



TEXAS CHARTER AUTHORIZER ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2024–2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive Summary

Background

The first charter schools were established in the United States in 1991 to provide students with a tuition-free alternative to traditional public schools. Their purpose: to create additional flexibility and innovation in education. Minnesota was the first state to usher in charter schools, and other states quickly followed; charter schools now operate in 44 states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam. The number of charter schools operating nationally increased from 4,396 to 8,140 between the academic years 2007–08 and 2023–24. Student enrollment in charter schools also experienced substantial growth during that period, rising from about 1.3 million students in 2007–08 to more than 3.8 million students in 2023–24 (White, 2025).

Texas charter schools were first established in 1995 by the 74th Texas Legislature with the addition of Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 12. The state proposed charter schools as a means to improve student learning, increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system, create professional opportunities to attract new teachers to the public school system, and encourage different and innovative learning methods (TEC § 12.001, 2025). Texas charter schools are subject to fiscal and academic accountability, though they have fewer regulations than traditional public schools to encourage innovation and flexibility.

Five subchapters within TEC Chapter 12 (2025) codify the different types of charter schools in Texas:

- **Home-rule school district charter schools** (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter B, § § 12.011–12.030, 2025), which are not in existence to date;
- **Campus or campus program charter schools** (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C, § § 12.051–12.065, 2025), which are authorized by Texas Independent School District (ISD) school boards and serve students within the district;
- **Open-enrollment charter schools** (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter D, § § 12.101–12.141, 2025), which are authorized by the commissioner of education (COE), are operated by 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations or governmental entities, and can enroll students from any school district in Texas;
- **College, university, or junior college charter schools** (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter E, § § 12.151–12.156, 2025), which are authorized by the COE, are operated by institutions of higher education, and can enroll students from any school district in Texas; and
- **Adult high school charter schools** (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter G, § § 12.251–12.265, 2025), which are authorized by the COE and operated by 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations to provide services and instruction below the college level for adults.

Contemporary charter school legislation demonstrates the state’s effort to balance quality with growing charter school demand. In 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 2, which made significant changes to the state’s charter school legislation. The bill added TEC § 12.115 (a)–(d) (2025)—Charter Revocation or Modification of Governance—to the TEC, which placed charter schools under stricter financial and academic accountability expectations and enacted the requirement that the commissioner revoke a school’s charter should it fail to meet the stated accountability benchmarks for three consecutive years. Since the passage of SB 2 in 2013, 60 charter schools have closed, and the number of charters granted annually has decreased.^{1,2} SB 2 also increased the cap on the maximum number of

¹ In reports prior to the 2022–23 school year, the number of charter schools reported closed since the passage of SB 2 in 2013 inconsistently counted charter consolidations in the closure number. In some years, consolidations were reported as one charter closure, and in other years, consolidations were counted as multiple closures. Starting with the 2022–23 report, the reported number reflects consolidations as one charter closure (Texas Education Agency, Personal Communication, March 6, 2025).

² In the 2024–25 report, the total number of closures was updated to account for two additional closures in 2015 and 2024 that were not counted in previous reports.

open-enrollment charter schools from 215 to 305 by September 2019 (TEC § 12.101, 2025). Another significant change introduced in SB 2 was the transfer of authority in granting open-enrollment and university charters from the State Board of Education (SBOE) to the COE (TEC § 12.101 (a), 2025). The commissioner must still submit notification to the SBOE regarding which charters are proposed, and the SBOE may veto any new charter proposed within 90 days of the notification of the commissioner's decision (TEC § 12.101(b-0), 2025). Along with this change, the legislature added a requirement (TEC § 12.1013 (a)-(d), 2025) for a report on the performance of open-enrollment and university charter school campuses by authorizer type that compares the results of each with matched traditional public school campuses.

In 2017, the 85th Texas Legislature passed SB 1882, providing incentives to school districts to partner with open-enrollment charter schools and certain eligible entities to open campuses within their district.³ The bill provided two incentives to promote district partnerships with open-enrollment charter schools and eligible entities. The first was a two-year relief from campus sanctions imposed at schools with low academic performance; the second was access to potentially increased state funding. Both of these benefits incentivized districts to enter into partnerships with outside entities. Also in 2017, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 21, allowing public charter schools, for the first time in Texas, to receive up to \$60 million in state funding annually for facilities (TEC § 12.106 (d)-(2), 2025).

After a 2020 court ruling that nullified flexible provisions to address low-performing schools, the 87th Texas Legislature passed SB 1365 in 2021 to grant explicit authority for revocation, as well as a specific timeline for particular interventions and sanctions. Included in SB 1365 was language that made clear that *D* ratings in the state's academic rating system, in addition to *F* ratings, would make schools eligible for closure (TEC § 12.1141(b) and (d), 2025).

Overview of Texas Charter School Campuses

In the 2024–25 academic year, 9,084 Texas public school campuses were in operation. Approximately 12% (1,055) of those campuses were charter school campuses, including ISD-authorized charter school campuses and campuses operated by SBOE-authorized charter schools and COE-authorized charter schools. In 2024–25, most charter school campuses operated under SBOE-authorized charter schools (863).⁴ Additionally, 97 campuses were ISD-authorized, and 95 campuses operated under COE-authorized charter schools.⁵ A total of 489,894 students were enrolled in charter school campuses in 2024–25, representing approximately 9% of the 5,544,048 total students enrolled in Texas public schools.

The aggregate performance outcomes presented in this report include 813 campuses operated by SBOE-authorized charter schools, 97 ISD-authorized charter school campuses, and 91 campuses operated by COE-authorized charter schools.⁶

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

For the purposes of this report, charter schools and their respective campuses are categorized by their original authorizer. Campus or campus program charter schools are reported as ISD-authorized. Open-enrollment and college, university, or junior college charter school campuses are reported as SBOE-

3 SB 1882 Texas partnership schools are classified as ISD-authorized charter schools for the purposes of this report.

4 The 863 campuses associated with SBOE-authorized charter schools include campuses approved by the COE through the approval of expansion amendment requests to add new campuses under existing charter schools originally authorized by the SBOE.

5 Seven campuses newly operating as ISD-authorized (Subchapter C) campuses in 2024–25 were not yet identified as ISD-authorized campuses in time to be included in the report and therefore were not included in the report's counts or analyses. These campuses were either receiving Texas Partnership (SB 1882) benefits or a Charter School Program grant.

6 Residential treatment facilities (RTFs) at charter school campuses (SBOE-authorized charter schools n=50; COE-authorized charter schools n=4) and RTFs at traditional public school campuses (n=76), as well as traditional public school disciplinary alternative education programs (n=139) and traditional public school juvenile justice alternative education programs (n=138) are not included in the performance outcome reporting.

authorized or COE-authorized, depending on the year in which the charter schools were authorized; the COE replaced the SBOE as the state charter authorizer for open-enrollment and university charter schools in 2013. Since then, campus expansions for charters originally authorized by the SBOE are approved by the COE. To date, Texas does not have any home-rule school district charter schools on which to report. These findings—comparing SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses with matched traditional public school campuses—include aggregate outcome measures related to attrition; State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) exams; graduation rates; college, career, and military readiness (CCMR) outcomes, and accountability domain scores and overall accountability ratings.

Attrition Rates

For the purposes of this report, the attrition rate is defined as the percentage of students enrolled in the fall of 2024 who did not return to the same campus in the fall of 2025.⁷ The attrition rates for this report, along with the numerators and denominators, were provided by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for all active campuses for the 2024–25 school year.

SBOE-authorized charter school campuses reported higher overall attrition rates compared with their matched traditional public school campuses (23% vs. 22%). SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses reported the same attrition rate as matched traditional public elementary school campuses (23%). SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses (23% vs. 17%) and SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses (26% vs. 19%) reported higher attrition rates than matched traditional public middle and high school campuses. ISD-authorized charter school campuses also reported higher overall attrition rates than their matched traditional public school campuses (22% vs. 21%). The attrition rate at ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses was lower than matched traditional public elementary school campuses (20% vs. 22%); the rate was higher at ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses (18% vs. 16%) and charter high school campuses (26% vs. 18%) than matched traditional public school campuses.

STAAR Results

Analyzed in this report are the percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard and Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-Reading Language Arts (RLA) and STAAR-Mathematics exams taken by elementary and middle school students in Grades 3–8, the STAAR Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) exam taken by middle and high school students, and the STAAR English I and English II EOC exams taken by middle and high school students.^{8,9}

At SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, a higher percentage of students in Grades 3–8 achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR-RLA exams (78% vs. 76%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses, and a lower percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR English I EOC exam (69% vs. 71%) and STAAR English II EOC exam (72% vs. 74%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses. A higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-RLA exams (26% vs. 23%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses; a lower percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on the STAAR English I EOC exam (13% vs. 15%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses; and the same percentage of SBOE-authorized charter school and matched traditional public school students achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on the STAAR English II EOC exam (8%). At SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 67% of students taking the STAAR-Mathematics exams and 78% of students taking the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam met the Approaches Grade Level standard, compared with 68% and 83%, respectively, at matched traditional

⁷ See Appendix A for a detailed description of the attrition analysis.

⁸ The Approaches Grade Level standard is a STAAR performance level indicating that the student is likely to succeed in the next grade or course with targeted academic intervention. The Approaches Grade Level standard serves as the state's passing standard.

⁹ A more difficult achievement level to attain, the Masters Grade Level standard is a STAAR performance level descriptor indicating that the student is expected to succeed in the next grade or course with little or no academic intervention.

public school campuses. Lower percentages of students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-Mathematics exams (16% vs. 18%) and the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam (24% vs. 36%) compared with those at matched traditional public school campuses.

At ISD-authorized charter school campuses, 73% of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR-RLA exams compared with 76% of students at matched traditional public school campuses. For the STAAR English I exam, 69% of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard at ISD-authorized charter school campuses, compared with 64% of students at matched traditional public school campuses. For the STAAR English II EOC exam, 72% of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard at ISD-authorized charter school campuses, compared with 67% of students at matched traditional public school campuses. A higher percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-RLA exams than students at matched traditional public school campuses (24% vs. 20%). A higher percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on the STAAR English I EOC exam (13% vs. 10%) and the STAAR English II EOC exam (7% vs. 5%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses. At ISD-authorized charter school campuses, 63% of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR-Mathematics exams, compared with 68% of students at matched traditional public school campuses, and 75% of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam, compared with 82% at matched traditional public school campuses. A lower percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-Mathematics exams (15% vs. 17%) and the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam (25% vs. 34%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses.

Graduation Rates

SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions had a class of 2024 four-year longitudinal graduation rate of 96%, compared with 92% at matched traditional public school campuses. The four-year longitudinal graduation rate at ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions was 95%, compared with 91% at matched traditional public school campuses. Additionally, four-year longitudinal graduation rates for campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were examined; the graduation rate at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses was 69%, compared with 92% at matched traditional public school campuses. For ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions and their matched traditional public school campuses, the graduation rates were masked due to the limited number of campuses operating under these provisions and thus ineligible for this analysis.

College, Career, and Military Readiness Outcomes

Under TEC § 39.053(c) (2024), for accountability purposes, high school graduates can demonstrate readiness for college, a career, or the military through a number of achievements outlined in detail in Appendix A.

SBOE-authorized charter school campuses reported higher percentages of graduates on three CCMR outcomes compared with their matched traditional public school campuses: 73% of graduates met Texas Success Initiative (TSI) college readiness benchmarks in both RLA and mathematics, compared with 66% from matched traditional public school campuses; 39% of graduates met the criterion score on an Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exam in any subject area, compared with 21% from matched traditional public school campuses; and 8% of special education students graduated under an advanced diploma plan, compared with 6% from matched traditional public school campuses. Matched traditional public school campuses reported higher percentages of CCMR outcomes than SBOE-authorized charter school campuses for graduates earning dual course credits (41% vs. 19%); graduates earning an industry-based certification (35% vs. 11%); graduates earning a Level I or Level II certificate in any workforce education area (2% vs. <1%); graduates completing and earning credit for an English Language Arts (ELA) college prep course (29% vs. 23%); graduates completing and earning credit for a mathematics college prep course (31% vs. 28%); graduates completing an OnRamps dual enrollment course and earning at least three college credits (6% vs. 5%); graduates earning an associate's degree while

in high school (14% vs. 3%); and graduates completing an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and demonstrating workforce readiness (2% vs. 1%). The same percentage of graduates at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses (<1%) enlisted in the Armed Forces.

ISD-authorized charter school campuses reported higher percentages of graduates on two CCMR outcomes compared with their matched traditional public school campuses: graduates earning dual course credits (30% vs. 27%) and graduates earning a Level I or Level II certificate in any workforce education area (2% vs. 1%). ISD-authorized charter school campuses reported lower percentages than their matched traditional public school campuses for graduates satisfying the TSI college readiness benchmarks in both RLA and mathematics (58% vs. 62%); graduates earning industry-based certifications (23% vs. 37%); graduates completing and earning credit for an ELA college prep course (29% vs. 39%); graduates completing and earning credit for a mathematics college prep course (39% vs. 43%); graduates earning an associate's degree while in high school (5% vs. 6%); and graduates completing an IEP and demonstrating workforce readiness (1% vs. 3%). ISD-authorized charter school campuses reported the same percentages as matched traditional public school campuses for graduates meeting the criterion score on an AP or IB exam in any subject area (17%); graduates completing an OnRamps dual enrollment course and earning at least three college credits (8%); special education students graduating under an advanced diploma plan (7%); and graduates enlisting in the Armed Forces (<1%).

TEA Accountability Domain Scores

For SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, the average Student Achievement Domain score was 76, compared with 74 for matched traditional public school campuses. SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a lower average School Progress Domain, Academic Growth score than matched traditional public schools (74 vs. 77) but a higher average School Progress Domain, Relative Performance score than matched traditional public school campuses (77 vs. 75). SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses both had average scores of 80 for the Closing the Gaps Domain. Overall, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses averaged higher overall accountability rating scores than matched traditional public school campuses (81 vs. 80).

ISD-authorized charter school campuses had a higher average Student Achievement Domain score than matched traditional public school campuses (74 vs. 72); a lower average School Progress Domain, Academic Growth score compared with matched traditional public school campuses (75 vs. 77); a higher School Progress Domain, Relative Performance score than matched traditional public school campuses (77 vs. 75); and a higher average Closing the Gaps Domain score than matched traditional public school campuses (80 vs. 79). ISD-authorized charter school campuses averaged higher overall accountability rating scores than matched traditional public school campuses (81 vs. 79).

Key Findings for COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses

Aggregate outcome measures related to attrition, STAAR exams, CCMR outcomes, and accountability domain scores and overall accountability ratings were reported for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. Because of the small number of COE-authorized charter school campuses, aggregate outcome measures related to graduation rates were not reported.

Attrition Rates

The attrition rate for COE-authorized charter school campuses was 33%, compared with 21% at their matched traditional public school campuses.

STAAR Results

Analyzed in this report are the percentages of students achieving the Approaches Grade Level standard and Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-RLA and STAAR-Mathematics exams taken by elementary and middle school students in Grades 3–8, the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam taken by middle and high

school students, and the STAAR English I and English II EOC exams taken by middle and high school students.

At COE-authorized charter school campuses, lower percentages of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR-RLA exams (73% vs. 79%), the STAAR English I EOC exam (68% vs. 80%), and the STAAR English II EOC exam (70% vs. 80%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses. Lower percentages of students at COE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-RLA exams (21% vs. 26%), the STAAR English I EOC exam (13% vs. 22%), and the STAAR English II EOC exam (8% vs. 12%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses. At COE-authorized charter school campuses, lower percentages of students achieved the Approaches Grade Level standard on STAAR-Mathematics exams (60% vs. 71%) and the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam (75% vs. 84%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses. Likewise, lower percentages of students at COE-authorized charter school campuses achieved the Masters Grade Level standard on STAAR-Mathematics exams (12% vs. 22%) and the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam (21% vs. 31%) than students at matched traditional public school campuses.

College, Career, and Military Readiness Outcomes

COE-authorized charter school campuses reported higher percentages of graduates completing an OnRamps dual enrollment course (8% vs. 2%) and special education students graduating under an advanced diploma plan (5% vs. 4%) than matched traditional public school campuses. For all other CCMR outcomes, matched traditional public school campuses reported higher percentages of graduates than COE-authorized charter school campuses.

TEA Accountability Domain Scores

The average Student Achievement Domain score for COE-authorized charter school campuses was 67, compared with 75 for matched traditional public school campuses. When compared with their matched traditional public school campuses, COE-authorized charter school campuses had a lower average School Progress Domain, Academic Growth score (69 vs. 79), average School Progress Domain, Relative Performance score (63 vs. 75), and average Closing the Gaps Domain score (71 vs. 80). COE-authorized charter school campuses averaged lower overall accountability rating scores than matched traditional public school campuses (72 vs. 81).

Study Limitations

This report provides a detailed description of charter school campuses and matched traditional public school campuses intended for comparison of school types. While a combination of sampling techniques was used to identify demographically similar traditional public school campuses as the matched set for comparison, inferences regarding the performance of charter schools relative to traditional public schools cannot be made using this report. In order to suggest the performance of one type of school is consistently better or worse than another, statistical tools controlling for observed and unobserved characteristics influencing performance would need to be in place and inferential statistical analysis employed. Additionally, careful interpretation of the comparisons with COE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses provided in this report is necessary because of the small number of campuses in each category.

Because of the differences in STAAR performance standards, changes to the Texas Accountability Rating System, the award of new charters, and the expansion of existing charters over the years, comparisons with prior year published *Texas Charter Authorizer Accountability Reports* should be made with caution. In 2012, the state of Texas introduced a new standardized test, STAAR. Over the years since this annual report began, STAAR passing standards have been phased in or modified; its administration was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019–20; exam participation was below normal rates in 2020–21; and STAAR was redesigned and changed entirely to an online administration in 2022–23. In addition, a new A through F accountability rating system was introduced in 2018–19 for campuses and is refreshed approximately every five years. The changes over the years to STAAR exam and accountability system should be taken into consideration when comparing the results of this report to prior year reports.