



2015-16 New California Charter Schools Fact Sheet

Over 580,000 Students Choose Charter Schools in 2015-16

Across the state, an estimated 581,100 students are attending charter public schools for the 2015-16 school year. Additionally, 80 new charter schools are opening their doors bringing the total number of charter schools in California to 1,230.

Charter school enrollment grew by an estimated 36,100 students, or an increase of 7%. California has the most charter schools and charter school students of any state in the country.

This school year, the Los Angeles region has the largest charter school growth, with 27 new schools opening. The second largest growth area is in the North Coast & Bay Area region (21 schools), with 7 new charter schools opening in Alameda county and 6 new schools opening in Sonoma county.

Despite this growth, there is still an overwhelming unmet demand for quality school options in California. The demand for charter schools can be significantly higher than the number of seats available. In California, approximately 158,000 students are on charter school waiting lists.

Charter School Growth in CA: 1998-2015

- 1998-99: 177 charter schools
- 1999-00: 235 charter schools
- 2000-01: 299 charter schools
- 2001-02: 349 charter schools
- 2002-03: 408 charter schools
- 2003-04: 443 charter schools
- 2004-05: 502 charter schools
- 2005-06: 560 charter schools
- 2006-07: 585 charter schools
- 2007-08: 682 charter schools
- 2008-09: 746 charter schools
- 2009-10: 809 charter schools
- 2010-11: 912 charter schools
- 2011-12: 982 charter schools
- 2012-13: 1,063 charter schools
- 2013-14: 1,130 charter schools
- 2014-15: 1,182 charter schools
- 2015-16: 1,230 charter schools

By the Numbers

- **1,230**: Charter schools in California
- **80**: New charter schools in 2015-16 school year
- **California**: Most charter schools and charter school students of any state in the country
- **581,100**: Estimated number of students attending charter schools in CA as of 2015-16
- **7%**: Estimated percentage by which charter school student enrollment grew in 2015-16
- **36,100**: Estimated number of new charter school students in 2015-16
- **Los Angeles**: Region with highest growth in new charter schools
- **27**: New charter schools in Los Angeles region
- **North Coast & Bay Area**: Region with second highest growth
- **21**: New charter schools in North Coast and Bay Area
- **158,000**: Estimated number of students on charter school waiting lists in 2014-15
- **32**: Schools closed in 2014-15

- California approved the Charter Schools Act in 1992.
- California was the second state in the nation to pass a charter school law—after Minnesota.
- California has the most charter schools and charter school students in the U.S.