

Open-Enrollment Charter Schools vs. Traditional School Districts A Comparison of TEA Data

Comparing Texas Education Agency (TEA) Snapshot data from 2007 through 2010 for open-enrollment charter schools and traditional public schools in Texas:ⁱ

Student Demographics

- **Special Populations:** Charter schools educate a higher percentage of minority students and economically disadvantaged students but a lower percentage of limited English proficient students and students with disabilities than traditional public schools.ⁱⁱ

Student Performance

- **Attendance/Dropout Rates:** Charter schools have *lower* attendance rates and *higher* dropout rates than traditional public schools. The difference in the longitudinal dropout rates (the percentage of ninth graders who graduate with their class) is especially significant.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **TAKS Passing Rates:** Over the four school years analyzed, *fewer* charter school students passed each of the TAKS tests, especially the math and science TAKS, than students in traditional public schools. Not a single subgroup of students in charter schools performed better than their public school peers on the TAKS tests.^{iv}
- **College Readiness:** Charter schools prepared *fewer* students to meet the state's standards for college readiness, as measured by the percentage of students who took the SAT and ACT exams and the average scores on each of those exams.^v

Staff

- **Administrators:** Charter schools employ *more* central office and campus administrators and spend a greater percentage of their operating budgets on district and campus administration than traditional school districts.^{vi}
- **Teacher Salaries:** Charter schools pay teachers *less*, have almost twice the percentage of *less experienced* (0-5 years) teachers, and have *fewer* teachers with advanced degrees than school districts.^{vii}
- **Teacher Turnover:** Charter schools have a *significantly higher* teacher turnover rate, almost triple the turnover rate of traditional public schools.^{viii}

Revenue and Expenditures

- **Cost to the State:** Charter schools cannot levy a local tax rate. Therefore, it costs Texas *more* to educate students in open enrollment charter schools than it does to educate students in traditional school districts.
- **Per-Student Funding:** Students in charter schools are provided state funding based on the *statewide average funding per weighted student* (including the enrichment tier). Consequently, per-pupil funding for students in charter schools is *higher* than per-student funding for 50 percent of the students in traditional Texas public schools.^{ix}

- **Total Revenue Per Pupil:** Though charter schools get less *total* revenue per student than traditional school districts, total revenue includes local tax revenue for facilities. Only school districts can levy a facilities (I&S) tax rate.^x However, charter schools have access to state and federal facilities funding programs, including: the state's New Instructional Facilities Allotment, the Permanent School Fund's Bond Guarantee Program, the Foundation School Program's Credit Enhancement Program, and the federal qualified school construction bond program.^{xi}
- In each of the four school years analyzed, charter schools also spent a *lower* percentage of their operating budgets on instruction than did school districts.^{xii} Over the four school years analyzed, charter schools spent, on average, more than twice what school districts spent per student on central administration and 33 percent more on campus administration.^{xiii}
- Charter schools dedicate a larger percentage of their budget to fund balance than do school districts.^{xiv}

ⁱ Snapshots for each year may be accessed at the Texas Education Agency's website - <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/snapshot/>

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Summary Level	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
Students								
3. Total Students	80,629	89,829	102,491	119,137	4,496,304	4,561,687	4,625,713	4,705,641
4. % African American	33	30	28	26	14	14	14	14
5. % Hispanic	48	49	51	53	46	47	48	48
6. % White	17	17	17	17	36	35	34	34
7. % Other	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
8. % Economically Disadvantaged	69.6	69.9	69.5	70.6	55.3	55	56.4	58.7
9. % LEP	14	14	15	16	16	17	17	17
10. % Special Education	10	9	8	8	11	10	9	9
11. % Bilingual/ESL Education	13	13	14	15	15	16	16	16
12. % Career & Technology Ed.	14	13	12	10	21	21	22	22
13. % Gifted & Talented Ed.	2	2	2	2	8	8	8	8

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14. Attendance Rate	92.9	92.9	94	94.3	95.6	95.5	95.5	95.6
15. Annual Dropout Rate Gr. 7-8	1.8	1.6	1.3	1.1	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2
16. Longitudinal Dropout Rate Gr. 9-12	23.8	30.1	31.6	29.7	8.3	10.6	9.4	8.3
17. Annual Graduate Count	4,600	5,147	5,100	6,024	235,314	236,022	246,944	258,233
18. Longitudinal Graduation Rate	33.5	32.7	33.3	36.2	82.1	79.9	81	82.6

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TAKS % Students Passing - Summed Across All Grades	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
19. All Tests Taken	56	62	65	71	70	72	75	77
20. Reading/ELA	82	86	87	88	89	91	91	90
21. Writing	89	90	92	92	92	93	93	94
22. Mathematics	64	71	74	79	77	81	82	84
23. Science	51	61	67	77	72	74	78	83
24. Social Studies	78	83	87	92	89	92	93	96
25. African American	48	53	58	63	56	59	62	66
26. Hispanic	56	62	64	70	62	65	68	71
27. White	66	70	73	77	82	84	86	87
28. Other	85	88	90	92	87	89	90	91
29. Economically Disadvantaged	52	58	61	68	60	63	66	69

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College Admissions	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
31. Percent Tested	18.2	19.9	21.8	19.3	66.7	69.3	66	62.6
32. Percent At or Above Criterion	19.5	17.8	18.6	20.6	27.1	27	27.2	26.9
33. SAT - Mean Total Score	927	924	925	955	992	992	988	985
34. ACT - Mean Composite Score	19.1	18.5	18.7	19.6	20.1	20.3	20.5	20.5

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	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
37. Staff - % Central Administrative	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1
38. Staff - % School Administrative	5	5	6	6	3	3	3	3
77. % Total Operating Expenditures per pupil - Central Administrative	14	14	14	14	6	6	6	6
78. % Total Operating Expenditures per pupil - School Leadership	8	8	8	8	6	6	6	6

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Teachers	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
46. Average Teacher Salary	36,423	37,957	39,624	40,529	45,033	46,325	47,313	48,440
50. % With 5 or Fewer Years of Experience	70.8	69.7	72.1	73.2	36.6	37.1	37	36.2
51. Average Years of Experience	4.9	5	4.8	4.6	11.4	11.4	11.3	11.5
52. % With Advanced Degrees	15.4	16	15.9	16.6	21.7	21.6	21.5	22.0

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Teachers	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
53. Teacher Turnover Rate	42.5	41.1	37.2	32.3	15.2	14.8	14.3	11.4

^{ix} "To the Administrator Addressed Letter," 2010–2011 Preliminary Summary of Finances for Charter Schools, July 6, 2010; "Background Information on Charter School Funding," Texas Education Agency; Texas Education Code §12.106; 19 Texas Administrative Code §100.1041.

^x Texas Education Code §12.102(4)

Taxes and Actual Revenues	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
68. % State	80	80	82	81	33	37	44	42
69. % Local and Other	5	8	7	8	55	53	46	48
70. % Federal	15	12	11	11	11	10	9	10

^{xi} "To the Administrator Addressed Letter," *New Instructional Facility Allotment (NIFA); Online Application for Funding, May 20, 2010.* (New Instructional Facilities Allotment); Texas Education Code §12.135 (PSF Guarantee); Texas Education Code §45.301 (Foundation School Program Credit Enhancement); ^{xii} "To the Administrator Addressed Letter," *2010 Qualified School Construction Bond Program Allocation Availability, May 17, 2010.* (Qualified School Construction Bond Program).

Taxes and Actual Revenues	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
67. Total Revenue Per Pupil	7,578	8,485	8,879	9,657	8,785	9,403	9,755	9,970

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Actual Expenditures	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
75. Total Operating Expenditures Per Pupil	7,459	7,597	8,138	8,715	7,465	7,830	8,346	8,568
76. % Instructional	52	52	51	52	58	58	58	58

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Actual Expenditures	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
77. % Central Administrative	14	14	14	14	6	6	6	6
78. % School Leadership	8	8	8	8	6	6	6	6

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Fund Balances	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools				Texas School Districts			
	2007 Charter Schools	2008 Charter Schools	2009 Charter Schools	2010 Charter Schools	2007 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2008 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2009 Public Schools (excl. Charters)	2010 Public Schools (excl. Charters)
72. % Fund Balance district's budget	19	21	20	20	18	19	19	19