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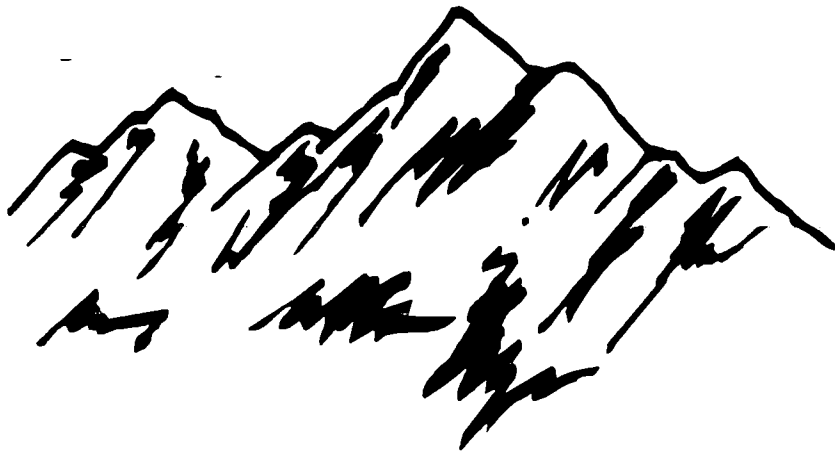
ABSTRACT

This document reports and analyzes information on Colorado charter schools for the 1999-2000 school year. Thirteen parts cover various aspects of these schools: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "The Colorado Charter Schools Act"; (3) "Disposition of Appeals by the State Board of Education"; (4) "The Characteristics of Colorado Charter Schools"; (5) "Characteristics of Colorado Charter School Students"; (6) "Governance of Colorado Charter Schools"; (7) "Colorado Charter School Teachers and Administrators"; (8) "Charter School Efforts to Create Safe and Civil Learning Environments"; (9) "Student and School Performance in Charter Schools"; (10) "Charter School Profiles"; (11) "Waivers"; (12) "Financial Issues in Colorado Charter Schools"; and (13) "Lessons Learned by Charter Schools and Ongoing Technical Assistance Needs." Highlights for the 1999-2000 school year include: 69 charter schools operated in the state, which represented 4.3 percent of all public schools; 16,358 students were enrolled, representing 2.3 percent of total public-school enrollment; the average student-to-teacher ratio was 16.4 to 1; more than 60 percent of the charter schools used a recognized national reform model as the foundation of their educational program; parent involvement was generally high, sometimes extraordinarily so; racial/ethnic minority students made up 26.6 percent of the total charter-school enrollment. An appendix contains the 1999-2000 Colorado Charter Schools Evaluation Study Data Matrix and a 2000 Colorado Charter Schools Evaluation School Questionnaire. (RT)

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The State of Charter Schools in Colorado: 1999-2000

The Characteristics, Status and Performance Record of Colorado Charter Schools



March 2001

Colorado Department of Education

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Joy Fitzgerald, an independent consultant, coordinated the data collection for the study and served as the primary author of this report. Dr. Kathy Green and Dr. Lucretia Peebles, of the University of Denver, completed the analysis of CSAP data discussed in Part Nine of the report. Dean Kern oversaw data collection and wrote the section related to flow-through of federal and state funds to chartering districts in Part Twelve of the report. Charter school administrators contributed their time and expertise as they responded to data requests related to this report.

Colorado Department of Education Organizational Commitment

The Colorado Department of Education dedicates itself to increasing achievement levels for all students through comprehensive programs of education reform involving three interlocking elements: A) High Standards for what students must know and be able to do; B) Tough Assessments that honestly measure whether or not students meet standards and tell citizens the truth about how well our schools serve children; C) Rigorous Accountability Measures that tie the accreditation of school districts to high student achievement.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The families of 17,822 Colorado students chose one of the state's 69 charter schools in the 1999-2000 school year. This number represented an increase of 23% from the total charter school enrollment the previous year. These 69 charter schools served 2.5% of the total public school enrollment and represented 4.3% of all Colorado public schools.

This report covers a subset of the total number of charter schools presently in operation: those 57 schools that had been operating for at least two years as of the end of the 1999-2000 school year. The report does not include schools in their first year of operation in order to give the schools adequate time to establish a performance baseline from which to measure their progress.

The 57 charter schools in this report served 16,358 students during the 1999-2000 school year, representing 2.3% of the state's public school enrollment and 3.6% of the state's public schools.

Characteristics of Colorado Charter Schools

School Size. The average enrollment of the charter schools was 286 students. Among the charter schools in this study, enrollment ranged from 17 students to 1,497 students. Forty-two percent of the charter schools enrolled 200 students or less, and only 7% enrolled over 600 students.

Student-to-Teacher Ratio. The average student-to-teacher ratio of the charter schools in this study was 16.4, lower than the average ratio for all public schools in Colorado (17.4). Forty-two percent of the charter schools had a student-to-teacher ratio of 15.0 or less.

Grade Level Configuration. Only about 40% of the charter schools in this study fit the traditional grade-level configuration of elementary, middle or high schools. Most of the schools offered a program that served students continuously from elementary through middle school, from middle school through secondary school, or throughout their public school experience.

Creation Status of Charter Schools. Eleven percent of the charter schools included in this study were public school conversions; the other 89% were newly created schools.

Educational Programs. The charter schools in this study offered a diverse array of education programs and instructional approaches. Over 60% of the schools in this study used a recognized national reform model as the foundation of their educational program. The cohort of charter schools using the Core Knowledge reform model was notable both for its size (representing 40% of all schools in this study) and for its dominance as a reform model used by charter schools (23 schools versus three schools for the reform model used by the second highest number of schools).

The Delivery of Services to Students with Disabilities. As public schools, charter schools must open their enrollment to any student who lives within the authorizing school district, and must provide appropriate special education services as needed by students with disabilities. Nearly half of the charter schools used an "insurance" model to the delivery of services to students with disabilities. Under this approach, the charter school paid the chartering district a negotiated fee on a per pupil basis to provide special education services to eligible students as required by law. It

appears that in the 1999-2000 school year chartering districts were increasingly encouraging (or requiring) charter schools to apply this approach to the delivery of special education services.

Assessment Tools Used by Charter Schools. Over 90% of the charter schools in this study reported using more than one assessment tool to measure different dimensions of student learning. These tools encompassed norm-referenced tests, criterion-referenced tests (including the Colorado Student Assessment Program, where applicable) and performance assessments.

The Students Served by Colorado Charter Schools

In 1999-2000, the population of students served by the cohort of charter schools included in this study was nearly as racially diverse as the state's public school enrollment. However, the charter schools served a significantly smaller percentage of student with disabilities and students who were eligible for free/reduced-price lunch than did all public schools in Colorado.

- **Racial/Ethnic Minority Students:** The 57 charter schools in this study served 4,353 racial/ethnic minority students in 1999-2000, representing 26.6% of the schools' total enrollment. The state average was 29.4%. The percentage of racial/ethnic minority students served by individual charter schools in this study ranged from 0% to 97.4%.
- **Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Lunch:** The 57 charter schools in this study served 2,350 students in 1999-00 who were eligible for free/reduced lunch, representing 14.4% of the total enrollment of the schools. The state average was 28.2%. The percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch enrolled in individual charter schools in this study ranged from 0% to 84.6%.
- **Students with Disabilities:** The 57 charter schools in this study served 1,013 students with disabilities, representing 6.2% of the schools' total enrollment. The state average was 10.2%. The percentage of students with disabilities served by the charter schools in this study ranged from 0% to 66.6%.

These data should be read with some caution. In instances where a charter school did not forward demographic information (through its chartering district) to CDE, the database shows "0%." The inattention of some charter schools and/or their chartering districts to reporting these data consistently and accurately may have skewed the demographic profile of charter schools as a whole. This is especially true with respect to student eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch. Second, the total number of charter school students in the study was small compared to the 1999-2000 student enrollment in all public schools (representing approximately 2.3% of the total public school enrollment). The percentages among categories could therefore change significantly with only slight alterations in the composition of student enrollment.

Charter School Staff, Administration and Governing Boards

Teacher Salaries, Education and Experience

- The average teacher salary in 1999-2000 for the charter schools in this study was \$26,446, substantially lower than the state average teacher salary of \$38,163. The average salary for individual charter schools ranged from \$12,275 to \$46,802.

- The average teaching experience of teachers in charter schools was 3.9 years, compared to an average of 7.6 years for all public classroom teachers in Colorado.
- The average percentage of charter school teachers who held a Masters Degree or higher post secondary degree was 21.6%. Statewide, 44.2% of public school teachers held a Masters Degree or higher.

Administrator Salaries, Education and Experience

- The average salary of charter school administrators was \$52,417, substantially lower than the state average administrator salary of \$63,064. Administrator salaries in individual charter schools ranged from \$3,316 to \$106,693.
- Charter school administrator experience in the field of education ranged from 33 years to no previous experience at all. The average experience of charter school administrators was 9.0 years. Statewide, the average public school administrator in 1999-2000 had 12.4 years of education experience.
- Approximately 84% of administrators in charter schools held a Masters Degree or higher post-secondary degree. The state average was 89%.

Administrator Tenure. The average tenure of lead administrators in charter schools ranged from a low of one year to a high of seven years. The average lead administrator tenure for all charter schools in this study was 2.4 years.

Governing Boards. One third of the charter schools in this study had a governing board comprised of parents, school staff and community members. About a quarter of the schools had a board comprised of parents only. The two other major configurations of charter school governing boards were parents and school staff (17% of the schools in the study) and parents and community members (15%). Parents held a majority on the governing boards in 66% of the charter schools in the study.

Safe and Civil Learning Environments

Slightly more than one third of the charter schools in this study used a different discipline policy than their chartering district. The same number of charter schools used substantially the same discipline policy as their chartering district, with slight modifications that generally involved a more explicit definition of consequences or the application of stricter consequences for violations of the policy. The remaining 31% of the charter schools used the same discipline policy as their chartering district.

The suspension rate in Colorado charter schools ranged from 48.3% to 0.3%. The average suspension rate for charter schools was 8.1%; the median rate was 3.9%. The 1999-2000 suspension rate for public schools statewide was 6.7%. The average expulsion rate for charter schools in 1999-2000 was 0.4%; the median rate was 0.0%. The expulsion rate for all Colorado public schools was 0.3%.

The full status report discusses the characteristics of charter schools that contributed to safe and civil learning environments. Those most commonly cited by charter school operators were:

- Clear code of behavior/discipline policy stressing mutual respect and personal responsibility that was enforced consistently and on a school-wide basis.
- Small size of school and/or classrooms promoted caring and personalized learning environments.
- High levels of parental involvement
- Explicit instruction in and/or formal programs related to character development
- Use of conflict resolution, bully-proofing or peer mediation programs.
- Adoption of a dress code/uniform policy.

Student and School Performance in Colorado Charter Schools

The status report presents six different kinds of data to present a multi-dimensional picture of the performance of Colorado charter schools and their students during the 1999-2000 school year.

1. Colorado Student Assessment Program

The Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) is a statewide assessment, aligned with the state model content standards that was administered at limited grades and in limited subjects during the 1999-2000 school year. The Colorado Department of Education reports CSAP results using performance levels. A student classified as proficient is considered to have met the state model content standards in the subject tested.

The report applies several comparative lenses to the performance of charter schools, as a cohort group, on the Colorado Student Assessment Program, focusing on the 4th grade reading and 7th grade writing CSAP assessments.

CHARTER SCHOOLS COMPARED TO STATE AVERAGE

As a group, the charter schools tended to perform well on the Colorado Student Assessment Program. As shown in Table 1, the average score of the charter schools in this study exceeded the state average by a significant margin.

Table 1: Comparison of Weighted and Non-Weighted Charter School Average CSAP Scores with Average Scores for the State of Colorado

	4 th Grade Reading	7 th Grade Writing
State Average	62%	42%
Non-weighted Charter School Average (n)	69% (33)	55% (32)
Weighted Charter School Average (n)	67% (33)	50% (32)

(N) is the number of schools included in the calculation.

Table 1 shows both weighted and non-weighted charter school averages. The weighted charter school score is calculated by multiplying the percentage proficient and advanced for a school by

the number of students in that school who took the test. While weighting is generally considered a more accurate way to present the average scores of schools of differing sizes, it allows a very large school with very poor scores to influence the overall picture in a negative way. It is relevant in this connection that the charter schools with the largest number of students taking the CSAP in each grade had among the lowest scores.

CHARTER SCHOOLS COMPARED TO "MATCHED" PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Colorado Charter Schools Act specifically directs that this report "shall compare the performance of charter school pupils with the performance of ethnically and economically comparable groups of pupils in other public schools who are enrolled in academically comparable courses."

This is an important focus from a policy perspective. However, it presents several challenges from the perspective of statistics and data analysis. First, because there were so many fewer charter schools than non-charter public schools, the charter school averages were more affected by the performance of a school or group of schools at either end of the performance spectrum than the non-charter school averages were. Additionally, when the charter schools scores were distributed across various categories for purposes of matching or comparing results, the number of schools in any one category often fell below 15. A commonly held research standard, applied to federal research studies, is that results should not be reported when the N (or number of schools) is fewer than 15. Second, because charter schools, in general, tend to be smaller than non-charter schools, a higher percentage of charter schools administered the CSAP but were not able to report data than their non-charter public school counterparts. Third, the free/reduced-price lunch eligibility data likely was under-reported for charter schools.

Fourth Grade Reading

The scores of charter schools and non-charter public schools that reported CSAP results in 4th grade reading were "matched" within identified ranges:

- less than 20% minority and less than 20% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 21-40% minority and 21-40% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 41-60% minority and 41-60% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 61-80% minority and 61-80% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; and
- 81-100% minority and 81-100% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch.

Each school's average percentage of students that scored at the proficient level or above was weighted by the number of students who took that test. Then all the weighted values for the individual charter schools were added up and averaged to produce a charter school average. The same process was applied for non-charter public schools.

Table 2, below, shows the results of the matching. In the 0-20% / 0-20% quintile band for both the percent minority and percent eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch, the charter school average percentage of students scoring at or above the proficient level was slightly higher than the non-charter public school average. In the 21-40% / 21-40% quintile band, the charter school average exceeded the non-charter school average by almost 5 percentage points. In the 81-100% /

81-100 % category, the charter school average was slightly higher than the non-charter school average. These results are not reported in Table 2 because fewer than 15 schools fell into each of these bands.

Table 2: Charter and Non-Charter Average Percentage of Students Scoring at the Proficient Level or Above on the 4th Grade Reading CSAP Assessment, Matched by % Minority and % Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility

	0-20% Minority & 0-20% F/R	21 – 40% Minority & 21-40% FR	41-60% Minority & 41-60% F/R	61-80% Minority & 61-80% F/R	81-100% Minority & 81-100% F/R
Charter Schools	78% (22)	* (3)	-	-	* (2)
Non-Charter Schools	77% (225)	61% (66)	51% (50)	41% (32)	27% (32)

* Results were not reported because N was fewer than 15.

Seventh Grade Writing

Table 3, below, shows the results of the same matching process applied to the 7th grade writing CSAP assessment. In the 0-20% / 0-20% quintile band for percent minority and percent free/reduced-price lunch eligibility, the charter school average for students scoring at the proficient level or above was significantly higher (eight percentage points) than the non-charter public school average. Charter school averages at the 21-40% / 21-40% and 41-60% / 41-60% quintile bands also were higher than non-charter school averages by sizeable margins. These results are not reported in Table 3 because fewer than fifteen schools fell into each of these bands.

Table 3: Charter and Non-Charter Average Percentage of Students Scoring at the Proficient Level or Above on the 7th Grade Writing CSAP Assessment, Matched by % Minority and % Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility

	0-20% Minority & 0-20% F/R	21 – 40% Minority & 21-40% FR	41-60% Minority & 41-60% F/R	61-80% Minority & 61-80% F/R	81-100% Minority & 81-100% F/R
Charter Schools (N)	65% (24)	* (3)	* (1)		
Non-Charter Schools (N)	57% (100)	37% (30)	26% (29)	19% (12)	11% (12)

* Results were not reported because the N is fewer than 15.

The number of schools shown in Tables 2 and 3 were less than the total number of schools (both charter and non-charter) that reported results on the respective tests. This is because the matching process only captured the scores of schools with demographics that fell within the broad quintile bands. If, for example, a school served a high percentage of racial/ethnic minority students but a low percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch, it would have fallen outside the quintile bands used for matching.

2. Parent Involvement in Charter Schools

The full evaluation report presents data related to the total number of volunteer hours contributed by parents/families during the 1999-00 school year and the approximate percentage of parents who participated. These data are difficult to summarize because the total number of hours contributed is only informative in the context of the schools' enrollment, and is related to the demographics of the schools and the grade levels served by the schools. It is fair to conclude, however, that the charter schools, as a whole, enjoyed striking (sometimes extraordinary) levels of parent

involvement. This is not to say that all charter school parents could and wanted to participate. But many did and at high levels of responsibility and commitment. Ninety-eight percent of the charter schools in this study regularly administered a parent satisfaction survey. Forty-seven percent of the schools used a parent contract to promote parent involvement.

3. Market-Based Indicators

As schools of choice, charter schools also can be fairly measured by market-based indicators, such as the demand for the school (waiting lists), parent satisfaction, and re-enrollment rates. Individual charter school data related to these indicators are provided in the individual school profiles found in the full report. A quick perusal of these profiles will confirm that many charter schools have extensive waiting lists, frequently exceeding the school's enrollment by several times. Parent satisfaction and re-enrollment rates are also generally high.

4. Designation of Charter Schools as Colorado Schools of Excellence

During the 1999-2000 school year, 105 schools applied for recognition through the John Irwin Colorado Schools of Excellence program. Nineteen of these schools received Excellence Awards through a competitive review process. Of that total, seven schools (nearly 40%) were charter schools. Yet, charter schools represented only 3.6% of all Colorado public schools in 1999-2000.

5. Charter Renewals/Closures

Under the Colorado Charter Schools Act, the renewal process is the ultimate tool of accountability. A charter renewal signals the satisfaction of the authorizing district that the charter school is fulfilling its commitments spelled out in the charter agreement.

Fifty-one schools in this study provided information about their renewal status. Of this total, 40 schools already had sought a renewal of their charter contract by the chartering district, and another seven schools were in the middle of a renewal process. The other four schools were still operating under their original charter. In all but one instance, the term of the charter renewal was equal to or greater than the original term of the charter.

In the nearly six years of the Colorado Charter Schools Act's operation, only three charter schools have closed. Two closed voluntarily at the initiative of the charter operator; one charter school was not renewed by the chartering district. This represents a closure rate of 4.2%.

6. The Performance of Individual Charter Schools Measured Against their Own Performance Goals

The Charter Schools Act requires a charter school application to articulate the school's performance goals for students and measurable objectives for student growth. The Act also requires the application to spell out the methods that the school will use to assess and report on student progress. As charter schools began operation, they refined and updated the performance goals contained in their charters through the annual school improvement planning process required of all public schools under Colorado law.

Given the fact that charter schools have unique performance goals and different approaches to measuring progress toward these goals, the evaluation study presents school performance data for each school individually. To do this, the status report includes a two-page School Profile for each charter school. The first page of the profile provides demographic data, the school's mission, educational approach, governance structure, and performance goals. The second page summarizes the student assessment results and data on other performance indicators collected by the school over a period of several years.

Based on a review of the data in the individual School Profiles, 88% of the schools in this study provided data in connection with this annual review to indicate that they were meeting or exceeding the expectations defined for their performance. The other 12% did not report any student achievement or school performance data for purposes of this study, or did not produce sufficient data to make the case that they are meeting their performance expectations.

Use of Waivers by Charter Schools

The Colorado Charter Schools Act extended to charter schools the operation of the same waiver provision that has been available to every public school district in Colorado since 1989. The cumulative record of waiver use by charter schools since the Colorado Charter Schools Act was enacted suggests that this process for permitting charter schools to secure waivers has been adequate to enable these schools to overcome statutory or regulatory barriers to the successful implementation of their distinctive programs. However, this process did require an investment of time and effort on the part of the charter schools, their chartering districts and the State Board. In the fall of 2000, the process through which charter schools and their chartering district apply for waivers was vastly simplified. The charter contract must contain a list of statutes and regulations that the school district would like the State Board of Education to waive on behalf of the charter school. In addition, the charter school and the district must submit a letter, co-signed by both parties, to the State Board listing the statutes to be waived.

Fifty-five of the 56 charter schools for which waiver information was available sought at least one waiver. Ninety-six percent of the schools obtained multiple waivers. There is a definite pattern of waiver requests among the charter schools, despite the range of educational programs they offered. Waivers of the following statutes were granted to over half of the charter schools in this study:

- 88% received a waiver from the operation of the Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act, Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-63-101 et seq.
- 82% received a waiver of Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-32-126, which addresses the employment and authority of principals.
- 82% received a waiver from the operation of the Licensed Performance Evaluation Act, Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-9-106, or enumerated subsections of the Act.
- 75% received waivers of specific subsections of Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-32-109, which enumerates the specific duties of local boards of education.
- 66% received waivers of specific subsections of Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-32-110, which enumerates the specific powers of local boards of education.

Charter School Finance Issues

Charter School Facilities. The charter schools in this study were located in a wide variety of facilities during the 1999-2000 school year, including public schools; a museum; renovated

churches, warehouses, office space, grocery stores, strip malls, and industrial space; modular buildings and others. Of the 49 schools that reported data about their facilities, 46% leased or rented their facilities. Eleven schools (33%) used a donated facility or a facility owned by the chartering district. The remaining 10 schools (21%) owned their facilities. The percentage of the charter schools' total budget that was allocated to rent ranged from 33% to 5%.

Federal Start-Up and Dissemination Grants. In FY 2000, Colorado received \$3.5 million from the U. S. Department of Education for start-up/implementation grants and \$350,000 for dissemination activities to support charter schools in Colorado. Of this total award, the Colorado Department of Education applied approximately \$175,000 (5%) for state-level administrative costs. The rest of the funds were awarded to charter schools through a competitive grant process.

Flow-Through of Federal and State Funds by Chartering Districts. The Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998 requires states and local school districts to take steps necessary to assure that all charter schools have equal access to federal funds for which they qualify. Data compiled for this study suggest there is still work to be done in communicating to both charter schools and their chartering districts the intent and requirements of this law. Respondents from over half of the charter schools in this study indicated that they did not have access to Title I, II, IV, VI, and VI-D monies, that they were unaware of their districts' *IASA Consolidated Federal Programs Application*, and that they were unaware of the CDE-funded Regional Centers. A concerted effort needs to be made on the part of CDE, districts, and charter schools to address these issues.

Lessons Learned and Ongoing Technical Assistance Needs

The full report presents the perspectives of charter school operators related to lessons learned and ongoing technical assistance needs. The lessons most frequently cited by the respondents concerned the quality of planning, staying on mission, and delineating clear lines of responsibility between the governing board and school staff and administration. The major technical assistance need of the charter schools in this study related to access to and application of technology.

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Colorado Charter Schools Act requires the State Board of Education to “report on the success or failure of charter schools, their relationships to other school reform efforts and suggested changes in state law necessary to strengthen or change the charter school program.”¹

The State of Charter Schools in Colorado: 1999-2000 responds to this mandate by reporting and analyzing information from the 1999-2000 school year related to:

- The characteristics of charter schools, their students and teachers
- The governance of charter schools
- Efforts of charter schools to create safe and civil learning environments
- Student achievement and school performance in charter schools
- Waivers of state law granted to charter schools
- Various funding issues related to charter schools
- Lessons learned by charter schools
- Ongoing technical assistance needs of charter schools.

This is the fifth annual report released by the Colorado Department of Education (“CDE”) since the Colorado Charter Schools Act became law. The methodology and framework applied to the evaluation process have remained the same over the years to provide continuity. A key element of this framework has been an effort to describe the performance of each charter school included in the study on an individual basis, using the school’s own performance goals as the benchmark for determining success. This approach was devised because, before the advent of the Colorado Student Assessment Program, there was no common assessment tool that allowed comparisons of performance among charter schools or between charter schools and other public schools. (Even as the CSAP expanded in recent years, however, CDE continued to include this methodology in the annual evaluation study because the individual school profiles were of interest and use to potential charter school operators and to families exploring charter school options.)

Another key consideration in the design of the evaluation methodology was recognition that Colorado’s charter school model places primary accountability for charter school performance on the chartering district, rather than on the state. Accordingly, this state level review has been limited to a paper review of data regularly maintained by the charter schools and reported to their stakeholders and/or to their chartering district.

Over the past five years, the state’s education policy infrastructure has changed significantly. First, the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) has expanded to cover more subjects and grades. As a result, today there is a much broader basis for comparing the performance of charter schools to non-charter public schools than when the framework for this statewide evaluation was initially designed. Second, the passage of Senate Bill 00-186 created a new approach to public school accountability – an annual performance report that rates all public schools on designated performance criteria. Future evaluations of Colorado charter schools will be organized around these new accountability tools.

Charter Schools Included in the 1999-2000 Study

During the 1999-2000 school year, 69 charter schools in Colorado served 17,822 students, an increase of 23% from the total number of students served in the fall of 1998. During the 1999-2000 school year charter schools served 2.5% of the total public school enrollment and represented 4.3% of all Colorado public schools. In 1998-99, the most recent year for which national data is available, of all the states with charter legislation in effect, only Arizona and the District of Columbia served a higher percentage of students enrolled in charter schools than Colorado.²

This report covers a subset of the total number of charter schools presently in operation: those 57 schools that had been operating for at least two years as of the end of the 1999-2000 school year. The report does not include schools in their first year of operation in order to give the schools adequate time to establish a performance baseline from which to measure their progress.

The 57 charter schools in this report served 16,358 students during the 1999-2000 school year, representing 2.3% of the state's public school enrollment. These 57 charter schools represented 3.6% of all Colorado public schools in 1999-2000. Of the 57 schools included in this report, two opened in 1993, 11 opened in 1994, 10 opened in 1995, seven opened in 1996, 19 opened in 1997 and eight opened in 1998. These 57 schools are:

- Academy Charter School (Douglas County School District, 1993)
- Academy of Charter Schools (Adams 12 Five Star School District, 1994)
- Alta Vista Charter School (Lamar School District, 1998)
- Aspen/Carbondale Community School (Roaring Fork School District, 1995)
- Battle Rock Charter School (Montezuma-Cortez School District, 1994)
- Boulder Preparatory Charter High School (Boulder Valley School District, 1997)
- Brighton Charter School (Brighton School District, 1998)
- Center for Discovery Learning (Jefferson County School District, 1994)
- Cherry Creek Academy (Cherry Creek School District, 1995)
- Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy (Cheyenne Mountain School District, 1995)
- CIVA Charter High School (Colorado Springs District 11, 1997)
- The Classical Academy (Academy School District, 1997)
- Collegiate Academy of Colorado (Jefferson County School District, 1994)
- Colorado High School (Greeley School District 6, 1998)
- Community of Learners Charter School (Durango School District 9-R, 1994)
- Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11, 1995)
- Compass Montessori School (Jefferson County School District, 1998)
- Connect Charter School (Pueblo School District 70, 1993)
- Core Knowledge Charter School (Douglas County Scholl District, 1994)
- Crestone Charter School (Moffat Consolidated School District, 1995)
- Crown Pointe Academy (Westminster District 50, 1997)
- DCS Montessori Charter School (Douglas County School District, 1997)
- Eagle County Charter School (Eagle County School District, 1994)
- Elbert County Charter School (Elizabeth School District, 1997)
- Excel Academy (Jefferson County School District, 1995)
- The EXCEL School (Durango School District 9-R, 1994)

- Globe Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11, 1995)
- Horizons Alternative School (Boulder Valley School District, 1997)
- Frontier Academy (Greeley School District 6, 1997)
- Jefferson Academy (Jefferson County School District, 1994)
- Lake George Charter School (Park School District RE-2, 1996)
- Liberty Common School (Poudre School District, 1997)
- Lincoln Academy (Jefferson County School District, 1997)
- Littleton Academy (Littleton School District, 1996)
- Littleton Preparatory Charter School (Littleton School District, 1998)
- Magnet School of the Deaf (Jefferson County School District, 1997)
- Marble Charter School (Gunnison-Watershed School District, 1995)
- Montessori Peaks Academy (Jefferson County School District, 1997)
- Monument Charter Academy (Lewis Palmer School District, 1996)
- Mountain View Core Knowledge Charter School (Canon City School District, 1996)
- The Odyssey School (Denver Public Schools, 1998)
- Passage Charter School (Montrose County School District, 1998)
- Pinnacle Charter School (Adams 12 Five Star School District 1997)
- Pioneer Charter School (Denver Public Schools, 1997)
- Platte River Academy Charter School (Douglas County School District, 1997)
- Prairie Creeks Charter School (Strasburg School District, 1997)
- P.S. 1 (Denver Public Schools, 1995)
- Pueblo School for the Arts & Sciences (Pueblo School District, 1994)
- Renaissance Charter School (Douglas County School District, 1995)
- Roosevelt/Edison – Emerson Charter School (Colorado Springs School District 11, 1996)
- Stargate (Adams 12 Five Star School District, 1994)
- Summit Middle School (Boulder Valley School District, 1997)
- Swallows Charter Academy (Pueblo School District 70, 1996)
- Twin Peaks Charter Academy (St. Vrain School District, 1997)
- Union Colony Preparatory School (Greeley School District 6, 1997)
- Wyatt-Edison Charter School (Denver Public Schools, 1998)
- Youth & Family Academy (Pueblo School District 60, 1997)

Three schools (5.2% of the total) -- Colorado High School, Mountain View Core Knowledge, Monument Charter School -- did not complete and return any of the materials sent to them by CDE in connection with this study. For these schools, this report contains only demographic data regularly maintained by the Colorado Department of Education, and, where applicable, Colorado Student Assessment (CSAP) scores.

Many of the schools that submitted completed evaluation materials, however, did not report data related to all the issues addressed in this report. Therefore, the number of schools reporting with respect to specific characteristics or performance issues varies from 57 schools to 37 schools, depending on the source of the data and the response rate of the charter schools.

Methodology

This descriptive evaluation rests on a paper review of student achievement and school performance data regularly maintained by the charter schools. The evaluation did not involve site visits to the schools and did not require supplemental data collection by the schools. CDE asked the charter schools to report these data by completing a data matrix.

This evaluation approach is consistent with the Colorado Charter Schools Act, which places accountability for charter schools squarely with their chartering districts, and not with the state. However, it has limitations. There are effective and promising practices going on in individual charter schools that cannot be captured by an evaluation of this sort. Similarly, there may be significant issues of concerns in individual charter schools that are not identified through a paper review.

The data analyzed in this report was obtained from the following sources:

- Charter school administrators completed a data matrix/school profile to provide 1999-2000 information on the school's educational program; parent involvement; tenure, salary and experience of the lead administrator; governance; the school's purchase of services from the chartering district and third parties, and student achievement and school performance measures.
- Charter school administrators completed the 2000 Charter Schools Evaluation Questionnaire, responding to open-ended questions related to issues of interest to CDE.
- The Colorado Department of Education, Research and Evaluation Unit, provided data regarding student enrollment, school demographics, and suspension and expulsion rates. The data regarding student enrollment and student demographics were reported by the charter schools (through their chartering districts) on the October "count day" in 1999. The suspension and expulsion data was reported to CDE at the end of the 1999-2000 school year, again through the chartering districts.
- The Colorado Department of Education, Research and Evaluation Unit, provided data on administrator education and experience, and on teacher salary, education and experience. The charter schools reported these data to CDE through their chartering school districts.
- The Colorado Department of Education, Assessment Unit, provided data related to the performance of charter school and other public schools on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP).

PART TWO

THE COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT

Purpose

The Colorado Charter Schools Act declares that its purpose is to:

- Improve pupil learning by creating schools with high, rigorous standards for pupil performance,
- Increase learning opportunities for all students, especially those with low levels of academic achievement,
- Encourage diverse approaches to education,
- Allow the development of innovative forms of measuring student performance,
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers,
- Provide parents and pupils with increased educational choice,
- Encourage parental involvement in public schools, and
- Hold charter schools accountable for meeting state board and school district content standards and to provide charter schools with a method to change accountability systems.³

General Provisions

Charter schools are public, nonsectarian, non-religious, non-home-based schools. Charter schools operate “within” the districts that grant their charters and are accountable to the chartering district’s board of education. Charter schools are subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special educational services. Charter schools must be open to any child who resides within the school district, but they are not required to alter the structure or arrangement of their facilities except as required by state or federal law. A majority of the charter school’s students must live in the chartering district or contiguous districts.⁴

Charter schools are administered by governing bodies as described in the charter application. Charter schools may organize as nonprofit corporations while retaining their status as public schools, but are not required to do so. Charter schools are considered governmental entities for purposes of tax-exempt financing. A charter school and the local board of education may agree to extend the length of the charter beyond five years for the terms of enhancing the terms of any lease or financial obligation.⁵

Charter schools may not charge tuition for K-12 programs and services, but may charge for before- and after-school services or pre-kindergarten classes.⁶

Charter schools operate free from school district policies and state laws and regulations as specified in their charter contracts. Local boards of education may waive the application of their regulations without seeking approval of the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education may waive state statutory requirements and rules promulgated by the state board.⁷

Charter schools are responsible for their own operations, including preparation of budgets, contracting for services and personnel matters. Charter schools may, at their discretion, contract with their chartering districts for the purchase of district services. Authorizing districts are required to provide such services to the charter school at cost.⁸

The Charter School Contracts

The Act contains specific timelines for submission and review of charter applications, which may be waived by mutual agreement between the charter applicant and the chartering district. Charter applications must be filed with the local board of education by October 1 to be eligible for consideration the following school year. If an application is incomplete, the board will request the necessary information from the charter applicant. The school district's accountability committee reviews applications before they are considered by the board of education. The accountability committee must include one person with demonstrated knowledge of charter schools and one parent or guardian of a child enrolled in a charter school in the district. The local board is required to hold community meetings on the proposed charter, after which the board must rule on the application within 75 days. The contract between the charter school and the school district must be finalized within 90 days of the time the board of education approves an application. The charter applicant and the local board may jointly waive these timelines. If the local board denies the application or imposes unacceptable conditions on the application, the applicant may appeal to the State Board of Education.⁹

The approved charter application serves as the basis for a contract between a charter school and the board of education of its chartering district. The contract between the charter school and the district must reflect all agreements regarding the waiver of school district policies and requests for waivers from state regulations and statutes. Within ten days after the contract is approved by the local board of education, the local school board will deliver any request for release from state statutes and regulations to the state board. Within 45 days after a request is received, the state board will grant or deny the request. Denials must be made in writing. If the local board of education and the charter school do not receive notice of the state board's decision within 45 days after submittal of the request for release, the request shall be deemed granted.¹⁰

The charter application must specify:

- A mission statement, goals, objectives and performance goals for students in the school.
- Evidence that an adequate number of parents, teachers and students support the formation of the charter school.
- A detailed description of the school's educational program, pupil performance standards and curriculum, which must meet or exceed any content standards adopted by the school district in which the charter school is located, and which must be designed to enable each student to achieve the standards.
- A description of the charter school's plan for evaluating student performance, including the types of assessments and a timeline for meeting the school's performance goals.
- Evidence that the charter school's plan is economically sound for both the charter school and the chartering district, a proposed budget and a description of the annual audit process.
- A description of the governance and operation of the charter school.
- An explanation of the relationships that will exist between the proposed charter school and its employees.

- The employment policies of the school.
- An agreement between the parties regarding their respective legal liability and applicable insurance coverage.
- A description of how the charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of its students.
- A description of the school's enrollment policy.
- A third-party dispute resolution process to resolve disputes that may arise concerning the implementation of the charter contract. If there is no provision in the contract, the Colorado Department of Education provides dispute resolution services. If either party refuses to participate in this process, the other party may appeal to the State Board of Education.¹¹

Private or nonpublic home-based educational programs cannot be converted into public schools.¹²

A charter applicant is not required to provide personal identifying information concerning any parent, teacher or perspective pupil prior to the time that the charter is approved and the teacher is actually hired or the pupil is actually enrolled.¹³

The Appeal Process

The State Board of Education may review decisions of any local board of education concerning charter schools upon receipt of a notice of appeal or upon its own motion.¹⁴

The Charter Schools Act requires each charter school and its chartering district to agree on a third-party dispute resolution process to resolve disagreements that may arise concerning implementation of the charter contract. If the charter contract does not specify a dispute resolution process, the Colorado Department of Education provides dispute resolution services. If either party refuses to participate in this process, the other party may appeal to the State Board of Education.¹⁵

Under the Act's appeal procedures, the decision of a local board of education to deny, refuse to renew or revoke a charter or to unilaterally impose conditions that are unacceptable to the charter school or charter applicant, must be appealed by filing a written notice with the State Board of Education within 30 days of the decision. Within 60 days of receipt of the notice of appeal, the state board is required to hold a public hearing to review the decision of the local board and makes its findings. If the state board finds the local board's decision was contrary to the best interest of the pupils, school district or community, it must remand the decision to the local board with written instructions to reconsider. The instructions will include specific recommendations concerning the matters requiring reconsideration.

The local board must reconsider its decision with 30 days of the remand and make a final decision. If the local board's decision is still adverse, a charter applicant or operator may file a second appeal within 30 days of the final decision. Within 30 days of the receipt of the second notice of appeal, the state board is required to hold a second hearing and determine whether the local board's decision was contrary to the best interests of the pupils, school district or community. If such a finding is made the state board must remand the local board's final decision with instructions to approve the charter application. The state board's decision is final and not subject to appeal.¹⁶

Instead of the first appeal to the state board, the parties may agree to facilitation. Within 30 days after denial, nonrenewal or revocation, the parties may file a notice of facilitation with the state board. Facilitation will continue as long as both parties agree to its use. If one party substantially

rejects facilitation, the local board of education will make a final decision. The charter applicant may file an appeal to the state board.¹⁷

If the notice of appeal, or the motion to review by the state board relates to a local board's decision to grant a charter, the state board will review the appeal within 60 days after receipt of the notice to appeal. The state board will hold a hearing and review the decision of the local board. The standard applied will be whether the decision of the local board was arbitrary and capricious or whether the establishment or operation of the proposed charter school would violate civil rights laws, violate a court order, threaten the health and safety of students in the school district, violate the provisions of the Act regarding the permissible number of charter schools, or be inconsistent with the equitable distribution of charter schools among school districts. If the state board makes such a determination, it will remand such decision to the local board with instructions to deny the charter. The state board's decision is final and not subject to appeal.¹⁸

Charter Revocation and Renewal

With certain exceptions, a new charter may be approved for a period of at least three years but not more than five years and may be renewed for periods not exceeding five years. The charter school must submit a renewal application to the local board no later than December 1 of the year prior to the academic year in which a charter is scheduled to expire. The local board of education is required to rule on the renewal application no later than the following February 1 or a mutually agreed upon date. A renewal application must contain a progress report on the charter school and a financial statement that discloses the costs of operating the charter school.¹⁹

The local board of education may revoke or non-renew a charter for the following reasons:

- The charter school committed a material violation of the conditions, standards or procedures in the charter application.
- The charter school failed to make reasonable progress toward achieving the content or pupil performance standards set for in its application.
- The charter school failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management.
- The charter school violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.²⁰

In addition, the local board of education may non-renew a charter upon a finding that it is not in the best interest of the pupils residing in the district to continue operation of the school. The local board's decision must state its reasons for revoking or not renewing a charter. Any decision not to renew a charter may be appealed.²¹

Employee Options

A teacher employed by a chartering district who is hired by a charter school is considered to be on a one-year leave of absence from the chartering district. The teacher and the district may agree to renew the leave for two additional one-year periods. At the end of this period, the district has the authority to determine the relationship between it and the teacher and provide notice to the teacher. The local board of education also has the authority to determine the status of school district employees who worked in charter schools and later seek re-employment with the district. Employees of charter schools are members of the Colorado Public Employee Retirement Association or the Denver Public Schools' Retirement Association.²²

Finance and Facility Issues

Facilities issues generally are left to negotiations between the charter school and its chartering district. The Act provides that a charter school may negotiate and contract with a school district, the governing body of a state college or university or any third party for the use of a school building or grounds. The Act prohibits chartering districts from charging rent to charter schools occupying district-owned facilities.²³ Recent amendments to the Act also make clear that charter schools may issue financial obligations that are exempt from state and federal income tax.²⁴

Pupils enrolled in a charter school are included in the pupil enrollment of the chartering school district. The district receives full funding under the School Finance Act for each charter school student in the district. The Act requires the charter school to negotiate resources with its chartering district.²⁵ Historically, a charter school's financing has been based upon the chartering district's "per pupil operating revenues" (PPOR), which in turn is based upon the chartering district's per pupil revenues (PPR). A district's PPR results when the district's total program, as calculated under the School Finance Act, is divided by the district's total funded pupil count for the year. The PPOR results when the "mandatory transfer" to capital and insurance reserve funds required by law is subtracted from the PPR.

In the original 1993 Act, the district and charter school were to "begin discussion" on the funding formula in the contract using *80% of the district's PPOR*. This section of the Act was amended in 1999.²⁶ Beginning with the budget year 2000-2001, the charter school and authorizing school district will negotiate funding under the contract at a minimum of *95% of the district PPR* for each pupil enrolled in the charter school. The district may choose to retain up to 5% of the district PPR as payment for the charter school's portion of central administrative overhead costs incurred by the school district.²⁷ The Act specifically defines the cost items that can be included in overhead.²⁸ As part of this new funding formula, the charter school will be required to transfer a specified amount for each student enrolled into accounts that the school can use only for capital reserve and risk management purposes.²⁹

Beginning with the 2000-2001 budget year, each school district must provide federally required educational services to students enrolled in charter schools on the same basis as such services are provided to students enrolled in other public schools in the district. Unless the charter school and the chartering district negotiate an alternate arrangement, the charter school will reimburse the school district (on a per pupil basis) for the costs incurred by the district in providing federally required educational services.³⁰

The charter school can contract with the school district for direct purchase of district services in addition to those included in central administrative overhead. The cost of these services are to be determined by dividing the district's cost by its total enrollment and multiplying this rate times the enrollment of the charter school.³¹

The authorizing school district must direct the proportionate share of state and federal resources generated by students with disabilities (or staff serving them) to the charter school enrolling the students. The proportionate share of moneys generated under other federal and state categorical aid programs also must be directed to charter schools serving students eligible for such aid, as required by the federal Charter School Expansion Act of 1998.³²

PART THREE:

DISPOSITION OF APPEALS BY STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Colorado Charter Schools Act's provision for the appeal of local board decisions to the State Board of Education is described in Part Two of this report.

In House Bill 99-1274, the General Assembly clarified its intent that the State Board of Education has the authority to make a final decision on contract disputes between charter schools and their school districts. In *Board of Education School District No. 1 v. Booth*,³³ the Colorado Supreme Court upheld the appeal provision of the Colorado Charter Schools Act. Denver Public Schools had challenged the appeal procedure on the grounds that it violated local control of education as guaranteed in the Colorado Constitution.

As of December 31, 2000, the State Board of Education had disposed of 85 appeals under the Colorado Charter Schools Act. Of this total number, the State Board had:

- Upheld 33 local board of education decisions,
- Remanded 21 decisions back to the local board of education for reconsideration,
- Ordered the establishment of three charter schools,
- Overturned one local board revocation of a charter,
- Vacated five hearings, and
- Dismissed 22 appeals.

PART FOUR

CHARACTERISTICS OF COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS

This section of the report looks at some key characteristics of Colorado charter schools and the students and families they served, in the context of statewide and national data. These data present an overall picture of the charter school program in Colorado during the 1999-2000 school year. It is important to note, however, that the charter schools featured in this report were a diverse lot. The range of experience among the charter schools was extremely broad.

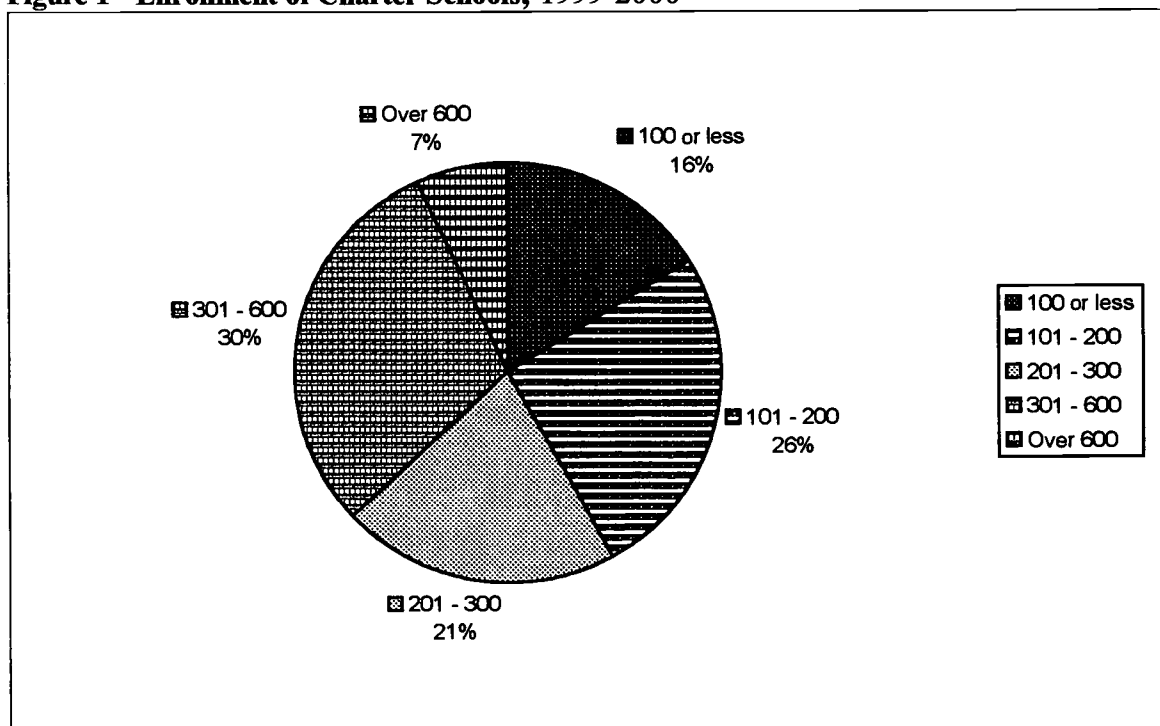
Charter School Size

The charter schools included in this study ranged widely in size, depending on their location, the grade levels served and educational philosophy.

Of the 57 schools in this report:

- 16% (9 schools) served under 100 students,
- 26% (15 schools) served between 101 and 200 students,
- 21% (12 schools) served between 201 and 300 students,
- 30% (17 schools) served between 301 and 600 students, and
- 7% (4 schools) served over 600 students.

Figure 1 - Enrollment of Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education, Fall 1999.

Of the charter schools in this study, 42% enrolled 200 students or less, and only 7% enrolled over 600 students. The number of students enrolled by the charter schools ranged from 1,491 in the Roosevelt Edison-Emerson Charter School³⁴ (Colorado Springs District 11) to 17 students in Marble Charter School (Gunnison Watershed School District). The average enrollment was 286 students. The median enrollment was 229 students.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

In the fall of 1999, approximately 24% of all Colorado public schools served less than 200 students and approximately 21% served over 600 students.

National Charter Schools

The most recent national data available on charter school size is from the 1998-99 school year. The *State of Charter Schools 2000 – Fourth-Year Report* reported that:

- Charter schools tend to enroll, on average, fewer students than in all public schools. During the 1998-99 school year, the median number of students in charter schools was 147, compared to a median of 475 in all public schools.
- In 1998-1999 more than three times as many charter school as compared to other public schools enrolled fewer than 200 students (65% and 17% respectively.)
- Only 8% of charter school enrolled more than 600 students, as opposed to 35% of all public schools. Only 1% of charter schools enrolled more than 1,100 students, as compared to 11% for all public schools.³⁵

Student-to-Teacher Ratio

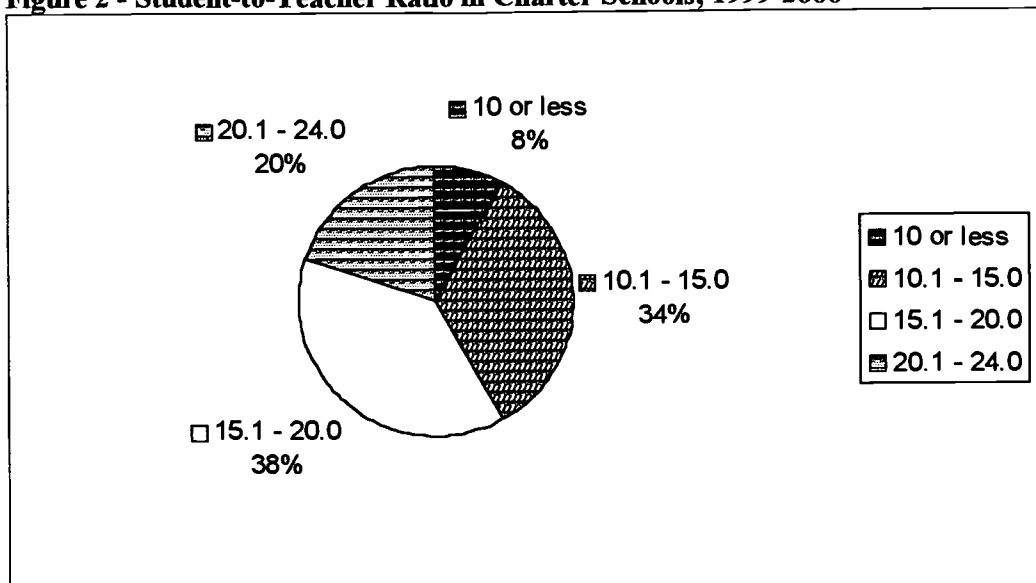
The Colorado Department of Education defines the selected pupil-to-teacher ratio as the ratio of all staff members assigned to professional activities or instructing students in self-contained classrooms or courses. The CDE count therefore includes not only classroom teachers, but also special education teachers and special subject teachers, including music, art, physical education and driver education.

Data related to the 1999-2000 student-to-teacher ratio was available for 50 of the 57 schools included in this report. Twin Peaks Charter Academy and Prairie Creeks Charter School did not report data related to the student-to-teacher ratio to the Colorado Department of Education. Several other schools – Compass Montessori School, Core Knowledge Charter School, DCS Montessori Charter School, Elbert County Charter School and P.S. 1 -- did not report this data completely, resulting in a student-to-teacher ratio that clearly was not an accurate reflection of the schools' staffing.³⁶

Of the 50 charter schools for which data were available:

- 8% (4 schools) had a student-teacher ratio of 10.0 less,
- 34% (17 schools) had a student-teacher ratio of 10.0 to 15.0,
- 38% (19 schools) had a student-teacher ratio of 15.1 to 20.0, and
- 20% (10 schools) had a student-teacher ratio of 20.1 to 24.0²⁷

Figure 2 - Student-to-Teacher Ratio in Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education, Fall 1999.

The student-to-teacher ratios for charter schools in this study ranged from 24.0 at Pioneer Charter School to 5.0 at the Magnet School of the Deaf. The average student-to-teacher ratio was 16.4. The median student-to-teacher ratio of the charter schools was 16.7.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

In the fall of 1999-2000, Colorado's student-to-teacher ratio was 17.4.

National Charter Schools

In 1998-99, the most recent year for which national data is available, most charter schools had a slightly lower teacher to student ratio than did all public schools in the 27 charter states. The median student to teacher ratio was 16.0 for charter schools compared to 17.2 for all public schools.³⁷

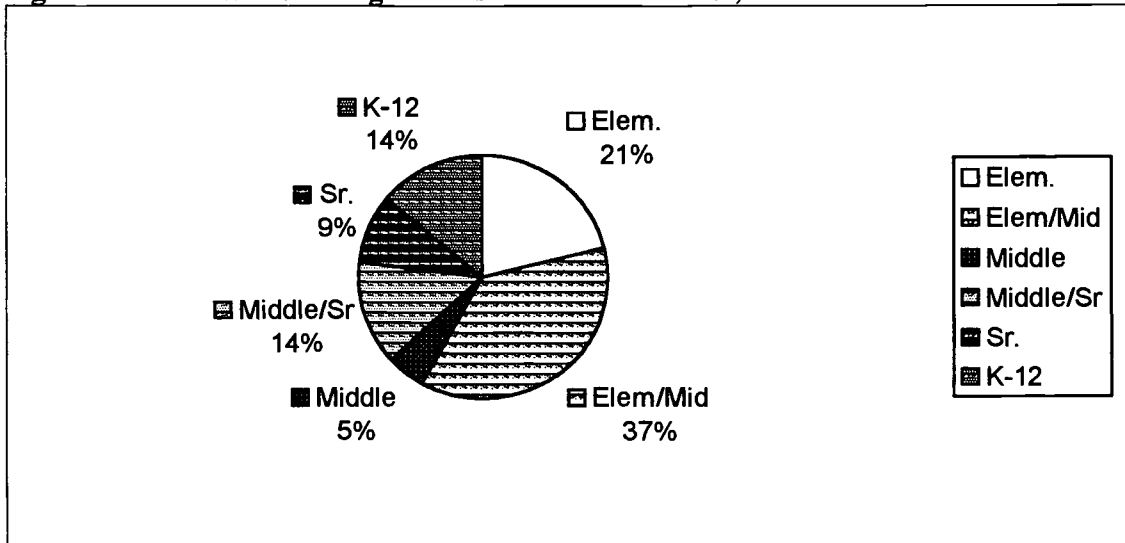
Grade Level Configuration

Less than half of the charter schools in this report (23 schools or 40%) fit the traditional grade-level configuration of elementary, middle or high schools. Most of the charter schools offered a program that served students continuously from elementary through middle school, or from middle school through secondary school, or throughout their public school experience.

1999-2000 data on grade levels was available for all 57 schools included in this report. Of these:

- 21% (12 schools) were elementary schools³⁸,
- 37% (21 schools) were K-7 or K- 8 schools,
- 5% (3 schools) were middle schools or junior high schools,
- 14% (8 schools) were middle/high schools,
- 9% (5 schools) were high schools, and
- 14% (8 schools) were K - 12 schools.

Figure 3 - Grade Level Configurations of Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education, Fall 1999

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

Charter schools were much more likely than other public schools in Colorado to combine elementary and middle school grade levels, middle and secondary school grades levels, and to offer an educational program that serves students in grades K-12. In Colorado, only about 15% of public schools did not fit the traditional grade-level configuration of elementary, middle or secondary schools. In contrast, 60% of the charter schools in the report offered programs that fell outside of traditional grade-level configurations.

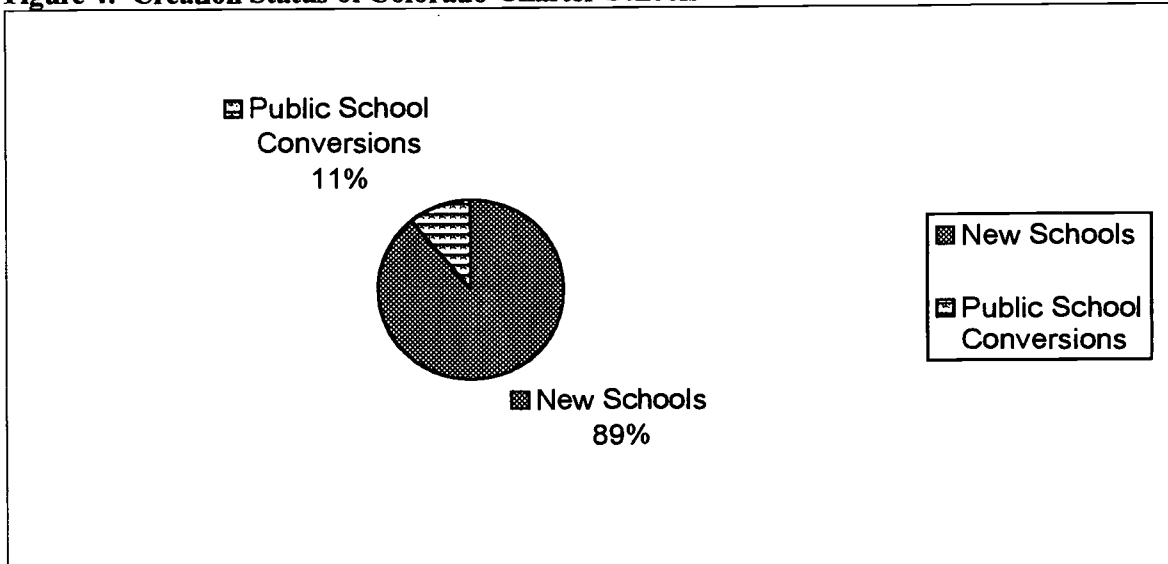
National Charter Schools

In 1998-99, the most recent data available, about one half (52%) of all charter schools were structured according to a traditional grade level configuration of elementary, middle, or high school as compared to more than three-fourths (78%) of all public schools in the 27 charter states (in 1997-98).

Creation Status of Charter Schools

Fifty-one of the 57 schools (89%) included in this report were new schools created through operation of the Colorado Charter Schools Act. The remaining six schools (11%) were converted public schools. Colorado law does not allow the conversion of private schools into charter schools.

Figure 4: Creation Status of Colorado Charter Schools



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education

POINTS OF REFERENCE

National Charter Schools

On a national level, approximately 72% of all charter schools are newly created schools, 18% are pre-existing public schools and 10% are pre-existing private schools.³⁹

Educational Program

During the 1999-2000 school year, 35 of the 57 schools (61%) in the report used a recognized national reform model as the foundation of their educational program. These reform models included:

Core Knowledge - 23 schools:

- Academy Charter School (Douglas County School District),
- Academy of Charter Schools (Adams 12 Five Star School District),
- Alta Vista Charter School (Lamar School District),
- Brighton Charter School (Brighton School District)
- Cherry Creek Academy (Cherry Creek School District),
- Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy (Cheyenne Mountain School District),
- The Classical Academy (Academy School District 20),
- Collegiate Academy of Colorado (Jefferson County School District)

- Core Knowledge Charter School (Douglas County School District),
- Crown Pointe Academy (Westminster School District 50),
- Elbert County Charter School (Elizabeth School District),
- Frontier Academy (Greeley School District 6)
- Jefferson Academy (Jefferson County School District),
- Liberty Common School (Poudre School District),
- Lincoln Academy (Jefferson County School District),
- Littleton Academy (Littleton School District),
- Littleton Preparatory Charter School (Littleton School District)
- Monument Charter Academy (Lewis Palmer School District),
- Mountain View Core Knowledge Charter School (Canon City School District),
- Pinnacle Charter Academy (Adams 12 Five Star School District),
- Platte River Academy Charter School (Douglas County Charter School),
- Swallows Charter Academy (Pueblo School District 70), and
- Twin Peaks Charter Academy (St. Vrain School District).

The cohort of charter schools using the Core Knowledge reform model is notable both for its size (representing 40% of all schools in this report) and for its dominance as a reform model used by charter schools. Of the schools included in this report, 23 use the Core Knowledge reform model, compared to three schools for the reform model used by the second highest number of charter schools.

Core Knowledge is an approach to curriculum based on the work of E.D.Hirsch, Jr. The focus of the Core Knowledge approach is on teaching a common core of concepts, skills and knowledge that characterize a “culturally literate” and educated individual. Core Knowledge is based on the principle that the grasp of a specific and shared body of knowledge will help students establish strong foundations for higher levels of learning. Developed through research examining successful national and local core curricula and through consultation with education experts in each subject area, the Core Knowledge Sequence provides a consensus-based model of specific content guidelines for students in the elementary grades. It offers a progression of detailed grade-by-grade topics of knowledge in history, geography, mathematics, science, language arts, and fine arts, so that students build on knowledge from year to year in grades K-8. Instructional strategies are left to the discretion of teachers. The Core Knowledge sequence typically comprises 50% of schools’ curriculum; the other 50% allow schools to meet state and local requirements and teachers to contribute personal strengths. Parent involvement and consensus building contribute to the success of the Core Knowledge Sequence.⁴⁰

Montessori - three schools:

- Compass Montessori School (Jefferson County School District)
- DCS Montessori Charter School (Douglas County School District)
- Montessori Peaks Academy (Jefferson County School District).

Montessori is a comprehensive educational approach from birth through adolescence based on the observation of children’s needs. It incorporates an understanding of children’s natural learning tendencies as they unfold in “prepared environments” for multi-age groups (0-3, 3-6, 3-9, 9-12 and 12-14). The Montessori environment contains specially designed manipulative “materials for development” that invite children to engage in learning activities of their own individual choice. Under the guidance of a trained teacher, children learn by making discoveries with the materials,

thus cultivating concentration, motivation, self-discipline and love of learning. The curriculum is interdisciplinary and interactive. In a Montessori classroom, independent activity constitutes about 80% of the work while teacher-directed activity accounts for the remaining 20%. The special environments also offer practical occasions for development of social relationships through free interaction. The materials themselves invite activity and are self-correcting. The child solves problems independently, building self-confidence, analytical thinking and the satisfaction that comes from accomplishment.⁴¹

The Edison Project – two schools:

- Roosevelt Edison Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)
- Wyatt-Edison Charter School (Denver Public Schools)

The Edison Project is a privately sponsored effort to create innovative schools that operate at current public school spending levels and that provide all students with an education that is rooted in democratic values, that is academically excellent and that prepares them for productive lives. The design is composed of ten integral parts:

1. Schools Organized for Every Student's Success: small schools within schools;
2. Better Use of Time: longer school day and year;
3. Rich and Challenging Curriculum: world class standards; education in humanities and arts, mathematics and science, ethics and practical skills, health and fitness (Edison uses the University of Chicago School Mathematics Program and the Success for All reading program).
4. Teaching Methods that Motivate: multiple instruction techniques;
5. Careful Assessment that Provides Real Accountability: tied to standards; multiple assessment tools;
6. A Professional Environment for Teachers : a portable computer for every teacher; extensive professional development;
7. Technology for an Information Age: a computer in every student's home; highly equipped schools;
8. New Partnership with Parents: regular communication between teachers and parents;
9. Schools Tailored to Your Community: curriculum tailored to meet local needs; and
10. Backed by a System That Serves: support, guidance and resources from the Edison national headquarters.⁴²

Expeditionary Learning – two schools:

- The Odyssey School (Denver Public Schools)
- Renaissance Charter School (Douglas County School District)

Expeditionary Learning is based on the principles of Outward Bound. Curriculum, instruction, assessment, school culture and school structures are organized around producing high quality student work in learning expeditions- long term, in-depth investigations of themes or topics that engage students in the classroom and in the wider world through authentic projects, fieldwork and services.

Learning expeditions are designed with clear learning goals that are aligned with district and state standards. Ongoing assessment is woven throughout each learning expedition, pushing students to higher levels of performance. Teachers work collaboratively in teams, with regular common planning time to plan interdisciplinary expeditions, critique each other's expedition plans and

reflect on student work and teacher practices to improve curriculum and instruction. To strengthen relationships in the classroom, students stay with the same teacher or team of teachers for more than one year. Teachers and school leaders participate in a sequence of professional development activities.⁴³

Paideia - two schools:

- Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)
- Pueblo School for the Arts and Sciences (Pueblo District 60).

Paideia's purpose is to prepare each student for earning a living, being a citizen of this county and the world and pursuing life-long learning. The model is based on the work of Mortimer Adler. Paideia educators believe that high academic achievement is expected of all students and that it is society's duty to provide that opportunity. A fundamental value in this model is that universal, high quality education is essential to democracy. Instructional goals are based on acquisition of knowledge, development of intellectual skills, and enlarged understanding of ideas and values. These are addressed through three instructional approaches:

- didactic instruction: teacher lecturing which provides opportunities for "acquisition of knowledge";
- coaching: one-on-one instruction from the teacher, which takes place while students work independently at their own level and pace; and
- small group seminars: which usually use the Socratic method of questioning to explore issues in greater depth.

Schoolwide restructuring is necessary to fully implement all three instructional pieces, as Socratic seminars require longer class periods, while coaching may call for smaller classes enabling teachers to spend more time with individuals. The National Paideia Center advocates schools' using locally developed standards.⁴⁴

William Glasser's Quality School Network - one school:

- Horizons Alternative School (Boulder Valley School District).

The Coalition of Essential Schools - one school:

- The CONNECT Charter School (Pueblo School District 70).

The remainder of the schools included in this study offered educational programs that combined elements of various reform models and practices. While subsets of this remainder shared common practices and characteristics, they could not be grouped into identifiable categories for purposes of comparing the relative performance of different reform models.

The diversity of the educational approaches being offered by Colorado charter schools is reflected in Table 1, which identifies the distinctive components of their programs. This diversity was responsive to the intent of the Colorado Charter Schools Act to offer new educational options to students and their parents.

The determination of whether the educational programs offered by the charter schools are innovative, or more innovative than those offered in conventional public schools, is ultimately a matter of context. Innovation is in the eye of the beholder. Routine instructional practices in some

schools may be highly inventive in others. Moreover, the same reform strategy can be expressed very distinctly in different schools, depending on the school's culture and policy context and on the level of support for reform. In other words, innovation can be a product of the duration and intensity of educational practices as well as of their content.

Table 1: Overview of Distinctive Components of Educational Programs - Schools Opened Fall 1993, Fall 1994

Distinctive Components of Educational Program	Academy Charter School	Academy of Charter Schools	Battle Rock	Center for Discovery Learning	College	Comm of Learners	CON-NECT	Core Knowledge	Eagle	The EXCL School	Jefferson Academy	PSAS	Stargate
Thematic/Interdisciplinary Instruction	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Technology as a major focus	X		X				X	X	X	X	X	X	
Core Knowledge curriculum	X	X			X				X		X		
Community as classroom			X	X		X				X		X	X
Individualized learning plans	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Multi-age groupings			X	X		X	X			X		X	X
Focus on specific subject matter (e.g. arts, science/math)				X	X							X	
Character development	X			X	X				X		X		X
Hands-on/Experiential learning	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	
Extended academic day/year				X	X					X		X	
Foreign language instruction at all grades	X	X	X		X		X	X		X		X	X
Block or other non-traditional scheduling	X			X	X	X	X			X		X	X
Year-Round Calendar						X						X	
Community Service/Service Learning			X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X



Table 1 (Continued): Distinctive Components of Educational Programs - Schools Opened Fall 1995

Distinctive Components of Educational Program	Aspen/Carbondale	Cherry Creek Academy	Cheyenne Mountain	Community Prep	Crestone Charter	Excel Academy	GLOBE Charter	Marble Charter	P.S.1	Renaissance
Thematic/Interdisciplinary Instruction	X			X	X		X	X	X	X
Technology as a major focus				X	X					
Core Knowledge curriculum		X	X							
Community as classroom	X						X	X	X	
Individualized learning plans	X			X	X		X	X	X	X
Multi-age groupings	X			X	X		X	X	X	X
Focus on specific subject matter (e.g. arts, science/math)							X			
Character development	X	X					X		X	
Hands-on/Experiential learning	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X
Extended academic day/year		X								
Foreign language instruction at all grades	X						X			X
Block or other non-traditional scheduling							X		X	
Year-Round Calendar						X			X	X
Community Service/Service Learning	X			X	X		X	X	X	X

Table 1 Continued: Distinctive Components of Educational Programs - Schools Opened Fall 1996

Distinctive Components of Educational Program	Lake George	Littleton Academy	Monument Charter Academy	Mt. View Core Know.	Roosevelt-Edison	Summit Middle School	Swallows Academy
Thematic/Interdisciplinary instruction	X			X	X		
Technology as a major focus					X	X	
Core Knowledge curriculum		X	X	X			X
Community as classroom	X				X		
Individualized learning plans	X	X	X	X	X		
Multi-age groupings	X				X	X	
Focus on specific subject matter (e.g. arts, science/math)						X	
Character development					X	X	X
Hands-on/experiential learning	X			X	X		
Extended academic day/year					X		
Foreign language instruction at all grades		X		X	X	X	
Block or other non-traditional scheduling							
Year-Round Calendar							
Community Service/Service Learning							

Table 1 Continued: Distinctive Components of Educational Programs - Schools Opened Fall 1997

Distinctive Components of Educational Program	Boadler Prep	CTVA Charter	Classical Academy	Crown Pointe	DCS Montessori	Ebert County	Frontier Academy	Horizons Alternative	Liberty Common School
Thematic/Interdisciplinary Instruction								X	
Technology as a major focus	X					X		X	
Core K knowledge curriculum			X	X		X	X		X
Community as classroom	X				X			X	
Individualized learning plans	X				X	X	X	X	X
Multi-age groupings	X	X			X	X		X	
Focus on specific subject matter (e.g. arts, science/math)		X							
Character development	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hands-on/Experiential learning	X	X	X		X			X	X
Extended academic day/year	X				X				X
Foreign language instruction at all grades			X	X	X	X		X	X
Block or other non-traditional scheduling	X				X			X	X
Year-Round Calendar	X								
Community Service/Service Learning	X	X				X	X	X	

Table 1 Continued: Distinctive Components of Educational Programs - Schools Opened Fall 1997

Distinctive Components of Educational Program	Lincoln Academy	Magnat School Deaf	Montessori Peaks	Plumcote	Pioneer	Platte River Academy	Prairie Creeks	Twin Peaks	Union Colony	Youth/Family Academy
Thematic/Interdisciplinary Instruction		X		X	X	X			X	
Technology as a major focus			X		X	X	X			
Core Knowledge curriculum	X			X		X		X		
Community as classroom										
Individualized learning plans		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Multi-age groupings		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Focus on specific subject matter (e.g. arts, science/math)		X			X					
Character development		X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Hands-on/Experiential learning		X	X			X				X
Extended academic day/year			X		X	X				
Foreign language instruction at all grades		X	X			X		X	X	
Block or other non-traditional scheduling		X		X		X	X		X	
Year-Round Calendar										
Community Service/Service Learning					X	X		X		

Table 1 Continued: Distinctive Components of Educational Programs - Schools Opened Fall 1998

Distinctive Components of Educational Program	Alta Vista Charter	Brighton Charter	Colorado High School	Compass Montessori	Littleton Preparatory	The Odyssey School	Passage Charter School	Wyatt-Edison Charter
Thematic/Interdisciplinary Instruction				X		X	X	
Technology as a major focus		X						X
Core Knowledge curriculum	X	X			X			
Community as classroom				X		X	X	
Individualized learning plans	X			X			X	
Multi-age groupings	X	X		X		X		
Focus on specific subject matter (e.g. arts, science/math)		X		X			X	
Character development		X		X		X		X
Hands-on/experiential learning				X		X	X	
Extended academic day/year		X					X	X
Foreign language instruction at all grades								X
Block or other non-traditional scheduling		X		X	X		X	
Year-Round Calendar							X	
Community Service/Service Learning				X			X	

The Delivery of Special Education Services in Charter Schools

As public schools, charter schools must open their enrollment to any student who lives within the authorizing school district, and must provide appropriate services as needed by students with disabilities. Charter schools are not required to make alterations in the structure of their facility, except as may be required by state or federal law.⁴⁵

Charter schools participating in this study were asked to report information about the way they work with their authorizing district to serve the students with disabilities enrolled in their schools and the advantages and disadvantages of the approach they used. Schools also were asked to provide information about how their staff received training in emerging special education issues and the requirements of state and federal law related to serving students with disabilities.

As a result of the great interest in this issue, CDE has commissioned Debora Sheffel, an Associate Professor of special education at the University of Northern Colorado, to develop an in-depth questionnaire on the delivery of special education services in Colorado charter schools. The questionnaire will be sent to charter school directors and special education directors in chartering school districts. Dr. Sheffel's report will be published later this year.

Of the 57 schools in this study, 42 provided information about the delivery of special education services to students with disabilities.

- In 48% (20 schools) the chartering district had primary responsibility for delivery of special education services,
- In 38% (16 schools) the charter school and chartering school district shared responsibility for delivery of special education services, and
- In 14% (6 schools) the charter schools had primary responsibility for delivery of special education services.

The charter school responses suggested that there was no single best approach to serving students with disabilities in all charter schools, in terms of either quality or cost. Rather, it was appropriate for each charter school to consider the pros and cons of the delivery options, in light of its size, location, student population, finances, relationship with the chartering district, and other factors. Each charter school balanced its desire for autonomy against the advantages of collaboration (primarily access to the expertise of the chartering district) and weighed its tolerance for risk against the cost of "insuring" (through collaboration with the chartering district) against the potential expense of serving students with severe needs.

CHARTERING DISTRICTS ASSUMED PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY

Under this "insurance model" the charter school paid the chartering district a negotiated fee on a per pupil basis to provide special education services to eligible students as required by law. It appears that chartering districts were increasingly encouraging (or requiring) charter schools to apply this model to the delivery of special education services. The cost varied by district. Several charter school respondents expressed concern about the involuntary nature of their school's participation in this model. Several others expressed concern about the rate charged.

The advantages to this approach cited by the charter schools in this report were:

- The schools felt confident that they were meeting the requirements of the law.
- The school enjoyed the benefit of the district's expertise and access to district services and placements for students with intense needs.
- The school had the assurance of legal protection if parents challenged the services provided.
- The school had predictability in budgeting for special education programming.
- The school did not need to hire its own special education staff.
- The school was able to provide services at a high level of quality.
- The school offered special education programming that was consistent with the programming provided by other public schools in the chartering district.
- The school had access to district-sponsored training and staff development offerings related to special education.

The disadvantages to this approach identified by charter school operators included:

- This approach was potentially more expensive than the other alternatives
- Special education teachers hired by the district but working at the charter school must answer to two "masters."
- In cases where the chartering district provided special education services on an as-needed basis, special education staff were not on-site at all times to serve as a resource to teachers and students.
- The chartering district assigned special education staff to the charter school and the staff did not always share the school's educational philosophy.

CHARTER SCHOOLS AND AUTHORIZING DISTRICT COLLABORATED ON SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

This category embraced a myriad of different collaborations, some very flexible and informal, others more structured and defined. Under this model, the charter schools generally hired and paid for their own special education staff, while the chartering district provided support to school-based staff. Depending on the particular collaboration negotiated in each individual case, district support may have included: staff development services, general information and advice, legal counsel, insurance, participation of district staff in IEP development, district review of placement options for students with disabilities, and services of district specialists (occupational therapy, speech therapy, general health screening, psychologist).

The charter schools that employed this approach identified these advantages:

- The school had the discretion to hire special education staff who understood and supported the school's unique program and philosophy and to assign these staff based on student needs.
- The school's collaboration with the chartering district brought a greater depth of expertise and a broader range of resources to enhance the quality of services for students with disabilities.
- The collaboration allowed the school to balance its interest in autonomy with the benefits of centralized coordination of service to students with disabilities.
- This approach provided an opportunity for interaction and relationship building between the school and its chartering district.
- This approach allowed the charter school to offer integrated services to students with disabilities.
- Special education staff were woven into the fabric of the school.

The charter schools operators identified the following disadvantages of the collaborative approach to the delivery of special education services:

- The collaborative approach involved more administrative time in terms of coordinating the schedules of district and school personnel.
- One respondent noted that the chartering district could use its partnership role in the delivery of special education services to criticize the charter school, rather than to assist.
- One respondent noted that the charter school community often felt that it was the last on the district's list of priorities in terms of receiving services.

CHARTER SCHOOLS ASSUMED PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY

Charter schools in this category hired their own special education staff and/or contracted with third parties for needed specialized services. These staff members were responsible for developing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with disabilities.

The schools that employed this approach during the 1999-2000 school year cited the following advantages:

- This approach was less expensive than paying chartering districts "an insurance premium" for special education services.
- This approach supported increased autonomy from the chartering district.
- School-based planning facilitated the close involvement of parents and implementation of a full inclusion model.
- Contracting with third parties on a needs-basis allowed charter schools to buy services tailored to the individual needs of students with disabilities.
- In inclusive settings, special education teachers were able to work with many students in the classrooms and not just those students on IEPs.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING AVAILABLE TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

Only sixteen charter schools provided information related to how their staff received training on special education issues. It was not clear whether the low response rate indicated that the majority of charter schools did not have access to such training, or simply whether most charter school directors did not complete this subsection of the evaluation questionnaire.

The great majority of charter schools that provided information relative to this issue received training from or participated in professional development opportunities offered by their chartering district. A few of the larger schools hired an outside consultant or attorney to provide training. Several schools also mentioned that their own special education staff provided training on special education issues to other teachers in their school.

Assessment Tools Used by Charter Schools

As public schools, all charter schools were required to administer the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) in the appropriate content areas and grades. During the 1999-2000 school year, the CSAP was administered in 3rd grade for reading, in 4th grade for reading and writing, in 5th grade for math, in 7th grade for reading and writing and in 8th grade for math and science. The CSAP is a standards-based assessment, aligned with the state model content standards.

To supplement the CSAP, the charter schools used a variety of assessments, depending on the school's educational approach and performance goals and the requirements of the chartering district. Assessment experts agree that an assessment program should use an array of tests to measure different dimensions of student learning. No single test can provide a full picture of a student's progress or learning. In this regard, note that charter schools used teacher-produced and informal assessments regularly in the classroom, in addition to the more formal assessments discussed here.

Table 2 provides an overview of the assessment tools used by charter schools during the 1999-2000 school year, organized into three broad categories:

- **Norm-referenced tests** are tests that measure the relative performance of the individual or group by comparison with the performance of other individuals or groups taking the same test. The norm-referenced test used by the most schools in this report was the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), followed by Terra Nova.
- **Criterion-referenced tests** are tests whose scores are interpreted by reference to well-defined domains of content or behaviors, rather than by reference to the performance of some other group.
- **Performance assessments** are tests that measure ability by assessing open-ended responses or by asking the respondent to complete a task, produce a response or demonstrate a skill.

Of the 56 charter schools in this study for which data on assessment tools used were available:

- 84% (47 schools) administered norm-referenced tests,
- 95% (53 schools) administered criterion-referenced tests. This number includes several small schools that administered the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) but could not report the results because fewer than 16 students took the test.
- 54% (30 schools) administered performance assessments.

Fifty-four of the 56 charter schools (96%) reported using more than one assessment. Of these 54 charter schools, 51 schools (94%) used assessment tools drawn from two or more of the broad categories of assessment types. Almost all charter schools administered parent surveys and tracked behavior indicators (student suspension and expulsion rates), as well. These measures are discussed in Part Eleven and Part Ten of this report, respectively.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

National Charter Schools

In 1998-99, nearly every charter school used standardized assessments of student achievement (96%), though a higher percentage of charter schools used norm-referenced assessments (86%) than criterion-referenced assessments (62%). The majority of charter schools also used nonstandardized assessments. Charter schools measured student achievement through student demonstration of their work, student portfolios, and performance assessments. Charter schools also used parent surveys, behavior indicators and students to measure progress toward other school goals.⁴⁶

Table 2: Overview of District/School Assessments Used by Charter Schools that Opened Fall 1993 or 1994

Assessment Tools Used to Measure Student Achievement	Academy Charter School	Academy of Charter	Battle Rock	Center Disc. Learning	Collegiate	Comm of Learners	CON-NECT	Care Knowledge	Eagle	EXCEL School	Jefferson Academy	PSAS	Stargate
Norm-Referenced Assessments													
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)		X	X	X		X				X	X		
California Achievement Test (CAT)													
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills													
Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP)													
Durrell Reading Analysis													
Nelson-Denney Reading Test													
STAR Math and Reading Assessments	X		X										
Terra Nova	X						X	X	X		X	X	
Test of Adult Basic Education													
Tests of Achievement & Proficiency													
Criterion-Referenced Assessments													
Colorado Student Assessment Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stanford Achievement Test													
Stanford Writing/Reading Assessment						X				X			
District Content Standards/Curriculum Assessment			X		X	X			X	X		X	X
Woodcock Johnson									X				
High/Scope Child Observation Record													
Performance Assessments													
Individual Learning Programs	X		X		X	X			X			X	X
Portfolios	X		X	X	X	X						X	X
Student Exhibits			X		X		X		X			X	X

Table 2 (Cont.): Overview of District/School Assessments Used by Charter Schools that Opened Fall 1995

Assessment Tools Used to Measure Student Achievement	Aspen Carbon-dale	Cherry Creek Academy	Cheyenne Mountain	Comml. Prep	Crestone	Excel Academy	GLOBE	Marble	P.S.1	Renaissance
Norm-Referenced Tests										
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)		X				X	X		X	
California Achievement Test (CAT)										
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)										X
Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP)									X	
Durrell Reading Analysis										
Nelson-Denney Reading Test										
STAR Math/Reading Assessments								X		
Terra Nova										X
Test of Adult Basic Education				X						
Tests of Achievement & Proficiency (TAP)				X			X			
Criterion-Referenced Tests										
Colorado Student Assessment Program	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Stanford Achievement Test			X		X					X
Stanford Writing/Reading Assessment										
District Content Standards/Curriculum Assessment		X		X		X	X			
Woodcock Johnson	X								X	
High/Scope Child Observation Record	X									
Performance Assessments										
Individual Learning Programs	X			X	X		X	X	X	
Portfolios	X			X	X		X	X	X	X
Student Exhibits	X			X				X	X	X

Table 2 (Cont.): Overview of District/School Assessments Used by Charter Schools that Opened Fall 1996

Assessment Tools Used to Measure Student Achievement	Lake George	Littleton Academy	Monument Charter School	Mountain View Core Knowledge	Roosevelt-Edison	Summit Middle School	Swallows Academy
Norm-Referenced Tests							
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)		X	X	X	X		
California Achievement Test (CAT)							
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)							
Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP)							
Durrell Reading Analysis							
Nelson-Denney Reading Test							
STAR Math/Reading Assessments							X
Terra Nova	X					X	X
Test of Adult Basic Education							
Tests of Achievement & Proficiency (TAP)							
Criterion-Referenced Tests							
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stanford Achievement Test							X
Stanford Writing/Reading Assessment							
District Content Standards/Curriculum Assessment			X	X	X		
Woodcock Johnson							
High/Scope Child Observation Record							
Performance Assessments							
Individual Learning Programs		X			X		X
Portfolios	X				X		
Student Exhibits	X						

Table 2 (Cont.): Overview of District/School Assessments Used by Charter Schools that Opened Fall 1997

Assessment Tools Used to Measure Student Achievement	Essex Prep	CIVA Charter	Classical Academy	Crowe Pointe Academy	DCS Montessori	Elbert County	Frontier Academy	Horizons	Liberty Common School
Norm-Referenced Tests									
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)			X			X	X		X
California Achievement Test (CAT)									
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)	X							X	
Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP)									
Durrell Reading Analysis									
Nelson-Denney Reading Test									
STAR Math/Reading Assessments				X					
Terra Nova				X					
Test of Adult Basic Education									
Tests of Achievement & Proficiency (TAP)		X	X						
Criterion-Referenced Tests									
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stanford Achievement Test									
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Assessment									
District Content Standards/Curriculum Assessment		X	X						
Woodcock Johnson			X						
High/Scope Child Observation Record									
Performance Assessments									
Individual Learning Programs		X	X						
Portfolios		X		X					
Student Exhibits		X							

Table 2 (Cont.): Overview of District/School Assessments Used by Charter Schools that Opened Fall 1997

Assessment Tools Used to Measure Student Achievement	Liacoin Academy	Magnet School of the Deaf	Montessori Peaks	Pinnacle	Pioneer	Platte River Academy	Prairie Creeks	Twin Peaks	Union Colony	Youth & Family Academy
Norm-Referenced Tests										
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	X		X		X					
California Achievement Test (CAT)										
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)								X		
DALT										
Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP)										
Durrell Reading Analysis										
Nelson-Denney Reading Test										
STAR Math/Reading Assessments						X				X
Terra Nova		X				X		X		X
Test of Adult Basic Education										
Tests of Achievement & Proficiency (TAP)										
Criterion-Referenced Tests										
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Stanford Achievement Test										
Stanford Writing/Reading Assessment										
District Content Standards/Curriculum Assessment			X	X		X	X		X	X
Woodcock Johnson										X
High/Scope Child Observation Record										
Performance Assessments										
Individual Learning Programs		X	X			X				X
Portfolios		X	X			X				
Student Exhibits			X			X				

Table 2 (Cont.): Overview of District/School Assessments Used by Charter Schools that Opened Fall 1998

Assessment Tools Used to Measure Student Achievement	Alta Vista Charter	Brighton Charter	Colorado High School	Compass Montessori	Litleton Preparatory Charter	The Odyssey School	Passage Charter	Wyatt-Edison Charter
Norm-Referenced Tests								
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	X			X	X	X		X
California Achievement Test (CAT)								
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)								
Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP)								
Durrell Reading Analysis								
Nelson-Denney Reading Test								
STAR Math/Reading Assessments		X						
Terra Nova		X		X				
Test of Adult Basic Education							X	
Tests of Achievement & Proficiency (TAP)								
Criterion-Referenced Tests								
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	X	X		X	X	X		X
Stanford Achievement Test								
Stanford Writing Assessment								
District Content Standards/Curriculum Assessment				X				
Woodcock Johnson								
High/Scope Child Observation Record								
Performance Assessments								
Individual Learning Programs				X		X	X	X
Portfolios				X		X	X	X
Student Exhibits						X		

PART FIVE

CHARACTERISTICS OF COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

Table 3, below, shows the percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch,⁴⁸ of racial/ethnic minority students, and of students with disabilities who were served by the 57 charter schools included in this study during the 1999-2000 school year. The data show that the charter schools in this study, as a cohort group, were about as racially diverse as Colorado public schools in general (within 10% of the state average). The charter schools in this study, however, served a significantly smaller percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch and students with disabilities, compared to statewide public school averages.

These data provide a reasonable basis for broadly assessing the diversity of students in Colorado charter schools compared to other public schools, but they have limitations and should be read with some caution.

- Perhaps most significantly, the figure “0%” can mean one of two things: (1) the school did not serve any students within that classification or (2) the school did not report the relevant data to CDE. The failure of some charter schools and/or their chartering districts to report complete demographic data therefore likely had the effect of skewing the profile of charter schools as a whole.
- The total number of charter school students in this report was small compared to the 1999-2000 student enrollment in all public schools (representing approximately 2.2% of the total student population). The percentages among categories could therefore change significantly with only slight alterations in the composition of student enrollment.
- A pattern of racial concentration in a particular school might have resulted from the school’s location and does not necessarily suggest a deliberate policy of exclusion. The location of charter schools depended on the willingness of communities and school districts to welcome, or at least support, charter schools in the first few years of their development. None of the schools in this report applied an admissions process that excluded certain populations of students in a discriminatory manner.

Racial/Ethnic Minority Students

The 57 charter schools in this report served 4,353 racial/ethnic minority students in 1999-2000 representing 26.6% of the schools’ total enrollment (16,358). The state average was 29.4%.

The percentage of racial/ethnic minority students served by the charter schools in this report ranged from 0% -- Marble Charter School (Gunnison Watershed School District), Prairie Creeks Charter School (Strasburg School District) to 97.4% (Pioneer Charter School, Denver Public Schools).

Of the 57 schools in this study,

- 17% (10 schools) served a percentage of racial/ethnic minority students that was within twenty percent of their chartering district’s average percentage of racial/ethnic minority students,

- 58% (33 schools) served a lower percentage of racial/ethnic minority students than their chartering district, and
- 25% (14 schools) served a higher percentage of racial/ethnic minority students eligible than their chartering district.

Student Eligibility for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

The 57 charter schools in this report served students 2,350 students in 1999-2000 who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, representing 14.4% of the total enrollment (16,358) of the schools. The state average was 28.2%.

The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch served by the charter schools in this report ranged from 0% -- Aspen/Carbondale Community School (Roaring Fork School District), Boulder Prep Charter High School (Boulder Valley School District), Cherry Creek Academy (Cherry Creek School District), The Classical Academy (Academy District 20), Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs School District 11), Connect Charter School (Pueblo School District 70), DCS Montessori Charter School (Douglas County School District), Eagle County Charter School (Eagle County School District), Horizons Alternative School (Boulder Valley School District), Littleton Preparatory Charter School (Littleton Public Schools), Marble Charter School (Gunnison Watershed School District), Platte River Academy (Douglas County School District), Prairie Creeks Charter School (Strasburg School District), Renaissance Charter School (Douglas County School District), and Swallows Academy (Pueblo School District 70) -- to 84.6% at Pioneer Charter School (Denver Public Schools).

Of the charter schools that showed 0% students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in 1999-2000, the following did not offer a lunch program: Aspen/Carbondale Community School (Roaring Fork School District), Boulder Prep Charter High School (Boulder Valley School District), Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs School District 11), Connect Charter School (Pueblo School District 70), DCS Montessori Charter School (Douglas County School District), Eagle County Charter School (Eagle County School District), Horizons Charter School (Boulder Valley School District), Littleton Preparatory Charter School (Littleton Public Schools), Marble Charter School (Gunnison Watershed School District), Renaissance Charter School (Douglas County School District), and Swallows Academy (Pueblo School District 70).

Of the 57 schools in this study,

- 17% (10 schools) served a percentage of free or reduced-price lunch students that was within ten percent of their chartering district's average percentage of free or reduced-price lunch students,
- 58% (33 schools) served a lower percentage of students eligible than their chartering district, and
- 25% (14 schools) served a higher percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch than their chartering district.

Students with Disabilities

The 57 charter schools in this study served 1,013 students with disabilities, representing 6.2% of the schools' total enrollment (16,358). The state average was 10.2%

The percentage of students with disabilities served by the charter schools in this report ranged from 0% at Crestone Charter School (Moffat Consolidated School District), Elbert County Charter School (Elizabeth School District), Passage Charter School (Montrose School District), Twin Peaks Charter Academy (St. Vrain School District), Wyatt-Edison Charter School (Denver Public Schools) to 66.6% at the Magnet School for the Deaf (Jefferson County School District).

Of the 57 schools in this study,

- 12% (7 schools) served a percentage of students with disabilities that was within five percent of their chartering district's average percentage of students with disabilities,
- 68% (39 schools) served a lower percentage of students with disabilities than their authorizing district, and
- 19% (11 schools) served a higher percentage of students with disabilities than their chartering district.

Table 3 - Charter Schools and Chartering Districts-Student Characteristics, 1999-2000

<i>DISTRICT</i> Charter School	% racial/ethnic minority students	% students eligible for free/reduced lunch	% students with disabilities
<i>State of Colorado</i>	29.4%	28.2%	10.2%
<i>All Charter Schools Included in this Report</i>	26.6%	14.2%	6.2%
<i>Academy School District 20</i>	12.5%	4.0%	7.1%
The Classical Academy	7.7%	0.0%	2.9%
<i>Adams 12 Five Star School District</i>	28.6%	19.9%	10.8%
Academy of Charter Schools	29.6%	31.5%	3.9%
Pinnacle Charter School	26.1%	10.9%	6.6%
Stargate Charter School	22.0%	1.7%	2.5%
<i>Boulder Valley School District</i>	18.5%	11.3%	11.6%
Boulder Prep Charter School	39.0%	0.0%	24.4%
Horizons Alternative School	7.7%	0.0%	10.1%
Summit Middle School	11.5%	4.0%	4.0%
<i>Brighton School District</i>	42.6%	26.1%	8.8%
Brighton Charter School	28.6%	4.2%	3.1%
<i>Canon City School District</i>	8.9%	33.7%	11.3%
Mountain View Core Knowledge	5.4%	16.3%	6.4%

Table 3 (Cont.) - Charter Schools and Chartering Districts-Student Characteristics, 1999-2000

DISTRICT Charter School	% racial/ethnic minority students	% students eligible for free/reduced lunch	% students with disabilities
<i>Cherry Creek School District</i>	21.3%	9.9%	10.8%
Cherry Creek Academy	7.0%	0.0%	2.9%
<i>Cheyenne Mountain District 12</i>	11.8%	5.8%	6.1%
Cheyenne Mountain Charter	15.5%	26.7%	3.6%
<i>Colorado Springs District 11</i>	28.8%	31.5%	9.1%
CIVA Charter School	19.2%	9.1%	13.1%
Community Prep Charter	42.1%	0.0%	7.6%
GLOBE	21.4%	33.8%	6.9%
Roosevelt Edison - Emerson	66.4%	56.4%	10.3%
<i>Denver Public Schools</i>	76.6%	61.1%	10.8%
The Odyssey School	44.9%	24.0%	4.7%
Pioneer Charter School	97.4%	84.6%	8.0%
P.S. I	47.9%	32.8%	7.1%
Wyatt-Edison Charter School	92.7%	80.3%	0.0%
<i>Douglas County School District</i>	8.9%	2.1%	8.0%
Academy Charter	7.6%	1.1%	10.1%
Core Knowledge	2.5%	1.9%	5.0%
DCS Montessori School	8.1%	0.0%	5.7%
Platte River Academy Charter	10.2%	0.0%	4.9%
Renaissance Charter	10.4%	0.0%	5.3%
<i>Durango School District 9-R</i>	16.9%	22.0%	9.4%
Community of Learners	29.3%	22.0%	18.7%
EXCEL School	14.7%	23.9%	12.8%
<i>Eagle County School District</i>	7.4%	25.4%	7.9%
Eagle County Charter	7.8%	0.0%	5.4%
<i>Elizabeth School District</i>	7.4%	4.9%	10.1%
Elbert County Charter School	11.6%	0.9%	0.0%
<i>Greeley School District 6</i>	43.7%	45.0%	10.8%
Colorado High School	58.4%	60.4%	12.9%
Frontier Academy	18.6%	27.0%	8.6%
Union Colony Preparatory Academy	14.9%	14.9%	8.3%

Table 3 (Cont.) - Charter Schools and Chartering Districts-Student Characteristics, 1999-2000

DISTRICT Charter School	% racial/ethnic minority students	% students eligible for free/reduced lunch	% students with disabilities
<i>Gunnison Watershed District</i>	9.1%	9.9%	8.7%
Marble Charter School	0.0%	0.0%	23.5%
<i>Jefferson County School District</i>	16.3%	14.4%	8.9%
Center for Discovery Learning	21.6%	20.0%	14.7%
Collegiate Academy	6.7%	4.7%	6.4%
Compass Montessori	12.2%	5.8%	5.8%
Excel Academy	10.3%	9.5%	6.3%
Jefferson Academy	9.1%	1.5%	6.7%
Lincoln Academy	11.4%	2.4%	3.3%
Magnet School of the Deaf	14.8%	33.3%	66.6%
Montessori Peaks Academy	11.4%	0.4%	8.3%
<i>Lamar School District</i>	41.4%	46.9%	11.7%
Alta Vista Charter School	13.8%	31.3	6.3%
<i>Lewis Palmer School District</i>	6.3%	3.8%	8.7%
Monument Charter Academy	12.0%	0.9%	5.9%
<i>Littleton School District</i>	10.5%	10.2%	9.7%
Littleton Academy	6.0%	1.1%	5.8%
Littleton Preparatory Charter School	20.0%	0.0%	4.5%
<i>Moffat Consolidated No. 2</i>	19.4%	52.1%	10.3%
Crestone Charter School	5.1%	27.1%	0.0%
<i>Montezuma Cortez</i>	33.6%	45.7%	11.4%
Battle Rock Charter School	11.5%	19.2%	11.5%
<i>Montrase County School District</i>	22.3%	38.6%	12.6%
Passage Charter School	56.5%	82.6%	0.0%
<i>Park County School District</i>	9.2%	22.0%	6.8%
Lake George Charter School	5.3%	25.2%	11.2%
<i>Poudre School District</i>	16.4%	17.3%	10.3%
Liberty Common School	8.2%	9.6%	4.8%
<i>Pueblo School District 60</i>	58.4%	55.1%	9.9%
Pueblo School Arts-Sciences	59.0%	57.1%	7.3%
Youth and Family Academy	79.7%	72.0%	16.1%

Table 3 (Cont.) - Charter Schools and Chartering Districts-Student Characteristics, 1999-2000

DISTRICT Charter School	% racial/ethnic minority students	% students eligible for free/reduced lunch	% students with disabilities
<i>Pueblo School District 70</i>	25.4%	23.1%	8.4%
Connect Charter School	16.5%	0.0%	15.4%
Swallows Academy	16.4%	0.0%	2.6%
<i>Roaring Fork School District</i>	23.2%	17.4%	6.5%
Aspen/Carbondale Community School	4.2%	0.0%	4.7%
<i>Strasburg School District</i>	7.3%	14.2%	9.5%
Prairie Creeks Charter School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>St. Vrain School District</i>	23.8%	19.0%	7.5%
Twin Peaks Charter School	11.1%	5.2%	0.0%
<i>Westminster School District 50</i>	52.0%	39.0%	10.1%
Crown Pointe Academy	38.0%	1.5%	2.5%

Date Source: Colorado Department of Education, Fall 1999.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

State level data is reported in Table 3. In 1999-2000, the total public school population included:

- 29.4% students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and
- 29.9% racial/ethnic minority students,
- 10.2% students with disabilities.

National Charter Schools

- **Racial/Ethnic Composition:** In 1998-99, the most recent data for which data are available, charter schools enrolled approximately 11% fewer white students than all public schools (48% versus 59%) in the 27 charter state included in the national study. Sixty-nine percent of charter schools were within 20 percent of their surrounding district's percentage of nonwhite students, while almost 18% had a distinctly higher percentage of students of color than their surrounding district. Approximately 14% of schools had a lower percentage of students of color than their surrounding district.
- **Student Eligibility for Free/Reduced-Price Lunch:** In 1998-99, charter schools served a slightly higher percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch than all public schools in the 27 charter states included in the national study (39% versus 37%). In six of the charter states, including Colorado, the percentage of eligible students was a least 10 points lower in charter schools than in all public schools. The percentage of eligible students was at least 10 points higher in charters than in all public schools in 11 of the charter states included in the study.
- **Students with Disabilities:** In 1998-99 charter schools enrolled 3% fewer students with disabilities than all public schools (8% versus 11%) in the 27 charter states. The percentage of students with disabilities in charter schools and all public schools was within 5 percent in most cases.⁴⁹

PART SIX

GOVERNANCE OF COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS

Governing Board Composition

The Colorado charter schools in this report were required to propose a governance structure in their charter applications. The chartering district approved this structure, either as submitted or as modified through negotiations, in the charter school contract.

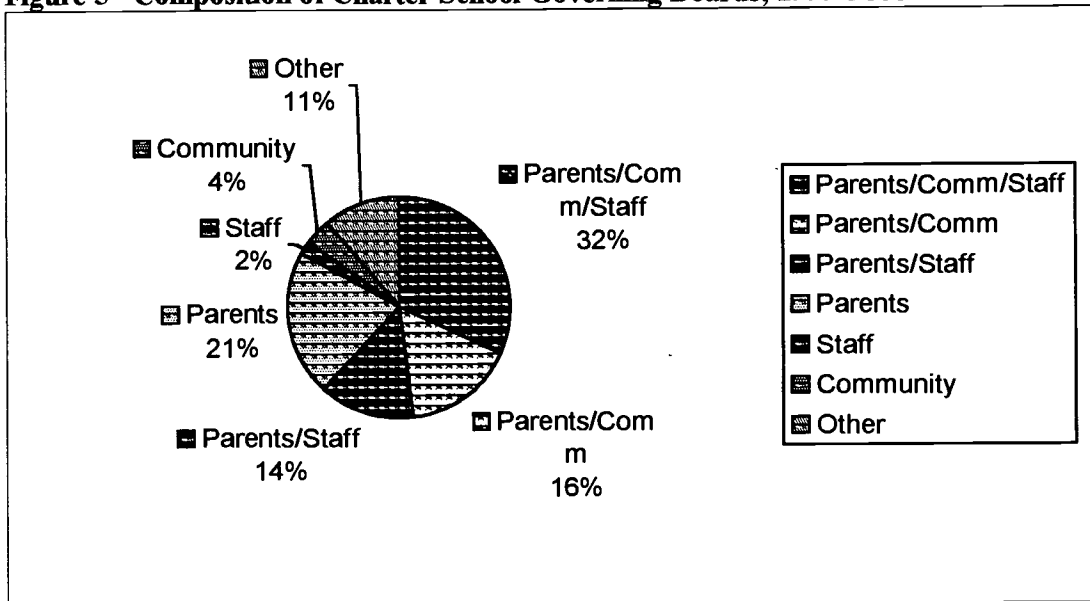
These charter school governing bodies had authority over curriculum, personnel, budget and all other aspects of the school, under the terms and conditions of the charter contract with the chartering district. Almost all charter schools in the report employed an administrator (sometimes called a dean, educational director, or a lead teacher instead of a principal) who was responsible for making day-to-day operational decisions.

Fifty-six of the 57 charter schools in this study provided information about the composition of their governing boards in 1999-2000. Of these 56 schools:

- 33% (18 schools) had a governing board comprised of parents, school staff and community members,
- 22% (12 schools) had a board comprised of parents only,
- 17% (9 schools) had a board comprised of parents and community members,
- 15% (8 schools) had a board comprised of parents and school staff,
- 4% (2 schools) had a board comprised of community members only,
- 2% (1 school) had a board comprised of teachers only, and
- 11% (6 schools) had unique governing board configurations that reflected the origin and mission of their schools.⁵⁰

Parents held a majority on the governing boards in 66% of the charter schools included in this study.

Figure 5 - Composition of Charter School Governing Boards, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Charter Schools

PART SEVEN

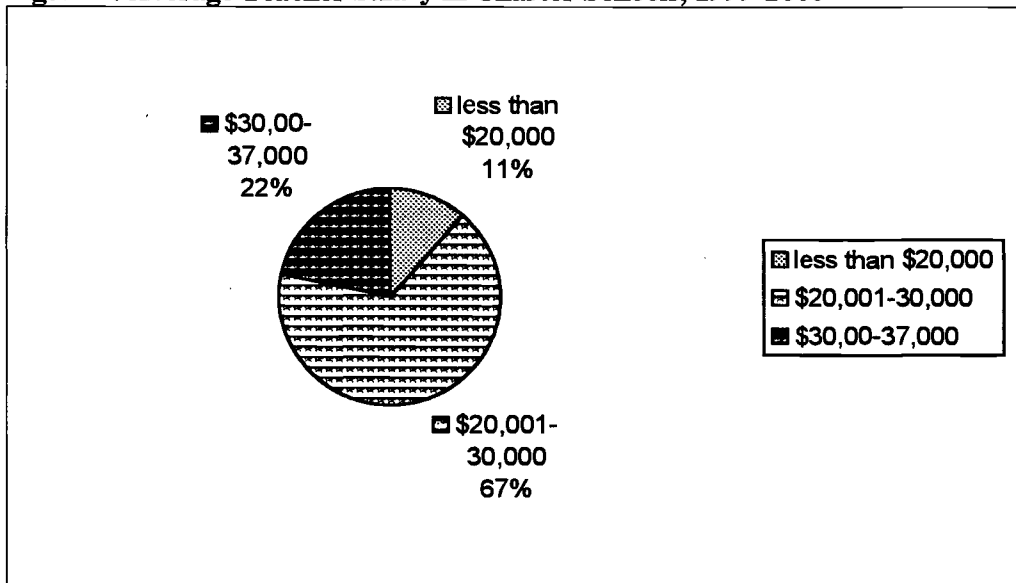
COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Charter School Teacher Salaries

Fifty-five charter schools in this study reported data to CDE related to their average teacher salaries. Of these:

- 11% (6 schools) have average teacher salaries of under \$20,000;
- 67% (37 schools) have average teacher salaries of between \$20,001 and \$30,000; and
- 22% (12 schools) have average teacher salaries of between 30,001 and \$37,000.

Figure 6: Average Teacher Salary in Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Date Source: Colorado Department of Education.

The average teacher salary of the charter schools in this study was \$26,446. Average teacher salaries in individual charter schools ranged from a low of \$12,275 at Boulder Preparatory High School (Boulder Valley School District) to a high of \$36,802 at Core Knowledge Charter School (Douglas County School District).

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

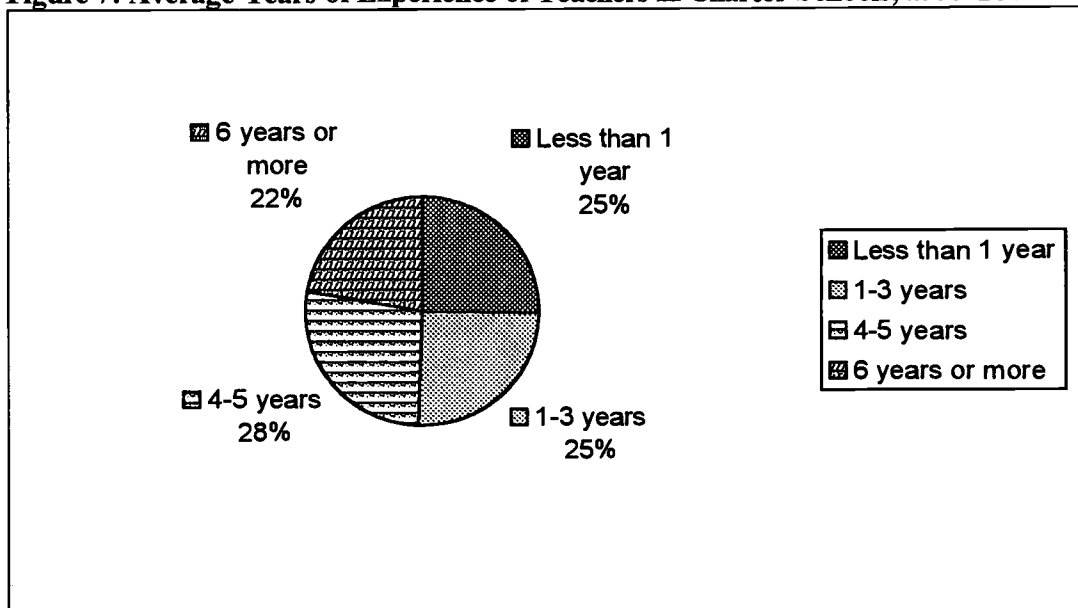
The average teacher salary in Colorado public schools statewide is \$38,163.

Charter School Teacher Experience

Of the 57 schools included in this study, 55 schools reported data to CDE about the average number of years of experience their teachers had. Of these 55 schools,

- 25% (14 schools) had a teaching staff with an average of less than 1 year experience.
- 25% (14 schools) had a teaching staff with an average one to three years experience.
- 27% (15 schools) had a teaching staff with an average of four to five years of experience.
- 22% (12 schools) had a teaching staff with an average of more than six years of teaching experience.

Figure 7: Average Years of Experience of Teachers in Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education

The average experience of teachers in Colorado charter schools ranged from 0.0 years to 15.9 years. The CDE database reflects a 0.0 average experience for five of the charter schools included in this study, suggesting that these schools failed to report the data. (The zeros were included in calculating the average figure presented in this report, however, so the data should be read with caution.) The average experience of teachers for all the charter schools in this study was 3.9 years.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

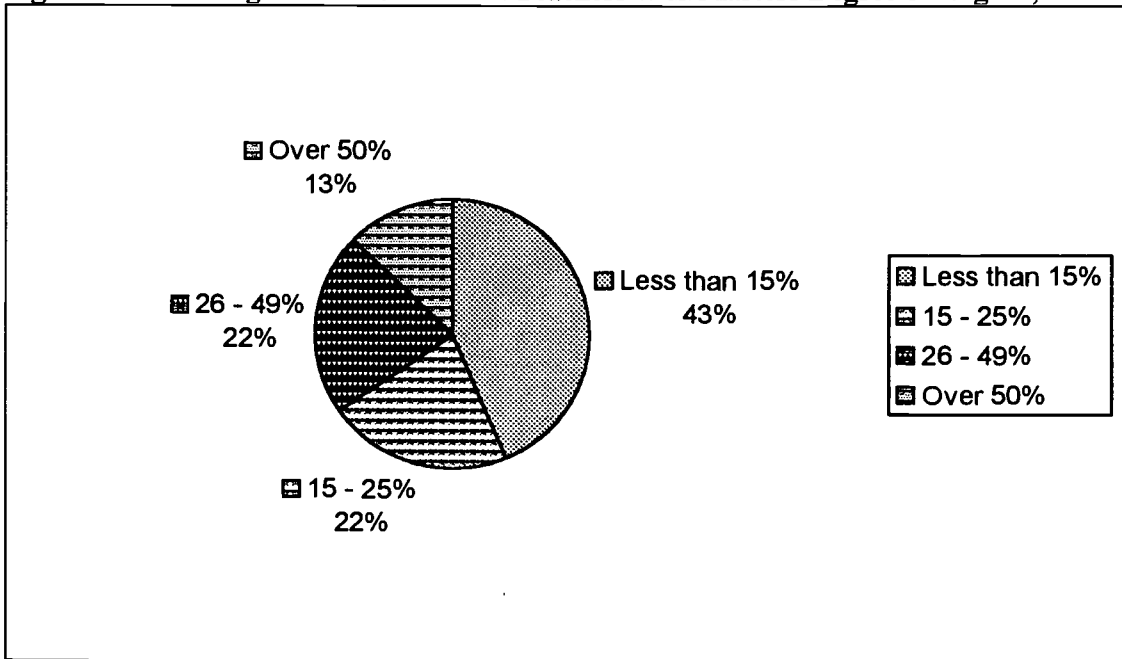
The average teaching experience of all public classroom teachers in Colorado is 7.61 years in-state and 1.22 years out-of-state.

Educational Background of Charter School Teachers

Of the 57 charter schools included in this study, 55 reported data to CDE about the percentage of their teachers who held a Masters Degree or higher post-secondary degree.

- 40% (22 schools) had a teaching staff of whom 15% or less held a Master Degree or higher
- 22% (12 schools) had a teaching staff of whom 16% to 25% held a Masters Degree or higher
- 22% (12 schools) had a teaching staff of whom 26% to 49% held a Masters Degree or higher
- 13% (7 schools) of the charter schools had a teaching staff of whom more than 50% held a Masters Degree or higher.

Figure 8: Percentage of Charter School Teachers with Masters Degree or Higher, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education, Fall 1999

The percentage of teachers that held a Masters Degree or higher ranged in individual Colorado charter schools from 0.0% to 87.5%. The average percentage of charter school teachers who held a Masters Degree or higher in 1999-2000 was 21.6%. The median percentage was 20%.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

Statewide, 44.2% of public school teachers held a Masters Degree or higher post-secondary degree.

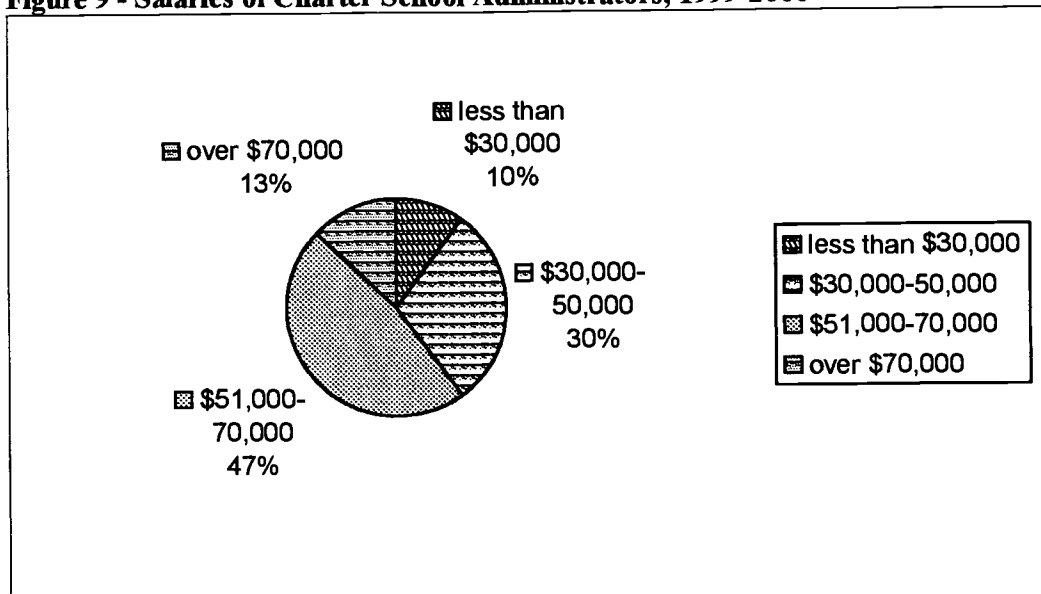
Charter School Administrator Salaries

Forty-seven of the 57 charter schools in this report reported data to CDE about the salaries of their administrators. Of these 47 schools:

- 10% (5 schools) had average administrator salaries of less than \$30,000,
- 30% (14 schools) had average administrator salaries of \$31,000 - \$50,000,

- 47% (22 schools) had average administrator salaries of \$51,000 - \$70,000, and
- 13% (6 schools) had salaries of over \$70,000.

Figure 9 - Salaries of Charter School Administrators, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education

The salaries of the charter school lead administrators in this report ranged from \$3,316 at Boulder Preparatory High School (Boulder Valley School District) to \$106,693 at CIVA Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11). The average salary of charter school administrators in 1999-2000 was \$52,417.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

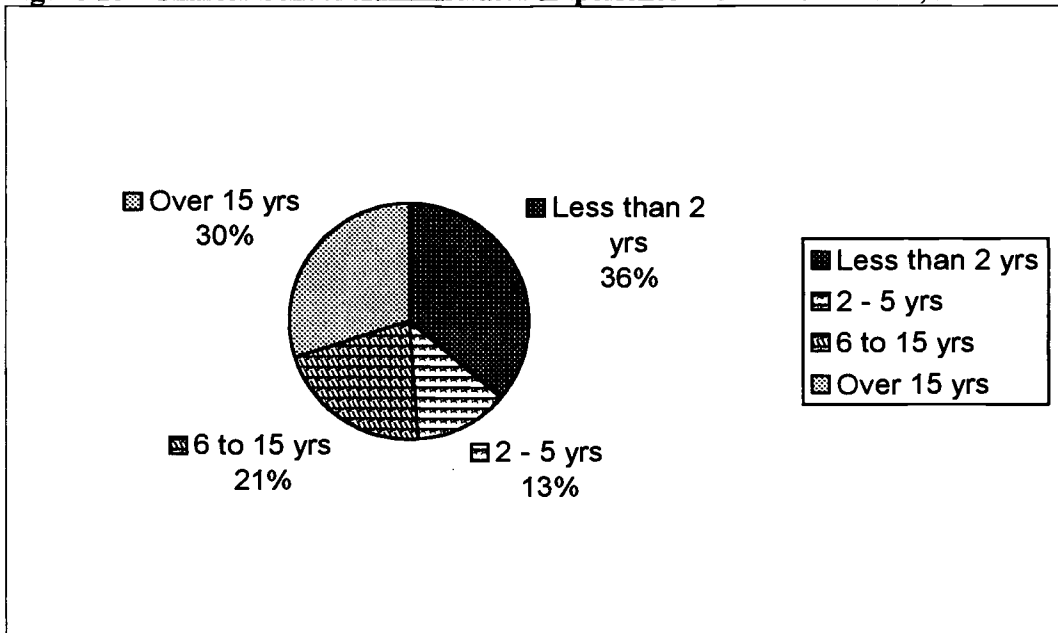
The average salary of Colorado public school principals in 1999-2000 was \$63,064.

Charter School Administrator Experience

Of the 57 charter schools covered by this report, 47 schools provided data related to their administrators' experience in the field of education. Of these 47 charter schools,

- 36% (17 schools) had lead administrators with less than two years experience in the field of education,
- 11% (6 schools) had lead administrators with 2 to 5 years experience in the field of education,
- 21% (10 schools) had lead administrators with 6 to 15 years experience in the field of education
- 30% (14 schools) had lead administrators with over 15 years of experience in the field of education.

Figure 10 - Charter School Administrator Experience in Education Field, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education

Charter school administrator experience in the field of education ranged from a high of 33 years to a low of no previous experience. The average experience of charter school administrators was 9.0 years.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

In Colorado, the average public school administrator had 12.43 years of education experience in-state and 2.28 years of education experience out of state.

National Charter Schools

A national study completed by the Washington-based nonprofit consulting group StandardsWork in May 2000 found that at a national level almost 80% of charter school directors had worked in the education field just prior to taking a position in a charter school. Thirty percent were former teachers, 10% were private school principals, 17% were public school principals, and 22% were school administrators. The rest came from other professions. According to the study, most charter schools are run by educators who took their jobs because they wanted to achieve excellence or gain more freedom than traditional public schools offer.⁵¹

Charter School Administrator Educational Background

Of the 57 charter schools covered by this report, 47 schools provided data related to their administrators' educational background.

Approximately 84% of the administrators in these charter schools held a Master's Degree or higher post-graduate degree.

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POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

In the State of Colorado, 89.0% of the public school principals in 1999-2000 held a Masters degree or higher post-graduate degrees.

Average Tenure of Charter School Lead Administrator

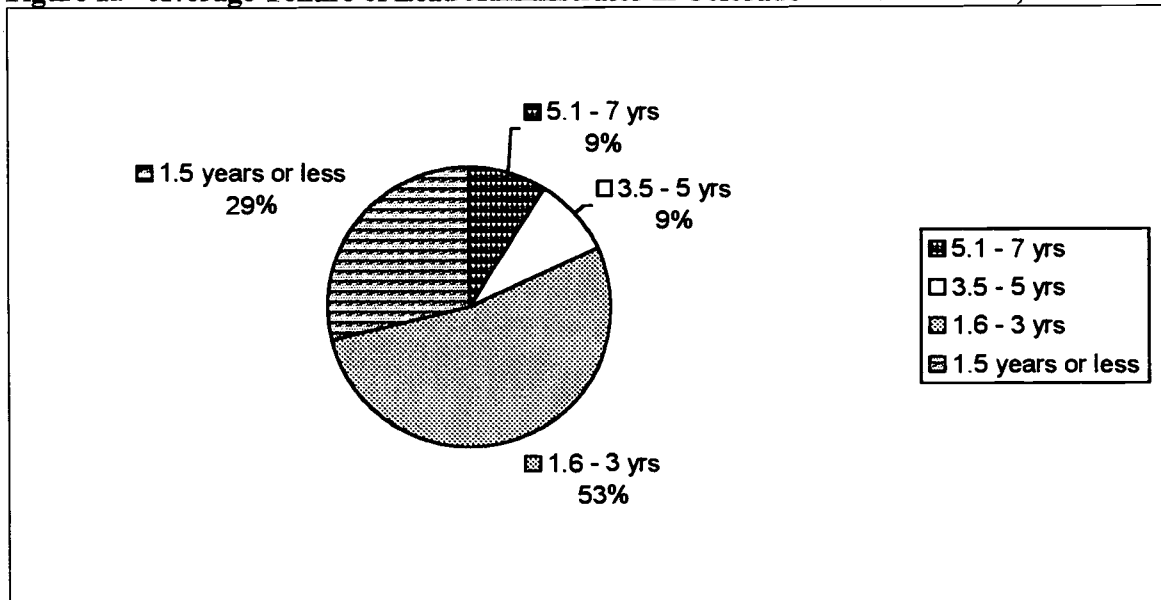
A high rate of administrator turnover has challenged many charter schools in Colorado and throughout the nation. Some charter school communities struggled to find the right balance of responsibilities between policy-making boards and on-site administrators. Others may have found that making the transition of leadership from the charter school founders (often a parent or community group) to the professional staff was difficult.

Forty-five of the 57 schools in this report provided data related to the average tenure of their lead administrators. The average tenure was calculated by dividing the total number of years the school had been in operation by the total number of lead administrators employed by the school.

Of the 45 schools that provided 1999-2000 data related to administrator tenure:

- 9% (4 schools) had an average administrator tenure of 5.1 to 7 years,
- 9% (4 schools) had an average administrator tenure of 3.1 to 5.0 years,
- 53% (24 schools) had an average administrator tenure of 1.6 to 3.0 years,
- 29% (13 schools) had an average administrator tenure of 1.5 years or less.

Figure 11 - Average Tenure of Lead Administrator in Colorado Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Charter Schools

In the 45 schools for which data are available, charter school lead administrator tenure ranged from a low of one year to a high of seven years. The median lead administrator tenure was 2.0 years.

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PART EIGHT

CHARTER SCHOOL EFFORTS TO CREATE SAFE AND CIVIL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

National and state polls continue to underscore the high priority that parents, staff and students give to issues related to school discipline and safe learning environments. Student suspension and expulsion rates are commonly used as indicators of school climate. The suspension and expulsion rates are a product of many factors, including the school's discipline code, the population the school serves and the school's capacity (including adequate resources) to provide alternative learning opportunities for disruptive students.

Colorado law defines the grounds for the suspension and/or expulsion of students from public schools. These grounds include

- Carrying, bringing, using or possession of a deadly weapon;
- Selling a drug or controlled substance;
- Commission of an act which if committed by an adult would be a robbery or assault;
- Habitually disruptive student;
- Disobedience and persistent defiance of proper authority;
- Willful destruction or defacing of school property;
- Behavior on or off school property which is detrimental to the welfare or safety of pupils or of school personnel; and
- Repeated interference with a school's ability to provide educational opportunities to other students.⁵²

CDE began collection information on suspensions and expulsions from all public schools in a standard format in 1994-95. School districts were requested to report the number of students suspended and the total occurrences of suspensions. If a student was suspended more than once during the school year, each occurrence was included in the suspension count.

Student Suspensions

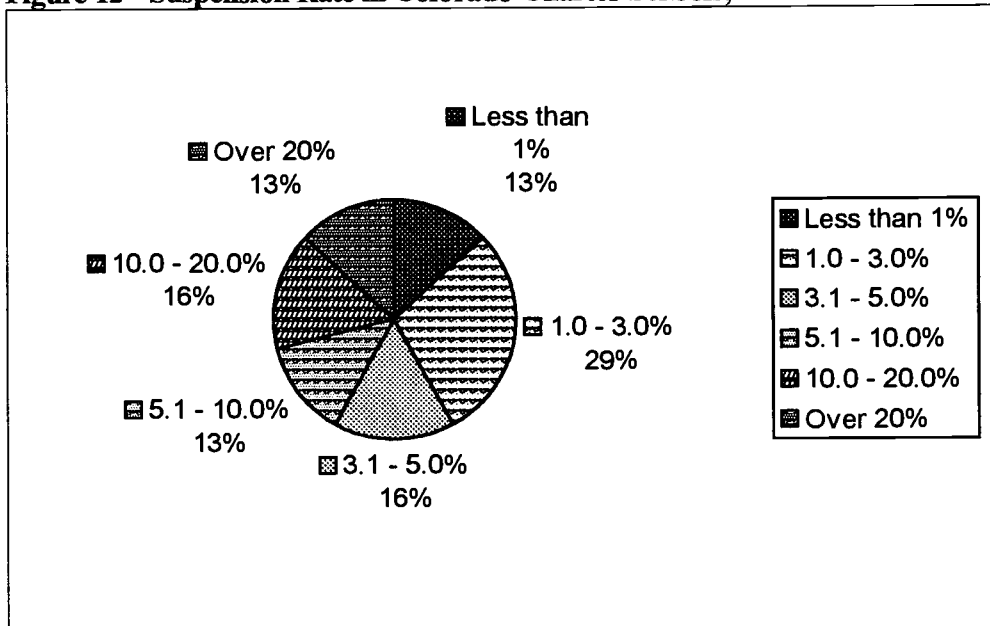
The Colorado Department of Education database for the 1999-2000 school year included data for 38 of the 57 charter schools in this report. As stated above, charter schools reported these data to CDE through their chartering school districts.

Of these 38 schools,

- 13% (5 schools) had a suspension rate of less than 1 %,
- 29% (11 schools) had a suspension rate of 1.1% to 3.0%,
- 16% (6 schools) had a suspension rate of 3.1% to 5.0%,
- 13% (5 schools) had a suspension rate of 5.1% to 10%,
- 16% (6 schools) had a suspension rate of over 10% to 20% and
- 13% (5 schools) had a suspension rate of over 20%.

The 1999-2000 suspension rates for schools in this report ranged from a high of 48.3% to a low of 0.3%. The average suspension rate of the 39 charter schools for which data were available was 8.05%. The median suspension rate was 3.9%.

Figure 12 - Suspension Rate in Colorado Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

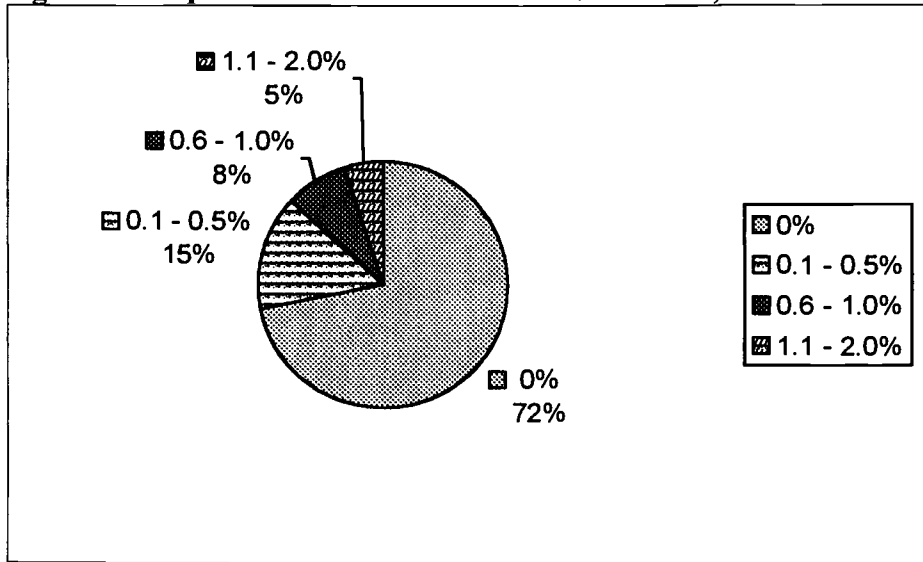
The suspension rate for public schools statewide was 6.7%.

Student Expulsions

The Colorado Department of Education database for the 1999-2000 school year included data for 39 of the 57 schools in this report related to the expulsion of students for discipline violations. Of these 39 schools:

- 72% (28 schools) had an expulsion rate of 0%,
- 15% (6 schools) had an expulsion rate of 0.1% to 0.5%,
- 8% (3 schools) had an expulsion rate of 0.6% to 1.0%, and
- 5% (2 schools) had an expulsion rate of 1.1% to 2.0%.

Figure 13 - Expulsion Rate in Colorado Charter Schools, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Department of Education

The 1999-2000 expulsion rates of charter schools in this report ranged from 2.0% to 0.0%. The average expulsion rate of the 39 charter schools for which 1999-2000 data were available was 0.38%. The median expulsion rate was 0.0%.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

State of Colorado

The 1999-2000 expulsion rate for Colorado public schools statewide was 0.3%.

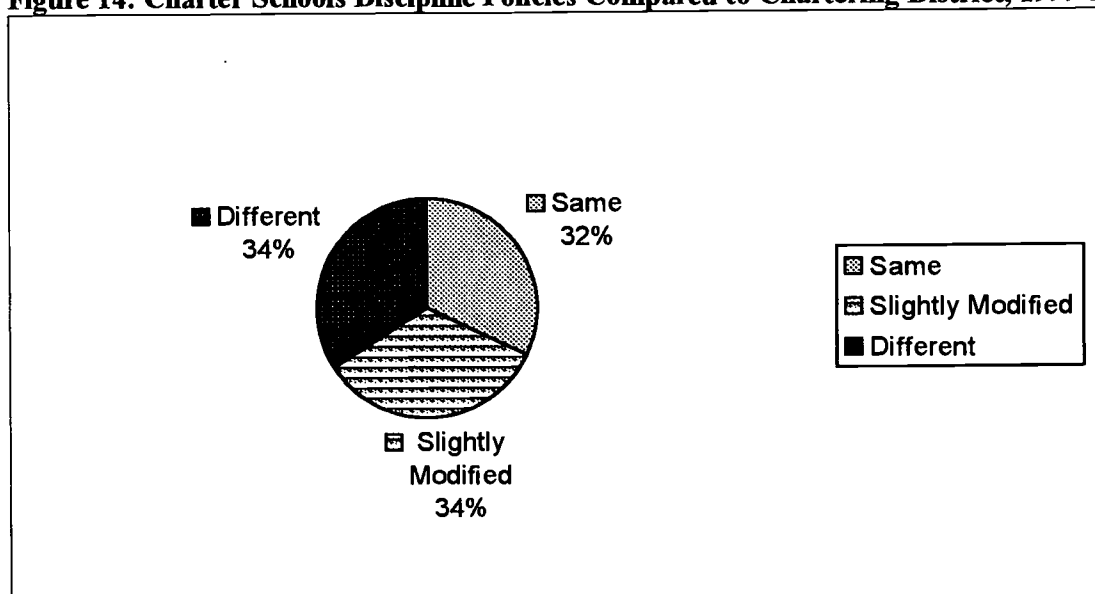
Charter School Discipline Policies

Twenty-nine of the 57 schools in this study provided information about whether their school's discipline policy was the same as the one adopted by their chartering district.

Of this total,

- 32% (9 schools) used the same discipline policy as their chartering district
- 34% (10 schools) used substantially the same discipline policy as their chartering district. These slight modifications generally involved a more explicit definition of consequences or the application of stricter consequences for violations of the policy.
- 34% (10 schools) used a different discipline policy than their chartering district.

Figure 14: Charter Schools Discipline Policies Compared to Chartering District, 1999-2000



Data Source: Colorado Charter Schools

Depending on the school, the charter schools that adopted a different discipline policy than their chartering districts may have adopted a stricter policy than the chartering district, or may have expressed a different view of effective disciplinary methods. The charter school respondents identified the following differences in their discipline policies:

- Use of conflict-resolution model: tried to instill good lessons, rather than being punitive.
- Zero tolerance of bullying, rules related to mutual respect were more strictly enforced.
- Stricter definition of offenses or consequences for violations.
- Focused on trying to help students learn to assert self-discipline and to develop responsibility for well being of broader community.
- Infrequent use of suspensions; instead, students are assigned to a work detail in the building.

Characteristics of Charter Schools that Contribute to Safe and Civil Learning Environments

The 1999-2000 Colorado Charter Schools Evaluation Study Questionnaire posed an open-ended question asking charter school operators to identify the characteristics of their schools that most contributed to a safe and civil learning environment. The use of fields and scales in the question would have allowed the responses to be more comprehensive and transferable across schools. The data presented below provides a picture painted in broad strokes.

The characteristics most commonly mentioned by charter schools respondents, listed by the frequently of response, were:

- The existence of a clear code of behavior or discipline policy that stressed mutual respect and personal responsibility and that was enforced consistently and school-wide;
- Small size of school and/or classrooms promoted caring and personalized learning environments;
- High levels of parent involvement;

- Explicit instruction in and/or formal programs related to character development;
- Use of conflict resolution, bully-proofing or peer mediation programs;
- Adoption of a dress code/uniform policy;
- Student participation in school decision-making at levels appropriate to their age.
- Training of staff in student management strategies and in child development.
- Strong sense of community spirit derived, in part, from the fact that teachers, students and families chose to become a part of the school.
- High expectations related to academics and behavior.

On the issue of safety, many charter schools also noted that they had worked with their chartering district to adopt plans and procedures for emergency situations.

Approximately 21% of the charter schools included in this study obtained waivers from the State Board of Education of the state law related to suspension, expulsion and denial of admission (refer to Part Ten).

PART NINE

STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS

Overview

The report presents six different kinds of data to present a multidimensional picture of the performance of Colorado charter schools and their students during the 1999-2000 school year.

1. *The schools' performance on the Colorado Student Assessment Program.*
2. *The level of parent involvement in the schools.*
3. *Market-based indicators*, such as the demand for the schools (waiting lists), parent satisfaction, and re-enrollment rates.
4. Colorado Department of Education's *designation as Schools of Excellence.*
5. *The renewal record of the charter schools.*
6. *The progress made by individual schools against their own unique performance and school improvement goals.*

1. Colorado Student Assessment Program

The Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) is a statewide assessment, aligned with the state model content standards that was administered at limited grades and in limited subjects during the 1999-2000 school year. The state assessment program began in April 1997, testing all fourth grade students in reading and writing. In the spring of 1998, fourth grade reading and writing were tested again and third grade reading comprehension was added. Tests in seventh grade reading and writing were administered for the first time in the spring of 1999. During the 1999-2000 academic year, CSAP tests also were administered in 5th grade math (fall 1999) and 8th grade math and science (spring 2000).

The Colorado Department of Education reports CSAP results using four performance levels:

- Unsatisfactory
- Partially proficient – does not meet the standards
- Proficient - meets the standards
- Advanced - exceeds the standards.

1999-2000 CSAP results were available in at least one grade for 44 of the 57 charter schools included in this study. Five of the charter schools in this report did not administer the 1999-2000 CSAP assessments because they did not serve students in the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th or 8th grade. The charter schools in this category were: Boulder Prep Charter School (Boulder Valley School District); CIVA Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11); Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11), Prairie Creeks Charter School (Strasburg School District), and Passage Charter School (Montrose School District)

Another eight charter schools administered the CSAP but did not report their results publicly. As a matter of policy, CDE does not report the results for schools in which 16 or fewer students took the test, out of concern that individual students' scores may be identifiable. The schools in this category were: Alta Vista Charter School (Lamar School District), Battle Rock Charter School (Montezuma Cortez School District), Colorado High School (Greeley School District 6), Community of Learners Charter School (Durango 9-R), Crestone Charter School (Moffat Consolidated School District), GLOBE Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11), Marble Charter School (Gunnison Watershed School District), and Magnet School for the Deaf (Jefferson County School District).

CSAP data for individual schools are shown in the school profiles (Subsection 6, below).

This section of the report applies several comparative lenses to the performance of charter schools, as a cohort group, on the Colorado Student Assessment Program, looking at:

- The performance of charter schools compared to the state as a whole;
- The performance of charter schools compared to non-charter public schools that serve a "matched" population in terms of student race/ethnicity and eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch; and
- The performance of charter schools over time.

Each analysis was conducted for the 4th grade reading and 7th grade writing CSAP assessments. While not comprehensive, this focus crosses two different subjects and encompasses both elementary and middle school grade levels.

CHARTER SCHOOLS COMPARED TO STATE AVERAGE

As a group, the charter schools tended to perform well on the Colorado Student Assessment Program. As shown in Table 4, the average score of the charter schools in this study exceeded the state average by a significant margin.

Table 4: Comparison of Weighted and Non-Weighted Charter School Average CSAP Scores with Average Scores for the State of Colorado

	4 th Grade Reading	7 th Grade Writing
State Average (n)	62%	42%
Non-weighted Charter School Average (n)	69% (33)	55% (32)
Weighted Charter School Average (n)	67% (33)	50% (32)

(N) is the number of schools included in the calculation.

Table 4 shows both weighted and non-weighted charter school averages. Weighting accounts for the different sizes of schools within a category when calculating an average for that category. The weighted charter school score is calculated by multiplying the percentage proficient and advanced for a school by the number of students in that school who took the test. The process of weighting influences the totals and the means scores of all schools in the category as well as of the overall category, giving larger schools more weight in the total average. While weighting is generally considered a more accurate way to present the average scores of schools of differing sizes, it allows a very large school with very poor scores to impact the overall picture in a negative way. It is relevant in this connection that the charter schools with the largest number of students taking the CSAP in each grade had among the lowest scores. For example, the three charter schools with the largest number of students taking the test in 4th

grade (108, 80 and 64 students) had scores of 43%, 29% and 50% proficient or advanced while the three charter schools with the smallest number of students taking that test (17, 16 and 16 students) had scores of 75%, 63% and 81%.

Additionally, although the charter schools in this study represented only about 3.6% of all public schools in the state, charter schools were represented at a much greater rate among the highest performing schools on CSAP. In 4th grade reading, of the 25 schools that scored at 90% proficient or advanced, four of these schools (16%) were charter schools. In 7th grade writing, of the six schools that scored at 80% proficient or advanced, five of these schools (86%) were charter schools.

CHARTER SCHOOLS COMPARED TO "MATCHED" PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Colorado Charter Schools Act specifically directs that this report "shall compare the performance of charter school pupils with the performance of ethnically and economically comparable groups of pupils in other public schools who are enrolled in academically comparable courses."⁵³

This is an important focus from a policy perspective. However, it presents several challenges from the perspective of statistics and data analysis. First, because there were so many fewer charter schools than non-charter public schools, the charter school averages were more affected by the performance of a school or group of schools at either end of the performance spectrum than the non-charter school averages were. Additionally, when the charter schools' scores were distributed across various categories for purposes of matching or comparing results, the number of schools in any one category often fell below 15. A commonly held research standard, applied to federal research studies, is that results should not be reported when the N (or number of schools) is fewer than 15.

Second, because charter schools, in general, tend to be smaller than non-charter schools, a higher percentage of charter schools administered the CSAP but were not able to report data than their non-charter public school counterparts.

Third, the free/reduced-price lunch eligibility data very likely was under-reported for charter schools. The number of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunches is counted on the basis of completed free/reduced-price lunch applications returned to the school. Because not every eligible family returns a completed application, free/reduced lunch eligibility is an imperfect proxy for determining poverty or low socioeconomic status (SES) in any context. In the context of many charter schools, however, the likelihood of underreporting was even greater. Approximately 16 charter schools in this study did not offer a lunch program in 1999-2000. Therefore, in order for these schools to report free/reduced-lunch eligibility data, the schools were required to ask parents to complete and return the eligibility form, even though no lunch benefit was offered to those parents. It is perhaps not surprising that most charter schools in this category did not report free/reduced-price lunch data or reported it as "0." It is difficult to determine the impact of this underreporting on the data described below. It can be argued, for example, that schools that do not feel obliged to offer a free lunch program can be assumed to serve families with the means to provide lunch for their children. Moreover, the categories used for "matching" the charter schools and non-charter schools (quintiles) are broad enough to likely capture many of the schools that underreported.

Fourth Grade Reading

To frame the analysis, Table 5 compares the charter and non-charter schools by the number of fourth grade students who took the CSAP. Again, note that schools did not report results when fewer than 16 students took the test. Table 6 provides a demographic comparison of the charter and non-charter schools that reported 4th grade reading CSAP results

Table 5: Comparison of Charter and Non-Charter Schools by Number of Students who Took the 4th Grade Reading CSAP

Number of Students	Charter Schools		Noncharter Schools	
	All Schools	Reporting Schools	All Schools	Reporting Schools
1-20	28.6%	9.1%	9.2%	3.0%
21-40	38.1%	48.5%	12.4%	13.2%
41-60	26.2%	33.3%	23.1%	24.7%
61-80	4.7%	6.1%	24.0%	25.6%
81-100	2.4%	3.0%	19.8%	21.2%
101-214	0.0%	0.0%	11.5%	12.3%

Table 6: Demographic Comparison of Charter and Noncharter Schools that Reported 4th Grade Reading CSAP Results

% Free /Reduced-Price Lunch			% Minority		
%	Charter	Noncharter	%	Charter	Noncharter
0%	27.3%	3%	0-6%	12.5%	10.4%
1-5%	33.3%	12.4%	6.1-10%	34.4%	12.3%
5.1-30%	24.2%	37.7%	10.1-30%	28.1%	36.6%
30.1+	15.2%	49.6%	30.1+	25.0%	40.7%
	N=33	N=771	N=33	N=771	
0-20%	75.8%	36.6%	0-20%	68.8%	47.7%
21-40%	12.1%	26.1%	21-40%	12.5%	21.0%
41-60%	6.0%	20.3%	41-60%	3.1%	13.1%
61-80%	3.0%	12.5%	61-80%	6.2%	8.5%
81-100%	3.0%	4.5%	81-100%	9.4%	9.7%

Charter schools and non-charter public schools that reported CSAP results in 4th grade reading were "matched" within identified ranges

- less than 20% minority and less than 20% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 21-40% minority and 21-40% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 41-60% minority and 41-60% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 61-80% minority and 61-80% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch; and
- 81-100% minority and 81-100% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch

Each school's average percentage of students that scored at the proficient level or above was weighted by the number of students who took that test. Then all the weighted values for the individual charter schools were added up and averaged to produce a charter school average. The same process was applied for non-charter public schools.

Table 7, below, shows the results of the matching. In the 0-20% / 0-20% quintile band for both percent minority and percent eligibility for free/reduced-price lunch eligibility, the charter school average percentage of students scoring at the proficient level or above was slightly higher than the non-charter public school average. In the 21-40% / 21-40% quintile band, the charter school average exceeded the non-charter school average by almost 5 percentage points. In the 81-100% / 81-100% category, the charter school average was slightly higher than the non-charter school average. These results are not reported in Table 7 because fewer than fifteen schools fell into these bands.

CDE was interested in exploring the relative performance of the various reform models adopted by the charter schools in this study. These models are described in Part 3 of this report. However, the only reform model which had a large enough number of schools to support such an analysis was the Core Knowledge model. The matched scores for Core Knowledge schools also are shown on Table 7.

Table 7: Charter and Non-Charter Average Percentage of Students Scoring at the Proficient Level or Above on the 4th Grade Reading CSAP Assessment, Matched by % Minority and % Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility

	0-20% Minority & 0-20% F/R	21 - 40% Minority & 21-40% FR	41-60% Minority & 41-60% F/R	61-80% Minority & 61-80% F/R	81-100% Minority & 81-100% F/R
Charter Schools	78% (22)	* (3)	-	-	* (2)
Core Knowledge Charter Schools	78% (15)				
Non-Charter Schools	77% (225)	61% (66)	51% (50)	41% (32)	27% (32)

* Results were not reported because N was fewer than 15.

Seventh Grade Writing

Table 8 compares the charter and non-charter schools by the number of seventh grade students who took the CSAP. Schools did not report results where fewer than 16 students took the test. Table 9 provides a demographic comparison of charter and non-charter schools that reported 7th grade writing CSAP results.

Table 8: Comparison of Charter and Non-Charter Schools by Number of Students who Took the 7th Grade Writing CSAP

Number of Students	<i>Charter Schools</i>		<i>Noncharter Schools</i>	
	All Schools	Reporting Schools	All Schools	Reporting Schools
1-20	31.7%	12.5%	19.6%	4.6%
21-40	26.8%	34.4%	11.4%	13.6%
41-60	29.3%	37.5%	6.2%	7.3%
61-80	4.9%	6.2%	5.3%	6.3%
81-100	4.9%	6.3%	4.4%	5.3%
101-543	2.4%	3.1%	53.1%	62.9%

Table 9: Demographic Comparison of Charter and Noncharter Schools that Reported 7th Grade Writing CSAP Results

% Free/Reduced-Price Lunch			% Minority		
%	Charter	Noncharter	%	Charter	Noncharter
0%	28.1%	3%	0-6%	21.9%	11.0%
1-5.9%	37.5%	11.0%	6.1-10.9%	31.2%	16.3%
6-30%	18.8%	40.5%	11-25.9%	25.0%	31.0%
30-100%	15.6%	48.2%	26+	21.9%	41.7%
	N=32	N=302		N=32	N=302
0-20%	75.0%	36.9%	0-20%	71.9%	50.0%
21-40%	15.6%	30.9%	21-40%	15.6%	22.0%
41-60%	6.3%	20.6%	41-60%	6.3%	15.3%
61-80%	3.1%	8.3%	61-80%	0.0%	7.0%
81-100%	0.0%	3.3%	81-100%	6.2%	5.7%

Charter schools and non-charter public schools that reported CSAP results in 7th grade writing were "matched" within identified ranges:

- less than 20% minority and less than 20% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 21-40% minority and 21-40% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 41-60% minority and 41-60% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch;
- 61-80% minority and 61-80% eligible for free/reduced price lunch; and
- 81-100% minority and 81-100% eligible for free/reduced-price lunch.

Each school's average percentage of students that scored at the proficient level or above was weighted by the number of students who took that test. Then all the weighted values for the individual charter schools were added up and averaged to produce a charter school average. The same process was applied for non-charter public schools.

Table 10, below, shows the results of the matching. In the 0-20% / 0-20% quintile band for percent minority and percent free/reduced-price lunch eligibility, the charter school average for students scoring at the proficient level or above was significantly higher (eight percentage points) than the non-charter public school average. Charter school averages at the 21-40% / 21-40% and 41-60% / 41-60% quintile bands also were higher than non-charter school averages by sizeable margins. These results are not reported in Table 10 because fewer than fifteen schools fell into each of these quintile bands.

Table 10: Charter and Non-Charter Average Percentage of Students Scoring at the Proficient Level or Above on the 7th Grade Writing CSAP Assessment, Matched by % Minority and % Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility

	0-20% Minority & 0-20% F/R	21 - 40% Minority & 21-40% FR	41-60% Minority & 41-60% F/R	61-80% Minority & 61-80% F/R	81-100% Minority & 81-100% F/R
Charter Schools (N)	65% (24)	* (3)	* (1)		
Core Knowledge Charter Schools (N)	61% (15)	* (1)			
Non-Charter Schools (N)	57% (100)	37% (30)	26% (29)	19% (12)	11% (12)

* Results were not reported because the N is fewer than 15

Note that the number of schools shown in Table 7 and Table 10 were less than the total number of schools (both charter and non-charter) that reported results on the respective tests. This is because the matching process only captured the scores of schools with demographics that fell within the broad quintile bands. If, for example, a school served a high percentage of racial/ethnic minority students but a low percentage of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch, it would have fallen outside the quintile bands used for matching.

CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRESS OVER TIME

A third lens that can be applied to the performance of charter schools on the CSAP is whether the charter schools improved their performance from the 1998-99 school year to the 1999-2000 school year. It is important to note that this comparison tracks the *school's* performance over time, not the performance of a particular cohort of students showing academic growth over time. The group of students who took the 4th grade CSAP in 1999-2000, for example, was a different class than the students who took the 4th grade reading CSAP in 2000-2001.

4th Grade Reading: Thirty-one charter schools in this study reported 4th grade CSAP reading scores in both 1998-99 and 1999-2000. Of these, 15 schools (48%) increased their scores by more than two percentage points. The same number (15 schools, 48%) decreased their scores by more than two percentage points. One school (2%) had scores that remained about the same.

7th Grade Writing: Twenty-seven charter schools in this study reported CSAP scores in 7th grade writing in both the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 school years. Of this total, eight schools (30%) showed an increase in their scores of more than two percentage points. The scores of fourteen schools (52%) decreased by more than two percentage points. The scores of the remaining five schools (18%) remained about the same.

2. PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS

As a general rule, the charter schools in this report engaged parents at a high level of involvement. This is not to say that all charter school parents could and wanted to participate. But many did and at high levels of responsibility and commitment. Research has shown that parental involvement has a profound effect on student achievement. Students whose parents are involved in their education are more enthusiastic and confident learners and achieve at higher levels. Similarly, schools where parents are involved are more effective at meeting the needs of all students.⁵⁴

Table 11 is designed to provide some insight into the extent and depth of parent involvement in charter schools. The table shows the school's enrollment to provide a context for the data. It is also noteworthy that, in general, parent involvement tends to be much higher in elementary schools than in middle and high schools and much higher in schools that serve students who are not significantly impacted by poverty.⁵⁵ The charter school data reflected in this report is consistent with these general trends. The table reflects two ways to measure parent involvement: the total number of hours volunteered by parents or family members during the school year and the percentage of families in the school who volunteered. Some schools maintained data in both forms; others in one format or the other. Blank cells indicate that the schools did not provide data.

Table 11 – Parent Involvement in Charter Schools – 1999-2000

Charter School (Chartering District)	Enrollment	Total Hours Volunteered by Parents/Families	% of Parents/Families Who Volunteered	Administered Parent Satisfaction Survey?
Academy Charter School (Douglas County School District)	445	11,246 hours	67% volunteered 20/hours	yes
Academy of Charter Schools (Adams 12 Five Star)	845	18,552 hours		yes
Alta Vista Charter School (Lamar School District)	80	991 hours		yes
Aspen-Carbondale Community School (Roaring Fork Sch. Dist.)	213	228 hours	Approximately 50%	yes
Battle Rock Charter School (Montezuma Cortez)	26	400 hours		yes
Boulder Preparatory Charter High School (Boulder Valley)	41	120 hours	10%	yes
Brighton Charter School (Brighton School District)	353	979 hours	30%	yes
Center for Discovery Learning (Jefferson County School District)	245	Not tracked in 1999-2000		
Cherry Creek Academy (Cherry Creek School District)	443	12,000+ hours		yes
Cheyenne Mountain Academy (Cheyenne Mountain Dist. 12)	303			yes
CIVA Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)	99	Approximately 500 hours	Approximately 34%	yes
Classical Academy (Academy School District)	621		Approximately 33%	yes
Collegiate Academy of Colorado (Jefferson County)	550			yes
Colorado High School (Greeley School District 6)	101			yes
Community of Learners (Durango School District)	123	2,900 hours		yes
Community Prep (Colorado Springs District 11)	145	Approximately 750 hours	Approximately 10%	yes
Compass Montessori School (Jefferson County School District)	172	8,178 hours	100%	yes
CONNECT Charter School (Pueblo School District 70)	139		20%	no
Core Knowledge Charter (Douglas County School District)	320	8,382 hours		yes
Crestone Charter School (Moffat Consolidated Sch. Dist)	59	1,400 hours		yes
Crown Pointe Charter School (Westminster District 50)	200	9,858 hours	60%	yes
DCS Montessori Charter School (Douglas County School District)	210		80%	yes
Eagle County Charter School (Eagle County School District)	128	6 hours month/family		yes
Elbert County Charter School (Elizabeth School District)	216	12,000 hours		yes
Excel Academy (Jefferson County School District)	126	7,640		yes

Table 11 - Parent Involvement in Charter Schools – 1999-2000

Charter School (Chartering District)	Enrollment	Total Hours Volunteered by Parents/Families	% of Parents/Families Who Volunteered	Administered Parent Satisfaction Survey?
EXCEL School (Durango 9-R School District)	109	30 hours/year per family		yes
Frontier Academy (Greeley School District 6)	452		68%	yes
GLOBE Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)	145	3,523 hours	30%	yes
Horizons Alternative School (Boulder Valley School District)	297	5,000 hours		yes
Jefferson Academy (Jefferson County School District)	337	17,143 hours		yes
Lake George Charter School (Park School District RE-2)	107	1,500 hours	90%	yes
Liberty Common School (Poudre School District)	502			
Lincoln Academy (Jefferson County School District)	245	7,479		yes
Littleton Academy (Littleton School District)	451	10,062	85%	yes
Littleton Preparatory Charter School (Littleton School District)	444	7,720 hours		yes
Magnet School of the Deaf (Jefferson County School District)	27		Approximately 5%	yes
Marble Charter School (Gunnison Watershed Sch. Dist.)	17	5 hours/week		yes
Montessori Peaks Academy (Jefferson County School District)	229	8,755 hours	65% contribute 50+ hours/year	yes
Monument Charter Academy (Lewis Palmer School District)	334			
Mountain View Core Knowledge (Canon City School District)	202			
The Odyssey School (Denver Public Schools)	167	5,285 hours		yes
Passage Charter School (Montrose County School District)	23		5%	yes
Pinnacle Charter School (Adams 12 Five Star)	635	6,500 hours		yes
Pioneer Charter School (Denver Public Schools)	311			
Platte River Academy (Douglas County School District)	384	13,486 hours		yes
Prairie Creeks Charter School (Strasburg School District)	23			
P.S. 1 (Denver Public Schools)	238	7,000 – 8,000 hours		yes
Pueblo School Arts-Sciences (Pueblo 60 School District)	371	11,939	96.2%	yes
Renaissance Charter (Douglas County School District)	297		60%	yes

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Table 11 - Parent Involvement in Charter Schools – 1999-2000

Charter School (Chartering District)	Enrollment	Total Hours Volunteered by Parents/Families	% of Parents/Families Who Volunteered	Administered Parent Satisfaction Survey?
Roosevelt-Edison Charter School ⁵⁶ (Colo. Springs Dist. 11)	703	7,000 hours		yes
Stargate Charter School (Adams 12 Five Star)	241	4,200 hours	75%	yes
Summit Middle School (Boulder Valley School District)	253			yes
Swallows Charter Academy (Pueblo School District 70)	177	2,344 hours	42%	yes
Twin Peaks Charter Academy (St. Vrain School District)	477	10,000 hours		yes
Union Colony Preparatory School (Greeley District 6)	181		58%	yes
Wyatt-Edison Charter School (Denver Public Schools)	655			yes
Youth & Family Academy (Pueblo School District 60)	118			yes

Data Source: Colorado Charter Schools

PARENT SURVEYS

Of the 57 charter schools in this status report, 51 provided information about their use of parent surveys or questionnaires. Of these 51 charter schools, 50 of these schools (98%) regularly administered a parent survey, most commonly on an annual basis.

These surveys had the potential to contribute to accountability in at least two ways. First, they provided useful feedback to the schools from parents on a regular basis. Second, they offered an important source of information that potential patrons of a charter school could review as one measure of the school's effectiveness.

PARENT CONTRACTS

Of the 57 schools in this report, 47 schools provided information related to the use of parent contracts. Of the 47 schools reporting, 22 schools (47%) required a parent contract in 1999-2000, and 25 schools (53%) did not. These contracts generally spelled out the school's expectations of parents related to their involvement in the school and in their children's education.

3. Market-Based Indicators

As schools of choice, charter schools also can be fairly measured by market-based indicators, such as the demand for the school (waiting lists), parent satisfaction and re-enrollment rates. Data related to these indicators are contained in this report in the school profiles of individual charter schools.

A quick perusal of the school profiles, however, will confirm that many charter schools in this study have extensive waiting lists, frequently exceeding the school's enrollment by several times. Indicators such as parent satisfaction and re-enrollment rates also are generally high.

4. Designation of Charter Schools as Colorado Schools of Excellence

The purpose of the John Irwin Colorado Schools of Excellence is to recognize and reward schools that demonstrate outstanding records of academic excellence related to five components:

- Student performance on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)
- Multiple local measures of academic growth
- Effective strategies for closing achievement gaps
- Other accreditation indicators related to academic excellence
- Parent/Community satisfaction.

During the 1999-2000 school year 105 schools applied for recognition through this program. Nineteen of these schools across Colorado received Excellence Awards. Each of the recipients received an "outstanding" rating (earning 25 or more points out of a total of 30 points on the review rubric) on the five components. In addition, at least 80% of the school's students scored proficient or above on a composite of the most recently administered CSAP testing.

Of the 19 schools that received Colorado Schools of Excellence awards, seven (nearly 40%) were charter schools. Yet, during the 1999-2000 school year charter schools represented only 3.6% of all Colorado public schools. Table 12 lists the 1999-2000 Colorado Schools of Excellence. The charter schools are shaded.

Table 12 - Designation of Charter Schools as Colorado Schools of Excellence

Name of School	School District
Battle Rock Charter School	Montezuma – Cortez RE-1
Bear Creek Elementary	Boulder Valley School District
Broadmoor Elementary	Cheyenne Mountain School District
Centennial Middle School	Boulder Valley School District
Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy	Cheyenne Mountain School District
Cottonwood Creek Elementary	Cherry Creek School District
High Plains Elementary	Boulder Valley School District
Hoehne Elementary	Hoehne Reorganized School District 3
Horizons Alternative School	Boulder Valley School District
Jefferson Academy	Jefferson County School District
Liberty Common School	Poudre School District
Maybell Elementary	Moffat County School District
Mesa Elementary	Boulder Valley School District
Pinon Valley Elementary	Cheyenne Mountain School District
Prairie Elementary	Prairie School District RE-11
Steele Elementary	Colorado Springs School District 11
Southern Hills Middle School	Boulder Valley School District
Stargate Charter School	Adams 12 Five Star School District
Summit Middle School	Boulder Valley School District

During the 2000-2001 school year, the Colorado Department of Education plans to transition the John Irwin Schools of Excellence Program to recognition and awards directly linked to Senate Bill 00-186, Part 6: School Report Cards.

5. Charter School Renewals/Closures

Under the Colorado Charter Schools Act, the renewal process is the ultimate tool of accountability. A charter renewal signals the satisfaction of the chartering or authorizing district that the charter school is fulfilling its commitments spelling out in the charter contract. Fifty-one of the 57 charter schools included in this report provided information about their renewal status. Of this total, 40 schools already had successfully completed a renewal process before or during the 1999-2000; another seven were in process. The other four schools were still operating within their initial charter term.

In all but one instance, the charter schools that renewed their charters received a renewal term equal to or greater than the original term of the charter. The exception, The Center for Discovery Learning (then known as Community Involved Charter School) was originally awarded a three-year charter by Jefferson County School District. The school's charter subsequently was renewed for one year. Upon further review by the chartering district, the school's charter was renewed for a five-year term, with an audit in the third year.

The process used by chartering districts to consider the renewal of a charter varied on a district-by-district basis. The range of renewal activities completed by schools in this report included:

- Completion of a renewal application with a question and response format requiring extensive attachments.
- Negotiations with district officials.
- Public hearings.
- An outside educational audit.
- A site review by district review team.
- Completion of a renewal criteria checklist addressed to five major areas: Academics, Goals and Objectives, Financial, Administration and Governance and Accountability.

Increasingly, chartering school districts are beginning to incorporate elements of the Colorado League of Charter School's Accountability and Evaluation Plan into their renewal processes. The plan involves a guided self-study, site visits from outside observers (a team of five to seven educators) and access to consultants. It is designed to help charter schools meet their contractual obligations, to foster a process that leads to careful reflection within the school community on its progress, and in the end, to offer both the district and the school the benefit of an outside perspective on the school's progress.

Several large districts (Douglas County School District, Jefferson County School District, Colorado Springs District 11) have formally adopted the external team's visit and report as a key component in the renewal process for their charter schools. The external team's review is built around a set (roughly 30 in number) of Critical Questions that were designed by the League with input from charter schools. In addition, Colorado Springs District 11 expects to proceed with other key steps in the League's Accountability Plan, including the school's own self-study based on the same set of Critical Questions. Several other districts have found the self-studies completed by the charter schools, as well as the outside reports of the visiting teams, to be of value in their efforts to evaluate the progress of charter schools.

The self-study process can take much of a year to complete. The site visits usually take place over a two- to three-day period. The visit teams' reports are usually completed and sent to the schools, and where requested, to the chartering districts, within two to three weeks of the visit. These written reports contain a series of observations, commendations and recommendations.

CLOSURES

In the nearly seven years of the Colorado Charter Schools Act's operation, only three charter schools have closed. Two of these were voluntary closures.

- The Clayton Charter School (Denver Public Schools) was closed voluntarily by the charter operator at the end of the 1996-97 school year after three years of operation. The discontinuation of the school was prompted by the decision of the Denver Public Schools to establish its own charter school in the same service area.
- In October 1999, the Alpine Charter School (Summit School District) closed as a result of declining enrollment. Concerns about its upcoming renewal process apparently contributed to the school's decision to close.
- In June 2000, the State Board of Education, after two hearings, upheld the decision of the Douglas County School District RE-1 Board of Education not to renew the charter contract of the Colorado Visionary Charter School. The State Board found that the decision of the local board of education was not contrary to the best interests of the pupils in the school district and community. The State Board had previously (on March 1, 2000) remanded the non-renewal decision back to the local board of education with instructions to reconsider as follows:
 - That the charter school develop and present to the school district a mutually agreeable budget for the term of the contract.
 - That the charter school and school district obtain written resolution of the pending lawsuits involving the charter school.
 - That the charter school present to the school district a satisfactory long-term facility solution, to include financing.
 - That the charter school and school district develop mutually agreeable district oversight provisions to be included in the contract.

This represents a closure rate of 4.2% (calculated by dividing the number of closures by the total number of charter schools that had been operational at any time during the period from 1993 to the fall of 2000).

6. The Record of Charter Schools in Achieving their Own Performance Goals

This section of the report presents the record of charter schools in achieving performance goals that the schools themselves articulated, using assessment tools that the schools chose (or agreed with the chartering district) to administer. Given the fact that each charter school had unique performance goals and different approaches to measuring progress toward those goals, this report presents performance data for each school individually using a two-page school profile.

The first page of each profile summarizes key demographic data about the school and lists the school's mission, educational approach, and governance structure and performance goals. The second page presents student assessment data and data on other performance indicators over time. The profiles do not necessarily describe the universe of assessment activities that occurred in the charter schools during the 1999-2000 school year. Rather, they reflect those activities (and the data they produced) that the charter schools reported in connection with this study.

All data shown in the school profiles, including the demographic data, were from the 1999-2000 academic year. The demographic data were obtained from the CDE database and reflected the schools' status as of October "count day" 1999. The number of students on the waiting list and the school performance and student achievement data were self-reported by the charter schools.

Several of the charter schools participating in this study questioned the demographic data contained in the CDE database and reported on the school profile. As part of the information collection process involved in preparing this report, CDE invited the charter schools to provide data they believed more accurately reflected the status of their school in October 1999. Data from the charter schools that responded to this invitation were included in the school profiles following the official data. CDE should continue to educate charter schools and their chartering districts about the importance of reporting accurate data to their chartering districts each fall. CDE also should make every effort to assure that the definitions applied to various kinds of data are uniformly understood and applied by both the charter schools, and by the chartering districts through which charter school data are reported to CDE.

The Charter Schools Act requires that any charter school application articulate the school's performance goals for students and measurable objectives for student growth. The Act also requires the application to spell out the methods that the charter school will use to assess and report on student progress.⁵⁷

In Colorado, the discretion to approve a charter school's performance goals and its plan for assessing and reporting the academic progress of students lies with individual chartering districts, not a single chartering organization. Some charter schools included in this report developed applications that contained very specific performance standards and measurable objectives related to student performance. The applications from other schools contained goals and objectives that were more qualitative and more difficult to measure. However, the approval of the charters indicated the adequacy of the identified goals, performance standards, and assessment methods, at least in the eyes of the chartering district.

As the charter schools became operational, they updated and refined their performance goals on a regular basis through the school improvement planning process. All public schools (including charter schools) are required to participate in this process.⁵⁸ However, the formats used by charter schools in school improvement planning varied depending on the requirements of the chartering district.

The following questions provide a qualitative framework for evaluating the data presented in the school profiles:

- *Did the school set high goals for student achievement?* Unless the goals themselves are worthy, their accomplishment does not necessarily translate into improved learning results for students.
- *Were the school's goals consistent with its mission and distinctive educational approach?* The most authentic performance goals measure what matters most to the school community.
- *Were the school's goals measurable? Did the school use assessment tools that were capable of measuring the goals?* In this regard, recognize that it is much easier for a Core Knowledge school to identify assessments that can measure its curriculum, than a school that is pursuing a less structured program. For example, most Core Knowledge schools would consider the results of norm-referenced tests to be a fair indicator of their progress. Alternative schools would not. For example, several schools in this report administered the ITBS only at the request of their chartering district. These schools do not accept the results as valid in light of the non-alignment between this assessment and the schools' educational program.
- *What were the school's demographics?* Schools that served a high percentage of students who were at risk of under-achievement because of economic disadvantage or special needs faced a very different set of challenges than the schools that served a lower percentage of those students.
- *Did the assessment data reflect progress over time?* It is useful to consider the assessment data in terms of growth, and not just at a particular point in time. The same numerical score on a particular assessment may indicate marked improvement in one school and static performance in another, simply because the schools may have started from dramatically different baselines.
- *Did the assessment data report progress of the same cohort of students?* Most schools reported assessment data by grade levels. These data showed the performance of a first grade class one year against the performance of a different first grade class the second year. Tracking the performance of first grade students in one year against the performance of second grade students in the next year is also problematic, because this comparison does not account for changes in the population. In schools with high mobility rates, the composition of the first grade class in one year may be very different than the composition of the second grade class in the following year. Perhaps the best way to track the impact of the school's program over time is to track the cohort of students who are continuously enrolled in the school over a particular period of time.
- *How large is the school? How many students took the assessment?* In small schools where only a few students take a particular assessment, the results are much less reliable than with a larger sample. In cases where the sample (the number of students taking the test) is small, the performance of a single student can have a sizeable impact on the results for a grade level or for an entire school. For the same reason, it is very difficult to track student achievement over time when only a handful of students take the tests each year.

CONCLUSIONS

Taking into account all of the factors described above, the author of this report made judgments about whether the charter schools in this study were meeting or exceeding the expectations defined for their performance in their charter application and subsequent school improvement plans. There is a subjective component to this analysis; it does not lend itself to the precision of a mathematical computation. Moreover, this judgment is based on limited information: the data reported by the charter schools for purposes of this study.

The margin of difference between the two categories (the charter schools that were meeting or exceeding expectations for their performance and those schools that were not) was so great, however, that even if the categorization of several schools were changed it would not alter the overall conclusion: In 1999-2000, the charter schools in this study, as a cohort group, were meeting or exceeding the expectations defined for their performance.

Specifically, 50 schools (88%) provided data to indicate they were meeting or exceeding the expectations defined for their performance:

- Academy Charter School (Douglas County School District)
- Academy of Charter Schools (Adams 12 School District)
- Alta Vista Charter School (Lamar School District)
- Aspen - Carbondale Community School (Roaring Fork School District)
- Battle Rock Charter School (Montezuma Cortez School District)
- Boulder Preparatory High School (Boulder Valley School District)
- Brighton Charter School (Brighton School District)
- Cherry Creek Academy (Cherry Creek School District)
- Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy (Cheyenne Mountain School District)
- CIVA Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)
- Classical Academy (Academy School District 20)
- Collegiate Academy of Colorado (Jefferson County School District)
- Community of Learners Charter School (Durango School District 9-R)
- Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)
- Compass Montessori School (Jefferson County School District)
- Connect Charter School (Pueblo School District 70)
- Core Knowledge Charter School (Douglas County School District)
- Crestone Charter School (Moffat Consolidated School District)
- Crown Pointe Charter School (Westminster School District 50)
- DCS Montessori Charter School (Douglas County School District)
- Eagle Charter School (Eagle County School District)
- Elbert County Charter School (Elizabeth School District)
- Excel Academy (Jefferson County School District)
- EXCEL School (Durango School District 9-R)
- Frontier Academy Charter School (Weld School District 6)
- GLOBE (Colorado Springs District 11)
- Horizons Alternative School (Boulder Valley School District)
- Jefferson Academy Elementary (Jefferson County School District)
- Lake George Charter School (Park School District)
- Liberty Common School (Poudre School District)

- Lincoln Academy (Jefferson County School District)
- Littleton Academy (Littleton Public Schools)
- Littleton Preparatory Charter School (Littleton Public Schools)
- Montessori Peaks Charter School (Jefferson County School District)
- Monument Charter Academy (Lewis Palmer School District)
- Mountain View Core Knowledge (Canon City School District)
- The Odyssey School (Denver Public Schools)
- Passage Charter School (Montrose County School District)
- Pinnacle Charter School (Adams 12 School District)
- Platte River Academy Charter (Douglas County School District)
- P.S. 1 Charter School (Denver Public Schools)
- Pueblo School for the Arts and Sciences (Pueblo School District 60)
- Renaissance Charter School (Douglas County School District)
- Roosevelt Edison Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)
- Stargate Charter School (Adams 12 School District)
- Summit Middle School (Boulder Valley School District)
- Swallows Academy (Pueblo School District 70)
- Twin Peaks Charter School (St. Vrain School District)
- Union Colony Preparatory School (Weld School District 6)
- Wyatt-Edison Charter School (Denver Public Schools)

Seven schools (12%), including one school that did not report any student achievement or school performance data, did not produce data sufficient to make the case that they are meeting their performance expectations. This is not to say necessarily that these schools are not meeting expectations for their performance, but rather that the data reported to the state for purposes of this study was not sufficient to make the case.

- Center for Discovery Learning (Jefferson County School District)
- Colorado High School (Greeley School District 6)
- Magnet School of the Deaf (Jefferson County School District)
- Marble Charter School (Gunnison Watershed School District)
- Pioneer Charter School (Denver Public Schools)
- Prairie Creeks Charter School (Strasburg School District)
- Youth and Family Academy (Pueblo School District 60)

ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Douglas County School District

Location:	Castle Rock (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	17.6
Enrollment:	445	Percent Minority:	7.6%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1993	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	1.1%
Waiting List:	200	Percent Special Education:	10.1%

MISSION: Academy Charter School provides a challenging academic program based on the Core Knowledge Curriculum that promotes Academic Excellence, Character Development and Educational Enthusiasm for its students.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Academy Charter School uses an intensive, hands-on developmental approach to teach the Core Knowledge curriculum. Teachers strive to integrate curriculum/instruction across disciplines while developing students' problem solving and critical thinking skills. Technology and organizational skills are integrated into the curriculum. Each student has a student learning plan.

GOVERNANCE: A Governing Board (comprised of seven parents) sets policy for the school. The deans of the school are responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Each student will show a minimum of one year's growth in all academic areas (or as reasonable for students with exceptional needs).
- ◆ Meet or exceed the 65 percentile on composite scores for grades 2-8.
- ◆ Attendance rate will attain or exceed 95%.
- ◆ 75% of parents will volunteer at least 20 hours per year.
- ◆ Math proficiency scores for grades 4 and 7 will increase to 80% as measured by Terra Nova.
- ◆ Reading proficiency scores for grades 4 and 7 will increase to 80% as measured by Terra Nova.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99		1999-2000
Terra Nova National percentile rank	A comparison of Terra Nova scores for the same students from the 1996-97 to the 1997-98 school year showed significant improvements for students who scored low in 1996-97. Scores for students who scored high in 1996-97 were mixed.	Reading 4 th 81 7 th 82	Math 84 84	Not reported
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP)	3rd grade reading: 89% proficient or above (district: 80%) 4th grade reading: 66% proficient or above (district: 70%) 4th grade writing 49% proficient or above (district: 47%)	% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade school 86% district 81 % 4th grade school 76% 51% district 74% 49% 7th grade school 65% 58% district 76% 60%		% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade school 78% district 83% 4th grade school 78% 45% district 76% 49% 7th grade school 71% 58% district 77 % 59% Math Science 5th grade school 71% district 73% 8th grade school 46% 67% district 51% 65%
Parent Involvement	9,000 volunteer hours Approximately 81% of parents/families volunteered	11,300 volunteer hours		11,246 hours
Basic Literacy Rate				97.5% (6 of 240 K-4 grade students are on Individualized Literacy Plans (ILPs) pursuant to the Colorado Basic Literacy Act)
Attendance Rate	Not reported	96%		Not reported

ACADEMY OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

Chartering District: Adams 12 Five Star School District

Location:	Denver (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	17.8
Enrollment:	845	Percent Minority:	29.6%
Grade Levels:	K-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	31.5%
Waiting List:	240	Percent Special Education:	3.9%

MISSION: Our mission is to offer students with a variety of learning and communication styles (kindergarten through 12th grade), the opportunity, within a safe and structured environment, to excel at a challenging course of study through testing, placement and quality instruction that develops his or her talents in areas such as phonics, literature, penmanship, writing, speech, language, logic, civics, history, geography, research and computer skills, math, scientific methods, arts, music and physical education. We recognize self-esteem comes with accomplishment and achievement; therefore, we will provide opportunity for personal growth through academic achievement. We view parental satisfaction with our program and accomplishments as a gauge of our success; therefore, we require active parent involvement.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Academy of Charter Schools operates as a back to basics school emphasizing academics in a safe environment. The Academy uses the Core Knowledge Curriculum by E. D. Hirsch, which offers a planned progression of specific knowledge in history, geography, mathematics, science, language arts and fine arts. It represents a first and ongoing attempt to state specifically a core of shared knowledge that children should learn in American schools. The Core Knowledge Sequence is not a list of facts to be memorized. Rather, it is a guide to coherent content from grade to grade, designed to encourage steady academic progress as children build their knowledge and skills from one year to the next. The Core Knowledge Sequence is distinguished by its specificity. Moreover, because the Sequence offers a coherent plan that builds year by year, it helps prevent repetitions and gaps in instruction that result from vague curricular guidelines.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board (comprised of seven parents, one OPT representative and one teacher) makes policy decisions for the school. The Executive Director makes day-to-day operational decisions, while the Elementary and Secondary Directors take care of instructional decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students who have attended Academy for three years or more will score in the 65-75 percentile on nationally normed tests.
- ◆ Average test scores for students will increase by at least five percentile points.
- ◆ The school will attain an attendance rate of at least 95% for elementary and 92% for secondary grade levels.
- ◆ Parents and community members will contribute over 15,000 hours of volunteer time annually. The average number of volunteer hours per family will exceed 36 hours/year.
- ◆ 85% of parents, staff, community and students will be satisfied with the school.
- ◆ Every graduating student will be prepared for college (college remediation courses will not be necessary).
- ◆ 80% or more of students who have attended Academy two years or more will graduate.

MEASURE	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000	
	Reading	Language	Reading	Language	Reading	Language
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National percentile rank Tests were administered in spring of the designated school year 50% is the national average	K-6	51	K-6	54	K-6	54
	7-8	55	7-8	53	7-8	51
	9-12	55	9-12	56	9-12	58
	School	53	School	54	School	54
	(all students)		(all students)		(all students)	
		<i>Math</i>	<i>Soc. Studies</i>		<i>Math</i>	<i>Soc. Studies</i>
	K-6	54	46	K-6	51	44
	7-8	54	50	7-8	50	54
	9-12	56	57	9-12	60	57
	School	54	50	School	54	49
		<i>Science</i>	<i>Composite</i>		<i>Science</i>	<i>Composite</i>
	K-6	51	49	K-6	51	49
7-8	54	50	7-8	50	50	
9-12	59	56	9-12	59	58	
School	54	51	School	53	51	
ITBS Longitudinal Data Data shown are Pretest/Post-test scores for students who attended Academy of Charter Schools for more than 3 years as of Spring 1998. (Pretest represents the entering test scores of students. Post-test represents Spring 1998 scores.)	K-6	63	K-6	58	K-6	54
	7-8	61	7-8	58	7-8	55
	9-12	57	9-12	61	9-12	62
	School	61	School	59	School	57
		<i>Math</i>	<i>Soc. Studies</i>		<i>Math</i>	<i>Soc. Studies</i>
	K-6	66	53	K-6	61	50
	7-8	61	56	7-8	61	59
	9-12	64	64	9-12	66	60
	School	64	57	School	63	55
		<i>Science</i>	<i>Composite</i>		<i>Science</i>	<i>Composite</i>
	K-6	60	61	K-6	58	56
	7-8	57	57	7-8	54	56
9-12	63	63	9-12	64	63	
School	60	60	School	59	58	
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP) % proficient or above	3 rd grade reading: 70% proficient or above (district: 58%)		Reading 3 rd grade 62% (district 58%)		Reading 3 rd grade 73% (district 65%)	
	4 th grade reading: 61 9% proficient or above (district: 51%)		4 th grade 48% (district 51%)		4 th grade 50% (district 56%)	
	4 th grade writing 42 9% proficient or above (district: 30%)		Writing 25% 31% 39% (district 52%)		Writing 23% 21% 30% (district 52%)	
					Math 5 th grade 38% (district 38%)	
					8 th grade 19% (district 24%)	
					Science 25% 42%	
ACT (American College Test)	7 students / 18.4 average score		11 students / 21.2 average score		20 students / 21.6 average score	
Parent Survey on Teacher Performance 5 point scale with 5 being the highest score	Overall Score - 4.02 (42% of parents responded to the survey)		Overall score - 4.25 (31% of all parents responded to the survey)		Overall score - 4.32 (32% of parents responded to the survey)	
Parent Involvement	Over 20,995 hours		Over 25,686 hours		Over 18,552 hours	
Attendance Rate	94.2%		93.4%		93.6%	
Graduation Rate	78.6% (91.7% for students who attended Academy for more than one year)		91.3% (95.6% for students who attended Academy for more than one year)		77.6% (97.2% for students who attended the Academy for more than one year)	

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ALTA VISTA CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Lamar School District RE-2

Location:	Larmar (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	20.0 *
Enrollment:	80	Percent Minority:	13.8% *
Grade Levels:	K-7		
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	31.3% *
Waiting List:	13	Percent Special Education:	6.3% *

The charter school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher ratio: 18.0; Percent Minority: 18%; Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 33.0%; Percent Special Education: 9.0%.

MISSION: The mission of Alta Vista is to strengthen the academic performance of public school pupils in grades Kindergarten through Eighth by providing the attributes, traditions and virtues of a country school which allows students at all levels of performance to interact and work together. Alta Vista seeks to design a basic curriculum with enrichment and a delivery system, which will allow each student to be challenged to his or her individual maximum potential. The school achieves these goals through emphasis on a structured educational environment, strong encouragement of parental involvement and commitment to assessing each child individually as he or she progressed through Alta Vista Charter School.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Alta Vista's curriculum is based on the E.D. Hirsch Core Knowledge Curriculum and complemented by instructional materials including Saxton Math, Six-Trait Writing, Accelerated Reading Program and Houghton Mifflin Reading Series and Saxton Phonics. All classes are required to present class plays to other students and parents. This requirement helps students meet the standards in Language Arts. Many plays are based on topics covered in the Social Studies curriculum. Working with parents, Alta Vista strives to provide each student with an academic program tailored for his or her individual level of knowledge and ability.

GOVERNANCE: The school's seven member Governing Board (comprised of six parents and one community member) sets and interprets policy for the school. The administrator oversees the daily operation of the school, ensuring that school policies are implemented.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- 95% of students at Alta Vista will be promoted to the next grade level.
- The school will maintain or increase by one NCE in Math and one NCE in Reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).
- 80% of students in reading and math will pass 80% of the criterion-referenced tests at the 80% or better

MEASURE	1998-99	1999-2000	
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National Percentile Rank		Reading Language	
		2 nd grade	64 76
		3 rd grade	50 54
		4 th grade	76 72
		5 th grade	45 37
		6 th grade	61 56
		7 th grade	72 56
		Mathematics Composite	
		2 nd grade	88 88
		3 rd grade	72 58
4 th grade	77 75		
5 th grade	62 49		
6 th grade	66 63		
7 th grade	67 71		
Attendance	96.5%	96.9%	
Parent Involvement Number of volunteer hours contributed to the school		991 hours	

***NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this school because fewer than 16 students took any given assessment.**

ASPEN/CARBONDALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Chartering District: Roaring Fork School District

Location: Woody Creek and Carbondale (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio: 11.3
Enrollment: 213	Percent Minority: 4.2%
Grade Levels: K-8	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 0.0%
Opening Date: Fall 1995	Percent Special Education: 4.7%
Waiting List: 40	

NOTE: Two separate schools in different locations (Carbondale and Aspen) operate under a single charter.

MISSION: To help our students attain a strong academic foundation, interactive social skills and a commitment to personal and community responsibility. We strive to nurture, educate and graduate confident, creative and competent students. The school's focus is on integrated and experiential learning that combines teacher-led instruction with abundant opportunities for children to initiate and complete their own projects. Our students become and remain curious, independent and self-directed learners. They learn to take responsibility for their own education.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The school offers integrated and experiential learning that combines teacher-led instruction with project-based learning driven by student interest. Students establish individual learning goals each year and assess themselves through portfolios. The curriculum is project-based. The projects are mapped to the curriculum and aligned with standards and assessments. Students demonstrate skills and knowledge gained by creating a project which they present in learning centers.

GOVERNANCE: The schools are operated by COMPASS, a setting for educational and community learning that was established in 1970. COMPASS is home to nine learning projects that work in preK-8 education, teacher preparation, the arts, environment and community organizing. The COMPASS board consists of community members and parents interested in one or more of COMPASS' projects. On a day-to-day basis, the schools are operated by a principal in collaboration with Leadership Teams consisting of parents and teachers. The COMPASS board is comprised of three parents, one teacher, and two community members. The board, in conjunction with a school-based council (comprised of four parents, two staff members, two non-voting students and two administrators), sets policy for the school. The Administration makes day-to-day operating decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Attain an overall student attendance average of at least 90%.
- ◆ Teachers will incorporate state and district content standards in their curriculum, as evidenced by individual teacher portfolios, the school portfolio, and student portfolios of projects.
- ◆ Graduation rate of 100%. All graduates will leave school prepared for high school.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000																														
Student Portfolios Assessment focuses on artifacts that students can present to teachers, parents and others, demonstrating competency in reading, writing, speaking and listening.	100% of students have portfolios. Aspen Community School staff report "74% progress toward a thorough assessment of each student and their progress."	100% of students have portfolios. Aspen and Carbondale Community School staff report "85% progress toward a thorough assessment of each student and their progress." Students incorporate standards and benchmarks documents in portfolios	100% of students have portfolios. Aspen and Carbondale Community School staff report "90% progress toward a thorough assessment of each student and their progress." Students incorporate standards and benchmarks documents in portfolios																														
Graduation Rate	100%	100%	100%																														
Roaring Fork District Writing Assessment Using 6-Trait Writing Program Scores reflect a 5-point scale	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Grade</td> <td>4</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ideas/Content</td> <td>2 58</td> <td>3 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Originality</td> <td>2 5</td> <td>3 09</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Voice</td> <td>2 9</td> <td>3 36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sentence Fluency</td> <td>2 6</td> <td>3 55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mechanics</td> <td>2 0</td> <td>3 36</td> </tr> </table>	Grade	4	8	Ideas/Content	2 58	3 18	Originality	2 5	3 09	Voice	2 9	3 36	Sentence Fluency	2 6	3 55	Mechanics	2 0	3 36	Not available from district until January 2000	Not available												
Grade	4	8																															
Ideas/Content	2 58	3 18																															
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Voice	2 9	3 36																															
Sentence Fluency	2 6	3 55																															
Mechanics	2 0	3 36																															
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd Grade Reading: 82% proficient or above (74% district average) Results are not reported for 4 th grade reading and writing because fewer than 16 students took the test.	3rd Grade Reading: 77% proficient or above (69% district average) 4th Grade Reading: 65% proficient or above (63% district average) 4th Grade Writing: 10% proficient or above (23% district average)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>% proficient or above</td> <td>Reading</td> <td>Writing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd grade</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>school</td> <td>67%</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district</td> <td>66%)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th grade</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>school</td> <td>57%</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district</td> <td>63%</td> <td>29%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7th grade</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>school</td> <td>32%</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district</td> <td>63%</td> <td>32%)</td> </tr> </table> 8 th grade CSAP scores were not reported because fewer than 16 students took the test.	% proficient or above	Reading	Writing	3rd grade			school	67%		(district	66%)		4th grade			school	57%	13%	(district	63%	29%)	7th grade			school	32%	16%	(district	63%	32%)
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(district	63%	32%)																															
Attendance Rate	90%	94%	95%																														

BATTLE ROCK CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Montezuma Cortez School District

Location:	Cortez (rural)	Student Teacher Ratio:	12.3*
Enrollment:	26	Percent Minority:	11.5%*
Grade Levels:	K-6		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	9.2%*
Waiting List:	12	Percent Special Education:	11.5%*

The charter school self-reported the following data: Student-to-Teacher Ratio: 13.0; Percent Minority: 12.0%; Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 42%; Percent Special Education: 0%

MISSION: The mission of Battle Rock School is to enrich the students through both outdoor and indoor educational studies. Education at Battle Rock will promote the sharing of responsibilities, nurturing of family values, interacting with multi-age groups, and participation in innovative hands-on lessons to prepare the student to be a decent, self-motivated, contributing citizen.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Battle Rock School offers personalized learning experiences for every child. Core academic skills are taught through thematic projects. Instruction features outdoor learning, the community as classroom, multi-age groupings and acceleration based on ability. The school works closely with parents to support instruction and reinforce values.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board is comprised of five parents and one community member who must live in McElmo Canyon and may or may not be a parent. The Governing Board sets policy for the school. The Director makes day-to-day operational decisions. The charter school's governing board is in the process of adopting the Carver Model of Policy Governance.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ All students will obtain at least a 75% mastery level in Reading, Language and Math.
- ◆ 90% of students will perform at or above grade level as measured by the standard testing instruments of the district
- ◆ The school will attain an attendance rate of at least 95%.
- ◆ The school will attain a 100% graduation rate (measured by grade level promotion.)

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)-Form K complete battery % of students performing at or above grade level	Language - 62.5% / 82% Reading - 82% / 100% Math - 50% / 75% (Fall 1997 / Spring 1998)	Not administered	Not administered
District developed "Levels Test" % of students performing at or above grade level	All students scored at either proficient or advanced level in reading/language and math. No student had overall scores indicating "in progress."	Reading 93% 100% Math 79% 86% Fall 1998/ Spring 1999	Reading (grades 3-6) In progress – 0% Proficient – 64% Advanced – 36% Mathematics (grades 3-6) In progress – 13% Proficient – 43% Advanced – 43% Science (4th grade only) In progress – 0% Proficient – 33% Advanced – 64%
STAR Reading and Math Assessment		Reading – 65% proficient or above Math – 74% proficient or above	Reading: In Progress – 33% Proficient – 33% Advanced 33% Math: In Progress – 31% Proficient – 7% Advanced – 62%
Curriculum-Based Post Test Instruments (% of students who obtain 75% mastery of material)	Language - 90% / 100% Reading - 80% / 100% Math - 90% / 92% (Fall 1997 / Spring 1998)	Language 95% / 100% Reading 95% / 100% Math 100% / 95% (Fall 1998 / Spring 1999)	Not Reported
Graduation Rate Measured by grade level promotion	100%	100%	100%
Attendance Rate	96.6%	94%	95%

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this school because fewer than 16 students took the test in each year.

BOULDER PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL

Chartering District: Boulder Valley School District

Location:	Boulder (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	11.1
Enrollment:	41	Percent Minority:	39.0%
Grade Levels:	9 - 12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0%
Waiting List:	not reported	Percent Special Education:	24.4%

MISSION: Boulder Preparatory High School's mission is to provide year-round college preparatory education for all enrolled Boulder Valley students. Boulder Preparatory High School targets students who have become "at risk" youth because they are disconnected from the traditional school system or have had a troubled childhood. Boulder Prep High School provides an educational program that not only teaches the classics in a classical way, but also teaches how to apply the lessons of the classics to modern day situations and issues. Every student has a talent or interest that if nourished and encouraged will result in excellence. Achieving excellent results gives hope and confidence. The student must then be taught to translate that success into a better understanding of other topics and ideas. Teachers are responsible for facilitating the process of translating success from one subject to another. Boulder Prep's mission is to provide each student with the opportunity to grow into respectful young adults who will have the knowledge, will and self-esteem to succeed in college and in life.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Courses are presented in seven-week blocks on a year-round schedule. Students receive at least eighty hours of instruction in each course. Students demonstrate their abilities to read and comprehend all course material, write effectively about assigned course work and apply the work learned in a substantive manner. In most classes, there are two instructors in order to provide more individualized assistance to students. Educational programming stresses the traditional core subjects in a small group setting. This setting allows instructors and students to approach subjects in ways that meaningfully build upon the educational experience. The course content and academic standards are the same as other high schools in the authorizing district.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of two parents, two teachers, two community representatives, and one student. The Board is responsible for determining the school policies. The school administration is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Improved academic performance
- ◆ Improved attendance
- ◆ Graduation
- ◆ College acceptance
- ◆ College attendance
- ◆ Reduction of criminal recidivism.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Academic Performance	Students took the California Achievement Test at the beginning and end of the school year. The results showed small gains	Students took written assessments and the CTBS standardized test. Results were mixed from 14% to 40%	Students took "Boulder Prep" assessment, at beginning and end of the year. Evaluation not complete due to use of CSAP.
Attendance	90% attendance for students who remained for full five blocks	85% attendance for students who remained full five blocks.	86% attendance for students who remained full five blocks.
Graduation	All 18 seniors have completed the program and graduated	All 18 seniors have completed the program and graduated	All eight seniors graduated.
College Acceptance	All 18 seniors who graduated were accepted into at least one college	All 18 seniors who graduated were accepted into at least one college	All eight seniors who graduated were accepted into at least one college.
College Attendance	Three of the 18 students who graduated enrolled in college	Three of the 18 students who graduated enrolled in college.	One of the eight students who graduated enrolled in college
Reduction of criminal recidivism	No student committed new criminal acts.	80% of students committed no new criminal acts	70% of students committed no new criminal acts
Advanced Placement Courses		School provided three AP classes. Six students took an AP class, Five students passed the AP examination	No AP courses were offered

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this charter school because the test was not administered in the grade levels served by the school during the 1999-2000 school year.

BRIGHTON CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Brighton School District 27J

Location:	Brighton (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	11.9
Enrollment:	353	Percent Minority:	28.6%
Grade Levels:	6-10		
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	4.2%
Waiting List:	10	Percent Special Education:	3.1%

MISSION: The Brighton Charter School enables students to transition directly from the Charter School into skilled careers or college by offering a core knowledge curriculum and enhanced learning through business and college partnerships.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

The school has adopted clearly identified instructional objectives (content standards) for each major subject area. The school calls these essential learnings “walk ways.” The school offers instructional support and additional learning opportunities to students who are at risk of not meeting established standards through Saturday school, Zero Hour classes, academic lab periods and modified schedules. Instruction is differentiated to ensure that every child receives appropriate instruction. Systematic assessment is used to make instructional decisions, including those related to student grouping.

GOVERNANCE: The school’s five-member board of directors (comprised of three founders of the charter school and two parents) set policy for the school. The administrator is responsible for day to day operational decisions. The administrator serves on the board of directors in non-voting capacity.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Brighton Charter School will be both “data” and “market” driven in establishing goals and in assessing the effectiveness of our instructional programs.
- ◆ The foundation of the school’s curriculum is the educational content standards established by the state of Colorado. For this reason, the school will use the CSAP as a major indicator of student competency and as a basis of grade advancement, and eventually, as a requirement for graduation from our school.

MEASURE	1998-99	1999-2000
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	7th grade Reading: 63% proficient or above (district: 41%) 7th grade Writing: 50% proficient or above (district: 28%)	7th grade Reading: 58% proficient or above (district: 44%) 7th grade Writing: 45% proficient or above (district: 26%) 8th grade Math 16% proficient or above (district: 15%) 8th grade Science 44% proficient or above (district: 26%)
TERRA NOVA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS National Percentile rank. Numbers in parenthesis are the scores for district 27J	6th grade Read. Lang. Math Total 61.0 57.0 59.0 62.0 (42.1) (45.1) (43.7) (46.9) 8th grade 50.0 43.5 27.0 38.0 (53.0) (41.0) (43.4) (46.2)	6th grade Read. Lang. Math Total 63.0 68.0 55.5 67.6 (46.0) (51.0) (44.0) (49.0) 8th grade 71.5 58.0 46.5 68.0 (50.0) (47.0) (44.0) (48.0)
Building-Level Assessments used for accountability and to diagnosis student needs (Numbers shown are mean score) Tests are administered in May to students at all grade levels	New Standards Reference Examination: Language Arts (Harcourt Brace) 6 32% 7 48% 8 54% 9 60% 10 60% 11 NA New Standards Reference Examination: Math (Harcourt Brace) 6 28% 7 13% 8 28% 9 33% 10 35% 11 NA	New Standards Reference Examination: Language Arts (Harcourt Brace) 6 38% 7 57% 8 59% 9 57% 10 66% 11 67% New Standards Reference Examination: Math (Harcourt Brace) 6 31% 7 40% 8 48% 9 39% 10 41% 11 30%
Parent Satisfaction		% of parents who completed the questionnaire who agreed or strongly agreed that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My student is being academically challenged at this school – 88% • Teachers have high expectations for students- 100%

CENTER FOR DISCOVERY LEARNING

(Formerly Community Involved Charter School)

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Lakewood (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	19.6*
Enrollment:	245	Percent Minority:	21.6%*
Grade Levels:	K-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	20.0%
Waiting List:	74	Percent Special Education:	14.7%

* The charter school self-reported the following data: Student-to-teacher ratio: 17.6; Percent Minority: 18.0%.

MISSION: To promote lifelong learning through intensive learning and navigation throughout the global classroom.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Upon entering the Center for Discovery Learning, all students are assigned a staff advisor with whom they, along with their parents, develop personal learning plans. The total student population is divided into three developmental areas, or "seasons": Season One (preschool -3), Season Two (grades 4-6), Seasons Three, Four and Five (grades 7-12). Movement from one Season to another requires that students demonstrate that they have met certain expectations and completed a "passage." The Season expectations are clustered into the Intellectual, Personal, Social and Creative Domains. They consist of 48 discrete learning outcomes. The passages are personally challenging projects developed by students to demonstrate their ability to apply their skills in the real world. The school's primary instructional method is experiential. The school year is divided into 4-week blocks. During each block, a student enrolls in one "intensive," or interdisciplinary, thematic, multiage experience, often culminating in an extended excursion and encompassing many content areas as well as service learning. The school is extending its academic day through a 21st Century grant.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board is comprised of people outside of the school who understand and appreciate the school's mission. Most of the board members have a background in alternative educational programs. The principal and the management leaders make day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Align our program throughout the school (preK through 12) creating unity to in language for out students, parents and community members.
- ◆ Become financially sound with balanced budgets and owning our own building.
- ◆ Develop school-wide literacy and math plans. As a result of these plans, increase student performance on standardized tests and rubric scores of portfolios.
- ◆ Improve the overall student culture and discipline through strengthening our advisement program and creating leadership expectations.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000																								
Iowa Test of Basic Skills** (ITBS short form) National percentile rank National average is 50%	Insufficient numbers of students in grades 3, 5 and 7 took the ITBS for the scores to be publicly reported. <p style="text-align: right;">Grade 10</p> <i>Reading</i> 47 <i>Language</i> 36 <i>Math</i> 52	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Grade</td> <td>7</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Reading</i></td> <td>47</td> <td>61</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Writing</i></td> <td>61</td> <td>51</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Math</i></td> <td>46</td> <td>56</td> </tr> </table>	Grade	7	10	<i>Reading</i>	47	61	<i>Writing</i>	61	51	<i>Math</i>	46	56	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Grade</td> <td>7</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Reading</i></td> <td>42</td> <td>52</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Writing</i></td> <td>47</td> <td>44</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Math</i></td> <td>44</td> <td>39</td> </tr> </table> <p>(These scores are based on a sample size of only 20 students.)</p>	Grade	7	10	<i>Reading</i>	42	52	<i>Writing</i>	47	44	<i>Math</i>	44	39
Grade	7	10																									
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<i>Math</i>	44	39																									
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)		7th grade Reading: 32% proficient or above (district: 61%) 7th grade Writing: 11% proficient or above (district: 45%)	8th grade Math 0% proficient or above (district: 38%) 8th grade Science 13% proficient or above (district: 49%) CSAP scores in other subjects and for other grades are not reported because fewer than 16 students took the test.																								
Graduation Rate			45.8%																								
Parent Involvement (Number of Volunteer Hours)	1,200	1,873	Not tracked																								
Retention Rate (% of students who continue at the charter school the following school year)	78.0%	79%	75%																								
Attendance Rate	85.2% (Elementary - 90% Middle - 87% High School - 83%)	92%	93.7%																								

** The school administered the ITBS per the requirements of the authorizing district. The school does not consider the ITBS to be a valid measure of what students know and are able to do. Standardized tests, such as the ITBS, do not address 75% of the school's curriculum: social, creative and personal skills. In the 2000-2001 school year, the school replaced the ITBS with Terra Nova.

CHERRY CREEK ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Cherry Creek School District

Location:	Englewood (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	16.7
Enrollment:	443	Percent Minority:	7.0%
Grade Levels:	K-8	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Special Education:	2.9%
Waiting List:	1,400		

MISSION: Motivated children and responsible parents working together with dedicated teachers for excellent education.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: This school employs a Core Knowledge curriculum to focus on solid, fundamental mastery of the basics. The program also emphasizes student character, community involvement and parent responsibility.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board (comprised of nine parents) makes policy for the school. The director is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The improvement goal for all students is 10% per year for each of the first three years of the charter. The ultimate goal is an attainment level of 85% for 85% of students, averaged over all subject areas.
- ◆ Student reading, math and science scores will increase by at least 5% per year from established baseline scores.
- ◆ Perfect attendance is the goal for every student.
- ◆ The school will not be satisfied with less than 100% retention of those students whose parents are dedicated to a serious education of their children.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills National percentile rank (50% is the national average) Test is administered in spring of the academic year	Reading Lang. Math	Reading Lang. Math	Reading Lang. Math	Reading Lang. Math	Reading Lang. Math	Reading Lang. Math	Reading Lang. Math	Reading Lang. Math	
	K	94 95 98	K	96 98 99	K	98 99 98			
	1 st	87 88 89	1 st	84 80 79	1 st	89 90 80			
	2 nd	88 90 91	2 nd	92 93 94	2 nd	83 83 83			
	3 rd	67 69 69	3 rd	76 82 81	3 rd	76 70 75			
	4 th	78 79 79	4 th	79 79 79	4 th	83 85 83			
	5 th	71 66 66	5 th	70 68 75	5 th	72 66 76			
	6 th	78 71 64	6 th	73 72 73	6 th	68 76 80			
	7 th	70 62 78	7 th	70 65 64	7 th	70 68 65			
8 th	79 80 77	8 th	73 75 75	8 th	69 68 67				
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP) % proficient or above	3rd grade Reading: 80% prof. or above (75% district average)	Reading Writing 3rd grade school 94% (district 77 %)	Reading Writing 3rd grade school 85% (district 69%)						
	4th grade Reading: 89% prof. or above (72% district average)	4th grade school 87% 73% (district 72% 49%)	4th grade school 94% 75% (district 73% 52%)						
	4th grade Writing 81% prof. or above (53% district average)	7th grade school 79% 69% (district 68% 54%)	7th grade school 74% 74% (district 72% 58%)						
			8th grade Math Science school 39% 55% (district 50% 57%)						
Parent Satisfaction	92% of parents were satisfied or very satisfied with the school	97% of parents were satisfied or very satisfied with the school	98% of parents were satisfied or very satisfied with the school						
Parent Involvement	12,000+ hours	12,000+ hours	12,000+ hours						
Attendance Rate	98%	97%	97%						

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CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN CHARTER ACADEMY

Chartering District: Cheyenne Mountain District 12

Location:	Colorado Springs (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	15.4
Enrollment:	303	Percent Minority:	15.5%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	26.7%
Waiting List:	250	Percent Special Education:	3.6%

MISSION: The mission of Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy is to help guide students in development of their character and academic potential through academically rigorous, content-rich educational programs.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Academy's educational program and approach to curriculum emphasizes the "Core Knowledge Sequence" supplemented with "Direct Instruction" --carefully crafted research-based curriculum materials that teach concepts incrementally and sequentially. The school believes that education cannot be taught in a moral vacuum; education reform depends on putting character first.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors, comprised of four parents and one community member, sets policy for the school. The Administrator makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Achieve an attendance rate of 95%.
- ◆ Achieve an average median attainment of 80% (as measured by standardized tests) in all subjects for all grade levels.
- ◆ 90% of students will have the skills/competencies to advance to the next grade (for 1996-97 school year). The goal for the 1997-98 school year is 95%.
- ◆ 100% of all classes will perform at or above grade level.
- ◆ 80% of at-risk students will narrow the gap between their current grade level and performance level.
- ◆ 60% of students performing above grade level will increase the gap between current grade level and their performance level.
- ◆ Stakeholders will volunteer 4,000 hours per year.
- ◆ 90% of parents will be satisfied with the school's total educational program.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Stanford Achievement Test Grade level equivalent/ National percentile rank Battery Totals	Spring 1998	Spring 1999	Spring 1999
	K 1.5 / 87	K 1.5 / 91	K 1.5 / 91
	1 st 2.7 / 89	1 st 2.4 / 79	1 st 2.6 / 86
	2 nd 4.4 / 81	2 nd 3.7 / 84	2 nd 3.6 / 78
	3 rd 5.5 / 74	3 rd 4.7 / 74	3 rd 5.3 / 87
	4 th 6.7 / 77	4 th 6.2 / 77	4 th 6.6 / 83
	5 th 8.8 / 83	5 th 7.8 / 79	5 th 7.4 / 74
	6 th 9.9 / 80	6 th 10.3 / 86	6 th 10.6 / 88
	7 th 12+ / 90	7 th 12.1 / 86	7 th 12.2 / 86
	8 th 12+ / 87	8 th 13.3 / 90	8 th 13.3 / 89
	Average percentile ranking of all students: 81	Average percentile ranking of all students: 82	Average percentile ranking of all students: 82
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP)	3rd grade reading: 92% proficient or above (88% district average)	% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade school 91% (district 90 %)	% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade school 93% (district 90 %)
	4th grade reading: 79% proficient or above (77% district average)	4th grade school 93% 64% (district 84% 59%)	4th grade school 89% 68% (district 88% 72%)
	4th grade writing 64% proficient or above (56% district average)	7th grade school 100% 96% (district 81% 67%)	7th grade school 92% 88% (district 85% 71%)
			8th grade Math Science school 62% 81% (district 64% 73%)
Percentage of Students with skills/competencies to advance to the next grade level (Measured by teacher observation, classroom evaluations, and Stanford achievement tests)	96%	99%	99%
Re-enrollment Rate	89%	87%	87%
Parent Satisfaction % of parents satisfied with educational program	98%	92%	97%
Attendance Rate	94.5%	95.4%	95%

CIVA CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Colorado Springs District 11

Location:	Colorado Springs (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	19.3
Enrollment:	99	Percent Minority:	19.2%
Grade Levels:	9-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	9.1%
Waiting List:	5	Percent Special Education:	13.1%*

* The school self-reported the following data: Percent Special Education: 19.0%.

MISSION: Draw out the unique talents and personal best of each student, in partnering with staff, family and community, based on strong character rooted in courage, integrity, curiosity, creativity and leadership.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The academic program focuses on the success of each individual student. The small size of the school allows for a more personal educational experience and keeps students accountable because they cannot get lost in the crowd. The student population is diverse; the range of student needs and abilities is amplified by heterogeneous grouping of students and mainstreaming. The educational program emphasizes character education as well as weekly service learning opportunities. The school addresses the state and district standards in all our classes and uses the same assessments as all other high schools in District 11. Parent involvement in the school is key to the success of students.

GOVERNANCE: The eleven member governing board is comprised of four teachers (including one CIVA teacher) six community members and one parent. The CIVA principal serves as an ex-officio member of the board. The principal makes day-to-day operational decisions for the school within the policies set by the governing board.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students will demonstrate growth in academic skills, especially their language arts/communication skills, as demonstrated in their portfolio work and district tests (TAP and the District Writing Assessment)
- ◆ Parent, teachers and student will be satisfied with the school's educational environment and program.

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MEASURE	1998-99	1999-2000
Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP)	<p style="text-align: center;">Grade 10</p> <p>Reading: School: 44% District: 61%</p> <p>Written Expression: School: 35% District: 55%</p> <p>Math: School: 36% District: 58%</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grade 10</p> <p>Reading: School: 36% District: 64%</p> <p>Written Expression: School: 35% District: 59%</p> <p>Math: School: 38% District: 65%</p>
<p>District Writing Assessment</p> <p>Each student's work receives a score from 1-5 for each of six traits: content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.</p> <p>School District 11 scores are shown in parentheses.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grade 9</p> <p>Content: 2.3 (2.9) Organization: 2.0 (2.9) Voice: 2.4 (3.2) Word Choice: 2.3 (2.9) Sentence Fluency: 2.1 (2.9) Conventions: 1.9 (2.6)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grade 9</p> <p>Content: 2.8 (3.1) Organization: 2.5 (2.9) Voice: 3.0 (3.0) Word Choice: 2.9 (3.2) Sentence Fluency: 2.5 (2.8) Conventions: 2.5 (2.6)</p>
<p>Parent Satisfaction</p>		<p>87% agrees or strongly agrees that the school provides high quality instruction</p> <p>89% agrees or strongly agrees that students receive adequate individual instruction, time and attention.</p> <p>81% agree or strongly agree that the school provides a caring climate for students.</p>
<p>Graduation Rate</p>		<p>80% (4 of 5 seniors)</p>

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this charter school because the test was not administered in the grade levels served by the school during the 1999-2000 school year.

CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Chartering District: Academy School District 20

Location:	Colorado Springs (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	14.8
Enrollment:	621	Percent Minority:	7.7%
Grade Levels:	K-7		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	1,600	Percent Special Education:	2.9%

MISSION: The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary young citizens with superior academic preparation, equipped with analytical thinking skills, a passion for learning and virtuous character, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Core Knowledge Sequence clearly defines the core content standards and is the instruction program framework. The curriculum is enriched by classical subjects (Latin, logic and rhetoric) and classical methodologies. These methodologies include the Socratic method, the use of time-honored literature and use of field-specific "classics" to inspire students and give them an appreciation for excellence.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of seven parents and a non-voting principal. The Board is responsible for determining the school policies. The principal and assistant principal are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The attendance rate will meet or exceed the School District 20 average and the state goal of 95%.
- ◆ The graduation rate will meet or exceed the state goal of 90%.
- ◆ Students will meet or exceed district and state content standards, as measured by teacher assessment, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Colorado Student Assessment Program.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National Percentile Rank Composite Score	3rd grade: 69 5th grade: 91	3rd grade: 70 5th grade: 73	3rd grade: 69 5th grade: 71 7th grade: 75
Attendance Rate	not available	97.5%	96.9%
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 72% proficient or above (district: 80%) 4th grade Reading: 76% proficient or above (district: 74%) 4th grade Writing: 71% proficient or above (district: 50)	3rd grade Reading: 82% proficient or above (district: 83%) 4th grade Reading: 85% proficient or above (district: 78%) 4th grade Writing: 75% proficient or above (district: 49%) 7th grade Reading: 70% proficient or above (district: 76%) 7th grade Writing: 72% proficient or above (district: 64%)	3rd grade Reading: 83% proficient or above (district: 85%) 4th grade Reading: 81% proficient or above (district: 82%) 4th grade Writing: 65% proficient or above (district: 56%) 7th grade Reading: 81% proficient or above (district: 77%) 7th grade Writing: 79% proficient or above (district: 64%) 8th grade Math: 59% proficient or above (district: 52%) 8th grade Science: 73% proficient or above (district: 60%)

COLLEGIATE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Littleton (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	15.5
Enrollment:	550	Percent Minority:	6.7%
Grade Levels:	K-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994**	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	4.7%
Waiting List:	300	Percent Special Education:	6.4 %

** In 1999, Collegiate Academy expanded from a 7-12 school to a K-12 school.

MISSION: Collegiate Academy, a prototype 21st century school, uses state-of-the-art technology to provide a sound educational environment grounded in the fundamental skills of a traditional college preparatory curriculum. The environment will be individually structured to optimize each student's growth, so that all students, including "at-risk" pupils and those who are challenged with learning difficulties, will acquire a first-class education.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Collegiate Academy's curriculum philosophy emphasizes science and math, cultural literacy, communication skills, technology articulation and a balanced liberal arts approach. The curriculum is highly interdisciplinary, connecting facts, skills and processes as they are connected in the real world. Scheduling is flexible; emphasis is on achievement, not time spent. The school day is extended, from 7 am to 5 p.m. Students have some control over how they meet the school's academic requirements.

GOVERNANCE: Collegiate Academy's Board of Directors, comprised of seven parents, two teachers, two staff member and two students sets policy for the school. The school's Director is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ All students will complete Collegiate Academy's requirements at the "Mastery" level (grade A or B) and 20% of all students will earn a "Distinguished" rating (grade A+). These requirements will incorporate state and local requirements for graduation.
- ◆ The school will work to increase the number of students doing individual study, large projects, and integrated learning and reduce the number of traditional class periods.
- ◆ 60% of students will attain a GPA of 3.0 or better.
- ◆ 100% of students will graduate.
- ◆ The school will attain or exceed a 90% attendance rate.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
GRADES 7 - 12			
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	Grade 7 10	Grade 7 10	Not reported
National percentile rank. 50% is the national average	Reading 63 63 Writing 53 56 Math 58 63 Battery 57 61	Reading 59 70 Writing 53 66	
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)		7th grade Reading: 71% proficient or above (district: 61%) 7th grade Writing: 39% proficient or above (district: 45%)	7th grade Reading: 36% proficient of above (district: 63%) 7th grade Writing: 8% proficient or above (district: 46%) 8th grade Math: 16% proficient or above (district 38%) 8th grade Science: 43% proficient or above (district 49%)
Percentage of Students with GPA of 3.0 or better	75% of students have GPA of 3.0 or better	75% of students have a GPA of 3.0 or better	Not reported
Graduation Rate	75%	92%	Not reported
Attendance	89%	90%	Not reported
GRADES K - 6			
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)			3rd grade Reading: 56% proficient or above (district: 67%) 4th grade Reading 60% proficient or above (district: 67%) 4th grade Writing 30% proficient or above (district: 38%) 5th grade Math 36% proficient or above (district: 53%)
% of student scoring at the proficient level or above			

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THE COLORADO HIGH SCHOOL

Chartering District: Greeley School District 6

Location:	Greeley (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	20.1
Enrollment:	101	Percent Minority:	58.4%
Grade Levels:	7-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	60.4%
Waiting List:	not reported	Percent Special Education:	12.9%

MISSION: Not reported

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Not reported

GOVERNANCE: Not reported

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

Not reported

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MEASURE	1998-99	1999-2000
Not reported		
Not reported		

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this school because fewer than 16 students took the test in each year.

COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Durango School District 9-R

Location:	Durango (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	12.7
Enrollment:	123	Percent Minority:	29.3%
Grade Levels:	6-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	22.0%
Waiting List:	0	Percent Special Education:	18.7%

MISSION: The mission of the Community of Learners is to provide a positive, mutually respectful environment in which students, parents and teachers share a commitment to an experience of optimal, individualized learning that leads to a lifelong love of learning, as well as a high level of personal achievement.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Community of Learners features student-centered and self-directed learning, individual learning plans and learning in the community. Students participate in service learning and internships. The school combines a commitment to high standards for basic skills with a desire to rethink the total school experience, including the traditional roles of stakeholders, the nature of curriculum and school governance.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board, comprised of five parents and two community members, makes policy decisions for the school. The Administrator/Lead Teacher and Team Teachers make daily operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ 100% of Community of Learners students will utilize an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) created by the "triad" – the student, a parent and a COL teacher/advisor. The ILP will articulate goals appropriate to the developmental and academic level of the students.
- ◆ 90% of Community of Learners students will reach a satisfactory level of achievement of their individual goals and will complete, to a satisfactory level, the learning experiences which are outlined in their ILPs.
- ◆ Community of Learners will utilize the Colorado state content standards and the state mandated assessments to further academic, social and personal growth of students and to help the parents, students and teachers set student goals..
- ◆ Community of Learners will demonstrate proficiency in six spheres of knowledge: Community/Career Involvement, Global Awareness, Our Natural World, Interpersonal Growth, Health and Well-Being, Communication Skills and Creative Process.
- ◆ 100% of Community of Learners students will participate in service learning experiences on a regular and ongoing basis.
- ◆ In order to create a healthy, safe and nurturing climate for students, COL will emphasize the personal growth, learning, physical health and psychological well-being of staff, parents and other adult community members.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS - Form K and L)* Grade level equivalent	<i>Composite Score</i>		<i>Composite Score</i>
	4 th	4.5	4 th na**
	5 th	6.5	5 th 5.7
	6 th	8.1	6 th 6.3
	7 th	6.9	7 th 8.6
	8 th	10.2	8 th 8.0
	9 th	10	9 th 9.6
	10 th	10.8	10 th 11.8
	11 th -12 th	11.9	11 th 10.4
		In 1997-98, ITBS scores for students who attended Community of Learners for two or more years increased by one grade level equivalent (GLE) for 67% of students, two GLEs for 31% of students and more than 3 GLEs for 11% of students	12 th grade: na
Percentage of Students Who Participate in Service Learning	100%, representing 3,108 hours of service	95%, representing 4,256 hours of service	95%, representing 3,136 hours of service
District 9-R Writing Assessment (replaces Stanford Writing Assessment per district policy)	Mean Raw Score on 2-12 scale: 8 th grade: 5.8 11 th grade: 8	Mean Raw Score on 2-12 scale: 8 th grade: 5.9 11 th grade: na**	Mean Raw Score on 2-12 scale: 8 th grade: 5.7 11 th grade: 6.9
Progress of Students on Individual Learning Programs Students at COL receive credits only when they completely achieve the goal. (In contrast to receiving a grade "C" for mastering only 70% of the material.)	As of June 30, 1998, 55% of COL students have successfully transcribed 100% of the coursework, 43% have work that is still in progress and 2% received "No credit" for their coursework.	As of June 30, 1999, 60% of COL students have successfully transcribed 100% of the coursework.	As of June 30, 2000, 75% of COL students have successfully transcribed 100% of their coursework
Attendance	93%	85%	92%

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this school because fewer than 16 students took the test in each year.

COMMUNITY PREP CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Colorado Springs District 11

Location:	Colorado Springs (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	11.5
Enrollment:	145	Percent Minority:	42.1%
Grade Levels:	9-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%*
Waiting List:	25	Percent Special Education:	7.6% *

* The charter school self-reported these data: 40.0% free/reduced lunch and 11.0% special education.

MISSION: To provide a quality education in an environment that encourages innovative modes of teaching and learning in order to empower each individual student to develop academically, socially, and physically as a global citizen of the 21st century.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: This school serves high-risk potential dropouts and dropouts through a program offered in cooperation with District 11. Community Prep Charter School uses a modified Paideia instructional approach, based on student-centered learning. The program teaches life-long learning skills, successful employment and responsible citizenship. Didactic instruction is combined with coaching sessions and Socratic seminars. The school uses community-based education providers and the Comprehensive Competencies Program (CCP) – an individualized, self-paced, competency based, open-entry/exit learning approach that integrates varied instructional materials and technologies. Students do not progress to a higher level of CCP until they demonstrate 80% mastery of their current level. Each student works with an advisor to develop individual social and educational goals for the year. Parents meet with advisors and students monthly to discuss their progress.

GOVERNANCE: An elected governing board manages the school. An advisory school-based accountability committee develops the annual school improvement plan. The principal makes day to day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Each student will earn an average of 9 credits per year.
- ◆ The school's attendance rate will be no lower than 80% and will show yearly improvement.
- ◆ The school will meet all exit outcome standards of District 11 and the State of Colorado.
- ◆ The school will reduce the dropout rate of students each year.
- ◆ The school will continue to enhance the curriculum with current technology and materials.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000																																										
Credits Granted to Students Enrolled Note: All credits require 80% mastery of material	1,010 credit granted	948 credits granted	946 credits																																										
Attendance	87%	Not available	Not available																																										
Retention Rate (students must earn 80% to move on)	81% - 18 students graduated and 80 students returned out of 122 total.	Not available																																											
District Writing Assessment 10 th grade Test is given in April	Not available	<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>District</th> <th>CPS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ideas</td> <td>2.9</td> <td>2.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Organization</td> <td>2.9</td> <td>2.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Voice</td> <td>3.2</td> <td>2.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Word Choice</td> <td>2.9</td> <td>2.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sentence Fluency</td> <td>2.9</td> <td>2.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conventions</td> <td>2.8</td> <td>2.1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		District	CPS	Ideas	2.9	2.5	Organization	2.9	2.3	Voice	3.2	2.7	Word Choice	2.9	2.5	Sentence Fluency	2.9	2.2	Conventions	2.8	2.1	<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>District</th> <th>CPS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ideas</td> <td>3.1</td> <td>2.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Organization</td> <td>2.9</td> <td>2.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Voice</td> <td>3.2</td> <td>2.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Word Choice</td> <td>3.0</td> <td>2.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sentence Fluency</td> <td>2.8</td> <td>2.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Conventions</td> <td>2.6</td> <td>2.3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		District	CPS	Ideas	3.1	2.9	Organization	2.9	2.7	Voice	3.2	2.8	Word Choice	3.0	2.7	Sentence Fluency	2.8	2.5	Conventions	2.6	2.3
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Test of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) 10 th grade Scores shown are National Percentile Rank Test is given in October	Reading: 32 Language: 34 Math: 35	Reading: 42 Language: 35 Math: 33	Reading: 32 Language: 29 Math: 28																																										

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this charter school because the test was not administered in the grade levels served by the school during the 1999-2000 school year.

COMPASS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Wheat Ridge (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	68.8*
Enrollment:	172	Percent Minority:	12.2%
Grade Levels:	PreK – 6**		
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	5.8%
Waiting List:	432	Percent Special Education:	5.8%

* The school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher Ratio: 15.0.

** In the fall of 2000, the Compass Montessori Secondary school was opened, serving 31 students in grades 7-8.

MISSION: Utilizing authentic Montessori methods, the administrators, teachers and parents of Compass Montessori School aim to nurture the whole child, adapting to meet each student's unique intellectual, emotional, social, physical and spiritual needs. Our first goal is to foster competent, responsive, and independent students who demonstrate a life-long love of learning and respect for themselves, other people and the environment.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Compass Montessori School provides an authentic Montessori program for its students. The Montessori curriculum emphasizes self-paced interdisciplinary student learning and teacher instruction. The curriculum and assessment practices allow for diversity in students' learning styles without lowering expectations or denying opportunities. Montessori education uses prescribed kinesthetic manipulatives that progress from concrete to abstract and simple to complex skills to achieve learning objectives. The Montessori curriculum is based on over 100 years of theory, research and observation.

At the secondary level, the Montessori approach continues to emphasize the direct experiences of the learners and the unique needs of the adolescent. At Compass Montessori Secondary School, each morning begins with a community meeting. These student-led meetings provide a forum for celebrations, working out community problems and discussing future community goals. Part of the day is spent in individual work and part in group work. Group work provides students with the opportunity to develop team building and leadership skills and increases retention. Group discussion and debate engages students as they learn to think in ways that are more abstract. Individual work encompasses research projects, reading, writing, desktop publishing and math assignments. Students progress at their own pace, pursuing personal contracts with the teacher. Accountability for academic work is maintained through weekly reviews of academic progress. The school emphasizes the students taking responsibility for their environment and their own learning. Students participate in service work to the community in and around Compass.

GOVERNANCE: The school follows the Carver Model for effective governance practices. The Executive Committee is comprised of six elected parents (voting), one community member (voting) the Principal (non-voting) and a teacher representative (non-voting). The Executive Committee handles linkages to stakeholders and oversees the administrative functions for which the Principal is responsible.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Improve student achievement on school-wide, district and state assessments.
- ◆ Increase parent satisfaction with how well the school meets the intellectual needs of students.
- ◆ Increase the sense of respect among students in the school.

MEASURE	1998-99	1999-2000
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: Not available ** 4th grade Reading: 59% proficient or above 4th grade Writing: 18% proficient or above	3rd grade Reading: 63% proficient or above (district: 67%) 4th grade Reading: Not available ** 4th grade Writing: Not available ** 5th grade Math: 17% proficient or above (district: 53%)
Terra Nova		Average Grade Level: 6 th grade: 6.3 2 nd grade: 2.0
District Reading Assessment	84% of students reading at grade level	89% of students reading at grade level
Attendance	94.5%	94.3%
Parent Involvement	13,850 hours volunteered	8,178 hours volunteered

**** CSAP scores were not reported because fewer than 16 students took the 4th grade assessment.**

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THE CONNECT SCHOOL

Chartering District: Pueblo School District 70

Location:	Pueblo (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio	23.2
Enrollment:	139	Percent Minority:	16.5%
Grade Levels:	6-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1993	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	400	Percent Special Education:	15.4%

MISSION: The purpose of this school is to offer the finest academic program possible that will provide for increased learning opportunities for all students in an environment devised to meet the unique needs of each student by providing opportunities consistent with the learning styles; to improve pupil learning by creating a school with high and rigorous standards for pupil performance; to encourage and allow the most effective and innovative teaching methods in an environment where each student is truly known; to provide teachers with the opportunity, responsibility and accountability for the management and control of the total school curriculum and environment; to produce a flexible set of learning outcomes measured with different and authentic forms of assessments; to provide students and parents with an educational opportunity to the highest quality; and to foster student, parent, and community involvement through the use of community resources and partnerships.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Connect emphasizes reduced class size, increased time spent on core subjects, connecting the community as classroom, and focusing resources on instruction. Connect uses a proven curriculum and adds a hands-on instructional approach and unique "city school" resources.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board, comprised of three parents, one student, one administrator and one community member, makes policy decisions in consultation with staff. The administrator and staff make day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ 90% of students will perform at or above grade level in all content areas using the district's standardized testing program.
- ◆ 85% of continuously enrolled students will achieve at 85% or above in mathematics, reading and language.
- ◆ 100% of students performing below grade level will show at least 9 months academic growth.
- ◆ 100% of students will receive a grade of C or better in exhibitions and in the Rite of Passage Exam on the first attempt.
- ◆ 100% of students will use technology to increase personal productivity, will be able to use various multimedia programs to assemble and present information, and will be able to use telecommunications to access information.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000					
	6 th	7 th	8 th	8 th	6 th	7 th	6 th	7 th	8 th			
Terra Nova National percentile rank	Reading	78	77	76	Reading	78	83	77	Reading	93	83	81
	Lang.	87	80	74	Lang.	79	76	79	Lang.	87	91	87
	Math 81	88	80		Math	85	92	86	Math	80	90	88
	Science	89	75	84	Science	79	87	83	Science	88	91	84
	Soc Studies	78	72	80	Soc Studies	79	88	83	Soc Studies	83	87	75
	Total	86	79	79								
	95% of students score at or above grade level. Scores are the highest for any school in Pueblo District 60 or 70.											
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)				7th grade Reading: 61% proficient or above (district: 60%) 7th grade Writing: 69% proficient or above (district: 50%)	Reading 7 th grade school 87% (district 64%) Math 8 th grade school 74% (district 40%)	Writing 85% (51%) Science 81% (49%)						
Student Exhibitions % of students who achieved a "C" or better.	100%			100%			100%					
Exit Exams (Rite of Passage) % of students who achieved a grade of "C" or better on their first attempt	100%			Grade 8 - 94%			100%					
Percentage of students below grade level who improved at least one grade level.	100%			100%			100%					
Parent Attendance at School Functions	95% (100% participation in fall conferences)			94%			95%					
Re-enrollment Rate	98%			96%			96%					
Attendance Rate	97%			97%			97%					

CORE KNOWLEDGE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Douglas County School District

Location:	Parker (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	320.0*
Enrollment:	320	Percent Minority:	2.5%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	1.9%
Waiting List:	1,500	Percent Special Education:	5.0%

* The school self-reported a student-to-teacher ratio of 22.0.

MISSION: We will strive to build a foundation of knowledge and skills that will enable our children to meet the challenges of a global society.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Core Knowledge Charter School features a content-driven curriculum based on the Core Knowledge Foundation's materials. Spanish language instruction is provided at every grade. The school emphasizes high standards for academic performance, small class size and parental involvement.

GOVERNANCE: The Operating Council, comprised of six parents, two staff members and the Director, sets policy for the school. The Director is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students will perform at the 75th percentile or higher in all content areas as measured by CTBS.
- ◆ The school will maintain or exceed a 95% attendance rate.
- ◆ 90% of the students will work at or above grade level.
- ◆ 80% of parents will meet their obligation of 20+ hours of volunteer time.
- ◆ Reading assessment results for fourth and seventh graders will show 80% of students scoring at or above the satisfactory level for both fiction and non-fiction.
- ◆ Parents will re-enroll their children at a rate of 90%.
- ◆ 90% of existing 8th grade students who have had at least three years of consecutive Core Knowledge Charter School Spanish instruction will qualify for enrollment at the Spanish II level in high school.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 87% proficient or above (district: 80%) 4th grade Reading: 78% proficient or above (district: 70%) 4th grade Writing 48% proficient or above (district: 47%)	% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade school 90% (district 81%) 4th grade school 90% 68% (district 74% 49%) 7th grade school 85% 70% (district 76% 60%)	Reading Writing 3rd grade 85% (district 82%) 4th grade 83% 68% (district 76% 49%) 7th grade 83% 72% (district 77% 59%) Math Science 5th grade 92% (district 73%) 8th grade 65% 82% (district 51% 65%)
Terra Nova National percentile rank	Grade 3 6 8 Reading 93 68 48 Language 95 78 55 Math 89 77 41	Grade 3 6 8 Reading 78 79 90 Language 83 75 76 Math 82 73 28	Grade 3 6 8 Reading 78 72 94 Language 80 81 91 Math 66 72 68
Parental Involvement	8,100 hours volunteered	8,411 hours volunteered	8,382 hours volunteered
8th grade students who have completed at least three consecutive years of Spanish instruction at CKCS and who qualify for enrollment in Spanish II in high school	81% of the graduating class who took the entrance test scores at the Spanish II level.	100% of the graduating class who took the entrance test scores at the Spanish II level.	100% of the graduating class who took the entrance test scores at the Spanish II level.
Parent Satisfaction % that stated they are satisfied with school's academic standards	81% are "pleased" with the school's academic standards.	92% are "pleased" with the school's academic standards.	98% are "pleased" with the school's academic standards.
Attendance Rate	96%	96%	97%

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CRESTONE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Moffat Consolidated School District

Location:	Crestone (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	10.4
Enrollment:	59	Percent Minority:	5.1%
Grade Levels:	K-9		
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	27.1%
Waiting List:	11	Percent Special Education:	0.0%

MISSION: The mission of Crestone Charter School is to provide a stimulating experiential program that, in a creatively structured atmosphere, nurtures each student's sense of wonder and natural desire to learn. Emphasizing academic excellence and uniqueness of character, we strive to inspire healthy responsibility with self, community and environment, both locally and globally.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Crestone emphasizes experiential and integrated learning, using multi-age groups and thematic units. Each student has an Individual Learning Plan that helps students, teachers and parents set meaningful goals for achievement. The daily schedule is designed to support interdisciplinary curriculum and the flexibility needed for tutoring, mentorships, independent study, community service and self-expression.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Council, comprised of three parents, two community members, one faculty member and one administrator (in a non-voting capacity), sets policy for the school. The Director makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ To offer an innovative educational program of academic excellence that integrates body, mind, emotion and spirit.
- ◆ To provide a learning environment that encourages self-esteem and respects the experiences, talents and uniqueness of every student.
- ◆ To prepare each student to be a lifelong learner through relevant education.
- ◆ To prepare each student to find his/her place in the context of human history and to comprehend the challenges we face in a changing world.
- ◆ To ensure mastery of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and artistry that meet or exceed content standards of Goals 2000.
- ◆ To develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, collaborative skills and a sense of community responsibility.
- ◆ To use the natural environment as a classroom to foster appreciation for our ecosystem and the Earth as a whole.
- ◆ To engage the united efforts of parents, teachers, students and community members in the educational process and school governance.
- ◆ To participate in the nationwide effort to reform public education.

MEASURE	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000				
Stanford Achievement Test	Grade Level Equivalent		Grade Level Equivalent		At or Above 50%				
	Reading		Reading		Reading				
	Math		Math		Math				
	4 th	5.0	2.9	2 nd	5.6	4.2	3 rd	71	43
	5 th	5.6	6.2	3 rd	5.4	5.4	4 th	60	60
	6 th	5.7	7.1	4 th	5.2	7.1	5 th	100	100
	7 th	na	7.3	5 th	na	na	6 th	na	na
	8 th	9.6	na	6 th	8.1	9.7	7 th	67	33
				7 th	11.3	9.6	8 th	67	6
				8 th	na	8.3	9 th	100	100
				9 th	12.8	na	10 th	100	100
							11 th	50	50
		Language	Battery						
	4 th	3.4	3.7	2 nd	2.8	4.6			Battery
	5 th	6.2	5.8	3 rd	3.2	5.2	3 rd	57	
6 th	10.1	7.	4 th	6.7	6.8	4 th	20		
7 th	10.6	8.4	5 th	na	na	5 th	100		
8 th	11.1	10.1	6 th	6.5	8.4	6 th	na		
			7 th	8.5	9.0	7 th	50		
			8 th	12.8	10.7	8 th	67		
			9 th	12.8	na	9 th	100		
						10 th	100		
						11 th	50		
Parent/Community Satisfaction						Believe the charter school provides a necessary service to the community – 100% Believe the charter school is meeting the educational needs of the community – 92% Believe the charter school is a positive alternative to the traditional educational system – 100% Response Rate: 72%			
Parent Involvement	100% of parents volunteer at least 20 hours/semester		Not tracked		1,400 hours volunteered				
Attendance Rate	88.7%		94%		93%				

NOTE: CSAP results were not reported for this charter school because fewer than 16 students took the test in each year.

CROWN POINTE ACADEMY OF WESTMINSTER

Chartering District: Westminster School District 50

Location:	Westminster (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	16.4
Enrollment:	200	Percent Minority:	38.0%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	1.5%
Waiting List:	175	Percent Special Education:	2.5%

MISSION: The mission of Crown Pointe Academy Charter School is to encourage the acquisition of knowledge, engage the mind, stimulate creativity and curiosity, and develop an understanding of the world in all student. All students will be encouraged to strive for knowledge in order to maximize their potential. The school will offer a structured, challenging curriculum, encourage strong parental involvement and be committed to teaching each child as a unique individual. Character values including respect, responsibility, honesty and kindness will be strongly encouraged.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The academic program is driven by the *Core Knowledge Sequence* edited by Dr. E. D. Hirsch, Jr., which comprises as least 50% of the instructional time. The Core Knowledge curriculum is supplemented for all grades with *Open Court Reading*, *Saxon Mathematics*, *Accelerated Reader*, *Shurley Grammar*, *Steckvon Grammar*, *Zaner-Bloser Handwriting*, Spanish, music, art, physical education and library programs. The school provides individualized instruction using low student-to-teacher ratios, various methods of delivery to accommodate learning styles and various teaching techniques. The school offers an after-school remedial and enrichment program.

GOVERNANCE: The Academy Council is comprised of five parents. The school director serves as a non-voting member of the council. The council sets policy for the school. The director makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The school will implement a rigorous, challenging and integrated curriculum using the *Core Knowledge Sequence*.
- ◆ The school will grow each child a minimum of one grade level per year in each subject.
- ◆ The school will maintain a strong staff through a competitive compensation package, a strong professional development program and a strongly supportive environment.
- ◆ The school will maintain stability by retaining a growing waiting list and expanding to the 8th grade.
- ◆ The school will develop a strong parental community utilizing the parental contract and instituting a leadership development program.

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MEASURE	1997-98					1998-99						1999-2000							
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) % scoring proficient or above	Reading		Writing			Reading		Writing				Reading		Writing					
	3rd grade					3rd grade					3rd grade								
	school	60%				school	92%					(district	83%						
	(district	53%)				(district	58%)					4th grade	72%	44%					
	4th grade					4th grade					(district	49%)	22%)						
	school	46%	21%			school	79%	58%			7th grade	75%	58%						
	(district	41%	27%)			(district	39%	20%)			(district	42%	26%)						
											Math								
											5th grade	58%							
											(district	29 %)							
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) National percentile rank Test was administered in spring of the academic year shown	K	1	2	3	4	5	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	K	1	2	3	4	5
	Reading					Reading					Reading								
	44	85	69	50	48	76	51	87	80	79	61	76	76	44	90	71	67	75	72
	Language					Language					Language								
	36	83	78	58	42	80	69	88	86	77	63	68	83	66	89	76	68	73	70
	Math					Math					Math								
	38	46	73	56	43	64	57	67	80	64	64	73	82	52	76	70	60	66	61
	Science					Science					Science								
	na	35	75	47	45	69	na	62	72	78	56	70	69	na	74	68	64	74	70
	Social Studies					Social Studies					Social Studies								
	na	57	83	42	46	65	na	63	80	65	54	76	68	na	74	76	52	73	64
Total					Total					Total									
45	79	76	58	45	75	64	83	88	77	64	75	79	58	84	74	69	71	69	
STAR																			
National Percentile Rank Test was administered in spring of the academic year shown	1st grade		70%			1st grade		79%				1st grade		88%					
	2nd grade		69%			2nd grade		71%				2nd grade		75%					
	3rd grade		57%			3rd grade		74%				3rd grade		78%					
	4th grade		43%			4th grade		49%				4th grade		67%					
	5th grade		76%			5th grade		62%				5th grade		59%					
6th grade					6th grade		68%				6th grade		59%						
Report Card Grades	Not tracked					1	2	3	4	5	6	Not tracked							
1 st and 2 nd : % below Satisfactory 3 rd - 6 th grades: % below "C"						Reading													
						12	0	0	0	0	4								
						Language													
						-	5	8	0	10	20								
						Math													
					4	5	8	4	17	0									
					Science														
					-	5	4	0	4	4									
					Social Studies														
					-	9	0	0	4	8									
Attendance Rate	95%					96%					96%								
Parent Overall Satisfaction	94%					87%					87%								

DSC MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Chartering District: Douglas County School District

Location:	Littleton (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	70.0
Enrollment:	210	Percent Minority:	8.1%
Grade Levels:	preK - 6 th		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	165	Percent Special Education:	5.7%

MISSION: The mission of the Montessori Charter School is to provide students with an opportunity to acquire an education based on an authentic and accredited curriculum founded on the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The basic tenet of the Montessori philosophy of education is that all children carry within themselves the person they will become. In order to maximize their physical and intellectual potential, students must develop a meaningful degree of independence and self-discipline in an ordered environment. The world of the child is full of sights and sounds which at first appear chaotic; from this chaos, children must gradually create order, learn to distinguish among the impressions that have assailed their senses, and slowly gain mastery of themselves and their environment. Dr. Montessori developed what she called the "prepared environment" which already possesses a certain order and allows children to learn at their own rate according to their own capacities, in a non-competitive atmosphere. Dr. Montessori recognized that the only valid impulse to learning is the self-motivation of the child. Children move themselves toward learning. The teacher/facilitator prepares the environment, directs the activity, and offers the child stimulation, but it is the child who learns, who is motivated through work itself. If Montessori children are free to learn, it is because they have acquired an inner discipline from their exposure both to physical and mental order. Patterns of concentration, perseverance and thoroughness established in early childhood produce a competent learner later in life.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of five parents, two community representatives, and the Head of School, serving in an ex-officio capacity. The Board of Directors is responsible for determining the school policies. The Head of School is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Meet or exceed Douglas County School District's published standards in Language Arts, History, Mathematics, Science, Geography, Civics, Economics, Music and Art.
- ◆ Meet or exceed an attendance rate of 95%.
- ◆ Strive for a consistently high re-enrollment rate of the eligible student population.
- ◆ Maintain a 90% graduation rate to high school.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99		1999-2000
		Grade 3	6	
Terra Nova National percentile rank Scores shown are for DSC Montessori and for (Douglas County School District)		Reading 67(68) 63(81) Language 60(68) 64(80) Math 71(76) 57(84)		
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)		3rd grade Reading: 81% proficient or above (district: 81%) Results for fourth grade are not reported because fewer than 16 student took the test	3rd grade Reading: 88% proficient or above (district: 83%) 4th grade Reading: 68% proficient or above (district: 76%) 4th grade Writing: 36% proficient or above (district: 49%) 5th grade Math: 88% proficient or above (district: 73%)	
Attendance Rate		95%		95%

EAGLE COUNTY CHARTER

Chartering District: Eagle County School District

Location:	Wolcott (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	11.1
Enrollment:	128	Percent Minority:	7.8%
Grade Levels:	5-10		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%*
Waiting List:	350	Percent Special Education:	5.4%

* The charter school self-reported the following data: Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 3.0%.

MISSION: Eagle County Charter Academy brings parents, students and staff together in a rich, extended learning environment to produce students with academic stamina, who are respectful, responsible, accountable learners and contributors to the broader community.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The school stresses strong core academics, parental involvement, block scheduling, small class size, personalized learning plans and mentors.

GOVERNANCE: The school has a nine-member board (six parents and three staff) that makes policy decisions. The principal is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ 100% of students will achieve at least a 75% grade point average.
- ◆ 75% of students will score above 50 percentile on standardized tests.
- ◆ 95% of students will demonstrate at least 9 months academic growth each year.
- ◆ Students will achieve an average score of 3 on district writing and math assessments.
- ◆ School attendance will exceed 95%.
- ◆ The annual school climate survey will reflect 85% positive responses.
- ◆ 75% of all students will read at or above grade level.
- ◆ 100% parent attendance for fall conferences.
- ◆ 100% of students (who remain in the district) will return to the school for the following year.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) core test series National percentile rank National average is 50%	<i>Reading Language</i> 5 th 65 66 6 th 61 62 7 th 70 70 8 th 76 79	<i>Reading Language</i> 7 th 59 58 8 th 75 69 9 th 61 69 10 th 84 74	No longer administered
	<i>Math Composite</i> 5 th 69 67 6 th 64 61 7 th 68 71 8 th 74 81 (Spring 1998)	<i>Math Total</i> 7 th 55 57 8 th 64 70 9 th 58 60 10 th 84 78 (Spring 1999)	
Terra Nova Median national percentile		<i>Reading Language</i> 5 th 86 85 6 th 66 71 <i>Math Total</i> 5 th 74 88 6 th 77 73	<i>Reading Language</i> 5 th 85 78 6 th 78 89 7 th 66 72 8 th 68 74 <i>Math Social Studies</i> 5 th 83 84 6 th 78 79 7 th 71 73 8 th 78 64 <i>Total</i> 5 th 87 6 th 84 7 th 75 8 th 75
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)		7 th grade Reading: 53% proficient or above (district: 54%) 7 th grade Writing: 38% proficient or above (district: 37%)	<i>Reading Writing</i> 7 th grade 81% 59% (district 58% 43%) <i>Math Science</i> 5 th grade 88% (district 51%) 8 th grade 59% 81% (district 35% 58%)
District Writing Assessment (Avg. Score on 5-point test; 5 is high)		3.35	5 th grade - 4.1 6 th grade - 4.8 8 th grade - 3.6
Grade Point Average % of students with 75% GPA or better	90.25%	93%	93.5%
Attendance	91%	96%	97%
Parent attendance at fall conferences	100%	100%	100%
Parent Involvement Number of volunteer hours	5,300 hours	6,000 hours	7,300 hours volunteered
Re-enrollment rate	96%	96%	96%

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ELBERT COUNTY CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Elizabeth School District

Location:	Elizabeth (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	37.9*
Enrollment:	216	Percent Minority:	11.6%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.9%
Waiting List:	Not reported	Percent Special Education:	0.0% *

* The charter school self-reported the student-to-teacher ratio for 1999-2000 as 13.0 and the percentage of students eligible for special education services as 12.6%.

MISSION: The mission of The Elbert County Charter School (ECCS) is to help guide students in the development of their character and academic potential through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program. This mission will be accomplished through the use of the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence with an emphasis on a "back-to-basics" approach.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a detailed, explicit and systematic sequence of grant-specific content that can be taught consistently year after year. This core content is organized to spiral through the grade levels, becoming more sophisticated and detailed in each successive grade. In addition to the Core Knowledge Sequence, ECCS emphasizes the teaching of basic skills with a traditional and conventional approach, in a self-contained educational environment. The school's academically oriented program is organized so that the entire class generally works as a single group on grade level material, with ability grouping occurring in reading and math. Emphasis is placed on the basic foundations for an academically sound education: reading (with emphasis on phonics), mathematics, English, grammar, geography, history, government, penmanship, spelling, fine arts, physical education and science. Discipline and order is maintained so that all children can maximize their learning.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of five parents. The board is responsible for determining the school policies. The principal is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The school will implement the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence.
- ◆ The attendance rate will meet or exceed the average district elementary school.
- ◆ The voluntary re-enrollment rate in years two through four will be 100%.
- ◆ ECCS will set discipline standards that are enforced fairly and consistently.
- ◆ Median scores in all subject areas will increase by 5% annually.
- ◆ The average median attainment level in all subjects for all grade levels will be 80% or above.
- ◆ ECCS strongly encourages parental involvement, 40 hours per family.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	<p style="text-align: center;">Core Score</p> 3 rd grade 55 4 th grade 61 5 th grade 50 6 th grade 63	<p style="text-align: center;">Core Score</p> 3 rd grade 59 4 th grade 72 5 th grade 79 6 th grade 60 7 th grade 77	<p style="text-align: center;">Core Score</p> 3 rd grade 58 4 th grade 50 5 th grade 60 6 th grade 58 7 th grade 51 8 th grade 60
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	<p>4th grade Reading: 65% proficient or above</p> <p>4th grade Writing 71% proficient or above</p> <p>% proficient or above 4th grade Reading: 41% proficient or above</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reading Writing</p> <p>3rd grade school 77% (district 74%)</p> <p>4th grade school 64% 50% (district 70% 39%)</p> <p>7th grade school 67% 54% (district 69% 55%)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reading Writing</p> <p>3rd grade 77% (district 76%)</p> <p>4th grade 45% 36% (district 66% 41%)</p> <p>7th grade 61% 26% (district 64% 34%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Math</p> <p>5th grade 45% (district 56%)</p>
Attendance Rate		93%	94.4%
Retention Rate		89%	88%
Parent Satisfaction	90%	91%	Approximately 85%

EXCEL ACADEMY

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Arvada (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	12.6*
Enrollment:	126	Percent Minority:	10.3%
Grade Levels:	K - 6		
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	9.5%
Waiting List:	315	Percent Special Education:	6.3%*

* Excel Academy self-reported the following data: Student-to-teacher ratio: 18.1; Percent Special Education: 9.8%.

MISSION: Excel Academy's mission is that graduates are capable of independent, critical thought and life-long cooperative learning.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Excel's program features:

A rigorous academic program delivered in both traditional and non-traditional ways. The curriculum is focused on basic academic skills and core content in social studies, science and literature. Teaching methods include whole class instruction and non-traditional methods such as experiential, reality-linked and differentiated instruction.

Multiage classes using student-centered methods. Students spend two years with the same teacher.

High expectations. A student's self-image is strongly influenced by the teacher's estimation of the child's ability. For that reason, Excel students are viewed as gifted, and are taught to view themselves and others in that way. Students are taught to take responsibility for their learning and to be resourceful in their studies.

Low student-to-teacher ratio. Excel's standard class size is 18 students per teacher.

Required Parent Involvement.

Student Learning Plans. These plans report student progress toward pre-established goals in each subject area. Because the students participate in setting some of their goals, the plan helps them take responsibility for their own learning.

Year-Round School. This schedule promotes continuous, uninterrupted learning. The school year is comprised of five sessions with four breaks and a summer recess of no more than four weeks.

GOVERNANCE: The Executive Committee, comprised of four parents, one administrator and one community member, sets policy for the school. The Director makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ By 2001, 90% of all students in grades K-3 will read on or above grade level as measured by the DRA.
- ◆ The number of students scoring in the proficient or advanced range of the CSAP reading subtest will increase by 5% per year for students in 3rd and 4th grades.
- ◆ By 2001, 55% of students in grades 2-8 will score "proficient" or "advanced" on the 6-trait writing assessment. (4/98 baseline is 40%.)
- ◆ By 2001, increase the percentage of students, grades 3 and above, who perform at or above grade level in math achievement to 87%. (4/98 baseline is 77%.)
- ◆ By 2001, 80% of all students will have less than 10 absences (excused or unexcused) per year. (1997-98 benchmark: 52%.)
- ◆ By 2001, the number of referrals from Session 2 to Session 4 will decrease by 30% in each school year. (1997-98 benchmark: 23% reduction in referrals.)

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000					
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (National percentile rank) 50% is the national average	Grade	3	4	5	Grade	3	4	5	Grade	3	4	5
	Reading	37	55	76	Reading	64	72	60	Reading	64	66	60
	Writing	75	60	65	Writing	60	76	61	Writing	52	66	71
	Math	70	34	54	Math	59	78		Math	64	70	
	Battery	75	49	69	Battery	52			Battery	73		
	Grade	6	7	8	Grade 6				Grade 6			
	Reading	60	59	84	Reading	57			Reading	61		
	Writing	60	64	64	Writing	69			Writing	69		
	Math	62	53	67	Math	51			Math	60		
	Battery	64	59	72								
	(Spring 1998)											
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) % students attaining the proficient level or above	3rd grade Reading: 81% (district: 71%)			3rd grade Reading: 85% (district: 71%)			3rd grade Reading: 72% (district: 67%)					
	4th grade Reading: 81% (district: 64%)			4th grade Reading: 80% (district: 64%)			4th grade Reading: 77% (district: 67%)					
	4th grade Writing: 38% (district: 43%)			4th grade Writing: 40% (district: 38%)			4th grade Writing: 29% (district: 38%)					
							5th grade Math: 79% (district: 53%)					
Parent Involvement	7,333 volunteer hours contributed			7,028 volunteer hours contributed			7,640 volunteer hours contributed					
	100% of families participated			100% of families participated			100% of families participated					
Parent Satisfaction % of respondents whose expectations were met or exceeded	Emphasizes rigorous academics: 88%			Emphasizes rigorous academics: 91%			Emphasizes rigorous academics: 96%					
	Provides for individual learning styles: 89%			Provides for individual learning styles: 87%			Provides for individual learning styles: 87%					
	Teachers promote excellence: 81%			Teachers promote excellence: 99%			Staff promotes excellence: 99%					
	Extends classroom into community: 89%			Extends classroom into community: 79%			Extends classroom into community: 85%					
Attendance	K-6: 95%			K-8: 98%			K-6: 96%					
	7-8: 94%											

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THE EXCEL SCHOOL

Chartering District: Durango School District 9-R

Location:	Durango (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	10.3
Enrollment:	109	Percent Minority:	14.7%
Grade Levels:	6-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	23.9%
Waiting List:	0	Percent Special Education:	12.8%

MISSION: The EXCEL School, a school of choice, is a dynamic educational environment whose participants are willing to take risks as they foster educational excellence and cultivate personal, intellectual and emotional growth, responsibility and citizenship. The school will be a safe, nurturing environment which values the individual, recognizes diversity of learning styles and teaching methods and encourages innovation in teaching while maintaining high academic standards. In cooperation with Fort Lewis College, EXCEL will serve as a professional development center for the region.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The EXCEL School's curriculum emphasizes basic skills, critical thinking and problem solving, technology and community service. Every student has an individual learning plan, which serves as a three-way contract between the parent, teacher and the student.

GOVERNANCE: The School's Governing Board, comprised of two community members and five parents, makes policy decisions. The principal is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students will master the Durango School District standards.
- ◆ Students will make progress toward agreed upon contracts to excel (individual learning plans).
- ◆ Students will achieve at or above grade level.
- ◆ The school will attain an attendance rate of 100%.
- ◆ Parents will participate in the school at a rate of 95%.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) Composite Scores	Not reported	Average grade level equivalent 8 th grade - 9.6 National percentile rank: 8 th grade: Reading 63 Language 63 Math 53 Composite 57	Average grade level equivalent 8 th grade - 9.6
Iowa Test of Educational Development (11 th grade students)	Not reported	National Percentile Rank, composite score: 44 Grade Level Equivalent: 11.0	National Percentile Rank, composite score: 52 Grade Level Equivalent: 11.9
District Math Standards Assessment (% of students who are proficient in standards for five domains: measurement, number sense, geometry, algebra and statistics)	Not reported	Excel mean raw score: 51.0 District mean raw score: 52.8	Not administered
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) % Proficient or above (District average scores are shown in parentheses)		7th grade Reading: 71% proficient or above (district: 61%) 7th grade Writing: 39% proficient or above (district: 45%)	7th grade Reading: 60% proficient or above (district: 65%) 7th grade Writing: 40% proficient or above (district: 48%) 8 th grade scores are not reported because fewer than 16 students took the test
Attendance Rate	Not reported	93%	94%
Parent Involvement	Not reported	3,287 hours volunteered 75% of parents volunteered	2,986 hours volunteered

FRONTIER ACADEMY

Chartering District: Weld County School District 6

Location:	Greeley (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	14.2
Enrollment:	452	Percent Minority:	18.6%
Grade Levels:	K-8	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	27.0%
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Special Education:	8.6%
Waiting List:	396		

MISSION: Frontier Academy seeks to provide all children, having a variety of learning and communication styles, the opportunity to achieve high and common academic expectations. Consistency and direction throughout the grade levels will be made possible by using only research-based, field-tested and learner-verified instructional programs. Children shall have the opportunity to acquire a foundation of knowledge and character development in the early grades and will continue through 12th grade in a planned progression of specific academically rigorous, content-rich, proven and effective educational programs. Frontier Academy reflects the dedication and commitment to building a foundation of knowledge for cultural literacy, academic excellence and achievement.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Academy uses an integrated curriculum that combines: the *Core Knowledge Sequence* supplemented by the *Baltimore Curriculum Project*, *SRA Direct Instruction* for language arts, spelling, reasoning and writing, *Saxon Math* program and *Wild Goose Science Program*. This provides a content-rich, high expectation, back-to-basics learning environment. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a sequential program of specific grade-by-grade topics for core subjects. The educational program is designed to support and exceed state and district standards. Through intentional direct instruction and a proven reading/reasoning/writing program, the Academy is committed to advancing all students towards proficiency on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP).

GOVERNANCE: The Executive Committee is comprised of seven parents and one teacher. The Executive Committee is responsible for determining the school policies. The Headmaster is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The Academy will implement the *Core Knowledge Sequence* in grades K-8.
- ◆ The Academy will maintain full enrollment and a waitlist for all grades.
- ◆ Attendance at the Academy will meet or exceed 96% until transportation is made available.
- ◆ Student performance will met or exceed district and state performance standards in all core subjects.
- ◆ The Academy will teach character development in all grade levels.
- ◆ The Academy will provide instruction for all students with attention to their individual needs to promote mastery of all core subjects.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	
Iowa Test Of Basic Skills Scores shown are grade level equivalent.	GLE	GLE	GLE	
	Kindergarten .8	K -1 st grade 1.8	Kindergarten 1.4	
	1 st grade 1.3	1 st - 2 nd grade 2.0	1 st grade 2.2	
	2 nd grade 2.2	2 nd - 3 rd grade 3.1	2 nd grade 3.3	
	3 rd grade 2.8	3 rd - 4 th grade 4.1	3 rd grade 4.0	
	4 th grade 4.3	4 th -5 th grade 5.4	4 th grade 4.8	
5 th grade 4.8	5 th -6 th grade 6.1	5 th grade 5.9		
Fall 1997 baseline	Fall 1998. Scores are for same cohort of students as they advanced to the next year of school	6 th grade 6.5	7 th grade 7.6	
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 52% proficient or above (district: 52%)	3rd grade Reading: 62% proficient or above (district: 52%)	Reading 3rd grade 68% district (54%)	
	4th grade Reading: 58% proficient or above (district: 44%)	4th grade Reading: 58% proficient or above (district: 51%)	4th grade 67% (district 49%)	Writing 35% 27%)
	4th grade Writing 44% proficient or above (district: 24%)	4th grade Writing 30% proficient or above (district: 29%)	7th grade 39% (district 46 % %)	35% 29
			Math 5th grade 38% (district 38%)	
Attendance Rate		96%	96%	

GLOBE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Colorado Springs District 11

Location:	Colorado Springs (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	8.6 *
Enrollment:	145	Percent Minority:	21.4% *
Grade Levels:	K-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	33.8% *
Waiting List:	150	Percent Special Education:	6.9% *

The charter school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher Ratio: 10.3; Percent Minority: 20.6%; Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 41.0%; Percent Special Education: 8.3%.

MISSION: GLOBE Charter School enables students to become responsible, competent, aware, innovative and active citizens of the world. GLOBE Charter School fosters each student's ability to become a successful contributing member of the global community of the 21st century. We therefore provide a culturally rich, interdisciplinary educational program that teaches tolerance and celebrates diversity. We support students in acquiring the essential academic and life skills necessary to succeed in their personal and professional lives. GLOBE strives to make a positive difference in children's lives so that children can make a positive difference in the world

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The school uses a global, issues-oriented curriculum, featuring interdisciplinary thematic units, community service projects, portfolio assessment, and dynamic partnerships between students, faculty, and scholars/professionals in various disciplines. Curriculum focuses on world cultures, world views, foreign language instruction, relevant interdisciplinary instruction and experiential education processes. GLOBE provides educational environments, academic curricula, teaching methods, and individualized programs, goals and assessments for all its students, whose general aims will be to rejuvenate the educational process for all participants, reconnect it in a meaningful and dynamic way with the individual, the community, and the world it is meant to serve, and make a positive contribution to the local, national and global educational debate.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors (comprised of six parents and one teacher) makes policy decisions for the school. The Director of Education is responsible for curriculum, instruction, discipline and parent-teacher-student relations. The Director of Development is responsible for human resources, school accountability reports, district community relations and fundraising.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Continue to develop and improve curriculum, instruction and internal accountability according to GLOBE's Mission/Vision as well as state and district expectations.
- ◆ Continue to improve CSAP and DALT scores in order to demonstrate how GLOBE students meet or exceed reading, writing, math and science standards.
- ◆ Improve portfolio and other alternative assessments in order to document student achievement in many areas not measured by state and district evaluations.
- ◆ Improve the system by which we identify and respond to the needs of students who are not achieving their social or academic goals.
- ◆ Improve instructional/educational consistency by decreasing teacher turnover, increasing teacher salaries so that they more closely approach the district base salary; improving teacher evaluation and support processes.
- ◆ Improve the school site with the development of a science lab, a darkroom and an indoor physical education facility.
- ◆ Improve the clarity of our governance structure by adopting Carver's governing board strategies.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000		
District Achievement Levels Test (DALT) Test was administered in the Spring of each academic year. District averages are shown in parentheses ().	Reading	Math	Lang.	Reading	Math	Lang.	Reading	Math	Lang.
	3 rd 205 (191)	197 (196)	202 (199)	3 rd 199 (199)	197 (197)	201 (201)	3 rd 199 (200)	202 (202)	197 (197)
	4 th 203 (205)	210 (207)	210 (208)	4 th 212 (205)	205 (207)	209 (207)	4 th 196 (206)	207 (208)	211 (207)
	5 th 204 (211)	204 (216)	204 (213)	5 th 212 (211)	207 (216)	205 (214)	5 th 189 (211)	206 (213)	212 (215)
	6 th 208 (215)	206 (220)	205 (217)	6 th 220 (214)	212 (220)	218 (217)	6 th 210 (216)	212 (218)	213 (222)
	7 th 206 (218)	207 (226)	203 (219)	7 th 216 (218)	216 (227)	218 (220)	7 th 223 (220)	218 (221)	212 (229)
	8 th 222 (223)	222 (232)	219 (224)	8 th 223 (223)	224 (233)	217 (223)	8 th 211 (224)	213 (224)	221 (235)
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National percentile rank 50% is national average. Test was administered in early Spring	Reading	5 th 46	7 th 29	Reading	5 th 44	7 th 68	Reading	5 th 50	7 th 66
	Lang.	20	24	Lang.	29	50	Lang.	28	54
	Math	12	24	Math	34	34	Math	38	39
	Core	23	30	Core	34	50	Core	37	54
Attendance Rate	93%			90%			91.6%		
Parent Involvement	2,000 hours volunteered			2,666 hours volunteered			3,523 hours volunteers		
Portfolios	By year-end, all students had portfolios that included evaluation rubrics for each subject, student work from throughout the year, standardized test scores and teacher evaluations.			Students continued to have portfolios that included evaluation rubrics for each subject, student work from throughout the year, standardized test scores and teacher evaluations.			All students have portfolios demonstrating student progress, goals and achievement documented with rubrics, student work, reflections, assessments and standardized tests.		

**** NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this school because fewer than 16 students took the assessment at any given grade and subject.**

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HORIZONS K-8 ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

Chartering District: Boulder Valley School District

Location:	Boulder (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	11.1
Enrollment:	297	Percent Minority:	7.7%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	150	Percent Special Education:	10.1%

MISSION: Shared dedication and commitment to educational excellence enables parents, staff and community members to create a stimulating and supportive learning environment at Horizons. Children and adults work together at Horizons to strengthen their school and maximize their individual potentials. Horizons, as a member of William Glasser's Quality School Network, is committed to:

- Guiding students in grades K-8 to become self-directed learners and community contributors;
- Addressing the learning needs of the whole child in multi-age settings through challenging, developmentally appropriate curriculum;
- Identifying and enhancing the strengths of every student through active, personalized, authentic learning activities which honor individual student interests, choices and goals; and
- Maintaining high academic and behavior expectations for all students in a non-coercive, respectful and mutually caring learning environment.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Horizons program provides a rich and challenging curriculum which emphasizes mastery of literacy and numeracy skills, integrating basic skills and content with topics of interest and relevance to the students. Horizons emphasizes technology, Spanish language instruction, performing arts, service learning, outdoor education and student choices in the arts and sciences. Small classes, multi-age groups, school-wide curricular themes, individual learning goals, alternative assessments, family conferences, flexible staff roles, an emphasis on professional development, and extensive community participation characterize the school.

GOVERNANCE: The Horizons Board, comprised of six elected teachers and four elected parents, has final decision making authority. The lead teacher, with the assistance of the faculty and staff, is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions. All parents are invited to participate with all teachers and staff members in the governance of the school. The Horizons Council meets once a month to develop school policies and structures through a concordance model of decision making.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The school's attendance rate will exceed 95% each year.
- ◆ 98% of the students enrolled in the school will continue in the program from year to year.
- ◆ The Horizons community will maintain high levels of parent and teacher understanding and satisfaction with the school and the BVSD's School Snapshot Survey will indicate parent satisfaction levels of at least 95% a year and teacher satisfaction of at least 98%.
- ◆ Horizons students will demonstrate high levels of academic performance on the CTBS, with median percentiles at all grade levels of at least 75%.
- ◆ Horizons student will demonstrate high levels of academic performance on CSAP measures for grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, with 90% - 100% of students demonstrating proficiency on grade level measures in reading, writing, math and science.
- ◆ Horizons middle school students will continue to successfully transition from eighth grade to high school by satisfactorily completing their grade level requirements each year.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000		
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) (Scores shown are median percentiles)	Read.	Lang.	Math	Read.	Lang.	Math	Read.	Lang.	Math
	Grade 3			Grade 3			Grade 3		
	83	71	83	92	78	87	na	na	95
	Grade 4			Grade 4			Grade 4		
	na	na	91	na	86	90	na	na	91
	Grade 5			Grade 5			Grade 5		
	87	74	87	91	89	92	85	80	92
	Grade 6			Grade 6			Grade 6		
88	86	88	88	76	80	87	89	90	
Grade 7			Grade 7			Grade 7			
85	79	81	85	79	81	91	82	86	
Grade 8			Grade 8			Grade 8			
90	94	94	85	90	84	93	90	94	
Colorado Student Achievement Program (CSAP)	% proficient or above			% proficient or above			Reading	Writing	
		Reading	Writing		Reading	Writing	3rd grade	91%	
	3rd grade			3rd grade			(district	82%)	
	school	95%		school	100%		4th grade	100%	77%
	(district	65%)		(district	79%)		(district	78%	51%)
	4th grade			4th grade			7th grade	90%	63%
school	92%	71%	school	87%	54%	(district	73%	48%)	
(district	%	48%)	(district	76%	46%)	Math		Science	
			7th grade			5th grade	90%		
			school	94%	83%	(district	67%)		
			(district	71%	61%)	8th grade	97%	100%	
						(district	64%	54%)	
Attendance	96.1%			95.6%			96.7%		
Re-enrollment Rate	Elementary - 99% Middle School - 98%			Elementary - 99% Middle School - 99%					
Parent Satisfaction/Teacher Satisfaction (% satisfied on Boulder Valley School District's School Snapshot Survey)	Parents	Teachers		Parents	Teachers		Parents	Teachers	
	Learning Environment			Learning Environment			Learning Environment		
	95%	100%		97%	100%		95%	100%	
	Shared Decision Making			Shared Decision Making			Shared Decision Making		
	94%	100%		89%	100%		97%	100%	
	Communication			Communication			Communication		
93%	98%		93%	100%		97%	100%		
Leadership			Leadership			Leadership			
94%	100%		89%	100%		94%	100%		
Student Learning			Student Learning			Student Learning			
90%	100%		93%	100%		94%	100%		
Suspension Rate/Expulsion Rate	1.4% 0%			0.3% 0%			0.3% 0%		

JEFFERSON ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Broomfield (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	12.2*
Enrollment:	549	Percent Minority:	9.1%*
Grade Levels:	K-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	1.5%*
Waiting List:	2,500	Percent Special Education:	6.7%

* The charter school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher Ratio: 13.0; Percent Minority: 7.0%; Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 3.0%

MISSION: The mission of Jefferson Academy is to establish an environment where students attain their highest academic and character potential. This mission will be accomplished through an academically rigorous, content-rich educational program, in the context of discipline and respect, and a high degree of parental involvement.

VISION STATEMENT: Through the cooperation of parents, teachers, students and the educational and business communities, Jefferson Academy will create a learning environment that engenders growth in character, academic achievement, and the love of learning, resulting in responsible, productive citizens.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Jefferson Academy uses the Core Knowledge Foundation's Scope and Sequence and a fundamental, "back-to-basics" approach. The school emphasizes the teaching of basic skills with a traditional and conventional approach in a self-contained educational environment. The entire class generally works as a single group on grade level material with ability grouping occurring as necessary. Strict discipline and order is maintained.

GOVERNANCE: A Board of Directors (comprised of six parents and one lead administrator) is responsible for establishing school policy and for all aspects of the school. The principal, in consultation with staff, makes daily operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Reading and language scores will improve a minimum of five national percentile points.
- ◆ Achieve an average mean attainment level of 80% or better in all subjects for all grade levels on standardized tests.
- ◆ The school will maintain an attendance rate of 95% or better.
- ◆ 75% of students performing at least one year above grade level will show 9-months academic growth.
- ◆ 90% of parents will re-enroll their children in the school.
- ◆ Volunteer hours will exceed 10% of the total staffing hours.

Note: During the 1999-2000 school year, Jefferson Academy Elementary and Jefferson Academy were merged and the school expanded to also serve grades 11-12. To allow the reader to better track data from prior years, the school performance data for Jefferson Academy is presented separately for the elementary school, junior high and high school.

JEFFERSON ACADEMY - ELEMENTARY

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000																																																																																																
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS - Form G) National percentile rank National average is 50% This test is administered in the spring.	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Vocabulary</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Reading</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>K</td><td>78 82</td></tr> <tr><td>1st grade:</td><td>84 76</td></tr> <tr><td>2nd</td><td>83 83</td></tr> <tr><td>3rd</td><td>74 74</td></tr> <tr><td>4th</td><td>70 71</td></tr> <tr><td>5th</td><td>77 75</td></tr> <tr><td>6th</td><td>72 79</td></tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Lang. Spelling</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Math</i></th> </tr> <tr><td>K</td><td>68 76</td></tr> <tr><td>1st grade:</td><td>96 71</td></tr> <tr><td>2nd</td><td>89 81</td></tr> <tr><td>3rd</td><td>85 84</td></tr> <tr><td>4th</td><td>76 75</td></tr> <tr><td>5th</td><td>77 87</td></tr> <tr><td>6th</td><td>76 79</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Reading</i>	K	78 82	1 st grade:	84 76	2 nd	83 83	3 rd	74 74	4 th	70 71	5 th	77 75	6 th	72 79	<i>Lang. Spelling</i>	<i>Math</i>	K	68 76	1 st grade:	96 71	2 nd	89 81	3 rd	85 84	4 th	76 75	5 th	77 87	6 th	76 79	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Vocabulary</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Reading</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>K</td><td>na na</td></tr> <tr><td>1st grade:</td><td>91 90</td></tr> <tr><td>2nd</td><td>78 78</td></tr> <tr><td>3rd</td><td>79 76</td></tr> <tr><td>4th</td><td>82 84</td></tr> <tr><td>5th</td><td>87 84</td></tr> <tr><td>6th</td><td>76 75</td></tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Lang. Spelling</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Math</i></th> </tr> <tr><td>K</td><td>na na</td></tr> <tr><td>1st grade:</td><td>96 89</td></tr> <tr><td>2nd</td><td>84 74</td></tr> <tr><td>3rd</td><td>75 73</td></tr> <tr><td>4th</td><td>80 83</td></tr> <tr><td>5th</td><td>89 91</td></tr> <tr><td>6th</td><td>80 74</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Reading</i>	K	na na	1 st grade:	91 90	2 nd	78 78	3 rd	79 76	4 th	82 84	5 th	87 84	6 th	76 75	<i>Lang. Spelling</i>	<i>Math</i>	K	na na	1 st grade:	96 89	2 nd	84 74	3 rd	75 73	4 th	80 83	5 th	89 91	6 th	80 74	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Vocabulary</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Reading</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>K</td><td>70 86</td></tr> <tr><td>1st grade:</td><td>91 92</td></tr> <tr><td>2nd</td><td>86 84</td></tr> <tr><td>3rd</td><td>76 70</td></tr> <tr><td>4th</td><td>76 78</td></tr> <tr><td>5th</td><td>81 73</td></tr> <tr><td>6th</td><td>77 73</td></tr> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Lang. Spelling</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>Math</i></th> </tr> <tr><td>K</td><td>96 84</td></tr> <tr><td>1st grade:</td><td>93 89</td></tr> <tr><td>2nd</td><td>91 84</td></tr> <tr><td>3rd</td><td>77 72</td></tr> <tr><td>4th</td><td>70 78</td></tr> <tr><td>5th</td><td>78 84</td></tr> <tr><td>6th</td><td>76 71</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Reading</i>	K	70 86	1 st grade:	91 92	2 nd	86 84	3 rd	76 70	4 th	76 78	5 th	81 73	6 th	77 73	<i>Lang. Spelling</i>	<i>Math</i>	K	96 84	1 st grade:	93 89	2 nd	91 84	3 rd	77 72	4 th	70 78	5 th	78 84	6 th	76 71
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ITBS - Longitudinal Data National percentile rank, composite score	Students who have completed 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th & 6 th grades at Jefferson Academy (JA): Fall 94: 37 / Spring 98: 79 Students who have completed 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th & 5 th grades at JA: Fall 94: 31 / Spring 98: 82 Students who have completed 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th grades at JA: Spring 95: 71 / Spring 97: 75 Students who have completed 1 st , 2 nd & 3 rd grades at JA: Spring 96: 88 / Spring 98: 83 Students who have completed 1 st & 2 nd grades at JA: Spring 97: 85 / Spring 98: 86	Students who have completed 2 nd -6 th grades at Jefferson Academy (JA): Fall 94 / Spring 99: 40 / 77 Students who have completed 1 st -5 th grades at JA: Spring 96 / Spring 99: 72 / 86 Students who have completed 1 st - 4 th grades at JA: Spring 96 / Spring 99 83 / 84 Students who have completed 1 st - 3 rd grades at JA: Spring 97 / Spring 98 85 / 67 Students who have completed 1 st & 2 nd grades at JA: Spring 98 / Spring 99 85 / 80																																																																																																	
Parent Involvement Volunteer Hours	10,710 (25% of total staffing hours)	11,759	12,881																																																																																																
Parent Satisfaction % of parents who agree that school meets children's needs	99%	99%	98%																																																																																																
Re-enrollment	99%	97.7%	98%																																																																																																
Attendance	95.3%	96.2%	97%																																																																																																

JEFFERSON ACADEMY - JUNIOR HIGH

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) - National percentile rank National average is 50%	Grade 7th 8	Grade 7th 8	Grade 7th 8
	Reading	Reading	Reading
	70 68	71 68	64 67
	Integrated Writing	Integrated Writing	Integrated Writing
	78 68	76 75	N/A N/A
	Math	Math	Math
	71 71	71 71	69 70
	Composite	Composite	Composite
74 70	74 72	66 67	
Science	Science	Science	
85 71	73 77	66 66	
Soc. Studies	Soc. Studies	Soc. Studies	
79 74	69 79	62 75	
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)		7th grade Reading: 85% proficient or above (district: 61%) 7th grade Writing: 68% proficient or above (district: 45%)	7th grade Reading: 61% proficient or above (district: 63%) 7th grade Writing: 54% proficient or above (district: 46%) 8th grade Math: 42% proficient or above (district: 38%) 8th grade Science 54% proficient or above (district: 48%)
Percentage of students in grades 7 and 8 who created and produced a product using visual, audio or printed means that supports curriculum.	90%	90%	90%
Attendance Rate	97.3%		97%
Re-enrollment Rate	90% (Grades 7-9)	97.3% (Grades 7-10)	95% (Grades 7-8)
Parent Satisfaction % of parents who agree that the school meets their children's needs	98%	90%	97%
Parent Involvement Number of hours volunteered by parents or family members	1,927 hours (50% of families participated)	2,102 hours (55% of parents participated)	2,710 hours (55% of parents participated)

JEFFERSON ACADEMY – HIGH SCHOOL

MEASURE	1998-99	1999-2000
Attendance Rate		92%
Re-enrollment Rate		89%
Parent Satisfaction % of parents who agree that the school meets their children's needs		95%
Parent Involvement Number of hours volunteered by parents or family members		1,515 hours

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this charter school because the test was not administered in the grade levels served by the school during the 1999-2000 school year.

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LAKE GEORGE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Park RE-2 School District

Location:	Lake George	Student/Teacher Ratio:	10.9*
Enrollment:	107	Percent Minority:	5.3%*
Grade Levels:	preK-6		
Opening Date:	Fall 1996	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	25.2%*
Waiting List:	Not reported	Percent Special Education:	11.2%*

*The charter school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher ratio: 17.8; Percent Minority: 6.0%; Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 28%; Percent Special Education: 12.0%

MISSION: The Lake George Charter School, in partnership with families and the community, is dedicated to providing a safe and caring learning environment with a content rich, academically strong curriculum as the foundation for future success.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Lake George Charter School is community-based. The curriculum emphasizes math and literacy. Instruction is interdisciplinary. The educational program features a concept-based curriculum, which builds on the needs and interests of the individual child and meets or exceeds state standards.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board is comprised of two parents, two staff members, and three community members. The Governing Board makes policy decisions. The school administrator makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS: (from charter application and school improvement plans)

- ◆ Meet or exceed an attendance rate of 95%.
- ◆ Achieve measurable growth for all students in academic performance that meets or exceeds state standards and the expectations of the parents, students and classroom teachers.
- ◆ Increase options for preK-6 students who are currently home-schooled or are travelling long distances to attend classes.
- ◆ Show growth of one or more levels on the part of 85% of Title I Reading students, based on pre- and post- assessments.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	
Slossen Math Diagnostic Survey Grade Level Equivalent		Grade GLE 1 st 2.4 2 nd 3.2 3 rd 4.4 4 th 4.9 5 th 6.1 6 th 6.5 7 th 8.5 8 th 7.8	Grade GLE 1 st 2.27 2 nd 3.30 3 rd 4.32 4 th 5.25 5 th 6.45 6 th 8.26	
	Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 71% proficient or above (65% district average) 4th grade Reading: 61% proficient or above (61% district average) 4th grade Writing 33% proficient or above (27% district average)	3rd grade Reading: 68% proficient or above (51% district average) 3rd grade Reading: 63% proficient or above (64% district average) 4th grade Writing 32% proficient or above (32% district average)	3rd grade Reading: 80% proficient or above (77% district average) 4 th and 5 th grade CSAP scores were not reported because less than 16 student took the test.
	Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI)		1 st grade avg: 1.5 2 nd grade avg: 3.3 3 rd grade avg: 4.0	1 st grade avg: 1.3 2 nd grade avg: 3.0 3 rd grade avg: 4.
	Attendance Rate	93%	93%	93%

NOTE: In 1997-98 and 1998-99 Lake George-Guffey Charter School operated satellite sites in two locations. In 1999-2000, the Lake George Charter School operated in a single site only, serving students in grades K-6. Guffey Charter School received a separate operating charter.

LIBERTY COMMON SCHOOL

Chartering District: Poudre School District

Location:	Fort Collins (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	23.7
Enrollment:	502	Percent Minority:	8.2%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	9.6%
Waiting List:	not reported	Percent Special Education:	4.8%

MISSION: The mission of Liberty Common School is to provide excellence through a common foundation by successfully teaching a contextual body of organized knowledge, the value of a democratic society, and the skills of learning; in summary, we teach “common knowledge, common virtues, common sense.”

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Liberty’s educational philosophy is classical education. Classical education has as its metaphor a journey. The journey is the individual’s own quest in life and includes responsibility for one’s own education, which is a lifelong endeavor. The Core Knowledge Foundation’s Curriculum Sequence is the framework of the school’s curriculum. The *Core Knowledge Sequence* is distinguished by planned progression of specific knowledge in history, geography, mathematics, science, language arts and fine arts.

In addition, Liberty teaches specific thinking skills unique to each discipline, called “habits of mind.” The school teaches the values inherent in a democratic society, such as devotion to human dignity and freedom, equal rights for all, social and economic justice, the rule of law, civility, honesty, self-respect and self-reliance. Parents work in conjunction with the staff to ensure the most effective education possible for their children.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of seven parents. The board is responsible for determining the school policies. The school administration is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The mean ITBS development scores of students in all skill areas for all grade levels will increase by 7%.
- ◆ Volunteer hours contributed will equal 50% of staff hours.
- ◆ The attendance rate will meet or exceed that of the Poudre School District.
- ◆ The school will attain a 96% re-enrollment rate.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) Developmental scores	Reading Lang. Math 3 rd grade 182/201 177/ 191 184/201 4 th grade 199/221 195/216 203/222 5 th grade 214/229 204/216 210/217 6 th grade 237/251 232/243 261/266 Scores shown are fall 1997/ spring 1998	Reading Language Math 3 rd - 4 th grade 182/225 177/ 214 184/224 4 th - 5 th grade 208/233 199/229 208/233 5 th - 6 th grade 216/238 205/234 211/227 6 th - 7 th grade 239/260 252/268 232/252 7 th - 8 th grade 260/285 252/268 268/285 Scores shown are fall 1997 / January 1999 Performance goal of 7% was met in all skill areas in grades 3-6 and 7 th grade reading. Increase for 7 th grade language and math was 6%.	Not Reported
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	4th grade Reading: 83% proficient or above (district: 67%) 4th grade Writing 55 % proficient or above (district: 45%)	3rd grade Reading: 86% proficient or above (district: 76%) 4th grade Reading: 91% proficient or above (district: 73%) 4th grade Writing 79% proficient or above (district: 50%) 7th grade Reading: 85% proficient or above (district: 66%) 7th grade Writing: 72% proficient or above (district: 50%)	Reading Writing 3rd grade 79% (district 67%) 4th grade 89% 57% (district 74 % 50%) 7th grade 94% 76 % (district 73% 56%) Math Science 5th grade 86 % (district 63%) 8th grade 47% 74% (district 48% 61%)
Volunteer Hours Contributed	16,948 total 120.9% of staff hours	36,318 91% of staff hours	Not reported
Attendance Rate		96.1% (Poudre School District's average is 95.4%)	Not reported
Discipline Percentage of second referrals	2.9%	1.8%	Not reported
Re-Enrollment Rate	76%	85%	Not reported

LINCOLN ACADEMY

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Arvada (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	20.4
Enrollment:	245	Percent Minority:	11.4%
Grade Levels:	K-6		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	2.4%
Waiting List:	608	Percent Special Education:	3.3%

MISSION: The mission of Lincoln Academy is to help students attain their highest social and academic potential through an academically rigorous content rich educational program.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Lincoln Academy uses the Core Knowledge Sequence (as developed by Dr. E. D. Hirsch, Jr.) and a traditional fundamental, "back-to-basics" approach. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a detailed, explicit and systematic sequence of grade-specific content that can be taught consistently year after year. This core content is organized to spiral through the grade levels, becoming more sophisticated and detailed in each successive grade.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of five parents. The principal serves on the board in a non-voting capacity. The board is responsible for determining the school policies. The principal is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students will demonstrate a 5% increase in median scores on the Colorado Assessment of Student Program (CSAP) and attain the 80% level in all subject areas.
- ◆ The attendance rate will meet or exceed 95%.
- ◆ The rate of disciplinary referrals will be less than 3%.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	<p>3rd grade Reading: 91% proficient or above (district: 71%)</p> <p>Note: 4th grade scores are not reported because fewer than 16 students took the assessment.</p>	<p>3rd grade Reading: 96% proficient or above (district: 71%)</p> <p>4th grade Reading: 85% proficient or above (district: 64%)</p> <p>4th grade Writing 58% proficient or above (district: 38%)</p>	<p>3rd grade Reading: 81% proficient or above (district: 67%)</p> <p>4th grade Reading: 74% proficient or above (district: 67%)</p> <p>4th grade Writing 44% proficient or above (district: 38%)</p> <p>5th grade Math: 77% proficient or above (district: 53 %)</p>
Attendance Rate		90%	96%
Disciplinary Referrals		Less than 3%	Less than 3%
Parent Involvement	6,674 hours volunteered	8,108 hours volunteered. Approximately 56% of parents volunteered	7,479 hours volunteered

LITTLETON ACADEMY

Chartering District: Littleton School District

Location:	Littleton (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	17.3
Enrollment:	451	Percent Minority:	6.0%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1996	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	1.1%
Waiting List:	1,000	Percent Special Education:	5.8%

MISSION: The mission of Littleton Academy is to provide, within the Littleton community, a content-rich, academically rigorous education with a well-defined, sequential curriculum in a safe, orderly and caring environment.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The school's curriculum is based on the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence and emphasizes content skills in the development of the whole student. Core subject areas are: Reading: Open Court in K-5, SRA, Core Knowledge literature; Language Arts: Medallion, Spalding (K-5), Warriner's (6-8); Math: Saxon Math; Science: Core Knowledge topics; Social Studies: Core Knowledge topics – American History, World Civilization and Geography; and Spanish: Full instruction in grades 6-8, Introduction in grades 1-5. Instruction also is provided in Computers, Art, Music and Physical Education.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board is comprised of seven parents elected by the parent body. The Board is responsible for oversight of all school operations and determining the school policies. The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS: (From charter application and school improvement plans)

- ◆ Littleton Academy students will be expected to achieve mastery of the curriculum content. The performance target is that student grades will average 80% or better on tests of curriculum material.
- ◆ Littleton Academy students in grades 1-8 will take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) each spring. The students will show an improvement in scores for all grade levels in all subject areas.
- ◆ Littleton Academy performance on the ITBS will meet or exceed ITBS results for the Littleton Public School District.
- ◆ The average Littleton Academy score will exceed the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) results for Littleton School District and Colorado in every content area tested.
- ◆ Littleton Academy will meet all requirements of the Colorado Basic Literacy Act.
- ◆ Students who are found consistently working below grade level will be identified and will have a special plan developed for them, with input from their parents. Students who are found consistently to be working significantly above the class performance level will be identified and will have a special plan developed for them, with input from their parents.
- ◆ Littleton Academy will attain an attendance rate of 95% or better.
- ◆ Littleton Academy will maintain a stable enrollment rate of 96% of eligible students who will continue at the school through 8th grade graduation.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000			
	Reading	Language		Reading	Language		Reading	Language		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) - Grade Level Equivalent Tests were administered in the spring of the academic year.	K	na	na	K	na	na	K	na	na	
	1 st	2.9	2.6	1 st	2.8	2.8	1 st	2.7	2.6	
	2 nd	3.4	3.5	2 nd	4.1	4.5	2 nd	3.9	4.2	
	3 rd	5.1	4.8	3 rd	4.8	4.7	3 rd	5.3	5.6	
	4 th	6.2	6.5	4 th	6.7	6.3	4 th	6.5	6.5	
	5 th	7.0	7.6	5 th	7.3	8.5	5 th	7.3	8.1	
	6 th	8.6	8.3	6 th	8.5	10.1	6 th	9.1	11.3	
	7 th	10.7	11.5	7 th	10.8	12.0	7 th	10.3	12.3	
	8 th	12.1	12.6	8 th	12.4	13.4	8 th	12.3	13.6	
		Math	Core		Math	Core		Math	Core	
		K	na	na	K	na	na	K	na	na
		1 st	2.5	2.6	1 st	2.4	2.6	1 st	2.5	2.6
		2 nd	3.5	3.5	2 nd	4.0	4.3	2 nd	3.7	3.9
		3 rd	5.3	4.9	3 rd	4.8	4.7	3 rd	5.0	5.2
		4 th	5.9	6.0	4 th	6.4	7.7	4 th	6.3	6.3
		5 th	7.5	7.3	5 th	7.6	7.7	5 th	7.6	7.6
		6 th	9.0	8.9	6 th	8.8	9.2	6 th	9.3	9.8
		7 th	10.9	10.9	7 th	11.2	11.2	7 th	11.2	11.1
		8 th	12.7	12.4	8 th	12.8	12.9	8 th	12.8	13.0
		Median growth for all grades from May 1997 to May 1998 is 1.4 (one year, four months)			Median growth for all grades from May 1998 to May 1999 is 1.9 (one year, nine months)					
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) % proficient or above	4th grade Reading: 78% proficient or above (72% district average)			Reading Writing			Reading Writing			
	4th grade Writing 60% proficient or above (54% district average)			3rd grade school 88% district 75%			3rd grade 92 % district (75%)			
	3rd grade Reading: 76% proficient or above (75% district average)			4th grade school 80% 51% district 73% 46%			4th grade 86% 64 % district (74%) (49%)			
				7th grade school 76% 66% district 70% 59%			7th grade 81% 65 % district (74 %) (57%)			
							Math Science			
							5th grade 76% district (66%)			
							8th grade 52% 61 % district (49%) (63%)			
Mastery of Curriculum Content	Class means per class/subject ranged from 70% to 98% at the end of the school year			Class means per class/subject ranged from 74% to 99% at the end of the school year			Class means per class/subject ranged from 76% to 99% at the end of the school year.			
Attendance Rate	99%						97.2%			
Retention Rate	94%						92%			
Parent Satisfaction	98%- Satisfied with what their children are being taught 90%-Satisfied with the way their children are being taught 94%-Agree that Littleton Academy meets child's educational needs			98%- Satisfied with what their children are being taught 88%-Satisfied with the way their children are being taught 92%-Agree that Littleton Academy meets child's educational needs			99%- Satisfied with what their children are being taught 94%-Satisfied with the way their children are being taught 94%-Agree that Littleton Academy meets child's educational needs			

LITTLETON PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Littleton School District

Location:	Northwest Littleton (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	20.5
Enrollment:	444	Percent Minority:	20.0%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	450	Percent Special Education:	4.5%

MISSION: To provide a content-rich, academically rigorous education in a safe, orderly and caring environment.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

- Direct Instruction for reading, writing, spelling and math.
- Core Knowledge sequence for history, geography, literature, art, music, science, etc.
- Precision teaching approach to accelerate student performance to mastery.
- Placement of all students “where they are” academically to ensure an appropriate level of challenge.
- Smaller classes (about 14 students) in reading, writing, spelling and math. Mathematics problem solving curriculum from Singapore.
- Phonics-based introductory reading instruction.
- Serious study of content at all grades.
- Advanced classes for gifted and talented students.

GOVERNANCE: A five-member board comprised primarily of parents of students at the school makes policy decisions for the school. The principal is responsible for making day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Improve Core Knowledge and post-Direct Instruction implementation.
- ◆ Improve Direct Instruction skills of teaching staff.
- ◆ Implement a rigorous curriculum, emphasizing reading, writing, spelling, vocabulary, mathematics, science, geography and history.
- ◆ Meet or exceed the district average for ITBS mean test scores.
- ◆ Clearly define high expectations for students’ mastery of content.
- ◆ Build a safe, civil and caring environment.
- ◆ Encourage parent involvement.
- ◆ Block-schedule instruction in reading, writing, spelling and math.

MEASURE	1998-99		1999-2000				
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) Scores shown are National Percentile Rank. The test is administered in the spring of the academic year.	Reading	Language	Reading	Language			
	1 st	78	64	1 st	97	99	
	2 nd	56	50	2 nd	77	66	
	3 rd	50	32	3 rd	66	56	
	4 th	58	39	4 th	67	63	
	5 th	60	61	5 th	56	69	
	6 th	56	61	6 th	45	48	
				7 th	82	82	
		Math	Core	Math	Core		
		2 nd	24	44	1 st	88	99
		3 rd	42	42	2 nd	73	78
		4 th	49	47	3 rd	77	69
	5 th	70	67	4 th	66	65	
	6 th	46	55	5 th	70	67	
			6 th	54	50		
			7 th	76	81		
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	% proficient or above		% proficient or above				
		Reading	Writing	Reading	Writing		
	3rd grade			3rd grade	66 %		
	school	65%		(district	75%)		
	(district	75%)		4th grade	48%		
				(district	26 %		
4th grade			7th grade	81%			
school	37%	20%	(district	74%			
(district	73%	46%)		60 %			
			(district	74 %			
				57%)			
			Math				
			5th grade	36%			
			(district	66%)			
Attendance				96%			

MAGNET SCHOOL OF THE DEAF

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Lakewood (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	5.0
Enrollment:	27	Percent Minority:	14.8%
Grade Levels:	preK-6		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	33.3%
Waiting List:	not reported	Percent Special Education:	66.6%

MISSION: The mission of the Magnet School of the Deaf is to provide for deaf children, early childhood through 12th grade, an education that is “deaf-friendly,” supportive of the child’s home and managed by parents, the deaf community and the school personnel.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: MSD centers education on successful language acquisition and effective communication. The language of instruction is American Sign Language (ASL). This language is highly valued and provides the cornerstone for the students’ successful acquisition of English as a second language. Instruction and services are individualized for each student and emphasize problem solving and critical thinking. The MSD follow the district’s standards-based curriculum and also encompasses deaf history and deaf culture.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of three parents, one teacher, three community members and two educational representatives. The Board is responsible for setting policy for the school. The Management Team Leaders are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter application and school improvement plans):

- ◆ The school will further implement and utilize the district’s curriculum.
- ◆ The school will accommodate/challenge each student with academic goals set in an Individualized Education Plan.
- ◆ The school will ensure that the Colorado State Performance Assessment is administered.
- ◆ The school will meet or exceed the district average attendance rate.
- ◆ The school will maintain its enrollment.
- ◆ The school will explore ways to build literacy interest in its students.

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MSD administered the 3rd grade CSAP reading, the 4th grade CSAP reading, DRA K-3 literacy, and an American Sign Language receptive/expressive language development instrument. The CSAP scores were not reported as a result of CDE's policy not to publish scores for schools in which fewer than 16 students took the test. The chartering district waived the requirement that MSD administer the ITBS and the Magnet School of the Deaf is trying to secure an appropriate substitute assessment designed for administration to deaf or hard-of-hearing students.

The school notes that providing good student achievement data is particularly challenging for several reasons. First, the small numbers and diverse ages of students limit the use of averages and other statistical tools. Second, most students arrive at MSD with significant delays in academics, making data on relative progress more useful (at least in the short term) than data comparing the school to other schools. Finally, MSD staff has observed that students often appeared to have knowledge or skills that were not reflected in the assessment results because the test was administered in English. While English-based testing is appropriated for some purposes (most obviously, to test student attainment of the language arts curriculum), its use may not be fair or accurate for purposes of testing other knowledge or skills. The school plans to explore how administration of tests using American Sign Language may affect student results.

MARBLE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Gunnison School District

Location:	Marble (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	8.5
Enrollment:	17	Percent Minority:	0.0%
Grade Levels:	K-8	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Special Education:	23.5%
Waiting List:	0		

MISSION: The mission of the Marble Charter School is to provide guided opportunities for students to realize high levels of academic achievement, within a learning environment that encompasses natural and cultural resources from the community. The school develops its instructional program to exceed district standards and to provide each student with frequent self-rewarding successes. Marble Charter School expects its students, with full support of their families, to strive for excellence in all aspects of this learning process.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: “The Marble Charter School will respect each child as a unique individual. Respect allows and promotes choice, trust and independence. Respect accepts children where they are and encourages and congratulates them for their efforts. We believe that a child who feels respected will feel secure and be able to take risks. We believe that one of our basic roles, as a school, is to encourage an attitude of questioning. Thus, our own behavior should model the use of observation, questioning and experimenting as a means of gaining knowledge. We will encourage and foster creativity, enabling children to be successful at their own levels. We believe that students learn best when the curriculum is integrated and taught holistically. Therefore, we will organize our instructional time and materials around topics that lend themselves naturally to the integration of curriculum content areas. In order to accomplish this, we will pool our personnel resources. We will work cooperatively within the community, encouraging each and every one to participate in the teaching of our students.”

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board, comprised of four parents, one staff member and two community representatives, makes policy decisions for the school. The Head Teacher makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Identify any potentially “at risk” student.
- ◆ Meet or exceed district standards in both the Authorizing district and Roaring Fork School District.
- ◆ Each student will have an individualized learning plan that will help him or her successfully develop academic skills as well as the self-esteem and independence necessary for continued educational success.
- ◆ The school will achieve an attendance rate that meets or exceeds that of our authorizing district as well as RE-1.
- ◆ The school will improve its use of technology in the classroom.
- ◆ The school will strive for a high level of academic achievement.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
NWEA Levels Test	In the period from December 1997 to April 1998, 78% of students showed more than a half year's growth in reading, and 44% showed more than a full year's growth. In math, 78% of students showed more than a half year's growth in reading, and 75% showed more than a full year's growth.	From fall 1998 to spring 1999, 66% of students showed two or more years of growth in math, according to RIT scores on the NWEA Levels Test. In Reading, 62% of our students exceeded the expected one year growth according to their RIT scores.	60% of students exceeded the expected growth for the academic year in both reading and math.
STAR Reading Analysis			90% of students in grades 3-8 are reading above grade level.
Parent Involvement	100% of families contribute time to the school	100%	Average of 5 hours/week contributed
Attendance Rate	91.5%	94%	90.5%

NOTE: CSAP results were not reported for this school because fewer than 16 students took the test in each year.

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MONTESSORI PEAKS ACADEMY

Chartering District: Jefferson County School District

Location:	Littleton (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	13.1
Enrollment:	229	Percent Minority:	11.4%
Grade Levels:	PreK-6		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.4%
Waiting List:	87	Percent Special Education:	8.3%

MISSION: Achieve high standards of individual excellence by guiding the whole student through an exceptional educational experience. We will....

- ...guide the whole student by enabling development intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially to the fullest extent possible.
- ...achieve educational excellence while fostering the eager, autonomous learning of all students.
- ...maintain a financially viable educational institution.
- ...set a uniform, measurable academic standard and ensure each student achieves or exceeds it.
- ...create and maintain a strong community atmosphere and embrace diversity among ourselves.
- ...instill a love of learning in all of our students.
- ...encourage an overall appreciation and respect for the natural world in which we live.
- ...develop each student's independence, responsibility and respect for others.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The school adheres to the Montessori philosophy and methodology as the foundation of its academic programs. The Montessori curriculum is highly academically oriented and rigorous. The school features low ratios between faculty members and students, academics in the curriculum in pre-school classrooms, multi-age classrooms at all grade levels and a learning environment where the students are encouraged to become self-learning problem-solvers.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of seven parents, one teacher, and one community representative. The board is responsible for determining the school policies. The principal is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The percentage of students reading at grade level will increase to 80%, as measured by Colorado Student Achievement Program (CSAP), Development Reading Assessment (DRA) and Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).
- ◆ Portfolios for all elementary school students will be developed and maintained to provide information to students, parents and subsequent teachers about each student's level of development and academic growth over time, his/her attitudes and motivation.
- ◆ Students will produce grade level appropriate work using technology.
- ◆ 100% of parents will devote at least 50 hours/family of volunteer time to the school and 100% of faculty will participate in at least one school committee.
- ◆ The school will achieve an attendance rate of 94%.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National percentile rank Total battery		3 rd grade: 48% 5 th grade: 56%	3 rd grade: 64% 5 th grade: 63%
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)		3rd grade Reading: 50% proficient or above (district: 71%) 4th grade Reading: 67% proficient or above (district: 64%) 4th grade Writing 30% proficient or above (district: 38%)	3rd grade Reading: 67% proficient or above (district: 67%) 4th grade Reading: 63% proficient or above (district: 67%) 4th grade Writing 38% proficient or above (district: 38%) 5th grade Math: 80% proficient or above (district: 53%)
% of students reading at grade level	44%	77.3%	87%
Attendance Rate		95.8%	93.89%
Parent Involvement		7,085 hours volunteered 65% of parents volunteer	8,755 hours 65% of parents volunteer

MONUMENT CHARTER ACADEMY
 (Formerly Lewis Palmer Charter Academy)
 Chartering District: Lewis Palmer School District

Location:	Monument (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	16.9
Enrollment:	334	Percent Minority:	12.0%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1996	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.9%
Waiting List:	Not reported	Percent Special Education:	5.9%

MISSION: The mission of the Monument Charter Academy is to improve pupil learning by creating a charter school with high, rigorous standards in a friendly, caring, positive learning environment. The Academy's emphasis will be on the "Five R's" – reading, writing, arithmetic, respect and responsibility.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The setting offers traditional-type classrooms with the basic subjects taught at all grade levels. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a coherent, grade-by-grade (K-6) content-specific curriculum guide. Both the skill-based standards of Lewis Palmer School District 38 and the state model content standards are aligned for use with the Core Knowledge Sequence. Clear knowledge goals, smaller student/teacher ratios, individualized math and reading programs, and implementation methods differentiate the curriculum at the Monument Charter Academy from other District 38 schools.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board consists of seven parents, a teacher and the principal. The teacher and principal serve in a non-voting capacity. The Governing Board is responsible for policy decisions and the principal makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS: (from charter application and school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students will meet or exceed national standards for their grade level.
- ◆ The school will maintain an attendance rate of at least 95%
- ◆ All students will achieve a minimum of one grade level advancement during each school year.
- ◆ All students "at risk" for not achieving at least 70% in their course work will be identified and a corrective strategy will be established in consultation with the students' parents.

MEASURE	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) GLE - grade level equivalent; NRP - National percentile rank Data shown for K-1 st grade are Core totals and for grades 2-8 are Composite totals. Tests were administered in the spring of the academic year.	GLE	NPR	GLE	NPR	Not reported		
	K	1.2	90%	K		1.7	95%
	1 st	2.5	81%	1 st		2.5	83%
	2 nd	3.3	66%	2 nd		3.7	81%
	3 rd	4.3	69%	3 rd		4.4	67%
	4 th	6.1	75%	4 th		6.2	77%
	5 th	7.4	64%	5 th		7.4	72%
	6 th	9.6	74%	6 th		8.6	70%
	7 th	9.5	81%	7 th		10.8	75%
8 th	13.4	81%	8 th	12.9	82%		
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 88% proficient or above (district: 85%)		3rd grade Reading: 77% proficient or above (district: 81%)		% proficient or above		
	4th grade Reading: 80% proficient or above (district: 78)		4th grade Reading: 92% proficient or above (district: 79%)			Reading	
	4th grade Writing 70% proficient or above (district: 49%)		4th grade Writing 69% proficient or above (district: 53%)		Writing		
			7th grade Reading: 83% proficient or above (district: 66%)		3rd grade 75 % (district 72%)		
			7th grade Writing: 66% proficient or above (district: 58%)		4th grade 88% 52% (district 79% 46%)		
					7th grade 86% 57 % (district 74 % 58%)		
Attendance Rate	94%		95%		Not reported		
Parent Participation	10,000 hours volunteered by parents/families 89% of families participated		6,000 hours volunteered 61% of families participated		Not reported		

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MOUNTAIN VIEW CORE KNOWLEDGE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Canon City County School District Re-1

Location:	Canon City (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	22.9
Enrollment:	202	Percent Minority:	5.4%
Grade Levels:	K-6		
Opening Date:	Fall 1996	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	16.3%
Waiting List:	Not reported	Percent Special Education:	6.4%

MISSION: The mission of Mountain View Core Knowledge Charter School is to stimulate wonder and curiosity, engage the mind, and promote vision and understanding of the world to all students. Goals include giving students the opportunity to maximize potential by exposure to a common foundation of an organized body of knowledge sequentially presented by grade level. Character values including integrity, respect, responsibility and compassion will be strongly encouraged. The school achieves these goals through emphasis on a structured educational philosophy, strong encouragement of parental involvement, and commitment to treating each child as a unique individual.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The academic program is driven by the *Core Knowledge Sequence* curriculum, edited by Dr. E.D. Hirsch, Jr., which comprises at least 50% of the instructional time. The Core Knowledge curriculum is supplemented for all grade levels with the *Modern Curriculum Press* phonics and spelling program, the *Open Court* Reading program, the *Saxon Mathematics* program, Spanish, music, art, physical education and library. The kindergarten program is full-day.

GOVERNANCE: The school's governing board is comprised of five parents. The school administrator serves as a non-voting member of the board. The board sets policy for the school. The principal makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The school will implement the Core Knowledge Sequence curriculum.
- ◆ The school will attain an attendance rate of 96% or greater, to meet or exceed the average for public schools in the district.
- ◆ Volunteer involvement in the school will equal at least 100% of full-time staffing hours.
- ◆ Student performance will meet or exceed Colorado state performance standards in all subjects, for all grade levels.
- ◆ The school will address the educational needs of each student to promote individual progress and academic success.
- ◆ The school will maintain a stable enrollment.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) - National percentile rank; 50% is the national average Tests were administered in the spring	Core score: K 92 1 st 88 2 nd 74 3 rd 64 4 th 66 5 th 52	Core score: K 92 1 st 88 2 nd 74 3 rd 64 4 th 66 5 th 52	Not reported
Colorado Student Achievement Test (% proficient or above)	4th grade Reading: 72% prof. or above (district: 53%) 4th grade Writing 60% prof. or above (district: 28) 3rd grade Reading: 92% prof. or above (district: 69)	3rd grade Reading: 72% prof. or above (district: 71%) 4th grade Reading: 76% prof. or above (district: 58%) 4th grade Writing 52% prof. or above (district: 28%)	% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade 81 % (district 68%) 4th grade 84% 60% (district 64% 34%) 7th grade 84% 68% (district 58 % 38%) Math 5th grade 68% (district 36%)
Achievement Level Test for Canon City School District Median Percentile Rank Scores show Mountain View and (district) performance	Lang. Math Reading 3 rd grade 79 (55) 62(50) 63(44) 4 th grade 72(44) 68(43) 67(41) 5 th grade 61(51) 55(47) 64(44)	Lang. Math Reading 3 rd grade 78 (58) 65(47) 66(44) 4 th grade 75(46) 70(46) 67(44) 5 th grade 72(43) 75(42) 72(39) 6 th grade 67(47) 66(52) 70(46)	Not reported
Attendance Rate	96%	98%	Not reported
Retention Rate	95%	91%	Not reported
Parent Satisfaction Percentage of parents who are satisfied or very satisfied with the school	100%	98%	Not reported

THE ODYSSEY SCHOOL

Chartering District: Denver Public Schools

Location:	Denver (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	20.2
Enrollment:	167	Percent Minority:	44.9%
Grade Levels:	1-4		
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	24.0%
Waiting List:	118	Percent Special Education:	4.7%

MISSION: The Odyssey School is a dynamic Expeditionary Learning community dedicated to fostering each child's unique potential and spirit of adventure through exemplary standards of character, intellectual achievement, and social responsibility.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The school draws its direction and strength from Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Design Principals. These educational principles provide a powerful framework for personal growth through physical challenge and service. The curriculum is designed around rigorous, purposeful, project-based learning expeditions tied to Colorado State Standards. The Odyssey School's learning experience includes: a focus on reading and writing through literature, a rigorous math program (investigations and Connected Math), computers to develop students' research and thinking skills, fine arts, documentation of students' work through portfolios, regular out of school fieldwork, and adventure with environmental education.

GOVERNANCE: The Odyssey School has a 12-15-member board comprised of two teachers, two parents, one founder and seven-eight community members. The Director serves as a non-voting member.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Odyssey expects to increase reading scores by 7% overall as measured by CSAP, ITBS and reading assessments (DRA and QRI) for all returning students.
- ◆ Odyssey expects to increase math scores by 7% overall as measured by CSAP and ITBS math assessments for all returning students.
- ◆ Odyssey expects to increase student engagement and decrease student disciplinary referrals as measured by parent satisfaction with the school's disciplinary system and the referral and suspension rate for returning students.

MEASURE	1998-99	1999-2000																																																																																								
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 56% proficient or above (district: 43%) 4th grade Reading: 44% proficient or above (district: 31%) 4th grade Writing scores were not reported because fewer than 16 student took the test.	3rd grade Reading: 56% proficient or above (district: 47%) 4th grade Reading: 38% proficient or above (district: 38%) 4th grade Writing 38% proficient or above (district: 17%) 5th grade Math: 41% proficient or above (district: 20%)																																																																																								
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National Percentile Rank. Tests are given in the spring of the academic year	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Reading</th> <th>Lang.</th> <th>Math</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1st</td> <td>56</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd</td> <td>68</td> <td>65</td> <td>65</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 47</td> <td></td> <td>46</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>50)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> <td>59</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 36</td> <td></td> <td>39</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>33)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th</td> <td>65</td> <td>63</td> <td>60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 41</td> <td></td> <td>40</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>40)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Reading	Lang.	Math	1 st	56			2 nd	68	65	65	(district 47		46		50)				3 rd	60	60	59	(district 36		39		33)				4 th	65	63	60	(district 41		40		40)				<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Reading</th> <th>Lang.</th> <th>Math</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2nd</td> <td>59</td> <td>63</td> <td>71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 47</td> <td></td> <td>48</td> <td>50)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd</td> <td>35</td> <td>40</td> <td>33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 35</td> <td></td> <td>37</td> <td>31)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th</td> <td>53</td> <td>56</td> <td>42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 44</td> <td></td> <td>42</td> <td>42)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5th</td> <td>72</td> <td>62</td> <td>53</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 43</td> <td></td> <td>45</td> <td>39)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6th</td> <td>67</td> <td>67</td> <td>41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(district 44</td> <td></td> <td>55</td> <td>37)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Reading	Lang.	Math	2 nd	59	63	71	(district 47		48	50)	3 rd	35	40	33	(district 35		37	31)	4 th	53	56	42	(district 44		42	42)	5 th	72	62	53	(district 43		45	39)	6 th	67	67	41	(district 44		55	37)
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Student Return Rate	Over 90%	Over 90%																																																																																								
Parent Involvement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 80 to 90% of parents attend school events such as exhibition nights, dinner and school performances. • Families contributed 5,285 hours of volunteer time, an average of 46 hours/family during the school year. 																																																																																								

PASSAGE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Montrose School District RE-J1

Location:	Montrose (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	16.5
Enrollment:	23	Percent Minority:	56.5%
Grade Levels:	Ungraded Secondary	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	82.6%
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Special Education:	0.0%
Waiting List:	0		

MISSION: Passage Charter School is a community investment in quality education that results in healthy, responsible and rewarding lives for young parents and their children.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Passage Charter School offers teen parents the chance to earn a high school diploma in a flexible and supportive environment. The school operates year round and the daily schedule is designed to accommodate those who are employed or who can only spend a limited time at school for medical reasons. Through individualized instruction, the school can accommodate students at a variety of learning levels. Each quarter group classes are held in areas such as parenting, nutrition and employment preparedness. The licensed, on-site infant/toddler center provides care for the children of students and also serves as a “learning laboratory” – all students spend time during their PCS tenure working in the center. PCS students also are expected to earn 0.5 credit in the area of Service Learning by contributing in a volunteer capacity to their community. Prior to graduation, in addition to earning academic credits, all students must submit a “Parenting Portfolio” and a “Work Readiness Portfolio” demonstrating competencies in these areas.

GOVERNANCE: Passage Charter School is governed by a seven-member board that includes the Montrose City Attorney, Director of Workforce Development, a drug and alcohol abuse specialist, a drop-out prevention specialist, an early childhood specialist, a retired teacher/principal, and a former mayor of the City of Montrose. After the schools’ first year of operation, the Governing Board decided to contract with TPPI (Teaching Prevention-Promoting Involvement) for management of the school. TPPI staff handles most of the daily administrative tasks of the school. The Governing Board makes policy decisions for the school, often upon recommendations from TPPI.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ To increase the number of young parents who graduate from high school.
- ◆ To prepare young parents for the job market or for postsecondary education.
- ◆ To enhance the parenting abilities of young parents.
- ◆ To provide comprehensive services to pregnant and parenting teens enrolled in the school.
- ◆ To provide children, ages 0-3 years, of young parents with an enrichment environment while their parents complete their high school education.
- ◆ To maintain a minimum student enrollment equivalent to 80% of the school’s capacity.
- ◆ To increase scores of 80% of PCS students on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) a minimum of one grade level annually in the areas of Reading, Language Arts and Math.

MEASURE	1998-99		1999-2000	
	% of students Improving	Avg. Grade Levels Gained	% of students Improving	Avg. Grade Levels Gained
Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)	Reading 62.5%	3.9	Reading 70.0%	2.4
	Math 85.7%	1.7	Math 90.0%	1.9
	Language 85.7%	2.2	Language 70.0%	1.7
Attendance	71.5%		82%	
Parenting Skills			19 students participated in parenting classes. All students enrolled passed at an 80% level or above. Additionally, nine students completed 1,435 hours of laboratory time in the infant/toddler center under the supervision of qualified staff.	
Quality Care for Children of PSC Students	100% if the children who were cared for in the school's infant/toddler center were developmentally on track.		22 of 25 babies and toddlers of PSC students cared for in the infant/toddler center were developmentally on track as measured by the Denver II assessment. The other three have been assessed and are receiving additional services.	
Preparation for the Job Market	One third of PCS students who were previously unemployed are not successfully employed in part-time jobs.		All PSC graduates completed a "Work Readiness Portfolio" as part of their graduation requirements. Fourteen students completed a successful employment experience or internship during the year in a variety of fields.	
Comprehensive Services			100% of pregnant students receive prenatal care while enrolled in PSC. Case management services were provided to all students with 124 referrals made to area agencies for housing, legal aid, employment, health care and mental health services.	

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this charter school because the test was not administered in the grade levels served by the school during the 1999-2000 school year.

PINNACLE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Adams 12 Five Star School District

Location:	Thornton (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	20.5*
Enrollment:	635	Percent Minority:	26.1%*
Grade Levels:	K - 12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	10.9%*
Waiting List:	250	Percent Special Education:	6.6%*

* The charter school self-reported these data: Student/Teacher ratio: 23.0; Percent Minority: 31.3%; Percent Free/Reduced Lunch: 15%; Percent Special Education: 5.0%

MISSION: Our mission is to offer all students the opportunity to excel at a traditional course of study within a safe and structured environment. Self-esteem comes with accomplishment; therefore, students will be provided the opportunity for personal growth through academic achievement. Parent involvement is encouraged in the academic process.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Pinnacle has adopted the E.D. Hirsch, Jr. Core-Knowledge curriculum and Saxon math. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a planned progression of specific knowledge in history, geography, mathematics, science, language arts and fine arts. It is a guide to coherent content from grade to grade, designed to encourage steady academic progress as children build their knowledge and skills from one year to the next. The Core Knowledge Sequence and Saxon math are distinguished by their specificity. The specific content in the Sequence provides a solid foundation on which to build skill instruction. Moreover, its use helps prevent the many repetitions and gaps in instruction that can result from vague curricular guidelines.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of two elected parents, one elected community member, the principal and one elected administrator. The Board is responsible for determining the school policies. The Academic Director and the Business Director are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Use an evaluation process to assess student progress and progress of our academic mission.
- ◆ Improve student performance on nationally normed tests to the extent that such tests are compatible with our academic mission.
- ◆ Provide a safe and structured environment.
- ◆ Provide opportunity for personal growth through academic achievement.
- ◆ Accept students as they apply, subject to classroom space available.
- ◆ Provide post-high school options to all graduating students, including college and career paths.
- ◆ Increase parent involvement in the academic process.
- ◆ Continue to use an evaluation process to assess and improve student progress in reading and mathematics.

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MEASURE	1997-98		1998-99		1999-2000		
	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	
Achievement Level Test Scores shown are for Pinnacle and for the Authorizing district (in parenthesis)	Grade 3 203 (195)	202 Grade 4 207 (206)	Grade 3 199 (197)	198 (196) Grade 4 212 (206)	Grade 3 201 (NA)	200 (NA) Grade 4 209 (NA)	
	Grade 5 210 (212)	207 (210)	Grade 5 214 (212)	212 (210)	Grade 5 219 (NA)	213 (NA)	
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP)	4th grade Reading: 52% proficient or above (district: 51)	4th grade Writing: 21% proficient or above (district: 30%)	3rd grade Reading: 64% proficient or above (district: 58)	4th grade Reading: 50% proficient or above (district: 51%)	4th grade Writing: 30% proficient or above (district: 31%)	3rd grade Reading 66% (district: 65%)	Writing 33% (31%) 43% (32%)
					Math 43% (38%)	Science 32% (42%)	
California Achievement Test (CAT5) National Percentile Rank	3 rd grade 64	7 th grade 53	3 rd grade 59	7 th grade 64	Not administered		
Attendance Rate	93%		96.4%		97%		
Dropout Rate	0%		0%		0%		
Parent Satisfaction (% of parents who believe school achieved instructional effectiveness)	95%		94%		92%		

PIONEER CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Denver Public Schools

Location:	Denver (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	24.0
Enrollment:	311	Percent Minority:	97.4%
Grade Levels:	PreK - 5		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	84.6%
Waiting List:	not reported	Percent Special Education:	8.0%

MISSION: The mission of Pioneer Charter School, the center of learning for the community, is to guarantee that its children and youth acquire knowledge, skills, and values to become self-sufficient citizens. This is achieved by providing personalized learning experiences for students through the development of innovative partnerships with all segments of the community.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Pioneer Charter School represents a partnership between the Denver Public Schools and the University of Denver to operate a charter school. After three years of operation, the educational program was restructured in June 2000. The school adopted the Success for All program. This program aims to elevate student achievement in reading, but also focuses on cooperative learning, family support, community involvement and student motivation to attend school. The program includes an intensive tutoring component for students who need extra support to read at grade level. Writing instruction at Pioneer focuses on six-trait writing instruction. Writing is integrated throughout the curriculum with an emphasis on writing in the content areas and in math. Students receive a minimum of one hour of math instruction daily. Teachers in Kindergarten through 2nd grade use the Math Land Program. Teachers in 3rd through 5th grades use the Addison Wesley Math program. Among Pioneer's other features are an extended day program, an extended school year, a uniform policy, and numerous partnerships throughout Denver and the local community. Pioneer has a small class size (average 20) to allow for the implementation of personalized learning designed to accommodate the individual strengths and needs of students.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Board of the school consists of one University of Denver Trustee, Two University of Denver faculty members (one serving in a non-voting capacity, one DPS representative, three parents, one DPS Board of Education member, three Pioneer Charter School Staff Members (serving in a non-voting capacity.) The school also a Collaborative Making Team comprised of six parents, two administrators and five teachers. The Governing Board and the CDM make some policy decisions for the school; others are determined by DPS district policy. The Principal makes day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ CSAP scores will increase by at least 8% per year.
- ◆ Student attendance will meet or exceed 96%.
- ◆ Parent satisfaction with the school will be at or above the 90% level.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 23% proficient or above (district: 45%) 4th grade Reading: 21% proficient or above (district: 32%) 4th grade Writing 9% proficient or above (district: 17%)	3rd grade Reading: 0% proficient or above (district: 16%) 4th grade Reading: 9% proficient or above (district: 43%) 4th grade Writing 8% proficient or above (district: 31%)	3rd grade Reading: 25% proficient or above (district: 47%) 4th grade Reading: 23% proficient or above (district: 38%) 4th grade Writing 8% proficient or above (district: 17%) 5th grade Math: 6% proficient or above (district: 20%)
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) Grade Level Equivalent Test is administered in the spring of the academic year.			Reading 2nd grade 1.9 3rd grade 2.3 4th grade 2.7 5th grade 3.6
Attendance			96%
Parent Satisfaction			87%

PLATTE RIVER ACADEMY

Chartering District: Douglas County School District

Location:	Highlands Ranch (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	17.0**
Enrollment:	384	Percent Minority:	10.2%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	707	Percent Special Education:	4.9%

**The charter school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher ratio: 11.0.

MISSION: The mission of Platte River Academy is to provide a content-rich academically rigorous education with a well-defined, sequential curriculum in a safe, orderly and caring environment.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Platte River Academy features the Core Knowledge Curriculum plus art, music. Other features of the school include

- Traditional school calendar.
- Class size limited to 24 students with two classes per grade level and instructional aides.
- Ability grouping in reading and math.
- Spanish for grades K-8.
- Codes of expectations for academics, behavior and dress.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of six parents, one community representative, and the dean. The board is responsible for determining the school policies. The dean is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students will improve reading comprehension 3% each year, as measured by the Terra Nova, and exceed the district average each year.
- ◆ Student will exceed the district average in math on the Terra Nova assessments each year. Math scores will increase 5% each year.
- ◆ Students will increase language proficiency by 3% on the Terra Nova assessments each year.
- ◆ 100% of parents will be involved in the school.
- ◆ Meet or exceed CSAP achievement at 80% proficiency level designated by CDE.
- ◆ The attendance rate will meet or exceed 95%.
- ◆ Each student will achieve in writing to his/her highest potential.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000		
Terra Nova National percentile rank	Reading	Lang.	Math	Reading	Lang.	Math	Reading	Lang.	Math
	3 rd 75	80		3 rd 70	73	78	3 rd 70	73	78
	74			6 th 87	85	86	6 th 76	79	77
	6 th 73	73	72				8 th 81	72	74
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP)	Fourth grade reading: 68% proficient or above (district: 75%)			% proficient or above			Reading		Writing
	Fourth grade writing: 52% proficient or above (district: 47%)			Reading			3 rd grade 87% (district 83%)		
	Third grade reading 82% proficient or above (district: 80%)			school 85% (district 81%)			4 th grade 83% (district 76%)		57%
				4 th grade school 75% 58% (district 74% 49%)			7 th grade 81% (district 77%)		72%
				7 th grade school 77% 73% (district 76% 60%)			Math		Science
							5 th grade 79% (district 73%)		
							8 th grade 39% (district 51%)		44% (65%)
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National percentile rank	Read.	Lang.	Math	Core	Read.	Lang.	Math	Core	
	Kindergarten				Kindergarten				The school no longer administers the ITBS.
	94	91	85	87	92	93	81	87	
	1 st grade				1 st grade				
	76	80	73	78	82	83	75	82	
	2 nd grade				2 nd grade				
	84	82	76	84	70	71	72	72	
	3 rd grade				3 rd grade				
	66	70	74	70	75	79	78	78	
	4 th grade				4 th grade				
	79	78	82	81	78	72	81	78	
	5 th grade				5 th grade				
	66	66	75	69	77	75	83	80	
	6 th grade				6 th grade				
	81	79	91	85	67	66	75	70	
	7 th grade								
	75	75	79	77					
Attendance Rate				96.9%			96.25%		
Parent Involvement				90% of parents volunteer an average of 40 hours/family 14,000 total volunteer hours			84% of parents volunteer an average of 40 hours/family 13,486 total volunteer hours		

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PRAIRIE CREEKS CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering Districts: Strasburg School District

Location:	Strasburg (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	Not reported
Enrollment:	23	Percent Minority:	0%
Grade Levels:	9 - 12		
Opening Date:	January 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0%
Waiting List:	0	Percent Special Education:	0%

MISSION: The mission of the Prairie Creeks Charter School is to provide a second chance alternative high school program to grades 9-12 expelled students, high-risk students, or students counseled because they could not get along in their regular school program.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Prairie Creeks Charter School is based on the PLATO Computer Based Learning System, the Internet and self-directed learning. As advocates for lifelong learning and success, we are committed to developing effective self-management and fostering positive learning attitudes.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of the Superintendents of the four school districts that collaborated to create the charter school. The Board is responsible for determining the school policies. The site administrator is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ 90% of students will rate their training as “good” or “excellent” on a four-point scale.
- ◆ 80% of students will demonstrate improvement of one point on a five-point scale in 70% of the competencies measured.
- ◆ 98% of students will rate their engagement with PLATO as “good” or “excellent” on a four-point scale.
- ◆ 80% of students will respond positively to having utilized 50% of PLATO resources.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Student Progress (PCCCS students must reach at least 80% mastery level)	Data not available	96.4% exceed an 87% mastery level	Data not available
Percentage of students demonstrating improvement of at least one grade level during academic year	Data not available	100%	Data not available
Graduation Rate	Data not available	90%	90%
Attendance		75%	89%

NOTE: CSAP scores were not reported for this charter school because the test was not administered in the grade levels served by the school during the 1999-2000 school year.

P. S. 1

Chartering District: Denver Public Schools

Location:	Denver (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	30.9 *
Enrollment:	238	Percent Minority:	47.9%
Grade Levels:	5 th – 12 th	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	32.8%
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Special Education:	7.1% *
Waiting List:	Not reported		

*The charter school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher Ratio: 17.0; Percent special Education: 13.0%.

MISSION: P.S. 1's mission is to enrich life in the urban core of Denver – to add to its attractiveness, increase its economic viability, enliven its cultural life and bring out its hospitality. P.S. 1 will make its contributions to this mission by enabling young people to work together as a learning community on challenging projects that make a difference in the quality of city life and, in the process, draw students toward higher and higher standards of character, conduct, work, academic achievement and community service.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: P.S. 1's program comes from weaving together: student interests, strengths and weaknesses (as developed through Personal Learning Plans); opportunities for learning in the city; staff and volunteer expertise; Colorado Content Standards and other national standards; and P.S. 1 standards relating to character, conduct, work, academic achievement and community service.

GOVERNANCE: The Urban Learning Community's Board of Directors, comprised of three parents, two administrators and six community members, sets the vision and direction for the school. The Principal is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions and delegates much decision-making to staff and community members.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ All students must demonstrate that they have developed and can articulate high standards of character, conduct, work, academic achievement and community service.
- ◆ All students must demonstrate that they have acquired "Habits of the Mind," which include critical and creative thinking, anticipatory thinking, reflectiveness and capacities to analyze, synthesize, interpret and evaluate information in many symbol systems.
- ◆ 75% of all students who have completed two years of learning at P.S. 1 will be reading at grade level, as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills Reading Test.
- ◆ At the end of the 1996-97 school year and each year thereafter, 75% of P.S. 1 students will show reading improvement relative to grade or age level standards, as measured by the Degree of Reading Power (DRP) tests.
- ◆ At the end of the 1996-97 school year and each year thereafter, 75% of P.S. 1 students will show reading and writing improvement, as measured by alternative assessments developed by P.S. 1 educators.
- ◆ 75% of P.S. 1 students will show improvement relative to grade level standards in writing as demonstrated on a jointly agreed writing sample.
- ◆ All P.S. 1 students must demonstrate that they have achieved state model content standards through portfolios, knowledge bases, staff judgments, appropriate standardized tests, presentations and performances with school-developed scoring rubrics for each grade or groups of grades that are judged to be valid, reliable, and that provide comparable results to state-developed assessments.
- ◆ Given a career/academic plan, all students will demonstrate mastery of appropriate academic and work-place competence prior to graduation.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)	80% of students who have completed two years at P.S. 1 are reading at or above grade level. Mathematics scores from Spring 1997 to Spring 1998 (entire school) improved 1.26 grade level equivalent. All P.S. 1 grade levels improved more than one grade level equivalent during the 1997-98 school year.	79% of students who have completed two years at P.S. 1 are reading at or above grade level. National Percentile Rank Reading Math 6 th grade 61 43 7 th grade 57 44 8 th grade 56 52 9 th grade 54 43 10 th grade 57 56 11 th grade 79 69 12 th grade 56 na	National Percentile Rank (test was administered in the fall of 1999) Reading 6 th grade 52 7 th grade 55 8 th grade 61 9 th grade 78 10 th grade 66 11 th grade 61
Degrees of Reading Power Test (DRP) This test provides information about the level of text complexity that the student can comprehend.	86% of students improved on the DRP test from November 1997 to November 1998	Among students who have been at P.S. 1 two or more years: 8 th graders are scoring at grade level 10.3 9 th graders are scoring at grade level 10.5 10 th graders are scoring at a 12 th grade level 11 th graders are scoring at grade level 13.2	Not reported
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)		7th grade Reading: 35% proficient or above (district: 31 %) 7th grade Writing: 21% proficient or above (district: 19 %)	7th grade Reading: 32% proficient or above (district: 32%) 7th grade Writing: 25% proficient or above (district: 21%) 8th grade Math: 9% proficient or above (district: 12%) 8th grade Science: 24% proficient or above (district: 19%)
Parent Satisfaction Percent who agree/strongly agree that school meets the needs of students.	78%	Not reported	Not reported
Attendance Rate	95%	Not reported	86%

PUEBLO SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

Chartering District: Pueblo School District 60

Location:	Pueblo (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	18.6
Enrollment:	371	Percent Minority:	59.0%
Grade Levels:	K-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	57.1%
Waiting List:	150	Percent Special Education:	7.3%

MISSION: Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences will deliver a naturally integrated and balanced K-12 curriculum anchored in the Arts and in harmony with the Sciences which will improve learning and the quality of life. A strong community/school partnership based on Paidea Principles will create an untracked, enriched educational setting in which all students will succeed.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: PSAS features the same core curriculum for all students in an enriched educational setting in which all students will succeed. The arts are infused throughout the curriculum and are an integrated part of students' education within the structure of a sound academic program. Instruction is based on the Paideia model including didactic, tutoring and coaching, and seminars.

GOVERNANCE: The Site Council (comprised of six parents, six students, six faculty members, a USC/District 60 Alliance representative, a Pueblo District 60 representative, a Sangre de Cristo Arts & Conference Center representative, business representatives from the Latino Chamber of Commerce and the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce and the USC Provost) make policy decisions. The Dean of the School makes day-to-day operational decisions, in consultation with the faculty.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (From charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Students will meet or exceed all exit outcomes as determined by District 60 and the state of Colorado.
- ◆ Performance level discrepancies for Hispanic students in grades 2, 4, 6 and 8 in reading/writing and math will decrease (Goal is 5% for 2000).
- ◆ Percentage of students in grades 2, 4, 6 and 8 below proficient levels will decrease (Goal is 5% for 2000).
- ◆ The school will attain or exceed an attendance rate of at least 93%.
- ◆ 98% of PSAS families will volunteer at least 18 hours/year to the school.
- ◆ Parent satisfaction with PSAS' overall performance will be maintained at 80%.
- ◆ Using data from students' Personal Learning Records, the total of "at-risk" students in grades 2, 4, 6 and 8 will decrease by 5% in the content areas of reading/writing and math.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000			
ACT Passport Portfolio Project Wholistic Portfolio on 4-point scale Scores shown for PSAS/Other ACT Test Site Schools	Math	Lang.	Science	Lang.		Science	Math			
	Schoolwide Scores			9 th			9 th			
	2.25	1.93	1.47	1.82/1.74			2.00/2/28			
				1.33/1.52			10 th		2.43/2.41	
				10 th			11 th		2.40/2.64	
				1.70/2.13			12 th		2.00/2.51	
				11 th			Lang. Science			
				1.20/2.14			9 th	1.69/1.66	1.36/1.54	
				1.78/1.80			10 th	1.89/2.04	1.70/1/90	
				12 th	2.54/2.51	na	11 th	2.25/2.04	1.57/1.73	
							12 th	1.89/2.51		
							1.63/1.70			
Terra Nova (Mean National Curve Equivalent - Total score includes reading, language, math, science and social studies) Scores shown are for PSAS/Dist. 60	3 rd grade:	55 / 56		3 rd grade:	52 / 68		3 rd grade:	52 / 53		
	4 th grade:	51 / 56		4 th grade:	31 / 66		4 th grade:	53 / 58		
	5 th grade:	51 / 55		5 th grade:	53 / 60		5 th grade:	55 / 67		
	6 th grade:	56 / 50		6 th grade:	48 / 53		6 th grade:	53 / 61		
	7 th grade:	57 / 51		7 th grade:	58 / 53		7 th grade:	65 / 54		
	8 th grade:	49 / 48		8 th grade:	64 / 54		8 th grade:	66 / 60		
	9 th grade:	56 / 50		9 th grade:	49 / 54		9 th grade:	51 / 54		
	10 th grade:	63 / 57		10 th grade:	59 / 64		10 th grade:	70 / 62		
	Average:	54.7 / 52.7		Average:	54.3 / 59.0		Average:	58.0 / 58.5		
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) % proficient or above	3rd grade Reading: 80% (district: 67%)			Reading Writing 3rd grade 63% (district 66%)			Reading Writing 3rd grade 69% (district 72%)			
	4th grade Reading: 66% (district: 53%)			4th grade 44% 28% (district 57% 31%)			4th grade 58% 36% (district 61% 36%)			
	4th grade Writing 37% (district: 30%)			7th grade 56% 47% (district 44% 30%)			7th grade 46% 39% (district 26% 28%)			
							Math Science			
							5th grade 42% (district 48%)			
							8th grade 38% 46% (district 18% 28%)			
District Writing Assessment (Average score - 4-pt scale) Scores shown are for PSAS/Dist. 60	<i>Grades 5 7 10</i> Content 2.8/3.1 3.3/3.1 3.8/3.3			<i>Grades 5 7 10</i> <i>5-point scale</i> Word choice 2.9 3.2 3.5 Voice 3.0 3.2 3.6 Sentence Fluency 3.0 3.1 3.4 Mode 3.3 3.7 3.5			Data Not Available			
Parent Involvement	14,132 hours 97% of parents volunteered			12,362 hours 95% of parents volunteered			11,939 hours 96.2% of parents volunteered			
Attendance Rate	93.04%			92.94%			93.36%			

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RENAISSANCE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Douglas County School District

Location:	Parker (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	16.0*
Enrollment:	297	Percent Minority:	10.4%
Grade Levels:	PreK-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1995	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	92	Percent Special Education:	5.3%

*The school self-reported a Student/Teacher ratio of 20.0.

MISSION: To provide a Renaissance environment of vigorous intellectual, artistic and physical activity where students develop the academic skills, passion and responsibility for learning, while producing quality work.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Renaissance is an Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound School. Renaissance School assesses students to determine their learning and information processing styles and develops a Personalized Education Plan for each student. Students learn in multi-age classrooms. Learning is integrated from many subject areas and connects to real life experiences of students through the use of investigations. The school gives special attention to developing learning opportunities that identify and nurture the creative spark in each child. The school uses the Learning Network for literacy instruction.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors, comprised of nine parents, two community members and two administrators. The board sets policy for the school. The principal is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ The school will maintain or exceed a 95% attendance rate.
- ◆ Students will demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing and math on their CSAP scores.
- ◆ Terra Nova scores in math and language arts will increase by 2 percentile points.
- ◆ Students will be able to assess their own learning through the use of portfolios and will set appropriate goals for themselves.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Terra Nova National percentile rank	Reading Lang. Math 3 rd 67 60 75 4 th 84 83 61 5 th 82 80 69 6 th 61 63 60 7 th n/a due to small sample size	Reading Lang. Math 6 th 75 68 69	The school no longer administers this assessment.
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP)	3rd grade Reading: 74% proficient or above (80% district average) 4th grade Reading: 61% proficient or above (70% district average) 4th grade Writing 48% proficient or above (47% district average)	% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade school 83% (district 81%) 4th grade school 77% 43% (district 74% 49%) 7th grade school 63% 38% (district 76% 60%)	% proficient or above Reading Writing 3rd grade 59% (district 73%) 4th grade 70% 40% (district 76% 49%) 7 th grade scores are not reported because fewer than 16 students took the test Math Science 5th grade 64% (district 73%) 8th grade 19% 50% (district 51% 65%)
Attendance Rate	92.3%	90%	90%
Student Exhibits	Student oral and multimedia presentations demonstrate increases in research and presentation skills between term 1 and 4 for all grade levels, K-7.	Student oral and multimedia presentations demonstrate increases in research and presentation skills between term 1 and 4 for all grade levels, K-8.	

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ROOSEVELT-EDISON CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Colorado Springs District 11

Location:	Colorado Springs (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	15.0
Enrollment:	703	Percent Minority:	55.8%
Grade Levels:	K-5		
Opening Date:	Fall 1996	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	56.9%
Waiting List:	250+	Percent Special Education:	9.5%

NOTE: In 1999-2000, Edison-Emerson Jr. Charter Academy also operated under the charter originally granted to Roosevelt-Edison Charter School. Demographic data for this school was:

Enrollment: 791	Percent Minority:	75.9%
	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	54.7%
	Percent Special Education:	11.0%

With the exception of CSAP data, the following profile information applies to Roosevelt-Edison Charter School only. In future annual reports, this omission will be corrected.

MISSION: The mission of the Colorado Springs-Edison Charter School is to prepare a diverse cross section of Colorado Springs children for success as students, workers and citizens by providing them with a world class education at prevailing school costs.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Roosevelt-Edison Charter School is a partnership between the Edison Project and Colorado Springs District 11. Partnership schools are required to blend the research-proven elements of Edison's school design with the vision, creativity and energy of education professionals in local communities. The school design includes the organization of students into multi-age "houses", an innovative schedule, team teaching, an extended school day and year, a rich and challenging curriculum (*Success for All* in Reading, *Everyday Math*, *BSCS Science*, *Heartwood: An Ethics Curriculum for Children*), an extensive technology program and partnerships with parents and community. Instructional strategies include cooperative learning, projects and direct instruction. The Edison Project has developed its own assessment system to support its program.

GOVERNANCE: The national Edison Project sets policy related to school design and major program parameters for Roosevelt-Edison. A school-based advisory group, comprised of parents and representatives from the community, helps set budget priorities and implement local programs related to public relations, student achievement, fund raising and school events.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Each student will improve his/her skills in reading, writing and math as measured by biannual QRI assessments, quarterly promoted writings, monthly internal math assessments and CSAP assessments. All students should score at or above proficient and or improve their CSAP score from the prior year.
- ◆ Increase DALT scores on a pre/post test basis by 5% per year.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000		
District Achievement Level Tests (DALT) Data is reported in RIT scores comparing growth from fall to spring. District results are shown in parentheses ().	Reading	Math	Language	Reading	Math	Language	Reading	Math	Language
	3 rd grade 179/190 (186/199) 176/186 (184/201) 179/190 (189/201)			3 rd grade 179/192 (189/199) 178/188 (184/197) 181/193 (190/201)			3 rd grade 183/191 (186/199) 176/189 (184/197) 182/193 (190/201)		
	4 th grade 191/199 (199/206) 188/195 (198/207) 192/199 (201/208)			4 th grade 190/198 (199/205) 190/1958 (197/207) 192/200 (201/207)			4 th grade 192/198 (199/205) 191/201 (197/207) 194/200 (201/207)		
5 th grade 202/208 (206/211) 202/207 (207/216) 205/210 (209/214)			5 th grade 202/208 (206/211) 202/207 (206/216) 205/210 (209/214)			5 th grade 200/205 (206/211) 201/209 (206/216) 202/208 (209/214)			
Colorado Student Achievement Test	3rd grade Reading: 45% proficient or above (district: 64%)			% proficient or above Reading Writing			% proficient or above Reading Writing		
	4th grade Reading: 35% proficient or above (district: 59%)			3rd grade school 49% (district 66%)			3rd grade 49% (district 63%)		
	4th grade Writing 19% proficient or above (district: 36%)			4th grade school 37% 18% (district 58% 34%)			4th grade 43% 17% (district 61% 36%)		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) - National percentile rank. National average is 50% Fifth grade scores are shown both for Roosevelt-Edison/District 11.	Reading	Lang		Reading	Lang		Reading	Lang	
	3 rd grade 28 25			3 rd grade 36 31			3 rd grade 34 28		
	4 th grade 43 36			4 th grade 42 44			4 th grade 37 31		
5 th grade 44/56 36/51			5 th grade 35/56 41/51			5 th grade 40 31			
Math	Core		Math	Core		Math			
3 rd grade 27 24			3 rd grade 29 38			3 rd grade 28			
4 th grade 23 34			4 th grade 41 29			4 th grade 28			
5 th grade 29/51 35/52			5 th grade 32/51 35/52			5 th grade 26			
Attendance Rate	94.9%			92.9%			91.7%		
Parent Satisfaction (Measured on a 10-point scale)	7.8			8.7			9.2		

STARGATE CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Adams 12 Five Star School District

Location:	Northglenn (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	20.1
Enrollment:	241	Percent Minority:	22.0%
Grade Levels:	1-8*		
Opening Date:	Fall 1994	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	1.7%
Waiting List:	Not reported	Percent Special Education:	2.5%

* Stargate serves middle school students with a "School-within-a-School" program located at Thornton Middle School.

MISSION: We believe each child is entitled to an education commensurate with his/her ability to learn. Our purpose is to create a charter school with multi-district enrollment to serve those children whose academic and/or intellectual abilities require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program. This differentiated educational program will be designed regardless of disability, race, creed, color or gender, national origin, religion or ancestry so that these children can realize their contribution to self and society.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Stargate uses District Twelve curriculum, but teachers use different and innovative instructional strategies for gifted students. The school features foreign language at all levels, personal learning plans, multi-aged classrooms and direct parent involvement.

GOVERNANCE: The Governing Council (comprised of four parents and two staff members) makes policy for the school. The school's Executive Director and Director of Operations are responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Assure that every student is working at his or her ability level in reading and math based on individual CAT-V and performance level assessments.
- ◆ Meet or exceed state model content standards.
- ◆ Maintain CAT-V scores at 90% or above.
- ◆ Maintain or exceed an attendance rate of 95%.
- ◆ Achieve a 95% retention rate.
- ◆ 80% of third and fourth graders will score at the proficient level or above on the CSAP.
- ◆ Maintain a high level of parent satisfaction.

MEASURE	1997-98					1998-99					1999-2000				
California Achievement Test (CAT-V) National percentile rank. Scores shown for Stargate/Dist. 12	3rd grade		7th grade			3rd grade		7th grade			N/A				
	Math:	94/70	91/66	Math:	93/69	85/65	Reading:	86/61	93/59	Reading:	86/61	93/59	Sciences:	90/61	94/64
	Sciences:	96/65	96/64	Soc. Sci.:	86/64	94/60	Soc. Sci.:	81/62	92/59	Language:	85/59	91/56	Overall:	88/65	92/61
	Language:	85/59	95/55	Overall:	94/65	97/61									
District Performance Assessment Scores shown are for Stargate students/district average	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th					
	Math Communication					Math Communication									
	na	85/63	na	77/63	92/55	86/87	100/63	89	77/63	92/55					
	Problem Solving					Problem Solving									
	na	85/70	na	92/69	92/50	77/86	100/70	89	92/69	92/50					
	Science Communication					Science Communication									
	83/55	na	na	54/51	85/57	83/81	na	na	96/51	85/57					
	Problem Solving					Problem Solving									
	97/74	na	na	82/55	85/55	97/93	na	na	96/55	85/55					
	Writing Content					Writing Content									
	na	na	54/55	68/49	92/64	na	na	54/64	100/62	92/64					
	Originality					Originality									
	na	na	61/41	54/44	46/54	na	na	68/49	82/71	100/64					
	Style					Style									
	na	na	61/41	54/44	46/54	na	na	61/42	54/46	100/43					
	Editing					Editing									
	na	na	82/47	87/50	100/50	na	na	82/47	87/75	100/50					
Colorado Student Achievement Test (CSAP) % proficient or above	3rd grade Reading					Reading		Writing			Reading		Writing		
	97% proficient or above (district: 66%)					3rd gr.	86%				3rd grade	84%			
	4th grade Reading:					(district	58%)				(district	65%)			
	93% proficient or above (district: 51%)					4th gr.	100%	77%				4th grade	91%	69%	
	4th grade Writing					(district	51%	31%)				(district	56%	31%)	
	75% proficient or above (district: 36%)					7th gr.	98%	95%				7th grade	100%	88%	
						(district	52%	34%)				(district	52%	34%)	
												Math			
												5th grade	97%		
												(district	38%)		
Achievement Level Test Results (On a 250 scale) Level tests are based on the District 12 curriculum framework. Results are shown for Stargate/District 12	Science	Reading	Math			Science	Reading	Math			Science	Reading	Math		
	3rd	3rd	3rd			3rd	3rd	3rd			3rd	3rd	3rd		
	207/187	208/188	na			204/187	203/189	na			n/a	206/189	204/189		
	4th	4th	4th			4th	4th	4th			4th	4th	4th		
	218/199	216/198	211/196			221/199	219/199	212/197			n/a	213/200	214/200		
	5th	5th	5th			5th	5th	5th			5th	5th	5th		
	223/206	222/206	215/202			226/207	222/2067	215/203			n/a	225/207	232/209		
	6th	6th	6th			6th	6th	6th			6th	6th	6th		
	235/212	229/212	218/206			232/212	226/211	215/205			216/205	231/212	236/212		
	7th	7th	7th			7th	7th	7th			7th	7th	7th		
	244/218	234/216	222/209			240/220	233/211	220/209			221/208	233/218	241/220		
	8th	8th	8th			8th	8th	8th			8th	8th	8th		
	251/244	232/219	225/211			248/226	240/220	223/212			222/212	241/221	239/220		
Parent Satisfaction % expressing satisfaction	89%					89%					96%				
Attendance Rate	96.6%					97.2%					97.3%				

SUMMIT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Chartering District: Boulder Valley School District

Location:	Boulder (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	16.6
Enrollment:	253	Percent Minority:	11.5%
Grade Levels:	6-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1996	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	4.0%
Waiting List:	69	Percent Special Education:	4.0%

MISSION:

- To provide a rigorous, academic curriculum that promotes high levels of student effort and academic achievement.
- To foster high self-esteem through stimulating intellectual challenge and meaningful academic accomplishment.
- To inspire in students a lifelong love of learning and a desire for self-development.
- To create a community of peers who value scholarship, academic achievement and creativity.
- To serve as an excellent preparation for students intending to study in the International Baccalaureate program and other college-preparatory high school programs.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Summit offers challenging, ability-grouped middle school courses in which students are placed through an assessment of mastery of each subject area and ability, rather than on the basis of age or grade level. Five required core courses include English, science, math, social studies and foreign language.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is composed of seven voting members, elected by the parents of the entire student body as well as staff. The Principal and the Business Manager serve in a non-voting capacity. The Board sets policy for the school and the Principal is responsible for day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS: (from charter and annual school improvement plans)

- ◆ To expand educational choices within Boulder Valley School District.
- ◆ To provide the option of advanced classes for any student on a self-selecting basis.
- ◆ To group students according to subject mastery rather than grade classification or age.
- ◆ To challenge every student in every course.
- ◆ To elicit academic achievement commensurate with each student's ability.
- ◆ To maintain an unwavering commitment to the mastery of educational fundamentals (content) and the development of critical thinking skills (process).
- ◆ To enhance each student's social and emotional development and to foster positive relationships among peers.
- ◆ To recognize that its customers are students, parents, and the community, and to be responsive and accountable to their concerns.
- ◆ To strive to reflect the diverse population of the Boulder Valley School District.
- ◆ To meet or exceed District and State curriculum, content and performance standards.
- ◆ To monitor the program and evaluate it regularly.
- ◆ To ensure safety, civility and an optimum learning environment.
- ◆ Students in the 7th and 8th grades will demonstrate at least one year's academic growth over the previous academic year as measured by an increase in the class median national percentile total on the Terra Nova standardized test from 6th to 7th grade and from 7th to 8th grade, respectively.
- ◆ Summit's internally administered assessment will demonstrate that students master at least 80% of core area benchmarks.
- ◆ Summit students will have an average daily attendance of at least 96%.

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MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99			1999-2000					
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) National percentile rank	Reading	Lang.	Math	Reading	Lang.	Math	Reading	Lang.	Math			
	6 th	92.0	88.5	86.6	6 th	85.7	88.2	81.8	6 th	89.7	86.5	89.0
	7 th	92.8	87.2	85.0	7 th	87.8	87.7	92.2	7 th	87.8	87.7	92.2
	8 th	94.0	90.8	90.6	8 th	90.4	91.3	88.5	8 th	not tested		
		Sci	Soc	St	Spell	Sci	Soc	St	Spell	Sci	Soc	St
	6 th	88.7	87.0	80.2	6 th	87.0	86.0	69.4	6 th	not tested		
	7 th	88.4	90.5	73.3	7 th	89.5	87.8	67.4	7 th	not tested		
	8 th	92.6	89.0	72.8	8 th	91.8	88.8	88.9	8 th	not tested		
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)				7th grade Reading: 96% proficient or above (district: 71%) 7th grade Writing: 94% proficient or above (district: 61%)			7th grade Reading: 91% proficient or above (district: 73%) 7th grade Writing: 84% proficient or above (district: 59%) 8th grade Math: 81% proficient or above (district: 54%) 8th grade Science: 97% proficient or above (district: 64%)					
Attendance Rate	95.7%			94.96%			95.59%					
Parent Involvement	15,000+ hours volunteered by parents/families			17,000 hours volunteered by parents/families			28,000 hours volunteered by parents/families					
Retention Rate Percentage of students who re-enroll the following school year	98%			97%			97%					

SWALLOWS CHARTER ACADEMY

Chartering District: Pueblo School District 70

Location:	Pueblo (rural)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	18.2
Enrollment:	177	Percent Minority:	16.4%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1996	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	0.0%
Waiting List:	165	Percent Special Education:	2.6%

MISSION: The mission of Swallows Academy is to help guide students in the development of their character and academic potential through academically rigorous, content-rich educational programs built around a spirit of community.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Swallows Charter Academy operates an academically challenging education program using the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence. The school emphasizes a “back to basics” philosophy, with high academic standards, small class size and a strict discipline code.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors, comprised of four parents and three community members, set policy for the school. The Director and Assistant Director make day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter application and school improvement plans):

- ◆ **Attendance:** The Academy will achieve an attendance rate meeting or exceeding that of the average middle school within the District. Specifically, SCA will strive to achieve an average daily attendance of 95% or higher.
- ◆ **Stable Enrollment:** The Academy will strive for a voluntary re-enrollment rate of 95% of the eligible student population in years two through five of the Charter.
- ◆ **Community Involvement:** The Academy has set a goal of parental and community involvement equal to 10% or more of the total teaching hours budgeted each year.
- ◆ **Class Size:** Maximum enrollment allowed in any class will be 22 students.
- ◆ **Grade Level Advance:** 90% of students continuously enrolled in the school will have the necessary skills/competencies to advance to the next school level.
- ◆ **Standardized Tests:** 80% of our students will perform at or above grade level as measured by standardized testing.

MEASURE	1997-98			1998-99					1999-2000			
Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) National percentile rank 50% is the national average	Grade 6 7 8			Grade 4 5 6 7 8					Reading	Math	Lang.	
	<i>Reading</i> 54/62 71/74 68/60			<i>Reading</i> 60/81 62/77 55/67 59/72 69/73					1 st 92	67	91	
	<i>Math</i> 69/83 69/84 68/76			<i>Math</i> 55/83 54/85 70/86 68/87 76/85					2 nd 81	87	88	
	<i>Language</i> 55/71 59/68 65/62			<i>Language</i> 60/76 66/76 60/71 54/80 64/74					3 rd 71	77	72	
	<i>Science</i> 64/70 71/74 62/78			<i>Science</i> 67/84 74/78 61/76 69/81 71/79					4 th 76	82	86	
	<i>Social Science</i> 61/64 65/76 68/70			<i>Social Science</i> 72/84 64/77 66/75 54/66 74/74					5 th 73	85	81	
	Scores shown are for fall/spring of each academic year			Scores shown are for fall/spring of each academic year					6 th 89	72	84	
									7 th 77	91	88	
									8 th 81	91	88	
									Science	Social Science		
									1 st 80	N/A		
									2 nd 86	N/A		
									3 rd 72	76		
									4 th 87	81		
									5 th 81	77		
									6 th 87	83		
									7 th 84	76		
									8 th 85	80		
									Scores shown are for spring 2000			
Terra Nova NP (National Percentile Rank)	Grade 8			Grade 5 8					Grade 3 5 8			
	Reading	62 / 62		Reading	77 / 72		64/67		Reading	65	80	80
	Math	77 / 63		Math	83 / 66		73/63		Math	70	75	82
	Language	56 / 59		Language	80 / 66		83/68		Language	63	80	73
	Science	69 / 64		Science	79 / 69		78/68		Science	68	78	70
	Soc Sci	71 / 61		Soc Sci	80 / 70		72/64		Soc Sci	67	79	83
	Scores shown are for Swallows/District 70			Scores shown are for Swallows/District 70					Scores shown are for spring 2000			
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)				Reading Writing					Reading Writing			
% scoring proficient or above				4th grade					3rd grade			
				school 80% 55%					(district 91%)			
				(district 66% 38%)					(district 76%)			
				7th grade					4th grade			
				school 61% 72%					(district 81% 69%)			
				(district 60% 50%)					(district 72% 40%)			
									7th grade			
									school 85% 85%			
									(district 85% 85%)			
									(district 64% 51%)			
									Math Science			
									5th grade			
									school 67%			
									(district 67% 73%)			
									8th grade			
									school 60%			
									(district 60% 48%)			
Attendance Rate	95%			Elementary - 95.45%					Elementary - 95.67%			
				Middle - 94.86%					Middle - 94.42%			
Re-Enrollment Rate	84%			77%					87%			
Parent Attendance at Parent/Teacher Conferences	100%			100%					100%			

TWIN PEAKS CHARTER ACADEMY

Chartering District: St. Vrain School District

Location:	Longmont (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	Not reported *
Enrollment:	477	Percent Minority:	11.1% *
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	5.2%
Waiting List:	75	Percent Special Education:	0.0% *

The charter school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher Ratio: 14.0; Percent Minority: 11.8%, Percent Special Education: 4.0%

MISSION: Twin Peaks Charter Academy's mission is "to guide students in the development of their character and full scholastic potential through academically rigorous, content-rich educational programs. In so doing, we help to prepare students to become responsible, contributing citizens, able to compete in a global marketplace of ideas, goods and services."

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The school had adopted the *Core Knowledge* curriculum as the basis for its educational programs because it is specific, rigorous and sequential. The academic program includes: Reading: *Open Court* (1-6), *EPS Phonetic Readers* (K), Core Knowledge literature, ability grouped instruction; Language Arts: *Open Court* (1-6), *Steck-Vaughn Spelling* (1-7), *HBJ Language* (2-5), *STARS & CARS* (3,4), *Step Up to Writing*, *Warriner's Grammar* (6-8), *Saxon Phonics* (K-3), *EPS Vocabulary from Classical Roots* (6-8); *Glencoe Literature Series* (6-8), *Write Source 2000* (1-8), *Zaner Bloser Penmanship* (K-8) *ILS/Sing, Spell, Read, and Write Readers* (1-2), *EPS Reading Comprehension*, *Modern Curr Press Readers* (K-1); Math: Ability grouped instruction, *Saxon Math* (K-8; through Algebra 2); Science: Core Knowledge topics, *Silver-Burdett Discovery Works* (3-5); *Prentice Hall* (6-8), Non-fiction; Social Studies: Core Knowledge topics, *EPS* (2-3), *Story of US and Western Civilization*, *Adventures in Time and Place*, *McMillan/McGraw Hill* (4-5), *Prentice Hall and Glencoe*, *Holt Reinhart & Winston* (6-8), fiction and non-fiction. Curriculum extensions include computer, art, music, physical education and foreign language (Spanish for grades 1-5, 7-8; Latin required for grade 6). Teachers strive to integrate curriculum and instruction across disciplines by implementing a yearlong scope and sequence for each grade. Homework assignments are a daily routine. Multiple assessments are used to determine the success of past instruction and define the nature of future instruction. Team teaching and vertical teaming encourage shared academic expectations within and between grade levels and promote a comprehensive and consistent educational experience.

GOVERNANCE: The Board of Directors is comprised of seven parents. Two faculty members serve in a non-voting capacity. The board is responsible for determining the school policies. The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Student scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) will increase by 12 percentile points the initial year of operation.
- ◆ TPCA will maintain or improve an average daily attendance rate of 95%.
- ◆ TPCA will enroll 90% of its student each academic year.

MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) Composite Scores National percentile rank 50 is average score	1 st grade 51 / 82	1 st grade 91	1 st grade 84	
	2 nd grade 52 / 66	2 nd grade 87	2 nd grade 89	
	3 rd grade 61 / 87	3 rd grade 83	3 rd grade 89	
	4 th grade 56 / 84	4 th grade 80	4 th grade 84	
	5 th grade 66 / 86	5 th grade 86	5 th grade 81	
	6 th grade 57 / 82	6 th grade 87	6 th grade 84	
	7 th grade 60 / 86	7 th grade 82	7 th grade 89	
		8 th grade 90	8 th grade 71	
		Scores shown are fall 1997 / spring 1998	Scores shown are spring 1999	Scores shown are spring 2000
	Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) % scoring proficient or above		Reading Writing 3 rd grade school 81% (district 75%) 4 th grade school 85% 65% (district 66%) 41% 7 th grade school 56% 58% (district 59% 43%)	Reading Writing 3 rd grade 83% (district 73%) 4 th grade 73% 54% (district 47% 39%) 7 th grade 81% 67% (district 63% 47%) Math Science 5 th grade 77% (district 54%) 8 th grade 26% 47% (district 33% 51%)
Terra Nova National Percentile Rank Tests are administered in spring of the academic year. Scores in parentheses () are for St. Vrain School District		Grade 3 6 Reading 71 (66) 69 (61) Language 62 (64) 83 (61) Math 67 (60) 70 (58) Total 70 (66) 79 (62)	Grade 3 6 Reading 68 (67) 79 (62) Language 58 (64) 78 (63) Math 62 (63) 79 (60) Total 70 (67) 84 (62)	Grade 3 6 Reading 75 (67) 78 (64) Language 69 (66) 79 (66) Math 72 (60) 80 (60) Total 75 (67) 84 (65)
Attendance Rate		95%	95%	
Re-Enrollment Rate	88%	89%	93%	

UNION COLONY PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Chartering District: Greeley School District 6

Location:	Greeley (suburban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	19.0
Enrollment:	181	Percent Minority:	14.9%
Grade Levels:	8-12		
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	14.9%
Waiting List:	0	Percent Special Education:	8.3%

MISSION: Union Colony Preparatory School involves students in educational experiences that prepare them to excel in college or other post-secondary educational endeavors. To accomplish this mission, Union Colony provides:

- ◆ cross disciplinary exchange of knowledge among core subject areas, including fine arts, international languages, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies;
- ◆ a rigorous and challenging approach to thinking and learning;
- ◆ a strong focus on the processes and products of problem solving;
- ◆ an environment which fosters connections with teachers, other students and the community by limiting the size of the student body
- ◆ more continuity for students with a grade eight through twelve structure.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The program supports student success in college or other post-secondary educational endeavors by implementing dynamic curricula that integrate appropriate disciplines to teach learning processes and problem solving skills. Content knowledge is supported by requiring all students to take four years of core subject area classes in grades eight through eleven, and apply that content to solve applied problems through an integrated approach. Elective courses in the core subject areas are offered for students to expand their skills and knowledge or to prepare for Advanced Placement or college classes their senior year. The school emphasizes the organizational and study skills necessary for success in a college environment. Every senior is required to complete a minimum of two Advanced Placement courses or four comparable college courses. In addition, as a graduation requirement, each senior is required to research, write and present a thesis based on a problem statement designed during the second semester of his/her junior year. The students work with staff advisors to develop research committees who will evaluate the theses on organization, topic development, presentation, writing skills and content knowledge.

GOVERNANCE: The Faculty Council is comprised of 12 teachers. One parent, one student and one classified employee serve on the council in a non-voting capacity. The Faculty Council is responsible for determining the school policies. The principal is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ To demonstrate improvement of overall student achievement as measured by district-wide standards on mathematics, reading and writing assessments and by UCPS core content standards.
- ◆ To achieve and maintain the district and statewide attendance rate goals.
- ◆ To achieve and maintain the district and statewide graduation rate goals.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Weld School District 6 Assessment Results % of students scoring at or above standard	Grade 9 Reading: Information Selection 66% (67%) Reading: Story Selection 83% (77%) Math: 62% (56%) Writing: Content 96% (93%) Writing: Mechanics 87% (75%) Scores shown in parentheses () are for Weld School District 6	Grade 9 Reading: Information Selection 72% (61%) Reading: Story Selection 89% (75%) Math: 69% (56%) Writing: Content** 44% (41) Writing: Mechanics 29% (24) Scores shown in parentheses () are for Weld School District 6	Grade 8 Writing Content – 46% Writing Mechanics –61% Grade 9 Writing Content – 78% Writing Mechanics –53% Grade 10 Writing Content – 86% Writing Mechanics –86%
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)			8th grade Math: 31% proficient or above (district: 20%) 8th grade Science 49% proficient or above (district: 31%)
Attendance Rate		93.4%	89.6%
Graduation Rate		100%	78%

** The performance levels for this district writing assessment were raised substantially in 1998-99, accounting for the dramatic change in results from the prior year, at both the school and district level. Had the performance levels used in the 1997-98 school year been applied in 1998-99, the percentage of students scoring above the standard would have been 99% in Content and 85% Mechanics.

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WYATT-EDISON CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Denver Public Schools

Location:	Denver (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	22.9 *
Enrollment:	655	Percent Minority:	92.7%
Grade Levels:	K-8		
Opening Date:	Fall 1998	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	80.3%
Waiting List:	200	Percent Special Education:	0.0% *

* The school self-reported the following data: Student/Teacher Ratio: 18.8; Percent Special Education: 7.0%.

MISSION: The mission of the Wyatt-Edison Charter School is to provide a world-class education for all children as a public school of choice in their community. This is achieved through an extended school day and school year, an increased focus on reading, writing, math, science, social studies, fine arts, and character and ethics. The Wyatt-Edison School is operated in partnership with Edison Schools, a national model for excellence in public education.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: The Edison program features an ambitious and wide-ranging curriculum; pervasive use of technology, including a computer in every student's home and at every teacher's desk; a longer school day and school year; and an innovative organization that allows teams of teachers to work with the same students for several years. The instruction is varied and allows teachers to use a wide variety of pedagogy and reach students with different learning styles.

The curriculum sets high standards for all students. The standards for each academy are clearly spelled out for the Edison program and meet or exceed all national curriculum and Colorado content standards. The curriculum itself is well rounded. Every student receives a solid education in five major areas: humanities and arts, mathematics and science, character and ethics, practical arts and skills, and health and physical education.

Wyatt-Edison fully implements the Edison design. The school supplements the design with after-school enrichment programs for students as well as extensive community partnerships. The school's Student Achievement plan and Assessment Planning Team are unique to Wyatt-Edison. The school also plans to provide an extensive parent resource center and parent training opportunities.

GOVERNANCE: The Wyatt-Edison Charter Board is comprised of three school staff members, three to four community members and two parents. The Board provides oversight for the school. The school leadership team and the principal make day-to-day operational decisions.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ Wyatt-Edison will use two types of measures to gauge student achievement: 1) district standardized tests including the Colorado Student Assessment Program and other sanctioned assessments and 2) the customized Edison assessment system tied to Edison academic standards and objectives, including both traditional and performance-based assessment methods.
- ◆ Student progress will be evaluated using two different types of criteria. The first are district norms. Achievement levels of Wyatt-Edison students will be higher than those produced by other district schools for comparable students. The second are ambitious objective standards. Edison's academic standards meet or exceed those now in existence anywhere in the country.

MEASURE	1998-99		1999-2000	
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	3rd grade 21% (district 43%) 4th grade 16% (district 31%)	Writing 5% 16%	3rd grade 40% (district 47%) 4th grade 29% (district 38%) 7th grade 37% (district 32%)	Writing 9% 17% 15% 21%
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) National Percentile Rank of average standards score			Scores shown are for same cohort of students from spring 1999 to spring 2000 Grade 2 to Grade 3 Reading: 34 / 27 Mathematics: 28 / 26 Language: 21 / 34 Grade 3 to Grade 4: Reading: 20 / 31 Mathematics: 16 / 32 Language: 25 / 32 Grade 4 to Grade 5: Reading: 28 / 33 Mathematics: 22 / 23 Language: 27 / 30 Grade 5 to Grade 6: Reading: 24 / 27 Mathematics: 26 / 23 Language: 30 / 38 Grade 6 to Grade 7: Reading: 25 / 26 Mathematics: 17 / 27 Language: 40 / 37	
Attendance			94%	

YOUTH AND FAMILY ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Chartering District: Pueblo School District 60

Location:	Pueblo (urban)	Student/Teacher Ratio:	9.8
Enrollment:	118	Percent Minority:	79.7%
Grade Levels:	7-10	Percent Free/Reduced Lunch:	72.0%
Opening Date:	Fall 1997	Percent Special Education:	16.1%*
Waiting List:	8		

* The charter school self-reported the following data: Percent Special Education: 30.0%.

MISSION: The mission of the Youth and Family Academy is to create a safe environment for learning which will foster the development of the academic excellence, social adaptation skills, career preparation, leadership abilities, civic responsibility, respect for the physical universe, and appreciation of transglobal cultures in a manner which contributes to the betterment of public education and is respective of the public trust. Our educators will focus on the individual to help students achieve a high standard of academic performance by employing innovative and flexible teaching methods and cultivating personal growth and responsibility.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: YAFA is designed to serve at-risk students in grades 7 through 10 who have not had success in the traditional educational setting. In addition to the primary focus of education, a comprehensive Social Services component addresses the social, economic and health needs of families. Primary attributes of the educational program include: a low teacher/pupil ratio (20 to 1), an individualized approach to learning, and a career exploration and community awareness program.

GOVERNANCE: The Pueblo Youth Service Bureau (PYSB) is the sponsor of the YAFA and the PYSB/YAFA Board of Directors has direct governance authority over YAFA's operations. The school's principal directs the daily operation of the school. The Accountability Committee consists of representatives in the following areas: parents, business; community/education, human services, School District 60, PYSB/YAFA Board of Directors, YAFA teacher, YAFA Student Body President, YAFA Social Services Staff, YAFA Principal and PYSB/YAFA Deputy Chief Executive Officer. The Accountability Committee develops an Annual School Improvement Plan which identifies areas of strength, growth and improvement.

PERFORMANCE GOALS (from charter and annual school improvement plans):

- ◆ To provide student with an integrated learning curriculum that meets state standards and is different from what is currently being offered in traditional school settings.
- ◆ To cover four primary objectives in its curriculum: (1) Literacy (2) Self-Directed Learning (3) Economic Adaptability and (4) Group and Organizational Effectiveness Skills.
- ◆ To prepare students for the workforce through career exploration and planning activities linked to the curriculum.
- ◆ To provide a combination of school-based, family-centered support services by incorporating programming already provided by PYSB and YAFA to complement and enhance the successful educational experience of each student.

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MEASURE	1997-98	1998-99		1999-2000		
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) % scoring proficient or above		Reading	Writing	Reading	Writing	
		7th grade		7th grade		
		school	6%	0%	school	6%
		(district	44%	30%)	(district	42%
					28%)	
				8th grade		
				Math	Science	
				school	0%	
				(district	15%	
					5%	
					25%)	

Note: Youth and Family Academy Charter School is currently conducting research and undertaking development work in the area of valued-added approaches to student assessment. These assessment approaches will be implemented beginning in the fall of 2001.

PART TEN

WAIVERS

The Waiver Process and Its Use by Charter Schools

In 1999-2000, the Colorado charter school law did not provide an automatic exemption from certain state laws, rules and regulations to charter schools. Instead, the law extended to charter schools the operation of the same waiver provision that has been available to every public school district in Colorado since 1989.

This provision⁹⁹ allowed the state board of education to waive education laws (Title 22), and the rules and regulations promulgated under those laws, subject to standards providing for educational achievement and enhancement of educational opportunity. The waiver application had to be made by the board of education of the requesting school district and reflect the concurrence of (1) a majority of the appropriate accountability committee, (2) a majority of the affected licensed administrators, and (3) a majority of the teachers in the affected school or district.

The stated purpose of the waiver statute is to advance educational achievement and accountability. Before the advent of charter schools in Colorado, districts invoked the waiver statute sparingly and primarily for minor issues. In the four years before the passage of The Charter Schools Act, the period from 1989 to 1993, the state board granted twenty waivers. Between 1994 and 1997, in contrast, charter schools sought and received a total of 96 waivers. During that same period (1994 to 1997), the number of waiver requests granted to public school districts remained a modest 18.

There were several explanations for the expansive use of the waiver law by charter schools. The first was a practical one: as schools of choice, it was easier for charter schools to obtain the concurrences required by the waiver statute. Another explanation was that the budget constraints facing charter schools forced them to do business in a different way. The Colorado Charter Schools Act provided no start-up funds for new charter schools and required that (at least for the period covered by this report) charter schools receive a minimum of 80% of per pupil operating revenue. Some charter schools have successfully negotiated a higher rate of funding; others have not. Moreover, most schools must pay some portion of their operating revenues to rent facilities because they do not have access to school district facilities or to capital construction funds. Finally, many of the charter schools seek to maintain lower pupil/teacher ratios than conventional public schools. This practice has major fiscal implications. Given these budget parameters, the ability to structure employee compensation outside the district's normal salary schedule is essential to the viability of many charter schools. A third explanation was philosophical. In order to implement a distinctive educational program, the great majority of charter schools have attempted to establish considerable autonomy from their chartering districts.

Efficacy of the Waiver Process

Over the five-year period that these annual reports have been produced, the cumulative record suggests that the process for permitting charter schools to secure waivers was adequate to enable these schools to overcome statutory barriers to the successful implementation of their distinctive programs. However,

the waiver application and hearing process did require an investment of time and effort on the part of the charter schools, their chartering districts, and the State Board of Education.

The enactment of HB 00-1040 vastly simplified the method by which school districts apply for waivers from statute and regulation for public charter schools. The process now has two steps:

- **Step One:** School districts need to include within the charter contract a list of the state statutes and regulations the school district would like the State Board of Education to waive on behalf of the charter school.
- **Step Two:** The school district must submit to CDE the signed charter contract and charter application within ten days of the initial contract or renewal contract along with a cover letter listing the state statutes and regulations the school district would like the State Board of Education to waive on behalf of the charter school. The letter must be signed by an official of the school district. The charter contract must be signed both by an authorized representative of the school district and the charter school.

The Colorado Charter Schools Act now provides that if the State Board does not deny the waiver request in writing within 45 days after submittal of the request for release, the request will be deemed granted. If the State Board grants the requests, it may orally notify the local board of education and the charter school of its decision.

Waivers Secured by Colorado Charter Schools

Fifty-five of the 56 schools for which waiver information was available sought at least one waiver. Fifty-four of the schools (96%) obtained multiple waivers. Table 13 shows the frequency and distribution of waiver requests across the charter schools in this study. The charter schools in this study made an average of 12 requests in their petitions for waivers.⁶⁰ This number is larger than the number of "X's" shown in Table 13, because it includes requests of enumerated subsections of major Articles within Title 22 (Education) of the Colorado Revised Statutes. Table 13 shows the requests by Articles.

Most of the waivers sought and granted to the Colorado charter schools in the report addressed the status and rights of adults in the schools (evaluation, compensation, governance authority) and did not directly relate to the schools' educational program. This pattern reflects the nature of the Colorado's education policy infrastructure as a local control state. Colorado does not have state textbook selection, state graduation requirements or state mandated curriculum or curriculum frameworks. If Colorado regulated these areas at the state level, as do many other states, the pattern of waiver requests made by the charter schools certainly would have been much different, and more expansive, in order for the schools to attain the desired degree of autonomy. There is a definite pattern of waiver requests among the charter schools, despite the range of educational programs they offered.

POINTS OF REFERENCE

National Charter Schools

Half of the 38 states with charter school laws automatically granted waivers from many state laws, rules and regulations. This typically meant that charter schools were freed from most state and district regulations, with a few exceptions (federal regulations, health and safety rules, and civil rights laws in many cases; also, insurance, state testing, compulsory attendance, minimum age requirements and desegregation requirements in a few others). Fourteen other states permitted waiver requests and/or waivers negotiated with the charter school authorizer. In states where waiver of regulations was left to a negotiation process, the amount of freedom realized by a charter school may have depended on the charter school authorizer's orientation and relationship with charter schools. Four states did not allow state laws to be waived at all, but may have permitted limited waivers of other policies and regulations.⁶¹

In general, charter schools were not exempted from state student assessment or budgeting/auditing requirements. "Although charter schools represent a growing effort to rethink accountability, they remain public schools, and the agencies that sponsor them retain many of the same monitoring responsibilities that have always been in place."⁶²

Compared with the limited flexibility on state assessments and budget/auditing requirements, greater flexibility was apparent in domains related to teacher preparation and collective bargaining agreements. "These freedoms may seem relatively modest, particularly because of the charter movement's emphasis on deregulation. However, it does appear that charters enjoy considerably more freedoms than other public schools, even when these other schools are eligible for such freedoms by waiver."⁶³

At a national level, the extent to which charter schools had control over decisions and policies was closely linked to the type of agency that chartered them. In general, charter school authorizers that were not local educational agencies (e.g. agencies like state boards of education, institutions of higher education and special chartering boards) allowed charter schools greater flexibility and autonomy.⁶⁴

Statutes Waived by Colorado Charter Schools

This section of the report describes the statutes waived in order of the number of charter schools in this report that sought the waiver.

1. TEACHER EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION AND DISMISSAL ACT

This law, Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-63-101 et seq, contains numerous provisions that define the nature of the employment relationship between teachers and their employers. The law:

- requires all teachers to hold a teacher's license;
- requires all employment contracts to be in writing and to contain specific damage provisions;
- contains requirements regarding the transfer of teachers;
- prohibits teachers to receive moneys from the sale of books, musical instruments, school supplies or other materials;
- provides for the exchange of teachers with a school district in this state or in another state or with a foreign government;

- sets specific requirements for probationary teachers and the renewal and non-renewal of their contracts;
- sets forth the grounds and a detailed administrative procedure for the dismissal of non-probationary teachers;
- requires districts to adopt a salary schedule, salary policy or a combined salary schedule and policy; and
- requires those districts that adopt a salary schedule to place teachers on the salary schedule at a level at least commensurate with (but not limited to) the teacher's education, prior experience and experience in the district.

Forty-nine of the 56 schools in this study (88%) received a waiver of some or all provisions of this Act.

2. *EMPLOYMENT AND AUTHORITY OF PRINCIPALS*

Section 22-32-126, Colo. Rev. Stat., provides for the employment of principals, describes their role and requires that principals hold a Type D administrative certificate.

Forty-six of the 56 schools (82%) in this study received a waiver of this law.

3. *LICENSED PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION ACT*

This Act, Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-9-106, establishes the duties and requirements of school districts regarding the evaluation of licensed personnel, the district's reporting requirements to the State Board and the minimum information required in the district's written evaluation system.

Forty-six of the 56 charter schools (82%) in the report received a waiver from the operation of this statute or enumerated subparts of the statute.

4. *SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION*

In Section 22-32-109, Colo. Rev. Stat., the law enumerates specific duties of elected boards of education, including the power to

- to adopt policies and prescribe rules necessary and proper for the efficient administration of the affairs of the district,
- to adopt a policy prohibiting the use of tobacco products on school property,
- maintain minutes of proceedings,
- bond staff,
- keep financial records of the school district applying recognized principles of government accounting,
- publish a statement of the financial condition of the district,
- adopt a school calendar,
- set hours for parent-teacher conferences,
- prescribe textbooks and curriculum,
- adopt conduct and discipline codes,

- adopt procedures to follow in stances of assault on teachers or other school employees, and
- provide training to teachers designed to assist teachers in recognizing child abuse or neglect.

Forty-two of the 56 schools in this study (75%) received waivers of specific subsections of this statute.

5. *SPECIFIC POWERS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION*

Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-32-110 lists the specific powers of local boards of education, including the power to

- employ teachers' aides and other non-licensed personnel;
- terminate employment of personnel;
- procure life, health or accident insurance;
- adopt policies related to in-service training and official conduct of teachers; and
- accept gifts, donations and grants.

Thirty-seven of the 56 schools (66%) in the report received waivers of specific subsections in this statute.

6. *COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAW*

The Act, Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-33-104(4) requires local boards to adopt policies setting forth the district's attendance requirements. The policy must provide for excused absences.

Fifteen of the 56 schools (27%) received a waiver of specified sections of the compulsory school attendance law.

7. *BOARD OF EDUCATION - SPECIFIC DUTIES REGARDING THE EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONNEL*

Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-32-109.7 sets out specific duties that local boards of education must follow in employing personnel.

Thirteen of the 56 charter schools in this study (23%) received a waiver of this statute.

8. *SUSPENSIONS, EXPULSIONS AND DENIAL OF ADMISSION*

Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-33-105 sets out the requirements for suspension and expulsion of students.

Twelve of the 56 schools (21%) received a waiver or some of all of the provisions of this statute.

9. *KINDERGARTEN*

The Act, Colo. Rev. Stat. 32-32-119, states that a board of education may establish and maintain kindergartens for the instruction of children one year prior to their admission to the first grade.

Eleven of the 56 charter schools in this study (20%) received a waiver of this statute.

10. BOARD OF EDUCATION – FINGERPRINTING OF APPLICANTS

Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-32-109.9 sets out specific duties that local boards of education must follow in requiring licensed personnel to submit fingerprints if the school district has cause to believe that the personnel have been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor, not including traffic infractions, subsequent to their employment with the district.

Nine of the 56 charter schools in this report (16%) received a waiver of this statute.

11. FOOD SERVICES

Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-32-120 relates to the authority of a local board of education to establish, maintain, equip and operate a food-service facility.

Seven of the 56 charter schools (13%) received a waiver of this statute.

12. COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT

Two of the 56 charter schools (4%) received a waiver of subsections of the Colorado Charter Schools Act, Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-104 and 112(1), relating to the location of a charter schools and the financing of charter schools, respectively.

Table 13: Overview of Statutes Waived by Charter Schools, Schools Opened in Fall 1993 and Fall 1994

STATUTE WAIVED	Academy of Charter Schools	Academy of Charter Schools	Butte Rock	Center for Discovery Learning	Castle Gate	Comm of Learners	Connect	Core Knowledge	Eagle	The EXCEL School	Jefferson Academy	PSAS	Stargate
22-9-101, et seq. - Licensed Personnel Performance Evaluation Act	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
22-30.5-101, et seq. - Colorado Charter Schools Act													
22-32-109 - Board of Education - specific duties	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
22-32-109.7 - Board of Education - specific duties - employment of personnel													
22-32.109.8-9 - Fingerprinting of Applicants for nonlicensed and licensed positions													
22-32-110(1) - Board of Education - specific powers	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
22-32-119 - Kindergarten													
22-32-120 - Food Services - facilities									X				
22-32-126- Principals - employment and authority	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X
22-33-104(4) - Compulsory School Attendance - board of education shall adopt a written policy		X								X			
22-33-105 - Suspension, expulsion and denial of admission													
22-63-101, et seq. -Teacher Employment, Compensation & Dismissal Act	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X

Table 13 (Cont.): Overview of Statutes Waived by Charter Schools, Schools Opened in Fall 1995

STATUTE WAIVED	Aspen Carrholdale	Cherry Creek Academy	Cheyenne Mountain	Community Prop	Crestone	Excel Academy	GLOBE	Marble	P.S. I	Renaissance
22-9-101, et seq. - Licensed Personnel Performance Evaluation Act	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
22-30.5-101, et seq. - Colorado Charter Schools Act			X							
22-32-109 - Board of Education - specific duties	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
22-32-109.7 - Board of Education - specific duties - employment of personnel					X		X	X		
22-32.109.8-9 - Fingerprinting of Applicants for nonlicensed and licensed positions	X				X		X	X		
22-32-110(1) - Board of Education - specific powers	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
22-32-119 - Kindergarten	X				X		X	X		
22-32-120 - Food Services - facilities				X						
22-32-126- Principals - employment and authority	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
22-33-104(4) - Compulsory School Attendance - board of education shall adopt a written policy	X				X			X	X	
22-33-105 - Suspension, expulsion and denial of admission					X			X		
22-63-101, et seq. -Teacher Employment, Compensation & Dismissal Act	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 13 (Cont.): Overview of Statutes Waived by Charter Schools, Schools Opened in Fall 1996

STATUTE WAIVED	Lake George	Titlicton Academy	Monument Charter Academy	Mt. View Core Know.	Roosevelt-Rivmont	Summit Middle	Swallows Academy
22-9-101, et seq. - Licensed Personnel Performance Evaluation Act	X		X	X	X	X	X
22-30.5-101, et seq. - Colorado Charter Schools Act							
22-32-109 - Board of Education - specific duties	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
22-32-109.7 - Board of Education - specific duties - employment of personnel				X			
22-32.109.8-9 - Fingerprinting of Applicants for nonlicensed and licensed positions				X			
22-32-110(1) - Board of Education - specific powers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
22-32-119 - Kindergarten				X			
22-32-120 - Food Services - facilities							
22-32-126- Principals - employment and authority	X		X	X	X	X	X
22-33-104(4) - Compulsory School Attendance - board of education shall adopt a written policy				X	X		
22-33-105 - Suspension, expulsion and denial of admission	X						
22-63-101, et seq. -Teacher Employment, Compensation & Dismissal Act	X		X	X	X	X	X

Table 13 (Cont.): Overview of Statutes Waived by Charter Schools, Schools Opened in Fall 1997

STATUTE WAIVED	Holder Prop	CIVA	Classical Academy	Crown Pointe	DCS Montessori	Elbert County	Frontier	Horizons	Literary Companion School
22-9-101, et seq. - Licensed Personnel Performance Evaluation Act	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
22-30.5-101, et seq. - Colorado Charter Schools Act									
22-32-109 - Board of Education - specific duties	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
22-32-109.7 - Board of Education - specific duties - employment of personnel	X						X		X
22-32.109.8-9 - Fingerprinting of Applicants for nonlicensed and licensed positions	X						X		X
22-32-110(1) - Board of Education - specific powers		X	X	X			X		X
22-32-119 - Kindergarten				X			X		X
22-32-120 - Food Services - facilities				X					
22-32-126- Principals - employment and authority	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
22-33-104(4) - Compulsory School Attendance - board of education shall adopt a written policy				X			X		X
22-33-105 - Suspension, expulsion and denial of admission	X	X		X			X		X
22-63-101, et seq. - Teacher Employment, Compensation & Dismissal Act	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 13 (Cont.): Overview of Statutes Waived by Charter Schools, Schools Opened in Fall 1997

STATUTE WAIVED	Lincoln Academy	Magnet School/Deaf	Montessori Peaks	Pinnacle	Pioneer	Blatte River Academy	Prairie Creeks	Twin Peaks	Union Colony	Youth Family Academy
22-9-101, et seq. - Licensed Personnel Performance Evaluation Act	X	X	X			X				X
22-30.5-101, et seq. - Colorado Charter Schools Act										
22-32-109 - Board of Education - specific duties			X		X	X	X	X		X
22-32-109.7 - Board of Education - specific duties - employment of personnel			X			X				X
22-32.109.8-9 - Fingerprinting of Applicants for nonlicensed and licensed positions										X
22-32-110(1) - Board of Education - specific powers			X			X	X	X		X
22-32-119 - Kindergarten	X							X		
22-32-120 - Food Services - facilities	X					X		X		
22-32-126- Principals - employment and authority	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
22-33-104(4) - Compulsory School Attendance - board of education shall adopt a written policy							X	X		X
22-33-105 - Suspension, expulsion and denial of admission							X	X		X
22-63-101, et seq. -Teacher Employment, Compensation & Dismissal Act	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X



Table 13 (Cont.): Overview of Statutes Waived by Charter Schools, Schools Opened in Fall 1998

STATUTE WAIVED	Alta Vista Charter	Brighton Charter	Colorado High School	Compass Montessori Charter	Litotum Preparatory Charter	The Odyssey School	Passage Charter	Wyatt-Edison Charter
22-9-101, et seq. - Licensed Personnel Performance Evaluation Act	X	X		X	X		X	
22-30.5-101, et seq. - Colorado Charter Schools Act						X		
22-32-109 - Board of Education - specific duties				X	X			X
22-32-109.7 - Board of Education - specific duties - employment of personnel		X		X	X			
22-32.109.8-9 - Fingerprinting of Applicants for nonlicensed and licensed positions						X		
22-32-110(1) - Board of Education - specific powers				X	X			
22-32-119 - Kindergarten					X	X		
22-32-120 - Food Services - facilities		X						
22-32-126- Principals - employment and authority	X			X	X			X
22-33-104(4) - Compulsory School Attendance - board of education shall adopt a written policy					X			
22-33-105 - Suspension, expulsion and denial of admission					X			
22-63-101, et seq. -Teacher Employment, Compensation & Dismissal Act	X	X		X	X		X	X

PART TWELVE

SELECTED FINANCIAL ISSUES IN COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS

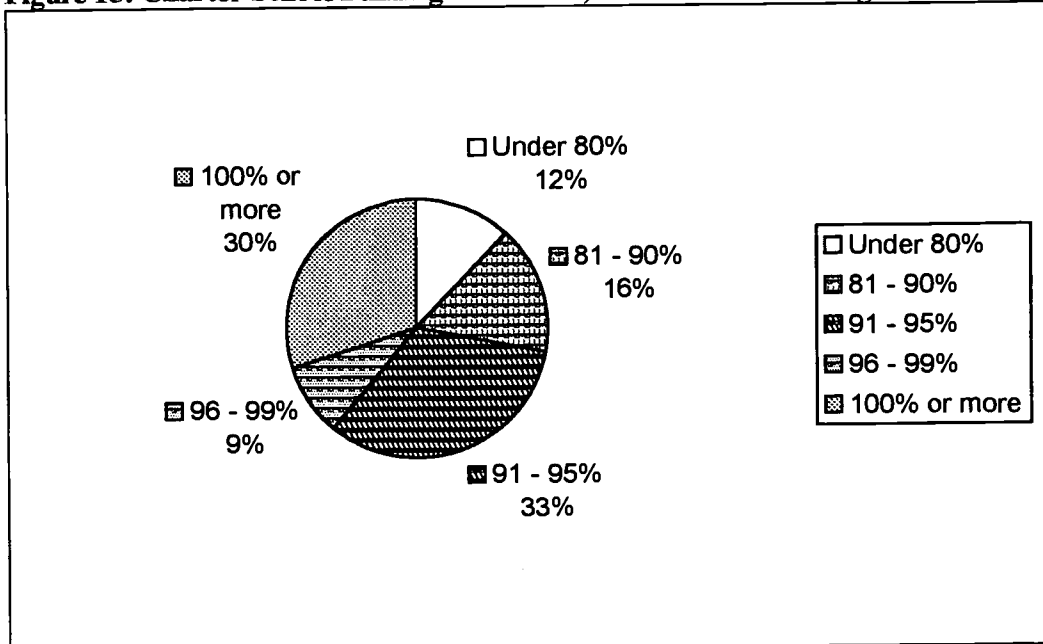
Funding

For the period covered by this report (the 1999-2000 school year), the Colorado Charter Schools Act provided that charter schools and their chartering districts “shall agree to funding and on any services to be provided by the school district to the charter school.” The Act required that the funding negotiated “cannot be less than eighty percent of the district per pupil operating revenues (PPOR) multiplied by the number of pupils enrolled in the charter school.” PPOR is the funding for a district that represents the financial base of support for public education in that district, divided by the district’s funded pupil count, minus the minimum amount of funds required to be transferred to the capital reserve fund, the insurance fund or any other fund for the management of risk-related activities. As described in Part Two of this report, the Colorado General Assembly amended the provisions of the Act related to charter school funding in 1999. The new provisions became effective for the current (2000-2001) school year.

Forty-three of the 57 charter schools in this study provided information about funding. Of this total:

- 12% (5 schools) received funding at a rate of 80% or less of the chartering district’s PPOR.
- 16%(7 schools) received funding at a rate of 81% to 90% of the chartering district’s PPOR.
- 33% (14 schools) receiving funding at a rate of 91% to 95% of the chartering district’s PPOR.
- 9% (4 schools) receiving funding at a rate of 96% to 99% of the chartering district’s PPOR.
- 30% (13 schools) receiving funding at a rate equal to or in excess of 100% of the chartering district’s PPOR.

Figure 15: Charter School Funding 1999-2000, Percent of Chartering District's PPOR



Data Source: Colorado Charter Schools

Purchase of Services

The Colorado Charter Schools Act allowed charter schools to contract with the school district for the direct purchase of district services in addition to receiving those district services included as part of the negotiated funding rate. The charter schools also were authorized purchase services from third parties. Of the 57 charter schools covered by this report, 45 schools provided information related to their purchase of services.

Table 14, below, was designed to show the kinds of services that school districts were receiving from their chartering district as part of the negotiated funding rate versus those they were directly purchasing from their district or third parties. Given the change in the structure of financing charter schools that occurred in the 2000-2001 school year (funding at a minimum of 95% of the chartering district's PPR),⁶⁵ future annual reports may want to focus on which services the charter schools are purchasing from third parties, which from their chartering district, and which they are choosing to provide in-house.

Table 14 – Patterns of Services Purchased by Charter Schools, 1999-2000

SERVICE PURCHASED	Purchased from Third Party	Purchased from District as Part of Negotiated Funding Rate	Purchased from District for Payment	Service Not Purchased by Charter School	Service Provided by Charter School In-House
Insurance	25%	28%	47%	0%	0%
Food Services	9%	17%	24%	48%	2%
Maintenance	45%	15%	15%	11%	9%
Legal Services	50%	25%	20%	6%	0%
Accounting Services	26%	37%	21%	10%	6%
Payroll Services	23%	50%	20%	0%	7%
Professional Development	47%	25%	9%	16%	5%
Transportation	6%	9%	16%	70%	0%
Facility	60%	23%	0%	0%	18%
Student Assessment	30%	34%	32%	0%	4%

POINTS OF REFERENCE

National Charter Schools

Averaging across all service areas in 1998-99, more than one-third of charter schools provided services themselves (36%), about one-third of charter schools used only an outside provider (34%) and slightly more than one-quarter of schools used the district as the sole service provider (26%). Newly created and pre-existing private schools were much more likely to provide services themselves or to secure services from an outside provider whereas pre-existing public schools were most likely to retain the district as the service provider. Charter schools most often acquired transportation (42%) and food programs (39%) from districts and purchased special education testing (36%) and social services (42%) from an outside provider. Charter schools most often provided themselves such administrative services as purchasing (57%) and custodial (45%) services. Charter schools most often purchased payroll (46%), accounting (38%), insurance (53%) and legal services (54%) from an outside provider.⁶⁶

Charter School Facilities

Of the 57 charter schools in this report, 48 provided data about their facilities. These charter schools were located in a wide variety of facilities during the 1999-2000 school year, including public schools; a museum; renovated churches, warehouses, office space, grocery stores, strip

malls, and industrial space; modular buildings and others. Of the 49 schools that reported data about their facilities, 46% leased or rented their facilities. Eleven schools (33%) used a donated facility or a facility owned by the chartering district. The remaining 10 schools (21%) owned their facilities. The percentage of the charter schools' total budget that was allocated to rent ranged from 33% at CIVA Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11) to 5% at Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11)

The Colorado Department of Education released a report on charter school capital finance in January 2000. The report described the types of facilities being used by Colorado Charter Schools, assessed the quality of the facilities and discussed the financial arrangements for the use of these facilities. The report -- *Colorado Charter Schools Capital Finance Report: Challenges and Opportunities for the Future* -- is available on the CDE website -- <http://www.cde.state.co.us>.

Federal Start-Up and Dissemination Grants

In FY 2000, Colorado received \$3.5 million from the U. S. Department of Education for start-up/implementation grants and \$350,000 for dissemination activities to support charter schools in Colorado. Of this total award, the Colorado Department of Education applied approximately \$175,000 (5%) for state-level administrative costs. The rest of the funds were awarded in grants to charter schools.

The Colorado Charter School Grant Program provided two grant opportunities to charter schools: startup/implementation grants and dissemination grants. The grants were competitive and student academic achievement was one of the most important criteria considered in awarding the grants.

During the 1999-2000 school year, 30 Colorado charter schools received **startup/implementation grants**, which were used primarily for the purchase of textbooks, furniture for the classrooms and professional development. Most of the schools that obtained these grant funds received no startup funding from their chartering district. Many new charter schools used grant money to hire an administrator early and provide professional development around their chosen curriculum prior to the opening of the school.

The Colorado **dissemination grants** funded four different projects during 1999-2000.

1. A Core Knowledge consortium provided
 - Grade level/subject area roundtable discussions and networking for classroom teachers;
 - Several curriculum-based workshops;
 - A technology strand integrating Core Knowledge with technology proficiencies, developing technology plans, and technical assistance in assessing hardware and software needs;
 - A week-long summer institute for unit writing; and
 - Networking with the new Western Regional Center for the Core Knowledge Foundation.

The Core Knowledge dissemination grant also funded a "Principal in Training." After learning about charter school operation and writing a charter school renewal application, this principal was recently hired to work at another Core Knowledge charter school.

2. An experienced Denver charter school established mentoring relationships with two of the new Denver charter schools and is now beginning to work with the three recently approved charter schools. The experienced school's staff also has collaborated with a second-year charter school to support further curriculum development.
3. A network of Colorado's rural charter schools established mentoring relationships with several developing or first-year charter schools. School site visits and joint workshops on standards and assessments and on project-based curricula were conducted. In addition, new and developing rural charter schools received training on policy and governance from more experienced charter schools.
4. An experienced charter school mentored a developing charter school (which opened in fall 2000) and also disseminated standards and assessment "best practices" to other public schools in its chartering school district.

Of the 57 schools included in this study, 40 reported information about their participation in dissemination grant activities. Of this total, 14 schools (35%) participated in one or more of the activities described above.

Flow-Through of Federal and State Funds by Chartering Districts

The *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998* requires states and local school districts to take steps necessary to assure that all charter schools have equal access to federal funds for which they qualify. CDE has included the requirements of the *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998* into the Colorado Department of Education's "Single Assurance Form" which all school districts must sign in order to qualify for any federal funds distributed through CDE.

The *1998-99 Colorado Charter Schools Evaluation Report* raised a concern related to school district compliance with this law and recommended that the Colorado Department of Education investigate the compliance issues. To follow-up on this recommendation and to assure that the requirements of the *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998* are being implemented, CDE staff conducted a brief survey during the months of November-December 2000 to determine how eligible charter schools are accessing numerous federally funded programs. The questionnaire covered three basic issues:

1. Is your charter school the recipient of any federal funds or services funded with federal funds? If yes, please list the federal funding source, approximate amount, or value of federally funded services.
2. Are you aware of the *IASA Consolidated Federal Programs Application* submitted to CDE by your district? If yes, how were you involved in its development?
3. Do you participate in professional development activities through your Regional Professional Development Centers? These are regional centers funded by CDE. If yes, which ones? If no, why not?

The survey was distributed through a variety of channels including the annual state charter schools conference, email, and phone. Seventy-nine charter schools were operating in Colorado as of September 2000. Of these schools, 66 charter schools responded to the survey. The responding

charter schools represent a cross section of charter schools from the metro, suburban, and rural areas.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Is your charter school the recipient of any federal funds or services funded with federal funds? If yes, please list the federal funding source, approximate amount, or value of federally funded services.

- Charter school responses to this question were evenly divided with 50% responding yes and 50% responding no. For purposes of the *IASA Consolidated Federal Programs Application*, the review of responses submitted to this question was limited to Titles I, II, IV, VI, and VI-D. In addition to these formula programs, a majority of the charter schools' responses included IDEA monies and Title X, Charter School Start-up/Dissemination funds. Charter schools cited IDEA and Title X funds and services most often as having been received. If the data were limited to only those schools that received federal IASA monies in addition to their IDEA and Title X monies, only 24 (37%) received a benefit.
- Of the thirty-two charter school operators responding "yes", they identified Title I most often as a federally funded benefit. A smaller number of respondents identified Title II – Eisenhower funds as being made available to them while only six identified having received funds and/or services by Title IV. Three respondents received Title VI directly from their chartering districts; three others stated that their districts signed the funds over to the BOCES and they did not have access to funds or services. Monies received by Charter schools from Titles I, II, IV, VI, and VI-D ranged from zero to \$1,600.
- Survey responses identified several different district practices for including charter schools in federal funding. Some districts used a rotating funding program. For example, all Title II monies rotated among buildings in the district on a yearly basis. Some charter respondents referred to a per-pupil allotment through which Title monies were distributed according to the number of students enrolled in a school. One district used the *Private, Nonprofit School Application for Titles II, IV, and VI*, and another district presented the charter school with the *School Improvement Planning Matrix* for submission, which was incorporated into the district's matrix. Other practices included a district-wide plan for staff development in which charter schools had the option to participate, and a competitive mini-grant process through which charter schools, along with other schools in the district, were requested to submit an "application" to the district outlining their intended use of the monies received.
- Several charter schools respondents identified their district as being proactive and supportive regarding equitable access to federal funds for charter schools. As part of this study, representatives of six districts (each of which authorized from one to five charter schools) were interviewed. One district made all Title funds, including VI-D, available to their two charter schools. Four districts focused on creating a positive and supportive relationship with strong levels of communication between the districts and their charter schools. Communication involved e-mails, memos, and participation in district level administrative meetings, accountability committees, and periodic charter school visitations. Several districts reported spending individual time with their charter schools in the planning and use of these federal funds. One district representative stated that the district's consolidated grants team made it a

point to understand the Charter School Expansion Act and noted that the district gathered information from the federal training workshops offered through CDE.

- Key issues of note:
 - The majority of charter schools respondents stated that their schools did not receive any federal program monies and/or services and had no knowledge about the individual programs and monies available to districts. It appears further information and education is needed for charter schools to understand these Title programs and how they might secure equitable access to these funds.
 - Districts often leveraged funds in their *IASA Consolidated Federal Programs Application*, providing a menu of services, resources, and training to schools district-wide. If charter schools chose not to participate in the programs offered by their chartering districts because the programs did not meet the schools' needs, it was difficult for charter schools to identify how they benefited from the federal funds. For example, several charter school respondents noted that their chartering districts' plan for staff development did not meet the needs of the charter school.
 - Third, charter school responses to this question reflect discrepancies among charter schools within the same district. While some claimed to have limited access, others were aware of the district processes for applying to the district for funds received from the Colorado Department of Education.
 - Finally, it appeared more difficult for charter schools to access services provided by BOCES, perhaps due to the involvement of a third party in addition to the charter school and chartering district.

2. Are you aware of the IASA Consolidated Federal Programs Application submitted to CDE by your district? If yes, how were you involved in its development?

Eight-seven percent of the charter school respondents were not aware of their chartering district's *IASA Consolidated Federal Programs Application*. Of the 13% of charter schools respondents that were aware of their district's consolidated grant application, only one reported being directly involved in the development of the application. The other respondents who were aware of the application process stated that they had not been invited to participate in the district's development of the *Consolidated Federal Programs Application*. One respondent mentioned that the school had specifically requested to be a part of the application development process and was denied.

3. Do you participate in professional development activities through your Regional Professional Development Centers? These are regional centers funded by CDE. If yes, which ones? If no, why not?

Twenty-two percent of charter school respondents had participated in regional professional development activities while 78% of the charter schools responded that they were not aware of these centers. The charter schools responding "yes" most often accessed services and activities in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and CSAP preparation. The responses of the charter schools seemed to indicate some confusion on the part of respondents between BOCES and the Regional Centers.

CONCLUSIONS

There is still work to be done in communicating to both charter schools and their chartering districts the intent and requirements of the *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998*. With over half of the charter schools responding that they did not have access to Title I, II, IV, VI, and VI-D monies, were unaware of their districts *IASA Consolidated Federal Programs Application*, and were unaware of the CDE-funded Regional Centers, a concerted effort needs to be made on the part of CDE, districts, and charter schools to address these issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Colorado Department of Education should actively promote district compliance with and provide ongoing technical assistance and support to school districts, BOCES, and charter schools regarding the *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998*. Possible strategies that CDE might want to consider include

- Implementing a staff development plan to help CDE employees understand the *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998*.
- Including charter schools in all RFP's and state administered programs.
- Providing appropriate information regarding the *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998* to charter schools, BOCES and their chartering districts in an ongoing manner.
- Including the *Charter Schools Expansion Act of 1998* in all CDE onsite reviews.
- Encouraging districts and charter schools to communicate regularly with one another regarding all funding opportunities and share identified "best practices" with all chartering school districts and charter schools.
- Inviting and involving charter school representatives to all CDE-sponsored training and in-service activities from which they can benefit

PART THIRTEEN

LESSONS LEARNED BY CHARTER SCHOOLS and THEIR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

Lessons Learned

The questionnaire asked the respondents to “identify the most significant lessons you have learned about how to structure and operate a successful charter school. Think in terms of the advice you would give to someone who is about to embark on this enterprise.”

CDE has asked this question of charter schools in each of the five years this annual report has been prepared. Although there is overlap in the responses from year to year, CDE staff have found that the responses to this question have been useful to potential charter school operators as well as to the department’s charter school unit in planning its assistance to charter schools. The responses of the charter school that opened more recently tended to focus on the quality of the planning process. The responses of the “older” charter schools tended to focus on the importance of staying true to the school’s original mission, the quality of the school’s relationship with parents and the chartering district, and the quality of the interaction between the school’s governing board and professional staff.

The evaluation questionnaire posed this question in an open-ended format to give charter schools the most flexibility in structuring their response. This report organizes the responses by broad categories and lists the responses in the order of the frequency with which the charter school respondents mentioned them. The information in this section of the report is based on the responses of 45 charter schools.

Planning

- Be sure to have clear mission/vision for your school.
 - Let the mission drive the specifics of planning.
 - Communicate your school’s mission clearly and consistently, making sure you are the school you say you will be.
 - Stay true to your school’s mission instead of trying to be all things to all people.
- Establish a clear, research-based curriculum and core academic goals before you start, stick to these goals.
- Get advice from experienced educators and charter operators; visit successful charter schools.
- Be thorough in preparation; pay attention to the details; break the planning down into manageable pieces within a master schedule.
- Be conservative financially.

- Ensure short-term survival while planning for long-term success. In area of facilities this may mean locating in less than ideal place until operational stability can warrant building or buying a better facility.
- Be honest about whether the need you want your school to fill is a genuine need in the community.
- Think about facilities issues at least five years in advance.
- Allow significant time for the publicity, public meetings involved in recruiting a student body.
- Start as small as you can. If you plan to expand grade levels, consider growing your own students.
- If you offer a program that will attract high numbers of previously unsuccessful students, be ready to receive those students in terms of their nonacademic needs, e.g. employing a full time therapist/counselor.
- Keep operations simple and focus on the academic program.
- Charter schools need more (not less) experienced staff, community involvement, organization, accountability and structure than other public schools to succeed.

Governance

- The relationship between the charter school's governing board and its administrators is of critical importance to the functioning of the school.
 - The most effective schools have united leadership that agrees on the school's mission and goals.
 - The respective roles of the board and the administration (policy making versus operations) should be clearly defined in advance of conflict.
 - It may also be helpful if the board and key staff share a similar educational and leadership style.
- Again, it is essential to define clearly the mission (vision and philosophy) of the school and to use that mission as the lodestar for making decisions about the school's programming or future development.
- Have all policies and procedures in writing and apply them consistently. Anticipate problems (e.g. unsatisfactory teacher performance) and create policies that address them in advance. The policies will help limit bad choices by individuals and ensure the smooth operation of the school.
- Hire a principal who is a strong academic leader.
- Consider using a dual administrator model, where one administrator is responsible for academics (curriculum, teacher coaching, etc.) and one is responsible for operations/external relationships.

- Ensure that all staff and board members are acquainted with applicable policies and laws. Provide training for governing board members.
- Maintain organizational flexibility to be able to refine or alter your programming and operations as needed on an ongoing basis.

Relationships

- Both the district and the charter school must realize that the charter school is a district school. Good relationships and open and continuous communication with the district are essential to success.
- Work hard to establish a broad base of community support and high levels of parent involvement from the outset. (In this connection, one respondent advised that parents who enroll in a school of choice may be more active in trying to tell the school how it should be run. Make sure you stay true to the ideals of the school while maintaining an open relationship with parents.)
- Take advantage of the resources and expertise offered by the Colorado League of Charter Schools
- Involve teachers in governance.

Teachers

- Hire the most competent staff you can and be willing to pay competitive salaries.
- Recognize the high potential for faculty burnout in charter schools. Work to sustain faculty effort and enthusiasm over time
- Money invested in curriculum development and staff development has paid off very handsomely.
- Provide extensive training prior to school's start-up in philosophy, teaching methods, research base, etc. so that teachers are on the same page

Other

- Establish school wide discipline policies and enforce them. Begin school operations with a strong focus on establishing expectations, practicing discipline routines, etc. to create a school culture that is civil and safe.
- Recognize that social and study skills are precursors to academic success. Create programs to assure these skills are taught well. This investment will support the students who need to learn the skills; other students and teachers will not be held back or distracted by students with needs for remedial support.

Technical Assistance Needs

- Twenty schools identified technical assistance needs in the area of technology. These needs related to acquisition of software and hardware and access to the Internet. They also related to the need for ongoing expertise in the building to help trouble shoot problems and to keep the school's technology infrastructure maintained and up to date. Several respondents referred to the advantage having data programs that are compatible with the programs used by the chartering district, either as a barrier to efficient operations or as a recent enhancement that has created efficiencies. (There is no question that technology is an area of great need for charter schools. It appears, however, that at least a couple of respondents read the reference to "technical assistance" as meaning assistance related to technology. This confusion, especially if widespread among the respondents, may have resulted in an over-reporting of needs related to technology. In any event, it would be interesting in a future annual report to explore the use of and access to technology in charter schools, especially as compared to other public schools.)
- Five schools noted ongoing technical assistance needs in the area of delivering special education services to students with disabilities.
- Five schools noted the need for assistance in business services, including financial practices, governance, budget development and long-term planning.
- Four schools noted technical assistance needs related to curriculum development or management.
- Three schools cited the need for legal services or legal assistance.
- Two schools noted the need for grant writing assistance and one additional school cited a need for expertise in developing a major capital campaign.
- Two schools also noted the need for assistance related to staff development, especially around using standards to guide instruction.

The questionnaire asked schools to identify the sources from which they received technical assistance and to describe which sources were most satisfactory and unsatisfactory. Less than a third of the charter schools responded to this question. The low response rate likely indicates that the majority of responding schools did not receive technical assistance from any source.

The source of technical assistance most frequently mentioned by the respondents was their chartering district. Other sources mentioned, in order of frequency, were the Colorado League of Charter Schools, outside consultants, and volunteers.

Satisfaction was highest with the assistance provided by the Colorado League of Charter Schools and outside consultants. Several charter school respondents expressed frustration that the chartering district provided technical assistance on its own schedule, not necessarily in response to the charter schools' needs. Several others noted that charter schools seem to be on the bottom of the district's priority list. The disadvantage of using volunteers as technical assistance providers related to their high turnover and lack of reliability.

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Major barriers cited by respondents to technical assistance were cost and time. One respondent also mentioned the frustration of not receiving consistent or accurate information from the governmental agencies with which it has to interact.

END NOTES

¹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(6)

² Arizona had the highest percentage, with charter school students representing over 4% of total public school enrollment. Washington, D.C. charter school enrollment was equal to 4% of total public school enrollment. RPP International, *The State of Charter Schools Fourth-Year Report*. (2000). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

³ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-102(2).

⁴ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-104(1) - (3).

⁵ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-104(4)-(4.5)

⁶ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-104(5).

⁷ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-104(6).

⁸ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-106(7).

⁹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-107.

¹⁰ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-105.

¹¹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-106.

¹² Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-106(2)

¹³ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-106(3)

¹⁴ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-108

¹⁵ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-107.5.

¹⁶ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-108.

¹⁷ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-108 (3.5)

¹⁸ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-108 (4)

¹⁹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-110

²⁰ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-110(3)

²¹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-110(4)

²² Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-111

²³ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-104(7)(b)-(c).

²⁴ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-104(4.5)(a).

²⁵ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-111(1)-(2).

²⁶ In the 1999 session the General Assembly passed and Governor Owens signed H.B. 99-113, which amended the Charter Schools Act to provide for increases in the minimum funding level for Colorado charter schools.

²⁷ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(2)(a)(III).

²⁸ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(2)(a.5)(I).

²⁹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(2)(a.7).

³⁰ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(2)(a.8).

³¹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(2)(b).

³² Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(2)(e)(3)(a)(I)-(III).

³³ *Board of Education School District No. 1 v. Booth*, 984 P.2d 639 (Colo. 1999),

³⁴ Roosevelt Edison-Emerson Charter School is actually two distinct schools – Roosevelt Edison Charter School (serving grades K-5) and Edison Emerson Jr. Charter Academy (serving grades 6-12) that operate under a single charter. In 1999-2000, Roosevelt Edison had an enrollment of 703 students and Edison Emerson Jr. Charter Academy's enrollment was 794 students. The total of 1,497 represents the combined enrollment of the two schools under the single charter.

³⁵ *The State of Charter Schools 2000 – Fourth Year Report*, January 2000. This Report covers charter schools in 27 charter states, including Colorado.

³⁶ The CDE data base contains the following PT ratios for these schools for the 1999-2000 school year:

Compass Montessori Charter School – 68.9

Core Knowledge Charter School – 320.0

DCS Montessori Charter School – 70.0

Elbert County Charter School – 37.9

P.S. 1 – 30.9.

³⁷ *The State of Charter Schools 2000 – Fourth Year Report.*

³⁸ Elementary Schools were defined as schools serving PreK-5, PreK-6, K-4, K-5, and K-6.

³⁹ *The State of Charter Schools 2000 – Fourth Year Report.*

⁴⁰ *Catalog of School Reform Models.* (1999). Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

⁴¹ *Catalog of School Reform Models.* (1999). Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

⁴² *Catalog of School Reform Models.* (1999). Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

⁴³ *Catalog of School Reform Models.* (1999). Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

⁴⁴ *Catalog of School Reform Models.* (1999). Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

⁴⁵ Colo. Rev. Stat. 11-30.5-104(3).

⁴⁶ *The State of Charter Schools 2000 – Fourth Year Report.*

⁴⁷ Colorado High School did not report data regarding the assessments administered.

⁴⁸ Free and reduced lunch eligibility is a way to estimate the percentage of low-income students. In 1999, a family of four with an annual income of \$21,385 or less would qualify for free lunch under the federally-funded lunch program. A family of four with an annual income of \$30,433 or less would qualify for reduced-price lunch.

⁴⁹ *The State of Charter Schools 2000 – Fourth Year Report.*

⁵⁰ Aspen/Carbondale Community School is governed by the COMPASS Board of Directors. COMPASS is a setting for educational and community learning that was established in 1970. COMPASS houses nine learning projects that work in preK-8 education, teacher preparation, the arts, environment and community organizing. Community Prep Charter School (Colorado Springs District 11) is operated by the City of Colorado Springs, under the authority of the Colorado Springs City Council. Passage Charter School is governed by a seven-member board that includes the Montrose City Attorney, Director of Workforce Development, a drug and alcohol abuse specialists, a dropout prevention specialists, an early childhood specialist, a retired teacher/principal and a former mayor of the City of Montrose. A board comprised of the four superintendents from the authorizing school districts governs Prairie Creeks Charter School (Strasburg School District). Pueblo School for the Arts and Sciences (Pueblo School District 60) is governed by a Site Council comprised of six parents, six students, six faculty members, a USC/District 60 Alliance representative, a Pueblo District 60 representative, a Sangre de Cristo Arts & Conference Center representative, business representatives from the Latino Chamber of Commerce and the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce and the USC Provost. Youth and Family Academy is sponsored by the Pueblo Youth Service Bureau (PYSB) and the PYSB/Youth and Family Academy Board has direct governance authority over the school's operations.

⁵¹ The study cited involved a poll of charter school leaders taken by StandardsWork. Surveys were sent to 1,674 charter school leaders in December, 1999; 391 responded. The study found that 48% of respondents said they entered the charter school field because they wanted to “have an opportunity to achieve excellence,” while 22% said they wanted to “escape the constraints of the traditional public schools system.” *Education Week*, May 31,2000.

⁵² Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-33-105.

⁵³ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-33-113(3).

⁵⁴ Henderson, Ann T. and Nancy Beda, Eds. (1996). *A New Generation of Evidence: The Family is Critical to Student Achievement.* Washington D.C.: Center for Law and Education.

⁵⁵ *A New Generation of Evidence.*

⁵⁶ The data in this table is shown for Roosevelt-Edison Charter School only, not for both the Roosevelt-Edison Charter School and Edison Emerson Jr. Charter Academy that operate under a single charter granted by Colorado Springs School District 11.

⁵⁷ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-106(b), (e) and (f).

⁵⁸ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-7-205.

⁵⁹ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-2-117.

⁶⁰ Colorado Department of Education Annual Performance Report to the U.S. Department of Education, August, 2000.

⁶¹ SRI International. (2000). *Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program: Year One Evaluation Report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

⁶² *Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program: Year One Evaluation Report*.

⁶³ *Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program: Year One Evaluation Report*.

⁶⁴ *Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program: Year One Evaluation Report*.

⁶⁵ Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-112(2).

⁶⁶ *The State of Charter Schools 2000 – Fourth Year Report*.

Appendix

2000 COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS EVALUATION STUDY DATA MATRIX

School Name: _____

Name and Phone Number of Person Completing the Data Matrix:

DATA ITEM	1999-00
STUDENTS	
Does the school apply any admission criteria? If yes, please describe or attach a copy of your admissions policy.	
Waiting List (as of end of 1999-00 school year)	
Attendance rate	
Graduation rate (if applicable)	
Basic Literacy Rate	
GOVERNANCE	
What is the average tenure of the lead administrators (often called principals, deans or executive directors) employed by your school? Please calculate by dividing number of years your school has been in operation by the number of principals your school has employed.	
Salary paid to lead administrator	
Total number of years lead administrator has worked as an administrator in the field of education (including experience in charter school and other education settings).	
For how many years was your original charter granted?	
Have you completed a process to renew your original charter? If so, please state the term of the renewed charter.	
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	
Does your school use a required parent contract?	

DATA ITEM	1999-2000
Total parent hours volunteered (or percentage of parents who volunteer)	
Does your school regularly administer a parent satisfaction survey?	
FACILITY	
Type of Facility	
Does your school own its facility, rent its facility or use a facility owned by the authorizing district?	
If applicable, what percentage of your school's total operating budget is spent on rent or mortgage payments?	
FUNDING	
% of district PPOR your school received from sponsoring district	
<p>For each of the services listed below, please indicate whether your school:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purchases service from third party, 2. Receives service from the sponsoring district as part of the negotiated PPOR rate paid by the district to the school, 3. Purchases service from the sponsoring district, or 4. Does not obtain the service at all. 	
Insurance	
Food services	
Maintenance	
Legal services	
Accounting services	
Special education services to students with IEP's	
Professional development services/support	
Transportation services	
Student assessment services	
Surplus furniture, classroom equipment	
Access to district purchasing office	
Facility	

2000 COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOLS EVALUATION SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Identify the most significant lessons you have learned about how to structure and operate a successful charter school. Think in terms of the advice you would give to someone who is about to embark on this enterprise.
2. What are your school's major needs for technical assistance?
 - a. From what sources have you received or are you receiving technical assistance? Which of these sources have been most satisfactory? Why? Which have been the most unsatisfactory? Why?
 - b. What are the major barriers to securing the technical assistance your school needs?
3. During the 1999-2000 academic year, did representatives of your school participate in any activities funded by a Colorado Charter School Dissemination Grant? If so, please list the activities. For each activity listed, please describe the most beneficial aspects of your participation as well as any aspects of the activity that were unsatisfactory.
4. Please indicate how your school works with its authorizing district to provide special education services to students with IEPs and answer the questions for the arrangement you checked.

____ Not at all. The charter school coordinates the provision of all services.

- a. Please describe the contractual/legal arrangements between the charter school and the district for this arrangement.
- b. Describe (in general terms) the types and extent of services currently being provided and the how the charter school obtains these services.
- c. Who is responsible for setting IEP meetings, and developing and monitoring IEPs?
- d. How has the charter school received information and training regarding students with special needs and the implementation of IDEA/505/ADA?

____ The authorizing district coordinates the provision of all services.

- a. Please describe the compensation, if any, the school provides to the sponsoring district for this service.
- b. Describe (in general terms) the types and extent of services the charter school receives from the district, including IEP staffing and development.
- c. How has the charter school received information and training regarding students with special needs and the implementation of IDEA/505/ADA?

____ The authorizing district and the school collaborate in the provision of all services.

- a. Please describe the structure and nature of the collaboration.
- b. Describe in general terms the types and extent of services provided by each party (the district and the charter school), including IEP staffing and development, and the processes used in obtaining these services.
- c. How has the charter school received information and training regarding students with special needs and the implementation of IDEA/505/ADA?

What are the advantages of your approach? What are the disadvantages, if any?

5. Please describe the actions your school has taken to provide a safe and civil learning environment for all students.
 - a. Has your school adopted a discipline policy that is different than the policy of your authorizing district? If so, please list the major differences that distinguish your school's policy.
 - b. Please identify the characteristics of your school that contribute most to your ability to provide a safe and civil learning environment.



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