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List of Acronyms Used in this Report

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA)
Commissioner of Education (COE)
Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP)
Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
Distinguished Level of Achievement (DLA)
End-of-course (EOC)
English Language Learner (ELL)
Foundation High School Program (FHSP)
Foundation High School Plan with Endorsement (FHSP-E)
Independent School District (ISD)
Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP)
Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)
Recommended High School Program (RHSP)
Request for Proposals (RFP)
Senate Bill (SB)
Senate Bill 2 (SB 2)
State Board of Education (SBOE)
State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)
Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR)
Texas Education Agency (TEA)
Texas Education Code (TEC)
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
Executive Summary

Background

Charter schools were created to help improve the nation’s public school system and offer parents another public school option to better meet their child’s specific needs. The first law allowing the establishment of charter schools was enacted in Minnesota in 1991, and the first charter school began serving students in 1992 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Over the 2005–06 to 2016–17 period, the number of charter schools operating across the country nearly doubled from approximately 3,700 to approximately 7,000, with steady annual growth over that time period. Over that same time period, the number of students enrolled at charter schools nearly tripled from approximately one million to just over three million (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2018). There is also some evidence suggesting that the types of charter schools that open, and that persist, have produced improvements in the aggregate quality of charter schools (Baude et al., 2014).

In 1995, the 74th Texas Legislature passed state laws to authorize the creation of charter schools in Texas. The goal of this legislation was to increase innovation in teaching methods, improve student learning, increase options for students and families within the public school system, and create professional opportunities which attract new teachers to the public school system. In addition, this legislation was intended to establish a new form of accountability for public schools (Texas Education Code (TEC) § 12.001). Four types of charter schools, or subchapters, were established in TEC to outline eligibility requirements and regulations for the award and operation of charter.

Charter schools authorized by the State Board of Education (SBOE) or the commissioner of education (COE) are categorized as open-enrollment charter schools, which are operated by public or non-public institutions of higher education, tax-exempt organizations classified as 501(c)(3)s under the Internal Revenue Code, and governmental entities (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapters D and E, 2016). Open-enrollment charter school campuses operated under the charter schools authorized by the SBOE or COE may enroll students from any approved school district as listed in the application for their charter or subsequent amendment(s), cannot charge tuition but may charge fees, and must provide transportation to the same extent as school districts (TEC § 12.101, 2016). TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C establishes statutory authority among traditional school districts to authorize in-district charter campuses (referred to as ISD-Authorized Charters in this report). Within this authority, the board of trustees of a school district may grant a charter campus to: 1) parents and teachers upon lawful petition and public vote; 2) educational service provider(s); or 3) a campus/program that is designated to operate as though the campus was an open-enrollment charter school (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C §§ 12.051-12.065, 2016). The authorization process is determined at the local school board level; however, all participating school districts must adopt policies that outline authorization, evaluation, renewal, and revocation criteria and procedures (TEC § 12.052, 2016). Another type of charter, the home-rule district charter is allowable under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter B (2016); however, no home-rule district charter schools are currently in operation.

In 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature, through the passage of Senate Bill 2 (SB 2), added § 12.1013 to the TEC. This legislation required a report on the performance of open-enrollment charter school campuses by authorizer, with results compared to matched traditional public school campuses. SB 2 also modified the process by which open-enrollment charter schools are authorized (i.e., from the State Board of Education [SBOE] to the commissioner of education [COE]).
For this report based on 2016–17 data, comparisons were made between the following types of campuses: 1) charter school campuses authorized by the State Board of Education (SBOE-authorized charter school campuses); 2) charter school campuses authorized by independent school districts (ISD-authorized charter school campuses); 3) charter school campuses authorized by the commissioner of education (COE-authorized charter school campuses); and 4) matched traditional public school campuses for each of the three authorizer-specific charter school campus groups. When reviewing comparative data contained in this report, it is important to note that the intent of the methodology was to select traditional public school campuses that have similar student enrollment profiles in order to generate comparative descriptive statistics for several measures of campus performance. The intent of matching was not to produce differences in the relative effectiveness of charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses.

Overview of Texas Charter School Campuses

In 2016–17, a total of 748 charter school campuses were in operation, serving almost 311,000 students. This represents approximately nine percent of the public schools in Texas and six percent of the students enrolled in Texas public schools. The vast majority of the charter school campuses operating in 2016–17 (659, or 88%) were SBOE-authorized charter school campuses—of which 49 charter school campuses were residential treatment facilities (approximately 7%). A total of 73 charter school campuses (approximately 10%) were ISD-authorized charter school campuses.

A total of 610 open-enrollment charter school campuses operating under charter schools authorized by the SBOE, 73 charter school campuses authorized by ISDs, and 15 charter school campuses operating under charter schools authorized by the commissioner of education are included in the aggregate performance analyses presented in this report.1

Key Findings for SBOE- and ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses

Aggregate campus-level performance results were explored for several different outcomes, including: 1) attrition rates; 2) percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Reading and Mathematics exams (for Grades 3–8) and the English I, English II, and Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) exams (for Grades 9–12); 2) Texas Education Agency (TEA) performance index scores (Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness indices) under 2017 Accountability;3) 4) annual dropout rates (for Grades 7–8 and Grades 9–12); and 5) Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rates for the class of 2016.

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1 Residential treatment facilities operated at charter school campuses (n=50) and traditional public school campuses (n=68), Disciplinary Alternative Education Program campuses (n=159), and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program campuses (n=142) operated at traditional public school campuses are not included in the analytic dataset for the aggregate performance analyses.

2 Approaches Grade Level refers to the passing standard on the STAAR exam.

3 Scores range from 0 to 100 for each of the four TEA performance indices.
Attrition Rates

The attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return to the same campus in 2017–18 in which they were enrolled in 2016–17. This calculation, however, required several adjustments to account for the grade-level pathways available to students at each campus.4

Higher attrition rates were observed at SBOE- (24% vs. 21%) and ISD-authorized (27% vs. 20%) charter school campuses when compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. Further, overall attrition rate differences were driven by attrition rates at the high school level and middle school level, which were higher for both SBOE- (31% vs. 17% and 19% vs. 16%, respectively) and ISD-authorized (33% vs. 16% and 19% vs. 15%, respectively) charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. Attrition rates for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses were comparable for elementary schools.

STAAR-Reading and Mathematics, English I and II EOC, and Algebra I EOC Results

The percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams was calculated for Grade 3–8 students. Thus, only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses. The Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 English I, English II, and Algebra I EOC exams were used for high school-level analyses.

SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a higher percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading exams (75% vs. 72%) and a comparable percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exams (76% for both) compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. ISD-authorized charter school campuses had a comparable percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading exam (70% vs. 71%) compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. However, ISD-authorized charter school campuses had a lower percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Mathematics exam (71% vs. 76%) compared to their matched traditional public school campuses.

Differences in the percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading and Mathematics exams were observed when data were disaggregated by school level. Higher passing rates were found at the high school level on the English I and II and Algebra I EOC exams for ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to matched traditional campuses (79% vs. 58% for English I, 79% vs. 61% for English II, and 81% vs. 76% for Algebra I). A higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard at the elementary school level on the STAAR-Reading exam (74% vs. 70%), but a comparable percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard at the elementary school level on the STAAR-Mathematics exam (75% vs. 76%) compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. A substantially lower percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard at the elementary school level on the STAAR-Reading (61% vs. 70%) and the STAAR-Mathematics (66% vs. 77%) exam when compared to students at matched traditional public school campuses.

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4 Refer to Appendix A for additional detail on attrition rate calculations.
A lower percentage achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard at the high school level on the English I and II and Algebra I EOC exams (58% vs. 62% for English I, 61% vs. 63% for English II, and 72% vs. 77% for Algebra I).

**TEA Performance Index Scores**

The 2017 Accountability Ratings system used a performance index framework to combine a broad range of indicators into a comprehensive measure of campus and district performance. Index scores from the 2017 Accountability Ratings were used in the analyses described below. Results are presented for each of the four performance indices:

1) **Student Achievement** (which measures campus and district performance based on satisfactory student achievement combined over all subjects for all students);
2) **Student Progress** (which measures student progress by subject and reports results by student demographics: race/ethnicity, English Language Learners (ELLs), and special education);
3) **Closing Performance Gaps** (which emphasizes the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students and the two lowest performing racial/ethnic student groups); and
4) **Postsecondary Readiness** (which emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school and the importance of earning a high school diploma that provides students with the foundation necessary for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military).  

Differences in TEA performance index scores for the Student Achievement, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness were observed between SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses (evaluated under standard accountability provisions) and their matched comparison campuses. Compared to matched traditional public school campuses, both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses had higher performance index scores for Student Achievement (75 vs. 72 for both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses) and Closing Performance Gaps (44 vs. 41 for both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses). For Postsecondary Readiness, both SBOE- (52 vs. 45) and ISD-authorized (51 vs. 46) charter school campuses had higher index scores than matched traditional public school campuses. Compared to matched traditional public school campuses on the Student Progress performance index, both SBOE- (39 vs. 40) and ISD-authorized (38 vs. 39) charter school campuses had comparable scores.

Composite TEA index scores, which include all index scores available for a particular campus, for charter school campuses, evaluated under standard accountability provisions, were higher for both SBOE-authorized (52 vs. 50) and ISD-authorized (52 vs. 50) charter school campuses than those of their matched comparison campuses.

SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under alternative education accountability (AEA) provisions posted higher scores than their matched traditional public school campuses on the following two indices: Student Achievement (56 vs. 49); and Closing Performance Gaps (31 vs. 27). SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted lower scores than their matched traditional public school campuses for the following two indices: Student Progress (23 vs. 25); and Postsecondary Readiness (87 vs. 90).

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In contrast, ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted lower scores than their matched traditional public school campuses on three of the four indices: Student Achievement (47 vs. 50); Student Progress (24 vs. 28); and Closing Performance Gaps (24 vs. 26). ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted higher Postsecondary Readiness index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (86 vs. 82).

Composite TEA index scores for charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were higher for both SBOE-authorized (49 vs. 46) and ISD-authorized (45 vs. 44) charter school campuses than those of their matched comparison campuses.

Annual Dropout Rates

Dropout rates for Grades 7–8 were small and not materially different between SBOE- (0.2% vs. 0.4%) and ISD-authorized (0.3% vs. 0.3%) charter middle school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. While differences were not observed for Grades 7–8 (middle schools), annual high school dropout rates (Grades 9–12) were consistently higher for both SBOE-authorized (5.5% vs. 2.0%) and ISD-authorized (6.4% vs. 1.9%) charter school campuses than their matched traditional public school campuses.

Graduation Rates

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate calculated for state accountability was used for this project. The Grade 9 four-year graduation rate for the class of 2016 is defined as the percentage of the class of students who began Grade 9 in Texas public schools in 2012–13 that graduated by August 31, 2016.

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate was lower for both SBOE-authorized (87% vs. 92%) and ISD-authorized (79% vs. 91%) charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses.

Key Findings for COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses

Aggregate campus-level performance results were explored for several different outcomes, including: 1) attrition rates (i.e., the percentage of students enrolled at a campus in 2016–17 who did not return to that same campus in 2017–18); 2) percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading and Mathematics exams (for Grades 3–8); and 3) TEA performance index scores (Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness indices). Due to the relatively small number of COE-authorized charter school campuses included in the analysis, findings related to COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses should be interpreted with caution.

Attrition Rates

Attrition rates at COE-authorized charter school campuses were approximately seven percentage points higher than they were at matched traditional public school campuses (29% vs. 22%).

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6 There is a one-year lag for the publication of graduation rates in TAPR.
STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Results

COE-authorized charter school campuses had a substantially higher percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading (78% vs. 68%) exams and a comparable percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics (72% for both) exams compared to their matched traditional public school campuses.

TEA Performance Index Scores

COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses have comparable scores on the Student Achievement and Student Progress indices (72 vs. 73 and 37 vs. 37, respectively). For the Closing Performance Gaps (40 vs. 43) and Postsecondary Success (36 vs. 51) indices, COE-authorized charter school campuses had lower index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses.

Study Limitations

The findings presented in this report do not suggest that one type of public school campus consistently outperforms another type. When interpreting aggregate performance outcomes, it is important to recognize that differences remain in the composition of the student populations at charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. Because the analyses were conducted at the campus level, and no statistical controls were used to account for the differences in the characteristics of students enrolled at charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, these differences in student characteristics may have had an impact on the aggregate outcome results for the various charter school campus types and their matched traditional public school campuses. In addition, differences in prior academic performance and other unobservable characteristics not available through publicly available data may have also had an impact on performance results at charter school campuses and students enrolled at traditional public school campuses. Furthermore, the number of campuses available for some of the analyses reported in this report, particularly those involving campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, may be fairly small. Analyses involving small numbers of campuses warrant cautious interpretation. In addition, due to the small number of COE-authorized charter school campuses available for analysis, and the relatively short time they have been operation when compared to their traditional public school campus peers, analyses included in Chapter 5 of this report should also be interpreted with caution.
Section 1: Introduction

National Charter School Overview

Charter schools are unique public schools that are allowed the freedom to be more innovative than traditional public schools, while being held accountable for advancing student achievement. The charter school movement dates back to 1991, when the first law allowing the establishment of charter schools was enacted in Minnesota. The first charter school was operational in 1992. Currently, charter school legislation has been passed in 43 of the 50 states (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). The number of charter schools operating in the United States has nearly doubled from 3,693 in 2005–06 to approximately 7,000 in 2016–17.

The growth in the number of students enrolled in charter schools over the 2005–06 to 2016–17 period exceeds the growth in the number of charter schools in operation over that same time period. Charter school student enrollment nearly tripled from approximately one million students in 2005–06 to just over three million students in 2016–17 (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1. Number of Students Enrolled in Charter Schools in the United States, 1999–2000 to 2016–17


In conjunction with the growth in the number of charter schools and the number of students enrolled in them, there is some evidence suggesting that the types of charter schools that open, and that persist, have evolved, producing improvements in the aggregate quality of charter schools. For instance, in Texas, there is evidence of selective closure of chronically low-performing charter schools, persistence of high-performing charter management organizations, and improvements in the quality of charter schools that survive. Findings suggest that these processes raised the aggregate effectiveness of charter schools compared to traditional public schools (Baude et al., 2014).
Texas Charter School Legislation

In 1995, as part of a major reform of the Texas Education System, the 74th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 1 which granted the State Board of Education (SBOE) the authority to authorize up to 20 open-enrollment charter schools. The goal of this legislation was to increase innovation in teaching methods, improve student learning, increase options for students and families within the Texas public school system, and create professional opportunities which attract new teachers to the public school system. Since 1995, additional legislation was passed that allowed for the expansion of open-enrollment charter schools, eventually capping the number of open-enrollment charter schools that could be awarded at 215 in 2001. However, this cap did not limit the number of charter school campuses that could be operated by a charter holder. By the 2003–04 school year, there were 274 open-enrollment charter school campuses in operation serving 60,748 students (Texas Center for Educational Research, 2005). The cap of 215 remained in place until 2013 when it was increased to 225 through the passage of SB 2 by the 83rd Texas Legislature. SB 2 also allowed for the gradual expansion of open-enrollment charter schools by allowing for an additional 15 charter schools to be authorized each year through 2019 when the cap will reach 305 charter schools (Texas Education Code (TEC) § 12.101 (b-1)-(b-2), 2016). Since the 2003–04 school year, the number of charter school campuses had risen to 748 in 2016–17 serving 310,610 students in Texas within 180 charter schools.

Purpose of the Report

The passage of SB 2 in 2013 also added § 12.1013 (a)-(d) to the TEC, which required a report on the performance of open-enrollment charter school campuses by authorizer, with results compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. SB 2 also modified the process by which open-enrollment charter schools are authorized (TEC § 12.101 (a)). The responsibility for authorizing charter schools was transferred from the State Board of Education (SBOE) to the commissioner of education (COE). Generation 20 charter schools, the most recent cohort of open-enrollment charter schools that could be included in this report, were authorized by the COE to begin operation in 2016–17. Therefore during the 2016–17 school year, there were charter schools in operation that were authorized by three different entities:

1. The State Board of Education (Generations 1–17),
2. The commissioner of education (Generations 18–20), and
3. Independent school districts.

TEA issued a request for proposals (RFP) from interested vendors to conduct this study of performance comparisons between charter school campuses by authorizer and their matched traditional public school campuses. Gibson Consulting Group (Gibson) was awarded the contract and officially began work on the study in February 2018.

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7 See HB 6 passed by the 77th Texas Legislature.
8 For additional information, please see Tables 2.1 and 2.3 of this report.
9 TEC § 12.101 (b-0) (2016) requires that the commissioner of education notify the SBOE for each charter school the commissioner proposes to grant. The SBOE may, by majority, vote against the granting of that charter.
10 Historically, charter schools authorized by SBOE or the commissioner of education have been authorized in sequential cohorts referred to as Generations. Generation 18 was the first group approved by the commissioner of education, and analysis of results from Generations 18–20 are included in this report.
Research Methods

Charter school campuses authorized by SBOE or the COE are categorized as open-enrollment charter school campuses, which are operated by institutions of higher education, tax-exempt organizations classified as 501(c)(3)s under the Internal Revenue Code, and governmental entities. Open-enrollment charter school campuses authorized by the SBOE or COE may enroll students from any school district, cannot charge tuition but may charge fees, and must provide transportation to the same extent as school districts (TEC § 12.101, 2016). Texas school boards may authorize charter school campuses within their district (TEC Subchapter C §§ 12.051-12.065, 2016). For these independent school district-authorized (ISD-authorized) charters, the charter specifies the campus’s educational program, its governing structure, and the conditions under which the charter may be revoked (TEC § 12.052, 2016).

For this report based on 2016–17 data, comparisons were made between the following types of campuses: 1) charter school campuses authorized by the State Board of Education (SBOE-authorized open-enrollment charter school campuses); 2) charter school campuses authorized by independent school districts (ISD-authorized charter school campuses); 3) charter school campuses authorized by the commissioner of education (COE-authorized open-enrollment charter school campuses); and 4) matched traditional public school campuses for each of the three authorizer-specific charter school campus groups. The methodological approach employed in this report mirrors the approach used in the 2014–15 Texas Charter Authorizer Accountability Report (Shields et al., 2016).

There are a number of important differences between open-enrollment charter school campuses and traditional public school campuses. For example, open-enrollment charter school campuses are allowed to employ teachers who do not hold a state teaching certificate, they are allowed to set their own teacher salary schedules, and they may establish their own class size/student-to-teacher ratios. Importantly, open-enrollment charter school campuses can enroll students from any school district, which may result in self-selection of students to charter school campuses across the state. Open-enrollment charter school campuses are exempt from disciplinary provisions of Chapter 37 of TEC (2016) and develop their own disciplinary policies and procedures. However, charter school campuses are evaluated under the same academic accountability standards as traditional public schools. In addition, charter school campuses are required to implement the same Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as traditional public schools, and students enrolled at charter school campuses are required to take the same State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exams as students enrolled at traditional public school campuses. Because of these similarities between charter school campuses and traditional public school campuses, the performance metrics selected for this study, and reported in this section, are appropriate for comparative purposes.

Data Sources

This study relied upon several publicly available data sources, as well as student-level data provided by TEA. The primary source of data used to calculate campus-level performance metrics was the 2016–17 Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) data downloaded from the TEA website. TAPR data were also used to match charter school campuses to comparable traditional public school campuses and to create campus weights used in the calculations. Accountability Rating System data for 2016–17 were used to determine if charter school campuses and traditional public school campuses were evaluated under standard or alternative education accountability (AEA) provisions, and to obtain campus-level accountability data. The evaluation team also used student-level data from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) from 2016–17 and 2017–18 to determine student attrition.
School Matching Procedures

TEC § 12.1013(b)(4) (2016) required a comparison of charter school campuses by authorizer type with matched traditional campuses. TEA requested that the vendor use a statistical matching procedure to identify traditional public school campuses that resemble charter school campuses based on publicly available school characteristics, such as the racial/ethnic composition of the campus and the percentage of students who participate in programs that serve the needs of certain student populations such as students in need of special education services. Importantly, the intent of the matching procedure was to select traditional public school campuses that have similar student enrollment profiles in order to generate comparative descriptive statistics for several measures of campus performance. The intent of matching was not to produce conclusions about the relative effectiveness of charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses, and the results presented in this report should not be used as indications of effectiveness.

The evaluation team utilized propensity score matching (PSM) techniques to identify “demographic peer” traditional public school campuses for each charter school campus.\(^\text{11}\) Prior year assessment scores and other performance measures were not used in the propensity score algorithm. The following campus-level variables used for matching:\(^\text{12}\)

- Primary campus enrollment type (i.e., elementary, middle, or secondary)\(^\text{13}\)
- Student enrollment count
- Percentage of historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities (Hispanic and African American students)
- Percentage of economically disadvantaged students
- Percentage of students receiving special education services
- Average years of experience of teachers
- Campus mobility rate
- Percentage of students who are classified as English language learners (ELLs)
- Percentage of students identified as at-risk of dropping out of school\(^\text{14}\)

\(^\text{11}\) In the most basic sense, a propensity score is simply the probability of some occurrence (here, whether a campus was constituted as an open-enrollment charter school), conditioned on a vector of covariates (here, campus-level demographic characteristics). A high propensity score means that a given campus’s (either an open-enrollment charter or a traditional public school) characteristics were very similar to the typical charter school, while a low propensity score means that a given campus’s characteristics were very dissimilar to the typical charter school. The research team used a regression with a logit link function to estimate the propensity score.

\(^\text{12}\) The evaluation team imposed two constraints on the selection of campuses with this procedure. First, traditional public school campus matches with a propensity score within 0.2 standard deviations of each charter school campus were selected. Second, a constraint on the maximum number of traditional campuses (N=10) matched to each charter school was imposed based on discussions with TEA staff to limit the number of matches to a sufficient amount.

\(^\text{13}\) Because public school campuses, and more commonly charter school campuses, may serve grades that cross traditional grade spans (K–5 for elementary, 6–8 for middle school, and 9–12 for high school), campuses were categorized as “primarily” elementary, middle, or high schools based on the largest percentage of students in a particular grade span. These categorizations represent the 2016–17 grade spans; however, it should be noted that new charter school campuses regularly add additional grades as they mature.

\(^\text{14}\) As per TEC 29.081(d) (2016), a "student at risk of dropping out of school" includes each student who is under 26 years of age and who: (1) was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years; (2) if the student is in grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12, did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester; (3) did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, and...
Residential Treatment Facility campuses, Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) campuses, and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) campuses (both charter school and traditional school campuses) were excluded from the matching process and from the analytic dataset that was used to report aggregate campus academic performance metrics for charter school and matched traditional public school campuses found in Sections 3, 4, and 5 of this report. DAEP and JJAEP exclusions were made because these campuses are very different from traditional campuses and their outcomes are attributed back to the student’s home campus. Residential Treatment Facility campuses were excluded because of lack of comparability in student populations and instructional settings between the various residential treatment facilities. Refer to Appendix A for further details regarding the matching procedures used in this report.

Attrition Analysis

As mentioned earlier in this section, student-level PEIMS data for 2016–17 and 2017–18 were used to calculate campus-level attrition rates for 2016–17. The attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return in 2017–18 to the same campus in which they were enrolled in 2016–17. This calculation, however, required several adjustments to account for the grade-level pathways available to students at each campus. That is, in order for a student to have attrited from a campus, that campus had to have offered a grade level for which that student could have advanced between 2016–17 and 2017–18. For example, most middle school students enrolled in Grade 8 in 2016–17 did not advance to Grade 9 at the same campus because Grade 9 was not offered at their 2016–17 campus in 2017–18. Similarly, Grade 12 students in 2016–17 who graduated left the public school system and should not be classified as having attrited. In addition to accounting for grade-level pathways, several other adjustments were made to account for limitations that would have erroneously reduced a campus’s

who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level equal to at least 110 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on that instrument; (4) if the student is in prekindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2, or 3, did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year; (5) is pregnant or is a parent; (6) has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with Section 37.006 during the preceding or current school year; (7) has been expelled in accordance with Section 37.007 during the preceding or current school year; (8) is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release; (9) was previously reported through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to have dropped out of school; (10) is a student of limited English proficiency, as defined by Section 29.052; (11) is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has, during the current school year, been referred to the department by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official; (12) is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 11302, and its subsequent amendments; or (13) resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district, including a detention facility, substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house, or foster group home.

The state defines an attrition rate, for the purposes of estimating a dropout rate, as the percentage of change in fall enrollment between two grades across multiple years (Grade 7 through Grade 12, and Grade 9 through Grade 12). Because the analysis for this report requires the aggregation of data across schools with different grade configurations, the methodology to calculate an attrition rate for this report is calculated differently to ensure the validity of the aggregations and subsequent comparisons.
attrition rate. To adjust for these limitations, the following exclusion criteria for students enrolled in Texas public schools in 2016–17 were imposed:

1) Students enrolled at a campus and in a grade in 2016–17 that was the highest grade offered at the campus according to 2017–18 enrollment records were removed from the attrition calculation;

2) Students in Grade 12 in 2016–17 were excluded from the attrition calculation;

3) Students who attended school for less than two hours in a day in 2016–17 or 2017–18 and therefore were not considered to be in membership for purposes of calculating average daily attendance for funding purposes were excluded from the attrition calculation; and

4) Students whose campus in 2016–17 was not active in 2017–18 were excluded from the attrition calculation.

Outcome Measures

In addition to the attrition rate described above, results for additional aggregate performance metrics presented in this report are detailed below.

STAAR–Reading and Mathematics Results and End-of-Course Exam Results

The percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for Grade 3–8 students. Thus, only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses.

The percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 English I and English II end-of-course (EOC) exams were calculated for students in Grades 9–12.

The percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) exams were calculated for students in middle and high school campuses.

TEA Performance Index Scores

The 2017 Accountability Rating system used a performance index framework to combine a broad range of indicators into a comprehensive measure of campus and district performance. Index scores from the

16 Despite the research team’s best efforts to minimize the impact of systematic sources of student attrition due to structural factors at a given campus (e.g., students enrolled in the highest grade offered at a campus), students flagged as having attrited may have left for a variety of reasons unrelated to conditions at a given campus. For instance, students may have been homeschooled or may have moved out of state (for full definitions and documentation guidelines for leaver reasons reported into PEIMS, see code table C162 found in Section 8.4 of the 2017–18 Texas Education Data Standards (TEDS) https://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/TEDS/1718/PEIMS_Data_Standards/). Furthermore, some campuses (such as open-enrollment prekindergarten centers without neighborhood-based attendance zones) enroll students whose zoned home campus is different than the campus in which they are enrolled in a given year, while other campuses physically relocate, producing an attrition rate that is abnormally high. These considerations should be taken into account when evaluating a given school’s attrition rate.

17 Retained students at the same campus were classified as having not attrited.

18 Please refer to the 2016–17 student attendance accounting handbook for details on membership: https://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=25769817607

19 Approaches Grade Level refers to the passing standard on the STAAR exam.
2017 Accountability Ratings were used in the analyses described below. Results are presented for each of the four performance indices: 1) Student Achievement; 2) Student Progress; 3) Closing Performance Gaps; and 4) Postsecondary Readiness. For additional detail related to TEA performance index scores, please refer to the 2017 Accountability Manual.20

1) **Index 1 Student Achievement**: measures campus and district performance based on satisfactory student achievement combined over all subjects for all students.

2) **Index 2 Student Progress**: measures student progress and provides an opportunity for districts and campuses to receive credit for improving student performance independent of the student’s pass/fail status on STAAR.

3) **Index 3 Closing Performance Gaps**: emphasizes advanced academic achievement of the economically disadvantaged student group and the lowest performing racial/ethnic student groups at each district and campus.

4) **Index 4 Postsecondary Readiness**: emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school and the importance of earning a high school diploma that prepares students for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military.21

For campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions, Index 4 is measured by a combination of performance at the STAAR postsecondary readiness standard (achieved the Meets Grade Level Standard), four- or five-year longitudinal high school graduation rates (or the Grade 9-12 annual dropout rate, if no graduation rate is available), the four-year graduation plan rate (e.g. Recommended High School Program/Distinguished Achievement Plan (RHSP/DAP), or percent RHSP/DAP and Foundation High School Plan with Endorsement (FHSP-E) or Distinguished Level of Achievement (FHSP-DLA) graduates) and the percentage of annual graduates who are considered college- and career-ready. For campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, Index 4 is measured by STAAR performance at the Meets Grade Level standard and four-, five-, or six-year longitudinal rates for graduates, continuing students, and General Educational Development (GED) recipients. If a graduation rate is not available, the 9–12 annual dropout rate is used.

For this analysis, campuses that did not receive a performance index score due to ineligibility were excluded only for the performance index for which they were ineligible.22 Performance index scores range from 0 to 100, so the analyses in this report are presented on this scale as well. See Appendix A regarding the 2016–17 performance index targets.

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20 [https://tea.texas.gov/2017accountabilitymanual.aspx](https://tea.texas.gov/2017accountabilitymanual.aspx)
21 Index 4 for elementary and middle schools is based only on STAAR results since these campuses do not have data on graduation rates, graduation diploma plans or postsecondary indicators.
22 For accountability rating determination, if a campus did not have data to calculate its score for a performance index, the campus was not required to meet performance standards for that index in order to receive an accountability rating. This campus would receive an accountability rating based on all required indices for which it has performance data. For example, a campus may not receive an index score because it had too few assessment results.
Composite TEA Performance Index

In order to rate the aggregate performance of campuses as required by TEC § 12.1013(d)(2) (2016), a composite index score for each campus included in the aggregate campus academic performance analyses was calculated. For the purposes of this analysis, the composite score is the sum of all TEA performance index scores calculated for a particular campus divided by the total number of index scores assigned to the campus. For example, if a campus had index scores for Index 1, 2 and 3, the sum of those scores would be divided by three to arrive at the composite index score for that campus.

Annual Dropout Rate

The annual dropout rate is the percentage of students in a specified grade range who drop out of school during one school year. An annual dropout rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who drop out during a single school year by the cumulative number of students who enrolled during the same year. TEA uses the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition (TEC § 39.051, 2004). Under this definition, a dropout is defined as a student who was enrolled in public school in Grades 7–8 for middle schools and Grades 9–12 for high schools during 2015–16 but did not return to public school in the fall of 2016–17, was not expelled, did not graduate, did not receive a high school equivalency certificate, did not continue school outside the public school system, did not begin college, or did not die. The dropout rate was defined as an annual rate, as opposed to a longitudinal rate. Annual dropout data from 2015–16 were used for 2017 state accountability.

Longitudinal Graduation Rate

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2016 calculated for state accountability was used for this project. The class of 2016 Grade 9 four-year graduation rate was calculated by dividing the number of students who began Grade 9 in 2012–13 and graduated by August 31, 2016, by the total number of graduates, continuers, GED certificate recipients, and dropouts in the class. For schools evaluated under AEA standards, the graduation rate is modified to credit campuses for graduates, continuers, and GED certificate recipients. Longitudinal graduation data from the class of 2016 were used for 2017 state accountability.

Weighting Procedures

When providing aggregate comparative campus-level results for the performance outcomes (described in this section) by SBOE-authorized, ISD-authorized, and COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, the average campus-level index score for a particular category of campuses (e.g., SBOE-authorized charter school campuses) is weighted by the number of students at each campus in that subgroup that contributed to the calculations of a particular outcome measure. For TEA performance index scores, the fall 2016 campus enrollment data are used for weighting purposes. Weighting for all other metrics is based on the number of students included in the

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23 It is important to note that this composite score was calculated to meet the legislative report requirement and was not used by TEA for accountability purposes.
24 Campus weights were also assigned based on the number of enrolled students at that campus as a proxy for the number of students included in the campus performance index ratings and the composite score.
26 There is a one-year lag for the publication of graduation rates in TAPR.
27 Refer to Appendix A for details on exceptions and attribution of records used in the calculation of annual dropout rates and longitudinal graduation rates.
calculation for a specific metric (e.g., percent of students meeting state passing standard on the STAAR-Mathematics assessment is based on the number of students who took the STAAR-Mathematics assessment).

The weighting procedure accounts for the size of the charter school campuses and matched comparison group campuses included in each analysis subgroup which prevents small schools with few students from receiving the same weight in calculations as very large campuses. With campus-level weights, then, a campus with 50 enrolled students who took the STAAR-Reading exam would contribute less to the calculation of the percentage of students meeting state standards on the STAAR–Reading exam than would a campus with 500 enrolled students.

**Study Limitations**

As previously noted, it is critical to understand that the intent of the matching procedure used for this study was to select traditional public school campuses that had similar student enrollment profiles in order to generate comparative descriptive statistics for several measures of campus performance, and not to produce inferences about the relative effectiveness of charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses.28

While the evaluation team used all available public data and went through extensive efforts to find traditional public school campuses with similar student populations to match to SBOE-, ISD-, and COE-authorized charter school campuses, it is important to keep in mind when interpreting aggregate performance outcomes that differences remain in the composition of the student populations. Because no statistical controls were used to account for the differences in the composition of student populations enrolled at charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses, these differences in student characteristics, as well as prior academic performance, may have had an impact on the aggregate outcome results for the various charter school campus types and their matched traditional public school campuses. While these analyses are possible, they are beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, the number of campuses available for some of the analyses reported in this report, particularly those involving campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, may be fairly small. Analyses involving small numbers of campuses warrant cautious interpretation.

Another study limitation is related to the comparison of results for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. Because of the relatively small number of COE-authorized charter school campuses and the relatively short period of time many of the campuses have been operational, the COE-authorized charter school campus comparisons should be interpreted with caution. More in-depth analyses of COE-authorized charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses may be feasible when a larger group of these charter school campuses are authorized and operational, and have had more years to mature.

Lastly, when comparing outcomes for charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, another important factor to keep in mind is the charter revocation process that is

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28 For this project, because matching is performed at the school-level, the counterfactual condition (i.e., a traditional campus that resembles a charter school) is an unrealizable condition even after accounting for campus-level differences: a traditional campus cannot be a charter school, nor can a charter school be a traditional public school. It is possible, however, to assess the impact of charter schools on student outcomes using student-level records, but it is beyond the scope of this project. For instance, with student-level records, in Rapaport et al. (2014), students who attended a charter school were compared against matched students who did not attend a charter school, but who attended a school that was a feeder to new charter schools.
Currently in place and that had been historically in place for charter school campuses in Texas. In 2013, SB 2 (83rd Texas Legislature) amended TEC § 12.115, requiring the commissioner of education revoke a charter if a charter school has failed to meet academic or financial accountability performance ratings for the three preceding school years. Prior to this change, the closure of charter schools relied on more permissive statutory language, and as a result, very few charters were closed. Statutory language was also added at that same time regarding the mandatory expiration of charter contracts for poor performance (See TEC § 12.1141). Since these changes were enacted, 26 charter schools have been closed under these new provisions (including those that were surrendered in lieu of revocation). This is a salient point because the closing of poor-performing charter school campuses, and the subsequent removal of these campuses from the comparative analyses presented in this report, impacts aggregate results for charter school campuses particularly if results are compared over time.

**Organization of the Report**

Following this introduction, Section 2 provides a summary of Texas public schools and the demographic and program participation characteristics of students enrolled at the three different types of charter school campuses we analyze in this report as well as traditional public school campuses. Section 3 of this report provides aggregate campus-level outcomes for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. Section 4 further disaggregates aggregate campus-level outcomes for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses by school level (elementary, middle, and high school). In both Sections 3 and 4, TEA performance index results are further disaggregated for charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions and under AEA provisions. Section 5 provides aggregate campus-level outcomes for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. Again, caution should be exercised when reviewing the exploratory data in Section 5 because only 15 COE-authorized charter school campuses were in operation in 2016–17 and the length of time they have been operational is not comparable to their matched traditional public schools.

Appendix A includes additional methodological detail related to the procedures used to match SBOE-, ISD-, and COE-authorized charter school campuses with traditional public school campuses as well as details related to performance metrics, including attrition calculation exclusions, exceptions and attributions of records for dropout and graduation rates, and TEA performance targets for 2016–17. Appendix B includes additional graphs related to the comparison of STAAR-Writing (Grades 4 and 7), STAAR Science (Grades 5 and 8), and STAAR-Social Studies (Grade 8) results for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. Appendix C includes aggregate campus-level performance results for each charter school campus included in the analysis and its matched traditional public school campuses, for each of the metrics explored in this report (i.e., attrition rate, STAAR-Mathematics and Reading passing rates, TEA performance index scores, annual dropout rates, longitudinal graduation rates, EOC exam passing rates for English I, English II, and Algebra I).

Appendix D, available on the TEA website, includes a list of charter school campuses and propensity scores for each of their matched traditional public school campuses.29

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29https://tea.texas.gov/Reports_and_Data/Program_Evaluations/Charter_Schools/Program_Evaluation_Texas_Charter_Schools/
Section 2: Description of Charter School Campuses and Traditional Public Schools

This section of the report summarizes the distribution of Texas public schools by school type and level. As Table 2.1 shows, out of the 8,757 Texas public school campuses operational in Texas during 2016–17, a total of 748 (approximately 9%) were charter school campuses authorized by either the State Board of Education (SBOE-authorized charter school campuses), independent school districts (ISD-authorized charter school campuses), or the commissioner of education (COE-authorized charter school campuses). Among charter school campuses, the largest number were campuses operating under charter schools authorized by the SBOE (n=659), including 49 charter school campuses which provided residential treatment services to students in 2016–17. There were a total of 73 ISD-authorized charter school campuses and 16 COE-authorized charter school campuses, which includes one residential treatment facility, operational in 2016–17.

Texas Public Schools

A total of 366 (49%) charter school campuses were categorized as elementary school campuses, while 146 (20%) were categorized as middle school campuses, and 236 (32%) were categorized as high schools. A slightly larger proportion of traditional public school campuses were classified as elementary schools (4,594, or 57%), while there were 1,639 (20%) traditional public middle school campuses, and 1,776 (22%) traditional public high school campuses operational in 2016–17 (Table 2.1).

It is important to note that a total of 159 DAEP campuses (14 elementary schools, 27 middle schools, and 118 high schools), 142 JJAEP campuses (117 high schools and 25 middle schools), and 68 residential treatment facilities (serving primarily high school students) are included in the 8,009 traditional public school campuses reported for 2016–17 (Table 2.1). There were 49 SBOE-authorized charter school campuses operating as residential treatment facilities (eight elementary schools, four middle schools, and 37 high schools) and one COE-authorized residential treatment facility included in the 748 Texas charter school campuses reported in Table 2.1.

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30 Because all public school campuses, and more commonly charter school campuses, often serve grades that cross traditional grade spans (K–5 for elementary, 6–8 for middle school, and 9–12 for high school), campuses were categorized as “primarily” elementary, middle, or high schools based on the largest percentage of students in a particular grade span. These categorizations represent the 2016–17 grade spans; however, it should be noted that new charter school campuses regularly add additional grades as they mature.
Table 2.1. Texas Public School Campuses by School Type, 2016–17

<table>
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<th>Campus Type</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Charter School Campus</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBOE-Authorized, not Residential Treatment Facilitiesa</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>117</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISD-Authorizedb</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE-Authorized, not Residential Treatment Facilitiesc</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>SBOE-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Charter School Campuses</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Type of Traditional Public School Campus        |             |       |             |
| Traditional Public School Campuses              | 4,576       | 1,584 | 1,480       | 7,640 |
| DAEP Campusesd                                 | 14          | 27    | 118         | 159  |
| JJAEP Campusesb                                | 0           | 25    | 117         | 142  |
| Residential Treatment Facilities                | 4           | 3     | 61          | 68   |
| Total Number of Traditional Public Schools      | 4,594       | 1,639 | 1,776       | 8,009 |
| Total Number of Public School Campuses in Texas | 4,960       | 1,785 | 2,012       | 8,757 |

Note: aSBOE = State Board of Education. bISD = Independent School District. cCOE = commissioner of education dDAEP = Disciplinary Alternative Education Program. eJJAEP = Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.

While information related to charter school campuses and traditional public school DAEP, JJAEP, and residential treatment facility campuses are presented in this section of the report, these campuses serve unique student populations and are not included in the process used to match traditional public school campuses with charter school campuses. These exclusions were purposeful and related to the difficulty in finding accurate matches between DAEP, JJAEP and residential treatment facility charter school campuses and traditional public school campuses of this nature. Thus, DAEP, JJAEP, and residential treatment facilities are not included in the analyses presented in Sections 3, 4, and 5 of this report.

Texas charter school campuses and traditional public school campuses with at least 75% enrollment of students at risk of dropping out of school and 50% of students enrolled in Grades 6–12 may apply to TEA for designation as an AEA campus.31 AEA campuses are evaluated under alternative accountability provisions due to the large number of students served in alternative education programs on these alternative education campuses. As Table 2.2 shows, there were 297 non-residential treatment facility campuses (of which 276 are high school campuses) which were evaluated under AEA provisions in 2016–17 (113 charter school campuses and 184 traditional public school campuses). A total of 104 non-residential charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and eight were ISD-authorized charter school campuses.

31 Refer to Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 29, Subchapter C, § 29.081(d) (2016) for the statutory definition of “a student at risk of dropping out of school.”
Table 2.2. Texas Public School Campuses Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, by School Type, 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Type</th>
<th>AEA&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt; Campuses, Non-Residential Treatment Facilities</th>
<th>AEA Residential Treatment Facilities</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Charter School Campus</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBOE-Authorized&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISD-Authorized&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>COE-Authorized&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td><strong>Traditional Public School AEA Campuses</strong></td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of AEA Schools in Texas</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: <sup>a</sup>SBOE = State Board of Education. <sup>b</sup>ISD = Independent School District. <sup>c</sup>COE = commissioner of education. <sup>d</sup>AEA = Alternative Education Accountability.
Student Enrollment

A total of 310,610 students, or about 6% of Texas public school students, were enrolled at charter school campuses during the 2016–17 school year. The vast majority of students enrolled at Texas charter school campuses (86%, or 268,665) were at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses (including students enrolled at residential treatment facilities), while 37,925 students were enrolled at ISD-authorized charter school campuses. A total of 4,020 students were enrolled at the COE-authorized charter school campuses in 2016–17, which includes 174 students enrolled at residential treatment facilities (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Student Enrollment in Texas Public School Campuses by School Type, 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Type</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Charter School Campus</td>
<td>School Type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBOE-Authorized(^a)</td>
<td>163,790</td>
<td>47,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISD-Authorized(^b)</td>
<td>13,621</td>
<td>9,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE-Authorized(^c)</td>
<td>2,879</td>
<td>741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBOE Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students Enrolled in Charter School Campuses</td>
<td>180,688</td>
<td>57,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Traditional Public School Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Public School Campuses</td>
<td>2,488,869</td>
<td>1,102,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAEP(^d) Campuses</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JJAEP(^e) Campuses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students Enrolled in Traditional Public Schools</td>
<td>2,489,085</td>
<td>1,103,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students Enrolled in Texas Schools</td>
<td>2,669,773</td>
<td>1,160,318</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \(^a\)SBOE = State Board of Education. \(^b\)ISD = Independent School District. \(^c\)COE = commissioner of education. \(^d\)DAEP = Disciplinary Alternative Education Program. \(^e\)JJAEP = Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program.
A total of 49,808 students in Texas were enrolled at campuses evaluated under AEA provisions during 2016–17, of which 30,730 (62%) were enrolled at charter school campuses and 19,078 (38%) attended a traditional public school campus. Students attending SBOE-authorized charter school campuses (25,801) accounted for the vast majority of students enrolled at AEA charter school campuses (as opposed to other types of campuses) A total of 16,865 students were enrolled at traditional public school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions and 2,213 students were enrolled at AEA residential treatment facilities in 2016–17. In addition, high school students made up the largest proportion of students enrolled at AEA charter school campuses (25,404, or 83%) and AEA traditional public school campuses (17,635, or 92%) (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. Student Enrollment in Texas Public School Campus Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, by School Type, 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus Type</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary Schoold</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Charter School Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBOE-Authorizeda</td>
<td>3,198</td>
<td>1,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISD-Authorizedb</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE-Authorizedc</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBOE-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students Enrolled in AEA Charter School Campuses</td>
<td>3,532</td>
<td>1,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Traditional Public School Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public School Campuses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Treatment Facilities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students Enrolled in AEA Traditional Public School Campus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Students Enrolled in AEA Texas Schools</td>
<td>3,532</td>
<td>3,237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: aSBOE = State Board of Education. bISD = Independent School District. cCOE = commissioner of education. dRepresents enrollment in PK–12 campuses serving 50% or more students in middle or high school as required for evaluation under AEA provisions, but who have a plurality of elementary school students.

Table 2.5 shows the student demographic makeup of charter school campuses by authorizer type and traditional public schools as well as differences in program participation (e.g., career and technical education, special education). For example, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a higher percentage of Hispanic (60% vs. 52%), African-American (19% vs. 12%), and economically disadvantaged (69% vs. 58%) students than traditional public school campuses. ISD-authorized charter school campuses also had higher percentages of Hispanic (64% vs. 52%), African-American (17% vs. 12%), and economically disadvantaged (73% vs. 58%) students than traditional public school campuses.

COE-authorized charter school campuses had a higher percentage of enrolled White students (38%) and a lower percentage of Hispanic students (44%) than either SBOE- or ISD- Authorized charter school campuses, or traditional public school campuses in Texas.
Table 2.5. Demographic Characteristics of Students Enrolled in Texas Public School Campuses, 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional Public School Campuses</th>
<th>Traditional Public School DAEP Campuses&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Traditional Public School JJAEP Campuses&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Traditional Public School Residential Treatment Facilities</th>
<th>SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
<th>COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
<th>COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses – Residential Treatment Facilities&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Students</strong></td>
<td>5,024,711</td>
<td>5,046</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>2,706</td>
<td>265,244</td>
<td>3,421</td>
<td>3,846</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Student Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Risk</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
<td>95.3%</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>97.8%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Programs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and Technical Education</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>56.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: <sup>a</sup> There are no DAEP or JJAEP charter school campuses. <sup>b</sup> There are no ISD-authorized charter school campus residential treatment facilities.
SBOE = State Board of Education. ISD = Independent School District. COE = commissioner of education.
Section 3: Aggregate Performance of Charter School Campuses by Authorizer Compared to Matched Traditional Public School Campuses

This section of the report provides a comparison of aggregate academic outcomes for students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, ISD-authorized charter school campuses, and their matched traditional public school campuses.32

Results for the following aggregate performance metrics are presented in this section: 1) attrition rate; 2) percent of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics and STAAR-Reading exams (Grades 3–8); 3) annual dropout rate (Grades 7–8 and 9–12); 4) longitudinal graduation rate; and 5) TEA performance index scores (four indices and a composite index score). In addition, TEA performance index results are further disaggregated for charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions and under AEA provisions. When reporting results by charter authorizer type/traditional public school campus or school level, the average campus-level performance metric for a particular category of campuses (e.g., SBOE-authorized charter school campuses) is weighted by the number of students at each campus in that subgroup that contributed to calculations of each metric.33

Before presenting aggregate performance results for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, the following section presents descriptive information about the number and demographic characteristics for the four categories of public school campuses included in the analyses.34

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32 Analyses related to the 15 charter school campuses authorized by the commissioner of education and operational in 2016–17 (COE-authorized charter school campuses) are reported in Section 5 of this report.
33 For example, a campus with 20 enrolled students who took the STAAR-Reading exam would receive a much smaller weight when calculating the percentage of students meeting state standards on STAAR-Reading than a campus with 500 enrolled students.
34 Please note that certain types of campuses were excluded from the matching and analysis. A detailed description of the matching procedure is presented in Appendix A, and an abbreviated description is provided in Section 1 of this report.
Campuses Included in the Aggregate Performance Analyses

A total of 506 SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and 1,061 matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were included in the aggregate performance analyses. As Table 3.1 shows, modest differences in race/ethnicity were observed between these two campus groups. The SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a higher percentage of Hispanic (61% vs. 57% for the matched traditional public school campuses) and a comparable percentage of Asian students (5% vs. 4% for the matched traditional public school campuses), more African American students (19% vs. 17% for the matched traditional public school campuses), and a lower percentage of White students (14% vs. 20% for the matched traditional public school campuses).

Table 3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions Which Were Included in Aggregate Performance Analyses, 2016–17

| Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2016–17. | Note: Number of schools includes the total number of traditional public school campuses matched to State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses and Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, respectively. The total number of traditional public school campuses matched to each charter school campus was limited to a maximum of 10. |
SBOE-authorized charter campuses had a higher percentage of students identified as economically disadvantaged compared to their matched traditional campuses (68% vs. 66%) and a comparable percentage of ELL students (25% vs. 24%). The percentage of students identified as at-risk, in special education and the percentage of students in the career and technical education (CTE) program were substantially lower at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. Forty-eight percent of students enrolled in SBOE-authorized charter school campuses were identified as at-risk, 6% received special education services, and 10% were classified in the CTE program, compared to 54%, 8% and 16%, respectively, at the matched traditional public school campuses.

A total of 65 ISD-authorized charter school campuses and 566 matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were included in the aggregate performance analyses. Several differences in race/ethnicity were observed between ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. For instance, a larger percentage of Hispanic students (64% vs. 58% for the matched traditional public school campuses) and a smaller percentage of White students (15% vs. 21% for the matched traditional public school campuses) were enrolled at ISD-authorized charter school campuses. Similar to the comparisons of SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses presented earlier in this section, the percentage of students classified as at-risk (53% vs. 55% for the matched traditional public school campuses), the percentage of students participating in the CTE program (17% vs. 21% for the matched traditional public school campuses), and the percentages of students who participated in special education programs (5% vs. 8% for the matched traditional public school campuses) were lower at ISD-authorized charter school campuses (Table 3.1).

While the evaluation team used all available data and went through extensive efforts to find traditional public school campuses with similar student populations to match to SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses, it is important to keep in mind when interpreting aggregate performance outcomes that differences remain in the composition of the student populations. Because no statistical controls were used to account for the differences in the composition of student populations enrolled at charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses, these differences in student characteristics, as well as prior academic performance, may have had an impact on the aggregate outcome results for the various charter school campus types and their matched traditional public school campuses.

A total of 104 SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and 54 matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were included in the aggregate performance analyses. A higher percentage of African American students and White students were enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (20% vs. 16% and 17% vs. 12%, respectively). A lower percentage of Hispanic students were enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (60% vs. 69%). Differences were observed in at-risk status (90% of students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 95% of students enrolled at matched traditional public school campuses), ELL status (19% of students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 29% of students enrolled at matched traditional public school campuses), and special education status (9% of students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 6% of students enrolled at matched traditional public school campuses). No differences in CTE participation status (37% of students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 37% of students enrolled at matched traditional public school campuses) were observed.
Eight ISD-authorized charter school campuses and 28 matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were included in the aggregate performance analyses. As Table 3.2 shows, differences in the race/ethnicity composition were observed between the ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, with smaller percentages of Hispanic and White students (71% vs. 77% and 4% vs. 9%, respectively), and a larger percentage of African American students (23% vs. 12%) enrolled at ISD-authorized charter school campuses.

Table 3.2. Demographic Characteristics of Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses Included in Aggregate Performance Analyses Who Were Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
<th>Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
<th>ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
<th>Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>71.3%</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Student Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Risk</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
<td>94.8%</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and Technical Education</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Students</strong></td>
<td>25,801</td>
<td>5,854</td>
<td>1,349</td>
<td>2,866</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Number of schools includes the total number of traditional public school campuses matched to State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses and Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, respectively. The total number of traditional public school campuses matched to each charter school campus was limited to a maximum of 10.

Other differences in the student populations at ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were also observed (see Table 3.2). The percentages of students classified as at-risk, ELL, and economically disadvantaged were
higher at ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. At ISD-authorized charter school campuses, 95% of students were classified as at-risk (vs. 93% at matched traditional public school campuses), 43% were classified as ELL (vs. 34% at matched comparison campuses), and 85% were classified as economically disadvantaged (vs. 78% at matched comparison campuses).

It is important to reiterate that the differences in student characteristics between SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions should be considered when interpreting aggregate performance metrics. In addition, prior performance was not included in the matching procedures for this report. Furthermore, the number of campuses available for some of the analyses reported in this section, particularly those involving campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, may be fairly small. Analyses involving small numbers of campuses warrant cautious interpretation.

Attrition Rates

The attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return to the same campus in 2017–18 in which they were enrolled in 2016–17. This calculation, however, required several adjustments to handle certain exceptions where an accurate 2016–17 to 2017–18 calculation would not be possible. Please refer to the methodology section in Section 1 and Appendix A of this report for further detail on the attrition rate calculation. As Figure 3.1 illustrates, larger percentages of students enrolled in SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses did not return to their 2016–17 campus of origin compared to students enrolled in the matched traditional public school campuses (24% vs. 21% and 27% vs. 20%, respectively).

Figure 3.1. Student Attrition Rates Between 2016–17 and 2017–18 for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses


Note: A total of 588 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 1,072 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 66 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 572 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this attrition analysis.
STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Results

The percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard (i.e., meeting or exceeding the state passing standard) on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for Grade 3–8 students (Figure 3.2). Thus, only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses. Students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses outperformed students at matched traditional public school campuses on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading exam. At SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 75% of Grade 3–8 students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam, compared to 72% of students at matched traditional public school campuses. The percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam was comparable to the percentage of students at matched traditional public school campuses (70% vs. 71%). Seventy-two percent of students statewide achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2017 STAAR-Reading exam.35

Figure 3.2. Percent of Students Achieving the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the STAAR-Reading Exam by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2016–17

Note: A total of 445 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 846 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 43 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 442 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.

As Figure 3.3. shows, the percentage of students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Mathematics exam was comparable to students at matched traditional public school campuses (76% for each). At ISD-authorized charter school campuses, 71% of Grade 3–8 students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on

the STAAR-Mathematics exam, compared to 76% of students at matched traditional public school campuses. Seventy-nine percent of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2017 STAAR-Mathematics exam.36

Figure 3.3. Percent of Students Achieving the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the STAAR-Mathematics Exam by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2016–17

![Diagram showing percent of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam by charter authorizer type and matched traditional public school campuses.]

Note: A total of 446 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 844 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 43 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 441 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.

### Dropout Rates

A dropout was defined for this project as a student who was enrolled in public school in Grades 7–8 for middle schools and Grades 9–12 for high schools during 2015–16 but did not return to public school in 2016–17. This definition excluded students who were expelled, who graduated, who received a high school equivalency certificate, who continued school outside the public school system, who began college, or who died. Additional detail regarding annual dropout rates is provided in Section 1 of this report.

As Figure 3.4 illustrates, the annual dropout rates for students in Grades 9–12 at both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter high school campuses exceeded the dropout rates at their matched traditional public high school campuses (5.5% vs. 2.0% and 6.4% vs. 1.9%, respectively).

Figure 3.4. Annual Dropout Rates by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses (Middle School and High School Campuses), 2015–16


Note: A total of 152 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter high school campuses, 208 traditional public high school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 91 SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses, and 184 traditional public middle school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses were included in these analyses. A total of 28 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter high school campuses, 121 traditional public high school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses, 17 ISD-authorized charter middle school campus, and 88 traditional public middle school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were also included in these analyses.

The annual dropout rates for Grade 7–8 students at both SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses and their matched traditional public middle school campuses were comparable (0.2% vs. 0.4% for SBOE-authorized comparison and 0.3% vs. 0.3% for the ISD-authorized comparison). The statewide annual dropout rate for 2015–16 was 2.0% for Grades 9–12 and 0.4% for Grades 7–8.37

Graduation Rates

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2016 calculated for state accountability was used for this project. Figure 3.5 shows that the Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rates for students at both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses were lower than at matched traditional public school campuses (87% vs. 92% and 79% vs. 91%, respectively). The statewide Grade 9

The Texas accountability system uses a performance index framework to combine a broad range of indicators into a comprehensive measure of campus and district performance. Index scores from the 2017 Accountability Ratings were used in the analyses described below. Results are presented for each of the four performance indices:

1) **Student Achievement** (which measures campus and district performance based on satisfactory student achievement combined over all subjects for all students);

2) **Student Progress** (measures student progress and provides an opportunity for districts and campuses to receive credit for improving student performance independent of the student’s pass/fail status on STAAR);

3) **Closing Performance Gaps** (which emphasizes advanced academic achievement of the economically disadvantaged student group and the lowest performing racial/ethnic student groups at each district and campus); and

4) **Postsecondary Readiness** (which emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school and the importance of earning a high school degree).

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38 [https://rptsrv1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2017/state.pdf](https://rptsrv1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2017/state.pdf)
diploma that prepares students for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military. The index includes test performance for high schools and grades 3–8 at the Meets Grade Level standard.)

TEA sets specific targets for campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions and AEA provisions, which must be met in order to demonstrate acceptable performance on each index (see Appendix A). Because the targets are substantially different for campuses evaluated under standard accountability procedures and AEA campuses, analyses related to TEA performance indices are conducted separately for the two types of campuses. For further detail on the four TEA performance indices, please refer to Section 1 of this report and the 2017 Accountability Manual.39

As Figure 3.6 illustrates, both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses rated under standard accountability procedures outperformed their matched traditional public school campuses on three of the four TEA performance indices: Student Achievement, Closing the Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness. For the Student Achievement index, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had an average index score of 75 compared to 72 for matched traditional public school campuses, and ISD-authorized charter school campuses had an average index score of 75 compared to 72 for matched traditional public school campuses.

For the Student Progress index, both SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses had comparable scores to their matched traditional public schools (39 vs. 40 and 38 vs. 39, respectively). Higher Closing Performance Gaps index scores were also observed between SBOE-Authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campus counterparts (44 vs. 41 for both). Lastly, as Figure 3.6 shows, the largest differences between charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses rated under standard accountability provisions were seen for the Postsecondary Readiness index, where the average index scores were seven points higher for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and five points higher for ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (52 vs. 45 and 51 vs. 46, respectively).

39 https://tea.texas.gov/2017accountabilitymanual.aspx
Figure 3.6. TEA Performance Index Scores by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2016–17


Note: A total of 472 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 982 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 62 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 531 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

For campuses evaluated under AEA provisions (Figure 3.7), Student Achievement performance index scores were higher for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (56 vs. 49). Conversely, Student Achievement performance index scores were lower for ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses (47 vs. 50).

As illustrated in Figure 3.7, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions had lower scores than their matched traditional public school campuses for the Student Progress and Postsecondary Readiness performance indices (23 vs. 25 and 87 vs. 90, respectively) and higher scores for the Closing the Performance Gaps index compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (31 vs. 27). Average Student Progress and Closing Performance Gaps scores were lower for ISD-authorized charter campuses than those for matched traditional public school campuses (24 vs. 28 and 24 vs. 26, respectively) while average Postsecondary Readiness index scores for ISD-authorized charter campuses were higher compared to traditional public school campuses (86 vs. 82).
Figure 3.7. TEA Performance Index Scores by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, 2016–17


Note: A total of 104 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 53 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, eight Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 27 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

To rate the aggregate performance of campuses as required by TEC § 12.1013(d)(2), 2016, a composite index score was calculated for each campus included in the aggregate campus academic performance analyses. The composite score is the sum of all index scores calculated for a particular campus divided by the total number of index scores assigned to the campus. As Figure 3.8 illustrates, the composite TEA performance index score for both SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions is approximately two points higher than the composite score for their matched traditional public school campuses (52 vs. 50).
Figure 3.8. Composite TEA Performance Index Score by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2016–17


Note: A total of 472 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 982 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 62 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 531 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis. Composite index data included in this figure are for comparative purposes only as no TEA performance threshold calculations for composite index scores have been established.
As Figure 3.9 illustrates, the average composite TEA performance index score for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions is 49 (compared to 46 for the matched traditional public school campuses). The composite TEA performance index score for ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions is comparable to the composite score for matched traditional public school campuses (45 vs. 44).

**Figure 3.9. Composite TEA Performance Index Score by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, 2016–17**

![Composite TEA Performance Index Score Chart](chart.png)

**Source:** Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2016–17.

**Note:** A total of 104 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 53 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, eight Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 27 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis. Composite index data included in this figure are for comparative purposes only as no TEA performance threshold calculations for composite index scores have been established.
Section 4: Aggregate Performance of Charter School Campuses by School Level and Authorizer Type Compared to Matched Traditional Public School Campuses

This section of the report provides a comparison of aggregate academic outcomes for students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, ISD-authorized charter school campuses, and their matched traditional public school campuses. The results in this section are disaggregated across school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, and high) for the two charter school authorizer types and their matched traditional public school campuses.

In addition to results being disaggregated by school level, TEA performance index results are further disaggregated for charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions and under AEA provisions. Results disaggregated by school level are presented for the following outcomes: 1) attrition rate; 2) percentage of students Approaching Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics and STAAR-Reading exams (Grades 3–8); 3) percentage of students meeting state standards on the English I, English II, and Algebra I EOC exams; and 4) TEA performance index scores (four indices and a composite index score). When reporting results by campus type (i.e., charter authorizer type or traditional public school campus) or school level, each average campus-level performance metric for a particular category of campuses is weighted by the number of students at each campus included in the calculation for that metric.

As previously noted, it is important to keep in mind when interpreting aggregate performance outcomes that differences remain in the composition of the student populations. Because no statistical controls were used to account for the differences in the composition of student populations enrolled at charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses, these differences in student characteristics, may have had an impact on the aggregate outcome results for the various charter school campus types and their matched traditional public school campuses. In addition, prior performance was not included in the matching procedures for this report.

Furthermore, the number of campuses available for some of the analyses reported in this section, particularly those involving campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, may be fairly small. Analyses involving small numbers of campuses warrant cautious interpretation.

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40 Refer to Section 3 of this report for four-year longitudinal graduation rate results.
41 For example, a campus with 50 enrolled students who took the STAAR-Reading exam would receive a much smaller weight when calculating the percentage of students meeting state standards on STAAR-Reading than a campus with 500 enrolled students.
Attrition Rates Disaggregated by School Level

The attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return to the same campus in 2017–18 in which they were enrolled in 2016–17. As Figure 4.1 illustrates, attrition rates for SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses are comparable (24% vs. 24%, respectively). The same is true for attrition rates for ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses (24% vs. 23%, respectively).

As shown in Figure 4.1, attrition rates for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses were higher compared to their matched traditional public middle school campuses (19% vs. 16% and 19% vs. 15%, respectively). Attrition rates at the high school level are higher for both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (31% vs. 17% and 33% vs. 16%, respectively).

Figure 4.1. Student Attrition Rates Between 2016–17 and 2017–18 for Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, by Authorizer Type and School Level


Note: The number of State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=314); middle (n=113); high (n=161). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=648); middle (n=210); high (n=214). The number of Independent School District (ISD)-authorized campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=23); middle (n=17); high (n=26). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for ISD-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=339); middle (n=105); high (n=128).

42 For further detail, please refer to the attrition rate section in Section 1 of this report.
STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Results Disaggregated by School Level

The percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for students in Grades 3-8 and disaggregated by school level. Because STAAR-Reading and Mathematics exams are only administered to students in Grades 3–8, only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses.

As Figure 4.2 shows, a slightly higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam compared to the matched traditional public elementary school campuses (74% vs. 70%, respectively). A smaller percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam compared to their matched traditional public elementary school campuses (61% vs. 70%, respectively). A lower percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam compared to their matched traditional public school elementary campuses (66% vs. 77%, respectively). However, there was little difference between SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses and their matched traditional public elementary school matches (75% vs. 76%, respectively).

Figure 4.2. Percent of Students Achieving the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Exams for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Elementary School Campuses


Note: A total of 299 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 607 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 22 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 324 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in these State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analyses.

As Figure 4.3 illustrates, a higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam than students
at their matched traditional public middle school campuses (77% vs. 74%, respectively). Meanwhile, comparable percentages of students at ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses and the matched traditional public middle school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam (72% vs. 73%, respectively).

Similarly, as seen in Figure 4.3, a higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam compared to matched traditional public middle school campuses (77% vs. 75%, respectively). Like the STAAR-Reading exam, comparable percentages of students at ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses and their matched traditional public middle school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam (74% vs. 74%, respectively).

**Figure 4.3. Percent of Students Achieving the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Exams for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Middle School Campuses**


Note: A total of 116 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 219 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 18 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 110 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in these State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analyses.
End-of-Course Results for English I, English II, and Algebra I Disaggregated by School Level

The percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR EOC exams for English I and English II were used to assess English Language Arts academic achievement for Grades 9–12 (i.e., high school campuses). Similarly, the percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR Algebra I EOC exam were used to assess mathematics academic achievement for Grades 9–12. This Algebra I metric was also calculated for middle school campuses, because a substantial number of advanced mathematics students in Grade 8 take the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam.

As Figure 4.4 illustrates, a lower percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR English I EOC exam (typically taken by Grade 9 students) compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (58% vs. 62%, respectively). A larger percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter high school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR English I EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (79% vs. 58%, respectively).

Figure 4.4. Percent of Students Achieving Approaches Grade Level Standard on the 2016–17 STAAR English I and STAAR English II EOC Exams for SBOE- Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD- Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, High School Campuses

Note: A total of 154 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 183 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 28 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 111 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in these State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) end-of-course (EOC) exam analyses.

Similarly, as shown in Figure 4.4, a lower percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR English II EOC exam (typically taken by Grade 10 students) compared to matched traditional public high school campuses (61% vs.
63%, respectively). Mirroring the STAAR English I EOC exam results, a larger percentage of students enrolled at ISD-authorized charter high school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard above on the STAAR English II EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (79% vs. 61%, respectively).43

Figure 4.5 shows that a smaller percentage of advanced mathematics students at SBOE-authorized charter middle school achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam (which is most commonly taken by Grade 9 students) compared to students at matched traditional public middle school campuses (90% vs. 100%, respectively). Comparable percentages of students enrolled at ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public middle school campuses (98% vs. 99%, respectively).44

Figure 4.5. Percent of Students Achieving the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the 2016–17 STAAR Algebra I EOC Exams for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Middle School and High School Campuses

Note: The number of State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized campuses included in these State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) end-of-course (EOC) exam analyses: middle (n=87); high (n=145). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: middle (n=170); high (n=179). The number of Independent School District (ISD)-authorized campuses included in these analyses: middle (n=14); high (n=27). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for ISD-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: middle (n=81); high (n=111).

A lower percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam compared to matched traditional

43 The state passing rates for 2016–17 EOC exams are as follows: English I = 64%, English II = 66%, and Algebra I = 83%. Algebra I passing rates include all students who took the assessment, including Grade 8 students.
44 The high percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level on the Algebra I EOC exam at the middle school level is related to the high level of academic aptitude in mathematics for students enrolled in Algebra I in Grade 7 or 8. These students are classified as advanced mathematics students with aptitude above their middle school grade level.
public high school campuses (72% vs. 77%, respectively). Conversely, as evident in Figure 4.5, a larger percentage of students enrolled at ISD-authorized charter high school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (81% vs. 76%, respectively).

**TEA Performance Index Scores Disaggregated by School Level**

Similar to Section 3, results are presented for each of the four performance indices: 1) Student Achievement; 2) Student Progress; 3) Closing Performance Gaps; and 4) Postsecondary Readiness. For further detail on the four TEA performance indices, please refer to Section 1 of this report and the 2017 Accountability Manual.45

As Figure 4.6 illustrates, SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted higher Student Achievement index scores compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (73 vs. 71). ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted lower Student Achievement index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (62 vs. 72). For the Student Progress index, as shown in Figure 4.6, both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted lower index scores than their matched traditional public elementary school campuses (41 vs. 44 and 40 vs. 44, respectively). For the Closing Performance Gaps index, SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses had comparable scores (42 vs. 41); however, ISD-authorized charter school campuses had lower scores than their matched traditional public elementary school campuses (35 vs. 41). SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted higher Postsecondary Readiness index scores compared with their matched traditional public school campuses (45 vs. 38), while ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted lower Postsecondary Readiness index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (29 vs. 38).

45 [https://tea.texas.gov/2017accountabilitymanual.aspx](https://tea.texas.gov/2017accountabilitymanual.aspx)
Only four SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses were evaluated under AEA provisions in 2016–17, and no traditional public elementary school campuses were matched to these charter school campuses. Furthermore, no ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses were evaluated under AEA provisions. Figure 4.7 provides the TEA Performance Index scores for the four SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses: 49 for Index 1: Student Achievement, 31 for Index 2: Student Progress, 24 for Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps, and 99 for Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness.

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46 The small number of campuses is explained by the nature of the grade span categorization for this report and the criteria for applying for AEA status. Because part of the criteria for AEA status includes enrollment of 50% or more in Grades 6–12, there are few cases where campuses categorized as “elementary” for this report were AEA.

47 Index 4 components for non-AEA districts and campuses include the following equally weighted elements: 1) STAAR meets grade-level standard; 2) Graduation rate; 3) Graduation plan rate; and 4) Postsecondary component, college and career readiness. For elementary school campuses, only the STAAR component can be consider, which may contribute to the higher index score.
As shown in Figure 4.8, SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted higher Student Achievement index scores than their matched traditional public middle school campuses (78 vs. 73). ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted comparable Student Achievement index scores to their matched traditional public middle school campuses (73 vs. 72). For the Student Progress index, SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses and their matched traditional public middle school campuses each had a comparable average index score (38 vs. 39). ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses had an average Student Progress index score of 40 compared to an average index score of 37 for matched traditional public school campuses.

For the Closing Performance Gaps index, also shown in Figure 4.8, both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses posted higher index scores than their matched traditional public middle school campuses. The average Closing Performance Gaps index score for SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses was 45 versus 39 for their matched traditional public middle school campuses. Similarly, the average Closing Performance Gaps index score for ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses was 43 versus 38 for their matched traditional public middle school campuses.

Lastly, as Figure 4.8 also illustrates, Postsecondary Readiness index scores for SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were higher than those for their matched traditional public middle school campuses (53 vs. 40). Postsecondary Readiness index scores for ISD-authorized charter school campuses were also higher than those for their matched traditional public middle school campuses (42 vs. 38).
As seen in Figure 4.9, SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions had higher Student Achievement and Closing Performance Gap index scores compared to their matched traditional public middle school campuses (51 vs. 32 and 25 vs. 17, respectively). Lower Student Progress index scores were observed for SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions and their matched traditional public middle school campuses (33 vs. 37). For the Postsecondary Success index, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a score of 86, but no comparison data were available for traditional public school campuses that were matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses. There was only one ISD-authorized charter middle school campus evaluated under AEA provisions active in 2016–17, and four traditional public middle school campuses were matched to this charter school campus; therefore, these campuses are not included in Figure 4.9.
Figure 4.9. TEA Performance Index Scores for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Middle School Campuses Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, 2016–17


Note: A total of nine State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses and five traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under alternative accountability (AEA) provisions were included in this analysis. There was only one Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter middle school campus evaluated under AEA provisions active in 2016–17 and four traditional public middle school campuses were matched to this charter school campus. There were no traditional public middle school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions which reported data for TEA Index 4.

As Figure 4.10 shows, compared to traditional public high school campuses, higher TEA performance index scores were observed for SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions for all four indices: Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Success (82 vs. 75, 35 vs. 28, 50 vs. 45, and 80 vs. 78, respectively).

For three of the four TEA performance indices (Indices 1-3) reported in Figure 4.10, ISD-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted higher index scores than matched traditional public high school campuses, while the index scores for the fourth index (Postsecondary Readiness) were slightly lower for ISD-authorized charter school campuses than matched traditional public school campuses (75 vs. 77). The largest differences between ISD-authorized charter high school index scores and their matched public high school index scores were observed for the Student Achievement index (86 vs. 73), the Student Progress index (35 vs. 26), and the Closing Performance Gaps index (52 vs. 44).
Figure 4.10. TEA Performance Index Scores for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, High School Campuses Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2016–17


Note: A total of 70 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 159 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 23 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 100 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

For campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, as shown in Figure 4.11, SBOE-authorized charter high school campus scores for Student Achievement (57 vs. 51) and Closing Performance Gaps (32 vs. 28) indices were higher than those for matched traditional public high school campuses, while Student Progress (21 vs. 24) and Postsecondary Readiness (85 vs. 90) were lower compared to matched traditional public high school campuses. For ISD-authorized charter high school campuses, Student Achievement, Student Progress, and Closing Performance Gaps index scores were lower compared to those for matched traditional public school high school campuses (43 vs. 50, 21 vs. 26, and 22 vs. 27, respectively) and higher for the Postsecondary Success index compared to traditional public high school campuses (86 vs. 82).
In order to rate the aggregate performance of campuses, as noted in Section 3 of this report and as required by TEC § 12.1013(d)(2) (2016), a composite index score for each campus included in the aggregate campus academic performance analyses was calculated (including the analyses disaggregated by school level, as presented in this section). The composite score is the sum of all index scores calculated for a particular campus divided by the total number of index scores assigned to the campus.

For SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions, composite index scores were higher at all three school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, high) compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (50 vs. 48, 54 vs. 48, and 62 vs. 57, respectively). As shown in Figure 4.12, results for ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were mixed. Lower composite index scores were observed for ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses compared to their matched traditional public elementary school campuses (41 vs. 49). Higher composite index scores were observed at the middle and high school levels for ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to the scores for their matched traditional public school campuses (50 vs. 46 and 62 vs. 55, respectively).
Figure 4.12. TEA Composite Performance Index Scores for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, by School Level, 2016–17

![Composite Index Scores Graph](image)


Note: State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses: elementary school campuses (n=295), middle school campuses (n=107), high school campuses (n=70). Traditional public school high campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses: elementary school campuses (n=608), middle school campuses (n=215), high school campuses (n=159). Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter campuses: elementary school campuses (n=22), middle school campuses (n=17), high school campuses (n=23). Traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses: elementary school campuses (n=324), middle school campuses (n=107), high school campuses (n=100). Composite index data included in this figure are for comparative purposes only as no TEA performance threshold calculations for composite index scores have been established.
As Figure 4.13 illustrates, both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted higher composite performance index scores than their matched traditional public middle school campuses (43 vs. 24 and 57 vs. 25, respectively). The composite index scores were comparable for SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions compared to their matched traditional public high school campuses (49 vs. 49) and lower for ISD-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions compared to their matched traditional public high school campuses (43 vs. 47). No SBOE- or ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions at the elementary school level were matched to traditional public school campuses.

Figure 4.13. TEA Composite Performance Index Scores for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, by School Level, 2016–17


Note: A total of nine State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter middle school campuses, five traditional public middle school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses, 91 SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses, 48 traditional public high school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses, one Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter middle school campus, four traditional public high school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter high school campuses, seven ISD-authorized charter high school campuses, and 23 traditional public high school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter high school campuses were included in this analysis. No SBOE- or ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under alternative education accountability provisions at the elementary school level, and one ISD-authorized charter school campuses at the middle school level, were matched to traditional public school campuses. Composite index data included in this figure are for comparative purposes only as no TEA performance threshold calculations for composite index scores have been established.
Section 5: Analysis of Charter School Campuses Authorized by the Commissioner of Education Compared to Matched Traditional Public School Campuses

This section of the report provides aggregate academic outcomes for students enrolled at COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, as required by TEC § 12.1013 (2016). Results for the following aggregate performance metrics are presented in this section: 1) attrition rate; 2) percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams; and 3) TEA performance index scores (four indices and a composite index score). As with prior analyses in Sections 3 and 4, performance metrics for COE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions and their matched traditional public school campuses are weighted by the number of students that contributed to calculations of a particular outcome measure.

Before presenting aggregate performance results for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, descriptive data related to the number of schools included in the analyses and the demographic characteristics of the student populations for the COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses are presented.

Table 5.1 presents the demographic characteristics of all students enrolled at 15 COE-authorized charter school campuses and the 75 matched traditional public school campuses included in Chapter 5 analyses. As Table 5.1 shows, there were substantive differences in race/ethnicity observed between the COE-authorized charter school campus group and the group of matched traditional public school campuses. The COE-authorized charter school campuses had a lower percentage of Hispanic students (44% vs. 55%) and African American students (13% vs. 21%) compared to the matched traditional public school campuses, and COE-authorized charter school campuses had a higher percentage of White students (38% vs. 19%). The percentages of students identified as at-risk (29% vs. 50%), economically disadvantaged (42% vs. 67%), English language learners (11% vs. 20%) and CTE program participants (3% vs. 28%) were all lower at COE-authorized charter school campuses than matched traditional public school campuses.

As Noted in Sections 3 and 4 of this report, when interpreting aggregate performance outcomes, please note that differences remain in the composition of the student populations. Because no statistical controls were used to account for the differences in the composition of student populations enrolled at charter

48 Because only two COE-authorized charter school campuses in 2016–17 were high schools, annual dropout rates and longitudinal graduation rates are not reported at the high school level in this section. While seven middle schools were authorized by the commissioner of education, Grade 7-8 annual dropout rates are reported in TAPR for only two of these campuses. Thus, annual dropout rates and graduation rates are not reported for COE-authorized charter school campuses.
49 For TEA performance index metrics, results were weighted by the number of students enrolled at each campus included in the calculation.
50 One COE-authorized charter school campus categorized as a residential treatment facility is excluded from these analyses.
school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses, these differences in student characteristics, may have had an impact on the aggregate outcome results for the various charter school campus types and their matched traditional public school campuses. Prior academic performance metrics were not included in the matching procedures for this report. Because of the small number of COE-authorized charter school campuses available for analysis, and the relatively short duration these campuses have been operational, the findings reported in this section warrant cautious interpretation.

Table 5.1. Demographic Characteristics of COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses which were included in Aggregate Performance Analyses, 2016–17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
<th>Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race/Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>54.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Student Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Risk</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and Technical Education</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,846</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Number of schools includes the total number of traditional public school campuses matched to commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses. The total number of traditional public school campuses matched to each charter school campus was limited to a maximum of 10.
Attrition Rates

The attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return to the same campus in 2017–18 in which they were enrolled in 2016–17.\textsuperscript{51} As Figure 5.1 illustrates, the attrition rates observed among COE-authorized charter school campuses were higher compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (29\% vs. 22\%).

Figure 5.1. Student Attrition Rates Between 2016–17 and 2017–18 for COE-Authenticated Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses

Note: Fifteen commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses and 63 traditional public school campuses matched to COE-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Results

The percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for Grade 3–8 students. Only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses.

Figure 5.2 illustrates that students enrolled at COE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam at a higher rate compared to students at traditional public school campuses matched with COE-authorized charter school campuses (78\% vs. 68\%, respectively). The percentages of students who achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Mathematics exam across COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses were comparable (72\% for both).

\textsuperscript{51} For further detail, please refer to the attrition rate section in Section 1 of this report.
Figure 5.2. Percent of Students Who Achieved the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Exams by COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2016–17

Note: A total of 13 commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses and 26 traditional public school campuses matched to COE-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

TEA Performance Index Scores

The Texas accountability system uses a performance index framework to combine a broad range of indicators into a comprehensive measure of campus and district performance. Index scores from the 2017 Accountability Ratings were used in the analyses described below. Results are presented for each of the four performance indices: 1) Student Achievement; 2) Student Progress; 3) Closing Performance Gaps; and 4) Postsecondary Readiness. For additional detail, please refer to the Section 1 of this report, and the 2017 Accountability Manual.52

TEA sets specific targets for campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions and AEA provisions which must be met in order to demonstrate acceptable performance on each index. The figures below focus on schools evaluated under standard accountability provisions because only one COE-authorized charter school campus was evaluated under AEA provisions.

As Figure 5.3 shows, both COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses have comparable scores on the Student Achievement and Student Progress indices (72 vs. 73 and 37 vs. 37, respectively). For the Closing Performance Gaps and Postsecondary Success indices, COE-authorized charter school campuses had lower index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (40 vs. 43 and 36 vs. 51, respectively).

52 https://tea.texas.gov/2017accountabilitymanual.aspx
Figure 5.3. TEA Performance Index Scores by COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2016–17


Note: Fourteen commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses and 64 traditional public school campuses matched to COE-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

In order to rate the aggregate performance of campuses as required by TEC § 12.1013(d)(2) (2016), a composite index score for each campus included in the aggregate campus academic performance analyses was calculated. The composite score is the sum of all index scores calculated for a particular campus, divided by the total number of index scores assigned to the campus.
As Figure 5.4 illustrates, the composite TEA performance index score was approximately five points lower for the 14 COE-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. The composite index score for COE-authorized charter school campuses was 46 compared to 51 for their matched campuses.

**Figure 5.4. TEA Performance Composite Index Scores by COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2016–17**


Note: Fourteen commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses and 64 traditional public school campuses matched to COE-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis. Composite index data included in this figure are for comparative purposes only as no TEA performance threshold calculations for composite index scores have been established.
Section 6: Discussion of Findings

Overview

Over the 2005–06 to 2016–17 period, the number of charter schools operating in the United States grew nearly doubled to approximately 7,000 in 2016–17. In 2016–17, a total of 748 charter school campuses were in operation in Texas, serving 310,610 students. This represents approximately nine percent of the public schools in Texas and six percent of the students enrolled in Texas public schools. The vast majority of the charter school campuses operating in 2016–17 (659, or 88%) were authorized by the State Board of Education. A total of 73 charter school campuses (approximately 10%) were authorized by independent school districts. The authority to authorize charter schools was transferred from the SBOE to the commissioner of education starting with those schools beginning operations in 2014–15. A total of 15 charter schools authorized by the commissioner of education served students during the 2016–17 school year (six elementary school campuses, seven middle school campuses, and two high school campuses).

SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a higher percentage of Hispanic (60% vs. 52%), African-American (19% vs. 12%), and economically disadvantaged (69% vs. 58%) students than traditional public school campuses. ISD-authorized charter school campuses had higher percentages of Hispanic (64% vs. 52%), African-American (17% vs. 12%), and economically disadvantaged (73% vs. 58%) students than traditional public school campuses. In contrast to SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses, COE-authorized charter school campuses had a lower percentage of Hispanic (44% vs. 52%) and economically disadvantaged (42% vs. 58%) students than traditional public school campuses. COE-authorized charter school campuses also had a substantially higher percentage of enrolled White students (38%) and lower percentages of Hispanic students (44%) than either SBOE- (14%; 60%) or ISD-Authorized (15%; 64%) charter school campuses, or traditional public school campuses (29%; 52%) in Texas.

The analyses contained in this report compare aggregate campus-level performance metrics between three categories of charter school campuses (SBOE-authorized, ISD-authorized, and COE-authorized) and their respective sets of matched traditional public school campuses. It is important to understand that the matching procedures in these analyses were employed to select traditional public school campuses that have similar student enrollment profiles in order to generate comparative descriptive statistics for several measures of campus performance. The intent of matching was not to produce inferences about the relative effectiveness of charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses.

Summary of Results

Aggregate campus-level performance results were explored for several different outcomes, including: 1) attrition rate; 2) percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the STAAR-Reading and Mathematics exams (for Grades 3–8) and the English I, English II, and Algebra I EOC exams (for Grades 9–12); 3) TEA performance index scores; 4) annual dropout rates (for Grades 7–8 and Grades 9–12); and 5) Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rates.

Attrition rates were somewhat higher for SBOE- (24% vs. 21%) and ISD-authorized (27% vs. 20%) charter school campuses when compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. These differences were mostly driven by attrition rates at the high school level which were substantially higher
for both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (13 and 17 percentage points, respectively).

Only modest differences in the percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were observed between SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. However, after disaggregating by school level, lower passing rates were observed for ISD-authorized charter school campuses (compared to their matched comparison campuses) at the elementary school level (61% vs. 70% for STAAR-Reading, and 66% vs. 77% for STAAR-Mathematics), but higher passing rates were found at the high school level on the English I (79% vs. 58%), English II (79% vs. 61%), and Algebra I (81% vs. 76%) EOC exams. School-level differences for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses followed a different pattern with somewhat higher percentages of elementary charter students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the STAAR-Reading exam (74% vs. 70%) and a comparable proportion of charter students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam (75% vs. 76%) at the elementary school level, but lower passing rates at the high school level on the English I (58% vs. 62%), English II (61% vs. 63%), and Algebra I (72% vs. 77%) EOC exams.

Similarly, differences in TEA performance indices 1 (Student Achievement), 2 (Student Progress), and 3 (Closing Performance Gaps) were fairly small (one to three points on the 100-point scale) when results for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. For the Student Achievement and Closing Performance Gaps indices, the charter school campus scores were higher. However, for the Student Progress index, both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses posted index scores of one point lower than matched traditional public school campuses. Average scores for TEA performance index 4 (Postsecondary Readiness) were seven points higher for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and five points higher for ISD-authorized charter school campuses than their matched traditional public school campuses. Composite TEA index scores for charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions, which include all index scores available for a particular campus, were two points higher for both SBOE-authorized (52 vs. 50) and ISD-authorized (52 vs. 50) charter school campuses than their matched comparison campuses.

For two of the four TEA performance indices, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted higher scores than their matched traditional public school campuses: Student Achievement (56 vs. 49); Closing Performance Gaps (31 vs. 27); however, they were somewhat lower for the Student Progress (23 vs. 25) and Postsecondary Readiness (87 vs. 90) indices. In contrast, ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under alternative accountability provisions posted somewhat lower scores than their matched traditional public school campuses on three of the four indices: Student Achievement (47 vs. 50); Student Progress (24 vs. 28), and Closing Performance Gaps (24 vs. 26); while ISD-authorized charter school campuses posted higher Postsecondary Readiness index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (86 vs. 82). Composite TEA index scores calculated for both the SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses rated under AEA provisions were slightly higher than those for their matched traditional public school campuses (49 vs. 46 and 45 vs. 44, respectively).

Annual dropout rates for Grades 9–12 were consistently higher for both SBOE-authorized (5.5% vs. 2.0%) and ISD-authorized (6.4% vs. 1.9%) charter school campuses than their matched traditional public school campuses. Small differences in annual dropout rates for Grades 7–8 were observed between SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and their traditional public school peers (0.2% vs. 0.4%). No
differences were observed in annual dropout rates for Grades 7–8 between ISD-authorized (0.3% vs. 0.3%) charter school campuses and their matched comparison campuses.

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2016 was substantially lower for SBOE-authorized (87% vs. 92%) and ISD-authorized charter (79% vs. 91%) school campuses than their matched traditional public school campuses.

Attrition rates at COE-authorized charter school campuses were approximately seven percentage points higher than they were at matched traditional public school campuses (29% vs. 22%). COE-authorized charter school campuses had a substantially higher percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading (78% vs. 68%) exams and a comparable percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the STAAR-Mathematics (72% for both) exams compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses have comparable scores on the Student Achievement and Student Progress indices (72 vs. 73 and 37 vs. 37, respectively). For the Closing Performance Gaps (40 vs. 43) and Postsecondary Success (36 vs. 51) indices, COE-authorized charter school campuses had lower index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses.

Limitations

The intent of the matching procedure used for this study was to select traditional public school campuses that had similar student enrollment profiles in order to generate comparative descriptive statistics for several measures of campus performance, and not to produce inferences about the relative effectiveness of charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses. Thus, the findings presented in this report do not suggest that one type of public school campus consistently outperforms another type. The evaluation team used all available public data and went through extensive efforts to find traditional public school campuses with similar student populations to match to SBOE-, ISD-, and COE-authorized charter school campuses; however, because statistical controls were not used to account for the differences in the composition of student populations enrolled at charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses, differences in student characteristics, as well as prior academic performance, may have had an impact on the aggregate outcome results for the various charter school campus types and their matched traditional public school campuses. Furthermore, the number of campuses available for some of the analyses reported in this report, particularly those involving campuses evaluated under AEA provisions and COE-authorized charter school campuses, may be fairly small. Analyses involving small numbers of campuses warrant cautious interpretation.

Lastly, in 2013, SB 2 (83rd Texas Legislature) amended TEC § 12.115 requiring the commissioner of education to revoke a charter if a charter school has failed to meet academic or financial accountability performance ratings for the three preceding school years. Prior to this change, the closure of charter schools relied on more permissive statutory language, and as a result, very few charters were closed. Statutory language was also added at that same time regarding the mandatory expiration of charter contracts for poor performance (See TEC § 12.1141). This legislative change is important because the closing of poor-performing charter school campuses, and the subsequent removal of these campuses from the comparative analyses presented in this report, impacts aggregate results for charter school campuses.53

53 Prior to this change, charter schools were shut down through a voluntary closure procedure. Since this change, 26 charter schools have been closed under these new provisions.
References


Appendix A: Methodological Detail

This appendix includes technical details associated with the propensity score matching (PSM) techniques used to match comparable campuses from traditional school districts to charter school campuses included in this study, and technical details related to the calculation of the various performance metrics included in this report.

Detail Related to PSM Techniques

Below, we explain the PSM procedures employed in this study and provide a rationale for the approach. This appendix also includes a list of variables used in PSM algorithm and a formal description of procedure, including formulae. Texas Education Code (TEC) § 12.1013(b)(4), 2016, requires a comparison of charter school campuses by authorizer type with matched traditional campuses. The Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) requested the vendor to use a statistical matching procedure to identify traditional public school campuses that resemble charter school campuses based on publicly available school characteristics, such as the ethnic composition of the campus, and the percentage of students who participate in supplemental programs that serve the needs of certain subgroups. Importantly, the intent of the matching procedure specified in the RFP is not to produce inferences about the relative effectiveness of charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses but, rather, to select traditional public school campuses that have similar student enrollment profiles in order to generate comparative descriptive statistics for several measures of campus performance.

The matching procedure is not being used in this manner because matching procedures are designed to estimate a treatment effect associated with some treatment condition ($D=1$, or the campus is a charter school campus) by constructing a counterfactual condition among non-treated units ($D=0$, or the school is a traditional public school campus) and comparing differences in some outcome between the treated units and the matched non-treated units. Implicit to this is the requirement that a unit (i.e., a campus) could have been placed into the counterfactual condition. However, for this project, because matching is performed at the campus-level, the counterfactual (i.e., a traditional public school campus that resembles a charter school campus) is an unrealizable condition even after balancing on all available covariates: a traditional public school campus cannot be a charter school campus, nor can a charter school campus be a traditional public school campus.

Keeping this in mind, we used propensity scores to identify “demographic peer” traditional public school campuses for each charter school campus. We did not use lagged outcome measures in the propensity

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54 Or, as Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983) stipulate, every unit should have a non-zero probability of being in either condition.
55 It is possible, however, to assess the impact of attending a charter school campus on student outcomes using student-level records, but it is beyond the scope of this project. For instance, with student-level records, in Rapaport et al. (2014), students who attended a charter school campus were compared against matched students who did not attend a charter school campus, but who attended a school that was a feeder to new charter school campuses.
56 This is approach is not dissimilar to the use of propensity score matching to identify “fiscal peers” in the Financial Allocation Study of Texas (FAST). The appendix describing the rationale and implementation of this approach can be found at [http://www.txsmartschools.org/pdf/2014/fast-2014-methodology.pdf](http://www.txsmartschools.org/pdf/2014/fast-2014-methodology.pdf).
score algorithm. In the 2012–13 Charter Authorizer Report published by TEA, 40 matched traditional public school campuses were selected for each charter school campus with no documented constraints imposed on the similarity between the matched and charter campuses based on each campus’s propensity score. We imposed two constraints on the selection of campuses with this procedure. First, we only selected traditional public school campus matches with a propensity score within 0.2 standard deviations of each charter school campus. Second, a constraint on the maximum number of traditional campuses (N=10) matched to each charter school campus was imposed based on discussions with TEA staff to limit the number of matches to a sufficient amount.

Matching Procedure

To identify measurably similar traditional public school campuses, the research team used nearest neighbor matching (NNM) in conjunction with a propensity score and a caliper of 0.2 standard deviations to find the N most similar traditional public school campuses to charter school campuses. This method is performed in two stages, following the procedures and notation of Becker and Ichino (2002):

**Step 1: Fit a logistic regression**:

\[
Pr(D_i = 1 | X_i) = \Phi[h(X_i)]
\]  
(1)

Where \( \Phi \) is the propensity score, and \( h(X_i) \) is a vector of 2016–17 campus-level \( (i) \) covariates.

The following campus-level covariates were included in the logistic regression to estimate the propensity score:

- Primary campus enrollment type (e.g., elementary, middle, or high school)
- Student enrollment count
- Percentage of historically underrepresented racial minorities (i.e., Hispanic and African American students)
- Percentage of economically disadvantaged students
- Percentage of students receiving Special Education services
- Average years of experience of teachers
- Student mobility rates
- Percentage of students who are English Language Learners (ELL)s

57 This is because we are attempting to find demographic peers for descriptive purposes, not matched comparison schools to generate quasi-experimental estimates of the impact of attending a charter school campus on student outcomes. Including lagged outcome measures in the propensity score model may unintentionally mislead the report’s audience into the belief that the intention of the comparisons between charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses is to make inferences about the contribution of a charter school to students’ academic performance, since the inclusion of lagged outcome measures is designed to account for pre-intervention characteristics that may influence the placement into the treatment group. Additionally, in using the prior year’s performance data as a part of the matching process, we may drop out newer charter school campuses that do not have data available for these performance measures.

58 The FAST study uses a similar criterion for selecting peer campuses and districts, though, in the first stage, they use a caliper of two standard deviations of a propensity score to select up to 40 matched campuses within this band. If fewer than 40 campuses are available within this band, all campuses within the respective stratum are selected.

59 Because public school campuses, and more commonly charter school campuses, may serve grades that cross traditional grade spans (K–5 for elementary, 6–8 for middle school, and 9–12 for high school), campuses were categorized as “primarily” elementary, middle, or high schools based on the largest percentage of students in a particular grade span. These categorizations represent the 2016–17 grade spans; however, it should be noted that new charter school campuses regularly add additional grades as they mature.
Percentage at-risk

In TAPR, both the campus-level average years of experience of teachers have missing values. The reason for the missing values for teachers’ experience levels is currently unknown but appears to be a function of whether the campus has dedicated staff who are assigned to the campus, as opposed to sharing the staff with other schools within the district. To retain these variables in the matching procedure, and to incorporate information about the pattern of missingness between charter campuses and traditional public schools, dummy variable imputation will be used so that this variable can still be included in the propensity score algorithm and that campuses that are missing this information are not discarded. See Stuart (2011) for advocacy of this method for the estimation of propensity scores.

**Step 2: Find the nearest neighbors for each charter school campus within a 0.2 standard deviation caliper up to 10 matches:**

\[ C(i) = \left\| p_i - p_j \right\| \leq c_{2\sigma} \]  

In (2), we selected the non-treated units \((j)\) that satisfy the condition \((i) = \left\| p_i - p_j \right\| \leq c_{2\sigma}\). In other words, we selected the traditional public school campuses with the smallest propensity score within 0.2 standard deviations of the charter school campus. Matched campuses and their propensity scores are presented as supplemental information posted separately on the TEA website along with this report.

All descriptive analyses were performed between charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses, with unmatched traditional public schools discarded from the analytic dataset. All charter school campuses, however, were retained.60

Residential Treatment Facility campuses, DAEP campuses, and JJAEP campuses (both charter school and traditional school campuses) were excluded from the matching process and the analytic dataset that was used to report aggregate campus academic performance metrics for charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses.

**Detail Related to Performance Outcomes**

**Attrition Analysis**

The attrition rate developed for this project is defined as the percentage of students who did not return to the same campus in 2017–18 in which they were enrolled in 2016–17. This calculation, however, requires several adjustments to account for the grade-level pathways available to students at each campus. For instance, most middle school students enrolled in Grade 8 in 2016–17 will not advance to Grade 9 at the same campus since Grade 9 is not offered at their 2016–17 campus in 2017–18. A similar restriction

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60 These methodological choices will not, necessarily, produce complete balance with trivial, insignificant differences between charter schools and their matched peers on the covariates included in the algorithm. For instance, small numbers of eligible campuses from a given authorization type pool may be more imbalanced compared to a pool of charter campuses with a large number of eligible campuses. This imbalance may be exacerbated since charter school campuses (i.e., the treatment condition) with poor matches that did not resemble other charter campuses were retained in the analysis sample: put more formally, the common support condition was only imposed on traditional campuses, and not charter school campuses.
applies to students enrolled in Grade 12 in 2016–17. To account for these limitations, we impose the following inclusion criterion for students enrolled in Texas public schools in 2016–17:

1. Students enrolled at a campus and in a grade in 2016–17 that was the highest grade offered at the campus according to 2017–18 enrollment records will be removed from the attrition calculation;
2. Students in Grade 12 in 2016–17 will be excluded from the attrition calculation;
3. Students who attended school for less than two hours in a day in 2016–17 or 2017–18 and therefore were not considered to be in membership for purposes of calculating average daily attendance for funding purposes were excluded from the attrition calculation;
4. Students whose campus in 2016–17 is not active in 2017–18 will excluded from the attrition calculation.

Despite the research team’s best efforts to minimize the impact of systematic sources of student attrition due to structural factors at a given campus (e.g., students enrolled in the highest grade offered at a campus), students flagged as having attrited may have left for a variety of reasons unrelated to conditions at a given campus. For instance, students may have been homeschooled, or may have moved out of state (for full definitions and documentation guidelines for leaver reasons reported into PEIMS see code table c162 of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2016–17 Public Education Information Management System Post Addendum Version Data Standards (TEA, 2017) https://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/TEDS/1718A/PEIMS_Data_Standards/. Furthermore, some campuses (such as open-enrollment prekindergarten centers without neighborhood-based attendance zones) enroll students whose zoned home campus is different than the campus in which they are enrolled in a given year, while other campuses physically relocate, producing an attrition rate that is abnormally high. These considerations should be taken into account when evaluating a given school’s attrition rate.

**STAAR–Reading and Mathematics Results and End-of-Course Exam Results**

The percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade level standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for Grade 3–8 students. Thus, only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses. The percentage of students achieving the Approaches Grade level standards on the 2014–15 English I, English II, and Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) exams were calculated for students in Grades 9–12.

**TEA Performance Index Scores**

The Texas accountability system uses a performance index framework to combine a broad range of indicators into a comprehensive measure of campus and district performance. Index scores from the 2015 Accountability Ratings were used in the analyses described below. Results are presented for each of the four performance indices: 1) Student Achievement; 2) Student Progress; 3) Closing Performance Gaps; and 4) Postsecondary Readiness. For additional detail related to TEA performance index scores, please refer to the 2017 Accountability Manual.

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61 Retained students at the same campus were classified as having not attrited.
63 Approaches Grade Level refers to the passing standard on the STAAR-Reading and Mathematics exams and end-of-course exams.
64 https://tea.texas.gov/2017accountabilitymanual.aspx
1) **Index 1 Student Achievement**: measures campus and district performance based on satisfactory student achievement combined over all subjects for all students.

2) **Index 2 Student Progress**: measures student progress and provides an opportunity for districts and campuses to receive credit for improving student performance independent of the student’s pass/fail status on STAAR.

3) **Index 3 Closing Performance Gaps**: emphasizes advanced academic achievement of the economically disadvantaged student group and the lowest performing racial/ethnic student groups at each district and campus.

4) **Index 4 Postsecondary Readiness**: emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school and the importance of earning a high school diploma that prepares students for success in college, the workforce, job training programs, or the military.\(^{65}\)

For campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions, Index 4 is measured by a combination of performance at the STAAR postsecondary readiness standard (Achieved the Meets Grade Level standard), four- or five-year longitudinal high school graduation rates (or the Grade 9–12 annual dropout rate, if no graduation rate is available), four-year graduation plan rate (e.g. Distinguished Achievement Plan (RHSP/DAP), or percent RHSP/DAP and Foundation High School Plan Rate with Endorsement (FHSP-E) or Distinguished Level of Achievement (FHSP-DLA) graduates), and the percentage of annual graduates who are considered college- and career-ready. For campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, Index 4 is measured by STAAR performance at the Meets Grade Level standard and four-, five-, or six-year longitudinal rates for graduates, continuing students, and General Educational Development (GED) recipients. If a graduation rate is not available, the annual dropout rate is used.

For this analysis, campuses that did not receive a performance index score due to ineligibility were excluded only for the performance index for which they were ineligible. For accountability rating determination, if a campus did not have data to calculate its score for a performance index that campus was not required to meet performance standards for that index in order to receive an accountability rating. This campus would receive an accountability rating based on all required indices for which it has performance data. For example, a campus may not receive an index score because it had too few assessment results. Performance index scores range from 0 to 100, so results from the analyses in this report are presented on this scale as well.

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\(^{65}\) Index 4 for elementary and middle schools is based only on STAAR results since these campuses do not have data on graduation rates, graduation diploma plans or postsecondary indicators.
For each TEA performance index, TEA determined the following specific targets which campuses had to meet in order to have demonstrated acceptable performance on each index in 2016–17:

Table A.1. 2017 Accountability Performance Index Targets for Standard Accountability Campuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Index 1</th>
<th>Index 2</th>
<th>Index 3</th>
<th>Index 4</th>
<th>All Components</th>
<th>STAAR Component Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table A.2. 2017 Accountability Performance Index Targets for AEA Campuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Index 1</th>
<th>Index 2</th>
<th>Index 3</th>
<th>Index 4</th>
<th>Both Components</th>
<th>Graduation, Dropout Rate Component Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEA Charter Districts and Campuses</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Composite TEA Performance Index**

In order to rate the aggregate performance of campuses as required by TEC § 12.1013(d)(2), 2016, a composite index score for each campus included in the aggregate campus academic performance analyses was calculated. For the purposes of this analysis, the composite score is the sum of all TEA performance index scores calculated for a particular campus divided by the total number of index scores assigned to the campus. For example, if a campus had index scores for Index 1, 2 and 3, the sum of those scores would be divided by three to arrive at the composite index score for that campus. Composite index data included in this report are presented for comparative purposes only as no TEA performance threshold calculations for composite index scores have been established.

**Annual Dropout Rate and Longitudinal Graduation Rate**

The annual dropout rate is the percentage of students in a specified grade range who drop out of school during one school year. An annual dropout rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who drop out during a single school year by the cumulative number of students who enrolled during the same year. TEA uses the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) dropout definition (TEC § 39.051, 2004). Under this definition, a dropout is defined as a student who was enrolled in public school in Grades 7–8 for middle schools and Grades 9–12 for high schools during 2015–16 but did not return to public school in the fall of 2016–17, was not expelled, does not graduate, does not receive a high school equivalency certificate, does not continue school outside the public school system, does not begin college, or has not

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66 It is important to note that this composite score was calculated to meet the legislative requirement and is not intended to be used by TEA for accountability purposes.
died. The dropout rate was defined as an annual rate, as opposed to a longitudinal rate.\textsuperscript{67} Annual dropout data from 2015–16 were used for 2017 state accountability.

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2016 calculated for state accountability was used for this project.\textsuperscript{68} The class of 2016 Grade 9 four-year graduation rate was calculated by dividing the number of students who began Grade 9 in 2012–13 and graduated by August 31, 2016, by the total number of graduates, continuers, GED certificate recipients, and dropouts in the class. For schools evaluated under AEA standards, the graduation rate is modified to credit campuses for graduates, continuers, and GED certificate recipients. Longitudinal graduation data from the class of 2016 is used for 2017 state accountability.

Additionally, for both the annual dropout and longitudinal graduation rate, state statute specifies the following exceptions for attribution of records to campuses and districts for 2017 state accountability purposes:

- Under TEC § 39.053(g-1) (2016), a student who meets at least one of the following criteria is excluded from campus and district annual dropout and longitudinal rate calculations: (a) a student who is ordered by a court to attend a high school equivalency certificate program but has not earned a high school equivalency certificate; (b) a student previously reported to the state as a dropout; (c) a student in attendance but who is not in membership for purposes of average daily attendance (i.e., students for whom school districts are not receiving state Foundation School Program [FSP] funds); (d) a student whose initial enrollment in a school in the United States in Grades 7 through 12 was as an unschooled refugee or asylee as defined by TEC § 39.027(a-1); (e) a student who is in the district exclusively as a function of having been detained at a county detention facility but is otherwise not a student of the district in which the facility is located; or (f) a student who is incarcerated in a state jail or federal penitentiary as an adult or as a person certified to stand trial as an adult.

- Under TEC § 39.054(f) (2016), the dropout record for a student who fails to enroll in school after leaving a residential treatment facility or a pre- or post-adjudication facility is not attributed to the district serving the facility.

- Under TEC § 39.055 (2016), a student in a Texas Juvenile Justice Department facility served by a Texas public school district is not counted in campus or district rates if the student was in the facility as a result of a court order.

- Under TEC §39.053(g-2) (2016), a student who (a) is at least 18 years of age as of September 1 and has satisfied the credit requirements for high school graduation; (b) has not completed his or her individualized education program (IEP); and (c) is enrolled and receiving IEP services is excluded from longitudinal rate calculations.

\textsuperscript{67} For additional detail on annual dropout rates in Texas, see Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2015–16 (Texas Education Agency, 2017).

\textsuperscript{68} There is a one-year lag for the publication of graduation rates in TAPR.
Appendix B: Aggregate Performance on Additional STAAR Exams for Charter School Campuses by Authorizer Type Compared to Matched Traditional Public School Campuses

Figure B.1. Percent of Students Who Achieved the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the STAAR-Writing Exam (Grades 4 and 7) by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2016–17

Note: A total of 413 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 807 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 40 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 418 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.
Figure B.2. Percent of Students Who Achieved the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the STAAR-Science Exam (Grades 4 and 7) by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2016–17

Note: A total of 380 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 760 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 39 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 381 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.
Figure B.3. Percent of Students Who Achieved the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the STAAR-Social Studies Exam (Grade 8) by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2016–17

Note: A total of 229 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 224 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 24 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 109 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.
Figure B.4. Percent of Students Who Achieved the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Writing (Grade 4) and STAAR-Sciences (Grade 5) Exams for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses

Note: A total of 327 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 670 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 25 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 347 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.
Figure B.5. Percent of Students Who Achieved the Approaches Grade Level Standard on the 2016–17 STAAR-Writing (Grade 7) and STAAR-Sciences (Grade 8) Exams for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses

Note: A total of 117 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 220 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 18 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 111 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.
Appendix C: Campus-Level Performance Results

Appendix C includes aggregate performance results for all metrics presented in the body of this report for each charter school campus and their matched traditional public school campuses. For all campuses, the outcomes provided were weighted by the number of students at each campus and included in each of the performance calculations. For TEA performance index scores, the fall 2016 accountability snapshot enrollment count was used as the weight.