

## 2012 Program Report Card: Public Charter School Program (Connecticut State Department of Education)

**Quality of Life Result:** All Connecticut students have a successful transition to adulthood, assume a contributing role in a world-class workforce, and become productive members of their community and society at large.

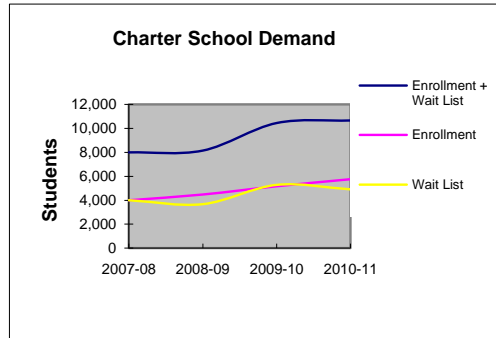
**Contribution to Result:** The *eighteen* Public Charter Schools (PCSs) are among the public school choice options that are raising the educational attainment level of participating students throughout the state through high-quality, racially/economically integrated education. These schools provide educational choices that contribute to a more highly educated workforce and may reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation. PCSs maximize the opportunity for each student to achieve his or her highest potential by offering challenging, relevant and rigorous curriculum and instruction. In addition, these schools provide a creative and flexible environment that values each student's unique abilities, talents, interests and learning styles. Greater student learning and engagement in school lead directly to a more prosperous adulthood with greater contributions to the economy and society.

Program Expenditures	State Funding	Federal Funding	Other Funding	Total Funding
Actual FY 11	\$53,255,301	\$5,576,430	\$14,499,272	\$73,331,003
Estimated FY 12	\$57,522,700	\$4,215,000	\$14,617,750	\$76,355,450

**Partners:** Institutions of higher education, business and industry, nonprofit organizations, educational researchers and parents.

### How Much Did We Do?

Total PCS enrollment and the number of students on PCS wait lists.



**Story behind the baseline:** Demand for PCSs reflects the quality and appeal of PCSs compared to traditional public schools. A legislative cap on the number of PCS students within schools and/or grade levels has stunted growth of the program in recent years. While enrollment has grown from 4000 to 5759 between 2007-08 and 2010-11, an increase of 44%, the number of students on wait lists has increased 42% between 2007-08 and 2009-10, and then steadied in 2010-11. The number of students on wait lists in 2010-11 was nearly that of the students enrolled, indicating that charter school enrollment would nearly double if there were enough space and state subsidy to accommodate all on the wait list as of 2011. The cap on enrollment per grade had been lifted in 2010 legislation, however the rate of future expansion is dependent on legislative support of 2012 legislation proposed by the Governor that allow up to 5 more charter schools.

**Trend:** ▲

### How Well Did We Do It?

Attendance rates of city resident students attending charter schools and city resident students attending traditional schools.

	Attendance Rate of City Resident Students					
	Traditional Schools			Charter Schools		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Bridgeport	91.1	92.2	92.4	94.2	94.3	95.3
Hartford	89.6	89.5	89.8	96.2	96.2	96.1
New Haven	90.5	90.9	92.2	94.2	96.2	96.6

**Story behind the baseline:** PCSs typically expect that innovative teaching and learning strategies will ensure that students will stay engaged in their education. Attendance rates reflect the average percentage of days students attend school. As PCSs overwhelmingly serve students who would normally attend inner city public schools that typically lag behind statewide averages, PCS city resident students attend school at a higher rate than students in the city public schools, and compare favorably with the wealthiest districts in Connecticut.

**Trend:** ▲

### How Well Did We Do It?

Percentage of students at or above proficiency in mathematics and reading (CMT/CAPT)

Charter School	Math			Reading		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Ach. 1 <sup>st</sup> . Hfd	79.7	86.5	82.0	45.3	58.4	60.1
Amistad Acad	88.2	92.0	93.8	76.4	75.0	74.4
Ach. 1 <sup>st</sup> . Bpt	75.9	86.1	86.1	44.6	51.5	64.5
Comm Grnd HS	67.4	75.0	80.0	72.1	82.1	94.3
Elm City Prep	91.1	88.6	85.4	64.8	73.3	70.6
Explorations	50.0	42.9	60.0	70.6	38.5	56.0
Highville	83.8	83.0	84.2	66.7	69.6	65.6
Integrated Day	76.3	77.7	77.1	78.2	77.2	70.5
ISAAC	67.2	67.8	74.9	68.8	77.9	80.5
Jumoke Acad.	77.4	81.9	89.4	64.2	70.1	83.1
New Beginnings	75.2	77.8	73.5	59.0	65.3	59.8
Odyssey Comm.	71.8	81.5	85.1	69.6	73.1	81.2
Park City Prep.	67.7	73.8	88.6	59.2	61.6	69.0
Side By Side	67.5	73.6	68.3	55.6	66.9	67.7
Stamfrd Acadm	19.2	11.1	11.8	16.7	6.7	35.3
The Bridge Acad.	69.0	71.9	74.0	51.2	64.2	53.1
Trailblazers	50.0	56.8	56.7	37.8	44.8	45.0
State	84.3	85.6	85.7	78.9	80.0	80.6

**Story behind the baseline:** Given that the majority of PCS students reside in the state's priority school districts which serve academically high-risk students, it is noticeable in the data that most schools are demonstrating improvement over the past three years in both reading and mathematics. Some schools with notable percent improvement over the three year period in mathematics and reading respectively are: Ach. 1<sup>st</sup> Hfd 10.2 and 19.9; Odyssey Comm 13.3 and 11.6; and Park City Prep 20.9 and 9.8. While the goal level may be a more desirable standard, it may also be more susceptible to fluctuation based on the performance of a small number of students and fail to capture the progress being made by the Charter Schools through the levels.

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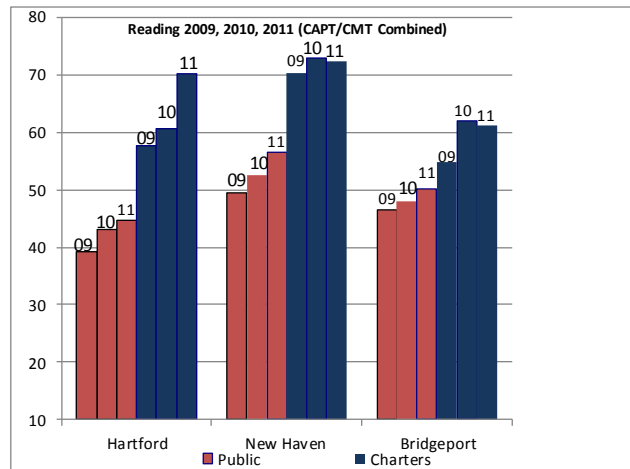
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### Is Anyone Better Off?

Percentage of Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport resident students at or above proficiency in reading in both PCSs and the traditional public schools.

#### # Tested in Reading (2009, 2010, 2011 CMT/ CAPT)

	Hartford	New Haven	Bridgeport
Charter '09	250	721	706
Traditional '09	7559	5443	9742
Charter '10	334	793	788
Traditional '10	7009	4995	9449
Charter '11	491	865	877
Traditional '11	6310	4866	9088



Note: These data reflect students in tested grades only (Grades 3-8). Resident students from these three cities are chosen as they are the only urban areas with at least two PCSs serving significant numbers of city students from which to base valid comparisons.

**Story behind the baseline:** Since PCSs overwhelmingly serve poor and minority students, the most valid way to base comparisons is by comparing “like-students” with similar academic risk factors of urban communities. In this case, the performance of city resident students who opted for PCSs were compared to those who remained in the city public school systems. City resident students who attend PCSs outperform students in the city public schools in reading and mathematics (not shown), and have increased percentage at/or above goal at a greater rate between 2009 and 2011 in both subject areas.

**Trend:** ▲

### Proposed Actions to Turn the Curve:

**Action 1:** The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) must continue to facilitate dialogue between constituencies contributing to the increasing demand for PCSs and the elected and appointed officials having the financial programmatic authority over these schools. The CSDE is currently reviewing applications for new charter schools contingent on state appropriation.

**Action 2:** The CSDE will identify PCSs that excel in student attendance and retention and identify specific successful strategies used to keep students in school, such as building positive relationships within the school community, including families. CSDE will also seek to identify the best practices in teaching and learning developed and utilized by PCSs. CSDE will engage staff or school leaders from successful PCSs in statewide best practices workshops to help bring these best practices to scale.

**Action 3:** CSDE is entering its third year of a site visitation process as part of holding PCSs to a greater degree of accountability through higher standards for their operation. As the schools are required to submit progress reports to the CSDE, this acts as a monitoring tool and enables CSDE to broker technical assistance where or if needed. As 2009 was a baseline year, CSDE will analyze multi-year trends in the performance of PCSs with respect to their counterparts in city schools, and among PCSs across the state. A formal program evaluation would assist in determining reasons for such success.

### Data Development Agenda:

- 1) Identify, define and collect statewide data that will measure the *actual* demand for PCS services, particularly among students/families who are not yet applying to enroll.
- 2) Identify, define and collect student achievement data for grades not tested by CMT and CAPT to assist the measuring of PCS effectiveness, particularly related to high school and PK-3 educational attainment.
- 3) Identify, define and collect data on successful student support and retention practices in PCSs.
- 4) Commission or conduct formal qualitative and quantitative program evaluations that glean evidence of cause and effect relationships explaining increased student achievement.