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Texas Charter Authorizer Accountability Report, 2014-15

FOR THE TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

Charter Authorizer Accountability Report

2014–15 School Year

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List of Acronyms Used in this Report

Alternative Education Accountability (AEA)
Commissioner of Education (COE)
Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)
End-of-course (EOC)
English Language Learner (ELL)
Independent School District (ISD)
Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP)
Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)
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 Performance Reporting System (TPRS)
Texas Education Code (TEC)

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, 2016). Over the 1999–2000 to 2014–15 period, the number of charter schools operating across the country grew from approximately 1,500 to over 6,600, with steady annual growth over that time period. In line with the national growth in the number of charter schools in operation was the number of students enrolled in charter schools over the 1999–2000 (approximately 350,000) to 2013–14 (approximately 2.7 million) period (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2016). 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).

The 74th Texas Legislature passed state laws to authorize the creation of charter schools in 1995. 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). 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). 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). 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). Another type of charter, the home-rule district charter is allowable under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter B; 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 SBOE authorization to COE authorization).

For this report based on 2014–15 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 2014–15, a total of 679 charter school campuses were in operation, serving almost 262,000 students. This represents approximately eight percent of the public schools in Texas and five percent of the students enrolled in Texas public schools. The vast majority of the charter school campuses operating in 2014–15 (611, or 90%) were SBOE-authorized charter school campuses—this includes 45 charter school campuses which were residential treatment facilities (approximately 7%). A total of 66 charter school campuses (approximately 10%) were ISD-authorized charter school campuses. The authority to authorize open-enrollment charter schools was transferred from the SBOE to the commissioner of education starting with those beginning operations in 2014–15. Only two charter school campuses authorized by the commissioner of education (COE-authorized charter school campuses) served students during the 2014–15 school year.

A total of 566 open-enrollment charter school campuses operating under charter schools authorized by the SBOE, 66 charter school campuses authorized by ISDs, and two 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

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 2014–15 who did not return to that same campus in 2015–16); 2) percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 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); 3) Texas Education Agency (TEA) performance index scores (for Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness indices);² 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 2014.

¹ Residential treatment facilities operated at charter school campuses (n=45) and traditional public school campuses (n=61), Disciplinary Alternative Education Program campuses (n=157), and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program campuses (n=156) operated at traditional public school campuses are not included in the analytic dataset for the aggregate performance analyses.

² 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 2015–16 in which they were enrolled in 2014–15. This calculation, however, required several adjustments to account for the grade-level pathways available to students at each campus.

Higher attrition rates were observed at SBOE- (25% vs. 21%) and ISD-authorized (26% vs. 21%) 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 which were substantially higher for both SBOE- (35% vs. 16%) and ISD-authorized (33% vs. 16%) 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 and middle schools.

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

The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the 2014–15 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.³ The Level II Phase-in 1 standards on the 2014–15 English I, English II, and Algebra I exams were used for high school-level analyses.

SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a slightly higher percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standards on the 2014–15 STAAR-Reading (80% vs. 75%) and STAAR-Mathematics (72% vs. 69%) exams than their matched traditional public school campuses. ISD-authorized charter school campuses had a slightly lower percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standards on the 2014–15 STAAR-Mathematics compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (66% vs. 70%), but had a similar percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standards on the 2014–15 STAAR Reading exam (both 76%).

Differences in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standards on the STAAR-Reading and Mathematics exams were observed when data were disaggregated by school level. Lower passing rates were observed for ISD-authorized charter school campuses (versus their matched comparison campuses) at the elementary school level (68% vs. 74% for reading, and 61% vs. 71% for mathematics), but higher passing rates were found at the high school level on the English I and II and Algebra I EOC exams (82% vs. 68% for English I, 82% vs. 71% for English II, and 82% vs. 75% for Algebra I). School-level differences for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses followed a different pattern with a slightly higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standards at the elementary school level (79% vs. 75% for reading, and 72% vs. 71% for mathematics), but lower passing rates at the high school level on the English I and II and Algebra I EOC exams (65% vs. 69% for English I, 65% vs. 71% for English II, and 68% vs. 76% for Algebra I).

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

³ Results for the STAAR-Mathematics were derived from a different source (the Texas Performance Reporting System) than other outcomes (derived from Texas Academic Performance Reports), because they were not used to determine campus accountability ratings since the standard had not been established when ratings were issued.

2015 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).⁴

Differences in TEA performance index scores for the Student Achievement, Student Progress, and Closing Performance Gaps were not materially different between SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses (evaluated under standard accountability provisions) and their matched comparison campuses. However, postsecondary readiness index scores were higher for SBOE- (46 vs. 38) and ISD-authorized (48 vs. 37) charter school campuses than matched traditional public school campuses. Composite TEA index scores (which include all index scores available for a particular campus) for charter school campuses, evaluated under standard accountability provisions, were somewhat higher for both SBOE-authorized (51 vs. 47) and ISD-authorized (51 vs. 46) charter school campuses than those of their matched comparison campuses.

For each of the four TEA performance indices, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under alternative education accountability (AEA) provisions posted higher scores than their matched traditional public school campuses: Student Achievement (59 vs. 52); Student Progress (22 vs. 19); Closing Performance Gaps (31 vs. 25); and Postsecondary Readiness (92 vs. 86). In contrast, ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted consistently lower scores than their matched traditional public school campuses on the four indices: Student Achievement (35 vs. 64); Student Progress (16 vs. 20); Closing Performance Gaps (20 vs. 34); and Postsecondary Readiness (82 vs. 97). ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted composite performance index scores lower than their matched traditional public school campuses (40 vs. 55), while SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were comparable to their matched traditional public school campuses (49 vs. 50).

Annual Dropout Rates

Dropout rates were small and not materially different between SBOE- (both 0.3%) and ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses (0.4% vs. 0.3%) 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 (5.6% vs. 2.0%) and ISD-authorized (5.6% vs. 1.8%) 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.⁵ The Grade 9 four-year graduation rate for the class of 2014 is defined as the percentage of the

⁴ Refer to the 2015 Texas Accountability Manual for additional detail about the TEA performance indices: <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/account/2015/manual/manual.pdf>.

⁵ There is a one-year lag for the publication of graduation rates in TAPR.

class of students who began Grade 9 in Texas public schools in 2010–11 that graduated by August 31, 2014.

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate was eight percentage points lower for both SBOE-authorized (83% vs. 91%) and ISD-authorized (84% vs. 92%) charter school campuses compared to 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.

The most severe study limitations are related to comparison of results for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. The lack of comparability is driven by the fact that just two COE-authorized charter school campuses were available to be included in the analysis, and the campuses served different grade spans (i.e., one campus served K–3 students and the other served only students in Grade 6 in 2014–15). Because of the lack of comparability between the COE-authorized charter school campus group and the group of matched traditional public school campuses, and due to the other reasons outlined above, the COE-authorized charter school campus comparisons are presented separately from analyses for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and should be viewed only as exploratory. More in-depth analyses of COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses may be feasible when a larger group of these charter school campuses is operational.

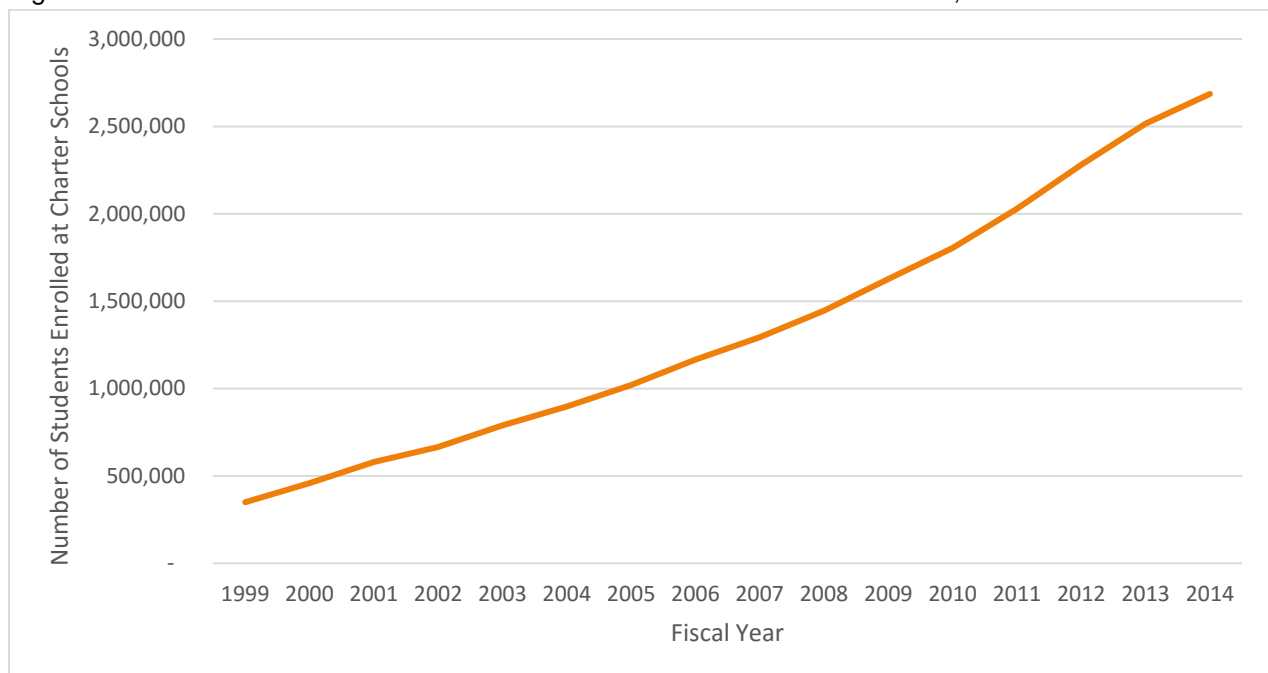
Section 1: Introduction

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 42 of the 50 states (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Between the 1999–2000 and 2014–15 school years, the number of charter schools operating in the United States grew from about 1,500 to over 6,600.

In line with the national growth in the number of charter schools in operation was the number of students enrolled in charter schools between 1999–2000 and 2014–15. In 1999–2000, just under 350,000 students were enrolled in charter schools in the United States. Charter school student enrollment rose to almost 1.3 million in 2006–07 and to just under 2.7 million in 2013–14 (Figure 2.2).⁶

Figure 1.1. Number of Students Enrolled in Charter Schools in the United States, 1999–2000 to 2013–14



Source: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2016.

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 (Baude et al., 2014). For instance, in Texas, Baude et al. (2014) provide evidence of selective closure of chronically low-performing charter schools, persistence of high-performing charter management organizations, and

⁶ National enrollment data for 2014–15 were not available.

improvements in the quality of charter schools that survive, finding that these processes raised the aggregate effectiveness of charter schools compared to traditional public schools.

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 2001.⁷ 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 (TEC § 12.101 (b-1)-(b-2)). Since the 2003–04 school year, the number of charter school campuses had risen to 588 in 2013–14 serving 203,972 students in Texas.⁸

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), 2016). The responsibility for authorizing charter schools was transferred from the State Board of Education (SBOE) to the commissioner of education (COE).⁹ Generation 18 was the first cohort of open-enrollment charter schools that were authorized by the COE, and they began operation in 2014–15.¹⁰ While four open-enrollment charter schools were recommended by the COE for 2014–15, the SBOE vetoed one and one did not open in 2014–15, leaving two operational for the 2014–15 school year.

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 April 2016.

Research Methods

Charter schools authorized by SBOE or the COE are categorized as open-enrollment charter schools, which are operated by public or non-public institutions of higher education, tax-exempt organizations

⁷ See HB 6 passed by the 77th Texas Legislature.

⁸ For additional information, please review the TEA Snapshot Report at <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/snapshot/2014/index.html>.

⁹ TEC § 12.101 (b-0) 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 have been authorized in sequential cohorts referred to as Generations. Generation 18 was the first group approved by the commissioner of education.

classified as 501(c)(3)s under the Internal Revenue Code, and governmental entities (TEC Chapter 12, Subchapters D and E). Open-enrollment charter school campuses operated by 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). 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). 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). Another type of charter, the home-rule district charter is allowable under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter B; however, no home-rule district charter schools are currently in operation.

For this report based on 2014–15 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.

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 as approved through their original application for a charter or any subsequent amendment(s) to the charter. 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, and the same performance metrics under TEC § 39.053 apply (e.g., dropout and graduation rates). In addition, charter school campuses are required to implement the same Texas Essential of Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as traditional public schools, and students enrolled at charter school campuses are required to take the same State of Texas Assessment 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 a number of 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 2014–15 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 2014–15 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. Texas Performance Reporting System (TPRS) data were used to obtain passing rates on the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) for mathematics.¹¹

Last, the evaluation team used student-level data from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) from 2014–15 and 2015–16 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.¹² Prior year assessment scores and other performance measures were not used in the propensity score algorithm. The following campus-level variables used for matching:¹³

- Campus enrollment type (i.e., elementary, middle, or secondary)
- Student enrollment count
- Percentage of historically underrepresented racial/ethnic minorities (Hispanic and Black 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 ELL

¹¹ STAAR-Mathematics results were not published in the TAPR in 2014–15. A rewrite of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for mathematics resulted in a delay in the 2014–15 performance standards for STAAR-Mathematics. As a result, both 2014–15 Accountability performance indices and 2014–15 TAPR reports excluded STAAR-Mathematics. Performance data on STAAR-Mathematics instead were released with the Texas Performance Reporting System (TPRS), after standards were set and performance results were calculated.

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.

- Percentage of students identified as at-risk of dropping out of school¹⁴

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 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 2014–15 and 2015–16 were used to calculate campus-level attrition rates for 2014–15. The attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return in 2015–16 to the same campus in which they were enrolled in 2014–15. This calculation, however, required several adjustments to account for the grade-level pathways available to students at each campus.¹⁵ 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 2014–15 and 2015–16. For example, most middle school students enrolled in Grade 8 in 2014–15 did not advance to Grade 9 at the same campus because Grade 9 was not offered at their 2014–15 campus in 2015–16. Similarly, Grade 12 students in 2014–15 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

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 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.

¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ To adjust for these limitations, the following exclusion criteria for students enrolled in Texas public schools in 2014–15 were imposed:¹⁷

- 1) Students enrolled at a campus and in a grade in 2014–15 that was the highest grade offered at the campus according to 2015–16 enrollment records were removed from the attrition calculation;
- 2) Students in Grade 12 in 2014–15 were excluded from the attrition calculation;
- 3) Students who attended school for less than two hours in a day in 2014–15 or 2015–16 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;¹⁸ and
- 4) Students whose campus in 2014–15 was not active in 2015–16 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 meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 passing standard on the 2014–15 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for Grade 3–8 students.¹⁹ Thus, only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses.²⁰

The percentages of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 passing standard 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

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 of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) 2014–15 Public Education Information Management System Post Addendum Version Data Standards (TEA, 2015)). 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, 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 student attendance accounting handbook for details on membership:

<http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769814325&libID=25769814370>

¹⁹ Level II Phase-in 1 refers to the passing standard for Satisfactory Academic Performance on the STAAR exam.

²⁰ Results for the STAAR-Mathematics assessment were derived from a different source (the Texas Performance Reporting System) than other outcomes in the report (derived from TAPR), because STAAR-Mathematics results were not used to determine campus and district accountability ratings in 2015.

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 2015 Texas Accountability Manual.²¹

- 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 by subject and reports results by student demographics: race/ethnicity, ELLs, and special education program participation.
- 3) *Index 3 Closing Performance Gaps*: Emphasizes the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students and the two lowest performing racial/ethnic student groups. The specific racial/ethnic groups are identified by campus based on prior year (2014) assessment results.
- 4) *Index 4 Postsecondary Readiness*: Emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school and also emphasizes 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.²²

For campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions, Index 4 is measured by a combination of performance at the STAAR postsecondary readiness standard (Level II at the final standard), four- or five-year longitudinal high school graduation rates, the diploma program under which students graduate (e.g., Recommended High School Program, Distinguished High School Program), 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 postsecondary readiness 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.²³ 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 2014-15 performance index targets.

Composite TEA Performance Index

In order to rate the aggregate performance of campuses as required by TEC § 12.1013(d)(2), a composite index score for each campus included in the aggregate campus academic performance analyses was calculated.²⁴ For the purposes of this analysis, the composite score is the sum of all TEA

²¹ <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/account/2015/manual/manual.pdf>

²² 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.

²³ 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.

²⁴ 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.

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.²⁵

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 2013–14 but did not return to public school in the fall of 2014–15, 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.²⁶ Annual dropout data from 2013–14 were used for 2015 state accountability.

Longitudinal Graduation Rate

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2014 calculated for state accountability was used for this project.²⁷ The class of 2014 Grade 9 four-year graduation rate was calculated by dividing the number of students who began Grade 9 in 2010–11 and graduated by August 31, 2014, by the total number of graduates, continuers, GED certificate recipients, and dropouts in the class. Longitudinal graduation data from the class of 2014 is used for 2015 state accountability.²⁸

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 2014 campus enrollment data are used for weighting purposes. Weighting for all other metrics is based on the number of students included in the calculation for a specific metric (e.g., percent of students meeting state passing standard on 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 20 enrolled students who took the STAAR-Reading exam would contribute less to the

²⁵ 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 For additional detail on annual dropout rates in Texas, see *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2014–15* (Texas Education Agency, 2016).

²⁷ There is a one-year lag for the publication of graduation rates in TAPR.

²⁸ 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 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.²⁹

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- 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. 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.

The most severe study limitations are related to the comparison of results for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. It is important to note that the demographic characteristics between COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses appear dissimilar because the two COE-authorized charter school campuses in operation in the 2014–15 school year were quite different from one another: one served students in Grades K–3 (with 42 Grade 3 students contributing to outcomes data reported in TAPR) and was matched with three traditional public school campuses, while the other COE-authorized campus in operation in 2014–15 served 77 Grade 6 students (at a Grade 6 only campus) and was matched with 10 traditional public school campuses. The propensity scores for the three traditional public school campuses matched to the formerly mentioned COE-authorized charter school campus and the 10 traditional public school campuses matched to the latter COE-authorized campus met all established matching criteria.³⁰ However, when these two COE-authorized charter school campuses were combined as one COE-authorized charter school campus group as required by TEC §12.1013(d)(1) (2016), the comparability of the two charter school campuses and their combined 13 matched traditional public school campuses was diminished. Because of the diminished comparability between the COE-authorized charter school campus group and the group of matched traditional public school campuses, and due to the other reasons outlined above, the COE-authorized charter school campus comparisons should be

²⁹ 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.

³⁰ Refer to Appendix A for a detailed explanation of the propensity score matching procedures.

viewed only as exploratory. 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.

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 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 to recommend revocation of 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, charter schools closed through a voluntary closure procedure. Since this change, 20 charter schools have been closed under these new provisions. 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 two COE-authorized charter school campuses were in operation in 2014–15 and included in the analyses. 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 2014–15. 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.³¹

³¹http://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 8,646 Texas public school campuses operational in Texas during 2014–15, a total of 679 (approximately 8%) 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=611), including 45 charter school campuses which provided residential treatment services to students in 2014–15. There were a total of 66 ISD-authorized charter school campuses and two COE-authorized charter school campuses operational in 2014–15.

Texas Public Schools

A total of 347 (51%) charter school campuses were categorized as elementary school campuses, while 118 (17%) were categorized as middle school campuses, and 214 (32%) were categorized as high schools.³² A slightly larger proportion of traditional public school campuses were classified as elementary schools (4,529, or 57%), while there were 1,651 (21%) traditional public middle school campuses, and 1,787 (22%) traditional public high school campuses operational in 2014–15 (Table 2.1).

It is important to note that a total of 157 DAEP campuses (14 elementary schools, 28 middle schools, and 115 high schools), 156 JJAEP campuses (128 high schools and 28 middle schools), and 61 residential treatment facilities (serving primarily high school students) are included in the 7,967 traditional public school campuses reported for 2014–15 (Table 2.1). There were no charter school campuses that were DAEPs or JJAEPs; however, 45 charter school campuses were operating as residential treatment facilities (four elementary schools, three middle schools, and 38 high schools) and are included in the 679 Texas charter school campuses reported in Table 2.1.

³² 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 2014–15 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, 2014–15

Campus Type	School Type			Total
	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	
Type of Charter School Campus				
SBOE-Authorized, not Residential Treatment Facilities ^a	319	98	149	566
ISD-Authorized ^b	23	16	27	66
COE-Authorized, not Residential Treatment Facilities ^c	1	1	0	2
SBOE-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities	4	3	38	45
ISD-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities	0	0	0	0
Total Number of Charter School Campuses	347	118	214	679
Type of Traditional Public School Campus				
Traditional Public School Campuses	4,511	1,590	1,492	7,593
DAEP Campuses ^d	14	28	115	157
JJAEP Campuses ^e	0	28	128	156
Residential Treatment Facilities	4	5	52	61
Total Number of Traditional Public Schools	4,529	1,651	1,787	7,967
Total Number of Public School Campuses in Texas	4,876	1,769	2,001	8,646

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

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.³³ AEA campuses are evaluated under separate AEA provisions due to the large number of students served in alternative education programs on alternative education campuses. As Table 2.2 shows, there were 307 non-residential treatment facility campuses (of which 288 are high school campuses) which were evaluated under AEA provisions in 2014–15 (114 charter school campuses and 193 traditional public school campuses). A total of 105 non-residential charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and nine were ISD-authorized charter school campuses.

³³ 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, 2014–15

Campus Type	AEA ^d Campuses, Non-Residential Treatment Facilities						
	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Total
SBOE-Authorized ^a	3	7	95	0	3	37	145
ISD-Authorized ^b	0	1	8	0	0	0	9
COE-Authorized ^c	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Number of AEA Charter School Campuses	3	8	103	0	3	37	154
Traditional Public School Campuses	0	8	185	0	0	0	193
Residential Treatment Facilities	0	0	0	0	5	42	47
Total Number of AEA Traditional Public School Campuses	0	8	185	0	5	42	240
Total Number of AEA Schools in Texas	3	16	288	0	8	79	394

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15

Note: ^aSBOE = State Board of Education. ^bISD = Independent School District. ^cCOE = commissioner of education.

^dAEA = Alternative Education Accountability.

Student Enrollment

A total of 261,733 students, or about 5% of Texas public school students, were enrolled at charter school campuses during the 2014–15 school year. The vast majority of students enrolled at Texas charter school campuses (85%, or 223,238) were at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, while 33,906 were enrolled at ISD-authorized charter school campuses. Just 353 students were enrolled at the two COE-authorized charter school campuses in 2014–15 (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3. Student Enrollment in Texas Public School Campuses by School Type, 2014–15

Campus Type	School Type			Total
	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	
Type of Charter School Campus				
SBOE-Authorized ^a	141,983	37,232	44,023	223,238
ISD-Authorized ^b	12,757	8,015	13,134	33,906
COE-Authorized ^c	276	77	0	353
SBOE Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities	137	209	3,890	4,236
ISD-Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities	0	0	0	0
Total Number of Students Enrolled in Charter School Campuses	155,153	45,533	61,047	261,733
Type of Traditional Public School Campus				
Traditional Public School Campuses	2,490,525	1,083,683	1,370,157	4,944,365
DAEP ^d Campuses	146	783	4,658	5,587
JJAEP ^e Campuses	0	83	737	820
Residential Treatment Facilities	308	141	2,328	2,777
Total Number of Students Enrolled in Traditional Public Schools	2,490,979	1,084,690	1,377,880	4,953,549
Total Number of Students Enrolled in Texas Schools	2,646,132	1,130,223	1,438,927	5,215,282

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

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.

A total of 45,017 students in Texas were enrolled at campuses evaluated under AEA provisions during 2014–15, of which 26,116 (58%) were enrolled at charter school campuses and 18,901 (42%) attended a traditional public school campus. Students attending SBOE-authorized charter school campuses (20,346) accounted for the vast majority of students enrolled at AEA charter school campuses (as opposed to other types of campuses), while the 16,849 students enrolled at traditional public school campuses accounted for most of the students enrolled at AEA traditional public schools. In addition, high school students made up the largest proportion of students enrolled at AEA charter school campuses (23,375, or 90%) and AEA traditional public school campuses (17,351, or 92%) (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. Student Enrollment in Texas Public School Campus Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, by School Type, 2014–15

Campus Type	School Type			Total
	Elementary School ^d	Middle School	High School	
Type of Charter School Campus				
SBOE-Authorized ^a	990	1,358	17,998	20,346
ISD-Authorized ^b	0	184	1,581	1,765
COE-Authorized ^c	0	0	0	0
SBOE Authorized, Residential Treatment Facilities	0	209	3,796	4,005
Total Number of Students Enrolled in AEA Charter School Campuses	990	1,751	23,375	26,116
Type of Traditional Public School Campus				
Public School Campuses	0	1,409	15,440	16,849
Residential Treatment Facilities	0	141	1,911	2,052
Total Number of Students Enrolled in AEA Traditional Public School Campus	0	1,550	17,351	18,901
Total Number of Students Enrolled in AEA Texas Schools	990	3,301	40,726	45,017

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15

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

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 (58% vs. 52%), African-American (20% 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 (65% vs. 52%), African-American (17% vs. 12%), and economically disadvantaged (74% vs. 58%) students than traditional public school campuses.

Table 2.5. Demographic Characteristics of Students Enrolled in Texas Public School Campuses, 2014–15

	Traditional Public School Campuses	Traditional Public School DAEP Campuses ^a	Traditional Public School JJAEP Campuses ^a	Traditional Public School Residential Treatment Facilities	SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses	SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses – Residential Treatment Facilities ^b	COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses	ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses
Number of Students	4,944,365	5,587	820	2,777	223,238	4,236	353	33,906
Race/Ethnicity								
African American	12.2%	25.2%	18.0%	19.0%	20.1%	20.1%	9.9%	16.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0%	0.3%
Asian	3.9%	0.8%	0.9%	0.4%	4.6%	0.2%	2.0%	2.3%
Hispanic	51.6%	60.5%	60.7%	50.4%	57.9%	48.9%	46.4%	65.3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0%	0.1%
Two or more races	2.0%	1.6%	1.2%	1.9%	1.6%	1.9%	4.0%	1.1%
White	29.6%	11.3%	18.5%	27.7%	15.3%	28.3%	37.6%	14.0%
Other Student Characteristics								
At-Risk	51.0%	96.9%	96.0%	87.9%	49.9%	94.0%	38.5%	54.8%
Economically Disadvantaged	58.2%	73.1%	65.6%	53.1%	68.7%	89.8%	51.2%	74.4%
English Language Learner	18.0%	14.3%	12.3%	8.2%	21.8%	14.1%	21.5%	19.5%
Special Programs								
Career and Technical Education	23.8%	30.1%	12.1%	21.1%	10.0%	36.2%	0% ^c	11.1%
Special Education	8.6%	16.1%	19.6%	25.3%	6.1%	26.3%	4.8%	4.9%

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15

Note: ^a There are no DAEP or JJAEP charter school campuses. ^b There are no COE- or ISD-authorized charter school campus residential treatment facilities.

^c Career and Technical Education is only available at the high school level. There are no COE-authorized charter school campuses serving high school student

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. In this section, the results are aggregated across school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, high school) for two of the charter authorizer types and their matched traditional public school campuses.³⁴

Results for the following aggregate performance metrics are presented in this section: 1) attrition rate; 2) percent of students meeting the Level II, Phase-in 1 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.

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.³⁵

³⁴ Exploratory analyses related to the two charter school campuses authorized by the commissioner of education and operational in 2014–15 (COE-authorized charter school campuses) are reported in Section 5 of this report.

³⁵ 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 2 of this report.

Campuses Included in the Aggregate Performance Analyses

A total of 461 SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and 1,018 matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were included in the aggregate performance analyses. As Table 3.1 shows, only minor differences in race/ethnicity were observed between these two campus groups. The SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had a comparable percentage of Hispanic (57% vs. 58% for the matched traditional public school campuses) and Asian students (5% vs. 4% for the matched traditional public school campuses), slightly more African-American students (20% vs. 16% for the matched traditional public school campuses), and a slightly lower percentage of White students (15% 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, 2014–15

	SBOE- Authorized Charter School Campuses	Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to SBOE- Authorized Charter School Campuses	ISD- Authorized Charter School Campuses	Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses
Number of Schools	461	1,018	57	510
Race/Ethnicity				
African American	20.4%	16.3%	15.8%	15.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%
Asian	5.0%	3.5%	2.4%	2.9%
Hispanic	57.2%	57.9%	65.5%	57.5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
White	15.3%	19.8%	14.6%	22.0%
Two or more races	1.6%	1.7%	1.1%	1.6%
Other Student Characteristics				
At-Risk	45.9%	56.6%	52.6%	54.6%
Economically Disadvantaged	67.9%	67.0%	74.3%	66.4%
English Language Learner	22.2%	23.1%	18.7%	22.2%
Program Participation				
Career and Technical Education	7.3%	17.3%	10.1%	17.3%
Special Education	5.8%	8.2%	4.8%	8.1%
Total Students	202,892	571,148	32,141	274,591

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15

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.

While comparable percentages of students identified as economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners (ELL), and special education students were enrolled in SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, the percentage of students identified as at-risk 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-six percent of students enrolled in SBOE-authorized charter school campuses were identified as at-risk, and 7% were classified in the CTE program, compared to 57% and 17%, respectively, at the matched traditional public school campuses.

A total of 57 ISD-authorized charter school campuses and 510 matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were included in the aggregate performance analyses. Some meaningful 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 (66% vs. 58% for the matched traditional public school campuses), and a smaller percentage of White students (15% vs. 22% 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) and the percentage of students participating in the CTE program (10% vs. 17% 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 105 SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and 58 matched traditional public school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions were included in the aggregate performance analyses. As Table 3.2 shows, the race/ethnicity composition of the 105 SBOE-authorized charter school campuses was very similar to that of their matched traditional public school campuses. However, some modest differences were observed in at-risk status (90% of SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 94% of matched traditional public school campuses), ELL status (17% of SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 20% of matched traditional public school campuses), special education status (9% of SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 15% of matched traditional public school campuses), and CTE participation status (37% of SBOE-authorized charter school campuses vs. 31% of matched traditional public school campuses).

Nine ISD-authorized charter school campuses and 23 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 students and White students (61% vs. 64% and 4% vs. 21%, respectively), and a larger percentage of African-American students (33% vs. 11%) enrolled at ISD-authorized charter school campuses.

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. 89% at matched traditional public school campuses), 33% were classified as ELL (vs. 14% at matched comparison campuses), and 76% were classified as economically disadvantaged (vs. 61% at matched comparison 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, 2014–15

	SBOE- Authorized Charter School Campuses	Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to SBOE- Authorized Charter School Campuses	ISD- Authorized Charter School Campuses	Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to ISD- Authorized Charter School Campuses
Number of Schools	105	58	9	23
Race/Ethnicity				
African American	17.0%	16.9%	33.4%	11.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%
Asian	0.5%	1.0%	0.7%	1.0%
Hispanic	65.4%	64.4%	61.4%	64.4%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
White	15.5%	16.4%	3.5%	21.4%
Two or more races	1.0%	0.8%	0.5%	1.2%
Other Student Characteristics				
At-Risk	89.5%	94.0%	94.9%	89.4%
Economically Disadvantaged	76.2%	75.1%	75.5%	60.7%
English Language Learner	16.9%	20.4%	33.3%	14.4%
Program Participation				
Career and Technical Education	37.4%	31.0%	28.2%	34.8%
Special Education	9.4%	15.1%	7.3%	6.9%
Total Students	20,346	4,402	1,765	1,925

Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15

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.

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.

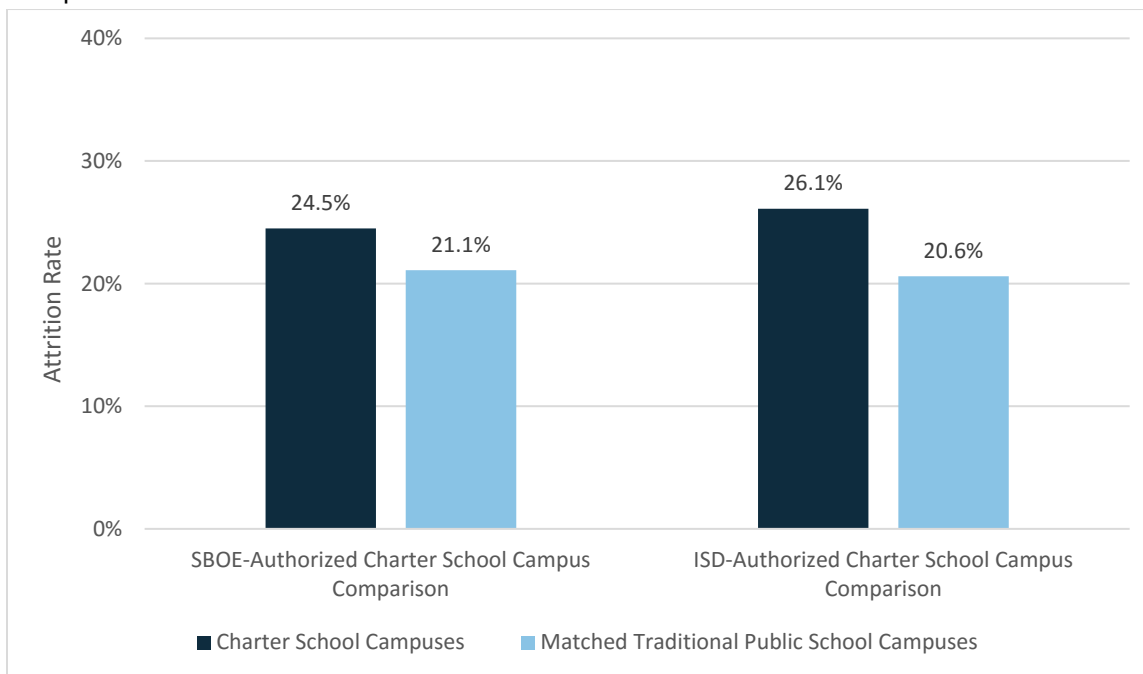
Furthermore, the number of campuses available for some of the analyses reported in this section, particularly those involving campuses evaluated under AEA provisions, may be fairly small. Analyses involving small numbers of campuses warrant cautious interpretation.

Attrition Rates

The attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return to the same campus in 2015–16 in which they were enrolled in 2014–15. This calculation, however, required several adjustments to handle certain exceptions where an accurate 2014–15 to 2015–16 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 2014–15 campus of origin compared to students enrolled in the matched traditional public school campuses (25% vs. 21% and 26% vs. 21%, respectively).

Figure 3.1. Student Attrition Rates Between 2014–15 and 2015–16 for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses



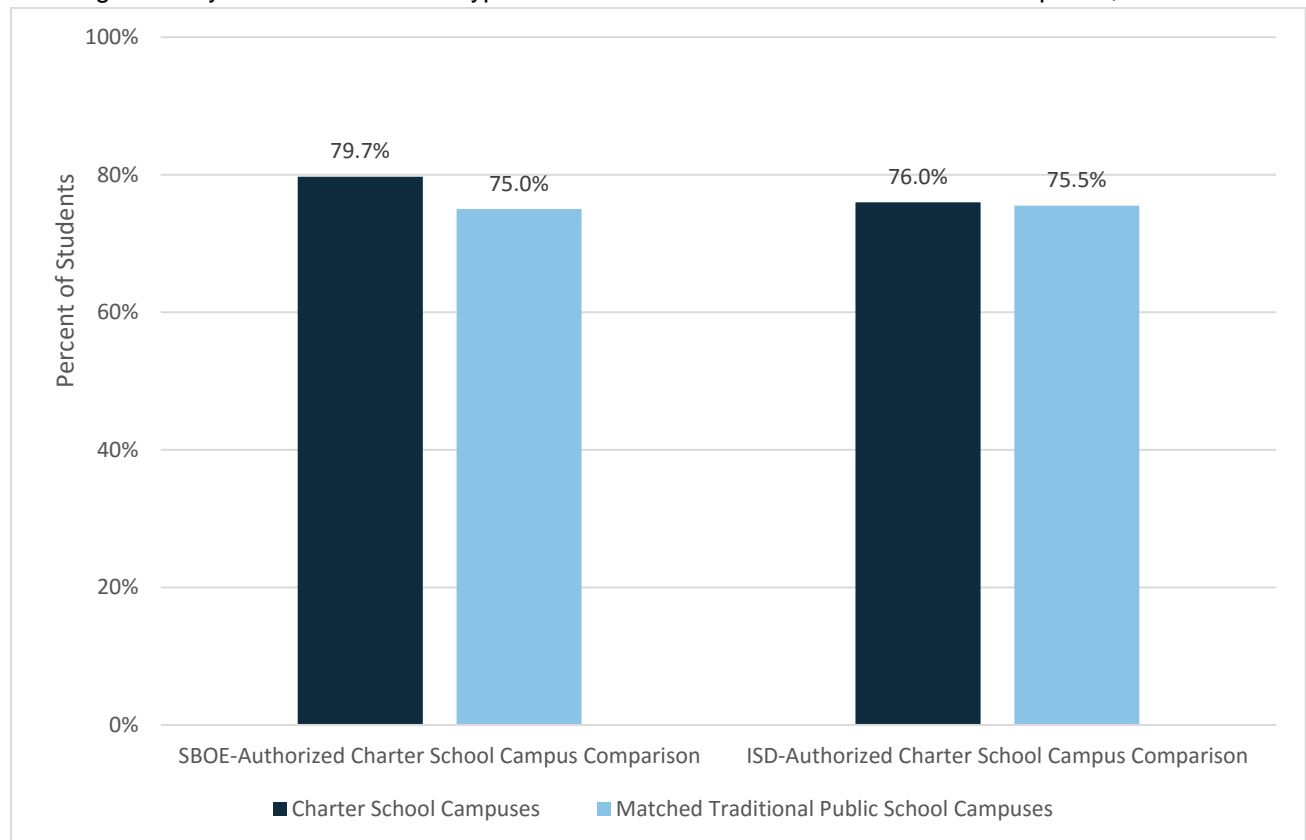
Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15. Public Education Information Management System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Note: A total of 524 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 1,026 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 62 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 506 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 meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the 2014–15 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-charter school campuses outperformed students at matched traditional public school campuses on the 2014–15 STAAR-Reading exam. At SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 80% of Grade 3–8 students met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Reading exam, compared to 75% of students at matched traditional public school campuses. The percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses meeting or exceeding the standard on the STAAR-Reading exam was comparable to the percentage of students at matched traditional public school campuses (both 76%). Seventy-seven percent of students statewide met or exceeded the standard on the 2015 STAAR-Reading exam.³⁶

Figure 3.2. Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Level II, Phase-in 1 Standard on the STAAR-Reading Exam by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



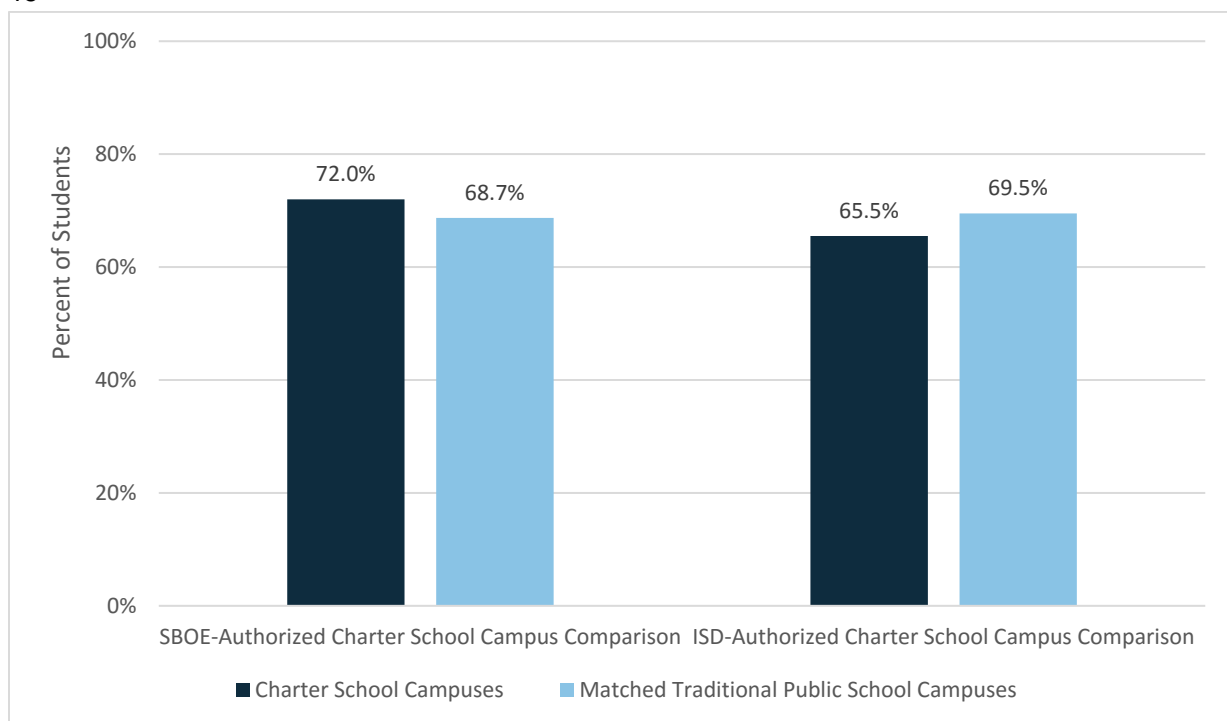
Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 405 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 785 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 39 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 390 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.

³⁶ <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2015/state.pdf>

As Figure 3.3. shows, students enrolled at SBOE-authorized charter school campuses passed the 2014–15 STAAR-Mathematics exam at similar rates to students at matched traditional public school campuses (72% vs. 69%, respectively). At ISD-authorized charter school campuses, 66% of Grade 3–8 students met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam, compared to 70% of students at matched traditional public school campuses. Seventy-four percent of students statewide met or exceeding the standard on the 2015 STAAR-Mathematics exam.³⁷

Figure 3.3. Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 Standard on the STAAR-Mathematics Exam by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



Source: Texas Performance Reporting System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 401 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 780 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 39 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 388 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

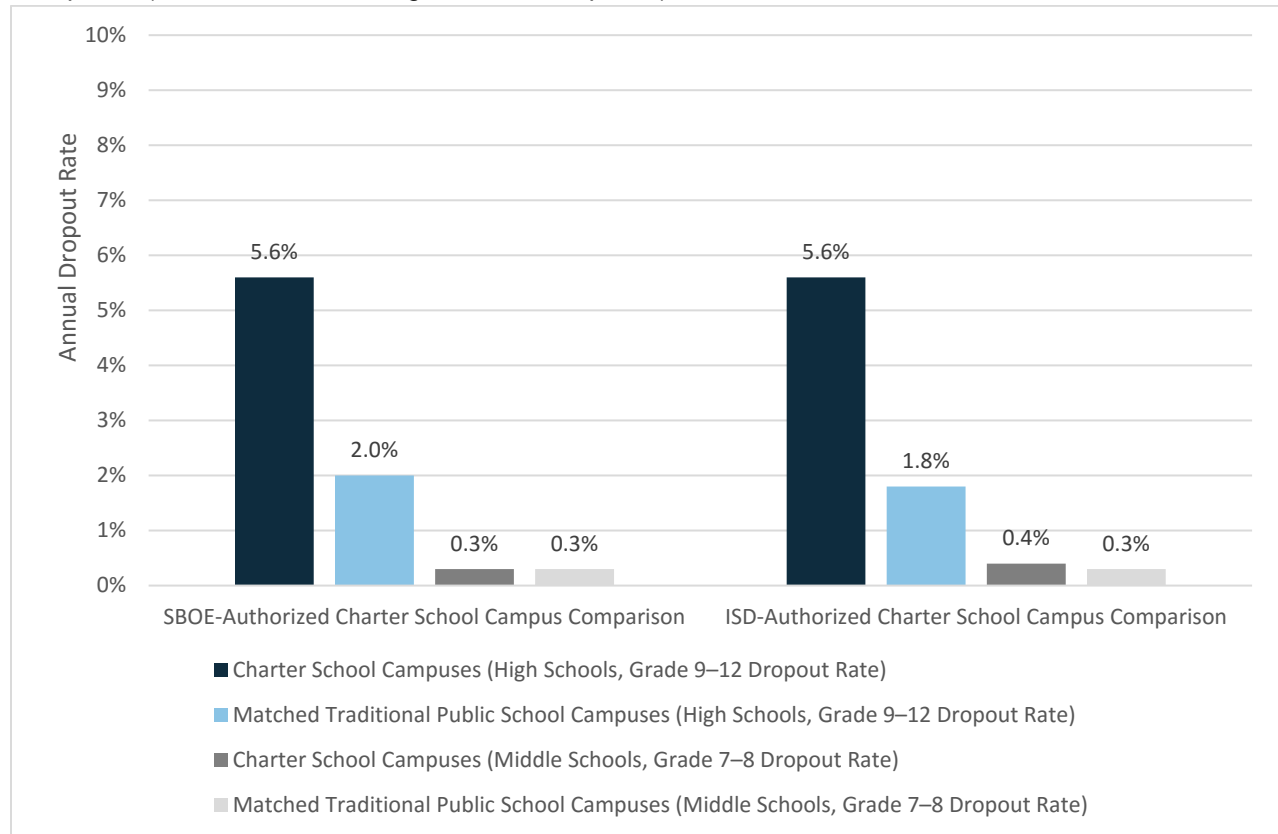
A dropout was defined for this project as a student who was enrolled in public school in Grades 7–8 for middle schools and Grades 9–12 for high schools during 2013–14 but did not return to public school in 2014–15. This definition excluded students who were expelled, who graduated, who received a high

³⁷ <https://rptsrv1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2015/state.pdf>

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.

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 (5.6% vs. 2.0% and 5.6% vs. 1.8%, respectively).

Figure 3.4. Annual Dropout Rates by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses (Middle School and High School Campuses), 2013–14



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 139 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter high school campuses, 224 traditional public high school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 81 SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses, and 185 traditional public middle school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses were included in these analyses. A total of 27 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter high school campuses, 109 traditional public high school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses, 16 ISD-authorized charter middle school campus, and 85 traditional public middle school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were also included in these analyses.

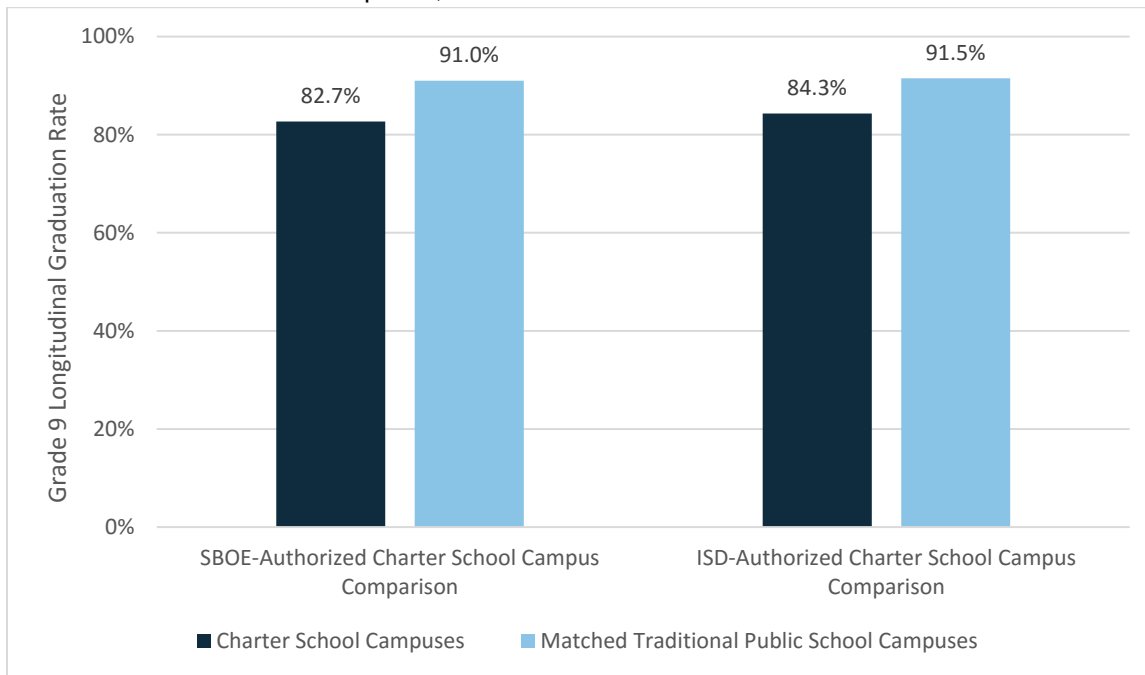
The annual dropout rates for Grade 7–8 students at both SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses and their matched traditional public middle school campuses were low and comparable (0.3% each for SBOE-authorized comparison and 0.4% vs. 0.3% for the ISD-authorized comparison). The statewide annual dropout rate was 2.2% for Grades 9–12 and 0.5% for Grades 7–8.³⁸

³⁸ <https://rptsrv1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/tapr/2015/state.pdf>

Graduation Rates

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2014 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 (83% vs. 91% and 84% vs. 92%, respectively). The statewide Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for 2013–14 was 88.3%. Additional detail regarding longitudinal graduation rates is provided in Section 1.

Figure 3.5. Grade 9 Four-Year Longitudinal Graduation Rates by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Class of 2014



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 118 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 197 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 23 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 91 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-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 2015 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, current and monitored 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).

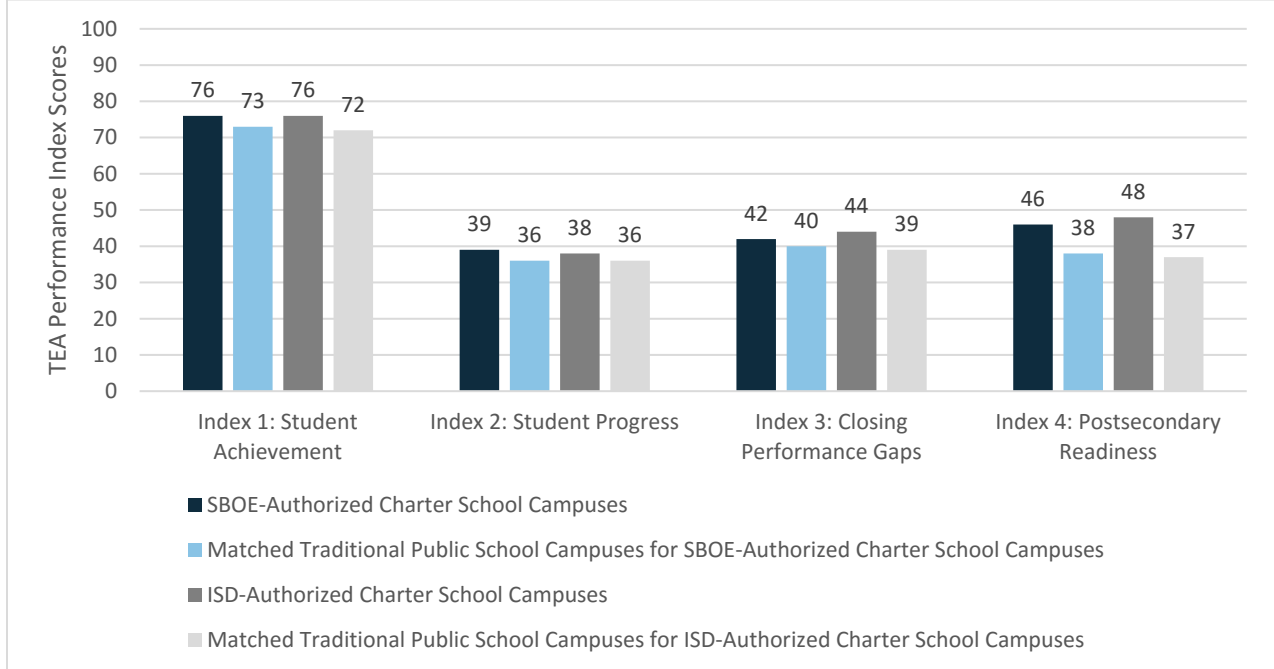
TEA sets specific targets for campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions and AEA provisions which must be met in order to demonstrate acceptable performance on each index (See Appendix A). Because the targets are substantially different for campuses evaluated under standard accountability 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 2015 Texas 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 each of the following four TEA performance indices: Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing the Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness. For the Student Achievement index, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses had an average index score of 76 compared to 73 for matched traditional public school campuses, and ISD-authorized charter school campuses had an average index score of 76 compared to 72 for matched traditional public school campuses.

For the Student Progress index, both SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses had slightly higher scores than their matched traditional public schools (39 vs. 36 and 38 vs. 36, respectively). Slightly 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 (42 vs. 40 and 44 vs. 39, respectively). 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 eight points higher for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses and 11 points higher for ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (46 vs. 38 and 48 vs. 37, respectively).

³⁹ <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/account/2015/manual/manual.pdf>

Figure 3.6. TEA Performance Index Scores by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2014–15



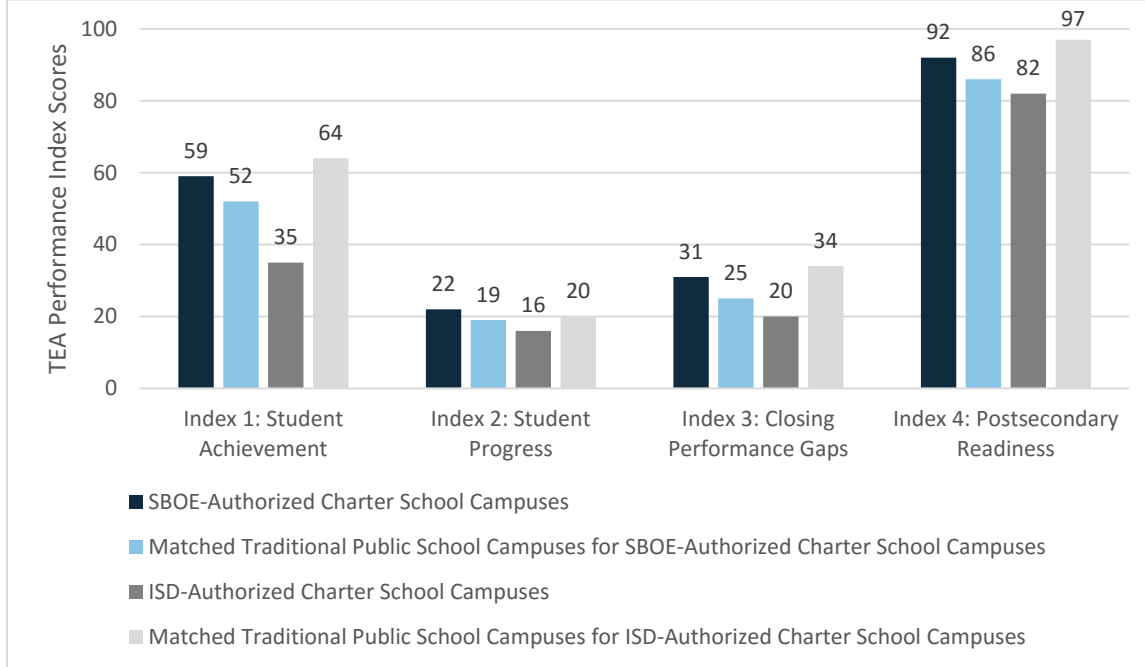
Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2014–15.

Note: A total of 461 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 1,018 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 57 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 510 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 (59 vs. 52). Conversely, Student Achievement performance index scores were substantially lower for ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to matched traditional public school campuses (35 vs. 64).

For the Student Progress, Closing the Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness performance indices illustrated in Figure 3.7, SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions had higher scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (22 vs. 19, 31 vs. 25, and 92 vs. 86, respectively). The opposite was true for ISD-authorized charter school campuses; average Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness index scores were markedly lower than those for matched traditional public school campuses (16 vs. 20, 20 vs. 34, and 82 vs. 97, respectively).

Figure 3.7. TEA Performance Index Scores by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, 2014–15

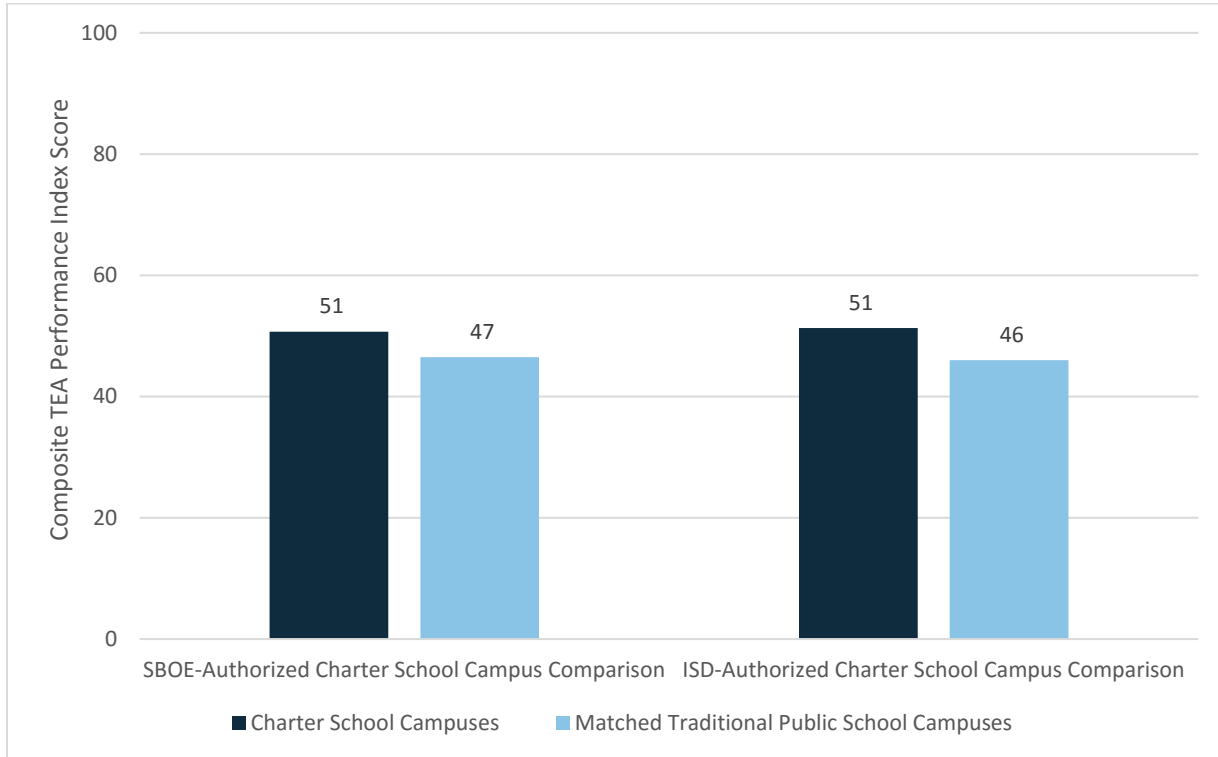


Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2014–15.

Note: A total of 105 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 58 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, nine Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 23 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-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), 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 3.8 illustrates, the composite TEA performance index score for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions is approximately four points higher than the composite score for their matched traditional public school campuses (51 vs. 47). Similarly, the composite TEA performance index score for ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions is approximately five points higher than the composite score for their matched traditional public school campuses (51 vs. 46).

Figure 3.8. Composite TEA Performance Index Score by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2014–15

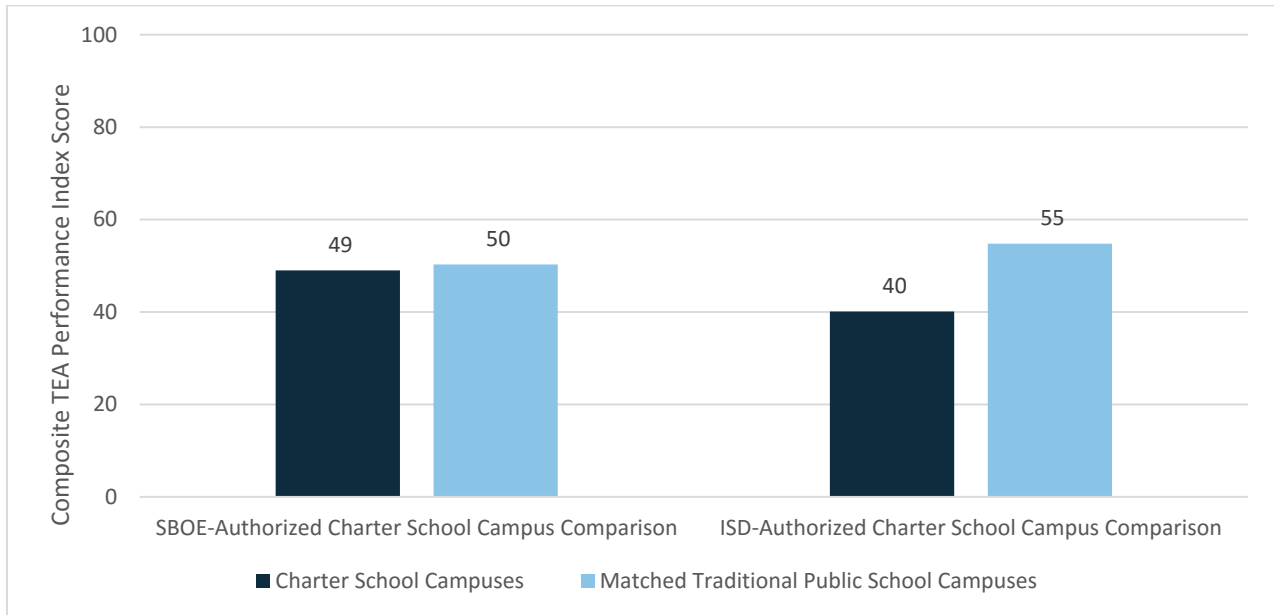


Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2014–15.

Note: A total of 461 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 1,108 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 57 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 510 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 shows, the average composite TEA performance index score for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions is 49 (compared to 50 for the matched traditional public school campuses). In line with the findings related to the individual TEA performance indices, the composite TEA performance index score for ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions is approximately 15 points lower than the composite score for matched traditional public school campuses (40 vs. 55).

Figure 3.9. Composite TEA Performance Index Score by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2014–15.

Note: A total of 105 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 58 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, nine Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 23 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 meeting state standards 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).⁴⁰ 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.⁴¹

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.

⁴⁰ Refer to Section 3 for 4-year longitudinal graduation rate results.

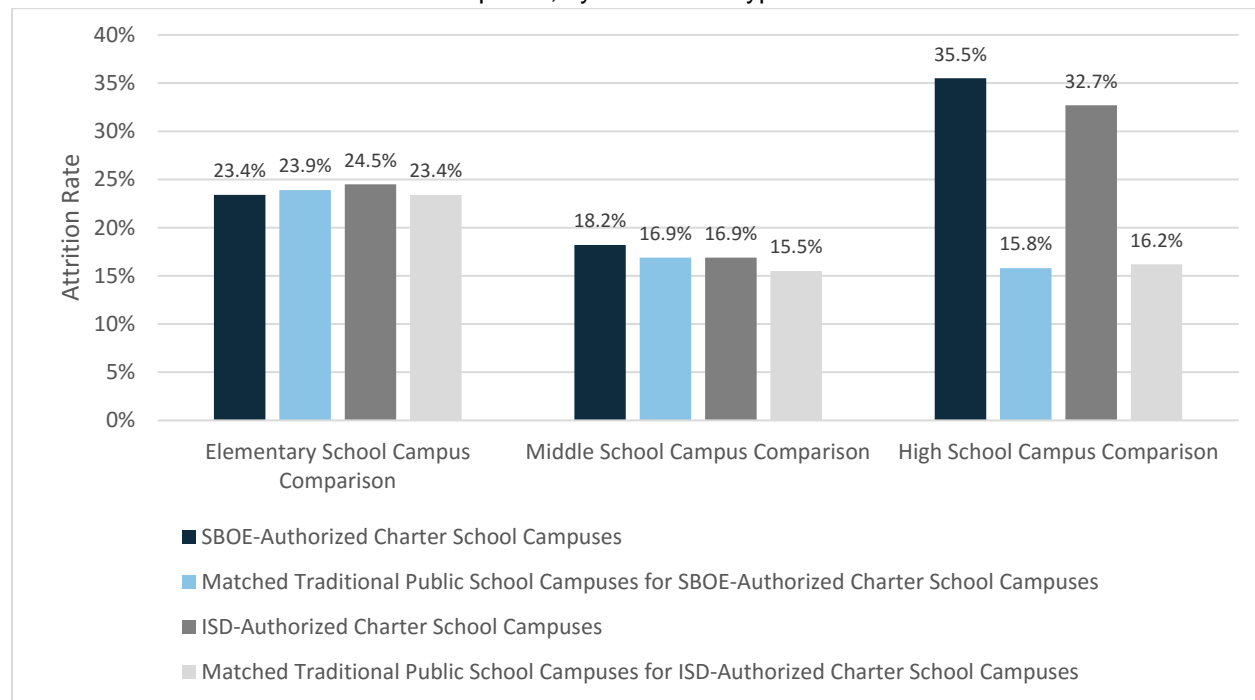
⁴¹ For example, a campus with 20 enrolled students who took the STAAR-Reading exam would receive a much smaller weight when calculating the percentage of students meeting state standards on STAAR-Reading than a campus with 500 enrolled students.

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 2015–16 in which they were enrolled in 2014–15.⁴² As Figure 4.1 illustrates, attrition rates for SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses are comparable (23% vs. 24%, respectively). The same is true for attrition rates for ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses (25% vs. 23%, respectively).

Similarly, as shown in Figure 4.1, only a one percentage point difference exists in the attrition rates for SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses and their matched traditional public middle school campuses (18% vs. 17% and 17% vs. 16%, respectively). Attrition rates at the high school level are substantially higher for both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses (35% vs. 16% and 33% vs. 16%, respectively).

Figure 4.1. Student Attrition Rates Between 2014–15 and 2015–16 for Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, by Authorizer Type and School Level



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, 2014–15, Public Education Information Management System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Note: The number of State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=297); middle (n=92); high (n=135). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=601); middle (n=202); high (n=223). The number of Independent School District (ISD)-authorized campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=21); middle (n=16); high (n=25). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for ISD-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: elementary (n=298); middle (n=100); high (n=108).

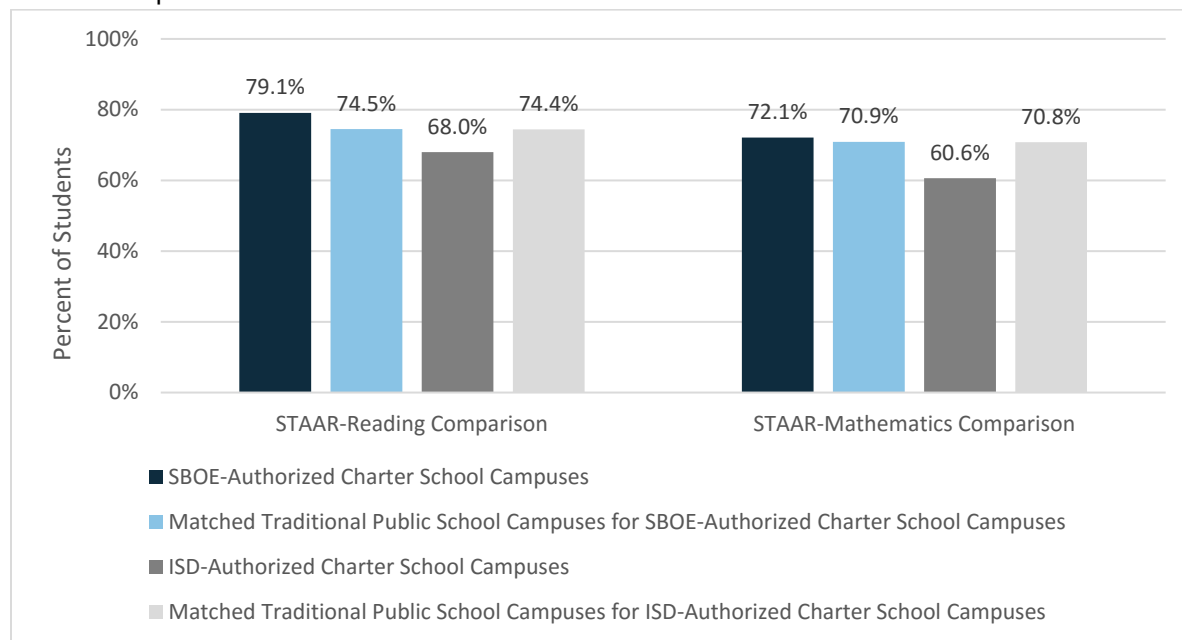
STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Results Disaggregated by School Level

⁴² For further detail, please refer to the attrition rate section in Section 1 of this report.

The percentages of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the 2014–15 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for students in Grade 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 met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Reading exam compared to the matched traditional public elementary school campuses (79% vs. 75%, respectively). A smaller percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Reading exam compared to their matched traditional public elementary school campuses (68% vs. 74%, respectively). A similar trend was observed when STAAR-Mathematics scores were examined, as shown in Figure 4.2. Fewer students at ISD-authorized charter school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam compared to their matched traditional public school elementary campuses (61% vs. 71%, respectively). However, there was little difference between SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses and their matched traditional public elementary school matches (72% vs. 71%, respectively).

Figure 4.2. Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Level II Phase-In 1 Standard on the 2014–15 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



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Performance Reporting System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

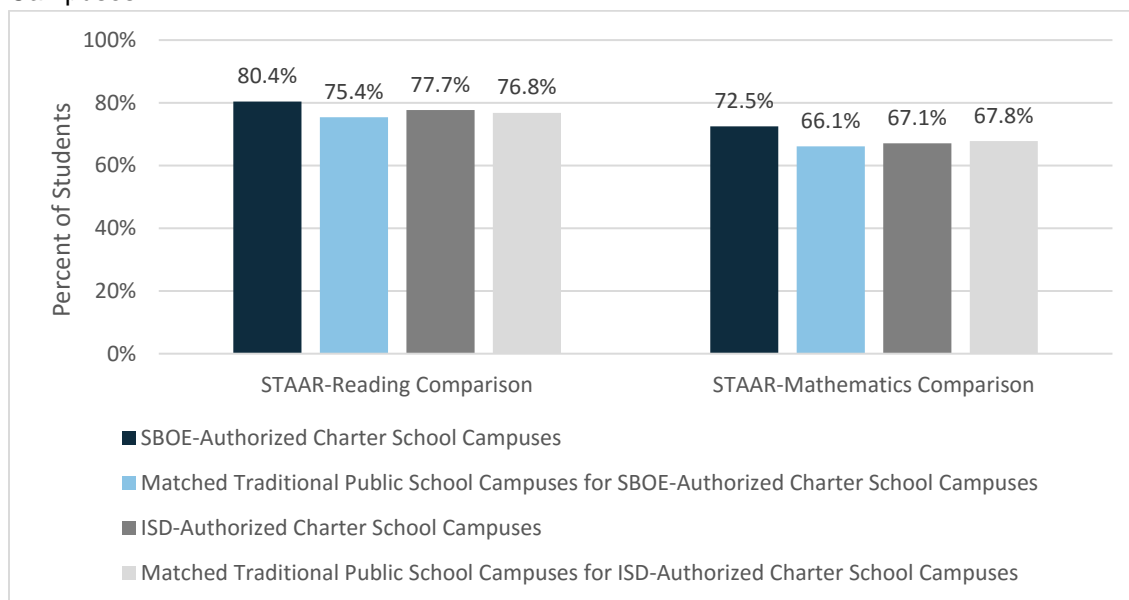
Note: A total of 319 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 620 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 23 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 309 traditional public school campuses matched 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 slightly higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses met or exceeded the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the STAAR-Reading exam than students at their matched traditional public middle school campuses (80% vs. 75%, respectively).

Meanwhile, comparable percentages of students at ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses and the matched traditional public middle school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Reading exam (78% vs. 77%, respectively).

Similarly, as seen in Figure 4.3, a higher percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam compared to matched traditional public middle school campuses (73% vs. 66%, 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 met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Mathematics exam (67% vs. 68%, respectively).

Figure 4.3. Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 Standard on the 2014–15 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



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Performance Reporting System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

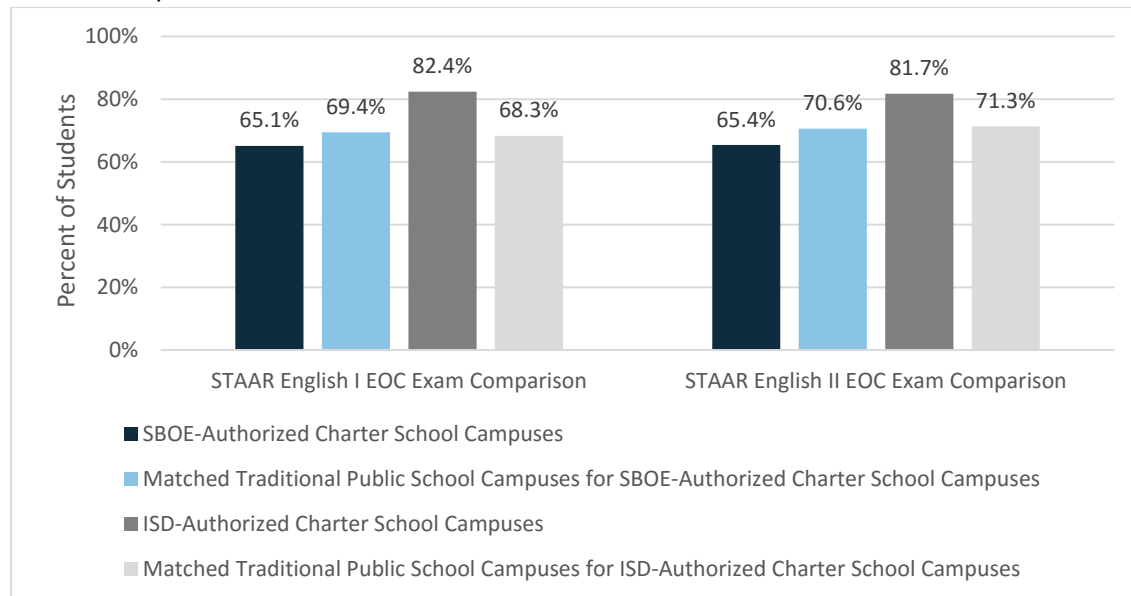
Note: A total of 98 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 213 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 16 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 105 traditional public school campuses matched 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 meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the 2014–15 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 meeting or exceeding the standard on the 2014–15 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 slightly lower percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses met or exceeded the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the STAAR English I EOC exam (typically taken by Grade 9 students) compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (65% vs. 69%, respectively). A substantially larger percentage of students at ISD-authorized charter high school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR English I EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (82% vs. 68%, respectively).

Figure 4.4. Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 Standard on the 2014–15 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



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

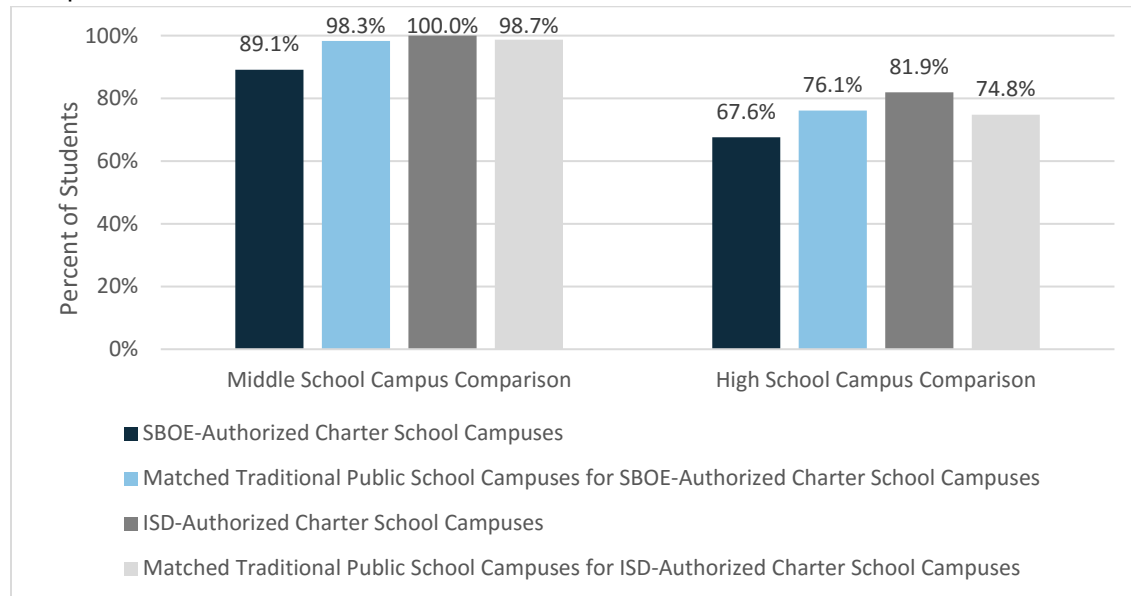
Note: A total of 149 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 243 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 27 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 119 traditional public school campuses matched 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 met or exceeded the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the STAAR English II EOC exam (typically taken by Grade 10 students) compared to matched traditional public high school campuses

(65% vs. 71%, respectively). Mirroring the STAAR English I EOC exam results, a larger percentage of students enrolled at ISD-authorized charter high school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR English II EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (82% vs. 71%, respectively).⁴³

Figure 4.5 shows that a smaller percentage of advanced mathematics students at SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses met or exceeded the Level II Phase-in 1 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 (89% vs. 98%, respectively). Comparably high percentages of students enrolled at ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public middle school campuses (100% vs. 99%, respectively).⁴⁴

Figure 4.5. Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeded the Level II Phase-in 1 Standard on the 2014–15 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



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

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=72); high (n=139). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for SBOE-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: middle (n=168); high (n=186). The number of Independent School District (ISD)-authorized campuses included in these analyses: middle (n=13); high (n=25). Number of matched traditional public school campuses for ISD-authorized charter school campuses included in these analyses: middle (n=77); high (n=93).

A somewhat lower percentage of students at SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam compared to matched traditional public high

⁴³ The state passing rates for 2014–15 EOC exams are as follows: English I=71%, English II=72%, and Algebra I=81%. Algebra I passing rates include all students who took the assessment, including Grade 8 students.

⁴⁴ The high percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standard 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.

school campuses (68% vs. 76%, respectively). Conversely, as evident in Figure 4.5, a larger percentage of students enrolled at ISD-authorized charter high school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR Algebra I EOC exam compared to students at matched traditional public high school campuses (82% vs. 75%, respectively).

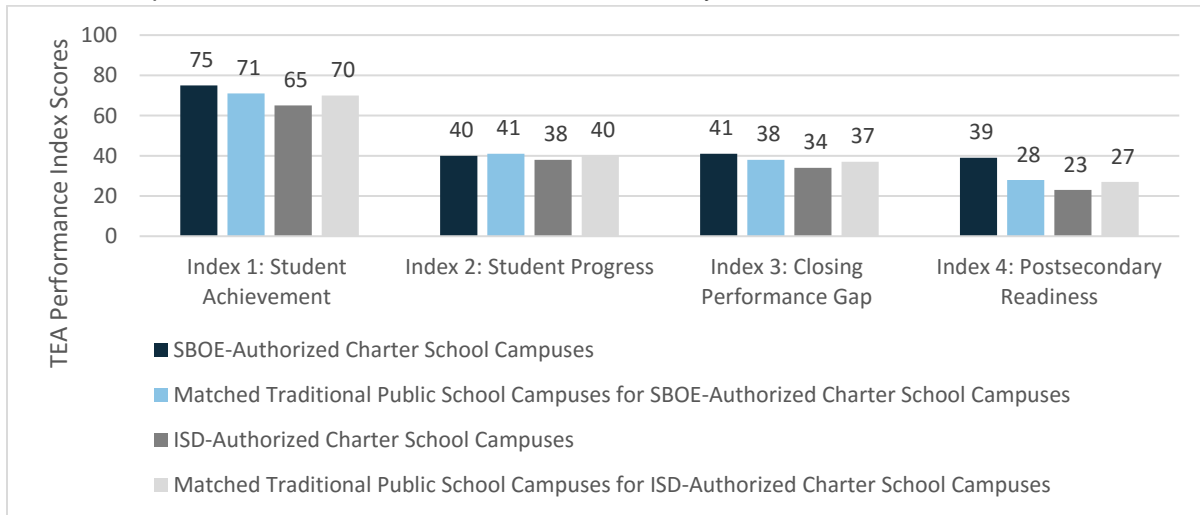
TEA Performance Index Scores Disaggregated by School Level

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 2015 Texas 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 (75 vs. 71). ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted somewhat lower Student Achievement index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (65 vs. 70). 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 comparable index scores to their matched traditional public elementary school campuses (40 vs. 41 and 38 vs. 40, respectively). For the Closing Performance Gaps index, only minor differences between SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campus scores and those of their matched traditional public elementary school campuses were observed (41 vs. 38 and 34 vs. 37, respectively). Much like the Student Achievement index, 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 (39 vs. 28), while ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions posted somewhat lower Postsecondary Readiness index scores than their matched traditional public school campuses (23 vs. 27).

⁴⁵ <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/account/2015/manual/manual.pdf>

Figure 4.6. TEA Performance Index Scores for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Elementary School Campuses Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2014–15



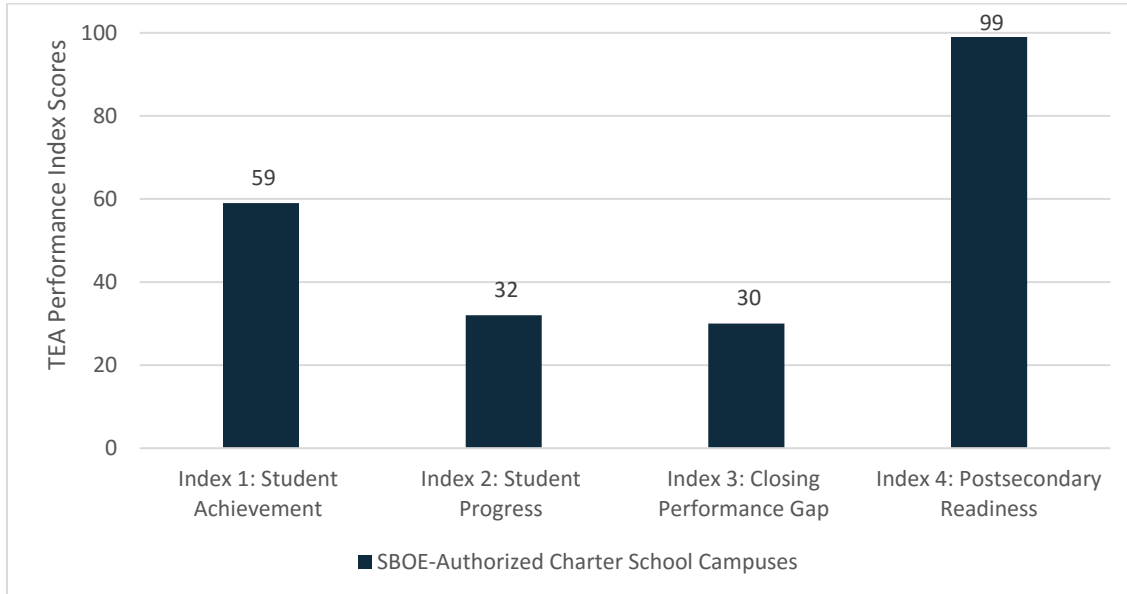
Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 316 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 620 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 23 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 309 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

Only three SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses were evaluated under AEA provisions in 2014–15, and no traditional public elementary school campuses were matched to these charter school campuses.⁴⁶ Furthermore, no ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses were evaluated under AEA provisions. Figure 4.7 provides the TEA Performance Index scores for the three SBOE-authorized charter elementary school campuses: 59 for Index 1: Student Achievement, 32 for Index 2: Student Progress, 30 for Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps, and 99 for Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness.

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.

Figure 4.7. TEA Performance Index Scores for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, Elementary School Campuses Evaluated Under Alternative Education Accountability Provisions, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

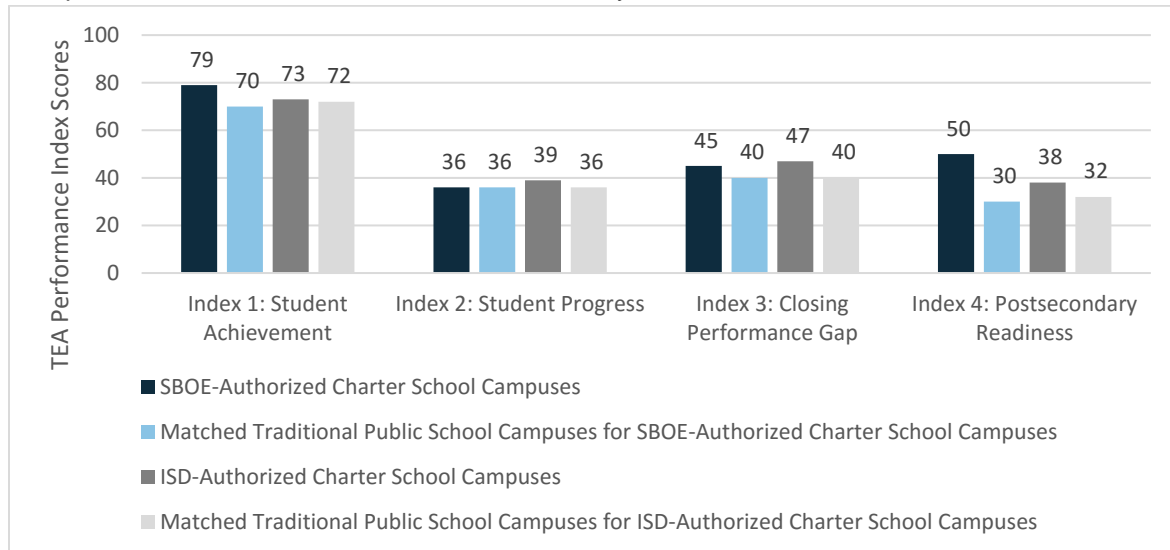
Note: Only three State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter elementary school campuses were included in this analysis and no traditional public elementary school campuses were matched to these charter school campuses. In addition, there were no Independent School District (ISD)-authorized elementary charter school campuses in 2014–15. 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.

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 (79 vs. 70). 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 an average index score of 36. ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses had an average Student Progress index score of 39 compared to an average index score of 36 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 40 for their matched traditional public middle school campuses. Similarly, the average Closing Performance Gaps index score for ISD-authorized charter middle school campuses was 47 versus 40 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 substantially higher than those for their matched traditional public middle school campuses (50 vs. 30). Postsecondary Readiness index scores for ISD-authorized charter school campuses were also higher than those for their matched traditional public middle school campuses (38 vs. 32).

Figure 4.8. TEA Performance Index Scores for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Middle School Campuses Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions, 2014–15

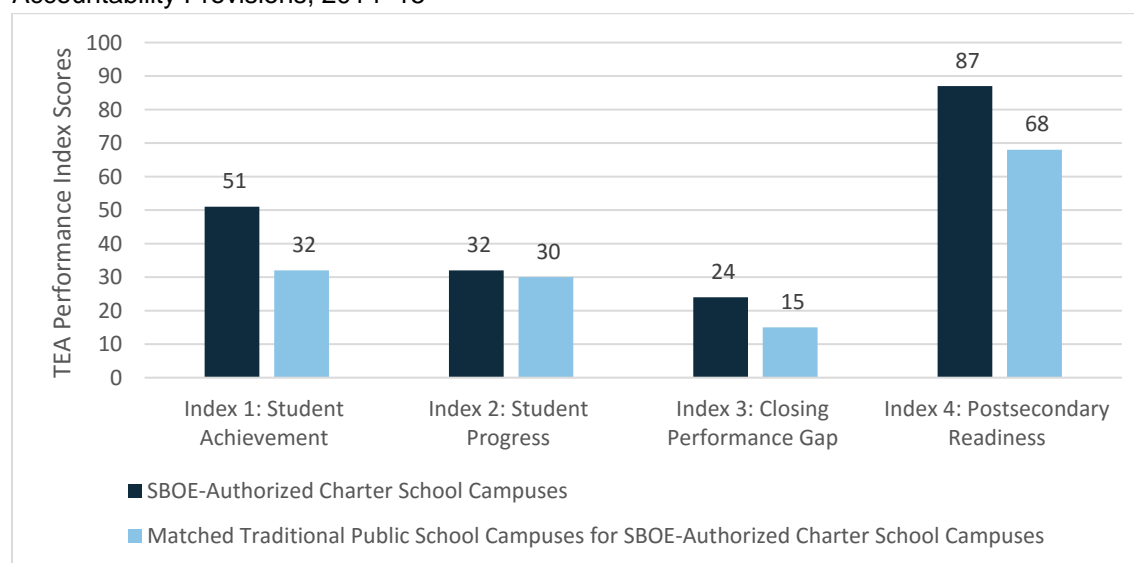


Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 91 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 208 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 15 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 105 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

As seen in Figure 4.9, SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions had substantially higher Student Achievement, Closing Performance Gap, and Postsecondary Readiness index scores compared to their matched traditional public middle school campuses (51 vs. 32, 24 vs. 15, and 87 vs. 68, respectively). Comparable 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 (32 vs. 30). There was only one ISD-authorized charter middle school campus evaluated under AEA provisions active in 2014–15, and no traditional public middle school campuses were matched to this charter school campus.

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, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

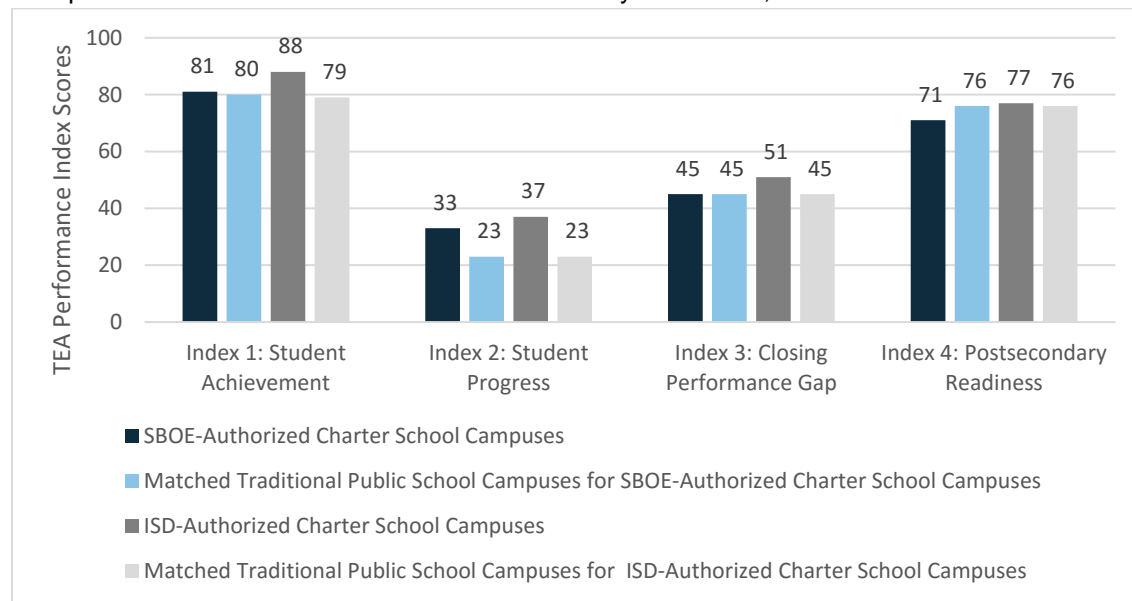
Note: A total of 7 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses and five traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under alternative accountability provisions were included in this analysis. There was only one Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter middle school campus active in 2014–15 and no traditional public middle school campuses were matched to this charter school campus.

As Figure 4.10 shows, comparable TEA performance index scores were observed for SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions for the Student Achievement and Closing Performance Gaps indices compared to those of the matched traditional public high school campuses (81 vs. 80 and 45 vs. 45, respectively). Results were mixed for the other two TEA performance indices. Higher Student Progress index scores were found for SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions compared to matched traditional public high school campuses (33 vs. 23). Conversely, lower Postsecondary Readiness index scores were found for SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions compared to matched traditional public high school campuses (71 vs. 76).

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 comparable for ISD-authorized charter school campuses and matched

traditional public school campuses (77 vs. 76). 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 and the Student Progress index (88 vs. 79 and 37 vs. 23, respectively). Smaller differences between ISD-authorized charter high school index scores and their matched public high school index scores were observed for the Closing Performance Gaps index (51 vs. 45).

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, 2014–15

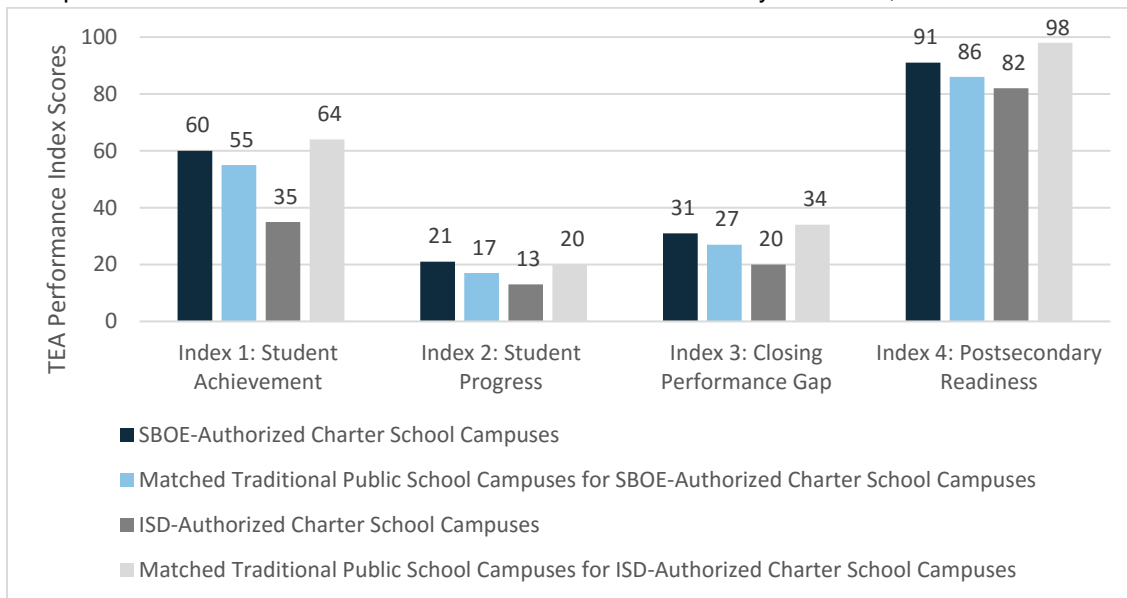


Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 54 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 190 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 19 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 96 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 each of the four TEA performance indices were somewhat higher than those for the matched traditional public high school campuses: Student Achievement (60 vs. 55), Student Progress (21 vs. 17), Closing Performance Gaps (31 vs. 27), and Postsecondary Readiness (91 vs. 86). The opposite was true for ISD-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions. For ISD-authorized charter high school campuses, Student Achievement, Student Progress, Closing Performance Gaps, and Postsecondary Readiness index scores were substantially lower compared to those for matched traditional public school high school campuses (35 vs. 64, 13 vs. 20, 20 vs. 34, and 82 vs. 98, respectively).

Figure 4.11. 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 Alternative Education Accountability Provision, 2014–15



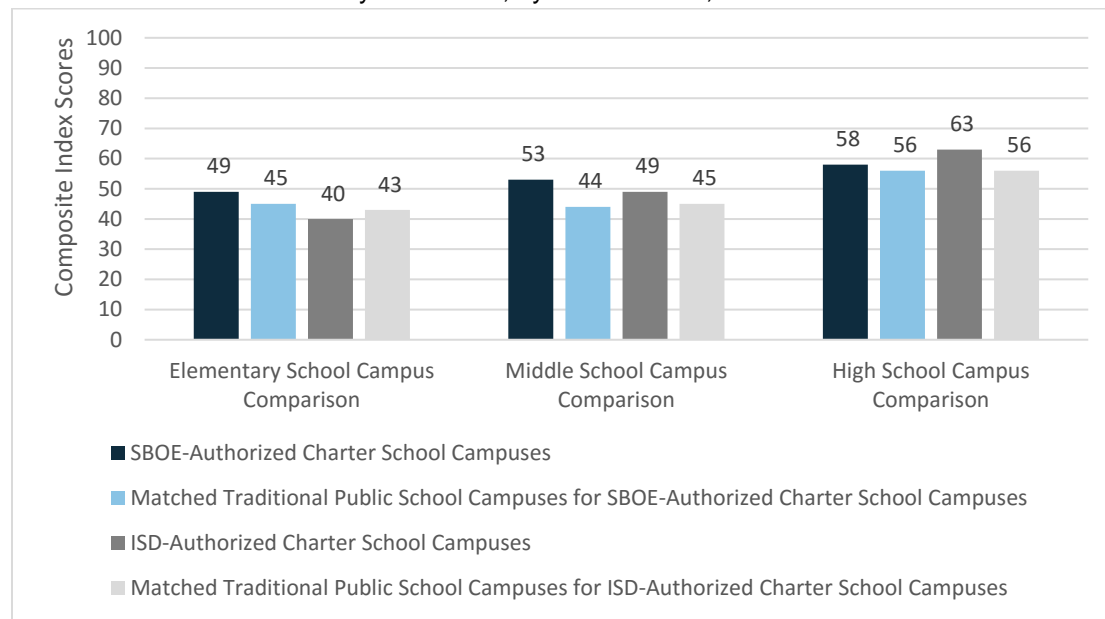
Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 95 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 53 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 8 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 23 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis.

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), 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 (49 vs. 45, 53 vs. 44, and 58 vs. 56, respectively). As shown in Figure 4.12, results for ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions were more mixed. Slightly lower composite index scores were observed for ISD-authorized charter elementary school campuses compared to their matched traditional public elementary school campuses (40 vs. 43). Somewhat 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 (49 vs. 45 and 63 vs. 56, 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, 2014–15

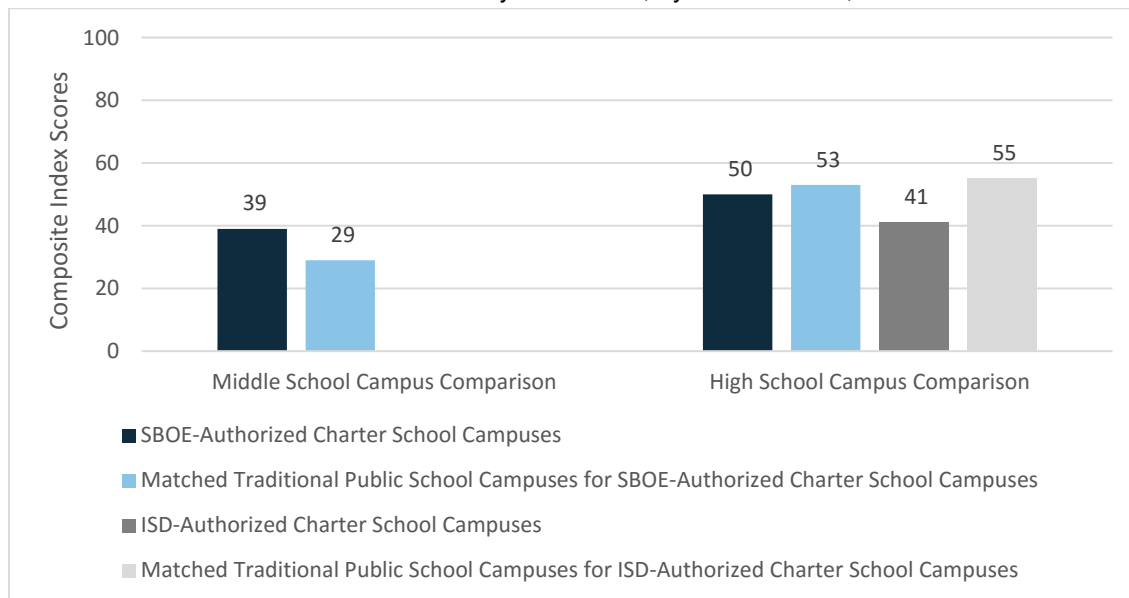


Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2014–15.

Note: State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses: elementary school campuses (n=316), middle school campuses (n=91), high school campuses (n=54). Traditional public school high campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses: elementary school campuses (n=620), middle school campuses (n=208), high school campuses (n=190). Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter campuses: elementary school campuses (n=23), middle school campuses (n=15), high school campuses (n=19). Traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses: elementary school campuses (n=309), middle school campuses (n=105), high school campuses (n=96). 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, SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions posted higher composite performance index scores than their matched traditional public middle school campuses (39 vs. 29). No SBOE- or ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions at the elementary school level were matched to traditional public school campuses. Furthermore, no ISD-authorized charter school campus comparisons were made at the middle school level for campuses evaluated under AEA provisions. The composite index scores were lower for both SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter high school campuses evaluated under AEA provisions compared to their matched traditional public high school campuses (50 vs. 53 and 41 vs. 55, respectively).

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, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2014–15.

Note: A total of seven State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter middle school campuses, five traditional public middle school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter middle school campuses, 95 SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses, 53 traditional public high school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter high school campuses, eight Independent School District (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 no 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: Exploratory 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). The commissioner of education recommended four charter school campuses for 2014–15 after the authority to authorize open-enrollment charter schools was transferred to the commissioner. Only two of the four charter school campuses recommended for approval were operational in 2014–15 and have aggregate student performance data available through TAPR and the Texas Accountability Rating System.⁴⁷ Because of the small number of campuses available for analysis, the findings reported in this section are highly exploratory in nature and warrant cautious interpretation.

Results for the following aggregate performance metrics are presented in this section: 1) attrition rate; 2) percentage of students meeting state standards on the STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams;⁴⁸ and 3) TEA performance index scores (four indices and a composite index score).⁴⁹ As with prior analyses in sections 3 and 4, performance metrics for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses are weighted by the number of students that contributed to calculations of a particular outcome measure.⁵⁰

Before presenting aggregate performance results for COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses, this section presents descriptive information about 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. Two COE-authorized charter school campuses and 13 matched traditional public school campuses were included in the exploratory aggregate performance analyses presented in this section of the report. Both of the charter school campuses were evaluated under standard accountability provisions.

Table 5.1 presents the demographic characteristics of all students enrolled at the two COE-authorized charter school campuses and the 13 matched traditional public school campuses. It is important to note that the demographic characteristics appear dissimilar because the two COE-authorized charter school campuses were quite different: one served students in Grades K–3 (with 42 Grade 3 students contributing to outcomes data reported in TAPR) and was matched with three traditional public school campuses, and

⁴⁷ One charter campus recommended was vetoed by the SBOE and the other was not operational in 2014–15. The campus not operational in 2014–15 is now open and serving students but is not included in the report since the report is focused on 2014–15 data.

⁴⁸ STAAR-Mathematics data were not available for the two COE-authorized charter school campuses from the data sources used for this report.

⁴⁹ Because of the grade levels served by the two COE-authorized charter school campuses in 2014–15, annual dropout rates and longitudinal graduation rates are not reported in this section.

⁵⁰ For TEA performance index metrics, results were weighted by the number of students enrolled at each campus included in the calculation.

the other served 77 Grade 6 students (at a Grade 6 only campus) and was matched with 10 traditional public school campuses. The propensity scores for the three traditional public school campuses matched to the formerly mentioned COE-authorized charter school campus and the 10 traditional public school campuses matched to the latter COE-authorized campus met all established matching criteria.⁵¹ However, when these two COE-authorized charter school campuses were combined as one COE-authorized charter school campus group, the comparability of the two charter school campuses and their combined 13 matched traditional public school campuses was diminished. Because of the diminished comparability between the COE-authorized charter school campus group and the group of matched traditional public school campuses, and due to the other reasons outlined in the first paragraph of this section, the analyses presented in this section are exploratory. 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 operational.

As Table 5.1 shows, and as explained in the preceding paragraphs of this section, substantive differences in race/ethnicity were 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 substantially lower percentage of Hispanic students compared to the matched traditional public school campuses (46% vs. 72%), and the COE-authorized charter school campuses had a markedly higher percentage of White students (38% vs. 11%). The percentages of students identified as at-risk, economically disadvantaged, and in the CTE program were all substantially lower at COE-authorized charter school campuses compared to the matched traditional public school campuses (39% vs. 60%, 51% vs. 79%, and 0% vs. 34%, respectively).

⁵¹ Please refer to Appendix A for a detailed explanation of the propensity score matching procedures, and to Section 1 of this report for an abbreviated description of the matching procedures.

Table 5.1. Demographic Characteristics of COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses Evaluated Under Standard Accountability Provisions which were Included in Aggregate Performance Analyses, 2014–15

	COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses	Traditional Public School Campuses Matched to COE- Authorized Charter School Campuses
Number of Schools	2	13
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	9.9%	15.7%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0%	0.4%
Asian	2.0%	0.3%
Hispanic	46.4%	72.1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%
White	37.6%	10.6%
Two or more races	4.0%	0.7%
Other Student Characteristics		
At-Risk	38.5%	59.7%
Economically Disadvantaged	51.2%	78.8%
English Language Learner	21.5%	15.9%
Program Participation		
Career and Technical Education	0.0% ^a	34.4%
Special Education	4.8%	5.6%
Total Students	353	2,553

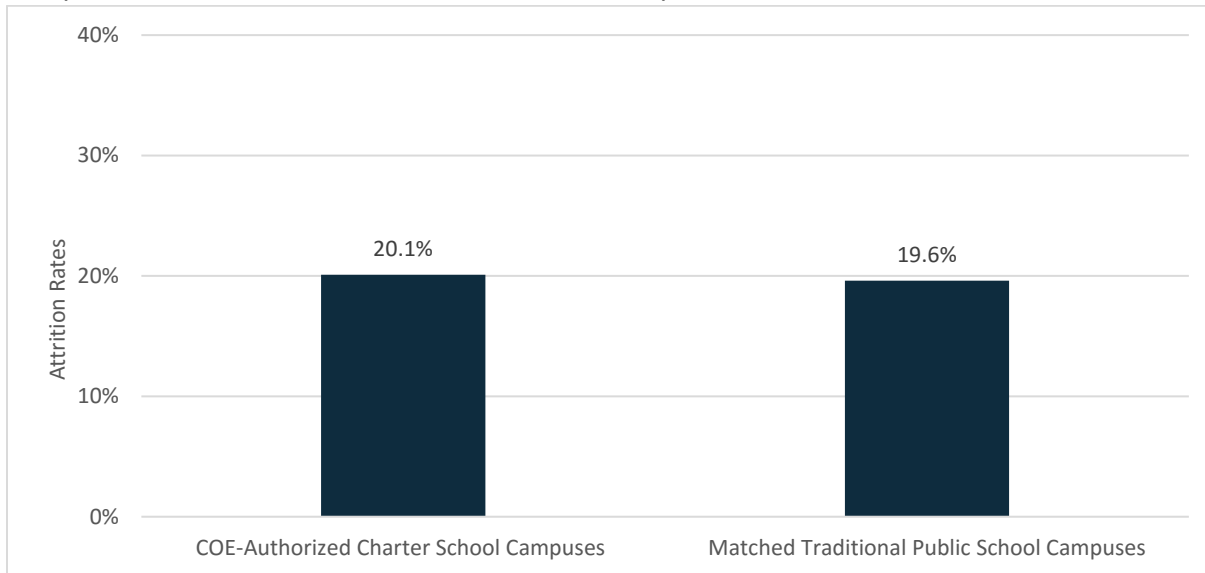
Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

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. ^a Career and Technical Education is only available at the high school level. There are no COE-authorized charter school campuses serving high school students.

Attrition Rates

As Figure 5.1 shows, the attrition rates observed between COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses were the same at approximately 20% for both groups of campuses.

Figure 5.1. Student Attrition Rates Between 2014–15 and 2015–16 for COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15. Public Education Information Management System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15 and 2015–16.

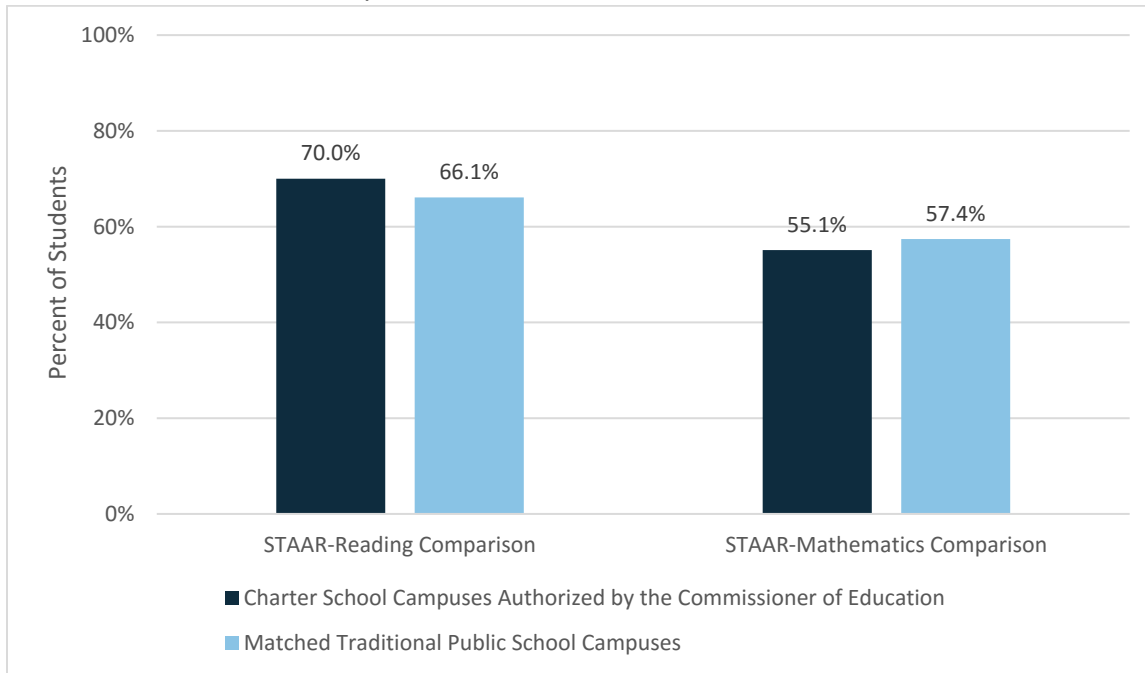
Note: Two commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses and 11 traditional public school campuses matched to COE-authorized charter school campuses were included in this analysis. During 2015–16, an additional grade was added to the charter school campus that served only Grade 6 students in 2014–15, which made the calculation of an attrition rate for that school possible.

STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Results

The percentages of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the 2014–15 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for Grade 3–8 students. Only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses. One of the COE-authorized charter school campuses served only Grade 6 students, and the second COE-authorized charter school campus served Grades K–3 with only Grade 3 results included in the STAAR performance calculations. Therefore, the following STAAR performance results warrant cautious interpretation.

Figure 5.2 illustrates the lack of difference observed in the percentages of students who met or exceeded the standard on the 2014–15 STAAR-Mathematics exam across COE-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses (55% and 57%, respectively). However, COE-authorized charter school campuses met or exceeded the standard on the STAAR-Reading exam at a slightly higher rate compared to students at traditional public school campuses matched with COE-authorized charter school campuses (70% vs. 66%, respectively).

Figure 5.2. Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 Standard on the STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics Exams by COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

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

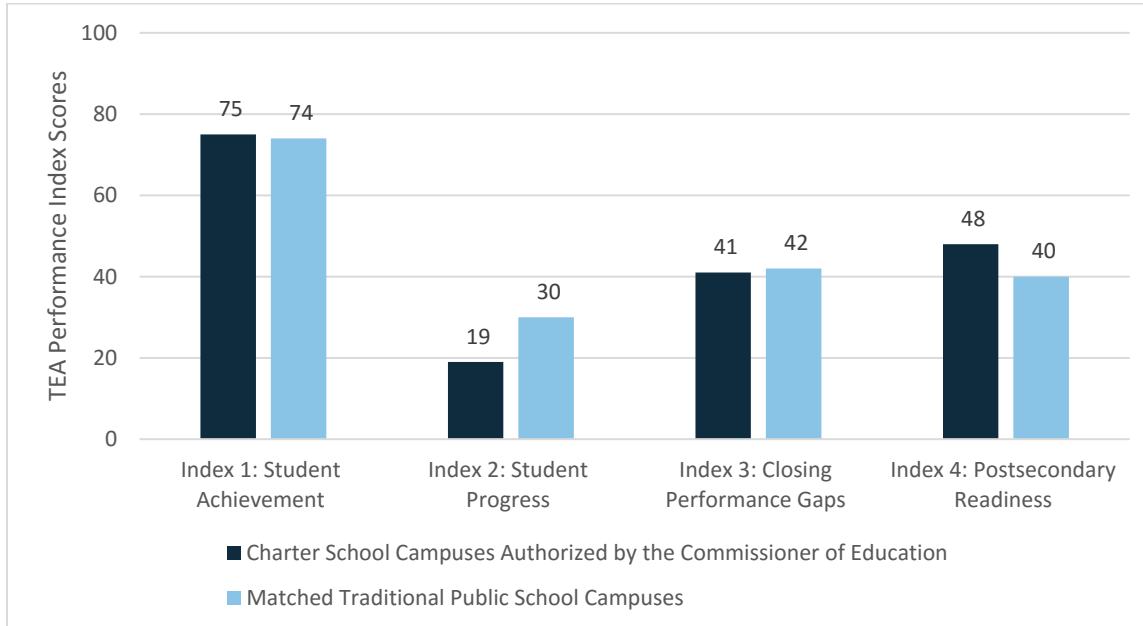
TEA Performance Index Scores

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 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, please refer to the Section 1 of this report, and the 2015 Texas Accountability Manual.⁵²

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 Closing Performance Gaps indices (75 vs. 74 and 41 vs. 42, respectively). Results were mixed for the other two performance indices, Student Progress and Postsecondary Readiness. For Student Progress, COE-authorized charter school campuses posted an average score of 19 compared to 30 for their matched traditional public school campuses. For the Postsecondary Readiness index, COE-authorized charter school campuses recorded an average score of 48 compared to 40 for the matched traditional public school campuses.

⁵² <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/account/2015/manual/manual.pdf>

Figure 5.3. TEA Performance Index Scores by COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



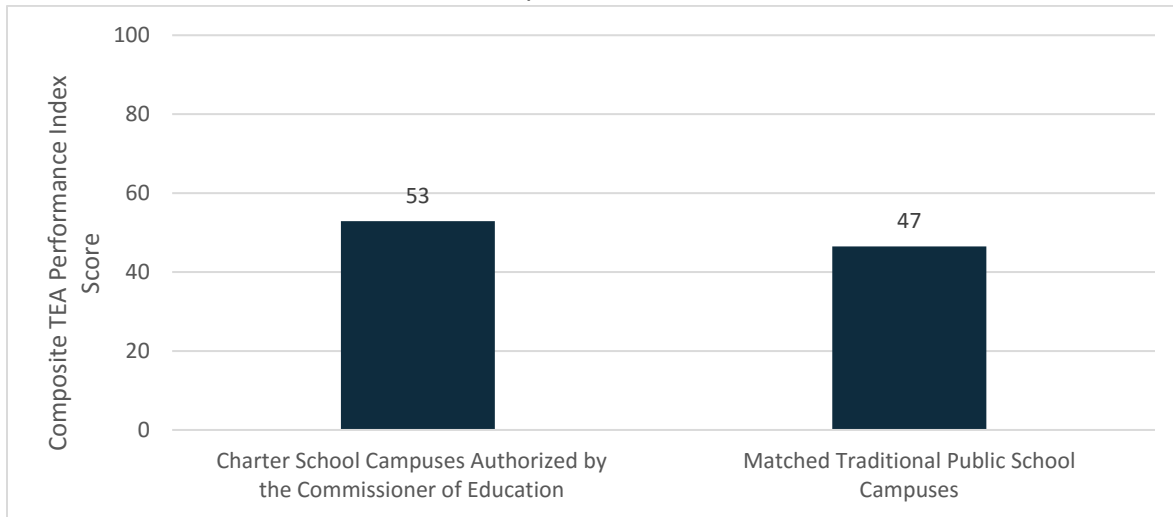
Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: Two commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses and eight 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), 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 six points higher for the two COE-authorized charter school campuses compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. The composite index score for COE-authorized charter school campuses was 53 compared to 47 for their matched campuses.

Figure 5.4. TEA Performance Composite Index Scores by COE-Authorized Charter School Campuses and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency (TEA), 2014–15.

Note: Two commissioner of education (COE)-authorized charter school campuses and eight 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 1999–2000 to 2014–15 period, the number of charter schools operating in the United States grew from 1,541 to over 6,600. In 2014–15, a total of 679 charter school campuses were in operation in Texas, serving almost 262,000 students. This represents approximately 8% of the public schools in Texas and 5% of the students enrolled in Texas public schools. The vast majority of the charter school campuses operating in 2014–15 (611, or 90%) were authorized by the State Board of Education. A total of 66 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. Only two charter schools authorized by the commissioner of education served students during the 2014–15 school year.

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. In addition, with only two COE-authorized charter school campuses operational in 2014–15, it is not possible to accurately assess the differences in the performance of the two COE-authorized charter school campuses and their 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 meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 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- (25% vs. 21%) and ISD-authorized (26% vs. 21%) charter school campuses when compared to their matched traditional public school campuses. These differences were 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 (19 and 17 percentage points, respectively).

Only modest differences (less than five percentage points) in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standard on the 2014–15 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were observed between SBOE- and ISD-authorized charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses. However, lower passing rates were observed for ISD-authorized charter school campuses (compared to their matched comparison campuses) at the elementary school level (68% vs. 74% for reading, and 61% vs. 71% for mathematics), but higher passing rates were found at the high school level on the English I and II and Algebra I EOC exams (82% vs. 68% for English I, 82% vs. 71% for English II, and 82% vs. 75% for Algebra I). School-level differences for SBOE-authorized

charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school campuses followed a different pattern with higher percentages of charter students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 standards at the elementary school level (79% vs. 75% for reading, and 72% vs. 71% for mathematics), but substantially lower passing rates at the high school level on the English I and II and Algebra I EOC exams (65% vs. 69% for English I, 65% vs. 71% for English II, and 68% vs. 76% for Algebra I).

Similarly, differences in TEA performance indices 1 (Student Achievement), 2 (Student Progress), and 3 (Closing Performance Gaps) were fairly small (two to five 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. In each of these comparisons, the charter school campus scores were higher. However, average scores for TEA performance index 4 (Postsecondary Readiness) were eight to eleven points higher for charter school campuses than for 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 modestly higher for both SBOE-authorized (51 vs. 47) and ISD-authorized (51 vs. 46) charter school campuses than their matched comparison campuses.

For each 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 (59 vs. 52); Student Progress (22 vs. 19); Closing Performance Gaps (31 vs. 25); and Postsecondary Readiness (92 vs. 86). In contrast, ISD-authorized charter school campuses evaluated under alternative accountability provisions posted consistently lower scores than their matched traditional public school campuses on the four indices: Student Achievement (35 vs. 64); Student Progress (16 vs. 20); Closing Performance Gaps (20 vs. 34); and Postsecondary Readiness (82 vs. 97). In contrast to the results presented above for non-AEA campuses, composite TEA index scores calculated for both the SBOE-authorized and ISD-authorized charter school campuses rated under AEA provisions were somewhat lower than those for their matched traditional public school campuses (49 vs. 50 and 40 vs. 55, respectively).

Annual dropout rates for Grades 9–12 were consistently higher for both SBOE-authorized (5.6% vs. 2.0%) and ISD-authorized (5.6% vs. 1.8%) charter school campuses than their matched traditional public school campuses. Annual dropout rates for Grades 7–8 were small and comparable between both SBOE- (0.3% for both) and ISD-authorized (0.4% vs. 0.3%) charter school campuses and their matched comparison campuses.

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2014 was substantially lower for SBOE-authorized (83% vs. 91%) and ISD-authorized charter (84% vs. 92%) school campuses than their matched traditional public school campuses.

Limitations

The findings presented in this report do not suggest that one type of public school campus consistently outperforms another type. 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. 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- and ISD-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, 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 recommend revocation of a charter if a charter school has failed to meet academic or financial accountability performance ratings for the three preceding school years. 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, 20 charter schools have been closed under these new provisions.

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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) 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.⁵⁴ 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.⁵⁵

Keeping this in mind, we used propensity scores to identify “demographic peer” traditional public school campuses for each charter school campus.⁵⁶ We did not use lagged outcome measures in the propensity

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 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>.

score algorithm.⁵⁷ In the previous 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.⁵⁸ 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:

$$\Pr(D_i = 1 | X_i) = \Phi\{h(X_i)\} \quad (1)$$

Where Φ is the propensity score, and $h(X_i)$ is a vector of 2014–15 campus-level (i) covariates.

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

- Campus enrollment type (e.g., elementary, middle, or high school)
- Student enrollment count
- Percentage of historically underrepresented racial minorities (i.e., Hispanic and Black 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 ELLs
- Percentage at-risk

In TAPR, both the campus-level student mobility rate and the average years of experience of teachers have missing values. The missing values for student mobility rates are attributable to new campuses for

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.

which the mobility cannot be calculated between 2013–14 and 2014–15. 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 these variables 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:

$$C(i) = \|p_i - p_j\| \leq c_{.2\sigma} \quad (2)$$

In (2), we selected the non-treated units (j) that satisfy the condition $(i) = \|p_i - p_j\| \leq c_{.2\sigma}$. 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.⁵⁹

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

As mentioned earlier in this section, student-level PEIMS data for 2014–15 and 2015–16 were used to calculate campus-level attrition rates for 2014–15. While 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), the attrition rate for this project was defined as the percentage of students who did not return in 2015–16 to the same campus in which they were enrolled in 2014–15.⁶⁰ 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

⁵⁹ These methodological choices will not, necessarily, produce complete balance with trivial, insignificant differences between charters 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.

⁶⁰ 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.

to have attrited from a campus, that campus had to have offered a grade level for which that student could have advanced between 2014–15 and 2015–16. For example, most middle school students enrolled in Grade 8 in 2014–15 did not advance to Grade 9 at the same campus because Grade 9 was not offered at their 2014–15 campus in 2015–16. Similarly, Grade 12 students in 2014–15 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 attrition rate. To adjust for these limitations, the following exclusion criteria for students enrolled in Texas public schools in 2014–15 were imposed:⁶¹

- 1) Students enrolled at a campus and in a grade in 2014–15 that was the highest grade offered at the campus according to 2015–16 enrollment records were removed from the attrition calculation;
- 2) Students in Grade 12 in 2014–15 were excluded from the attrition calculation;
- 3) Students who attended school for less than two hours in a day in 2014–15 or 2015–16 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;⁶² and
- 4) Students whose campus in 2014–15 was not active in 2015–16 were 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) 2014–15 Public Education Information Management System Post Addendum Version Data Standards (TEA, 2015). 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, 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 meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 passing standard on the 2014–15 STAAR-Reading and STAAR-Mathematics exams were calculated for Grade 3–8 students.⁶³ Thus, only elementary and middle school campuses were included in these analyses. It is important to note that results for the STAAR-Mathematics assessment were derived from a different source (the Texas Performance Reporting System) than other outcomes in the report (derived from TAPR), because STAAR-Mathematics results were not used to determine campus and district accountability ratings in 2015.

⁶¹ Retained students at the same campus were classified as having not attrited.

⁶² Please refer to the student accounting handbook for details on membership:
<http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769814325&libID=25769814370>.

⁶³ Level II Phase-in 1 refers to the passing standard for Satisfactory Academic Performance on the STAAR exam.

The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the Level II Phase-in 1 passing 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 2015 Texas Accountability Manual.⁶⁴

- 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 by subject and reports results by student demographics: race/ethnicity, ELLs, and special education program participation.
- 3) *Index 3 Closing Performance Gaps*: Emphasizes the academic achievement of economically disadvantaged students and the two lowest performing racial/ethnic student groups. The specific racial/ethnic groups are identified by campus based on prior year (2014) assessment results.
- 4) *Index 4 Postsecondary Readiness*: Emphasizes the role of elementary and middle schools in preparing students for the rigors of high school, and also emphasizes 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. Index 4 for elementary and middle schools is based only on STAAR results since these campuses do not have data on graduations rates, graduation diploma plans or postsecondary indicators.

For campuses evaluated under standard accountability provisions, Index 4 is measured by a combination of performance at the STAAR postsecondary readiness standard (Level II at the final standard), four- or five-year longitudinal high school graduation rates, the diploma program under which students graduate (e.g., Recommended High School Program, Distinguished High School Program), 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 postsecondary readiness 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

⁶⁴ <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/account/2015/manual/manual.pdf>

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.

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 2014–15:

Table A.1. 2015 Accountability Performance Index Targets for Standard Accountability Campuses

Target	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				All Components	STAAR Component Only
Elementary	60	30	28	Not applicable	12
Middle	60	28	27	Not applicable	13
High School	60	15	31	57	21

Table A.2. 2015 Accountability Performance Index Targets for AEA Campuses

Target	Index 1	Index 2	Index 3	Index 4	
				Both Components	Graduation, Dropout Rate Component Only
AEA Charter Districts and Campuses	35	7	11	45	33

For additional detail, refer to the 2014–15 Accountability Manual (Texas Education Agency, 2015).

Composite TEA Performance Index

In order to rate the aggregate performance of campuses as required by TEC § 12.1013(d)(2), a composite index score for each campus included in the aggregate campus academic performance analyses was calculated.⁶⁵ 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 2013–14 but did not return to public school in the fall of 2014–15, was not expelled, does not graduate, does not receive a high school equivalency

⁶⁵ 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.

certificate, does not continue school outside the public school system, does not begin college, or has not died. The dropout rate was defined as an annual rate, as opposed to a longitudinal rate.⁶⁶ Annual dropout data from 2013–14 were used for 2015 state accountability.

The Grade 9 four-year longitudinal graduation rate for the class of 2014 calculated for state accountability was used for this project.⁶⁷ The class of 2014 Grade 9 four-year graduation rate was calculated by dividing the number of students who began Grade 9 in 2010–11 and graduated by August 31, 2014, by the total number of graduates, continuers, GED certificate recipients, and dropouts in the class. Longitudinal graduation data from the class of 2014 is used for 2015 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 2015 state accountability purposes:

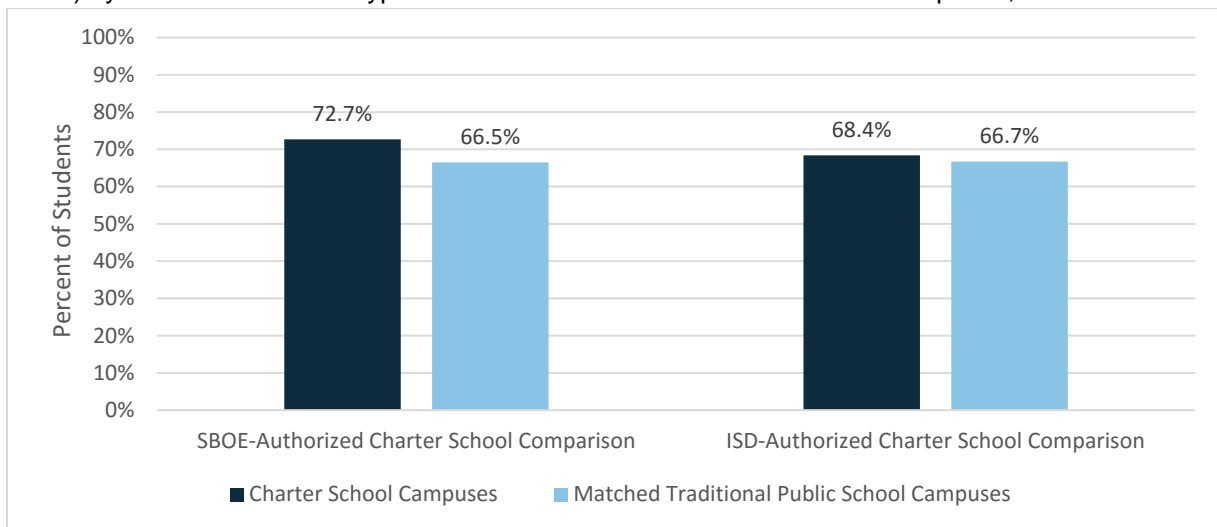
- Under TEC § 39.053(g-1) (2013), a student who meets at least one of the following criteria is excluded from campus and district annual dropout and longitudinal rate calculations: (a) a student who is ordered by a court to attend a high school equivalency certificate program but has not earned a high 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) (2013), 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 (2013), 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. Statute was amended in 2013 to exclude, as well, any student in a residential treatment facility served by a Texas public school district. State accountability procedures were modified in 2014 to accommodate this statutory change.

⁶⁶ For additional detail on annual dropout rates in Texas, see *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools, 2014–15* (Texas Education Agency, 2016).

⁶⁷ 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

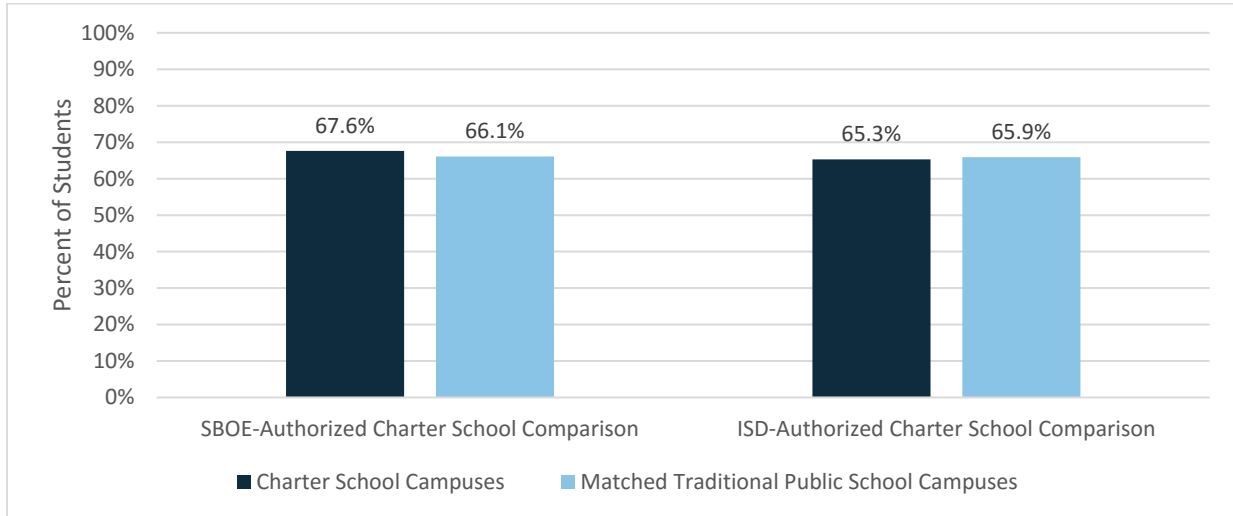
Figure B.1. Percent of Students at or Above the State Standard on the STAAR-Writing Exam (Grades 4 and 7) by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 372 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 746 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 37 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 365 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.

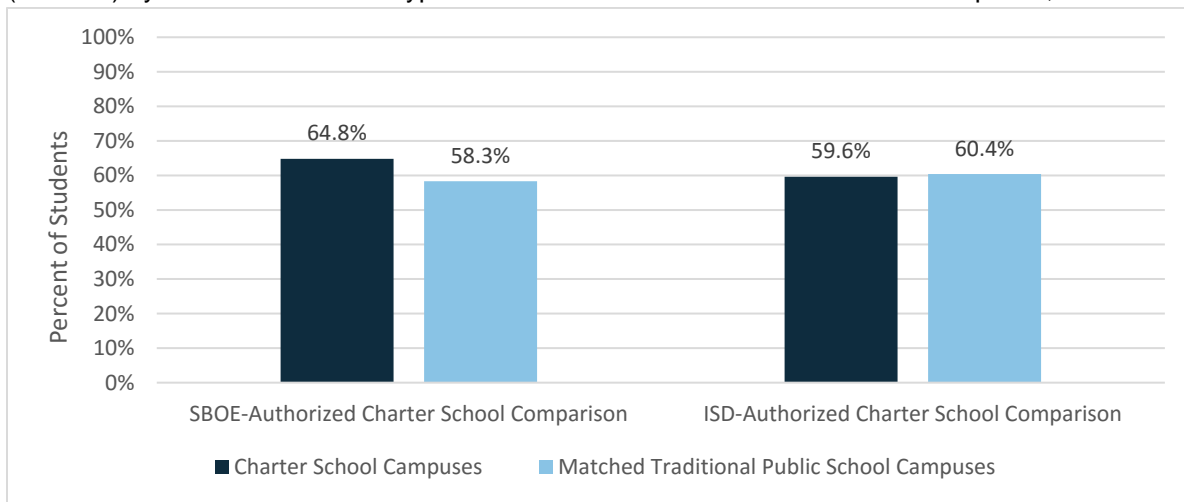
Figure B.2. Percent of Students at or Above the State Standard on the STAAR-Science Exam (Grades 4 and 7) by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 344 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 698 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 35 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 342 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.

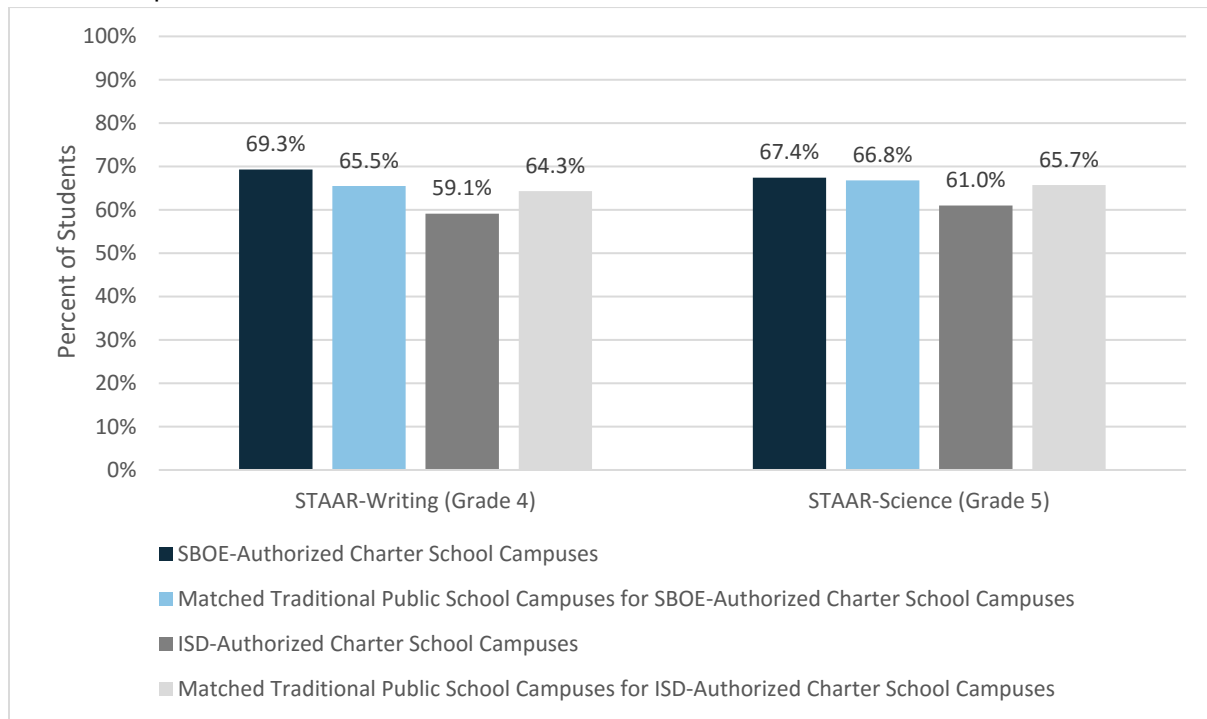
Figure B.3. Percent of Students at or Above the State Standard on the STAAR-Social Studies Exam (Grade 8) by Charter Authorizer Type and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, 2014–15



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports and Texas Accountability Rating System, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 213 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 223 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 23 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 102 traditional public school campuses matched to ISD-authorized charter school campuses were included in this State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) analysis.

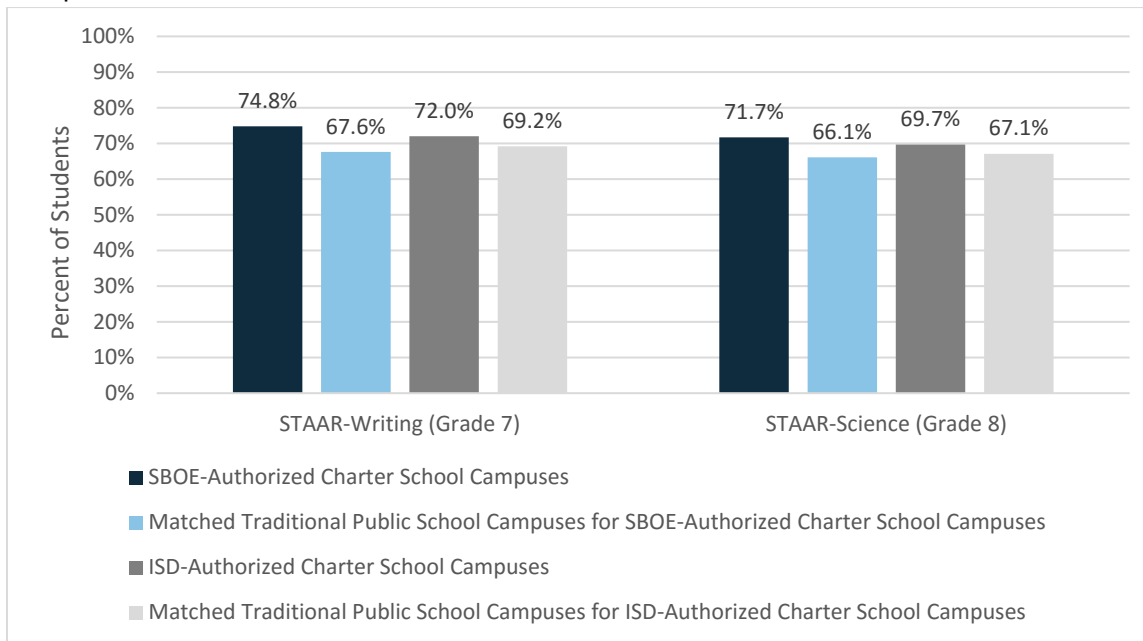
Figure B.4. Percent of Students at or Above the State Standard on the 2014–15 STAAR-Writing (Grade 4) and STAAR-Sciences (Grade 5) Exams for SBOE-Authorized Charter School Campuses, ISD-Authorized Charter School Campuses, and Matched Traditional Public School Campuses, Elementary School Campuses



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15.

Note: A total of 319 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 620 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 23 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 309 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 at or Above the State Standard on the 2014–15 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, Middle School Campuses



Source: Texas Academic Performance Reports, Texas Education Agency, 2014–15. Note: A total of 98 State Board of Education (SBOE)-authorized charter school campuses, 213 traditional public school campuses matched to SBOE-authorized charter school campuses, 16 Independent School District (ISD)-authorized charter school campuses, and 105 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 2014 accountability snapshot enrollment count was used as the weight.