

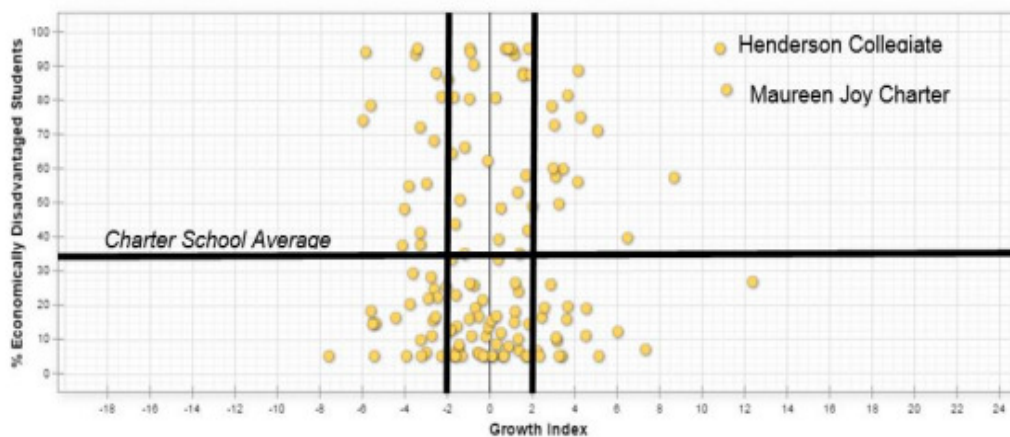
“One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.”

--Vision of Teach For America

This year, Teach For America celebrates its 25th anniversary of existence and its 25th year of partnership with North Carolina. As a partner, Teach For America has committed to maximizing our contribution to the state by recruiting, training, and supporting excellent, diverse teachers and growing our number of alumni living and working in North Carolina. We are also committed to strengthening the North Carolina Teacher Corps.

Every day across North Carolina we see corps members, alumni, and students dramatically impacting North Carolina communities. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction recently released an annual report on charter schools for the general assembly. Henderson Collegiate and Maureen Joy Charter schools were both outliers in their ability to lead economically disadvantaged students to academic growth.¹ These schools are both led by Teach For America alumni, staffed by many Teach For America trained teachers, and are models for other charter schools across the state.

2014-15 Charter Schools Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students and Growth



Similar growth is happening in traditional public schools across the state. With Teach For America alumna Erica Jordan-Thomas as its principal, and Teach For America teachers making up 50 percent of its teaching staff, Ranson Middle School was in the top one percent for growth in the state. Students at Ranson, 80 percent of whom are economically disadvantaged, are receiving excellent educational opportunities.

Results like these are happening in individual classrooms as well. In his first year of teaching in the North Carolina Piedmont Triad, Nasaa Enkhbold, a biology teacher at High Point Central High School, led his students to 90% proficiency with 67% of his students being college and career ready. Luke Stewart and Dwight Miller, history teachers at West Meck in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, led to the fifth highest growth scores among all district high schools. Luke, in his first year of teaching, was among the top three teachers in the district for growth with students.

Teach For America alumni are making an impact at a national level as well. *Forbes Magazine* has named eight Teach For America alums to their prestigious 30 Under 30 list. These alumni are using their leadership to innovatively address

¹ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. “Annual Charter Schools Report.” *Report to the North Carolina General Assembly*. 15 January 2016. <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/Attachment.aspx?S=10399&AID=49263&MID=2223>. 23 March 2016. (See appendix A)

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North Carolina · Quarterly and Annual Legislative Report
March 2016

education's most challenging problems.² Six of these alumni were chosen for the education category while the remaining two were selected for the social entrepreneurs and retail and e-commerce categories. These alumni join 22 other former Teach For America corps members who have received this honor from *Forbes* over the past several years.

Statewide Impact

Teach For America develops diverse, innovative educators and leaders who partner with communities to ensure that all children have access to an excellent education. In North Carolina, we are over 1,800 strong impacting 60,000 students across the state (see appendix C). More than 30 of our alumni are school leaders, and we continue to provide the most effective source of early career teachers, according to the North Carolina Teacher Portal Study. Our alumni base across the state has grown from 1,208 last year to 1,358 this year—a growth of 12%. This growth includes both individuals who completed the corps in North Carolina as well as those who we have actively recruited from out of state.

Our current teaching corps marks our most diverse corps to date. Their achievements make us confident and excited about their impact in the classroom.

- The average GPA is 3.42
- 46% come from a low-income background³
- 42% are people of color
- 37% will be teaching math or science
- 28% are the first in their families to graduate from college
- 7 served in the military

We are working hard to attract talent to our regions. The Charlotte region was able to take advantage Teach For America's 25th Anniversary Summit where 15,000 alumni gathered to unite around a common belief in educational equity. The Charlotte team set up a booth aimed at recruiting talent to Charlotte and North Carolina (see appendix D). We had over 300 out-of-state Teach For America corps members and alumni express interest in moving to North Carolina. We have built a website for those interested to learn more about the Charlotte region and the opportunities available to them (see appendix E). As we come into a new school year, the North Carolina team is focused on developing strategies to bring more talent across the state.

In addition to attracting talent to the state, we are focused on training our teachers to be best-in-class educators for North Carolina's students. Like many Teach For America regions, Eastern North Carolina's teachers have always been trained at national institutes. While the national preparation model enabled our teachers to consistently be the state's most effective early career educators, we believe our redesign will improve the way teachers are trained in North Carolina and have a lasting impact on top-talent retention in the state. For the first time in our 25 years in the state, Eastern North Carolina will train their incoming corps members locally during our new teacher preparation program. Over \$1,000,000 will be directly invested in rural North Carolina communities throughout the year including \$400,000 on housing and expenses, and additional funds to support the hiring of local instruction partners, master teachers, principals, and school operators to help facilitate the summer residency program.

In addition to the broad impact on rural teacher training, ENC Residency will provide free summer school programming for over 1,000 students in Lenoir and Northampton counties, 72% of whom receive free and reduced lunches.

² Teach For America Editorial Team. "Forbes 30 Under 30 Selects 8 Teach For America Alumni." 5 January 2016.

<https://www.teachforamerica.org/top-stories/forbes-30-under-30-selects-7-teach-america-alumni>. 23 March 2016. (See appendix B)

³ As identified by receiving a full or partial Pell Grant

North Carolina Teacher Corps (NCTC)

Teach For America is committed to partnering with the state to inspire more North Carolinians to teach and lead as educators in our state. While we know great teachers exist across the nation, we believe that teachers with personal ties to North Carolina can make a unique contribution to our state, bringing a special sense of urgency and commitment to educating North Carolina's children.

Dorian Edwards, an Eastern North Carolina and North Carolina Teacher Corps Member, is a math teacher at Rochelle Middle School in Kinston, North Carolina—the same middle school he attended as a child. When asked about his experience teaching in his home school, Dorian said, “We can try to do what we can in other communities, and it’s great, but for me and the ties that I have here and all of the people that have helped me, I thought it was only fitting to say thanks by coming back and serving my community.” We are honored to have corps members like Dorian, and many other North Carolina connected corps members, educating students across the state.

Since the state’s investment, we have doubled the number of corps members who are either native North Carolinians or attended college in North Carolina.

We currently have 190 corps members who identify as part of the North Carolina Teaching Corps. One hundred and thirty two of them graduated from a North Carolina college or university and 123 of them are North Carolina natives. Our NCTC corps members to date represent 71 colleges across the United States including the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, Duke University, Yale, and Princeton. Our North Carolina connected corps members make up a diverse group of teachers and leaders across the state:

- The average GPA is 3.4
- 55% come from a low-income background⁴
- 53% are people of color
- 40% will be teaching math or science
- 34% are the first in their families to graduate from college
- 2% served in the military

We are building on this success by continuing to supplement Teach For America’s national recruitment methods with strategies tailored to North Carolina candidates. Tailored strategies include:

- **One-on-One Outreach:** We have conducted nearly 70 individual conversations with final round applicants from North Carolina. North Carolina staff and alumni use these calls to inspire applicants to choose to teach in North Carolina rather than choosing to teach out of state.
- **NCTC Webinars:** We have hosted five webinars for both North Carolinians moving into final round of interviews as well as those who are just beginning their application. Sixty registrants and applicants have attended these webinars thus far. These webinars highlight stories of current corps members and alumni with North Carolina ties who chose to lead in our state. Our data shows that candidates who attend one of our webinars are significantly more likely to preference one or more of our North Carolina regions when making their regional assignment decisions.
- **Junior Webinars:** We are holding an additional webinar in May for juniors who are interested in applying for Teach For America. We hope that this webinar will build investment in teaching in North Carolina even earlier.
- **Registrant Recruitment:** For the first year ever, we have opened up our NCTC activities to applicants who are just beginning an application to join Teach For America. By doing this, we are exposing applicants to the

⁴ As identified by receiving a full or partial Pell Grant

opportunity to teach in North Carolina at a much earlier stage in the application process. We have reached out to over 800 of these early applicants to join our NCTC webinars.

- **School Visits:** In partnership with our recruitment team, we have hosted two school visits across the state for prospective applicants to Teach For America. These school visits give applicants a line of sight into the work they would be leading as a first year teacher in North Carolina. Applicants had the opportunity to ask questions of Teach For America alumni and staff and provide an excellent lever for helping prospects complete the final stages of their application.
- **Holiday Social:** We hosted a holiday social in Durham for both admitted candidates as well as applicants with North Carolina connection. The social allowed incoming corps members and prospective applicants the chance to meet with current corps members, alumni, and Teach For America staff members.

Regional Updates

We are grateful for the continued investment from the state which allows us to operate in three regions across North Carolina. This year, the Eastern North Carolina region celebrates its 25th year in the state, Charlotte sees its 10th anniversary, and the North Carolina Piedmont Triad enters its second year.

- **North Carolina Piedmont Triad**

In its first two years of existence, the North Carolina Piedmont Triad is delivering exceptional results to both students and district partners in Guilford County. In the 2014-2015 school year, five Teach For America teachers were named their respective schools' "Rookie Teacher of the Year," and one progressed as a district finalist. In the 2015-2016 school year, another five Teach For America teachers were named their respective schools' "Rookie Teacher of the Year."

With teachers like Juan Estrada and Miranda Lanning, it is no surprise that the region has garnered such titles. Estrada, a Spanish teacher at Page High School, collaborated with his administration to form a two-tiered mentoring program for Latino male students called Unidad. His students engage in after school group programming and directly mentor local middle school students. This initiative was spotlighted in the 2016 Guilford County Schools State of Our Schools event. Miranda Lanning, a sixth grade science teacher at Southeastern Guilford Middle School, is building up young innovators with her afterschool STEM club. Her students have been awarded a grant through the Boy Scouts of America to bring their ideas of innovation to improve prosthetics for farmers, air quality in schools, and offices to prototype.

- **Charlotte**

In February, the Charlotte region hosted 13 out-of-state alumni for a School Leadership Summit (see appendix F for an agenda). The Charlotte team secured national grant funding to host a weekend long summit for out-of-state alumni interested in becoming school leaders in Charlotte. Participants were able to meet with current and former Charlotte Mecklenburg district employees, visit local museums, learn about the principal pool process, and attend a hiring fair. We are hopeful that many of these leaders will choose to put down roots in Charlotte after attending the summit.

For the fourth consecutive year, corps members and Teach For America staff are designing and executing programming aimed at empowering the student voice through the WakeUp Student Empowerment Summit. The group's mission is to cultivate and empower student leadership by uniting students in the Charlotte Mecklenburg community through service and advocacy. Manuela, a junior at Garinger High School, said of the program, "I enjoy being a part of WakeUp because it's an amazing way to have fun while getting involved with our community. It also helps build leadership skills that are useful in life after high school and it allows me to meet new people."

The goal of WakeUp is to support students in facilitating a leadership conference open to teachers, students, and community members. Through this conference, students will share their stories and then host breakout groups based on four issues impacting the Charlotte community. In the breakout groups, students will present the issue facing the community and then lead participants through a problem solving protocol. In doing so, students deepen understanding of self and storytelling, learn further about issues impacting the city and communities, build and refine skills in research and facilitation, and lead others to find a solution.

- **Eastern North Carolina**

Eastern North Carolina is working harder than ever to ensure they are attracting and retaining great talent to rural parts of the state. Over 800 Teach For America alumni currently live in the region. Through the Alumni Teacher Leadership Initiative, the Eastern North Carolina region is providing ongoing support to alumni teachers.

In addition to supporting alumni teachers as they develop their practice, the region is working hard to increase the number of qualified alumni pursuing pathways to school leadership. As such, the region created the Alumni School Leadership Initiative to identify, cultivate, and support corps members and alumni who are interested in entering the school leadership pipeline. This is a critical step in creating a network of transformational schools throughout Eastern North Carolina.

With the growth and continuation of the North East Leadership Academy (NELA), as well as Teach For America's own Rural School Leadership Academy (RSLA) and Rural Principals Fellowship (RPF), there are more unique opportunities than ever for school leaders. At the same time, the Eastern North Carolina region is working to grow in the early identification and cultivation of corps members and alumni interest in pursuing a future in school leadership. Currently, 18 principals and 13 assistant principals in the region are TFA alumni. We aim to increase the number of RSLA applicants from five (in 2015) to ten (in 2016) and NELA applicants from two (in 2015) to four (in 2016).

We are thankful for the continued investment from North Carolina which allows us to support incredible teachers and leaders, like the ones highlighted above, throughout the state.

Financial Reporting

Teach For America is committed to maximizing the state's investment through fiscal responsibility and working diligently to inspire private donors to invest in our work in North Carolina. For the last 12 years, Teach For America has received Charity Navigator's (the leading charity evaluator in America) four-star rating for sound fiscal management. Less than one percent of the charities rated by Charity Navigator have received 12 consecutive four-star evaluations. As such, Teach For America outperforms most U.S. charities in carrying out its mission in a fiscally responsible manner (see appendix G).

We remain grateful for the state's investment and are committed to making every public and private dollar work hard for students across our state. We look forward to updating the state on our progress in our June quarterly report.



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

Annual Charter Schools Report
G.S. 115C-218.110(b)

Date Due: January 15, 2016
Report #
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2015-16

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LEGISLATION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1996, the North Carolina General Assembly passed the Charter School Act, thereby authorizing the establishment of “a system of charter schools to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and the community to create and sustain schools that operated independently of existing schools, as a method to accomplish all of the following:

1. Improve student learning;
2. Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for student who are identified as at risk of academic failure or academically gifted;
3. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
4. Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunities to be responsible for the learning at the school site;
5. Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
6. Hold the schools established under this Part accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.”

Codified in NC General Statute as Article 14A of Chapter 115C (115C-218, *et al.*), the charter schools law assigns the State Board of Education the sole authority to grant approval of applications for charters.

Statute originally capped at 100 the number of charter schools that could operate in the State in a given school year, but the General Assembly removed that ceiling in August 2011. Thirty-four charter schools opened in the inaugural year of 1997. There are 158 charter schools currently operating in the 2015-16 school year, including 21 of the original 34 schools. Since 1997, 43 schools that have been open at some time have closed.

Current statute sets the parameters for how the system of charter schools must operate. The law includes the following sections:

- Purpose of charter schools; establishment of North Carolina Charter Schools Advisory Board and North Carolina Office of Charter Schools
- Eligible applicants, contents of applications; submission of applications for approval
- Final approval of applications for charter schools
- Charter school exemptions
- Charter school operation
- General requirements

- Accountability; reporting requirements to the State Board of Education
- Charter School Facilities
- Charter School Transportation
- Admission requirements
- Employment Requirements
- Funding for charters
- Causes for nonrenewal or termination; disputes

Finally, G.S. 115C-218.110 directs that the State Board “shall report annually no later than January 15 to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the following:

- (1) The current and projected impact of charter schools on the delivery of services by the public schools.
- (2) Student academic progress in the charter schools as measured, where available, against the academic year immediately preceding the first academic year of the charter schools' operation.
- (3) Best practices resulting from charter school operations.
- (4) Other information the State Board considers appropriate.”

This report addresses this legislated reporting requirement.

CURRENT STATE OF CHARTER SCHOOLS IN NC

School & Student Population

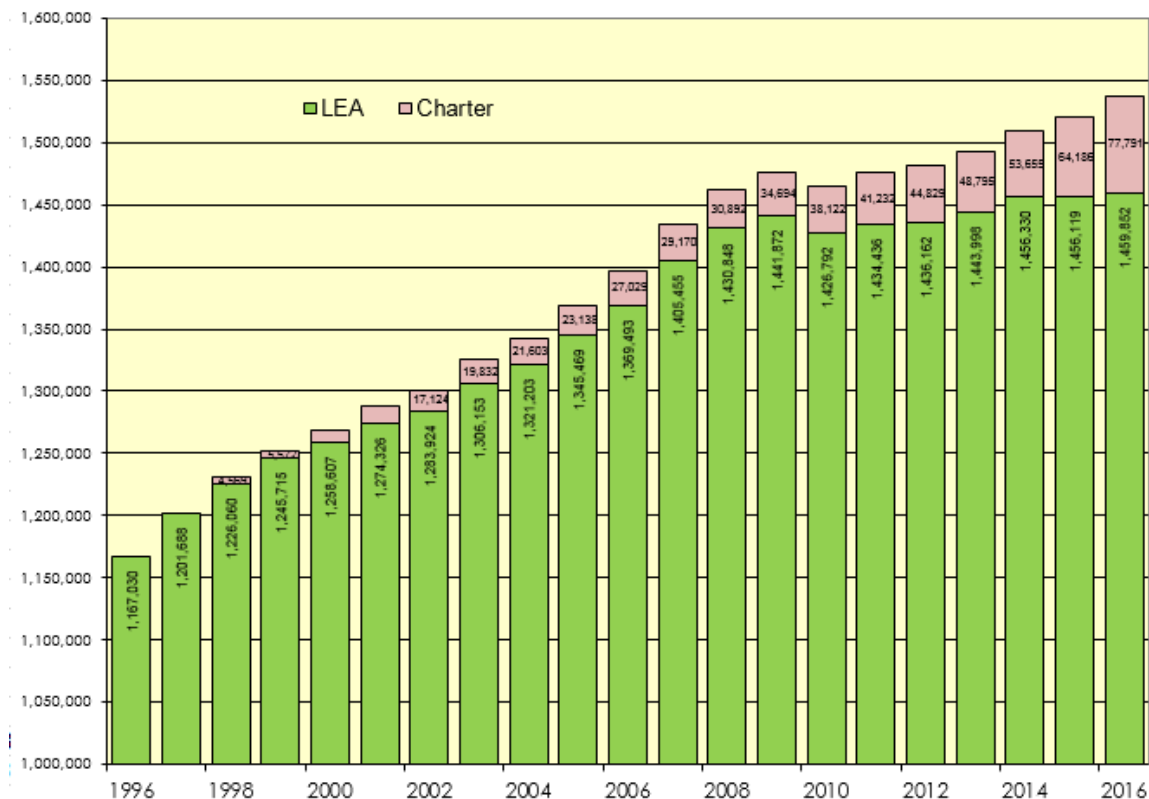
Schools

Between 1997 and 2011, the number of charter schools in NC grew first rapidly, then slowly, but steadily until it reached the legislatively maximum of 100 schools. Since the removal of “the cap” in 2011, 300 applicants have submitted complete applications for charters and the State Board of Education has approved 87. Twenty-eight more applicants have applied in 2015 to open schools in 2017-18; these applications are still being reviewed. No applications were submitted in 2015 for fast-track replication, a special option added in policy in 2015. One hundred fifty-eight charter schools are operating in 2015-16. Included in that total are the State’s first two virtual charter schools (directed in S.L. 2014-100 to be established as pilots) and one drop-out prevention and recovery charter school (directed in S.L. 2014-104 to be established as a pilot).

Students

The charter schools student population has grown steadily since 1997, with larger annual increases occurring in the years since the cap on schools was lifted in 2011. The graph below illustrates the increase in allotted charter school student enrollments from 1997 to 2016. According to first month Average Daily Membership (ADM) figures certified in November 2015, 81,951 students are now being served by charter schools.

**Allotted Average Daily Membership
1995-2016**



Data Source: Highlights of the North Carolina Public School Budget, February 2015 (updated in December 2015), Information Analysis, Division of School Business, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Admissions and Student Demographics

Background

NC's charter schools are not subject to school district geographic restrictions and often have student populations drawn from multiple local school districts. Charter schools are directed in G.S. 115C-218.45(e) to "make efforts [to have] the population of the school reasonably reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the general population residing within the local school administrative unit in which the [charter] school is located or the racial and ethnic composition of the specific population that the school seeks to serve residing within the local school administrative unit in which the [charter] school is

located.” There is no mechanism by which schools can guarantee racial and ethnic balance, however, nor is there an official consequence for not achieving it. Charter schools may target certain students through admissions set-asides, if the student population being given priority for admission is identified as such through the school’s State Board-approved mission and admissions process; in practice, this has been done infrequently.¹

Charter schools may not discriminate in their admissions process on the basis of race, creed, national origin, religion, or ancestry. Charter schools may target certain students through their marketing, but “any child who is qualified under the laws of [NC] for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to a charter school.”

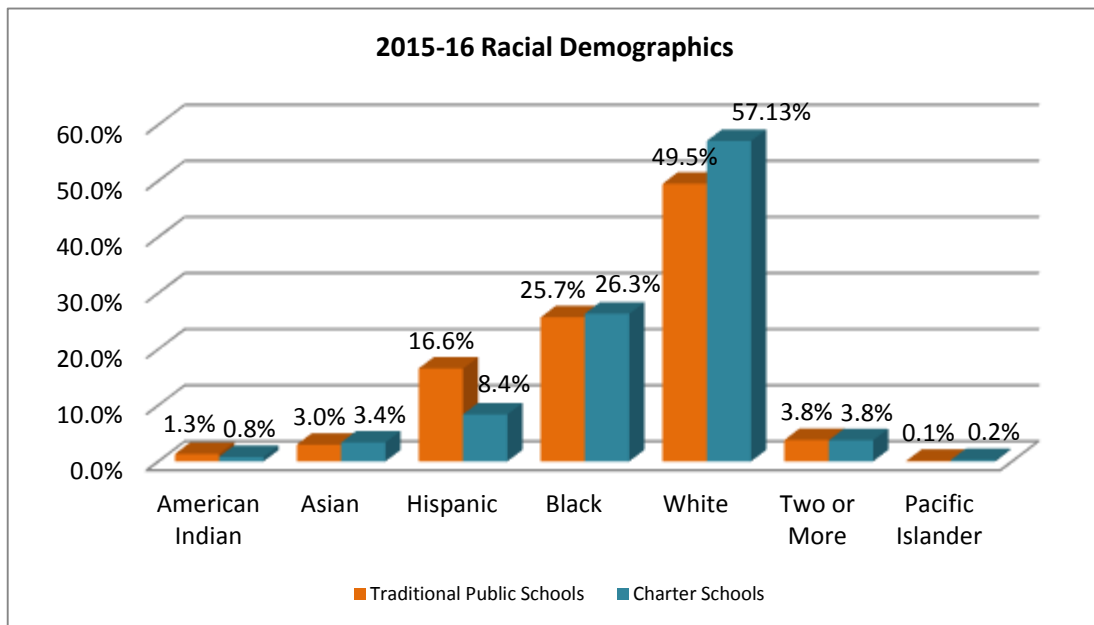
Each charter school has an authorized maximum funded enrollment. If a school receives more applications from qualified applicants than there are funded slots at the school, the school must conduct a lottery and establish a wait list. Students who are not enrolled through the lottery must re-apply for admission each year. Students who are enrolled do not need to re-apply and may retain enrollment in subsequent years.

Demographics: Race and Ethnicity

Based on data from 2014-15, the overall student populations in the NC charter schools and traditional public schools are similar in terms of racial and ethnic composition, though several differences do exist. As illustrated in the chart below, the overall charter schools student population is more White and less Hispanic than the overall traditional school population.

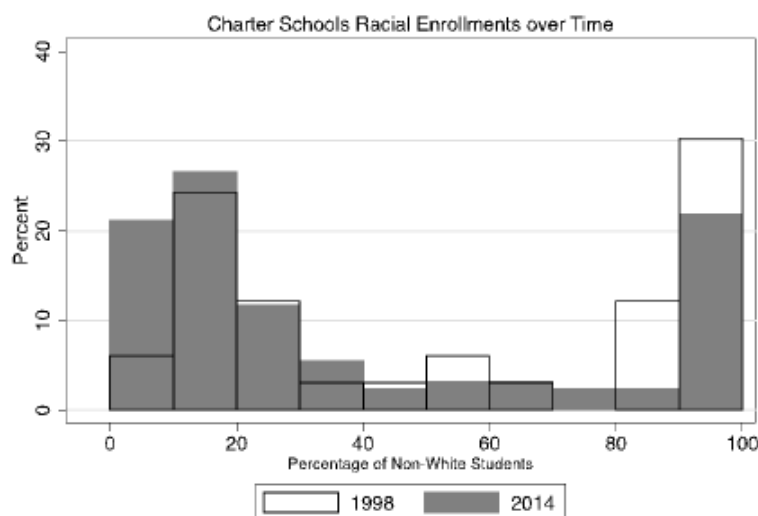
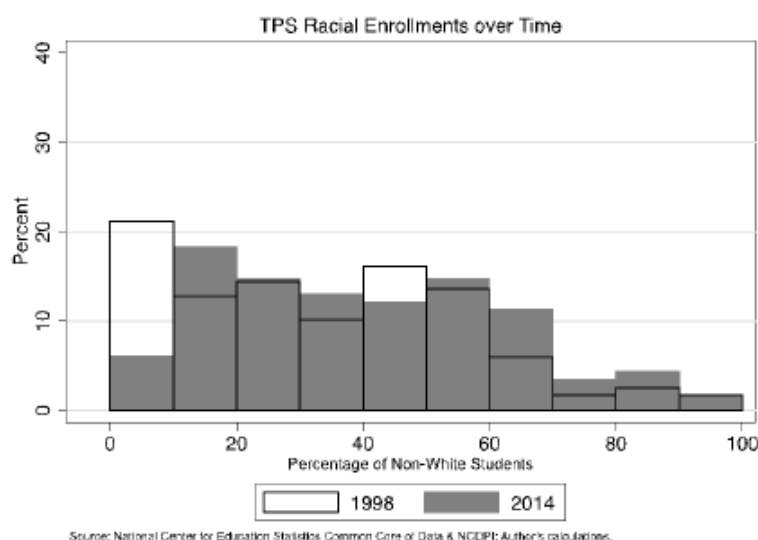
¹ Two charter schools have approved processes that permit the school to conduct weighted lotteries. Francine Delaney New School for Children, located in Asheville City, is under desegregation order and must ensure that the percentage of black students attending matches that of the district. The Central Park School for Children, located in Durham County, has SBE approval to conduct a weighted lottery based upon Economically Disadvantaged status of families. The ability to conduct weighted lotteries was codified in the 2015 long session in HB 334 and provides for charter schools to have additional controls to enroll underserved populations if supported by the school’s mission.

Overall Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools Racial Demographics



Source: 2015-16 Grade, Race, Sex Report www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data

School-level data, however, indicates greater differences between the charter schools and traditional public schools in terms of the racial composition of individual school populations. In an April 2015 report entitled *The Growing Segmentation of the Charter School Sector in North Carolina* (see http://www.caldercenter.org/sites/default/files/WP%20133_0.pdf), Duke University researchers Helen Ladd, Charles Clotfelter, and John Holbein documented the findings of their analysis of the racial composition of NC charter schools' student populations. The analysis finds that the student populations of individual charter schools in NC have historically been either predominantly white (less than 20 percent nonwhite) or predominantly minority (greater than 80 percent nonwhite). Also, over time, the share of minority students in charter schools has declined. Figures 2a and 2b (from the Ladd, *et al* report) below illustrate how these trends differ from the traditional public schools.

Figure 2a. Distribution of charter school students by racial mix of schools (1998 & 2014)**Figure 2b. Distribution of traditional public school (TPS) students by racial mix of schools (1998 & 2014)**

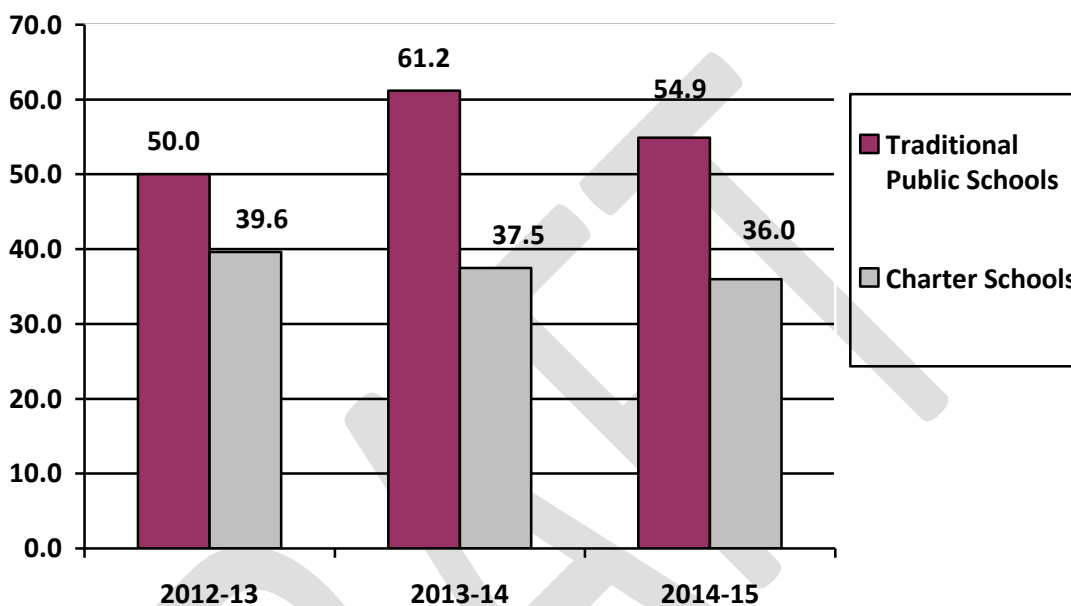
Data Source: NCDPI Accountability Services, 2014-2015

Demographics: Socio-Economic Status

Overall, NC's charter schools and traditional public schools differ in terms of the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged (ED) students (e.g., students from families with lower income) they serve. As illustrated in the chart below, the percentage of ED students in traditional public schools and charter schools has fluctuated over the past three years, but proportionally, charter schools have consistently served fewer ED

students than traditional schools. In 2014-15, the percentage of ED students in charter schools was approximately 19% lower than in traditional schools.

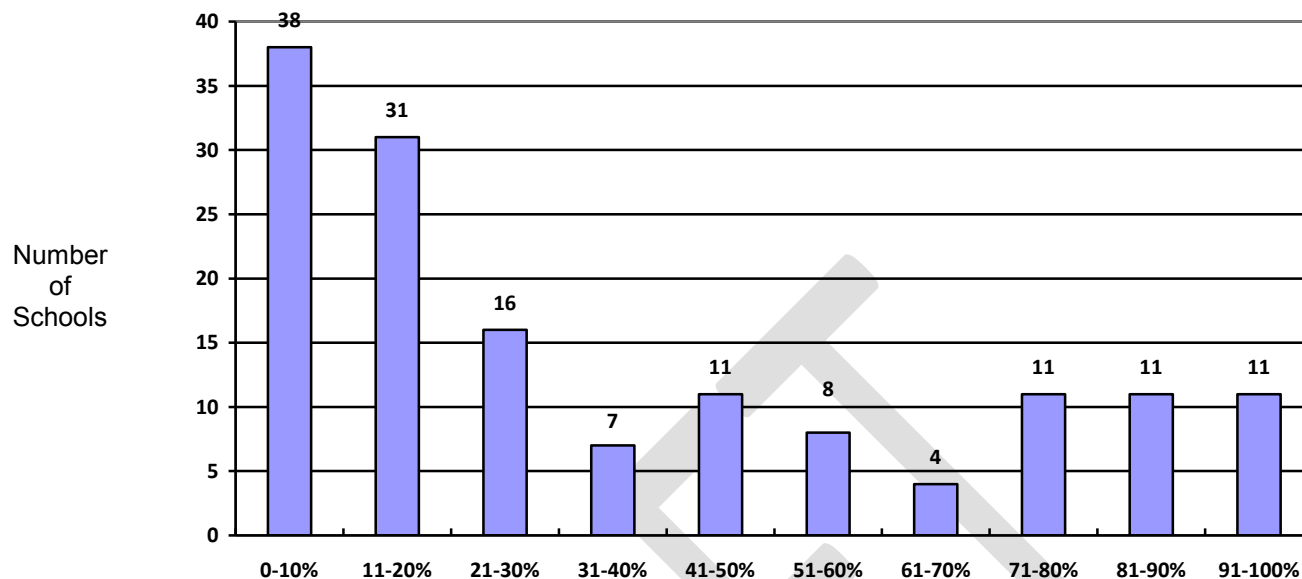
**Percentage of Overall Student Population that is Economically Disadvantaged (ED)
(2012-13 to 2014-15)**



Analysis of school-level data for 2014-15 indicates that the median percentage of ED students in charter schools is 24.4% and the majority of charter schools have an ED percentage below 20%.² The chart on the following page displays the distribution of 2014-15 charter schools based on percentage of ED students served.

² Note that ED data is collected through Testing and Accountability Services and is self-reported by the schools. Seven charter schools reported 0% in 2014-15.

Distribution of Charter Schools by Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students Served in 2014-15

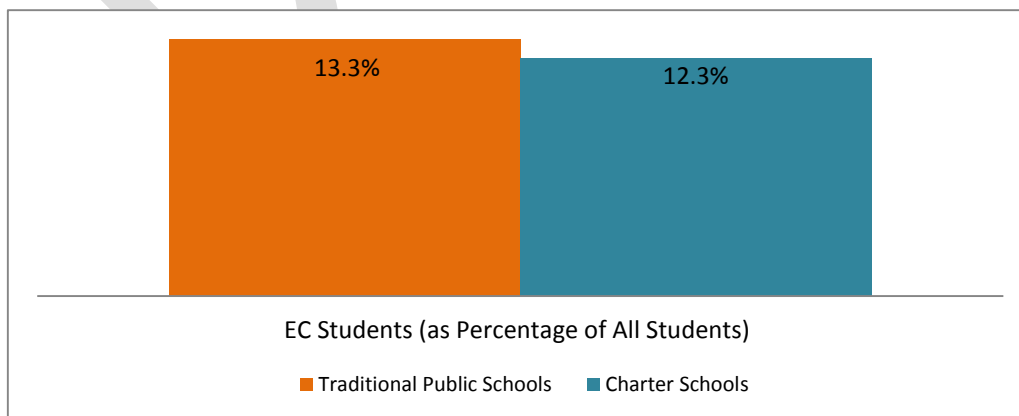


Data Source: NCDPI Accountability Services, 2014-2015

Demographics: Exceptional Children

The Exceptional Children's Division collects exceptional children headcount data twice annually. The last reported headcount was April 2015. Based on this data, charter schools serve approximately the same percentage of students identified as requiring Exceptional Children's (EC) services as are served by traditional public schools.

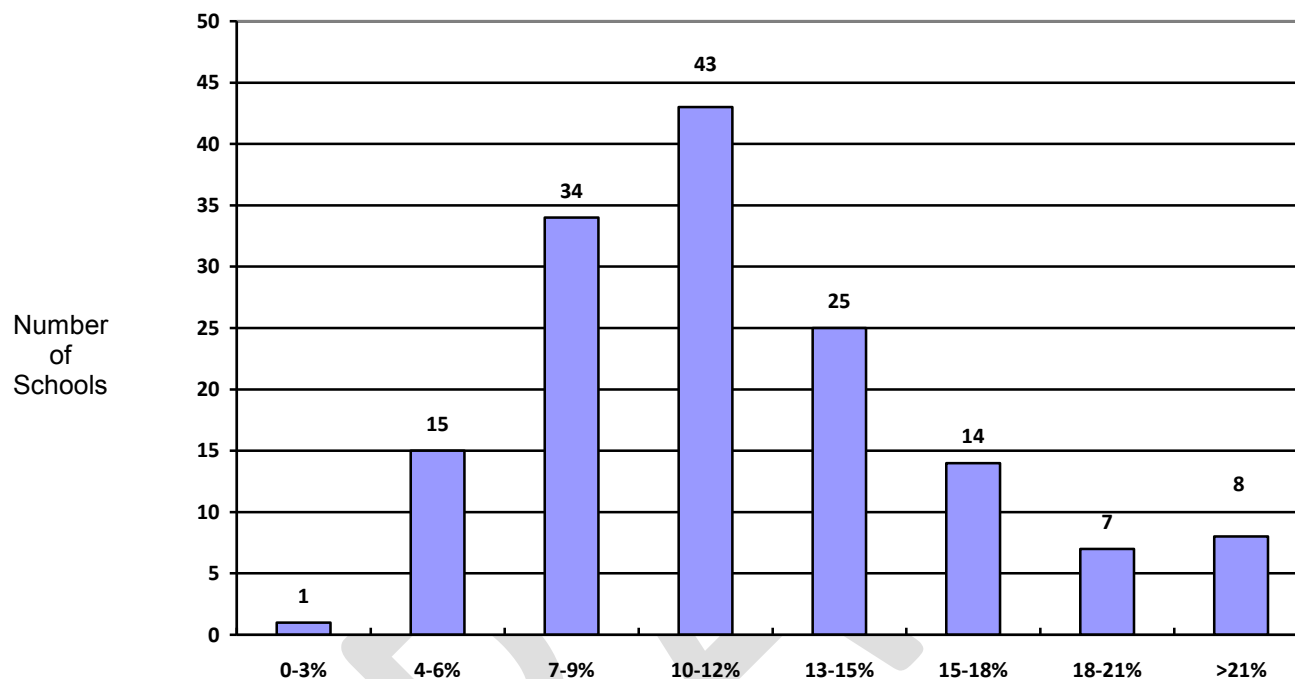
Exceptional Children's (EC) Charter Student Population by April 2015 Headcount (Percentage of Overall Student Population)



Data Source: Exceptional Children's Services Division

School-level data indicates that the majority of charter schools serve between 7-15% EC students, which is in the average range for traditional public schools.

Distribution of Charter Schools by Percentage of EC Students Served in 2014-15



Data Source: Exceptional Children's Services Division

Charter Schools Operating Requirements

Charter schools, once approved, must complete a planning year and meet “Ready to Open” criteria that focus on ensuring quality charter board-approved policies to guide the following:

- Sound fiscal management
- Effective governance and operations
- Hiring of high quality staff
- Ensuring student health and safety
- Compliance with Testing and Accountability requirements
- Compliance with Exceptional Children's requirements

Once opened, though each charter school has significant flexibility in how it operates, the school must meet financial, governance, and academic standards set by the State through

statute, State Board of Education policy, and the terms of the [Charter Agreement](#) that is signed by each school when the State Board grants final approval of the charter. The State Board monitors each school's financial, academic, and operational performance annually, and does a comprehensive review, assisted by the Charter Schools Advisory Board, as part of considering whether to grant charter renewals.

Charter Schools Performance

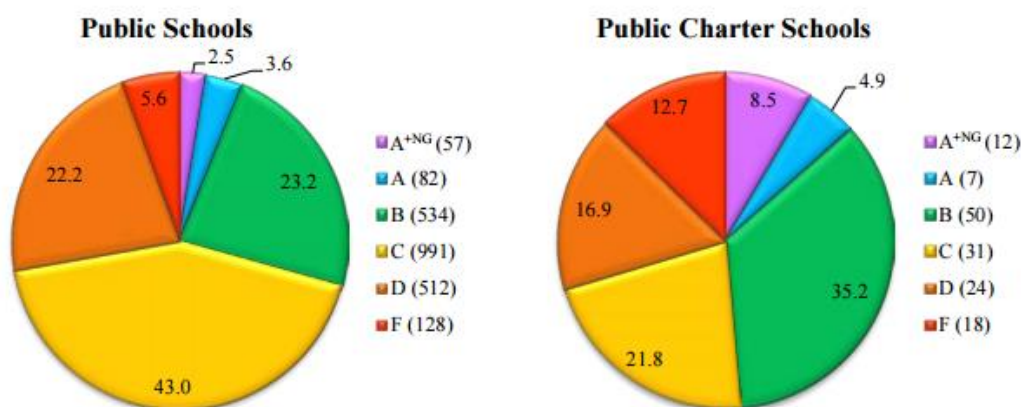
Academic Performance: School Performance Grades

As a result of G.S. 115C-83.15, beginning with the 2013-14 school accountability data, all public schools are assigned School Performance Grades (A-F) based on test scores, and, for high schools, additional indicators that measure college and career readiness. School Performance Grades (SPG) are based on student achievement (80%) and growth (20%). In 2014-15 a letter grade of A^{+NG} was added to represent schools that received an A rating and that did not have significant achievement and/or graduation gaps.

2014-2015 School Performance Grades for All Public Schools

Overall Grade	Public Schools		Public Charter Schools	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
A ^{+NG}	57	2.5	12	8.5
A	82	3.6	7	4.9
B	534	23.2	50	35.2
C	991	43.0	31	21.8
D	512	22.2	24	16.9
F	128	5.6	18	12.7
Total	2,304		142	

*Due to rounding, the percent of schools may not total 100%.



Data Source: www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/exsumm15.pdf

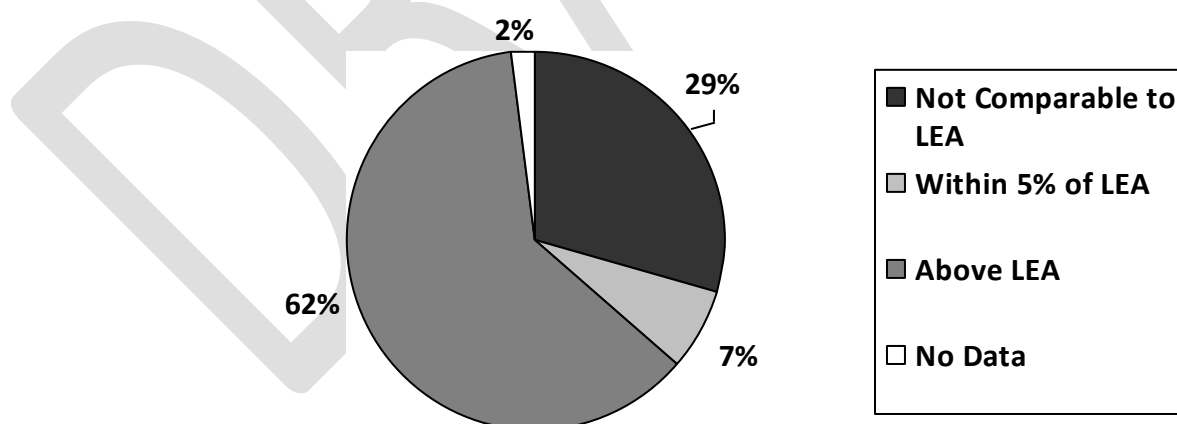
The data indicates that charter schools had higher percentages than traditional public schools of both D and F ratings, and A/A^{+NG} and B ratings. This suggests that there are higher percentages of charter schools on both ends of the rating continuum and fewer in the average range, as compared to traditional public schools.

Academic Performance: School Performance Composites and Growth

The General Assembly amended charter schools statute in 2013 to expand the academic expectations to be considered when reviewing schools for charter renewal. G.S. 115C-218.5 requires that a charter school's academic outcomes should be "comparable to the local school administrative unit in which the charter school is located." The Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB), when considering this requirement for renewal recommendations, defined "comparable" as having a Performance Composite in Grade Level Proficiency (GLP) less 5% of the local school administrative unit in which the school is located.

Data for 2014-15, illustrated below, indicate that approximately two thirds of charter schools are either comparable to or exceed the composite performance in Grade Level Proficiency of the local school administrative unit in which they are located. Approximately one third of charter schools are not comparable to their local school districts. Schools with no data serve students in K-2 and do not have proficiency scores.

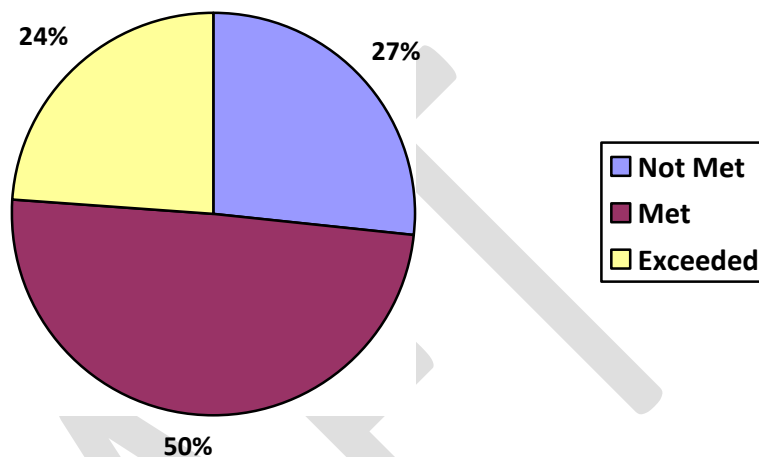
Charter School Performance as Compared to Home LEAs



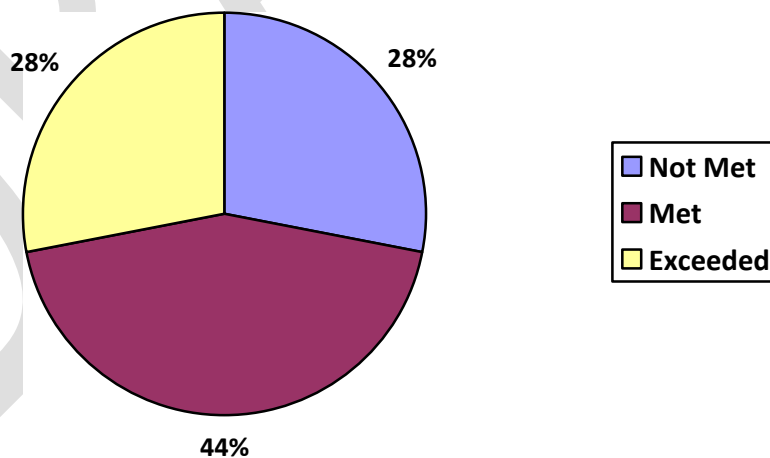
Data Source: NCDPI Accountability Services, 2014-2015

Under the current accountability model, all public schools receive a growth status of *Not Met*, *Met*, or *Exceeded*. The data for 2014-15, illustrated below, indicates that the charter schools achieved approximately the same distribution of these statuses as the traditional public schools.

Charter School Academic Growth 2014-2015



Traditional Public School Growth 2014-2015



Academic Performance: Relative to State Board of Education Goals

As part of its strategic planning initiative, the State Board of Education created a series of goals for charter school performance over time. Specifically, Goals 2.4.1a, 2.4.1b, and 2.4.2 set targets for charter school academic performance, as measured through percentage of students proficient on State tests, and school growth, as defined by the

Education Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS). The following chart shows the charter schools' actual results relative to the State Board's goals and targets:

	Measure	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
		Targeted	Actual	Targeted	Actual	Targeted	Actual	Targeted	Actual
2.4.1a	Percentage of charter schools at or above 60% on EOG and EOC assessments (Students scoring Levels 4 & above: College-and-career-ready (CCR) standard)	NA	30.8%	49.2%	32.0%	51.7%	39.9%	43.0%	N/A
2.4.1b	Percentage of charter schools at or above 60% on EOG and EOC assessments (Students scoring Levels 3 & above: Grade Level Proficiency (GLP) standard)	NA	NA	49.2%	54.4%	51.7%	55.9%	58.0%	N/A
2.4.2	Percentage of charter schools meeting or exceeding expected annual academic growth	N/A	82.7%	73.0%	75.6%	75.0%	73.4%	75%	N/A
2.4.3	Percentage of charter schools meeting or exceeding all financial and operational goals as measured by the Office of Charter School's performance framework*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	32.1%	TBD	TBD

**Note: The 32.1% excludes items that we anticipate removing or revising in 2015-16; with those items included, the 2014-15 total is 26.0%*

Data Source: State Board of Education Strategic Plan

Academic Performance: "Inadequate" Schools

In the same August 2011 legislation that lifted the cap on the number of charter schools in NC, the General Assembly also codified language defining "inadequate academic performance" for a charter school. "Inadequate" is defined as demonstrating less than 60% proficiency and not meeting growth for two of three consecutive years. Schools meeting these criteria in a given year are notified that they must improve or could face revocation of their charter.

2012 marked the first time that the State Board revoked a school's charter because the school was deemed academically inadequate. Soon after, 2012-13 was the first year of re-normed State tests, so scores did not count against schools for purposes of this policy. Based upon accountability results for the following year, 2013-14, however, 16 charter schools received academic warning letters because they were at less than 60% proficiency and did not meet growth. Five of these schools were in their first year of operation while the rest had two or more years of operational experience. Four of the 16 schools continued to meet the statutory criteria in 2014-15 and therefore have now been formally designated as "academically inadequate." Two of the schools have been in operation fewer than five years and two have been in operation more than five years. These four schools are under review by the Charter School Advisory Board, which will make a recommendation to the State Board of Education regarding what actions to take regarding these four schools.

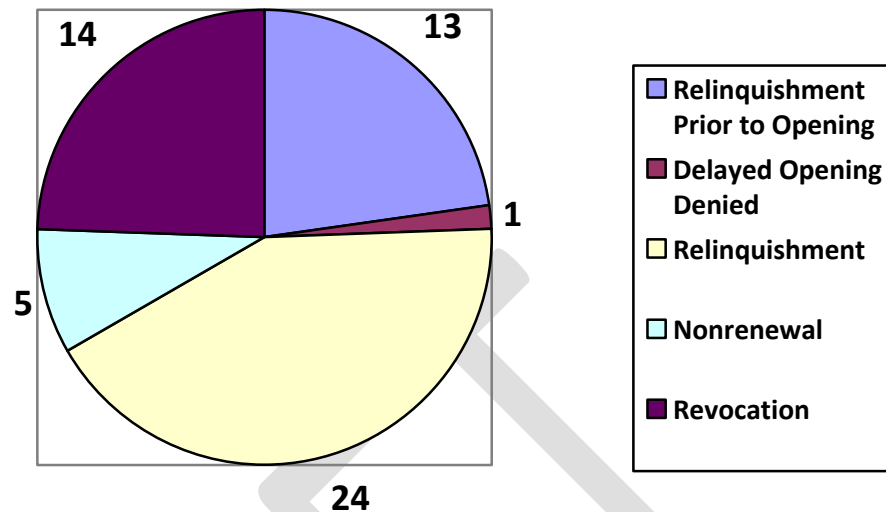
Charter School Closure

Between 1997 and 2011, 57 charter schools closed. This total number includes schools that were not able to open, schools that relinquished their charters, and schools that either had their charters revoked or not renewed by the State Board of Education.

The majority of charter school closures have been the result of financial or financially-related issues – low enrollment, fiscal noncompliance, excessive debt, etc. Out of the 43 schools that opened for operation, but then closed, 35 (or 80%) of those schools closed due to financial reasons.

Since the cap on charter schools was lifted in 2011, 13 schools have closed (including three that were not able to open). These 13 schools account for 23% of all school closures since 1997. Since August of 2014, seven charter schools have closed. Two of those schools relinquished the charter prior to opening and five schools were in the first year of operation. One of those schools was revoked due to non-compliance with requirements for services for Exceptional Children..

Reasons for Charter School Closure from 1997-2015
(# of Schools by Closure Reason)



IMPACT OF CHARTER SCHOOLS ON THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Historical Overall Fiscal Impact

Growth in the number of charter schools combined with increased population at existing charter schools has increased the financial impact charter schools have on the overall system of public schools. The growing enrollments in charter schools mean an increase in State Public School Fund dollars allotted to them. As the chart on the next page shows, State funding for charter schools has increased from just over \$16 million in 1997 to more than \$366 million in 2014-15.

Charter Schools Status Report 1997-2015

Year	Approved	Opened	Closed	Relinq w/o Opening	Total in Operation	Planning Allotted ADM	% of Total ADM	Total State Funds Allotted
1996-97	34	0	0	0	0			
1997-98	31	34	1	0	33	4,106	0.3%	\$ 16,559,947
1998-99	28	26	3	0	56	5,572	0.4%	\$ 32,143,691
1999-00	17	23	4	4	75	10,257	0.8%	\$ 50,104,210
2000-01	9	15	4	3	86	14,230	1.1%	\$ 64,213,491
2001-02	3	8	3	2	91	19,492	1.5%	\$ 77,177,902
2002-03	2	5	3	1	93	19,832	1.5%	\$ 87,233,744
2003-04	4	2	2	0	93	21,578	1.6%	\$ 94,286,726
2004-05	2	4	0	0	97	24,784	1.8%	\$ 110,888,050
2005-06	1	2	3	0	96	28,733	2.1%	\$ 132,089,910
2006-07	7	1	4	0	93	29,170	2.0%	\$ 144,299,621
2007-08	2	7	2	0	98	30,892	2.1%	\$ 169,871,326
2008-09	0	2	3	0	97	34,694	2.3%	\$ 191,751,412
2009-10	3	0	1	0	96	38,449	2.6%	\$ 187,726,898
2010-11	1	3	0	0	99	41,314	2.8%	\$ 200,058,046
2011-12	9	1	0	0	100	44,829	3.0%	\$ 228,291,552
2012-13	24	8	1	1	107	48,795	3.3%	\$ 255,396,318
2013-14	26	22	3	0	127	53,655	3.6%	\$ 304,459,644
2014-15	14	24	3	0	148	64,186	4.2%	\$ 366,455,982
	217	187	40	11				

Data Source: Highlights of the North Carolina Public School Budget, February 2015, Information Analysis, Division of School Business, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

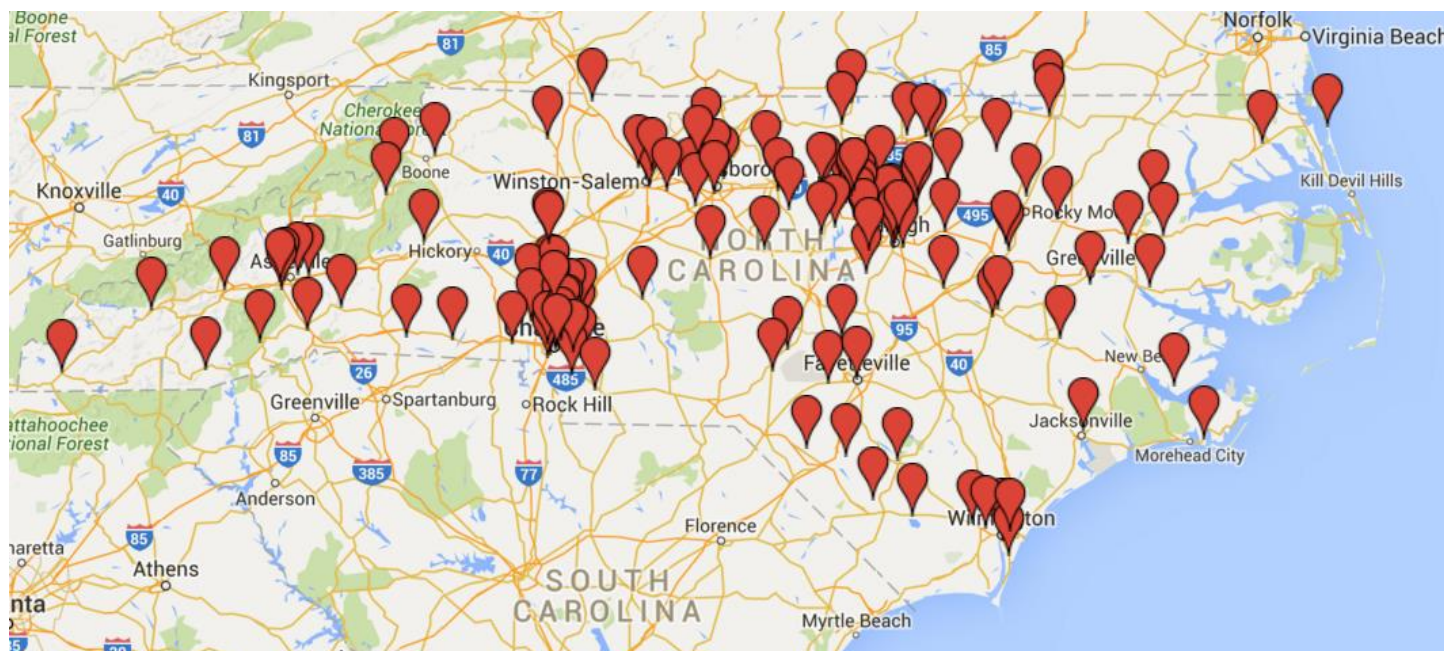
Many, but not all of the dollars directed to charter schools would have been directed to school districts (traditional public schools), as most charter school students were formerly enrolled in traditional public schools. In cases where former private or home schoolers enroll in charters, however, the increase in charter enrollment is simply increasing the overall number of students in the State's system of public schools who need to be funded; in theory, this funding would not be *redirected* from traditional schools, but would simply be *added* by the General Assembly to the appropriation that had already been sized to fund the State's total public school student population. To the extent that the General Assembly does not grow appropriations each year in direct proportion to growth in overall student population, home and private schoolers coming into the public system to attend charter schools do decrease funding going to school districts.

Current School Year (2015-16) Specific Fiscal Impact

For the current academic year over half of the 115 local school districts in North Carolina have charter schools located within them. Even though a charter may be located in a specific school district, charter schools are not bound to only serve students from the

district in which they are located. Many charter schools serve students from multiple school districts, in which cases the charter schools' impact extends across school district boundaries. The specific fiscal impact of a given charter school on its "home district" and those around it will vary depending upon the number of students from the various districts who attend the charter school.

2015-16 Currently Operating Charter Schools



Data Source: Google Fusion Maps

158 charter schools, located in 62 school districts and 59 counties, are currently open and serving 81,951 students (first month ADM for 2015-2016). The projected enrollment for 2015-2016 was 86,643 students. Statewide, charter schools are at 95% of projected enrollment.

Prior to 2013, the State Board of Education was required by legislation to solicit impact statements from LEAs when new applications for charters were being considered or when existing charter schools wanted to grow beyond what was normally allowed within the statute. The General Assembly removed the requirement that LEAs submit impact statements, but the State Board has continued to consider comments from school districts in situations involving charter school enrollment growth.

Other Considerations: Other Fiscal and Non-Fiscal Impact

Discussion of the impact of charter schools upon the overall system of public schools typically focuses on the amount of operational (also known as "current expense") funding shifting from each school district to charter school(s) in or near the district; however, there are a number of other impacts, though perhaps harder to document, that are worth

considering. For example, another potential fiscal impact in urban school districts facing overcrowding is that they might have less immediate needs to expand facilities if significant numbers of students choose charter schools instead.

Charter schools may also have non-fiscal impacts on the system of public schools. Where charters exist, they typically do create alternative education options for parents to consider for their students (note: the true availability of these alternative options may be limited for some families in cases where a charter does not provide the same level of transportation or school nutrition services as the local school district). Presence of “competitive” charters in a district may create greater urgency and/or focus for all the schools – traditional and charters – to experiment in order to find what will work best to improve student outcomes for their particular student populations. Similarly, the presence of charter school options for parents may lead parents to engage more deeply with the public schools – traditional or charter – in order to better understand the options available for students.

BEST PRACTICES RESULTING FROM CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Charter Schools Performance Framework

In order for a school to be judged successful or “high quality,” the State Board has established³ that the school must meet or exceed standards for performance in the academic, operational, and financial realms, as measured in through the Charter Schools Performance Framework.

The initial Charter School Performance Framework was released on June 1, 2015. This Framework included three performance area evaluations that incorporated both legal requirements and accepted best practices in accordance with National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA).

Out of the 146 charter schools in operation in 2014-15, nine charter schools or 6.2% were fully compliant on all three areas (note: 21 charter schools that did not have academic data because they were in the first year of operation were not included in the analysis). Those nine charter schools serve as a model of academic, financial and operational performance for other operating charter schools. The nine schools are as follows:

The Hawbridge School (Alamance County)

Francine Delaney New School for Children (Asheville City)

³ State Board of Education Strategic Plan Measure 2.4.3: “Percentage of charter schools meeting or exceeding academic, financial, and operational goals as measured by the Office of Charter School’s performance framework.”

Willow Oak Montessori (Chatham County)
 Neuse Charter School (Johnston County)
 The Arts Based School (Forsyth County)
 Voyager Academy (Durham County)
 The Central Park for Children (Durham County)
 Socrates Academy (Mecklenburg County)
 Community School of Davidson (Mecklenburg County)

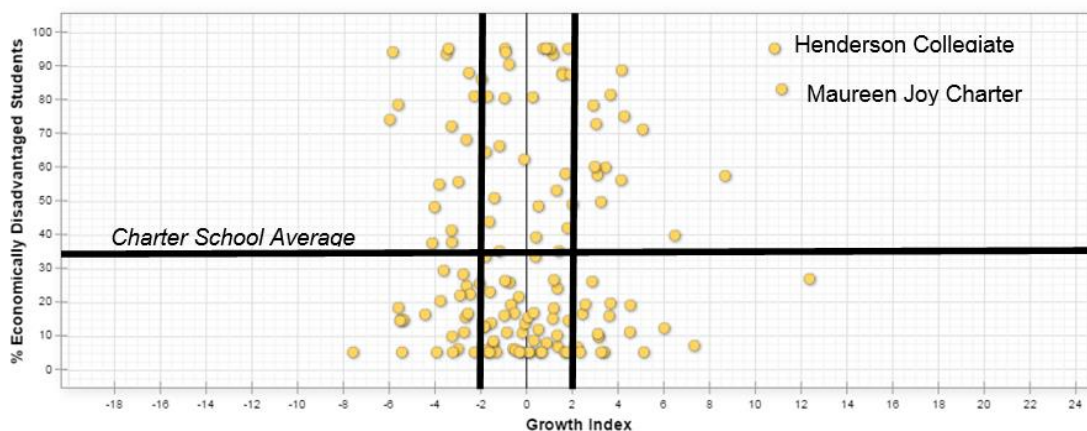
Many charter schools missed full academic compliance in 2014-15 due to not being comparable to the local administrative agency in one or more student subgroup areas or did not have sufficient student academic growth. Forty-seven or 32.1% of charter schools were compliant in both finance and operations. Out of the 146 schools, fifteen schools were non-compliant in finance.

Based on feedback regarding the initial version of the Performance Framework, the Framework is currently being revised to provide a more simplified evaluation that focuses only on compliance with objective standards based on State and Federal law, State Board of Education Policy, or the signed Charter Agreement.

High Academic Growth with Disadvantaged Student Population

Another measure of excellence for charter (and traditional) schools is achieving high academic growth, as measured by the Education Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) with a student population that is economically disadvantaged. As illustrated below, eight charter schools were able to exceed growth expectations with student populations that were 70% or greater Economically Disadvantaged, and two of these schools were able to achieve extremely high growth.

2014-15 Charter Schools Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students and Growth



Based on this 2014-15 data, Henderson Collegiate Charter School was one of two NC schools recognized by the National Title I Association as a “Title I Distinguished Schools.” This designation is given to schools that the Title I Association believes will serve as great models for other schools that are seeking to improve their academic program and increase the achievement of all students. This is the first time that a charter school in NC has received this type of recognition.

OTHER INFORMATION

NCDPI Support for Charter Schools

As discussed in the Academic Performance section above, the State Board of Education has set a goal of increasing the number of charter schools that meet or exceed all operational, financial, and academic performance expectations. To this end, NCDPI, through the Office of Charter Schools (OCS) and other areas of the agency, provides a broad range of services to charter schools to help ensure that they understand how to meet all State and federal laws and policies and the promises they have made in their charter applications/agreements. In addition, though charter schools are not required to use the curricular, instructional, and technological resources provided for all public schools, NCDPI works to ensure that charter school leadership is fully informed about State-provide resources that could provide charters with cost effective, high quality materials and infrastructure if they so choose. Finally, NCDPI responds almost daily to requests from charter school leaders and their contractors, charter school advocates, parents, and public officials for information about charter schools and/or technical assistance.

Highlights of the services that NCDPI provides to the NC charter schools include the following:

- Office of Charter Schools (OCS)
 - Conducts Application Process training for prospective applicants for charters
 - Hosts Planning Year training for new charter school boards and school leaders on topics including governance, state and federal law, SBE policies, and the Charter Agreement.
 - Delivers periodic refresher training for charter school board members and school leaders
 - Maintains efficient, user-friendly online Application, Renewal, and Grade Enrollment & Expansion Request systems
 - Maintains a website with OCS- and NCDPI-created resources, and links to externally created resources (such as those provided by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers)

- Provides daily technical assistance through phone and email communication with school staff, parents, charter advocacy organization representatives, vendors, et al
- Processes individual schools' amendments to their charters (some amendments can be approved by OCS, while many require approval through State Board deliberations)
- Staffs the State Board of Education's Education Innovation and Charter Schools Committee (to present charter school policy items and amendments that schools have requested) and the Charter Schools Advisory Board
- Meets with groups of charter school leaders periodically to hear their concerns and identified needs and discuss with these leaders how OCS can better serve them
- Hosts annual charter school leadership institute where charter leaders can receive technical assistance from a variety of NCDPI experts and share with other charter school leaders
- Educator Effectiveness and Curriculum & Instruction Divisions
 - Provide a range of training, technical assistance, and both face-to-face and online professional development opportunities, including the following:
 - Inviting all charter schools to participate in Summer Institutes and other statewide and regional professional development gatherings supported with Race to the Top funding between 2010-11 and 2015-16
 - Inviting all charter schools to participate in the Principal READY meetings (professional development specifically for principals and assistant principals) across the State
 - Inviting all charter schools to participate in regionally-delivered professional development regarding standards and curriculum (i.e., instructional strategies)
 - Encouraging all charter schools to use the online professional development modules available through Home Base (and providing training for how to do so)
 - Offering webinars on a variety of topics (such as how to use Home Base tools and the Statewide Educator Evaluation System) specifically targeted to charter school administrators
- K-3 Literacy Division
 - Provides charter schools statewide with a dedicated consultant to conduct professional development for teachers and principals regarding literacy instruction and the State's formative, diagnostic assessment system (required for use as part of the Excellent Schools Act/Read to Achieve legislation)

- Trains master literacy trainers (including charter schools representatives) across the state to provide ongoing support regionally to schools regarding early literacy instruction
- Exceptional Children's Division
 - Assists charter schools in accessing federal funds for students with special learning needs
 - Provides a range of technical assistance services to help charter schools meet the needs of children with special learning needs
 - Invites all charter schools to annual conference designed to provide professional development across a broad range of topics related to serving students with special learning needs
- Finance and School Business Divisions
 - Advocate for adequate funding for State Public School Fund, which is the source of funds for both traditional and charter school funds (which rise and fall in concert, as the State funds for each charter are based on the funding to the district in which the charter is located)
 - Allot State funds to charter schools
 - Provide efficient, user-friendly online Charter School Average Daily Membership (CSADM) system for schools to enter their projected enrollments
 - Monitor and reports on charter school expenditures (in response to oversight by the General Assembly)
 - Process (with OCS) schools' requests for school enrollment and grade expansion
- Information Technology Area and Digital Teaching & Learning Division

Enable charter schools to benefit from State economies of scale for technology solutions set up to serve every school – traditional and charter – Statewide

 - Provide all charter schools with cloud-based student accounting system with many school management features, including scheduling and producing customized student transcripts
 - Provide all charter schools with opportunity to use cloud-based professional development and instructional/classroom management tools (through Home Base)
- Child Nutrition Division
 - Assists charter schools in accessing federal funding to support free and reduced price lunch program
- Transportation Division

- Provides free inspections and detailed reports regarding safety of charter school buses
- Provides free replacement of school buses at retirement threshold when school has purchased original bus

Update on Legislation Affecting Charter Schools

The General Assembly, in its 2015 Long Session, passed S.L. 20015-248 (House Bill 334), which made a number of changes to charter schools statute. The changes are as follows:

Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB)

- Adds non-voting member to the Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) that is a member of the SBE
- Prohibits the voting member of the CSAB appointed by the SBE from being a member of the SBE and requires that member to be a charter school advocate
- Requires the Chair of the CSAB or the Chair's designee to advocate for the recommendations of the CSAB at SBE meetings upon the request of the SBE

Office of Charter Schools

- Codifies the Office of Charter Schools in the General Statutes and places it administratively in the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) but subject to the supervision, direction, and control of the SBE
- Requires the Executive Director of the Office of Charter Schools to be appointed by the SBE and to serve at the pleasure of the SBE
- Authorizes various powers and duties of the Office of Charter Schools including serving as staff to the CSAB, providing technical assistance and guidance to charter schools and non-profits seeking to operate charter schools, and assisting in the coordination of services between charter schools and DPI

Charter School Enrollment

- Increases the minimum number of students served in charter schools from 65 students to 80 students
- Clarifies that charter school applicants may conduct a weighted admissions lottery if it is supported by the SBE-approved mission of the school

Charter Applications and Renewals

- Requires the SBE and CSAB to provide timely notice to charter school applicants and allow five business days to correct technical issues or incomplete information
- Requires the CSAB to allow charter school applicants ability to address the CSAB when the school's application is reviewed
- Requires the SBE to authorize a 10 year charter for renewals unless specific criteria are not met
- Requires that charter schools requesting substantial enrollment expansions beyond 20% or the charter application or more than one grade level must meet specific criteria for approval
- Directs the SBE to adopt a policy by January 15, 2016 for how to determine whether a charter school is in "substantial compliance"

Charter School Policy

- Updates specific requirements for charter schools adopting conflict of interest and nepotism policies
- Permits members of a non-profit board of directors operating a charter school to reside outside of NC as long as the majority of members reside within NC
- Clarifies that the non-profit board of directors operating a charter school may establish fees for extra-curricular activities consistent with those charged by the LEA in which 40% of students enrolled in the charter school reside

Charter School Closure Reserve

- Clarifies that only charter schools participating in the NC Retirement System must have the \$50,000 in reserve funds required to be maintained for charter school closure

Charter School Replication

- Directs the SBE, based upon the recommendation of the CSAB, to amend the process for replication of high quality charter schools established in SBE Policy TCS-U-016 to authorize consideration for fast track replication of a nonprofit corporation who agrees to contract with an education management organization or charter management organization currently operating in NC for at least one year

Update on Virtual Charter School Pilot

Section 8.35.(a-g) of S.L. 2014-100 directed State Board of Education to implement a virtual charter school pilot program that would first serve students in August 2015. This pilot program would last for four years and is limited to only two virtual charter schools.

In August 2015, the two virtual charter schools opened after successfully completing the Ready to Open process. The two schools, NC Connections Academy and NC Virtual Academy, provided an update on their opening and initial operations at the September 2, 2015 SBE meeting (see materials at <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/Attachment.aspx?S=10399&AID=44087&MID=2033> and <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/Attachment.aspx?S=10399&AID=44094&MID=2033>) and will continue to report regularly to the State Board throughout the course of the pilot.

Update on Drop-Out Prevention and Recovery Pilot

S.L. 2014-104 established a two-year pilot program for one alternative charter school that would focus on dropout prevention and recovery.

Commonwealth High School in Charlotte applied for and was approved for the pilot program, and opened in the 2014-15 school year. The State Board will be providing a legislatively required report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by March 15, 2016 regarding Commonwealth's pilot experience.

Update on 2015 Charter Renewals

Twenty charter schools completed the renewal process in 2015. The Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) developed and implemented a framework for determining recommendations for the number of year for each renewed charter terms. This framework incorporated legislation from 2014 guiding charter renewals.

The State Board of Education approved all of the CSAB's 2015 renewal recommendations. Of the twenty renewals, fifteen received a ten-year term, two received a seven-year term, two received a three-year term, and one received a one-year term. Six of the renewed schools had stipulations attached to the charter terms that included requirements for academic, financial, and operational performance.

Update on 2015 Charter Applications

Twenty-eight charter applicants submitted applications for the 2017-18 school year through NCDPI's automated system in September 2015. The Office of Charter Schools reviewed the applications, and the applicant groups with incomplete applications were given five days to submit or clarify incomplete items. All thirteen applicants that were given the five days to submit missing information did so; each of the 28 applications was therefore deemed complete and moved forward for substantive review. The applications are currently being reviewed by the Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB), external reviewers, and the Office of Charter Schools. Each applicant group will be

interviewed by the CSAB between November 2015 and April 2016 as part of the formal review process. The CSAB will then make recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE) for applications to move into the Planning Year/Ready to Open process. The SBE will make final decisions regarding approval by August 15 (per statute).

Trends in the 2015 applications include the following:

- Mecklenburg County and surrounding counties continued to be the area with the most applicants.
 - Mecklenburg County (6 applicants)
 - Gaston County (3 applicants)
 - Union County (1 applicant)
 - Iredell County (1 applicant)
- Urban areas generally have also continued to be the focus of the preponderance of charter applications
 - Forsyth County (3 applicants)
 - Guilford County (2 applicants)
 - Wake County (4 applicants)
- Increasingly, applicant non-profit boards are partnering with Education Management Organizations (EMOs); there are 12 such applicants in 2015.

Fast-Track Replication

State Board of Education Policy TCS-U-016 approved in April 2015 provided requirements for charter applicants seeking to replicate existing charter schools. Interested applicants submitted a letter of intent that was screened for compliance with the requirements listed in the policy, and applications for approved applicants were due on July 1. No Fast-Track applications were received for the 2015 application round.

The 2016 Fast-Track Replication process will begin with pre-qualifications in April 2016 and an application deadline of July 1, 2016.

Accelerated Planning Year

On November 6, 2014, the State Board of Education revised its existing policy TCS-U-013 that mandated a planning year for all new charter schools. The State Board identified key characteristics of a new applicant that could lead to the acceleration of the planning year. Those key indicators are:

- Clear and compelling need for accelerated planning
- Partnership with two or four-year institution of higher education in NC

- Verified absence of a charter school in the proposed county of location
- Agreement to participate in the planning year while the charter application is being reviewed without any guarantee of a charter award.

The Northeast Academy of Aerospace and Advanced Technologies located in Pasquotank County met the statutory criteria for acceleration and completed the Ready to Open process in the fall of the year in which the school's application was approved, opening in August 2015 with 122 students.



FORBES' 30 UNDER 30 SELECTS 8 TEACH FOR AMERICA ALUMNI

Forbes has named eight Teach For America alums to their prestigious 30 Under 30 list. Read more about this year's All-Stars, who are leveraging their leadership to innovatively address education's most systemic problems.

By
[The TFA Editorial Team](#)

Tuesday, January 5, 2016

ABOVE: Milagros Barsallo (Colorado '09) was among this year's 30 Under 30 honorees.

Forbes named eight Teach For America alumni to their prestigious [30 Under 30](#) list on Monday.

The members of the list, which *Forbes* describes as "founders and funders, brand builders and do-gooders [who] aren't waiting for a proper bump up the career ladder," include Milagros Barsallo (Colorado '09), Libby Fischer (Mississippi Delta '10), Eric Lavin (Arkansas '09), Mary Jo Madda (Houston '09), Gabriel Nakashima (Hawai'i '09), Aneesh Sohoni (Twin Cities '09), Alexandria Lafci (D.C. Region '11), and Shruti Shah (Baltimore '11).

Lafci was selected for the Social Entrepreneurs category and Shah for the Retail and E-Commerce Category, while the other six were chosen for the Education category. These impressive alumni join 22 other former TFA corps members who have received this honor from *Forbes* over the past several years.

Read more about this year's All-Stars, who are leveraging their leadership and innovation to address education's most systemic problems. They have truly embraced our [core value](#) of transformational change and are exemplars of impactful action.

Education Category



Milagros Barsallo (Colorado '09)
Co-Founder, [RISE Colorado](#)

Barsallo, 28, has earned praise from none other than President Obama for her work, most recently

with [RISE Colorado](#), a nonprofit focused on closing the opportunity gap for low-income and minority students. The Cornell (B.A.) and University of Colorado at Denver (M.A.) alumna has engaged and empowered families in Colorado, especially through workshops that get parents involved in policy work and other forms of community organizing. Barsallo also shared our [2014 Social Innovation Award](#) (with Veronica Palmer, L.A. '06).



Libby Fischer (Mississippi Delta '10)
CEO, [Whetstone Education](#)

Organizing teacher development data and feedback has always been an arduous task, but Fischer, 27, has helped facilitate the challenge. A summa cum laude graduate of Saint Louis University, she currently serves as CEO at [Whetstone](#), an online instructional coaching platform that streamlines quantitative and qualitative teacher trends in order for teachers to align resources with their growth needs.



Eric Lavin (Arkansas '09)
Founding Manager, Aspen Ventures

At Aspen Ventures, Lavin, 28, connects social entrepreneurs with resources at [The Aspen Institute](#), an international nonprofit dedicated to educational and policy studies. Some of these clients include

the Braddock Scholars Program and the DC Urban Innovation Lab. The Tulane University alum came to Aspen after co-founding Whetstone Education just two years ago.



Mary Jo Madda (Houston '09)

Senior Editor, [EdSurge](#)

As the senior editor of [EdSurge](#), an education technology news website, Madda, 29, has seen monthly views rise from 150,000 to almost 350,000. The Northwestern (B.A.) and Harvard University (M.Ed.) graduate also leads the Digital Innovation in Learning Awards, co-hosts EdSurge's "On Air" podcast, and completed the "Fifty States" project, which published articles from educators in all 50 states and U.S. territories.



Gabriel Nakashima (Hawai'i '09)

Founder, [Charter Substitute Teacher Network](#)

Nakashima, 28, has created a system that effectively vets high-quality substitute teachers—most of whom are placed in high-need classrooms in communities nationwide—through meticulous sourcing and analytics. Nakashima, a graduate of the University of San Diego (B.A.), and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (M.Ed.), has seen the [Charter Substitute Teacher Network](#) grow into a 320-employee operation.

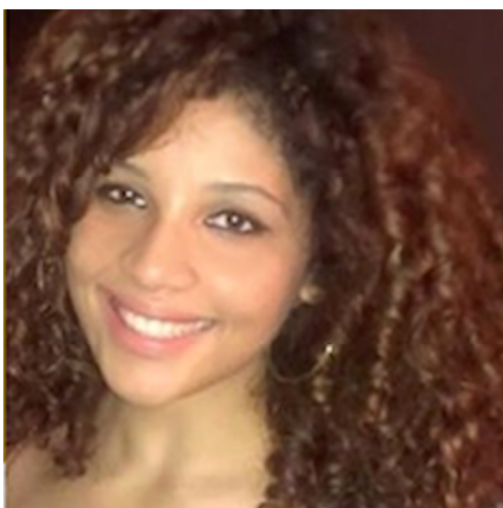


Aneesh Sohoni (Twin Cities '09)

Project Director, [The New Teacher Project](#)

Sohoni, 27, has dedicated himself to effecting change in the classroom—first as Chief of Staff for Teachers and Leaders in the Tennessee Department of Education, and most recently, with [TNTP](#), where as a Project Director of Performance Management, he supports Boston Public Schools and Duval County (which includes Jacksonville) in ensuring students are college and career-ready through standards. Sohoni holds degrees from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities (B.A.) and Vanderbilt University (M.P.P.).

Social Entrepreneurs Category



Alexandria Lafci (D.C. Region '11)

Co-Founder, [New Story](#)

[New Story](#) has been an integral part toward building sustainable communities in developing countries by crowdfunding new houses for homeless families. As co-founder, she has overseen the company raise

enough money to erect 151 homes in places as far as Haiti and El Salvador. Lafci, 26, is a graduate of Boston University (B.A.) and George Mason University (M.Ed.).

Retail & E-Commerce Category



Shruti Shah (Baltimore '11)

Co-Founder and COO, [Move Loot](#)

Shah, 27, has been at the forefront of changing the way millennials deal with their unwanted goods, especially in scenarios like a moving to a new residence. [Move Loot](#) appraises the customer's items (namely furniture), picks them up, and sells them on the market for the customer. A graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (B.A.) and Johns Hopkins University (M.S.Ed.), she also worked at the NewSchools Venture Fund before her time at Move Loot.

North Carolina's Teach For America

Teach For America develops diverse, innovative educators and leaders who partner with their communities to ensure that all children have access to an excellent education.

We recruit top graduates and professionals into North Carolina's highest-need classrooms, and support them to make a lasting impact for their students.



Our North Carolina network of teachers and alumni is:

Over
1,800
individuals strong

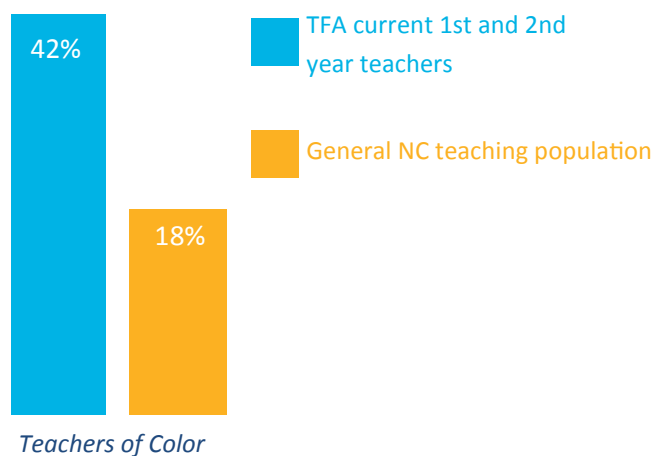
More than
30
school and system
leaders

Impacting
60,000
students across
North Carolina

The most effective
source of early career
teachers according to
the North Carolina
Teacher Portal Study

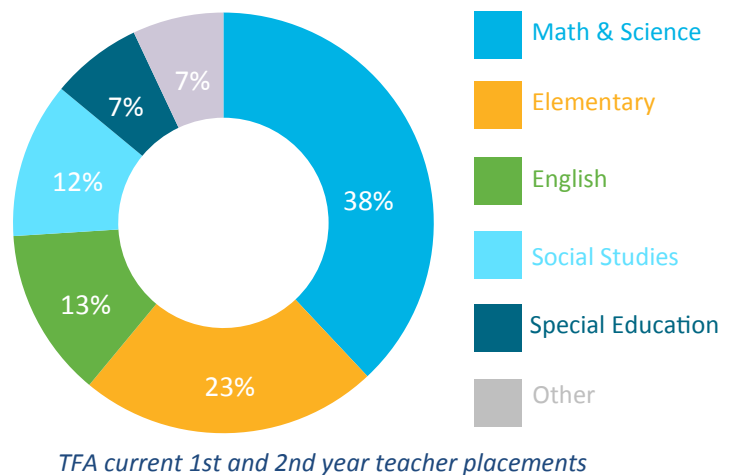
REPRESENTING NORTH CAROLINA'S DIVERSITY

TFA teachers are twice as diverse as North Carolina's general teaching population.*



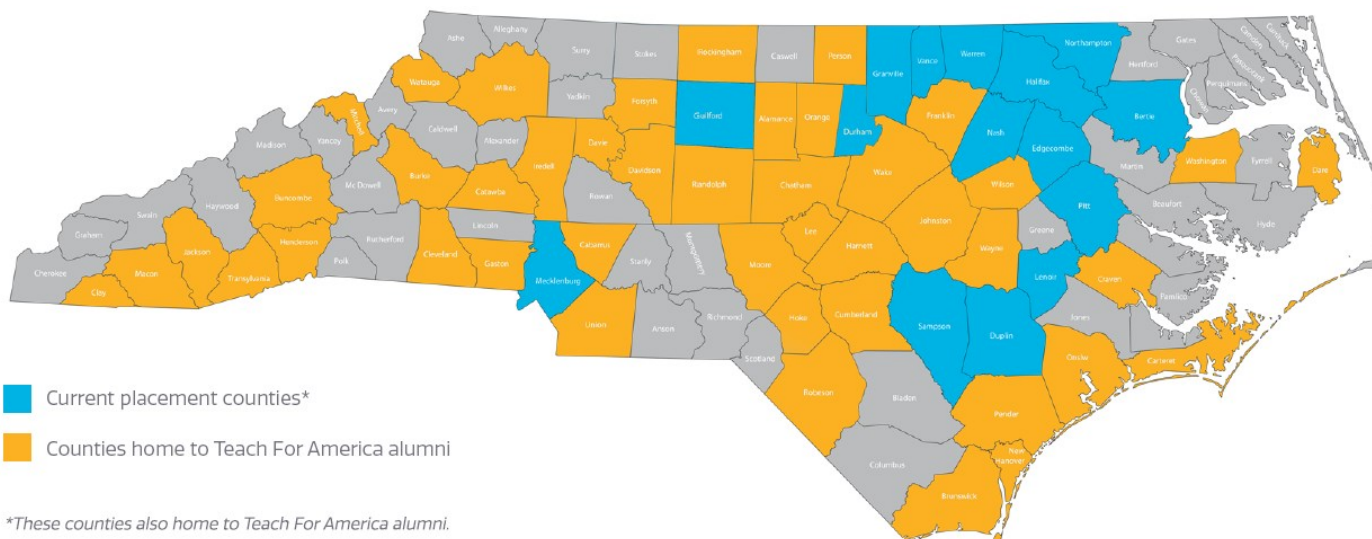
MEETING URGENT NEEDS

TFA teachers work in the highest-poverty schools and the hardest-to-staff subject areas.



North Carolina's Teacher Corps

RECRUITING AND TRAINING LEADERS FOR NORTH CAROLINA CLASSROOMS



Dorian Edwards, 2014 Eastern North Carolina Corps Member

Hometown: Kinston, NC
College: Livingstone College
Major: Business
Position: Math Teacher
School: Rochelle Middle School

"We can try to do what we can in other communities, and it's great, but for me and the ties that I have here and all of the people that have helped me, I thought it was only fitting to say thanks by coming back and serving my community." - Dorian Edwards

Dorian is teaching and coaching football back at his hometown school, Rochelle Middle in Kinston, NC.

Kayleigh Reyes, 2015 North Carolina Piedmont Triad Corps Member

Hometown: Wilmington, NC
College: UNC—Chapel Hill
Major: Linguistics
Position: Social Studies Teacher
School: Mendenhall Middle School

"Growing up I was incredibly aware of gaps in the education system and too often saw students like myself overlooked or underestimated. I got into teaching because I wanted to make a difference for students like myself who came from complicated backgrounds. I teach because I want to see students grow and expand their world view." - Kayleigh Reyes



Sania Rahim, 2015 Charlotte Corps Member

Hometown: Beckley, WV
College: Duke University
Major: Evolutionary Anthropology
Position: Biology Teacher
School: Garinger High School

"Although I spent my entire childhood in southern West Virginia, I never quite felt comfortable calling it home. After spending the last 4 years in Durham, I just knew that I wasn't ready to leave North Carolina yet. From top-notch universities, gorgeous beaches and mountains, and the warm, friendly people - I knew I had finally found a place that I felt comfortable calling home." - Sania Rahim

TFA - CHARLOTTE BOOTH

impact



Charlotte enjoys a vibrant, balanced economy that encompasses many sectors and companies that range in size from multinational to microbusiness. That variety helps make Charlotte's economy one of the healthiest and strongest in the nation. Diverse business interests challenge the city from problems that can result from slowdowns and other economic challenges.

Charlotte, NC
impact

A large metropolitan city with a "small town" feel, we take our opportunities and our challenges seriously. Charlotte welcomes the dreamers and the doers, the change makers and the pace setters. We focus on problems and explore the possibilities. Charlotte is a city where you can make your mark.

work

CHARLOTTE, NC

From a modern skyline in Uptown, to streetcar-era neighborhoods with vintage factories and grand estates, from suburbs of bungalows with cool spots and shops, to neighborhoods that reflect reinvestment and commitment to economic equity, whether you want to live in a high rise with a view of the skyline or in a cozy home with a tree-lined horizon, Charlotte has a community that will fit the way you want to live.

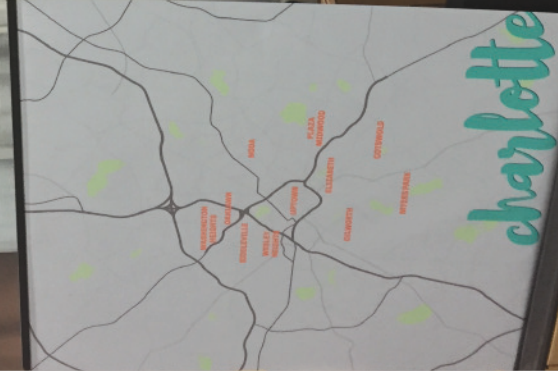
live

CHARLOTTE, NC

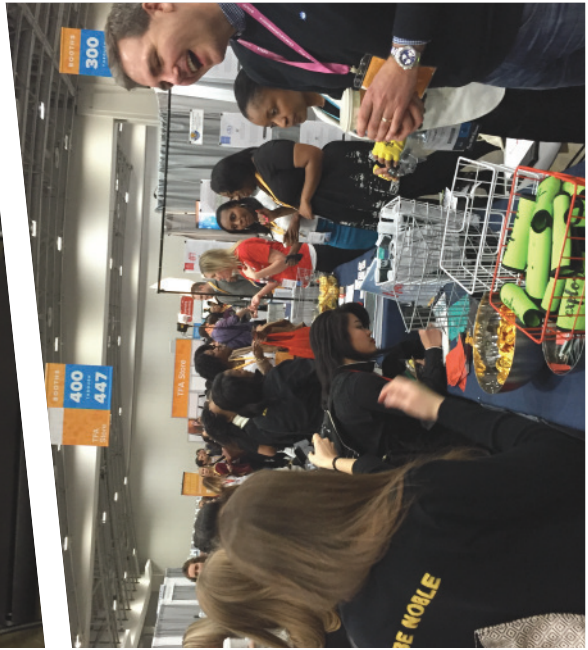
play

Thinking that there's nothing to do in Charlotte? Take another look at this new south city. If you're interested in sights, sounds, shopping, sports, riding the rapids or roller coasters, if you're a foodie, a techie or outdoorsy, Charlotte's got something for everyone. A few hours from the beach or the mountains, Charlotte's either got it or isn't far from it.

CHARLOTTE, NC



TEACHFORAMERICA



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It was nice to meet you. Are you ready for the next step?

[View this email in your browser](#)

impact

Hi there, remember us from Charlotte, NC?

Hint: It's that awesome place you entered to win a trip to at the TFA Summit.

We picked two winners and are planning their Charlotte trips as we speak! Unfortunately that means the rest of you didn't win. I know, I know, it's a sad day. Trust me, we are bummed too and will be playing Taylor Swift for the rest of the day thinking of you.

On the bright side, we absolutely loved meeting you and want to get to know you. Rather than overload you with all the millions of reasons why Charlotte is awesome, we want you to choose your own Charlotte adventure. So pick how serious you are about Charlotte and let's go from there:

I'm in Love: Let's chat about Charlotte

Testing the Waters: I'll explore on my own

We Need to Breakup: It's not you, it's me



Want to breakup? We hate to see you go, but understand you need space.

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

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Our mailing address is:

Teach For America Charlotte
5855 Executive Center Dr.
Suite 200
Charlotte, NC 28212

[Add us to your address book](#)

Choose Your Adventure



Check out Charlotte

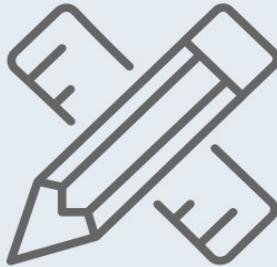
SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE QUEEN CITY

CHARLOTTE AGENDA

Teach For America - Charlotte © 2016

Choose Your Adventure

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR:



EDUCATION ENTHUSIAST

Your time in the classroom has sparked a passion that you want to continue exploring. Whether through teaching in the classroom or school leadership, you are looking to stay directly involved in education!

[This sounds like me >>](#)



OUT OF THE BOX

You're a champion for kids outside of the classroom. As an education advocate, you're ready to dive into a strong business economy in a new city. Whether it be in the buzzing non-profit scene, a multinational company or bringing your own vision to reality, you are

POWERED BY **strikingly**



LOCATION FOCUSED

You're ready for a new place to explore and looking for a city that you can vibe with and really thrive in. You may or may not know the meaning of life, but whatever it is, you're looking for the perfect place to call home. *What is perfect? Do I want perfect? What is life?*

[This sounds like me >>](#)

Good Morning Aspiring School Leaders!

On behalf of the TFA Charlotte Region Corps member and Alumni Leadership Continuum team we would like to invite you to our *School Leadership Summit* to learn about leadership opportunities in Charlotte and our Charlotte community scheduled for February 19-20, 2016. We are excited to reach out to you because you either expressed an interest in the Charlotte region and/or School Leadership. In Charlotte, we currently support close to 175 first and second year teachers and place at 40 schools where we are impacting over 13,000 students! We have ten Principals in Charlotte and three Assistant Principals who are leading school efforts to continue closing any gaps for our children. We hope that you will accept our invitation to visit Charlotte and learn even more about our schools and the community which we love dearly!

We are elated to share that we will be able to pay for your travel and hotel expenses for this two-day experience. Please review the agenda below and complete the survey below by January 8, 2016, so we can send follow-up logistical information. We look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, please email me or feel free to call 704-649-9233. Thanks in advance.

If you would like more information or plan to attend, please complete this survey by January 8, 2016.

[TFA - Charlotte School Leadership Summit RSVP](#)

Vision for Know, Grow and Lead in Charlotte Leadership Summit

- Learn about state of education in Charlotte
- Meet other alumni in school leadership and district level positions
- Meet other school leaders
- Learn about the pool process and different leadership pipeline programs

Friday, February 19th

Time	Event	Description/ Purpose	Location	Notes
8:00- 8:30 Breakfast	Breakfast		Hotel	
8:30 - 9:00 AM	Welcome/ Registration			
9:00 – 9:30 AM	Travel to Schools			
9:30 - 12:00 PM	School Visit; West Charlotte High School	Visit Corps Members and Alumni	West Charlotte High School	Read about West Charlotte High School's rich

		classrooms.		history and be prepared to discuss throughout two days. See link here .
12:00 PM - 12:30 PM	<i>Travel/ Break</i>	<i>Travel/ Break</i>	<i>Travel/Break</i>	
12:30- 1:30 PM	Lunch		Hotel	
1:30- 2:30 PM	Panel Discussion: What is the state of education in Charlotte both past and present?	Retired school leaders to share about their experiences and discuss the current state of education in Charlotte.	Hotel Breakout Rooms	
2:30-3:00 PM	Travel to Levine Museum of the New South			Read about the Levine Museum of the New South's rich historical context and be prepared to discuss throughout the day. See link here .
3:00-4:00 PM	Levine Museum Tour			
4:00– 4:30 PM	Travel back to hotel			
4:00 - 6:00 PM	Free Time	Walk through down town to explore sites and/or relax and unwind		

6:00 - 6:30 PM	Travel to dinner			
6:30- 8:00 PM	Dinner downtown: Meet and Greet with Principals and various school leaders			

Saturday, February 20th

Saturday,				
Time	Event	Description/ Purpose	Location	Notes
8:00- 10:00 AM	Breakfast	On your own	Varied	
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Brunch Panel	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Information Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline Programs • Principal/AP Pool Process 	Hotel	
12:00- 12:30 PM	Closing	Next steps and Acknowledgements		
12:30 – 3:00 PM	Opportunity Fair	Time for corps members and alumni to network with other alumni and learn about their organizations	Imaginon	



139 Harristown Rd • Glen Rock, NJ 07452
phone (201) 818-1288 • fax (201) 818-4694
www.charitynavigator.org

December 1, 2013

Elisa Villanueva Beard
Teach For America
315 West 36th Street
7th Floor
New York, NY 10018

Dear Elisa Villanueva Beard:

On behalf of Charity Navigator, I wish to congratulate Teach For America on achieving our coveted 4-star rating for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.

As the nonprofit sector continues to grow at an unprecedented pace, savvy donors are demanding more accountability, transparency and quantifiable results from the charities they choose to support with their hard-earned dollars. In this competitive philanthropic marketplace, Charity Navigator, America's premier charity evaluator, highlights the fine work of efficient, ethical and open charities. Our goal in all of this is to provide donors with essential information needed to give them greater confidence in the charitable choices they make.

Based on the most recent information available, we have issued a new rating for your organization. We are proud to announce Teach For America has earned our twelfth consecutive 4-star rating. Receiving four out of a possible four stars indicates that your organization adheres to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chance of unethical activities and consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way. Less than 1% of the charities we rate have received at least 12 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Teach For America outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Teach For America from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust.

Forbes, *Business Week*, and *Kiplinger's Financial Magazine*, among others, have profiled and celebrated our unique method of applying data-driven analysis to the charitable sector. We evaluate ten times more charities than our nearest competitor and currently attract more visitors to our website than all other charity rating groups combined, thus making us the leading charity evaluator in America. Our data shows that users of our site gave more than they planned to before viewing our findings, and in fact, it is estimated that last year Charity Navigator influenced approximately \$10 billion in charitable gifts.

We believe our service will enhance your organization's fundraising and public relations efforts. Our favorable review of Teach For America's fiscal health and commitment to accountability & transparency will be visible on our website as of December 1st.

We wish you continued success in your charitable endeavors.

Sincerely,

Ken Berger
President & Chief Executive Officer