

**Jennifer Alexander, Chief Executive Officer, ConnCAN**  
Testimony to the Joint Committee on Education Public Hearing  
Thursday, March 19, 2015

Good afternoon, Chairman Fleischmann, Chairwoman Slossberg and distinguished members of the Education Committee. My name is Jennifer Alexander and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now (ConnCAN). ConnCAN is committed to promoting student-centered policies that ensure all children have access to an excellent education, regardless of race, zip code or family income.

In recent years, we've taken promising steps to expand success and opportunity to all Connecticut children. The progress we've seen has been due to the work of this committee as well as the educators committed to our children and their success.

And, the results of this work can be seen in schools across the state—schools of all kinds—where children are receiving the tools and support they need and are achieving at high levels. In particular, we are encouraged that some schools are delivering a high-quality education to our most vulnerable students of color and students from low-income families. These schools are proving, when given a supportive learning environment, children will rise to our highest expectations.

Yet, far too many of Connecticut's students, nearly 40,000, in fact, attend schools that are chronically and persistently low-performing, while Connecticut continues to struggle with the largest achievement gap in the country.

While we have made some progress towards delivering on the promise of a great public education for all students, we have a long way to go. With this reality in mind, I submit testimony on Senate Bill 1096, Senate Bill 1098 and House Bill 7021.

If passed, the first of these bills, S.B. 1096, *An Act Concerning Charter Schools*, would place a two-year moratorium on approving any new public charter schools pending development of a comprehensive statewide charter school plan and review of all existing charter schools. While some might assert this bill is about assessing whether public charter schools are performing, we know this is not the case.

We already know from State Department of Education data, that charters in Connecticut are performing well, enabling some of our most vulnerable students to make amazing academic gains and helping Connecticut close its largest in the nation achievement gap. You will find a summary of this data attached to my written testimony. S.B. 1096 is not about accountability, but rather an attempt to stifle choice and opportunity in our state. This bill would prevent our most vulnerable children from accessing the high-quality schools they need for lifelong opportunity and success.

S.B. 1096 would essentially tell children who need a high-quality school now to keep waiting at a time when children and their families cannot afford to wait any longer. Right now, there are thousands of families waiting for high-quality school options. In Hartford alone, about 20,000 families applied for 5,000 magnet school seats. Statewide, there are nearly 4,000 student across the state on charter school waiting lists and nearly 10 times more students who attend schools that are currently unable

to meet their needs. These children are largely low-income and students of color and represent our students most in need of a quality education. And yet, even though their need is urgent and dramatic, day after day, and year after year, they are forced to wait.

S.B. 1096 would simply tell them to keep waiting for the high quality education they need now.

ConnCAN believes that no child should have to wait for a great school--not for a single day, and definitely not for two years. We also believe that in a time of limited resources, our state must make smart and strategic investments that we know will deliver results for children and close our achievement gap. Charters are one such investment. **On behalf of children, families and communities with whom we work, we ask this Committee and the Connecticut General Assembly to reject S.B. 1096 and ensure that we continue to be able to expand high-quality options for the students who need and demand them now.**

In addition to protecting high-quality options for students, we must also ensure that our students have the support they need to be successful, including highly effective teachers and principals. **ConnCAN supports S.B. 1098, *An Act Concerning Teacher Certification Requirements for Shortage Areas, Interstate Agreements for Teacher Certification Reciprocity, Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention and Cultural Competency Instruction* and H.B. 7021, *An Act Concerning Teacher Preparation Program Efficacy*.** Both of these bills will allow us to move forward to recruit and retain the highly qualified and diverse corps of teachers and school leaders that students need to be successful. Together, SB 1098 and HB 7021 will help drive the success of our education system by facilitating and encouraging teacher recruitment to our highest needs subject areas; easing restrictions to bring in high-quality educators and leaders to our state; supporting additional alternate routes to certification, particularly for school administrators; incorporating cultural competency within teacher preparation programs; and supporting initiatives to bring qualified educators of diverse backgrounds and experiences to our schools.

Research has shown that there is no in-school factor more important to student achievement and success than teacher and principal quality. Research has also shown that students do better when they have a teachers and school leaders who look like them. Great teachers change children's lives, they help our children dream big and ensure children are able to make those dreams a reality.

Great teachers don't happen by accident, though. Great teachers are built through support and coaching from experienced teachers and rigorous training that prepares them to meet the challenges of the classroom. Sadly, our teachers often don't receive the training and rich experiences they need to be successful from day one, but instead are subjected to trial by fire. As a result some teachers are woefully unprepared for the challenges of the job. While we have taken important steps to better determine the effectiveness of teachers and support their development through more rigorous evaluation, more must be done to prepare our teachers before they even step foot into a classroom.

To ensure our teachers have the greatest chance of success, and more importantly our students receive the education they deserve, we must make sure that our teachers leave their training programs with the tools and knowledge to drive success in the classroom.

We must also begin to realize that while teacher quality is the most important factor with regard to student achievement, it is also important that students have role models they can relate to and for teachers to have a base of experience and knowledge amongst colleagues they can learn from and draw upon to inform their teaching. This means having adults in the classroom that not only reflect the student population but that also have diverse backgrounds and experiences that everyone, from student to teacher to principal, can learn from.

**While Senate Bill 1098 and House Bill 7021 put us on a pathway to achieving both of these goals, Senate Bill 1096 would take our state backwards, further away from these goals.**

**I urge you to reject Senate Bill 1096 and support Senate Bill 1098 and House Bill 7021.**

The continued progress of Connecticut's education system, and the future prosperity of our state, depends on our ability to provide students with well-resourced, supportive school environments and excellent educators to staff those schools. Thus, whether we are discussing the types of schools available to our children, or the teachers we put in front of them, our focus must always be on quality and ensuring that no child is unfairly denied the education they need to succeed.

Today, we have an opportunity to build upon the progress you have championed and move forward with ensuring all of our students have access to the world-class education they deserve.

Thank you.

## Quick Facts: Public Charter Schools in Connecticut

**Charter schools are non-profit, tuition-free, public schools** of choice under Connecticut law. They are approved by the State Board of Education and are subject to renewal every five years.

### Charter Performance

- Charter schools **provide high-quality options** for minority and high-needs students. At least 75% of charter schools exceed state averages for African American, Hispanic/Latino, and English Language Learner student performance at the elementary/middle school level.
- Connecticut's charter schools are also preparing students for college and career. A number of charter high schools report college acceptance rates between 90% and 100%, with similarly high college persistence rates.

### Student Enrollment

- Charter schools **cannot restrict student enrollment in any way**. If demand is higher than the number of available seats, enrollment is determined through a random lottery.
- Charter schools serve a predominantly low-income and minority population. More than 85% of students in Connecticut's charter schools are African American or Hispanic, and more than 70% of charter school students are low-income.
- On average, 9% of charter school students qualify for special education and 5% are English Language Learners.
- There are currently 22 public charter schools serving more than 8,200 students. This accounts for 1.3% of the state's student population. Two more schools are approved to open in the 2015-2016 school year.

### Charter Policy and Funding

- 21 of the 22 charter schools in Connecticut are **funded entirely by the state**. There is no required contribution from cities or towns for state charter schools.
- Connecticut's charter law is among the most outdated and lowest rated in the U.S., ranking 35th out of 43 states that have charter school laws.
- Connecticut's charter authorizing policies are among the country's weakest, ranking 21st out of 21 states that have few authorizers.
- Charter schools receive **significantly less funding per pupil** than similar traditional public schools - often several thousands of dollars less. Evidence demonstrates an equity gap in funding between district and charter students of greater than 30%.

### Demand for Charters Exceeds Growth

- The **demand for charter schools in Connecticut is high**. In 2013-2014, the number of students on waiting lists for charter schools was more than 3,600.
- Charter growth has not kept pace with parent demand. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of total charter school seats available has increased by 37%, while the number of students on waiting lists for charter schools has only decreased by only 13%.
- Prior to the approval of seven charter schools between 2013 and 2014, Connecticut had not expanded charter school growth in five years.
- Charters **serve our highest-need students**. All of the existing and approved charter schools are located within the state's lowest performing districts. Some charter schools have a specialized focus for underserved student populations, including English Language Learners and over-aged, under-credited youth.

## Notes and Resources

**1. Charter school law:** Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-66aa (2014) [http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/pub/chap\\_164.htm#sec\\_10-66aa](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/pub/chap_164.htm#sec_10-66aa)

See also Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-66bb (2014) [http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/pub/chap\\_164.htm#sec\\_10-66bb](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/pub/chap_164.htm#sec_10-66bb)

See also Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223f (2014) [http://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/sup/chap\\_170.htm#sec\\_10-223f](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/sup/chap_170.htm#sec_10-223f)

See also Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-66ee(d)(1) (2014) [http://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/sup/chap\\_164.htm#sec\\_10-66ee](http://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/sup/chap_164.htm#sec_10-66ee)

See also Public Act 12-116 § 32 (f)(2) <http://cga.ct.gov/2012/ACT/PA/2012PA-00116-R00SB-00458-PA.htm>

**Notes:** 1) Local charter schools require approval from the local Board of Education before State Board of Education approval. 2) Although state charter schools receive their funding from the state, one exception to this law is where a charter school and its host district enter into a voluntary agreement by which the charter schools' student performance data may be calculated in the host district performance index, in exchange for in-kind contributions or other arrangements pursuant to this agreement. 3) Connecticut state law requires that two of the first four state charter schools approved between July 2012 and July 2017 must have a dual language or English Language Learner focus.

**2. Enrollment and performance data:** Conn. State Dept. of Educ., Charter School Accountability & 2015 Renewal. Presentation to the Conn. State Board of Educ. January 2015. <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2683&q=322228>

See also Conn. State Dept. of Educ., Biennial Report on the Operation of Charter Schools. 2014.

[http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/equity/charter/report\\_on\\_the\\_operation\\_of\\_charter\\_schools.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/equity/charter/report_on_the_operation_of_charter_schools.pdf)

See also Conn. State Dept. of Educ., School & District Performance Reports 2012-2013.

<http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/performance-reports/20122013-reports.asp>

**Notes:** All student enrollment, performance, and wait list figures are the most recently available from the CSDE and based on data available for all charter schools in that year. Student subgroup enrollment figures are based on 2013-2014 data. The definition of "low-income" in this document is the percentage of students who qualify for free/reduced price lunch. Total enrollment figures are based on 2014-2015 student data. Performance figures are based on 2012-2013 School Performance Index (SPI) data for all subgroups with available data within each charter school; SPIs were reported for 14 charter schools on the CMT (elementary/middle school) and 6 charter schools on the CAPT (high school). Wait list totals are based on 2013-2014 and 2009-2010 data. In 2009-2010, the number of students on wait lists was 4,186 and the number of students enrolled in charters was 5,170. In 2013-2014, the number of students on wait lists was 3,633 and the number of students enrolled in charters was 7,085.

**3. National-level research reports:** National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS). "Measuring Up to the Model: A Ranking of State Charter School Laws - Connecticut." January 2015. [http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/model\\_law\\_2015.pdf](http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/model_law_2015.pdf)

See also The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NASCA). "On The Road to Better Accountability: An Analysis of State Charter School Policies." December 2014. [http://www.qualitycharters.org/assets/files/Documents/Policy/NACSA\\_014\\_SLR\\_FINAL\\_1-15-15.pdf](http://www.qualitycharters.org/assets/files/Documents/Policy/NACSA_014_SLR_FINAL_1-15-15.pdf)

See also University of Arkansas. Charter School Funding: Inequity Expands. April 2014. <http://www.uaedreform.org/wp-content/uploads/charter-school-funding-report.pdf>

**Notes:** In the NAPCS report, Connecticut ranks in the lowest tier of states. In the NASCA report, Connecticut earns only four points out of a possible 30 points in an evaluation that measured authorizer performance and evaluation, management, and school default closure proceedings.

**4. Recent approvals and openings:** All Conn. State Dept. of Education press releases on charter school approvals listed below link to the approved applications and may be found at this hyperlink: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2604&Q=320362>

See Conn. State Dept. of Educ., State Board of Education Approves 4 New Charter Schools. April 2, 2014.

See also Conn. State Dept. of Educ., State Board of Education Takes Action: Approves Two Commissioner's Network Plans and One Local Charter Application; Authorizes Flexibility Requests Concerning State Standardized Tests for 2013-14. July 16, 2013.

See also Conn. State Dept. of Educ., New State Charter Schools Approved by State Board of Education. June 6, 2013.

**Notes:** The first of these new schools opened in Waterbury at the start of the 2013-14 school year. All seven schools are expected to open by the start of the 2015-16 school year. The applications for Great Oaks Charter School in Bridgeport and the Path Academy in Windham both indicate an ELL specialization. Path Academy also serves over-aged, under-credited youth. Both schools opened in the fall of 2014.

**5. College acceptance and persistence:** Conn. State Dept. of Educ., High School Reports on College Enrollment, Persistence, and Graduation. July 2014. <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2758&Q=335288>

See also Common Ground High School. <http://commongroundct.org/high-school/college-success/>

See also Amistad High School. <http://www.achievementfirst.org/schools/connecticut-schools/achievement-first-amistad-high-school/>

**Notes:** College persistence rates indicate the percent of high school graduates who enrolled in college in the year following high school and were still enrolled through their sophomore year. College acceptance rates are reported individually by high school for 2014.



# Turnaround Office Update

State Board of Education | December 11, 2014



# Charter Schools by the Numbers

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## **1 Authorizer**

The State Board of Education is Connecticut's sole charter authorizer.

## **22 Charter Schools**

There are 22 active charter schools statewide, of which 21 are state charter schools. At least two additional schools will open in time for the 2015-16 school year.

## **8,241 Students**

The State Board of Education has approved 8,241 charter school seats for the 2014-15 school year.

## **3,633 Waitlisted**

In 2013-14, 3,633 students sought enrollment and were waitlisted by Connecticut charter schools.

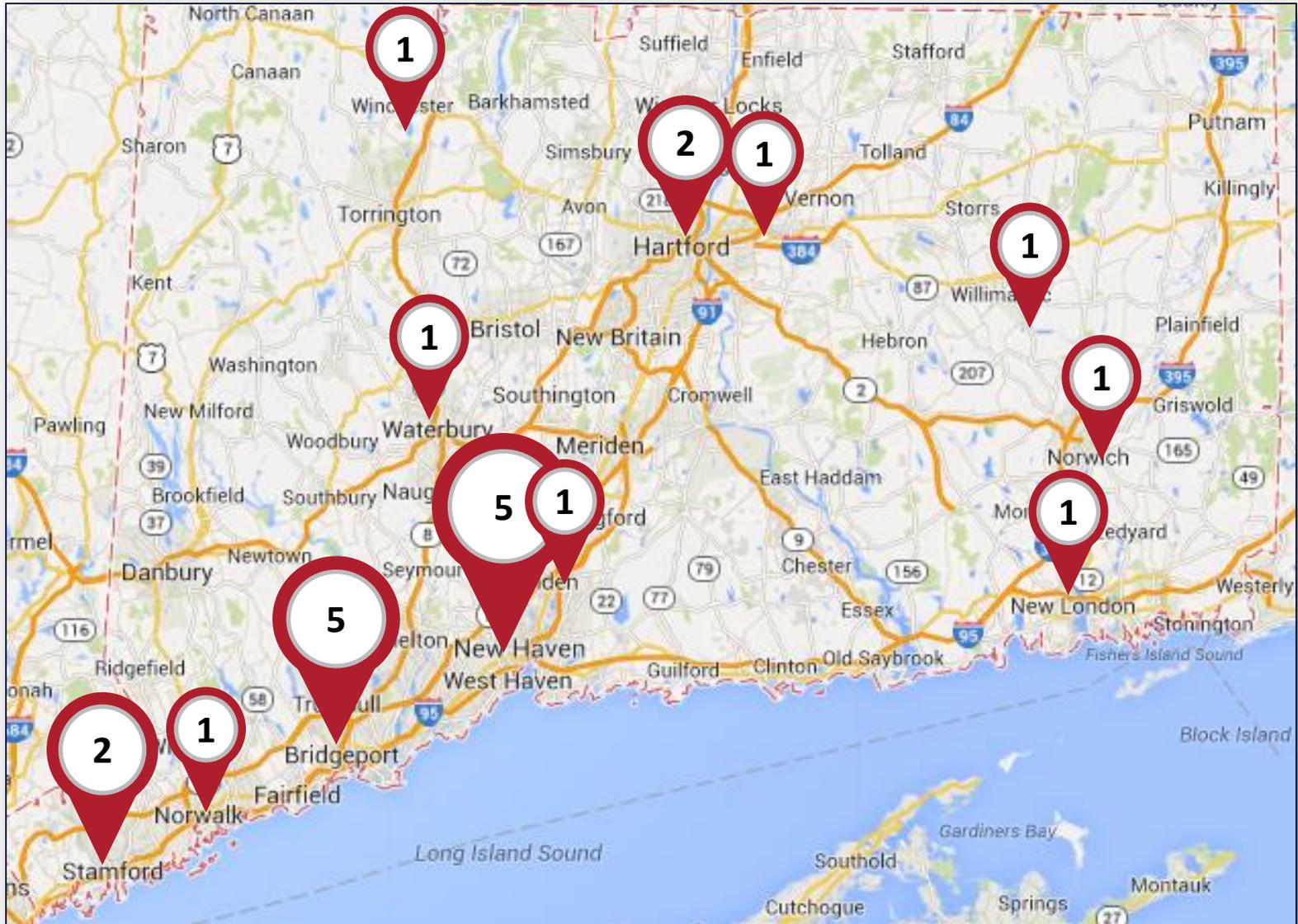
## **4 CMOs**

Four charter management organizations (CMOs) currently operate charter schools in Connecticut – Achievement First, Domus, Great Oaks Foundation, and Our Piece of the Pie.

## **12 Host Districts**

Connecticut's charter schools are located in 12 host districts and enroll students from 75 feeder districts.

# Charter Schools by Host District



# Connecticut's Charter Schools

School	Location
Achievement First Hartford Academy	Hartford
Achievement First Amistad Academy	New Haven
Achievement First Bridgeport Academy	Bridgeport
Booker T. Washington Academy	New Haven
Brass City Charter School	Waterbury
Capital Prep Harbor Charter School <sup>1</sup>	Bridgeport
Common Ground High School	New Haven
Achievement First Elm City College Preparatory School	New Haven
Elm City Montessori School <sup>2</sup>	New Haven
Explorations Charter School	Winsted
Great Oaks Charter School	Bridgeport
Highville Charter School	Hamden
Integrated Day Charter School	Norwich

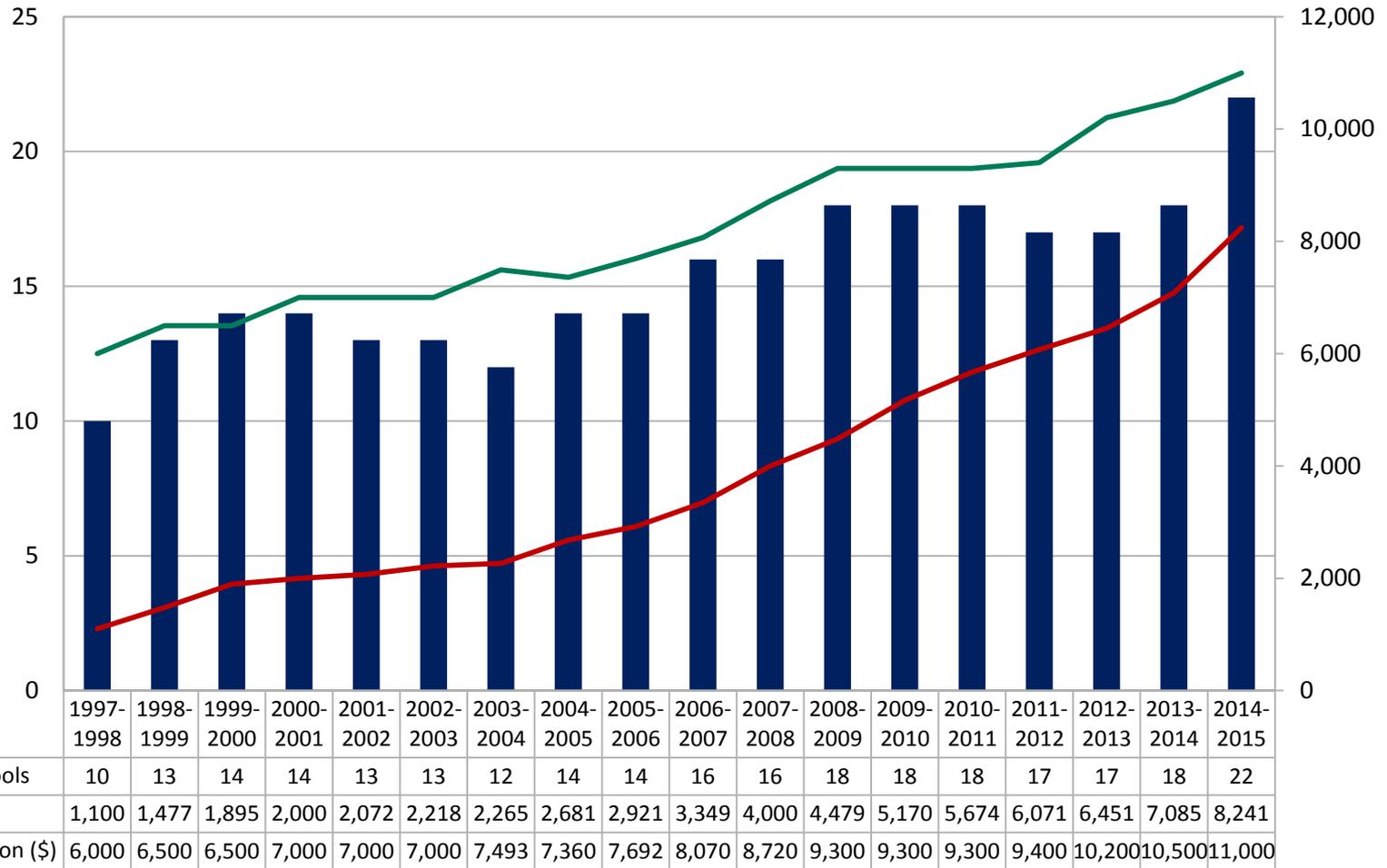
School	Location
Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC)	New London
Jumoke Academy	Hartford
New Beginnings Family Academy	Bridgeport
Odyssey Community	Manchester
Park City Prep Charter School	Bridgeport
Path Academy	Windham
Stamford Charter School for Excellence <sup>1</sup>	Stamford
Side By Side Community School	Norwalk
Stamford Academy	Stamford
The Bridge Academy	Bridgeport
Trailblazers Academy	Stamford

<sup>1</sup> Charters approved in April 2014; anticipated fall 2015 opening.

<sup>2</sup> Local charter school.

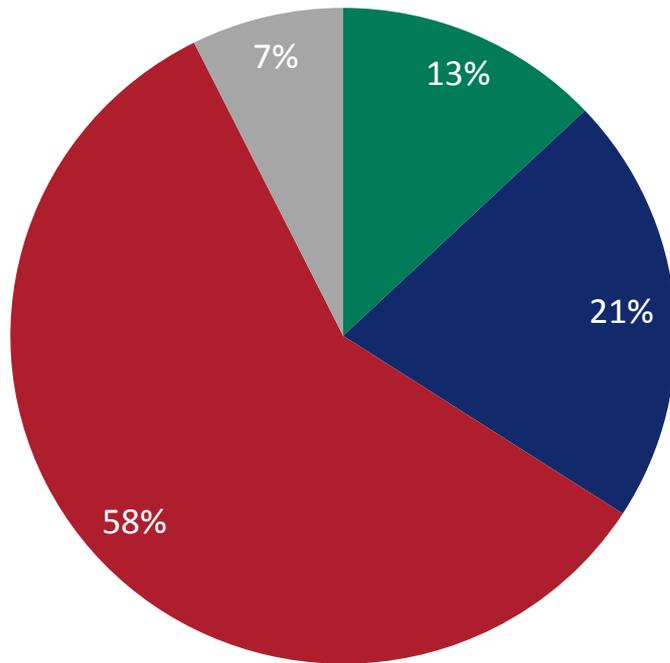
# Number of Charter Schools, Number of Students, and Per Pupil Allocation

Charter schools account for **only 1.3%** of Connecticut's school children.

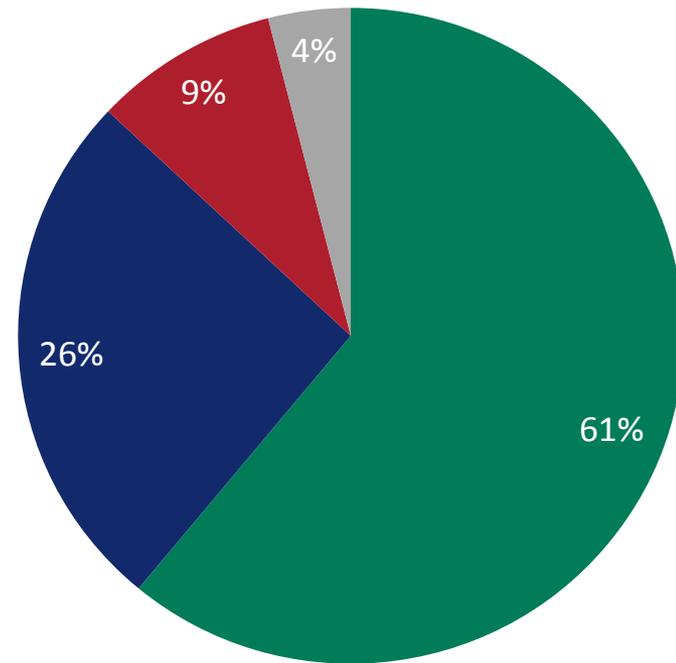


# 2013-14 Student Ethnic Breakdown

Statewide (N = 545,614)



Charter Schools (N = 7,096)

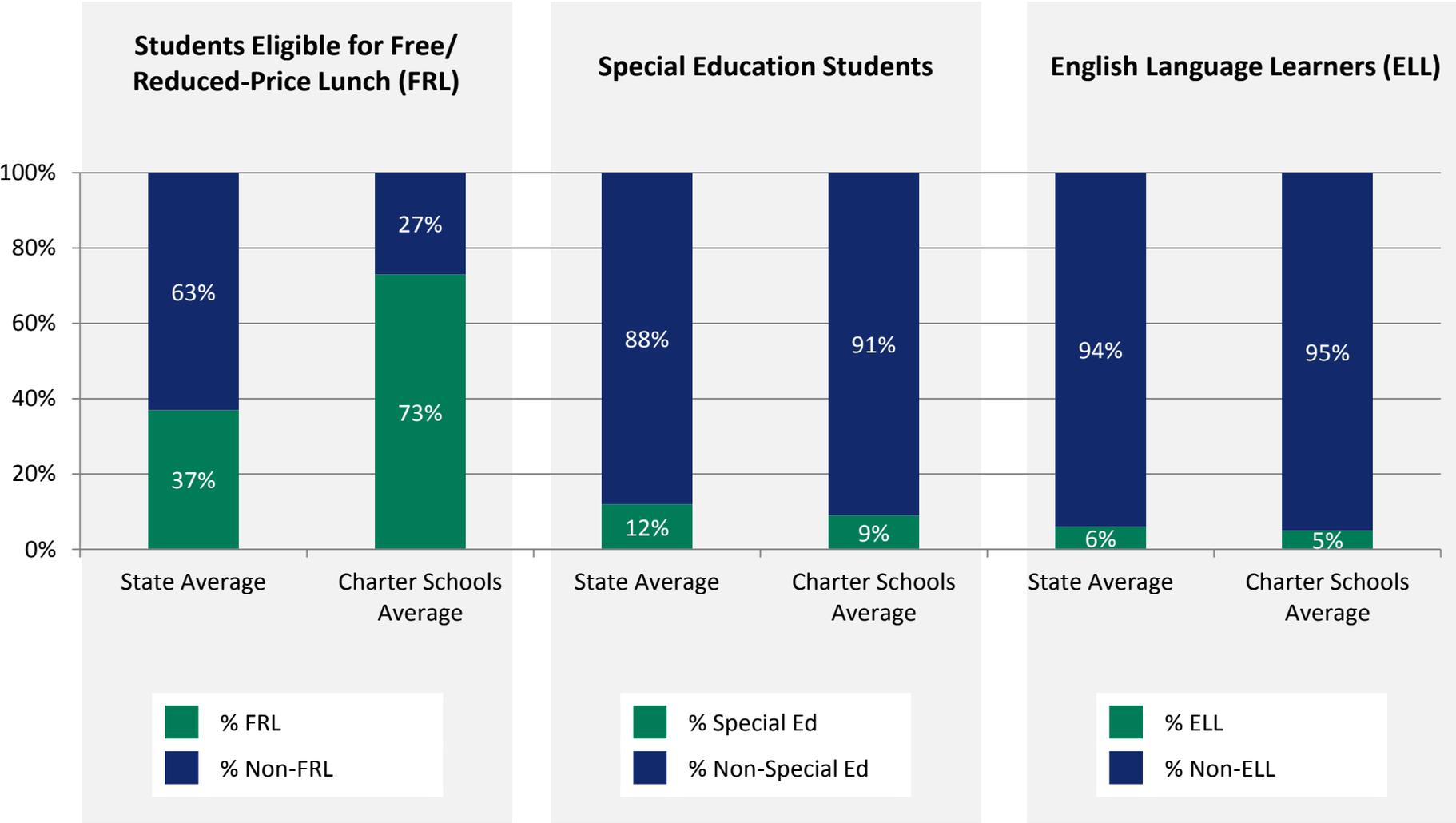


Black Hispanic White Other

2013-14 data, reflecting data for 18 charter schools.



# 2013-14 Charter School vs. State Demographics



2013-14 data, reflecting data for 18 charter schools.



# Charter School Achievement

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86%

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Of the 14 charter schools that administered the spring 2013 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), 12 outperformed their host district based on their overall School Performance Index (SPI).

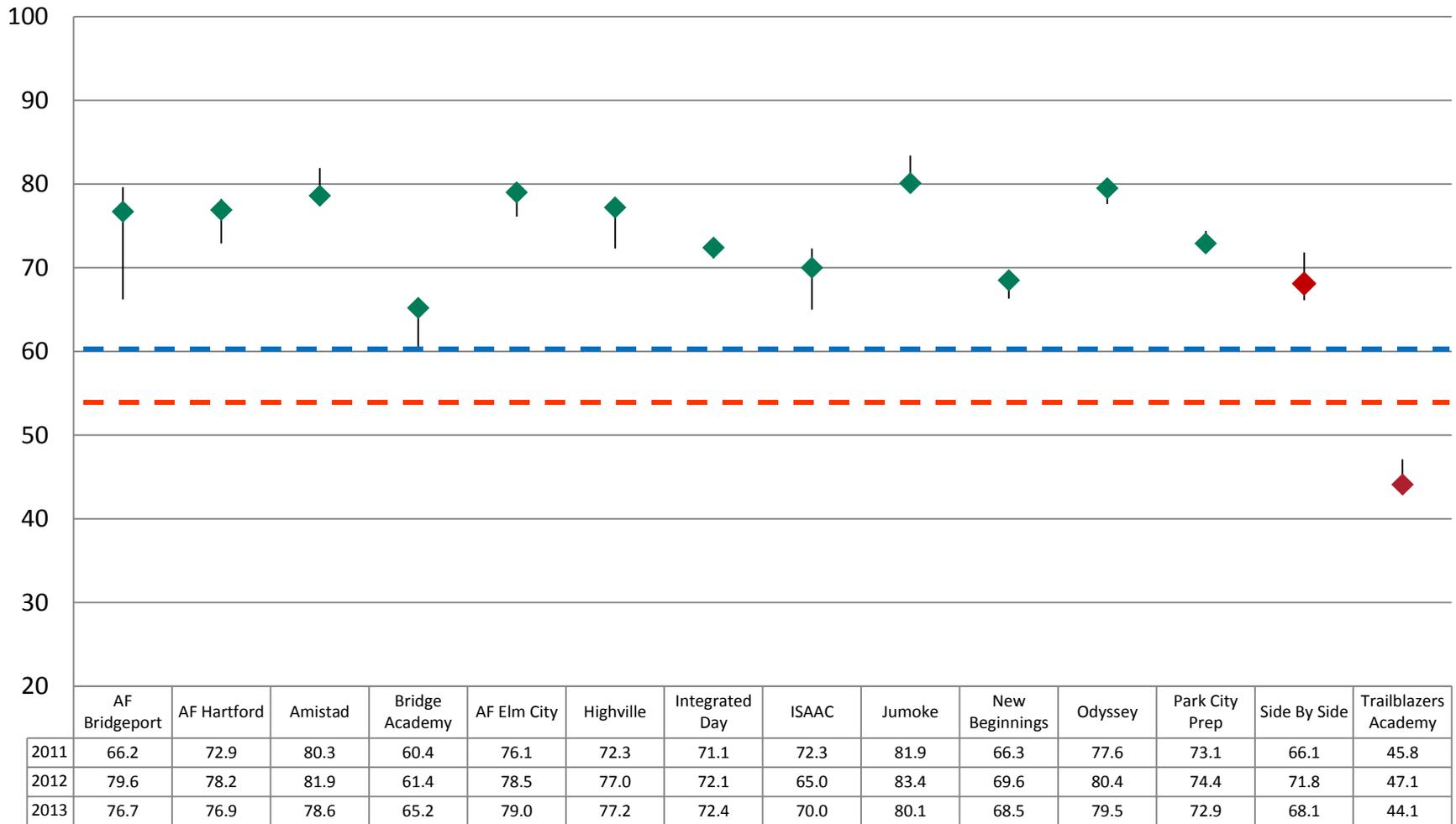
83%

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Of the 6 charter schools that administered the spring 2013 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), 5 outperformed their host district based on their overall SPI.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The only charter high school not outperforming its host district based on the CAPT SPI serves an alternative over-aged and under-credited population.

# Overall SPI Trends for Charter Schools Based on CMT



◆ 2013 SPI # is >/ the local district 2013 SPI #

◆ 2013 SPI # is < the local district 2013 SPI #

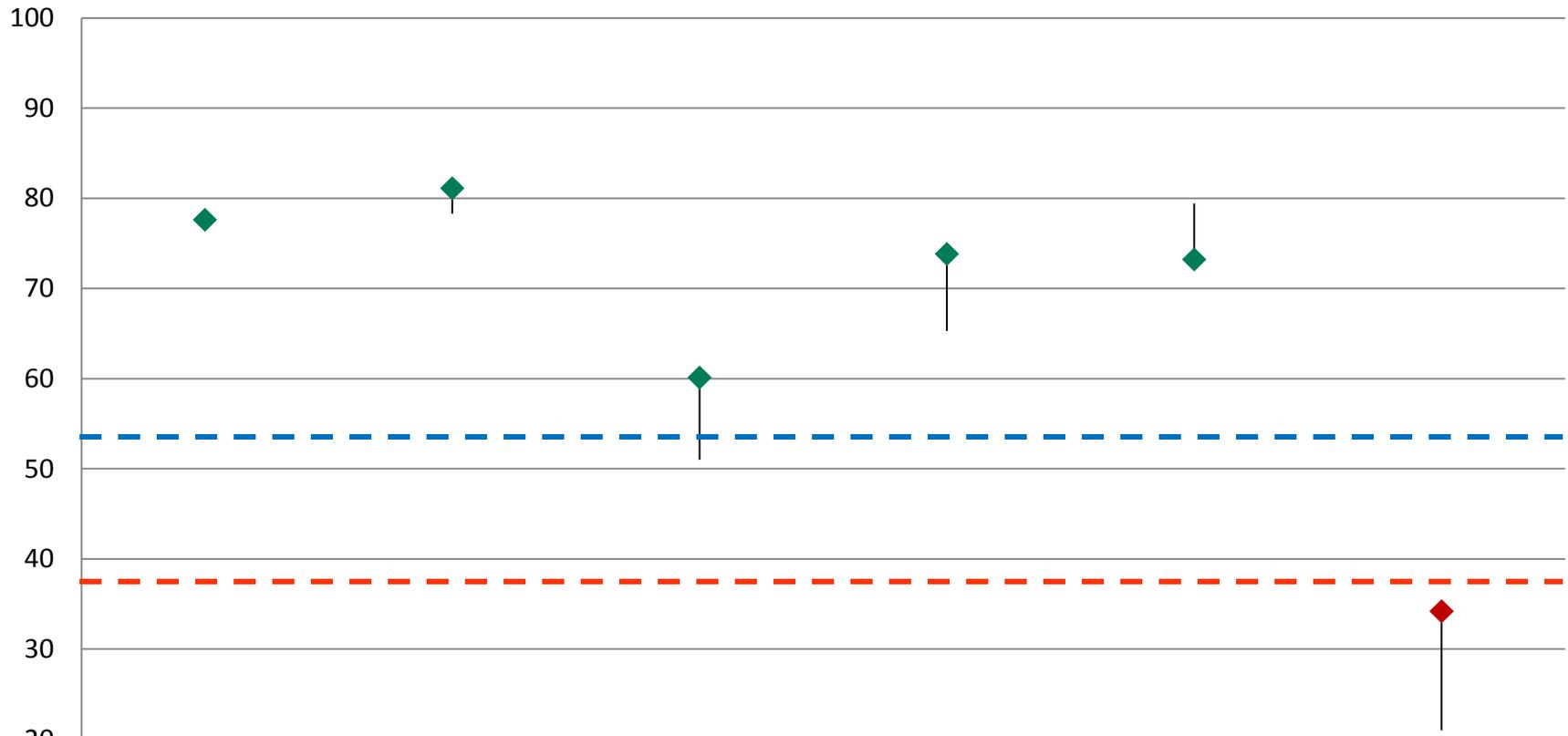
- - - 2013 Overall CMT DPI: Bridgeport

- - - 2013 Overall CMT DPI: New Haven

*Bridgeport and New Haven data shown for comparative purposes only.*



# Overall SPI Trends for Charter Schools Based on CAPT



	AF Bridgeport	Amistad	Bridge Academy	Common Ground	AF Elm City	Stamford Academy
2011		80.4	51.0	69.4		
2012		78.3	60.1	65.3	79.4	21.0
2013	77.6	81.1	60.1	73.8	73.2	34.2

◆ 2013 SPI # is >/ the local district 2013 SPI #

◆ 2013 SPI # is < the local district 2013 SPI #

--- 2013 Overall CAPT DPI: Bridgeport

--- 2013 Overall CAPT DPI: New Haven



# New Charter Performance Framework

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**School Performance:** Is the school a successful model resulting in strong student outcomes and a positive school climate?



**Stewardship, Governance, and Management:** Is the school financially and organizationally healthy and viable?



**Student Population:** Is the school promoting equity by effectively attracting, enrolling, and retaining students, particularly among targeted populations?



**Legal Compliance:** Is the school acting in compliance with applicable laws and regulations?

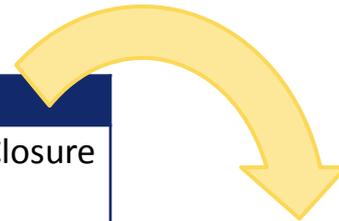
Charter Approval  
C.G.S. § 10-66bb(a)-(f)

Annual Reporting  
C.G.S. § 10-66cc

Renewal  
C.G.S. § 10-66bb(g)

# New Charter Performance Standards and Indicators

Standards:	Indicators:
<b>School Performance</b>	1.1 Student Achievement, Growth, and Gap Closure 1.2. Mission-Specific Goals 1.3. School Culture and Climate 1.4. Instruction 1.5. Academic Program 1.6. Supports for Special Populations
<b>Stewardship, Governance, and Management</b>	2.1. Fiscal Viability 2.2. Financial Management 2.3. Governance and Management 2.4. Organizational Capacity 2.5. Accountability Measures 2.6. School Facility
<b>Student Population</b>	3.1. Recruitment and Enrollment Process 3.2. Waitlist and Enrollment Data 3.3. Demographic Representation 3.4. Transfer/Retention Rates 3.5. Parental and Community Support
<b>Legal Compliance</b>	4.1. Signed Statement of Assurances 4.2. Open Public Meetings



Rating:
<p><b>Meets/Exceeds:</b> The school meets or exceeds performance expectations with minor, if any, concerns noted; the school can remedy any concerns.</p>
<p><b>Approaches:</b> The school approaches performance expectations; the school review generates moderate concerns with actions required by the school.</p>
<p><b>Falls Below:</b> The schools falls below performance expectations with significant concerns noted, which require immediate attention and intervention.</p>

# New Charter Performance Rubric

APPENDIX A: PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK RUBRIC

Performance Indicator	Falls Below (0 Points)	Approaches (2 Point)	Meets/Exceeds (4 Points)	Possible Evidence/Sources of Data
<b>PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE</b>				
<b>1.1. Student Achievement, Growth, and Gap Closure</b>  <i>Reviewers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charter</li> <li>Instruction</li> </ul>	Classification as a Review, Turnaround, or Focus school, resulting from overall poor performance or achievement gaps for a specific subgroup(s). Weak and/or minimal evidence of student growth and/or gap closure.	Classification as a Transitioning school or school outperforms its host district (or majority sending district) by between 0 and 10 points. Moderate evidence of student growth and gap closure.	Classification as a Progressing or Excelling school, or School of Distinction; or school outperforms host district (or majority sending district) by > 10 points. Strong evidence of and multiple data points indicating student growth and gap closure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School classification and SPI</li> <li>Achievement data</li> <li>Renewal application questions #2, 6, and 7</li> </ul>
<b>1.2. Mission-Specific Goals</b>  <i>Reviewers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charter</li> <li>Instruction</li> </ul>	Absence of school-specific goals and/or weak evidence to validate progress toward and achievement of such goals.	Established school goals, some sense of stakeholder awareness of goals, and some evidence of progress toward and achievement of school goals.	Established and acknowledged school goals; compelling and quantitative data substantiating progress toward and achievement of all school goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual report and goals</li> <li>Interviews and focus groups</li> <li>Data (depending on goals)</li> <li>Renewal application questions #2 and 10</li> </ul>
<b>1.3. School Culture and Climate</b>  <i>Reviewers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charter</li> <li>Instruction</li> </ul>	Concerns about school climate and the learning environment. Low expectations for students and staff. Average daily attendance < 90% and chronic absenteeism > 30%. Weak and/or inconsistent approach to behavior management. High frequency of suspensions.	Somewhat welcoming learning environment. Moderate expectations for students and staff. Average daily attendance < 95% and ≥ 90, and chronic absenteeism > 15% and ≤ 30%. Somewhat effective behavior management. Moderate frequency of suspensions.	Positive and welcoming learning environment. Consistently high expectations for students and staff. Average daily attendance rate ≥ 95%, and chronic absenteeism rate ≤ 15%. Clear, consistent, and effective behavior management. Low frequency of suspensions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews and focus groups</li> <li>School tour and classroom observations</li> <li>Attendance, chronic absenteeism, behavior data</li> <li>Climate survey data</li> <li>Renewal application question #2 and 9</li> </ul>
<b>1.4. Instruction</b>  <i>Reviewers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charter</li> <li>Instruction</li> </ul>	Weak and/or highly variable instruction and pedagogy, leading to concerns about teaching and learning. Minimal signs of the use of data. Minimal or misaligned opportunities for staff development.	Solid instruction and pedagogy demonstrated by most of the teaching staff. Some evidence to substantiate the use of data to drive instruction. Some opportunities for staff development of variable quality.	Strong instruction and pedagogy demonstrated by all or almost all teachers. Strong evidence of data to differentiate and improve instruction. Strong approach to staff development, as evidenced by instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews and focus groups</li> <li>Classroom observations</li> <li>Renewal application question #8</li> </ul>

Indicators and Reviewers

Rubric Definitions

Possible Evidence

# Winter 2014/Spring 2015 Renewal Process

<p><b>Common Ground</b> New Haven, CT Grades 9-12 Opening 1997</p>		<p><b>New Beginnings Family Academy</b> Bridgeport, CT Grades PK-8 Opened 2002</p>	
<p><b>Explorations</b> Winsted, CT Grades 9-12 Opened 1997</p>		<p><b>Odyssey Community School</b> Manchester, CT Grades K-8 Opened 1997</p>	
<p><b>Integrated School for Arts and Communication</b> New London, CT Grades 6-8 Opened 1997</p>		<p><b>Stamford Academy</b> Stamford, CT Grades 9-12 Opened 2007</p>	

# Renewal Process

Step:	Description:
<b>Issuance of Application</b> October 10, 2014	The CSDE issues the charter renewal application for charter schools eligible to participate in the renewal process.
<b>Renewal Application Deadline</b> November 21, 2014	By 4:00 p.m., the charter school submits an application to the CSDE for the renewal of its charter.
<b>Application Review</b> December 2014 – February 2015	A review team reviews the application and prepares a written summation of the merits of the application.
<b>Invitation for Written Comment</b> December 19, 2014	The CSDE sends letters to superintendents in school districts where a charter school is located and in contiguous districts asking for written comments on the renewal.
<b>Charter School Site Visit</b> December 2014 – February 2015	A site visit is conducted by a team of CSDE staff and/or impartial, external reviewers. The team provides a written report to the Commissioner of Education, including the summation of the merits of the application.
<b>Public Hearing</b> January 2015 – March 2015	A public hearing on the renewal is held in the school district in which the school is located.
<b>Commissioner's Recommendation and SBE Vote</b> April 1, 2015	The Commissioner of Education makes a recommendation to the SBE regarding the renewal of the charter, and the SBE votes on the charter renewal.