Hall County	Conversion

Figure 13: New Charters Switching Authorizers from Charter Commission to State Board of Education

Charter School	County / District Served	Type
Cherokee Charter Academy	Cherokee County	Start-up/SCSS
Georgia Connections Academy	Statewide (virtual)	Start-up/SCSS
Heritage Preparatory Academy	Atlanta Public Schools	Start-up/SCSS
Provost Academy of Georgia	Statewide (virtual)	Start-up/SCSS

Figure 14: Existing Charters Switching Authorizers from Charter Commission to State Board of Education

Charter School	County / District Served	Type
Atlanta Heights Charter School	Atlanta Public Schools	Start-up/SCSS
Charter Conservatory for Liberal Arts & Technology (CCAT)	Bulloch County	Start-up/SCSS
Coweta Charter Academy	Coweta County	Start-up/SCSS
Fulton Leadership Academy	Fulton County	Start-up/SCSS
Pataula Charter Academy	Baker, Clay, Calhoun, Early, and Randolph Counties	Start-up/SCSS

Figure 15: Existing Charters Switching Authorizers from Charter Commission to Local District

Charter School	County / District Served	Type
Ivy Preparatory Academy	Gwinnett County	Start-up
The Museum School of Avondale Estates	DeKalb County	Start-up

Figure 16: Charter Schools Closures or Non-Renewals for 2011-2012

Charter School	County / District Served	Type	Closure Status
Effingham Gateway to College	Effingham County	Start-up	Termination mid-year by agreement due to enrollment
Marietta Charter School	Marietta City	Start-up	Non-renewed
Peachtree Hope Charter School	DeKalb County	Start-up	Denied by local district and not approvable by the State

Figure 17: Charter Schools Converted Back to Traditional Public School for 2011-2012

Charter School	County / District Served	Type	Closure Status
Dougherty Comprehensive High School	Dougherty County	Conversion	Withdrew rather than have renewal petition denied
Dougherty International Education Middle School	Dougherty County	Conversion	Withdrew rather than have renewal petition denied

Figure 18: New 2011-2012 Charter Systems

Charter System
Barrow County Schools
Calhoun City Schools
Dawson County Schools
Dublin City Schools
Gordon County Schools
Morgan County Schools

Figure 19: New Schools Added to Existing Charter Systems

New Schools	County / District	Type	New Status
Glennwood Elementary School	Decatur City	Charter System School	Primary (K-3)
4/5 Academy at Fifth Avenue	Decatur City	Charter System School	4/5 Academy

Charter School Locations in Georgia

The proliferation of charter schools across the State of Georgia continued within the 2011-2012 school year. Consistent with prior years, approximately 60% of charter schools are clustered around the Metro Atlanta area. However, 14 school districts, excluding charter system districts, have more than 8% of their schools under a charter contract.

Figure 20: Percent of Schools under Charter Contract

System Name	Total Non System Charters	Total School Count	Percent Charter School
Webster County	1	2	50.0%
Thomas County	2	6	33.3%
Lamar County	1	4	25.0%
Hall County	8	33	24.2%
Berrien County	1	5	20.0%
Greene County	1	5	20.0%
Mitchell County	1	5	20.0%
Toombs County	1	5	20.0%
Baldwin County	1	6	16.7%
Fulton County	14	103	13.6%
Atlanta Public Schools	13	107	12.1%
Clarke County	2	21	9.5%
DeKalb County	12	133	9.0%
Newton County	2	23	8.7%

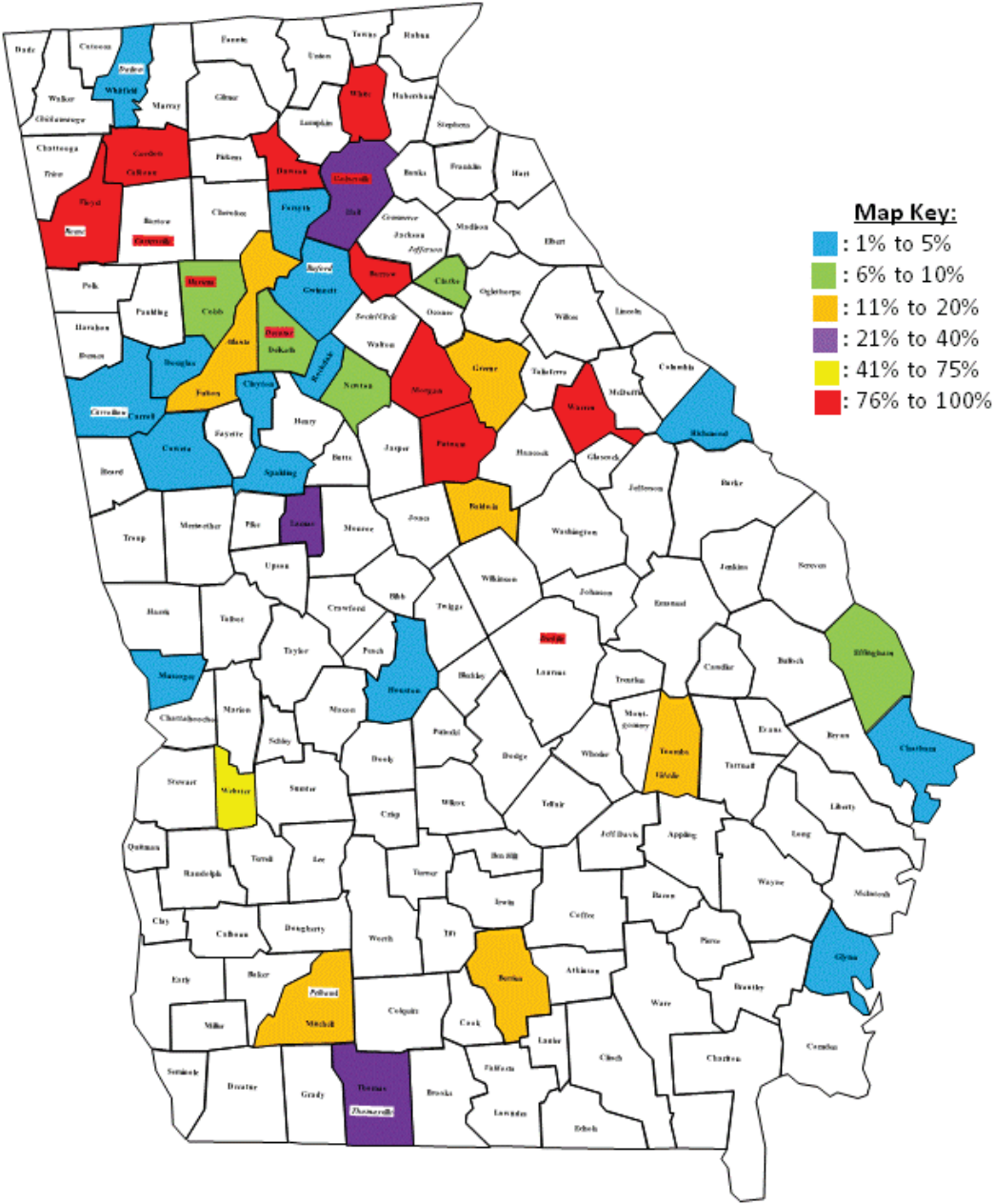
Note: Excludes the 14 charter systems in operation during 2011-2012.

While charter schools are clustered within the Atlanta metro area, the distribution of charter schools across the state is seen below, including southwest Georgia (Thomas County, Mitchell County, and

Berrien County), southeast Georgia (Glynn County), northwest Georgia (Whitfield County, Gordon County, Calhoun City, and Floyd County), and northeast Georgia (White County).

Figure 21: Graphical Map of Charter Schools

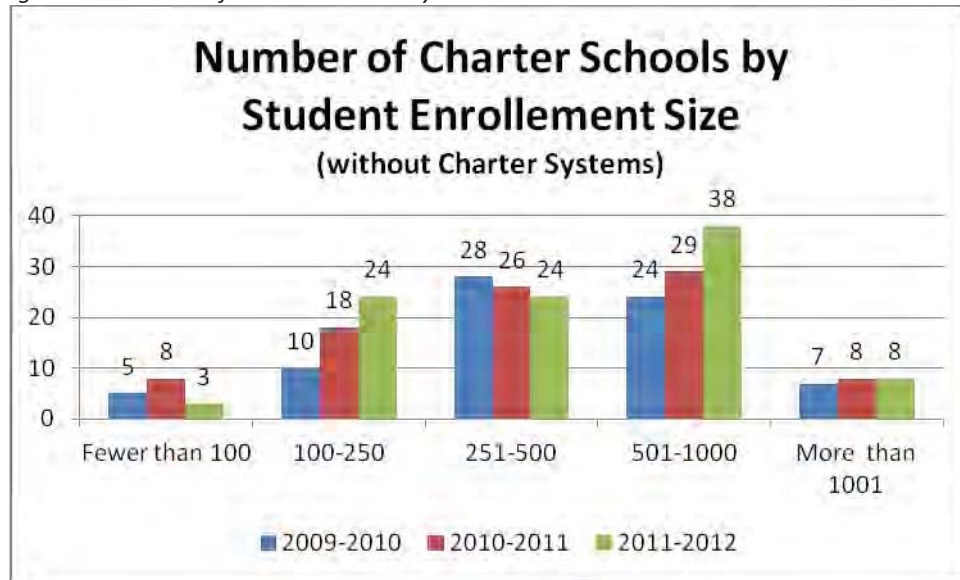
Percent of Districts Schools under Charter



Charter School Enrollment Trends

The range of student enrollment within Georgia charter schools varied widely, from Moore Street School (in the Dublin City charter system) with 36 students to Odyssey School/ Georgia Cyber Academy with 10,289 students. The average charter school enrolled 640 students. Start-up charter schools averaged 507 students (or 360 when removing the Odyssey Charter School), conversion charter schools averaged 820 students (Walton High School in Cobb County was the largest with 2,636 students), and charter system schools averaged 672 students.

Figure 22: Number of Charter Schools by Student Enrollment



Lottery and Waitlist

During the 2011-2012 school year, 50 charter schools held a lottery, which represents a 6.4% increase from the previous school year. Seventeen conversion and 33 start-up charter schools held lotteries ranging from five students participating at Futral Road Elementary (a conversion) to 2,700 students at Cherokee Charter Academy (a start-up state chartered special school). In addition to Cherokee Charter Academy, six other charter schools (Elite Scholars Academy, Fulton Sunshine Charter Elementary, Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science and Technology, Hapeville Charter Academy, Kennesaw Charter School, and KIPP South Fulton Academy School) held lotteries with more than 500 participants.

Ten charter schools opened their doors with a waitlist greater than 300 students. The three largest waiting lists were at Cherokee Charter Academy (1,500), Kennesaw Charter (762), and DeKalb Academy of Technology and the Environment Charter School (422). The average waitlist at Georgia charter schools was 172 students, with start-ups averaging 232 students and conversions 82 students.

Figure 23: 2011-2012 Lottery/Waitlist Summary

	Lottery Participants		Seats Available		Wait List Students	
	Mean	Median	Mean	Median	Mean	Median
All Charters	302	178	128	67	172	61
Start-up	420	202	189	128	232	101
Conversion	121	53	36	22	82	26

Figure 24: Conversion Charter Schools Requiring a Lottery for at Least One Grade

Charter School Name	District	Lottery Participants	Seats Available	Wait List Students
Chamblee Charter High School	DeKalb County	283	40	238
Chesnut Elementary School	DeKalb County	298	0	276
Clubview Elementary School	Muscogee County	37	37	61
Futral Road Elementary School	Spalding County	5	0	5
Martin Elementary School	Hall County	60	40	15
McEver Elementary School	Hall County	35	60	0
Peachtree Middle School	DeKalb County	359	0	359
Reese Road Leadership Academy	Muscogee County	65	35	35
Ridgeview Charter School	Fulton County	53	20	32
Riverwood International Charter School	Fulton County	332	150	182
Sandy Springs Middle School	Fulton County	15	10	0
Sardis Elementary School	Hall County	22	25	0
Sedalia Park Elementary School	Cobb County	28	11	17
Smoke Rise Elementary School	DeKalb County	262	6	128
Spout Springs Elementary School	Hall County	22	22	0
Wauka Mountain Elementary School	Hall County	39	13	26
World Language Academy	Hall County	145	140	15

Figure 25: Start-up Charter Schools Requiring a Lottery for at Least One Grade

Charter School Name	District	Lottery Participants	Seats Available	Wait List Students
Amana Academy School	Fulton County	90	200	46
Atlanta Heights Charter School	Atlanta Public Schools	157	131	159
Neighborhood Charter School	Atlanta Public Schools	189	49	147
Baconton Community Charter School	Mitchell County	143	92	47
Brighten Academy	Douglas County	448	55	393
Charles R. Drew Charter School	Atlanta Public Schools	480	130	350
Cherokee Charter Academy	Cherokee County	2,700	1,150	1,500
Coastal Empire Montessori Charter School	Chatham County	105	84	21
DeKalb Academy of Technology and the Environment Charter School	DeKalb County	489	67	422
Elite Scholars Academy School	Clayton County	775	400	375
Forsyth Academy	Forsyth County	81	58	23
Fulton Science Academy High School	Fulton County	204	100	104
Fulton Sunshine Charter Elementary	Fulton County	607	279	328
Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science and Technology	Gwinnett County	611	300	311
Hapeville Charter Career Academy	Fulton County	540	205	85
Hapeville Charter Middle School	Fulton County	350	250	15
International Academy of Smyrna	Cobb County	81	26	158

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Charter School Name	District	Lottery Participants	Seats Available	Wait List Students
International Community School	DeKalb County	129	47	92
Ivy Preparatory Academy at Kirkwood for Girls	DeKalb County	200	169	31
Ivy Preparatory Young Men's Leadership Academy at Kirkwood	DeKalb County	200	169	31
Kennesaw Charter School	Cobb County	1,211	449	762
KIPP Atlanta Collegiate	Atlanta Public Schools	178	142	36
KIPP South Fulton Academy School	Fulton County	515	114	401
KIPP STRIVE Academy	Atlanta Public Schools	160	95	61
KIPP VISION	Atlanta Public Schools	58	30	28
KIPP West Atlanta Young Scholars Academy	Atlanta Public Schools	226	125	98
Lake Oconee Academy	Greene County	208	71	127
Leadership Preparatory Academy	DeKalb County	166	74	92
Odyssey School	Coweta County	99	117	10
Oglethorpe Charter School	Chatham County	268	140	130
Pataula Charter Academy	Randolph County	10	2	8
Scholars Academy Charter School	Clayton County	260	117	153
The Kindezi School	Atlanta Public Schools	94	24	70
Museum School Avondale Estates	DeKalb County	115	68	47
Main Street Charter Academy Middle	Fulton County	375	39	336
Unidos Dual Language Charter School	Clayton County	116	132	0
Wesley International Academy	Atlanta Public Schools	215	88	86

National Research-Based Educational Models

Charter schools were surveyed on the types of instructional models that each school uses. A total of 20 charter schools reported using one of four models: (1) Expeditionary Learning, (2) International Baccalaureate, (3) Montessori, or (4) Core Knowledge. Of the 20 schools, all but five were start-ups. Five conversion charter schools reported using the International Baccalaureate program.

Figure 26: 2011-2012 Charter Utilization of National Research-Based Education Models

Charter School	Charter Type	National Model
Destiny Achievers Academy Of Excellence	Start-up	Core Knowledge
Lake Oconee Academy	Start-up	Core Knowledge
Lanier Charter Career Academy	Start-up	Core Knowledge
Oglethorpe Charter School	Start-up	Core Knowledge
Amana Academy	Start-up	Expeditionary Learning
Bishop Hall Charter School	Start-up	Expeditionary Learning
DeKalb Academy of Technology and Environment Charter School	Start-up	Expeditionary Learning
Heritage Preparatory Academy	Start-up	Expeditionary Learning
Pataula Charter Academy	Start-up	Expeditionary Learning
Scholars Academy	Start-up	Expeditionary Learning
The Museum School of Avondale Estates	Start-up	Expeditionary Learning
Clubview Elementary	Conversion	International Baccalaureate
International Academy of Smyrna	Start-up	International Baccalaureate
International Community School	Start-up	International Baccalaureate
Morgan County Charter High School	Conversion	International Baccalaureate
Ridgeview Charter School	Conversion	International Baccalaureate
Riverwood International Charter School	Conversion	International Baccalaureate
Sawyer Road Elementary	Conversion	International Baccalaureate
Wesley International Academy	Start-up	International Baccalaureate
Coastal Empire Montessori Charter School	Start-up	Montessori

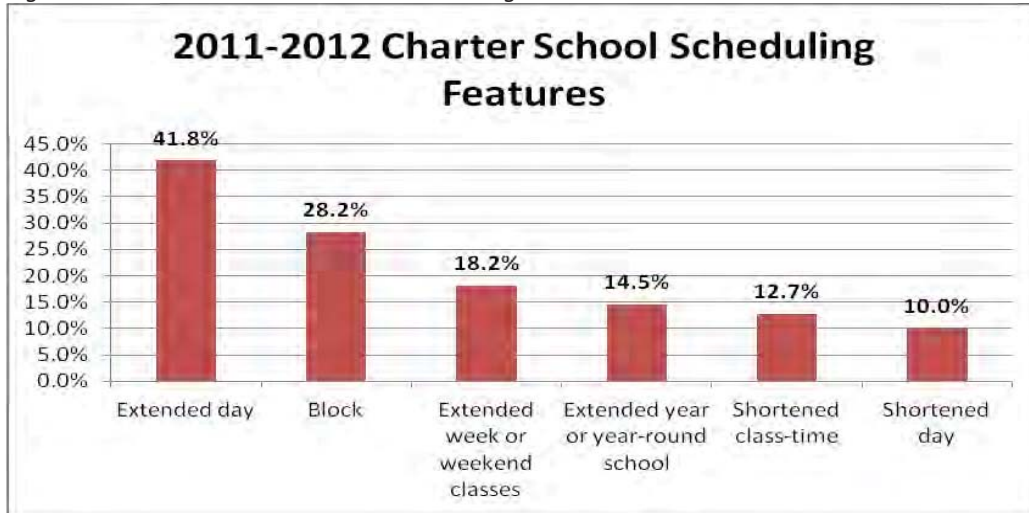
In addition to these 20 schools, 53 other start-up or conversion charter schools (66% of all non-system charter schools) reported using another instructional or teaching model, including:

- Academies of Inquiry and Talent Development
- Constructivist Teaching
- Developmental Approaches in Science, Health and Technology (DASH)
- Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies Next Generation Learning (Ford PAS)
- Gateway to College
- Learning Focused
- Museum School Model
- Multiple Intelligences
- Science and Technology Program for Children (STC)
- Thematic Learning

Program and Operating Services and Flexibility Utilization

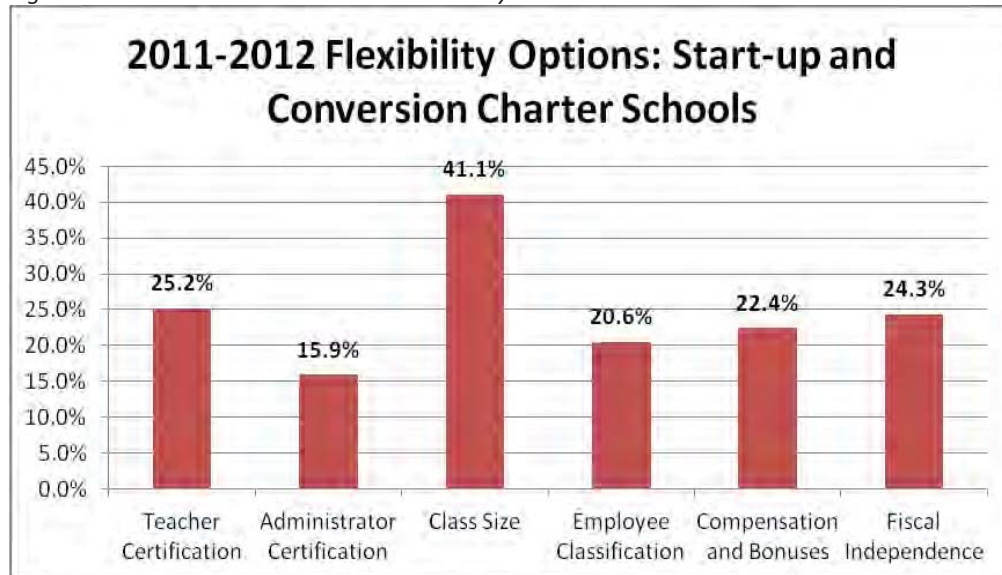
More than 80% of charter schools reported using one or more innovative scheduling feature to increase student achievement. Extending the school day was the most popular approach, followed by block scheduling. Only 10% of conversion and start-up charter schools reported using a shortened school day.

Figure 27: 2011-2012 Charter School Scheduling Features



While charter status provides schools with broad-based flexibility, it appears that charter schools are judicious in their use of flexibility. Class size was the most utilized flexibility, with 41% of charter schools utilizing such provision. Only 25% of start-up and conversion charter schools reported using teacher certification flexibility. Fewer charter schools reported using administrator certification flexibility, employee compensation flexibility, or fiscal independence.

Figure 28: 2011-2012 Charter School Flexibility Utilization

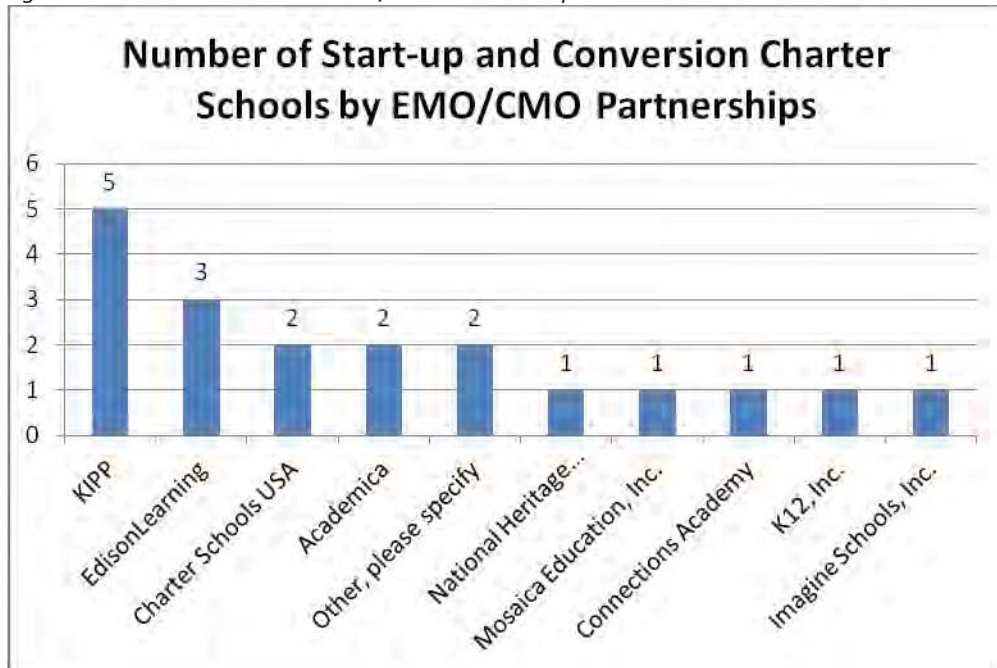


The Role of Management Organizations

Georgia charter schools reported partnering with 11 Educational Management Organizations (EMOs) or Charter Management Organization (CMO) during the 2011-2012 school year. EMOs are for-profit organizations and CMOs are a non-profit organizations that contract with a school or group of individuals to provide administrative and management services to operate a public school.

The only CMO operating in Georgia, the nationally-acclaimed Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), operated five schools in 2011-2012. Edison Learning operated three schools, Charter Schools USA operated two schools, and two schools reported that Academica provided EMO services. The remaining seven EMOs each operated a single school.

Figure 29: 2011-2012 Charter EMO/CMO Partnerships



Charter Schools and Accountability

In previous years, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) served as federal accountability for all schools within the State of 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 did not calculate AYP determinations for schools for the 2011-2012 school year.

In place of the AYP determinations, and to satisfy federal accountability for the 2011-2012 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 (78 schools), SIG (School Improvement Grant) schools, or high schools with a graduation rate of less than 60% for two consecutive years. Focus Schools are the 10% of Title I schools (156 schools) who have the largest within-school gap between subgroup performance on statewide assessments and graduation rate. Reward Schools (234 schools) can be classified in two years 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 2011) or 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).

For the 2011-2012 school year, one charter school was designated a Priority School – Challenge Charter Academy. Additionally, six Georgia charter schools were designated as Focus Schools for having the gap within school gap. No start-up charter schools received the Focus Schools designation. Twelve Georgia charter schools were identified as Reward Schools, with four of them within the 95th percentile on statewide assessments.

Figure 30: Charter Schools – Priority, Focus, and Reward

Accountability Distinctions: Priority, Focus, and Reward Schools

<u>Priority Schools</u>			
System name	School Name	Reason	Charter Type
Newton County	Challenge Charter Academy	Achievement	Start-up
<u>Focus Schools</u>			
System name	School Name	Reason	Charter Type
Fulton County	Ridgeview Charter School	Achievement	Conversion
Fulton County	Sandy Springs Middle School	Achievement	Conversion
Richmond County	Murphey Middle Charter School	Achievement	Conversion
Gainesville City	Gainesville Middle School	Achievement	System
Marietta City	Marietta High School	Grad Rate	System
Marietta City	Marietta Middle School	Achievement	System
<u>Reward Schools</u>			
System name	School Name	Reason	Charter Type
Fulton County	KIPP South Fulton Academy School	High Performing	Start-up
White County	Mount Yonah Elementary School	High Performing	System
Marietta City	West Side Elementary School	High Performing	System
(continued)			

Reward Schools (continued)			
System name	School Name	Reason	Charter Type
Ivy Prep	Ivy Prep School	High Performing	Start-up
Warren County	Warren County Middle School	High Progress	System
Warren County	Warren County High School	High Progress	System
White County	White Co. Intermediate	High Progress	System
Atlanta Public Schools	Charles R. Drew Charter School	High Progress	Start-up
Cartersville City	Cartersville Elementary School	High Progress	System
Decatur City	Decatur High School	High Progress	System
Marietta City	Sawyer Road Elementary	High Progress	Conversion
CCAT	CCAT High School	High Progress	Start-up

Note: Distinctions are based on the 2010-2011 school year.

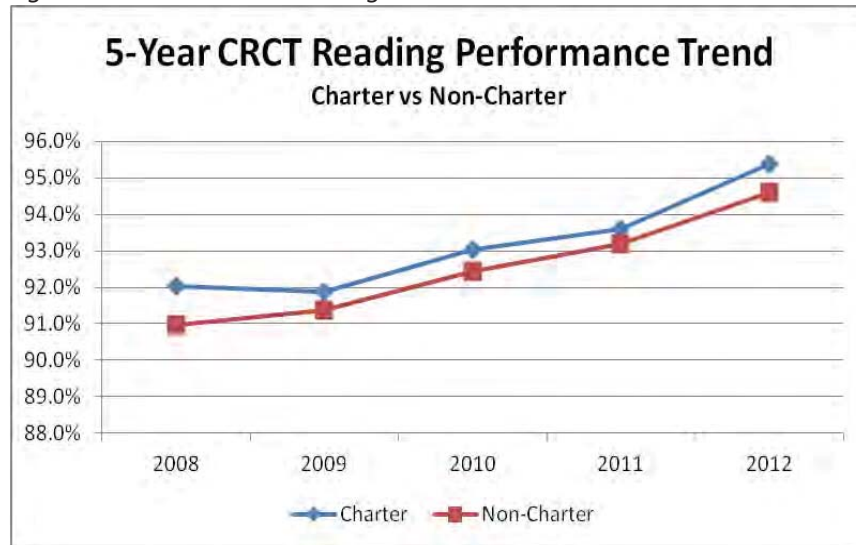
Charter Schools and Academic Performance

The following section summarizes the academic performance of Georgia charter schools on key statewide assessments for elementary, middle, and high schools.

Elementary and Middle School CRCT Test Performance

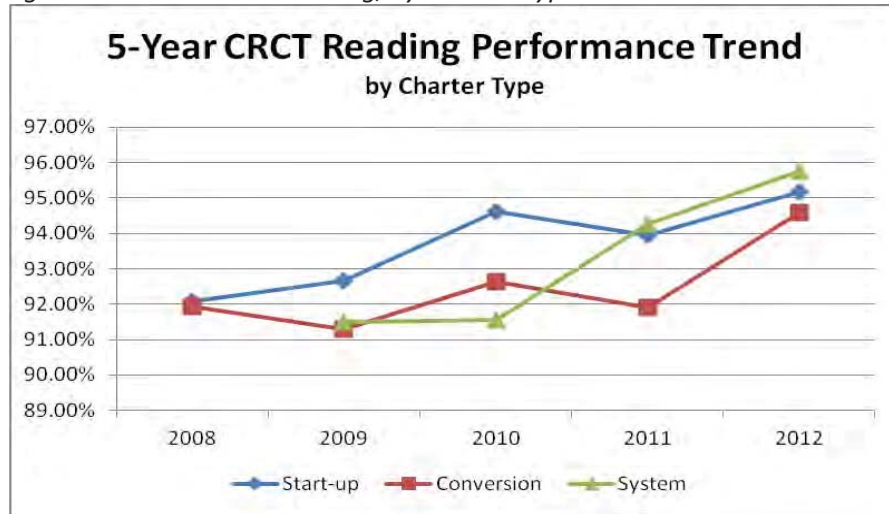
Georgia charter schools have outperformed non-charter schools on the CRCT reading assessment for each of the past five years. Additionally, the rate of increase over the past four years has been nearly identical, with charter schools increasing their passing percent by 3.5% and non-charter schools by 3.2%.

Figure 31: 5-Year CRCT Reading – Charters vs. Non-Charters



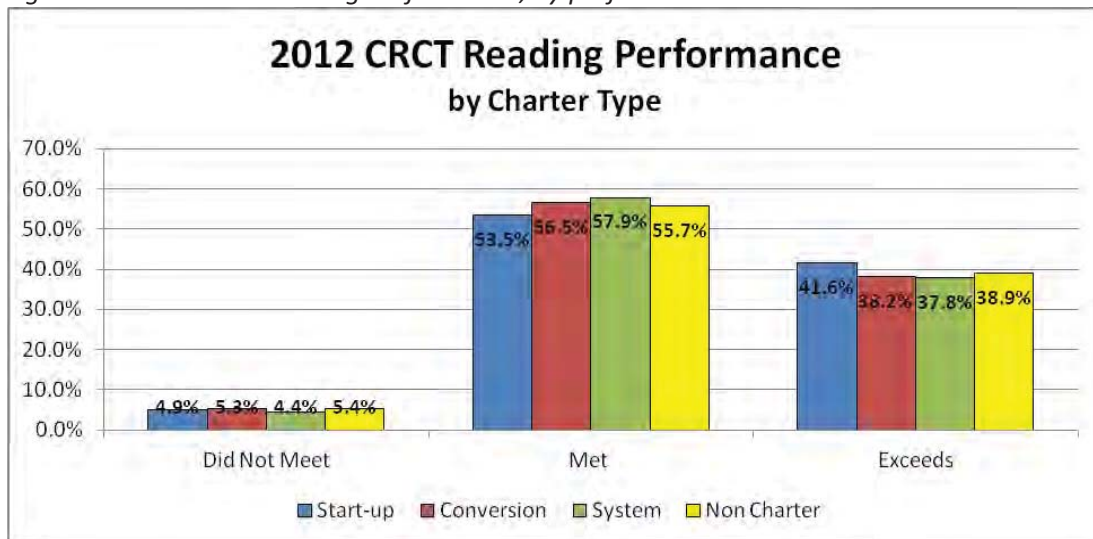
Over the past four years all charter school types have experienced at least a 2.5% increase in the percent of students passing the CRCT Reading assessment. However, charter system schools have experienced the largest growth in the percent of students passing the CRCT reading assessment, increasing their passing percent by 4.3%. Only start-up charter schools (2.5%) have experienced a slower growth in their passing percent than non-charter schools (3.2%).

Figure 32: 5-Year CRCT Reading, by Charter Type



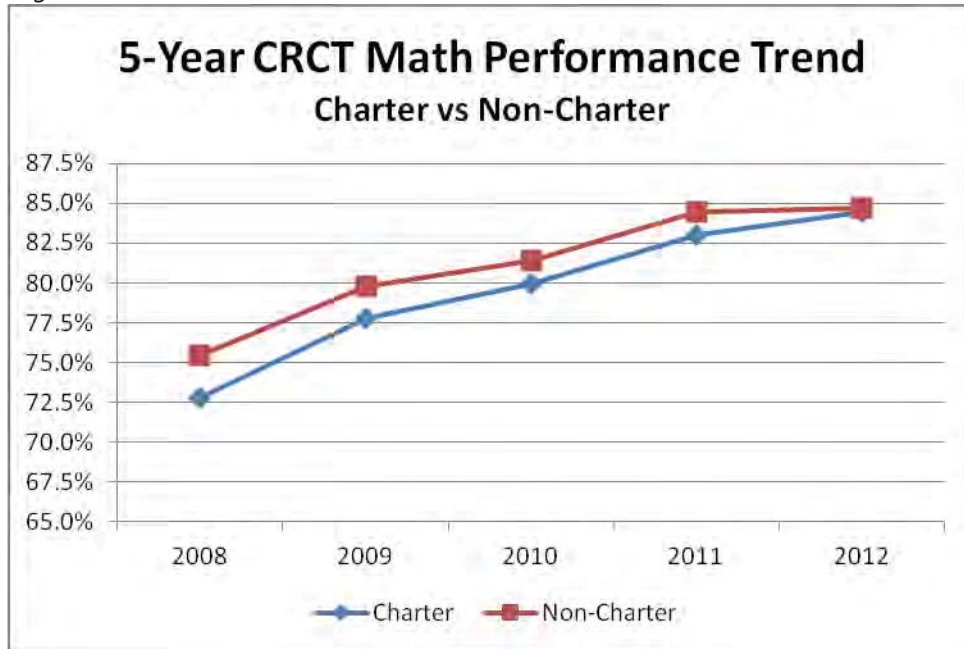
The 2012 CRCT Reading assessment illustrates similarities amongst charter schools and with non-charter schools. Start-up charter schools demonstrated the highest percentage of students exceeding the reading standard, but also have the third-highest percentage of students not meeting the standard. Neither conversions nor system charter schools outperformed non-charter schools on the percent of students exceeding the standard.

Figure 33: 2012 CRCT Reading Performance, by performance levels



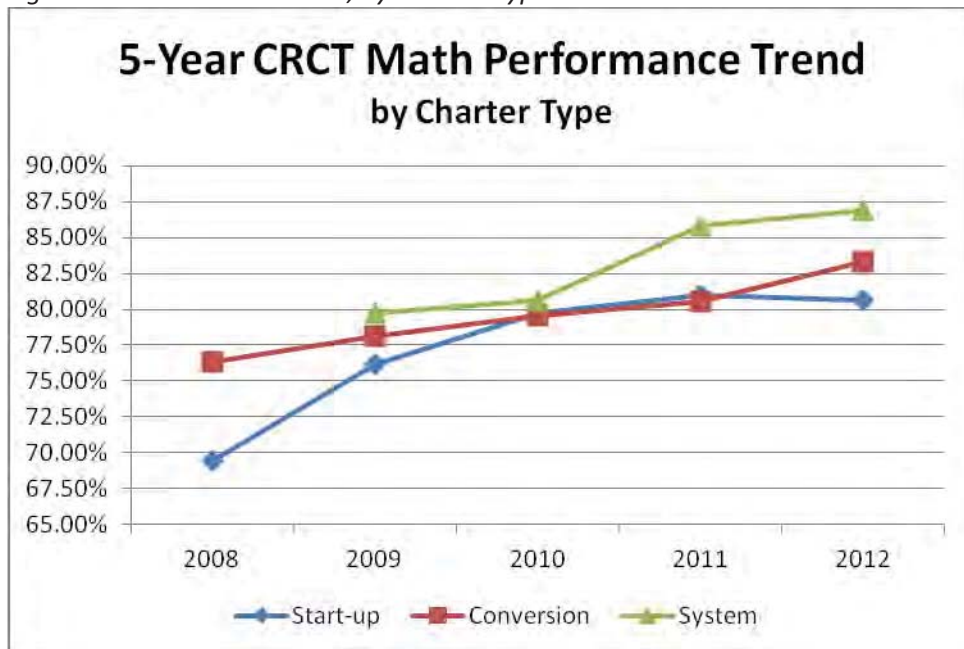
Unlike Reading, charter schools have failed to outperform non-charter schools on the CRCT Math test during the past five years. However, charter schools have demonstrated double-digit growth (11.6%) in the percent of student passing the assessment compared to the 9.3% growth of non-charters. Finally, in 2008 the performance gap between charters and non-charters was 2.6% and in 2012 that gap has decreased to 0.2%

Figure 34: 5-Year CRCT Math – Charters vs. Non-Charters



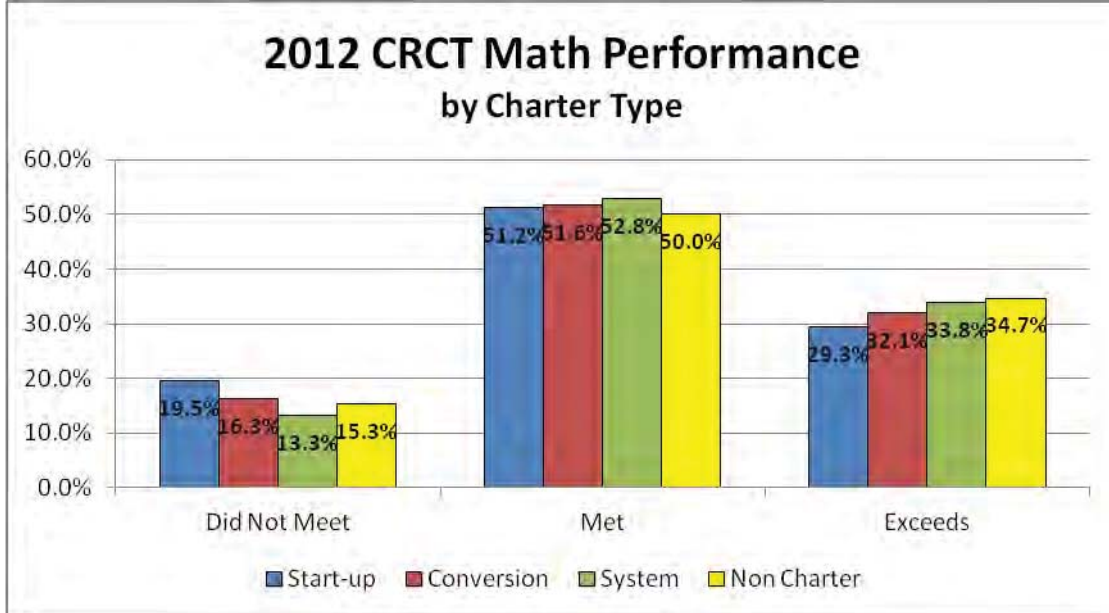
Amongst charter schools, start-up charters have experienced significant growth in the percent of students passing the CRCT Math assessment (up 11.1%) compared to conversion and system charter schools who each increased their passing percent by 7%. Charter system schools have outperformed both conversions and start-ups in each of the past five years.

Figure 35: 5-Year CRCT Math, by Charter Type



For the 2012 CRCT Math assessments, none of the charter school types outperformed non-charter schools on the percent of students exceeding the standards – although more charter system school than non-charter students (86.6% to 84.7%) met or exceeded the CRCT Math standard.

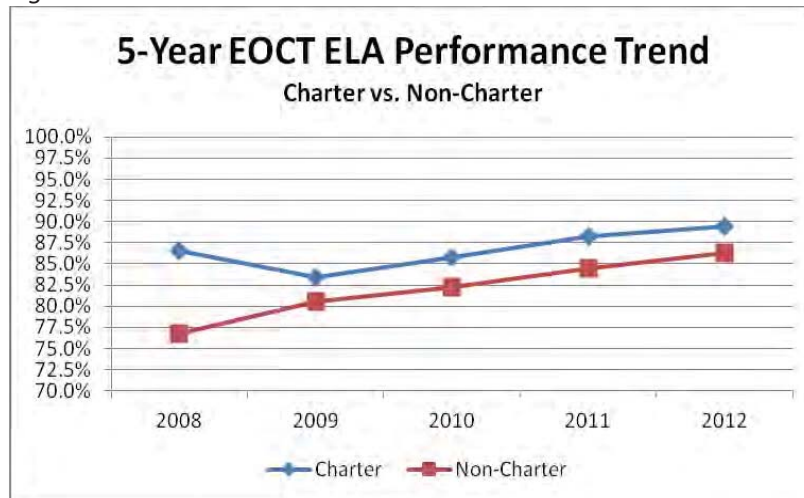
Figure 36: 2012 CRCT Math Performance, by performance levels



High School End of Course Test Performance

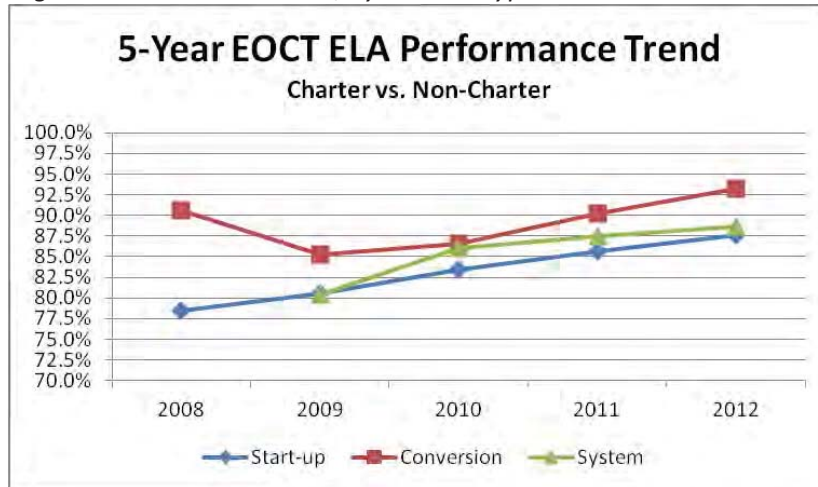
Over the past five years, Georgia charter schools have outperformed non-charter schools on the ELA End-of-Course tests (EOCTs). Charter schools have increased their passing percentage from 86.5% in 2008 to 89.5% in 2012. Traditional schools have increased their passing percent from 76.7% to 86.3% during the same time period.

Figure 35: 5-Year EOCT ELA – Charters vs. Non-Charters



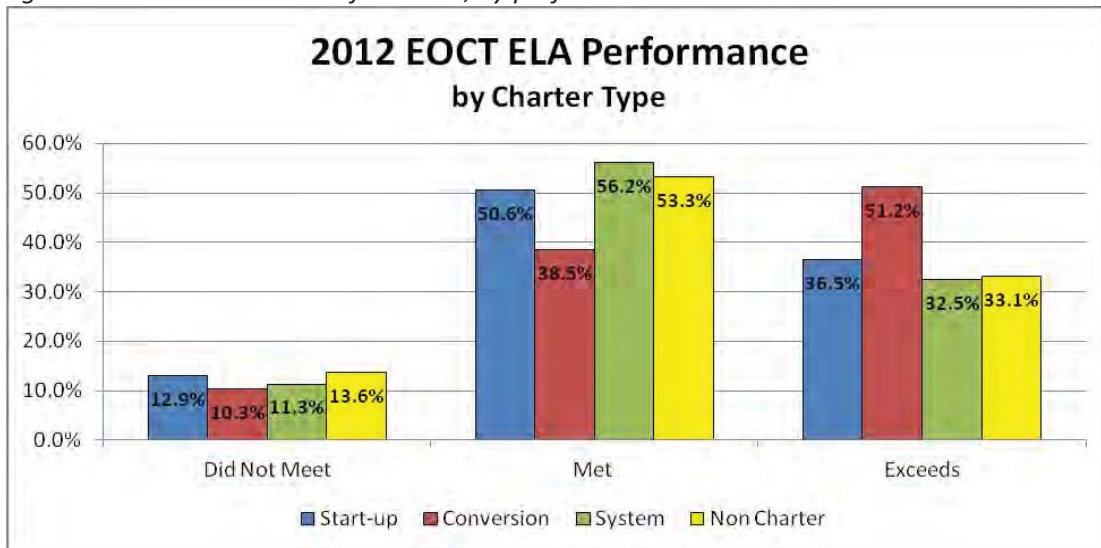
Conversion charter schools have outperformed both start-up and conversion charters on the ELA EOCT in each of the past five years. However, both start-ups and conversions have made significant increases in their passing percent on the ELA EOCT over the past five years – 9.3% and 8.2% respectively.

Figure 36: 5-Year EOCT ELA, by Charter Type



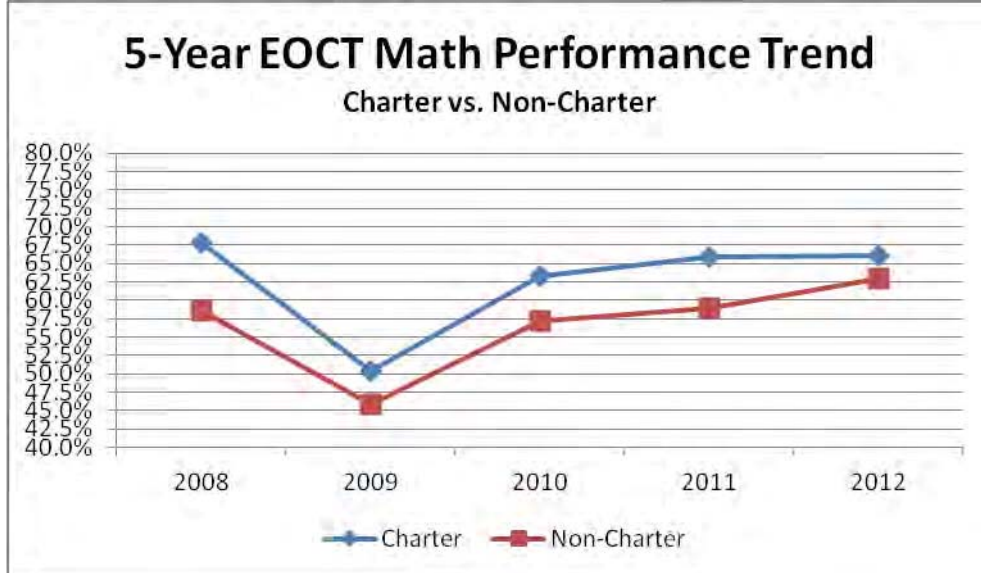
Examining 2012 performance on the ELA EOCT, conversion charter schools had a significantly higher percentage of students exceeding the ELA standard. Start-up charter schools exhibited the highest rate of charter school students not meeting the standard during the 2012 testing period.

Figure 37: 2012 EOCT ELA Performance, by performance levels



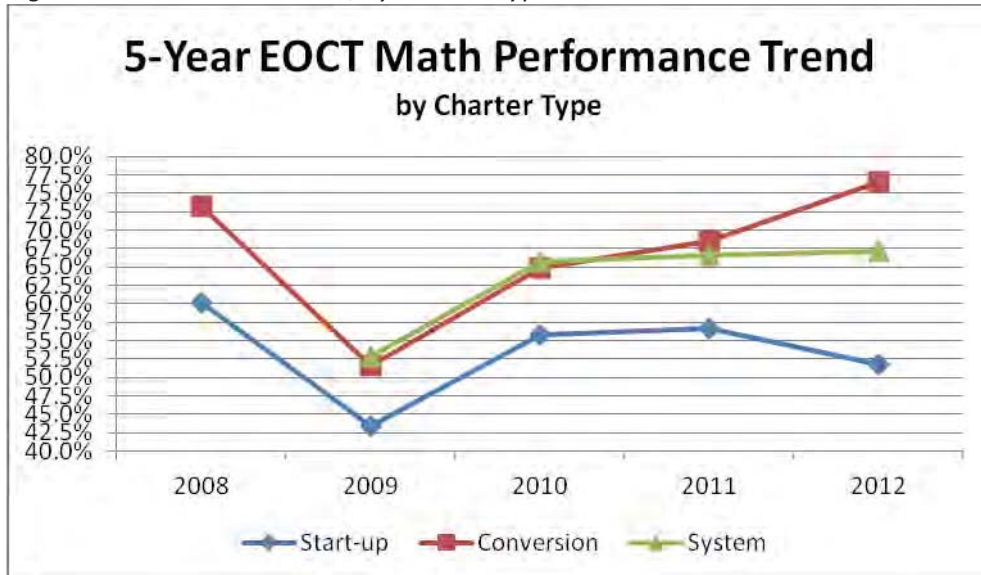
Georgia charter schools have also outperformed non-charter schools on the EOCT Math assessment for each of the past five years. However, the performance gap between charters and non-charters has decreased from 9.3% in 2008 to 3.1% in 2012.

Figure 38: 5-Year EOCT Math – Charters vs. Non-Charters



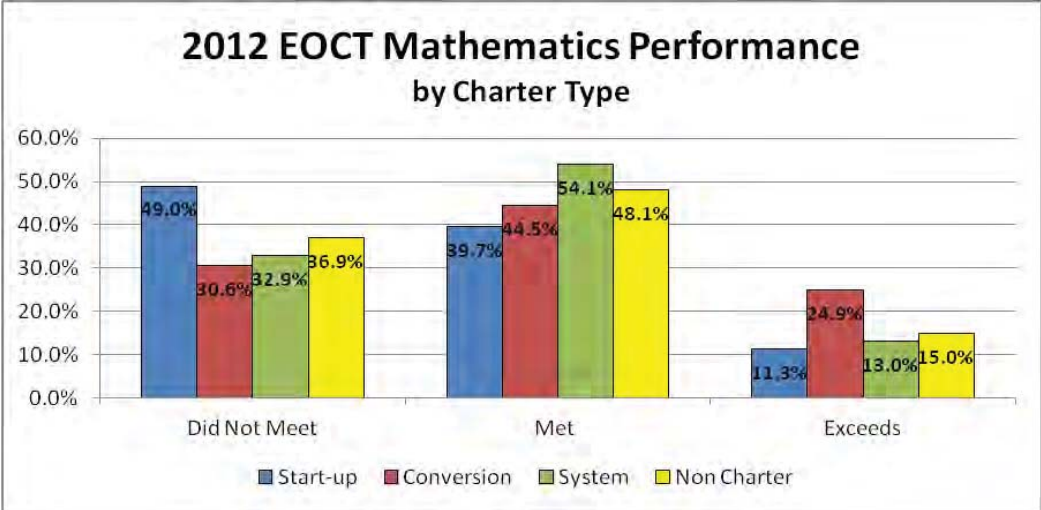
Performance on the EOCT Math assessment by charter school type illustrates a similar pattern as ELA performance. Both charter system and conversion schools outperform start-up charter high schools, with conversion high schools outperforming charter system high schools during the past two years. Performance on the EOCT Math assessment has increased for both conversion (3.3%) and charter system (14.3%) schools, while decreasing for start-ups (-8.4%) over the past five years.

Figure 39: 5-Year EOCT Math, by Charter Type



For the 2011-2012 school year, conversion charter high schools again demonstrated the highest percentage of students *exceeding* the EOCT Math standard (25%), while start-up charter high schools had 49% of their students *not meeting* the math standard.

Figure 40: 2012 EOCT Math Performance, by performance levels



Appendix A - Definitions

Charter Types referred to in this report

1. Conversion: 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.
2. Start-up: a charter school created by a petition brought forth by private individuals, private organizations, or a state or local public entity.
 - a. State-Chartered Special School: a charter school created as a special school operating under the terms of a charter between the charter petitioner and the State Board of Education (SBOE). Petitioners may apply to become a state chartered special school if their petition is first denied by a local board of education and they apply for state chartered special school status to the SBOE. Conversion charter school petitioners may not apply to be state chartered special schools.
 - b. Charter Commission School: a charter school created as an independent school that operated under terms of a charter between the charter petitioner and the Georgia Charter Schools Commission. Petitioners applied to become a Charter Commission School if their petition was denied by a local board of education or if they drew students from five or more counties. The Commission ceased operations following the 2011-2012 school year following a decision by the Georgia Supreme Court.
 - c. Locally Approved Start-up: a charter school operating under the terms of a charter between the charter petitioner and the local district.
3. Charter System: a local school district that operates under a charter between the district as the charter petitioner and the SBOE.

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 chartered special schools manage themselves and are treated as LEAs (local education agencies). Commission Schools also managed themselves and were treated as LEAs; however, since the Commission disbanded no more Commission schools currently exist. Commission schools were either approved by their local districts, became State Chartered Special Schools or closed.

Testing History

In 2000, the State 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.

Academic Data

Data on academic performance was extracted from the GaDOE data warehouse. In past reports, academic performance data from the Governor's Office of Student Achievement annual Report Card was used. However, at the time of initial production of this report, the Report Card had not yet been

finalized. Once that data is completed and published an update will be produced and attached to this report to ensure accuracy and transparency.

Once that data becomes available on Georgia's public schools, readers will be able to compare the charter school's achievement level to the local district and the State as well as to compare the charter school's rate of improvement to the local district and state. Further disaggregated data can be found for each charter school on the Governor's Office of Student Achievement website (www.gaosa.org).

Progress Towards Goals and Financial Audit

For locally-approved charter schools, information on academic goals and the financial audit was provided by each charter school. This report also contains information about the financial condition of each charter school, including whether each school had a surplus at the end of the reporting period and how much each school spent on facilities costs. Charter schools' progress towards the academic goals stated in their charters is important because, in conjunction with state and national accountability systems, charter schools are held accountable for meeting these goals.

Acronyms

Throughout the report, a number of acronyms appear. Among these are: AYP or Adequate Yearly Progress; CRCT or Criterion Reference Competency Test; GHS GT or Georgia High School Graduation Test; GaDOE or Georgia Department of Education; LEA or Local Educational Agency; SBOE or State Board of Education.

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