Statutory Report Series Legislative Report on Charter Schools 2024-2025

July 2026

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Statutory Report Series
Legislative Report on Charter Schools 2024-2025

Developed by

DPI Charter Schools Team

Bureau of Education Options

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents iii
Tables iv
Figures iv
Executive Summary vi
Introduction 1
Wisconsin Charter Schools 2
History of Wisconsin's Charter School Law 2
Number of Charter Schools in Wisconsin 4
Overview of Wisconsin's Charter Schools 6
Aspects of Autonomy 6
Accessibility and Admission 6
Instrumentality and Non-Instrumentality 7
Independent Authorizers 7
Virtual Charter Schools 9
Charter School Enrollment 10
Charter School Assessment 15
Creating a District Authorized Charter School 19
Charter School Petition 19
Charter School Proposal 21
"Development" and "Implementation" 21
Petition and Proposal Activity – Survey Results 22
General Information 22
"Development" Decisions 24
"Implementation" Decisions 24
Source of Petitions and Proposals 25
Planning Group Participants 25
Comments from Survey 25
DPI Awards on Federal Charter School Grant Applications 26
Charter Consortiums 27
Conclusion 30
References 31
Appendix A 32

Appendix B 33
Appendix C 34

Tables

Table 1: Growth of Charter Schools in Wisconsin 4
Table 2: States with the Most Charter Schools 5
Table 3: Wisconsin's Independent Charter Schools 8
Table 4: Wisconsin's Public School Population by Race/Ethnicity 10
Table 5: Wisconsin's Charter School Population by Race/Ethnicity 10
Table 6: Reasons for Approval of "Development" Decisions 24
Table 7: Reasons for Approval of "Implementation" Decisions 24
Table 8: Source of Charter School Petitions and Proposals 25
Table 9: Charter School Planning Group Members 25
Table 10: The DPI Action on Grant Applications Submitted December 2023 26
Table 11: School Districts Engaged in Multi-District/Partner Charter Activity 28

Figures

Figure 1: Virtual Charter Schools – Total Number of Virtual Charter Schools and Total Enrollment from the 2014-15 through the 2023-24 School Years 9
Figure 2: Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students Economically Disadvantaged in Wisconsin Public Schools from the 2014-15 through the 2023-24 School Years 11
Figure 3: Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students Economically Disadvantaged in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools from the 2014-15 through the 2023-24 School Years 12
Figure 4: Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students Economically Disadvantaged in Wisconsin Public Charter Schools from the 2014-15 through the 2023-24 School Years 12

Figure 5: Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students with a Disability in Wisconsin Public Schools from the 2014-15 through the 2023-24 School Years..... 13

Figure 6: Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students with a Disability in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools from the 2014-15 through the 2023-24 School Years 14

Figure 7: Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students with a Disability in Wisconsin Public Charter Schools from the 2014-15 through the 2023-24 School Years 14

Figure 8: Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Public Schools for the 2023-24 School Year 16

Figure 9: Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools for the 2023-24 School Year..... 16

Figure 10: Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Performance - Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Charter Schools for the 2023-24 School Year..... 17

Figure 11: Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam Mathematics Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Public Schools for the 2023-24 School Year 18

Figure 12: Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam Mathematics Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools for the 2023-24 School Year 18

Figure 13: Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam Mathematics Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Charter Schools for the 2023-24 School Year 19

Figure 14: Comparison by CESA – Total Number of "Development" Decisions on Proposed New Charter Schools During the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 School Years 23

Figure 15: Comparison by CESA – Number of Districts with Operating Charter Schools Compared to Those with "Development" Decisions on New Charter Schools in 2023-2024 23

Executive Summary

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is required to submit this report to the Legislature regarding the status of existing charter schools, the number of petitions for new charter schools, and the action taken by school boards and DPI on petitions for new charter schools (see Wis. Stat. §115.28 (49)). This report offers the results of the charter school activity survey in the 421 Wisconsin school districts during the 2024-2025 school year. Independent authorizer charter school activity is not included in the survey.

This report documents two distinct stages of decision-making regarding new charter school proposals. The first is a "development" decision which includes the following: (1) further study of a new charter school; (2) considering participation in a charter consortium; or (3) study of a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school. The second is an "implementation" decision which is defined as (1) an approved charter contract between the district and the operator of a charter school for a new charter school; (2) an approved written agreement to participate in a consortium; or (3) a signature on a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school. For the purpose of this definition, petition and proposal can be used interchangeably.

The department conducted an electronic survey and personally contacted school district officials to compile the necessary data. One hundred percent of Wisconsin school districts responded to the survey.

During the 2024-2025 school year, 15 districts (four percent) reported charter school activity as defined above, including at least one district in ten of the 12 regional Cooperative Educational Services Agencies (CESA). A breakdown of the activity shows nine school boards made ten "development" charter school decisions, and 14 school boards made 15 "implementation" charter school decisions. Of the "development" decisions, nine of ten (90 percent) were approved. Of the implementation" decisions, 14 of 15 (93 percent) were approved.

Introduction

Charter schools, as defined by the United States Department of Education (USDE), are a form of public school choice that provide innovative educational options for parents and students. Charter schools are nonsectarian and are created through a contract, or charter, between the operators and a chartering authority. The charter defines the school's mission and describes how the school will meet the unique needs and interests of its community, parents, and students. Therefore, charter schools become, in essence, living laboratories that may influence the larger public school system and introduce an element of entrepreneurship within that system. Although many goals for educating and preparing children are similar, each charter school fulfills a specific local need in education by offering choices in areas such as curriculum, teaching methodology, and classroom structure. The chartering authority holds the school accountable to the performance measures included in its charter. These performance measures are related to student achievement, management, operations, financial performance and other areas. Wisconsin's charter school law gives charter schools freedom from most state rules and regulations in exchange for greater accountability for results.

Charter schools have been in existence since the early 1990s. Minnesota passed the first charter school law in 1991. The following year, the first charter school in the United States opened in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. During the 2023-24[1] school year, there were 8,140 charter schools and campuses in operation across the country serving over 3.8 million students. (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2025).

Stimulated by a boost of federal funding for charter schools, the number of charter schools over the last two decades has increased.

[1] Data currently available from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS) is from the 2023-24 school year. NAPCS does not expect to have the 2024-25 charter school data available until December 2026.

Wisconsin Charter Schools

History of Wisconsin's Charter School Law

The Wisconsin Legislature established the Wisconsin Charter School Program (WCSP) in 1993 to provide educational alternatives for students in kindergarten through grade 12. The initial law permitted, with State Superintendent approval, 10 school districts to establish up to two charter schools each, creating a cap of 20 schools statewide. The State Superintendent approved three charter schools to open in the 1994-95 school year. The Stevens Point Area School Board authorized Wisconsin's first charter school, named "Teachers Educating, Advising and Mentoring," or "Team", which opened in August 1994. In January of the 1994-95 school year, two more charter schools opened in the Beaver Dam and Madison Metropolitan School Districts. Revisions made in 1995 to the charter school law gave chartering authority to school boards statewide and eliminated the cap.

Further changes to the law allowed other entities besides school boards the ability to authorize charter schools. In 1997, the state gave chartering authority in Milwaukee to the chancellor of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (UW—Milwaukee), the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), and the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee. In the 1998 budget adjustment session, the state allowed districts to contract with one of the 12 CESAs to operate a charter school located within the CESA region. In the 2001-2003 budget bills, the University of Wisconsin – Parkside (UW—Parkside) was given chartering authority, allowing it to establish a single charter school.

A number of changes regarding authorizers were made to Wisconsin's charter school law by 2015 Wisconsin Act 55. Under Act 55, five new entities were allowed to authorize independent charter schools (ICS): (a) the Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO) in the UW System; (b) the Gateway Technical College District Board; (c) the College of Menominee Nation; (d) the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College; and (e) the Waukesha County Executive. These independent chartering entities are often referred to as "2r" or "2x" authorizers because Wis. Stat. § 118.40 (2r) and Wis. Stat. § 118.40 (2x) pertains to these entities. (For more information, see Independent Authorizers.) Act 55 also established that the Board of Regents' approval is no longer statutorily required for charter schools authorized by UW—Milwaukee and UW—Parkside. The number of independent authorizers further increased under 2017 Wisconsin Act 59, which allowed any UW chancellor or any technical college district board to contract with a person to operate an ICS.

In addition to changes regarding authorizing entities, the law has undergone other modifications. The 1998 budget adjustment session established: a) procedures for when a school board is petitioned for the opening of a charter school; b) procedures for converting a nonsectarian private school to a charter school; and c) the requirement for charter schools to state their relationship with a school district as an instrumentality or non-instrumentality. Changes that occurred in the 2003-2005 biennial budget exempted a specific charter school sponsored by UW—

Milwaukee (Woodlands Academy) from some residency requirements. Additional changes in 2005 resulted in the elimination of previous school year attendance requirements for students residing in Milwaukee. In 2006, the law was changed again to allow authorizers to enter into a contract with a charter school that enrolls or offers limited courses to one sex, provided that a comparable school or course is available to the opposite sex. In 2008, the law was further amended to clarify requirements for virtual charter schools.

In 2013, the legislature expanded the locations of charter schools authorized by the UW—Milwaukee to include charter schools located anywhere in Milwaukee County or in an adjacent county. In addition, students who resided in Milwaukee County or in an adjacent county could attend any ICS established in Milwaukee County or in an adjacent county. 2015 Wisconsin Act 55 removed many of the residency and location restrictions on ICS, except for Gateway Technical College District Board, Waukesha County Executive, and OEO, which continued to have residency and location restrictions. 2017 Wisconsin Act 59 then removed previous residency and location restrictions for Gateway Technical College District Board and OEO. The only remaining geographic restriction is that schools authorized by the Waukesha County Executive must be located in Waukesha County.

Changes were also made to authorizer requirements as part of 2015 Wisconsin Act 55. These changes included requiring all authorizers to adhere to the standards and principles established by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), strengthening the power of the charter school governance board by providing a list of specific board-related responsibilities and requiring all charter school authorizers to report annually to the legislature and to the state superintendent on the performance of each of its charter schools.

New provisions under 2015 Wisconsin Act 55 further specified that each charter school must be governed by a governing board that is a party to the contract with the authorizing entity and no more than a minority of the governing board's members can be employees of the school or employees or officers of the school district. Act 55 allowed operators of ICS to claim state aid for providing transportation to students.

2017 Wisconsin Act 59 allowed ICS to receive funding for summer school. The Act also specified that a charter school authorizer must only consider (rather than adhere to, under prior law) the principles and standards for quality charter schools established by NACSA when contracting for the establishment of a charter school.

2021 Wisconsin Act 58 changed the funding source for legacy ICS. Legacy ICS are schools chartered by authorizers who had the authority prior to 2015 Act 55 (UW—Milwaukee, the City of Milwaukee, UW—Parkside, and the Milwaukee Area Technical College). Previously, legacy ICS funding was generated from a proportional reduction in state general aid from all school districts in Wisconsin. The act eliminated the proportional state aid reduction beginning in the 2021-22 school year and replaced it with direct GPR funding.

Number of Charter Schools in Wisconsin

Table 1 shows the number of Wisconsin charter schools from fall of 1994 to fall of 2024.

■ Table 1

Number of Charter Schools in Wisconsin

Year	Number of Charter Schools	Percent Increase from Year Before
1994-1995	3*	—
1995-1996	7*	133%*
1996-1997	13	86%*
1997-1998	17*	31%*
1998-1999	39*	129%*
1999-2000	53*	36%*
2000-2001	87*	64%*
2001-2002	109*	25%*
2002-2003	127*	17%*
2003-2004	135*	6%*
2004-2005	161*	19%
2005-2006	183*	14%*
2006-2007	187*	2%*
2007-2008	231	24%*
2008-2009	222*	-4%
2009-2010	206	-7%
2010-2011	206	0%
2011-2012	233*	13%
2012-2013	239*	3%
2013-2014	242	1%*
2014-2015	243	0.4%
2015-2016	243*	0%*
2016-2017	237	-3%*
2017-2018	234	-1%
2018-2019	233	-0.4%
2019-2020	236	1%
2020-2021	229	-3%
2021-2022	236	3%
2022-2023	239	1%
2023-2024	236	-1%
2024-2025	226	-4%

*Data for certain years has been updated from prior reports due to a reporting error identified by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

During the 2024-25 school year, 226 charter schools were in operation in Wisconsin, a decrease of four percent from the previous school year. There were 98 Wisconsin school boards that authorized 194 charter schools, and five non-

school board (independent) authorizers that authorized 32 charter schools. While 13 charter schools closed at the end of the 2023-24 school year, three new charter schools opened at the beginning of the 2024-25 school year. By the end of the 2024-25 school year, nine charter schools closed for a variety of reasons, including low student enrollment, contract non-renewals, financial reasons, and conversion to a program or traditional public school. Wisconsin ranks among the top 10 states in the U.S. with the most charter schools in operation (see Table 2). Over 49,000 Wisconsin students (six percent of all Wisconsin K-12 students) attended a charter school during the 2024-25 school year.

■ Table 2

States with the Most Charter Schools

		Total Number of Charter Schools				
2023-24 Rank	**State**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**
1	California	1,336	1,334	1,324	1,312	1,313
2	Texas	927*	893*	1,014*	1,053*	1,045*
3	Florida	676	690	707	743	731
4	Arizona	555	559	585	584	573
5	Michigan	367	368	372	378	363
6	New York	326	341	346	357	360
7	Ohio	317	318	328	338	342
8	Minnesota	243	257	281	303	296
9	Colorado	266	272	273	276	276
10	Wisconsin	236	229	236	239	236

*This data represents campuses and charter schools

Sources: The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS), 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025.

Note: Non-Wisconsin data is from NAPCS, while Wisconsin data is from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

In October 2023, DPI was the recipient of a $58 million federal grant from USDE to support charter activities over the next five years. These federal funds were disseminated through the Wisconsin Charter Schools Program (WCSP) and administered by DPI. Part of the federal grant supported the Wisconsin Resource Center for Charter Schools (WRCCS), which offers statewide technical assistance to support charter schools, governing boards, and authorizers.

It should be noted that, while charter school grant funds may influence and encourage the development of charter schools, chartering a new school at the local level is a separate and distinct activity from applying for charter school grant funds. Chartering requires an agreement between the operator of the charter school and the local authorizer, usually the school board. The department is not an authorizer and does not approve new charter schools to open.

Overview of Wisconsin's Charter Schools

Below is a brief overview of Wisconsin's charter schools. This and related information can be found on the DPI charter school website. Additionally, WRCCS publishes an annual charter school yearbook that includes a description of each operating charter school in the state.

Aspects of Autonomy

Wisconsin's charter schools are exempt from most state requirements regarding public education (see Wis. Stat. § 118.40 (7)(b)). However, depending on the school's contract, district authorized charter schools may not be exempt from local school board policies. The purpose of these exemptions is to allow charter school developers to be free in creating and establishing independent governance and administrative structures.

The governing board must be autonomous and independent of the authorizer. The governance board's autonomy must extend to making decisions on issues related to policy, budget, and personnel. Therefore, a majority of the governance board members must be non-school district and school employees and non-school board members. Many charter schools break from traditional management models by establishing decision-making boards that include school staff, parents, area employers, and student representatives. Others have parent and teacher committees that address school needs, such as fund-raising and the budget. Parental involvement and participation are hallmarks of charter schools. Although many parents readily volunteer, parental service may not be made a condition of pupil admission.

Accessibility and Admission

Charter schools may not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability. In addition, Wisconsin's law requires the charter contract to describe how the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance that reflects the balance in the school district as a whole.

During the admission process, preference must be given to students living within the attendance area of an existing traditional public school that is converted to a charter school. Nonresident students who want to attend a district-authorized charter school may apply to do so under the Wisconsin Public School Open Enrollment Program, though placement is not guaranteed. ICS may enroll students from anywhere in Wisconsin. If more students apply to attend a charter school than there are spaces available, a random lottery must be held. The lottery must give preference to students who were enrolled in the charter school in the previous year and to siblings of students who are enrolled in the school. The school may give preference to children of the school's founders, governing board members, and full-time employees, but this preference can be given to no more than 10 percent of the school's total enrollment. A charter school cannot charge tuition.

Attendance at a charter school is voluntary, and the district must provide alternative public education for pupils who do not wish to attend the charter

school or who are not admitted to the charter school due to space constraints. This provision also applies should a school board enter into a contract that would result in the conversion of all the public schools in the district to charter schools.

Charter schools receiving federal grant funds are subject to additional guidance and regulations from the U.S. Department of Education.

Instrumentality and Non-Instrumentality

For district authorized charter schools, the school board may determine whether the charter school is an instrumentality of the school district in which it is located. If the board deems it an instrumentality, the district employs all personnel for the charter school. If the board determines the charter school is not an instrumentality, the personnel are considered employees of the charter school. In 2024-25, of the 194 charter schools authorized by districts, there were 173 (89 percent) instrumentality and 21 (11 percent) non-instrumentality charter schools.

Although some charter schools are identified as instrumentalities of the district, the word "instrumentality" is not defined in the charter school law and has had limited use in Wisconsin. The word was initially included in the charter law to ensure continuing eligibility of charter school teachers in the Wisconsin Retirement System. Instrumentality as used in the retirement law defines the employer, making it clear that the employing school district is responsible for worker's compensation, unemployment compensation, employee insurance and benefits, liability for acts of school staff members, and other employee-related matters.

Independent Authorizers

Although most authorizers are school districts, there are other entities that state law permits to authorize charter schools. Initially, these entities included UW—Milwaukee, MATC, the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, and UW—Parkside. 2015 Wisconsin Act 55 expanded this to add five new independent authorizers, which included the Gateway Technical College District Board, the Waukesha County Executive, College of Menominee Nation, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, and the OEO in the UW System. 2017 Wisconsin Act 59 added any UW chancellor (in addition to the UW—Milwaukee and UW—Parkside chancellors under current law) and any technical college district board (in addition to MATC and Gateway). These independent chartering entities are often referred to as "2r" or "2x" authorizers, a reference to the section of charter school law within Wis. Stat. § 118.40 that grants these entities authority to authorize charter schools.

During the 2024-25 school year, there were a total of 32 ICS in operation in Wisconsin. Table 3 shows a list of these schools and their authorizers.

■ Table 3

Wisconsin's Independent Charter Schools

Authorizer	School
City of Milwaukee	
	Central City Cyber School
	Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
	Downtown Montessori Academy
	Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy
	Escuela Verde
	Milwaukee Academy of Science
	Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University	
	Akii-gikinoo'amaading
Office of Educational Opportunity	
	Adeline Montessori School
	Central Sands Community High School
	Isthmus Montessori Academy Public
	Kenosha High School of Technology Enhanced Curriculum
	Milestone Democratic School
	Mill Creek Academy
	New Leaf Prep Academy
	One City Expeditionary Elementary School
	One City Preparatory Academy
	The Lincoln Academy
	UpGrade Media Arts School
UW—Milwaukee	
	Bruce Guadalupe Community School
	Carmen Middle School South
	La Casa de Esperanza Charter School
	Milwaukee Scholars Charter School
	Pathways High School
	Rocketship Southside Community Prep
	Rocketship Transformation Prep
	Seeds of Health, Inc.: Seeds of Health Elementary School
	Seeds of Health, Inc.: Tenor High School
	Seeds of Health, Inc.: Veritas High School
	Stellar Collegiate Charter School
	UCC Acosta Middle School
	Woodlands School—Bluemound Campus
	Woodlands School East—State Street Campus
UW—Parkside	
	21st Century Preparatory School
Waukesha County Executive	
	Lake Country Classical

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2024

Virtual Charter Schools

In Wisconsin, a virtual charter school (VCS) is a specific form of online learning. It is the only form of online learning which allows an open enrolled student to participate fully remote, that is, without having to regularly physically attend a school located in the nonresident school district.

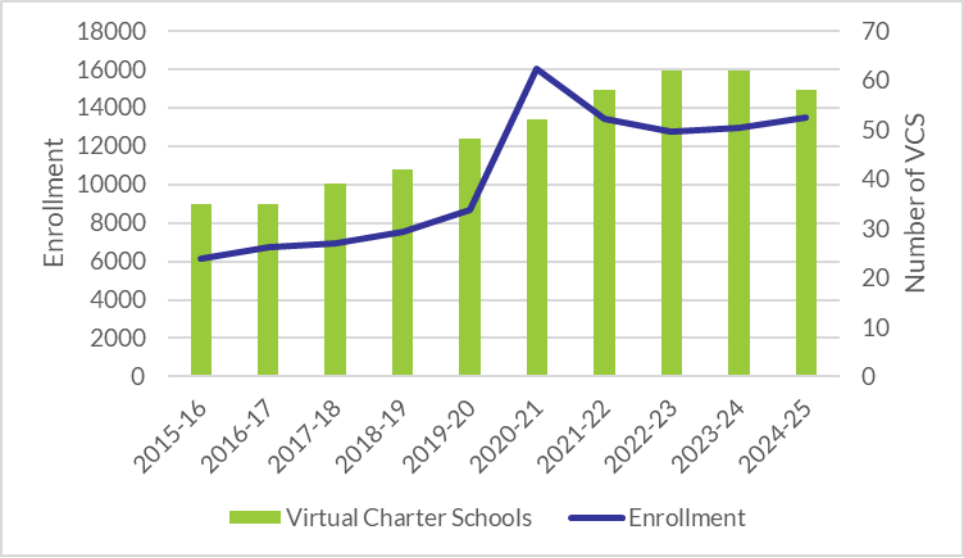
A VCS is defined in Wis. Stats. § 115.001 (16) as "a charter school under contract with a school board . . . in which all or a portion of the instruction is provided through means of the Internet, and the students enrolled in and instructional staff employed by the school are geographically remote from each other." Since a VCS must be in contract with a school board, all VCS are authorized by a school district and cannot be authorized by an independent authorizer.

VCS are publicly funded, nonsectarian schools that are exempt from many regulations that apply to traditional public schools that offer some of their classes online. In addition, state statutes contain specific requirements that must be met by VCS (see Wis. Stats. § 118.40 (8)). Students typically attend from their homes and communicate with teachers by e-mail, telephone, and online discussions. While most VCS in Wisconsin are exclusively virtual, it is important to note that some VCS operate under a blended learning model and require some physical attendance.

Over the last ten years, the number of VCS in Wisconsin has been steadily increasing. During the 2024-25 school year, there were 58 VCS in operation in Wisconsin. VCS experienced a significant increase in enrollment in the 2020-21 school year, which can be at least partially attributed to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Enrollment numbers in the 2024-25 school year were still above pre-COVID-19 enrollment numbers. Figure 1 shows the number of operating VCS increased by 66 percent from the 2015-16 to 2024-25 school year. Additionally, enrollment has increased by 120 percent during that time.

■ Figure 1

Virtual Charter Schools – Total Number of Virtual Charter Schools and Total Enrollment from the 2015-16 through the 2024-25 School Years.



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Charter School Enrollment

In the 2024-25 school year, 49,461 students enrolled in charter schools across Wisconsin. As shown in Table 4, charter schools served a higher percentage of racial and ethnic minority groups than all public schools in the state. However, when analyzing the enrollment for schools outside the City of Milwaukee, charter schools served all racial and ethnicity subgroups at a similar rate as all schools outside of the City of Milwaukee. Charters within the City of Milwaukee served racial and ethnic minority groups at a slightly higher rate compared to all public schools within the city. Table 5 shows that there are varying rates in which the different types of charter school serve racial and ethnic minority groups. For example, independent charter schools serve minority groups at a higher rate compared to virtual charter schools. Please note that VCS are included in all of the district authorized charter school data provided below.

■ Table 4

Wisconsin's Public School Population by Race/Ethnicity

	2024-25					
	All Charters in State	All Schools in State*	All Charters Excluding City of Milwaukee	All Schools Excluding City of Milwaukee*	All Charters in City of Milwaukee	All Schools in City of Milwaukee*
White, not Hispanic or Latino	45.7%	67.0%	68.5%	71.7%	4.5%	10.3%
Black or African American, not Hispanic or Latino	20.8%	8.0%	7.3%	4.6%	45.2%	49.0%
Hispanic or Latino	21.6%	14.0%	14.2%	12.8%	35.0%	28.3%
Asian	5.7%	4.3%	2.3%	4.0%	11.9%	7.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.6%	1.0%	0.8%	1.1%	0.3%	0.4%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Two or more races	5.5%	5.6%	6.8%	5.7%	3.0%	4.7%

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025 *Excludes Charter Schools

■ Table 5

Wisconsin's Charter School Population by Race/Ethnicity

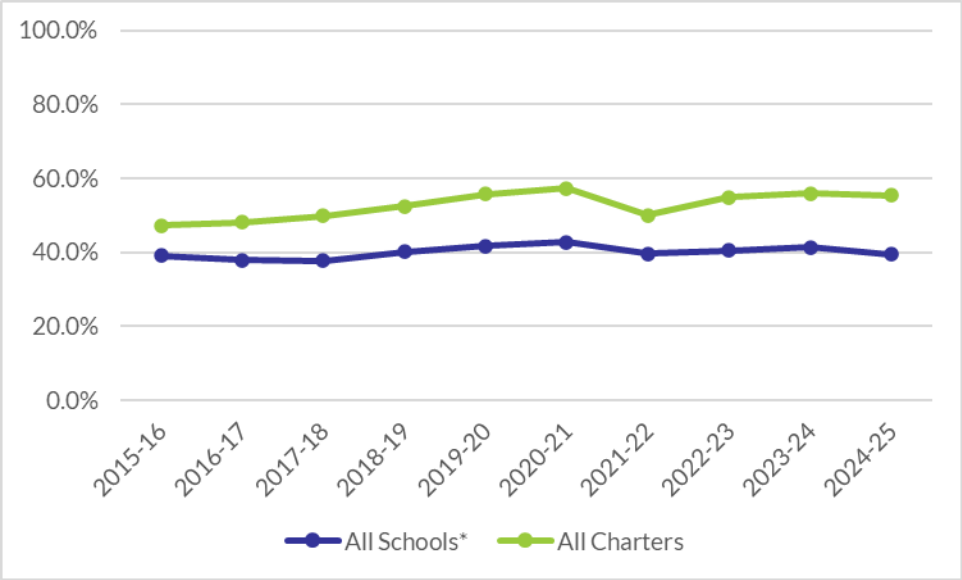
	2024-25		
	District Authorized Charter Schools*	Independent Charter Schools	Virtual Charter Schools
White, not Hispanic or Latino	55.6%	15.9%	71.9%
Black or African American, not Hispanic or Latino	13.4%	43.3%	7.5%
Hispanic or Latino	17.2%	34.9%	11.8%
Asian	7.3%	0.8%	1.4%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7%	0.3%	1.0%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Two or more races	5.7%	4.7%	6.3%

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025 *Includes Virtual Charter Schools

As shown in Figure 2, since the 2015-16 school year, charter schools have, overall, served a higher percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged compared to all public schools. However, when comparing this historical trend within the City of Milwaukee, Figure 3, charter schools served either approximately the same or a smaller percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged. In the 2024-25 school year, charter schools in the City of Milwaukee served a higher proportion of students (82.1 percent) who are economically disadvantaged compared to the state overall (39.4 percent). Figure 4 shows that ICS (of which 20 of the 32 are located in the City of Milwaukee) also served a higher proportion of students who are economically disadvantaged when compared to both the state overall and to district authorized charters including VCS. VCS had served economically disadvantaged students at a smaller rate compared to other schools; however this trend has reversed the last few school years. In 2024-25 VCS served students who are economically disadvantaged at a slightly higher rate (42.9 percent) compared to the state overall (39.4 percent).

■ Figure 2

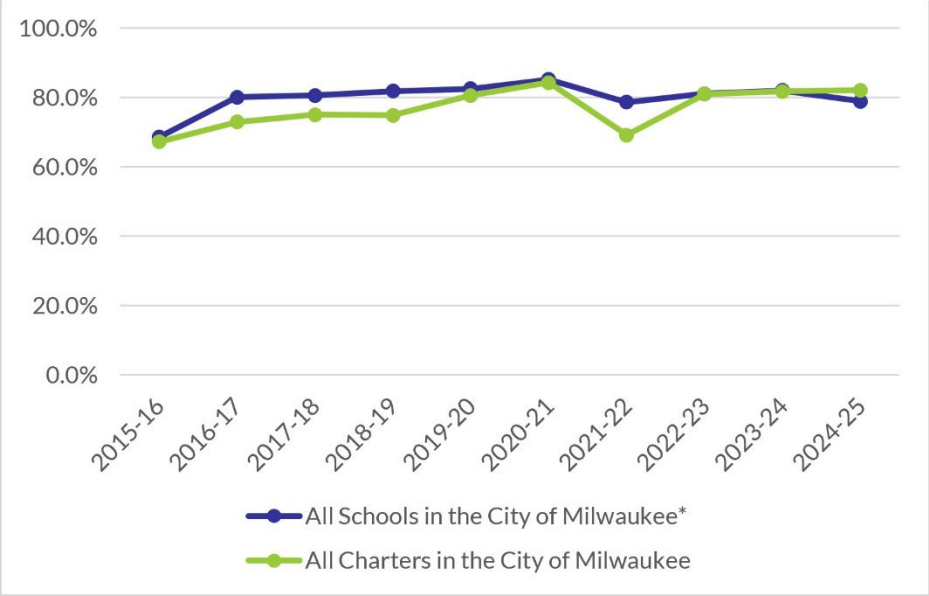
Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students Economically Disadvantaged in Wisconsin Public Schools from the 2015-16 through the 2024-25 School Years



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 3

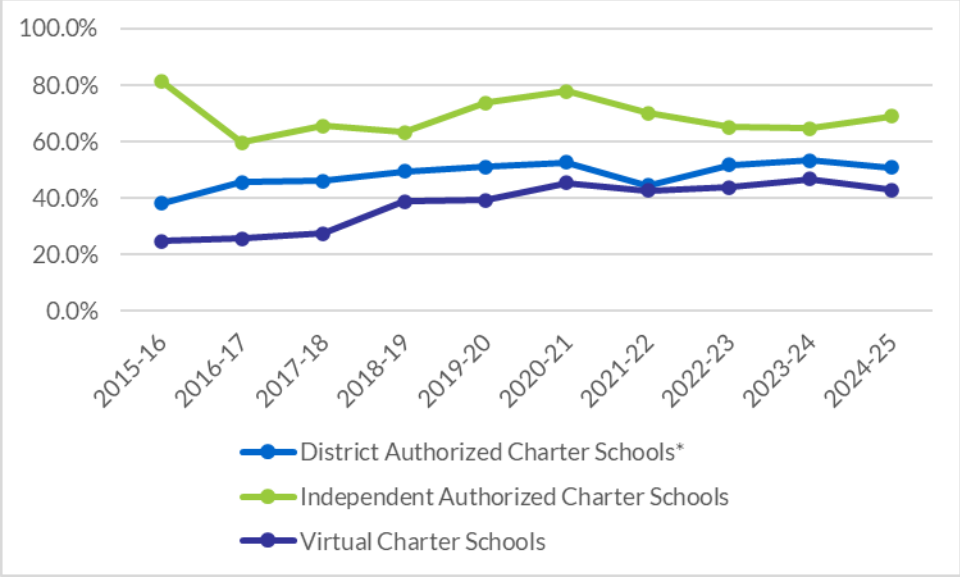
Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students Economically Disadvantaged in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools from the 2015-16 through the 2024-25 School Years



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 4

Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students Economically Disadvantaged in Wisconsin Public Charter Schools from the 2015-16 through the 2024-25 School Years

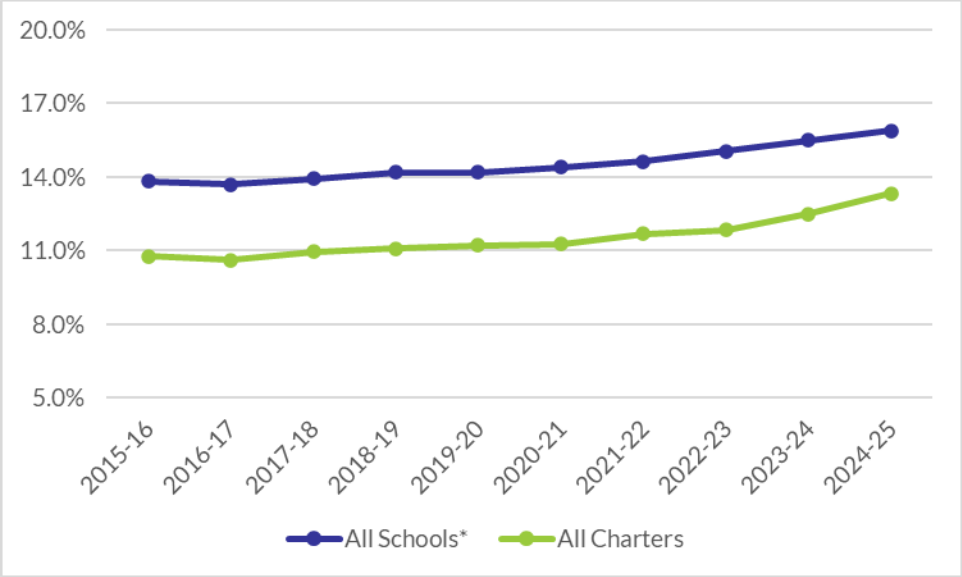


Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Includes Virtual Charter Schools

As shown in Figure 5 over the last ten school years, charter schools have served students with disabilities at a lower proportion compared to all public schools in the state. This is particularly true in the City of Milwaukee, Figure 6, where charter schools are serving students with disabilities over eight percentage points less than all public schools in the city for the 2024-25 school year. As shown in Figure 7, out of the three subcategories of charter schools, VCS are serving students with disabilities at the highest rate (14.1) as of the 2024-25 school year. Ten years ago, VCS and ICS were serving students with disabilities at a lower rate compared to district authorized charter schools. Please note Figures 5, 6, and 7 are scaled to see noticeable differences.

■ Figure 5

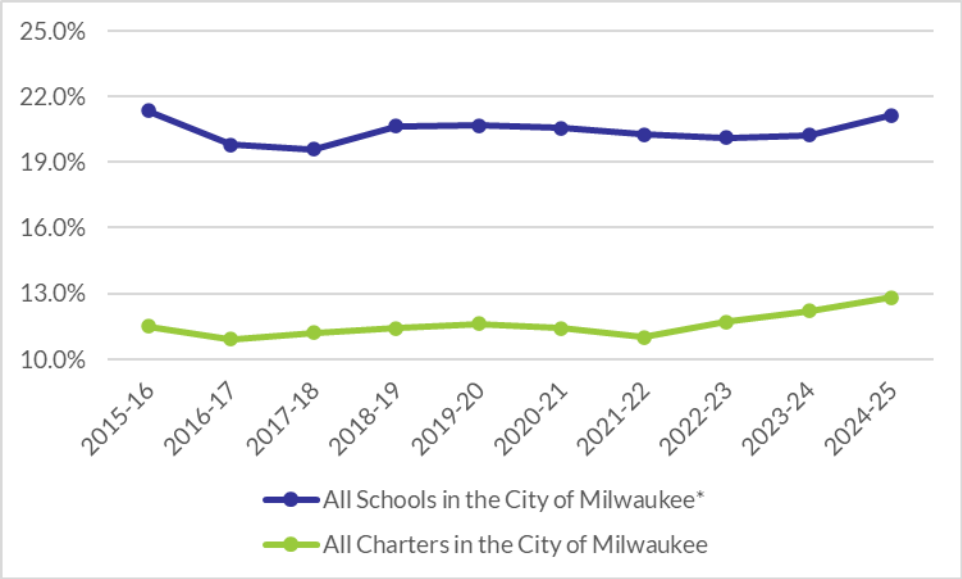
Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students with a Disability in Wisconsin Public Schools from the 2015-16 through the 2024-25 School Years



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 6

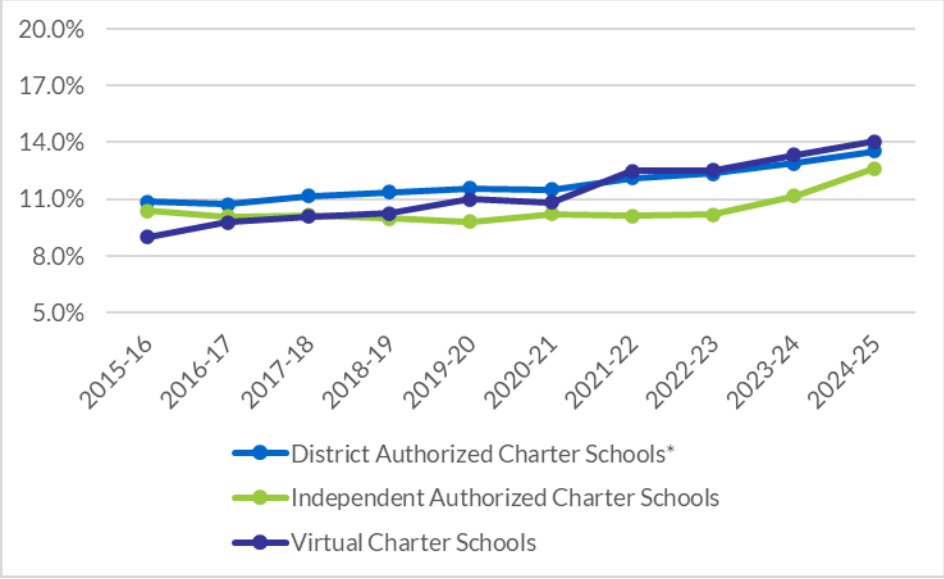
Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students with a Disability in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools from the 2015-16 through the 2024-25 School Years



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 7

Comparison of Enrollment – Percent of Students with a Disability in Wisconsin Public Charter Schools from the 2015-16 through the 2024-25 School Years



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Includes Virtual Charter Schools

Overall, charter schools appear to be fulfilling their statutory contract obligation to achieve a racial and ethnic balance that reflects the balance in the school district as a whole. Additionally, charter schools appear to be serving students who are economically disadvantaged at a higher rate compared to all Wisconsin public

schools. A potential enrollment area for charter schools to focus on is the rate at which charters are serving students with disabilities. Additional research would be needed to understand the enrollment differences between charter schools and other public schools.

Charter School Assessment

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires all states to test all students in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics in grades three through eight and once in high school. ESSA also requires students be assessed in science once each grade span (three through six, seven through nine, and 10 through12). Student performance on these assessments is reported in proficiency categories and used for accountability determination at the school, district and state levels. Wisconsin statute also requires students to take grade nine and 10 assessments as well as the social studies test. These tests together create the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS).

The WSAS is a statewide program designed to provide information about what students know in core academic areas and whether they can apply what they know. The WSAS includes the Wisconsin Forward Exam, PreACT Secure, the ACT with Writing, and Dynamic Learning Maps. This report will provide information related to the ELA and mathematics Wisconsin Forward Exams only. Additional information for WSAS can be found at DPI's Assessment webpage.

The Forward Exam is administered online in the spring of each school year at grades three through eight in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, at grades four and eight in Science, and four, eight, and 10 in Social Studies. Accommodations and supports for students with disabilities and/or English language learners are built into the system so that the progress of students can be accurately measured.

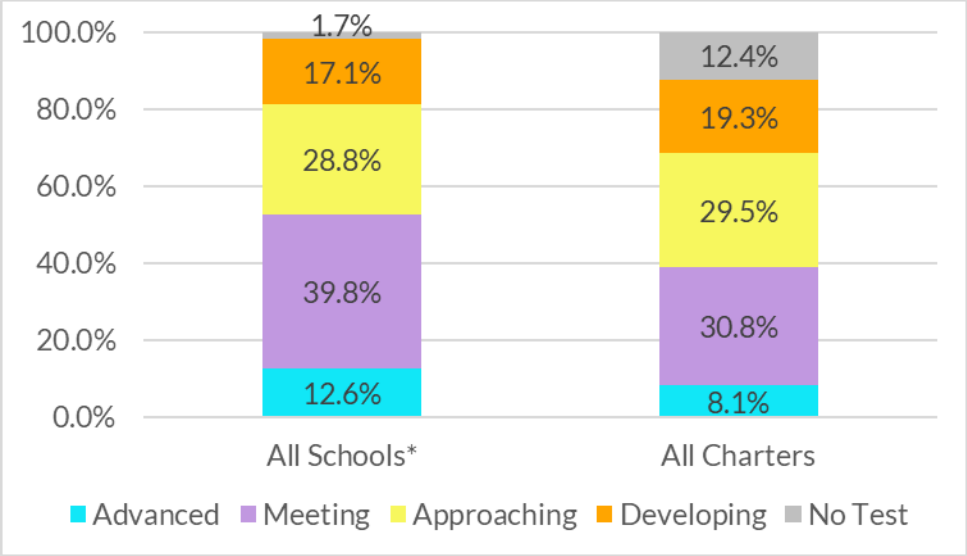
Recent revisions to Wisconsin's ELA and mathematics academic standards meant an update was needed to the Forward Exam design to align to the academic standards. These revisions went into effect during the 2023-24 administration of the standardized assessment. These revisions also updated the cut scores that separate students into four performance levels (Developing, Approaching, Meeting, and Advanced). Additional information on these updates can be found on the Forward Exam Data and Results webpage.

Figures 8, 9, and 10 below display proficiency rates on the ELA exam based on performance. The source student count data can be found in Appendix A.

As shown in Figure 8, charter schools had fewer students score meeting or advanced on the ELA exam compared to all public schools (38.9 percent vs. 52.4 percent). However, in the City of Milwaukee, Figure 9, charters had a higher rate of students (32.0 percent) score meeting or advanced compared to all public schools (20.5 percent) in the city. As shown in Figure 10, district authorized charter schools had the highest percentage of students (41.0) scoring meeting or advanced. When removing VCS, the district authorized charter schools rate increased (49.7 percent), however, VCS did have a disproportionately high rate of students (42.8 percent) who did not participate in the ELA exam.

■ Figure 8

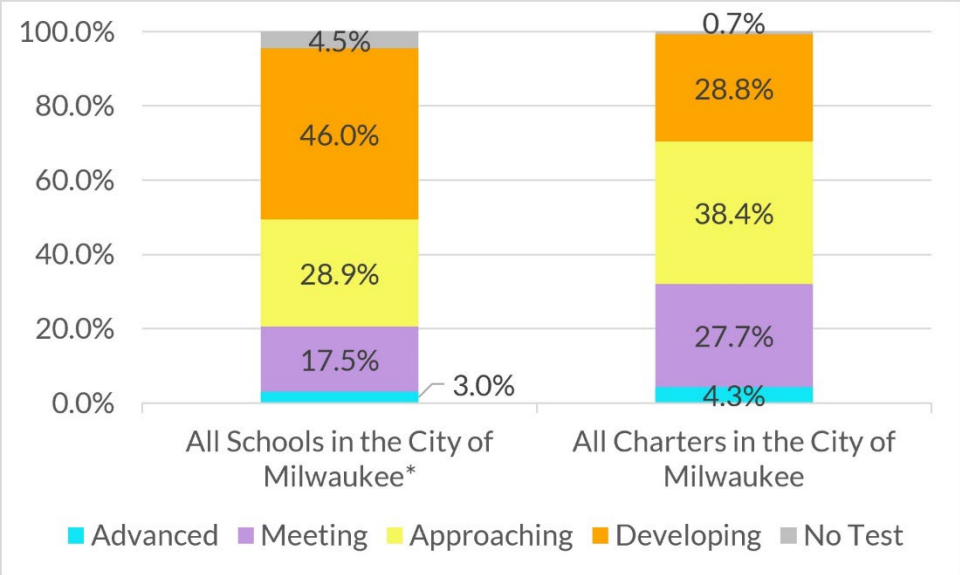
Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Public Schools for the 2024-25 School Year



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 9

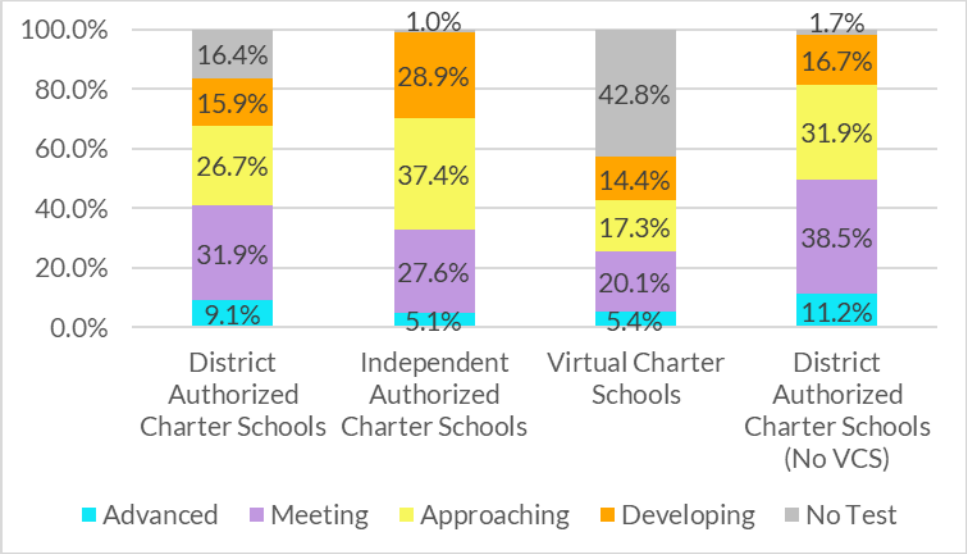
Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools for the 2024-25 School Year



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 10

Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Performance - Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Charter Schools for the 2024-25 School Year



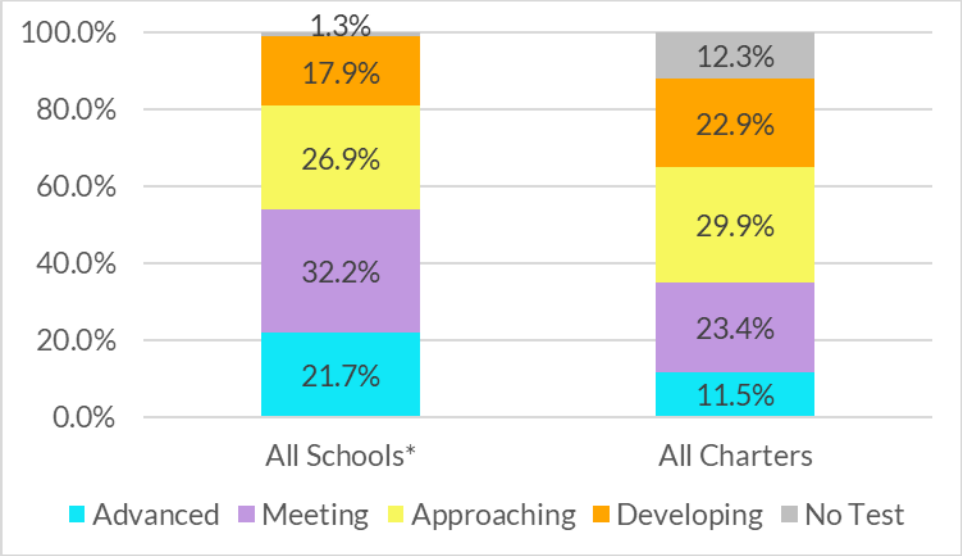
Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Figures 11, 12, and 13 below display proficiency rates on the mathematics exam based on performance. The source student count data can be found in Appendix A.

As shown in Figure 11, charter schools had fewer students score meeting or advanced on the mathematics exam compared to all public schools (34.9 percent vs. 53.9 percent). In the city of Milwaukee, Figure 12, charters had a higher percentage of students (31.5 percent) score meeting or advanced compared to all public schools (15.9 percent) in the city. In Figure 13, district authorized charter schools without VCS had the highest percentage of students (46.5 percent) scoring meeting or advanced, with VCS having a disproportionately high percentage (42.9 percent) of students who did not participate in the mathematics exam.

■ Figure 11

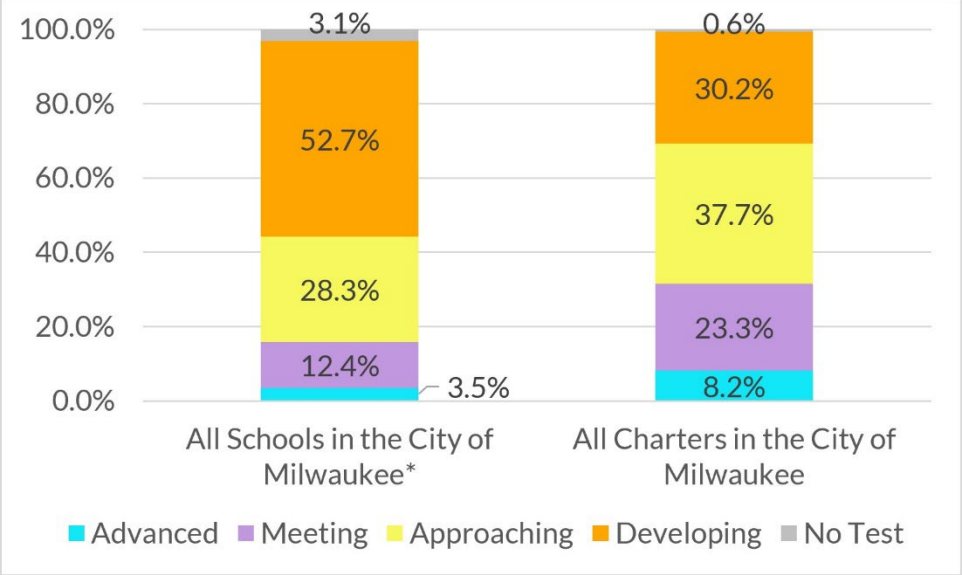
Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam Mathematics Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Public Schools for the 2024-25 School Year



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 12

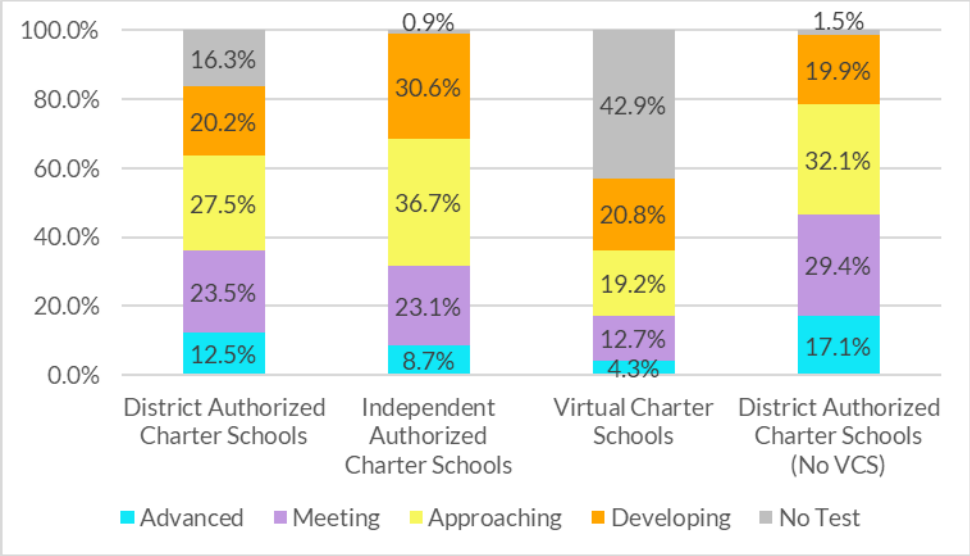
Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam Mathematics Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in the City of Milwaukee Public Schools for the 2024-25 School Year



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025
*Excludes Charter Schools

■ Figure 13

Comparison of Wisconsin Forward Exam Mathematics Performance – Percentage of Students in Each Performance Category in Wisconsin Charter Schools for the 2024-25 School Year



Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Creating a District Authorized Charter School

In Wisconsin, there are two ways to create a district authorized charter school: by petition or by proposal. Each method is described below.

Charter School Petition

Written Petition
Writing a petition is a collaborative effort between local groups, usually including teachers, administrators, parents, community members, universities or technical colleges, CESAs, students, not-for-profit organizations, or for-profit businesses. Planning requires an understanding of state and federal law as it relates to education, local needs, and educational options.

By law, a petition must include all of the following information:

1. The name of the person who is seeking to establish the charter school.
2. The name of the person who will be in charge of the charter school and the manner in which administrative services will be provided.
3. A description of the educational program of the school.
4. The methods the school will use to enable pupils to attain the educational goals under Wis. Stat. § 118.01.
5. The method by which pupil progress in attaining the educational goals under Wis. Stat. § 118.01 will be measured.
6. The governance structure of the school, including the method to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.
7. Subject to Wis. Stat. § 118.40 (7) (a) and (am), Wis. Stat. § 118.19 (1), and Wis. Stat. § 121.02 (1) (a) 2. the qualifications that must be met by the individuals to be employed in the school.

8. The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of the pupils.
9. The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the school district population.
10. The requirements for admission to the school.
11. The manner in which annual audits of the financial and programmatic operations of the school will be performed.
12. The procedures for disciplining pupils.
13. The public school alternatives for pupils who reside in the school district and do not wish to attend or are not admitted to the charter school.
14. A description of the school facilities and the types and limits of the liability insurance that the school will carry.
15. The effect of the establishment of the charter school on the liability of the school district.

To assist planners and authorizers, DPI established a contract benchmark form that outlines required and suggested items for inclusion in a charter school contract.

After the petition has been written, it must be signed by at least 10 percent of the teachers district-wide or at least 50 percent of the teachers employed at one school. The petition, which requests that the school board establish a charter school, is then filed with the school district clerk.

Public Hearing
The school board must hold a public hearing within 30 days after receiving a charter school petition. At the hearing, the school board considers both the level of employee and parental support described in the petition and the fiscal impact of the establishment of the charter school on the school district. Consequently, the school board may grant or deny the petition.

For only Milwaukee Public Schools, if the school board denies a petition, then an appeal is possible. An appeal must be filed with DPI within 30 days after receiving the denial from the school board. Then DPI shall issue a decision, which is final and not subject to judicial review, within 30 days after receiving the appeal.

Contract
If the school board grants a petition, the school board must contract with the person named in the petition to operate the charter school. The contract must include all 15 provisions required in the petition, other provisions required by state law, and may include other provisions agreed to by all parties. The contract may not exceed five school years and may be renewed one or more terms not to exceed five years. The contract must specify the amount to be paid to the charter school during each school year.

Conditions for Total Charter School Conversion
In special circumstances, a school board may grant a petition that would result in the conversion of all the public schools in the school district to charter schools. These circumstances must meet both of the following criteria:

1. At least 50 percent of the teachers employed by the school district sign the petition.

2. The school board provides alternative public school attendance arrangements for pupils who do not wish to attend or are not admitted to a charter school.

Charter School Proposal

Written Proposal
A school board may on its own initiative contract with an outside party to operate a charter school. The contract must include all of the 15 provisions required in a petition (as noted above) and may include other provisions as agreed to by all parties. The term of this contract may not exceed five school years and may be renewed for one or more terms not exceeding five years. The contract must specify the amount to be paid to the charter school during each school year and often includes reasons and procedures for revocation or renewal.

Notification
Whenever a school board intends to establish a charter school, Wis. Stat. § 118.40 (1) requires that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction be notified. A notice must include a description of the proposed school. A charter school contract submitted to the department, which must include 15 items according to Wis. Stat. § 118.40, satisfies this required notification.

Public Hearing
In some situations, a private school may want to convert to a charter school or a school may want to be established as a non-instrumentality charter school. This process starts with a public hearing held by the school district at least 30 days before entering into a contract. At the hearing, the school board considers both the level of employee and parental support for the changes and the fiscal impact of the establishment of the charter school on the school district.

Conditions for Total Charter School Conversion
A school board may not enter into a contract that would result in the conversion of all public schools in the school district to charter schools, except as noted above under Charter School Petition.

"Development" and "Implementation"

School districts have two distinct stages of decision-making related to charter schools. The first stage is the development stage which includes the following: (1) further study of a new charter school; (2) considering participation in a charter consortium; or (3) study of a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school. The second stage is the implementation stage which is defined as (1) an approved charter contract between the district and the operator of a charter school for a new charter school; (2) an approved written agreement to participate in a consortium; or (3) a signature on a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school. Both stages of decision-making are to help define petition and proposal activity as it relates to the planning and implementation of new charter schools. To measure this activity, DPI annually distributes an electronic survey. The results of the 2024-25 charter school activity survey are summarized in the next section.

Petition and Proposal Activity – Survey Results

This section describes the petition and proposal activity in school districts during the 2024-25 school year as well as the action taken by school districts and DPI. The terms "proposal" and "petition" are used interchangeably here. Additionally, although there are multiple authorizers in the state of Wisconsin (e.g. independent authorizers), the data in this report specifically address local school board actions and do not include activity or actions taken on new charter school proposals by non-school board authorizers.

An introductory email (see Appendix B) was sent to the superintendents of all 421 school districts. The email requested that each district complete an electronic online survey that asked questions regarding charter school petitions and/or proposals during the 2024-25 school year. By sending reminders and contacting districts directly, 100 percent of school districts responded.

The electronic online survey had 13 questions (see Appendix C). The person completing the survey was asked to identify their name, title, email address, and decisions regarding new charter schools during the 2024-25 academic year. The first section pertained to development decisions made regarding new charter schools. The second section asked questions related to implementation decisions made regarding new charter schools. The third section dealt with concepts and proposals of the new charter schools. The final question allowed for open comments, giving districts an opportunity to comment generally about charter schools.

General Information

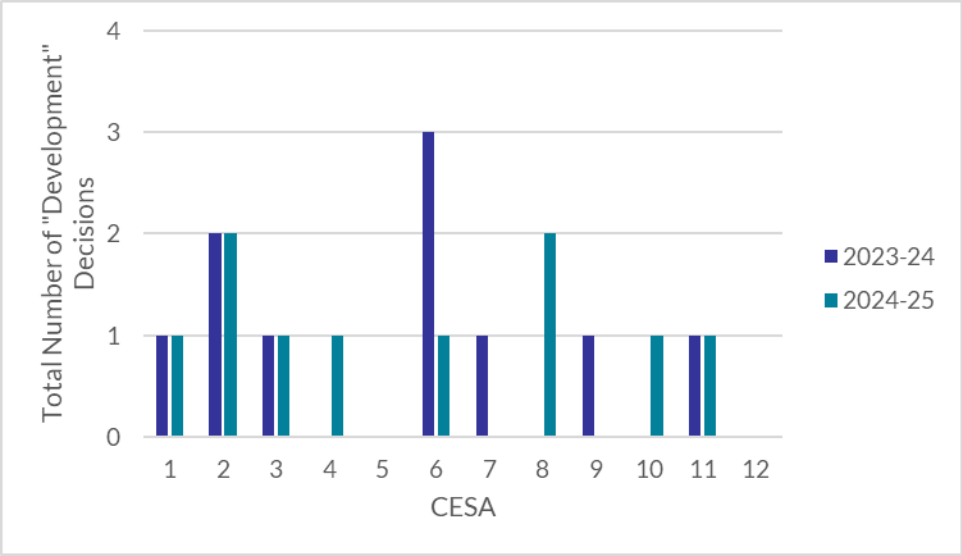
Most of the survey respondents were high-level administrators. Specifically, 388 (92 percent) indicated their title as being District Administrator or Superintendent. Six survey respondents (one percent) indicated their position as Assistant District Administrator and six survey respondents (one percent) indicated their position as Principal.

The remaining 21 survey respondents (five percent) selected "Other" for position title and indicated their title as Administrative Assistant, Executive Assistant, District Data Specialist, Finance Manager, Charter School Administrator, Student and instructional Services Coordinator, Director of Business Services, and other director-level positions.

Figure 14 provides a breakdown by CESA, comparing the number of "development" decisions made on proposed new charter schools during the 2023-24 and the 2024-25 school years. As shown, the number of "development" decisions made increased in CESA 4, 8, and 10. There were no "development" decisions made in CESA 5 or 12 during the 2023-24 or 2024-25 school years.

■ Figure 14

Comparison by CESA – Total Number of "Development" Decisions on Proposed New Charter Schools During the 2023-24 and 2024-25 School Years

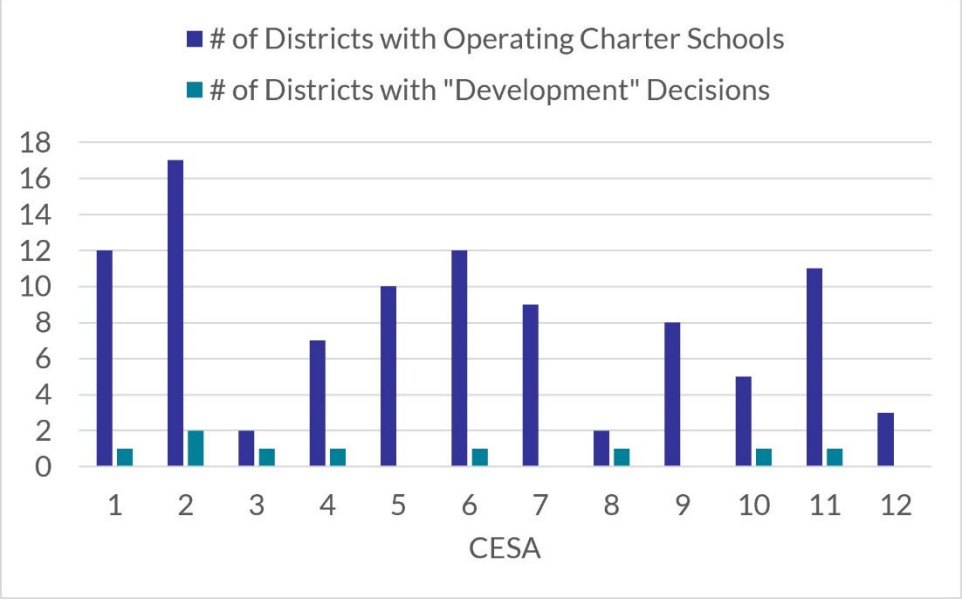


Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Figure 15 displays a comparison of the number of districts with operating charter schools to the number of districts with "development" decisions for proposed new charter schools in the 2024-25 school year.

■ Figure 15

Comparison by CESA – Number of Districts with Operating Charter Schools Compared to Those with "Development" Decisions on New Charter Schools in 2024-25



Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

"Development" Decisions

Between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, nine districts reported a total of ten "development" decisions. Nine districts approved nine (100 percent) of the filed proposals for the reasons noted in Table 6.

■ Table 6

Reasons for Approval of "Development" Decisions

Reason	Number (n=9)	Percentage
Attracts students	7	70%
Realizes an alternative vision for schooling	7	70%
Increases parent/community involvement	5	50%
Increases student achievement	4	40%
Participates in a charter school consortium	3	30%
Serves a special population	3	30%

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Note: Districts were able to indicate more than one reason for approval, therefore, percentages will not equal 100.

As noted in the table, the reasons most given for approving new proposals by the respondents to our Wisconsin-wide survey were "realizes an alternative vision for schooling" and "attracts students" (each 70 percent). "Increases parent/community involvement" (50 percent), "Increases student achievement" (40 percent), "participates in a charter school consortium" (30 percent), and "serves a special population" (30 percent) were also cited.

No districts reported a denial of a "development" decision.

"Implementation" Decisions

After the "development," proposals must have an "implementation" decision before a charter school can be established. Between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, 14 Wisconsin school districts reported making 15 "implementation" decisions. 14 districts approved 14 (93 percent) "implementation" decisions. Reasons for "implementation" decision approvals are noted in Table 7.

■ Table 7

Reasons for Approval of "Implementation" Decisions

Reason	Number (n=14)	Percentage
Realizes an alternative vision for schooling	9	64%
Participates in a charter school consortium	9	64%
Attracts students	8	57%
Serves a special population	4	29%
Increases student achievement	4	29%
Increases parent/community involvement	4	29%

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Note: Districts were able to indicate more than one reason for approval, therefore, percentages will not equal 100.

The reasons respondents provided for approving "implementation" decisions were generally consistent with the reasons provided for approving "development" decisions.

No districts reported a denial of a "implementation" decision.

Source of Petitions and Proposals

Fifteen districts indicated receiving a charter school proposal in the 2024-25 school year. Most of the charter school proposals came from school administrators and district superintendents. Table 8 shows the distribution of charter school proposal initiators.

■ Table 8

Source of Charter School Petitions and Proposals

Source	Number (n=15)	Percentage
District Superintendent	11	73%
School Administration	10	67%
Teachers	3	20%
Parents	3	20%
Community (not-for-profit)	2	13%
Business (for-profit)	1	7%
CESA	0	0%

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Note: Districts were able to indicate more than one source, therefore, percentages will not equal 100.

Planning Group Participants

Survey results indicate that district superintendents, school administrators, teachers, , and parents made up the majority of charter school planning groups during the 2024-25 school year.

■ Table 9

Charter School Planning Group Members

Source	Number (n=15)	Percentage
School Administration	14	93%
District Superintendent	13	87%
Teachers	11	73%
Parents	9	60%
Community (not-for-profit)	6	40%
Business (for-profit)	3	20%
CESA	0	0%

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Note: Districts were able to indicate more than one source therefore, percentages will not equal 100.

Comments from Survey

Only a few respondents offered additional comments regarding charter schools during the 2024-25 academic year. Comments were generally specific to a local situation.

DPI Action on Federal Charter School Subgrant Applications

In October 2023, DPI received a new federal CSP grant in the amount of $58 million. DPI was granted a waiver to allow schools awarded in the previous CSP grant to complete activities they started. In December 2023, 33 charter schools who were awarded in the previous grant applied to be part of a waiver cohort and all 33 schools were awarded. From 2024-2028, DPI plans to award subgrants to up to 42 new, expanded, or replicated public charter schools.

■ Table *10*

DPI Awards on Subgrant Applications Submitted February 2025

Grant Type	**Authorizer Name**	**School Name**
Expansion	Menominee Indian School District	Kaehkēnawapahtāēq
	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy
	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Pathways High
	Office of Educational Opportunity	Isthmus Montessori Academy Public
	Office of Educational Opportunity	KTEC Schools of Innovation
Implementation	Dodgeville School District	SEEING Forward Charter School
	Elkhorn Area School District	Southern Lakes College Academy
	School District of La Farge	Kickapoo Valley Field School
	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Autumn Hill Academy
	Westosha Central High School	Southeast Virtual Academy

Status of all expansion schools listed is "open" as of 7/1/2024.
Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Charter Consortiums

During the 2024-25 school year, 114 school districts participated in a multi-partner charter school initiative. A list of the sponsor districts and consortium partners is shown in Table 11.

■ Table 11

School Districts Engaged in Multi-District/Partner Charter Activity

Authorizing District	**Consortium Partners**
Cameron School District	
	Barron Area School District
	Chetek-Weyerhaeuser Area School District
	Clayton School District
	Prairie Farm School District
	Turtle Lake Area School District
Elkhorn Area School District	
	Big Foot UHS School District
	Williams Bay School District
Kiel Area School District	
	Barron Area School District
	Brillion Public Schools
	Delavan-Darien School District
	Fall River School District
	Genoa City J2 School District
	Herman-Neosho-Rubicon School District
	Horicon School District
	Hutisford School District
	Luxemburg-Casco School District
	Mishicot School District
	Omro School District
	Oostburg School District
	Osseo-Fairchild School District
	Portage Community School District
	Pulaski Community School District
	Random Lake School District
	Sevastopol School District
	West De Pere School District
	Weston School District
	Whitefish Bay School District
	Winneconne Community School District
Marshall School District	
	Beaver Dam Unified School District
	Beloit Turner School District
	Cambridge School District
	Columbus School District
	Edgerton School District

	Evansville Community School District
	Fort Atkinson School District
	Mauston School District
	Monroe School District
	Poynette School District
	Sun Prairie Area School District
	Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated School District
	Waterloo School District
Medford Area School District	
	Abbotsford School District
	Antigo Unified School District
	Ashland School District
	Athens School District
	Auburndale School District
	Bloomer School District
	Bonduel School District
	Bowler School District
	Chequamegon School District
	Chilton School District
	Clinton Community School District
	Clintonville School District
	Cochrane-Fountain City School District
	Colby School District
	Crandon School District
	Denmark School District
	East Troy School District
	Edgar School District
	Elcho School District
	Flambeau School District
	Granton Area School District
	Greenwood School District
	Gresham School District
	Iola-Scandinavia School District
	Kewaunee School District
	Loyal School District
	Marion School District
	Marshfield Unified School District
	Mercer School District
	Minocqua J1 School District
	Mosinee School District
	Neillsville School District
	New Holstein School District
	New London School District
	North Crawford School District
	Oconto Falls Public School District
	Owen-Withee School District
	Peshtigo School District
	Phillips School District
	Pittsville School District

	Prentice School District
	Rhinelander School District
	Rib Lake School District
	River Valley School District
	Rosholt School District
	Southern Door County School District
	Spencer School District
	Stevens Point Area School District
	Stratford School District
	Suring Public School District
	Thorp School District
	Three Lakes School District
	Tigerton School District
	Tomah Area School District
	Tri-County Area School District
	Waupaca School District
	Westby Area School District
	Weyauwega-Fremont Scholl District
	White Lake School District
	Wisconsin Dells School District
	Wisconsin Heights School District
	Wittenberg-Birnamwood School District
Minocqua J1 School District	
	Lac Du Flambeau #1 School District
	North Lakeland School District
	Woodruff J1 School District
Viroqua Area School District	
	Kickapoo Area School District
	La Farge School District
	Westby Area School District

Source: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2025

Conclusion

Wisconsin has been one of the leading states in cultivating an environment that fosters innovation in education through charter schools. The number of public school districts that made decisions regarding new charter schools during the 2024-25 school year is evidence that districts throughout the state support innovation in education and are exploring how and to what extent charter schools can provide quality options to parents and students in their districts. Additionally, the Wisconsin Charter Schools Program continues to help support high-quality charter schools.

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National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. (n.d.). “Charter School Data Dashboard.” Retrieved December 2025 from https://data.publiccharters.org/

U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). “Funding and Legislation.” Retrieved December 2025 from https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/charter-school-programs/expanding-opportunities-through-quality-charter-schools-program-csp-grants-to-state-entities#funding-and-legislation

Appendix A

2024-25 Wisconsin Forward Exam English Language Arts Performance Student Count								
	All Schools*	All Charters	All Schools in the City of Milwaukee*	All Charters in the City of Milwaukee	District Authorized Charter Schools	Independent Authorized Charter Schools	Virtual Charter Schools	District Authorized Charter Schools (No VCS)
Advanced	40,059	1,672	721	326	1,397	275	295	1,102
Meeting	127,118	6,370	4,177	2,092	4,885	1,485	1,095	3,790
Approaching	91,820	6,092	6,890	2,900	4,083	2,009	945	3,138
Developing	54,663	3,984	10,983	2,172	2,433	1,551	788	1,645
No Test	5,406	2,556	1,084	55	2,503	53	2,338	165
Total	319,066	20,674	23,855	7,545	15,301	5,373	5,461	9,840

*Excludes Charter Schools

2024-25 Wisconsin Forward Exam Mathematics Performance Student Count								
	All Schools*	All Charters	All Schools in the City of Milwaukee*	All Charters in the City of Milwaukee	District Authorized Charter Schools	Independent Authorized Charter Schools	Virtual Charter Schools	District Authorized Charter Schools (No VCS)
Advanced	69,250	2,383	834	620	1,916	467	235	1,681
Meeting	102,845	4,832	2,957	1,758	3,592	1,240	696	2,896
Approaching	85,775	6,185	6,740	2,847	4,211	1,974	1,051	3,160
Developing	56,974	4,739	12,576	2,275	3,094	1,645	1,137	1,957
No Test	4,222	2,535	748	45	2,488	47	2,342	146
Total	319,066	20,674	23,855	7,545	15,301	5,373	5,461	9,840

*Excludes Charter Schools

Appendix B

Dear District Administrator,

The Department of Public Instruction must annually report to the Legislature on the status of existing charter schools, the number of petitions/proposals for new charter schools, and school board and departmental action on petitions/proposals for new charter schools. In compliance with this requirement, each year the State Superintendent requests districts' participation in a DPI-administered electronic survey to gather necessary data for the report regarding any decisions made by districts regarding new charter schools in the 2024-25 school year.

URL

If your district **DID NOT** make any decisions regarding new charter schools between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, indicate this on the survey.

If your district **DID** make decisions regarding new charter schools between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, **including being added to a consortium/multi-district charter school**, respond to the questions on the survey, using the link below, regarding approval or denial for each petition or proposal filed, and select a reason(s) for approval or denial for each petition or proposal filed. If multiple proposals have been approved or denied, provide clarification of reasons in the space for comments at the end.

A "development" decision includes the following: (1) further study of a new charter school, (2) considering participation in a consortium/multi-district charter school or (3) study of a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school. An "implementation" decision is defined as (1) an approved charter contract between the district and the operator of a charter school for a new charter school, (2) an approved written agreement to participate in a consortium or (3) a signature on a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school.

The form must be electronically submitted by clicking the "Submit" button at the bottom of the survey on the last page.

Complete and submit the survey electronically by **August 22, 2025**. If you have questions while completing the survey or encounter difficulty when transmitting the survey, contact charterschools@dpi.wi.gov.

Thank you,

Parental Education Options | Charter Schools
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
201 W Washington Ave | Madison, WI | 53703
(888) 245-2732 ext. 6 | dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/charter-schools

Appendix C

Start of Block: Intro

Q1.1
Charter School Activity Data

Due Date: August 22, 2025

Dear ${e://Field/Contact%20Title},

The Department of Public Instruction must annually report to the Legislature on the status of existing charter schools, the number of petitions/proposals for new charter schools, and school board and departmental action on petitions/proposals for new charter schools.

In compliance with this requirement, each year the State Superintendent requests districts' participation in a DPI administered electronic survey to gather necessary data to include in our annual report to the legislature.

If your district **DID NOT** make any decisions regarding new charter schools between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, indicate this on the survey.

If your district **DID** make decisions regarding new charter schools between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, respond to the questions below regarding approval or denial for each petition or proposal filed, and select a reason(s) for approval or denial for each petition or proposal filed. If multiple proposals have been approved or denied, provide clarification of reasons in the space for comments at the end.

A "development" decision includes the following: (1) further study of a new charter school, (2) considering participation in a consortium/multi-district charter school or (3) study of a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school.

An "implementation" decision is defined as (1) an approved charter contract between the district and the operator of a charter school for a new charter school, (2) an approved written agreement to participate in a consortium/multi-district charter school or (3) a signature on a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school.

The form will be electronically submitted by clicking the "Submit Survey" button at the bottom of the survey.

Complete and submit the survey electronically by **August 22, 2025**. If you have questions while completing the survey or encounter difficulty when transmitting the survey, contact charterschools@dpi.wi.gov.

Helpful Hints Use the Chrome browser for best results.

End of Block: Intro

Start of Block: Block 2

Q2.1 **District Name: ${e://Field/RecipientLastName}**
CESA: ${e://Field/CESA}

Contact information for person completing the survey.

Name *(First and Last)*

_____

Q25 Title

▼ District Administrator (1) ... Other (4)

Display This Question:
If Title = Other

Q27 Please specify your title

_____

Q24 Email Address

_____

Q2.2 Did your district make **ANY** decisions regarding new charter schools between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

End of Block: Block 2

Start of Block: District Decisions

Q3.1
District Decisions

Q3.2 1. From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, how many "development" decisions were made by the district?

A "development" decision includes the following: (1) further study of a new charter school, (2) considering participation in a charter consortium or (3) study of a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school.

This total should include approval decisions and denial decisions.

_____

Q3.3 2. Number of approved "development" decisions.
Enter "0" if none were approved.

_____

Display This Question:

If If School Board Development Decisions Text Response Is Greater Than or Equal to 1

Q3.4 2a. Reason(s) for the approvals.
Select all that apply.

- ☐ Serves a special population (1)
- ☐ Increases student achievement (8)
- ☐ Increases parent/community involvement (9)
- ☐ Attracts students (10)
- ☐ Realizes an alternative vision for schooling (11)
- ☐ Participates in a charter school consortium (12)

Display This Question:
If Reasons for Development Approvals = Participates in a charter school consortium

Q3.5 *List the districts in the consortium.*

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Q3.6 3. Number of denied “development” decisions.
Enter "0" if none were denied.

_____

Display This Question:

If If 3. Number of denied “development” decisions.   Enter "0" if none were denied. Text Response Is Greater Than or Equal to 1

Q3.7 3a. Reason(s) for denials.
Select all that apply.

- ☐ Declining enrollment (1)
- ☐ Financial reasons (4)
- ☐ Program not unique or innovative (5)
- ☐ Lack of teacher, parent support (6)
- ☐ Liability of district (7)
- ☐ Withdrew from a multi-district consortium (8)

Display This Question:

If Reasons for Development Denial = Withdrew from a multi-district consortium

Q3.8 *List the districts in the consortium.*

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_____

Q3.9 4. From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, how many “implementation” decisions were made by the district?

An "implementation" decision is defined as (1) an approved charter contract between the district and the operator of a charter school for a new charter school, (2) an approved written agreement to participate in a consortium or (3) a signature on a federal Charter Schools Program grant or subgrant for a new or replicated charter school.

This total should include approval decisions and denial decisions.

_____

Q3.10 5. Number of approved "implementation" decisions.
Enter "0" if none were approved.

_____

Display This Question:

If If 5. Number of approved "implementation" decisions.   Enter "0" if none were approved. Text Response Is Greater Than or Equal to 1

Q3.11 5a. Reason(s) for the approvals.
Select all that apply.

- ☐ Serves a special population (1)
- ☐ Increases student achievement (9)
- ☐ Increases parent/community involvement (10)
- ☐ Attracts students (11)
- ☐ Realizes an alternative vision for schooling (12)
- ☐ Participates in a charter school consortium/multi-district charter school (13)

Display This Question:

If Reasons for Implementation Approvals = Participates in a charter school consortium

Q3.12 *List the districts in the consortium.*

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_____

_____

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_____

Q3.13 6. Number of denied “implementation” decisions.
Enter "0" if none were denied.

_____

Display This Question:

If If 6. Number of denied “implementation” decisions. Enter "0" if none were denied. Text Response Is Greater Than or Equal to 1

Q3.14 6a. Reason(s) for the denials.
Select all that apply.

- ☐ Declining enrollment (1)
- ☐ Financial reasons (14)
- ☐ Program not unique or innovative (15)
- ☐ Lack of teacher, parent support (16)
- ☐ Liability of district (17)
- ☐ Withdrew from a consortium/multi-district charter school (18)

Display This Question:

If Reasons for Implementation Denials = Withdrew from a multi-district consortium

Q3.15 *List the districts in the consortium.*

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_____

Q3.16 7. Who initiated the charter school concept(s) or petitions(s)?
Select all that apply.

- ☐ District superintendent (1)
- ☐ School administration (principal, curriculum director, etc.) (19)
- ☐ CESA (20)
- ☐ Teachers (21)
- ☐ Parents (22)
- ☐ Community (Not for Profit) (23)
- ☐ Business (For Profit) (24)

Q3.17 8. Identify members of the planning group.
Select all that apply.

- ☐ District superintendent (1)
- ☐ School administration (principal, curriculum director, etc.) (19)
- ☐ CESA (20)
- ☐ Teachers (21)
- ☐ Parents (22)
- ☐ Community (Not for Profit) (23)
- ☐ Business (For Profit) (24)

End of Block: District Decisions

Start of Block: Comments

Q4.1 Provide any comments you have about charter schools in Wisconsin.
Text box will expand beyond the space provided.

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End of Block: Comments