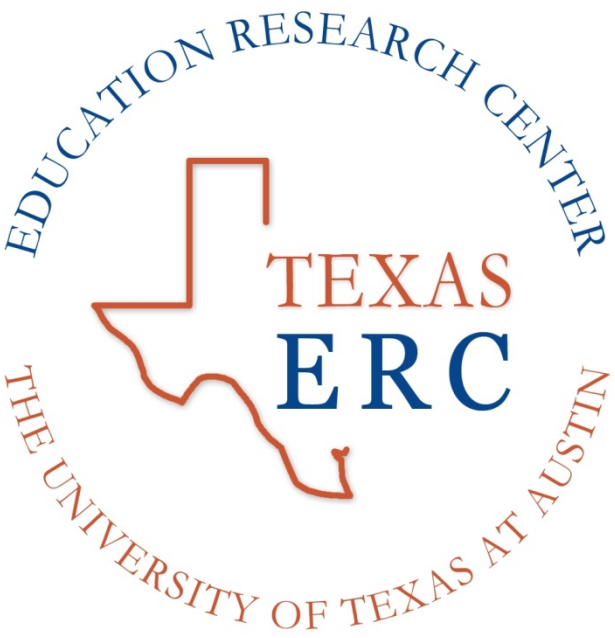


CHARTER AUTHORIZER ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2012-13

December 2014

(version 2)

By

The University of Texas at Austin

Education Research Center

CREDITS

The Texas Education Research Center (ERC) is located at The University of Texas at Austin. The Texas ERC is an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit organization focused on generating data-based solutions for Texas education and workforce demands. The goal of the Texas ERC is to supply policymakers, opinion leaders, the media, and the general public with academically sound research surrounding today's critical education issues.

The research presented here utilizes confidential data from the State of Texas supplied by the Texas ERC at The University of Texas at Austin. The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to The University of Texas at Austin or any of the funders or supporting organizations mentioned herein including the State of Texas. Any errors are attributable to the authors.

Texas Education Research Center: The University of Texas at Austin, The Office of the Vice President for Research, 3001 Lake Austin Blvd., Austin, TX 78703. Phone: (512) 471-4528, Fax: 512-471-2877, Website: www.utaustinERC.org.

Contributing Authors

Celeste Alexander, Cynthia Juniper, Matt Farber, and Cheryl Wilkinson

Prepared for

Texas Education Agency 1701 North Congress Avenue Austin, Texas 78701-1494 Phone: 512-463-9734

Funded by

The evaluation is funded through Senate Bill No. 2, (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2013), via Texas Education Agency.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACRONYMS

AEA ..... Alternative Education Accountability
AEC ..... Alternative Education Campus
AEIS ..... Academic Excellence Indicator Systems
CTE ..... Career and Technology Education
DAEP ..... Disciplinary Alternative Education Program
ELL ..... English Language Learner
EOC ..... End of Course
ERC ..... Education Research Center
G/T ..... Gifted and Talented
HB ..... House Bill
JJAEP ..... Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program
LEP ..... Limited English Proficient
PEG ..... Public Education Grant
PEIMS ..... Public Education Information Management System
SB ..... Senate Bill
SBEC ..... State Board for Educator Certification
SBOE ..... State Board of Education
STAAR ..... State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness
TAPR ..... Texas Academic Performance Reports
TEA ..... Texas Education Agency
TEC ..... Texas Education Code
TEKS ..... Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills
THECB ..... Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
TWC ..... Texas Workforce Commission

OVERVIEW

In Senate Bill (SB) 2 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2013), the Texas Legislature added Texas Education Code (TEC) § 12.1013 (a)-(d). This legislation requires that charter school performance to be compared to matched traditional public schools. The Bill requires the information be presented to the public. Senate Bill (SB) 2 further requires that comparisons should be made for each charter authorizer type, e.g., charter schools authorized by district school boards (campus charter schools), charter schools authorized by the State Board of Education (open-enrollment charter schools), and charter schools authorized by the commissioner of the state education agency[1] (open-enrollment charter schools). This report responds to that mandate, using data for the 2012−13 school year.

During 2012−13, there were 620 charter school campuses in Texas. Of these, 552 (89%) were open-enrollment charter school campuses and 68 (11%) were campus charter schools[2]. These schools include campuses that operated under standard accountability procedures as well as schools that operated under Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) procedures. Many of the AEA campuses, also referred to as Alternate Education Campuses (AECs), focus on dropout prevention and recovery. While 7% of Texas schools overall were charter schools, 39% of the state's AEA campuses (154 schools) were chartered. Forty-one AEA charter school campuses were residential treatment facilities.

Just over 4% of Texas public school students (212,711 students), attended charter school campuses. Of these, 179,120 (84%) attended open-enrollment charter campuses. When compared to other public school students in Texas, open-enrollment charter school students were more often African American, and economically disadvantaged. Students who attended campus charter schools (33,591 students; 16% of charter school students) were more often Hispanic, economically disadvantaged and in middle school.

As specified in SB 2, five outcome measures were used in making comparisons between charter schools and sets of traditional public schools which were matched to them based on campus size and student demographic characteristics. Outcome measures were: (a) scores on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness® (STAAR) reading and math tests, (b) ratings on the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Performance Indices, (c) dropout rates, (d) graduation rates, and (e) student attrition, as measured by student mobility. TEA Performance Index 2 (Student

[1] Prior to SB 2, the two charter authorizers were the SBOE for open-enrollment charters and school districts for campus charter schools. The passage of SB 2 changed the open-enrollment charter authorizer to the commissioner of the state education agency instead of the SBOE, although the SBOE still has the ability to vote (by majority) not to approve the commissioner's selections. There were no data available for this type of charter school for 2012–13. The first year during which commissioner-authorized charter schools can operate is 2014–15.
[2] There were six campus charter schools that served students most of the year, but were closed in March 2013. All six campus charter schools were located in San Antonio ISD. These campus charter schools are: Lowell Middle School, Cameron Elementary, Gates Elementary, Dorie Miller Elementary, Riverside Park Elementary, and Storm Elementary. These six campus charter schools are not included in this count of campus charter schools.

Progress) was used to address the legislative requirement that the aggregate performance of elementary, middle and high school students be rated for each school level.

Comparisons between Texas' 579 charter schools (511 open-enrollment campuses and 68 campus charter schools; 41 residential treatment facility charter school campuses excluded) and their matched traditional schools showed little difference between either type of charter school and traditional schools for any outcome. When performance was disaggregated at the three school levels (elementary, middle and high schools), it was found that outcomes at the elementary and middle school levels continued to be highly similar for charter and traditional schools. At the high school level, differences continued to be small, but campus charter high schools tended to have slightly better outcomes than both open-enrollment charter high schools and their matched traditional comparison schools.

A second set of comparisons was made between 131 AEA charter school campuses and a set of matched AEA comparison traditional public school campuses. These AEA campuses and their comparisons included residential treatment facilities. As before, differences were small, but AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses tended to outperform both their matched comparison AEA traditional public school campuses and campus charter AEA campuses.

Overall, descriptive results indicate that when both open-enrollment charter school campuses and campus charter schools are compared to schools that serve similar student populations in traditional public school campuses, the students in the open-enrollment and campus charter schools attain student achievement, dropout, graduation and student attrition outcomes that are approximately equal to those of traditional public schools.

INTRODUCTION

During the 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2013), the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 2 added Texas Education Code (TEC) § 12.1013(a)-(d). This section of the TEC requires the commissioner of education to select a Texas Education Research Center (ERC) to prepare an "annual report concerning the performance of open-enrollment charter schools by authorizer compared to campus charter schools and matched traditional campuses." This report provides this information about charter school performance for 2012−13, the most recent school year for which complete data were available at the time the report was initiated.

This section presents general information about charter schools in the United States and national trends in charter school development. This is followed by a description of the development of Texas charter schools, including the progression of state legislation, and a description of charter schools and students in Texas in 2012–13.

United States Charter Schools

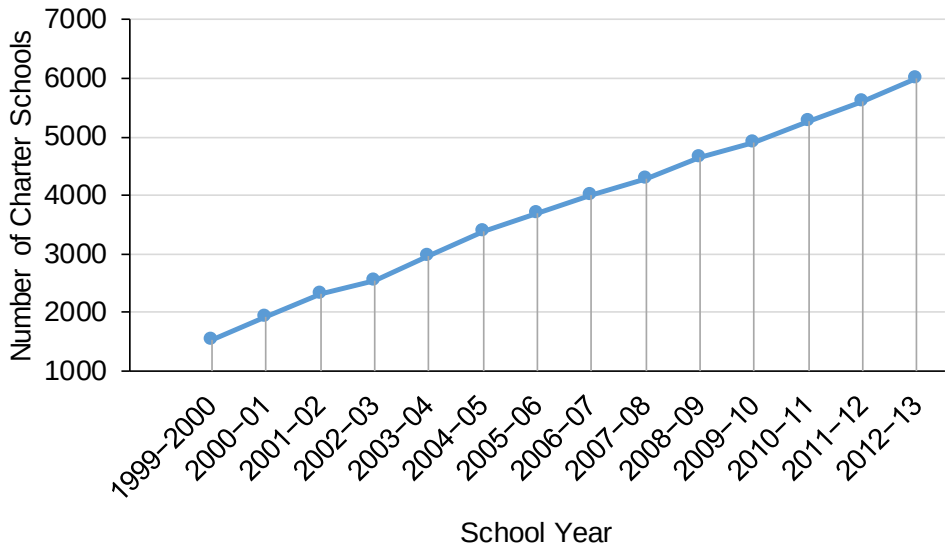
Charter schools are public schools that operate under a contract with a local school board or a state (charter). Charter schools operate from three basic principles:

1. Accountability: Charter schools are held accountable for meeting the student achievement goals established by their charter as well as for how well they manage the financial and operational responsibilities of the school.
2. Choice: Charter schools provide families and students with a public school alternative to traditional public schools.
3. Autonomy: Charter schools are allowed to be free of some of the regulations that govern traditional public schools. The intent is to create an environment that focuses on academic excellence and innovation.

Minnesota passed the first legislation which allowed the creation of charter schools in 1991 (*Laws of Minnesota 1991*, chapter 265, article 9, section 3.) Currently, 42 states and the District of Columbia authorize charter schools. Figure 1 illustrates the steady increase in the number of charter schools in the United States between the 1999−2000 school year, when nearly 1,500 charter schools were open, and 2012−13, when more than 6,000 charter schools were in operation.

In 2012–13, 2,280,627 students in the United States attended 6,004 charter schools (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2013) and these schools represented nearly 7% of all public schools.

Figure 1. Charter Schools in the United States by School Year



Source: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (2012−13).

Texas Charter Schools

Legislation. In 1995, the 74th Texas Legislature added Chapter 12 to the TEC, allowing for the creation of charter schools. This legislation described the purposes of Texas charter schools, which included improving student learning, increasing the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system, creating professional opportunities that would attract new teachers to the public school system, establishing a new form of accountability for public schools, and encouraging different and innovative learning methods.

The original legislation also described the types of charter schools which could be established in Texas (Chapter A, § 12.002; current TEC through the 83rd Texas Legislature, 3rd Called Session, August 2013). These were:

1. Home-Rule School District Charter (TEC, Subchapter B, §§ 12.011–12.030): An entire school district must agree to convert to charter status to establish a home-rule school district charter school.
2. Campus or Campus Program Charter (TEC, Subchapter C, §§ 12.051–12.065): Texas school boards may grant a charter to a group of parents or teachers who want to operate a charter if the majority of the parents and teachers at the school sign a petition support the request. In addition, school districts may contract with an education service provider to operate a campus charter school at a facility located within the district. The school district is held accountable for the academic and financial performance of campus charter schools. Throughout this report the term campus charter refers to these *campus or campus program charter schools*.

3. Open-Enrollment Charter School (TEC, Subchapter D, §§ 12.101–12.136): During the 2013 83rd Texas Legislative Session, the commissioner was authorized to grant open-enrollment charter schools. The commissioner is required to notify the State Board of Education (SBOE) of each proposed charter. The charter will automatically be granted unless, a majority of the members of the SBOE vote against it. [3]
4. Open-Enrollment College or University Charter School (TEC, Subchapter E, §§ 12.151–12.156): The commissioner has the authority to grant open-enrollment charters to public colleges, universities and junior colleges.

Prior to SB 2 (2013, 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session), the two charter authorizers were the SBOE for open-enrollment charter schools and school districts for campus charter schools.

The SBOE awarded the first open-enrollment charters in 1996. Under the original charter school legislation, the SBOE restricted open-enrollment charter school awards to no more than 20 individual charter holders. In the 1997−98 school year, 19 open-enrollment charter schools operated for the entire year, serving about 4,200 students. The charter school cap of 20 was raised to 120 in 1997 by House Bill (HB) 318, 75th Texas Legislature. HB 318 further authorized the SBOE to grant up to 100 open-enrollment charters to schools that adopted a policy to admit students who were eligible for a public education grants.[4] The legislation also authorized SBOE to grant an unlimited number of additional charters to open-enrollment charter schools when at least 75% of the school's prospective students were either students who were at risk of dropping out of school or recovered students who had previously dropped out of school.

In the 1998−99 school year, 84 charter schools operated in Texas; by 2001, there were approximately 200. Given this rapid growth, some legislators expressed concern about the oversight process for charter schools. To address this, HB 6, 75th Texas Legislature, mandated a two-year moratorium on new open-enrollment charter schools and strengthened the accountability and oversight provisions for them. HB 6 required the commissioner to establish performance standards and indicators to evaluate open-enrollment charter schools, and this allowed information about charter schools to be made available to the legislature and the public.

In 2013, with the passage of SB 2, 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, legislators enacted the most significant rewrite of charter legislation since authorizing the concept in 1995. This legislation lifted the 215-charter limit that had been in effect since 2001 (HB 6, 77th Legislature, Regular Session), and outlined a plan for allowing

[3] There were no data available for open-enrollment charter schools authorized by the commissioner for 2012-13 for the purposes of this report. The first year during which commissioner-authorized charter schools can operate is 2014-15. Data for these charter schools will be included in later reports.

[4] In 1995, the Texas Legislature created the Public Education Grant (PEG) program (TEC §§ 29.201 - 29.205). The PEG program permits parents whose children attend schools on the PEG list to request that their children transfer to schools in other districts. A school at which 50 percent or more of the students did not pass any of the state assessment subjects in any two of the preceding three years or a school that was rated Improvement Required, or Academically Unacceptable, is included on the PEG List.

the number of open-enrollment charter schools that can be authorized to increase over time. SB 2 specifies that the commissioner may not grant more than 215 open-enrollment charters through the fiscal year ending August 31, 2014. However, this number increases each year, such that 305 charters may be granted during the fiscal year that begins on September 1, 2019. SB 2 also established clearer processes for renewals and closures, created a streamlined process for replicating and renewing successful schools, and instituted automatic closure requirements.

Number of Charter Schools. During 2012−13, there were 8,555 schools in Texas, of which 620[5] (7%) operated under charters. Data in Table 1 classify these schools by charter authorizer and campus level. Along with traditional schools, schools in Texas include:

1. Residential Treatment Facilities. These campuses provide education services to students in private residential treatment centers.
2. Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs. Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) serve students who have committed disciplinary offenses which are severe enough to necessitate removal from their home school.
3. Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs. Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs (JJAEPs) serve students who have committed disciplinary offenses.

[5] There were six campus charter schools that served students most of the year, but were closed in March 2013. All six of these campus charter schools were located in San Antonio ISD. They are not included in the count of 620 charter schools reported here.

Table 1. Texas Schools by Charter and Program Type, 2012–13

	Campus Level[1]			Alternative Education Programs		Total
Campuses Type	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	DAEP[3]	JJAEP[4]	
Open-Enrollment Charter School	265	88	150	0	0	503
Open-Enrollment University Charter School Campuses	7	1	0	0	0	8
Campus Charter Schools[2]	22	18	28	0	0	68
Home-Rule Charter	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	(294)	(107)	(178)			(579)
Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses-Residential Treatment	0	8	22	0	0	30
Open-Enrollment University Charter School Campuses-Residential Treatment	2	2	7	0	0	11
Campus Charter Schools-Residential Treatment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Charter Schools	**296**	**117**	**207**	**0**	**0**	**620**
Residential Treatment Traditional Public	0	10	36	0	0	46
Traditional Public Schools	4450	1623	1522	154	140	7889
Total in Texas	**4746**	**1750**	**1765**	**154**	**140**	**8555**

Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from TEA 2012−13 downloaded from the TEA website: 2013 Accountability System data file titled “Accountability Index Scores and Rating” (variables: Campus 2013 Flag – Alternative Education Campus of Choice and/or Residential Treatment Facility under AEA Procedures, Campus 2013 Flag - Charter School, Campus 2013 Flag – DAEP, Campus 2013 Flag – JJAEP). ERC PEIMS data file: p.campus13 charter school designation (variable: CAMP_CHARTTYPE).

[1] For this report, campuses were classified by traditional grade groupings for elementary, middle and high school categories as required in SB 2. Some campuses enroll students in grade levels different from these traditional categories. In these instances, the campus was placed in the category with the largest enrollment of students.

[2] There were six campus charter schools that served students for most of the 2012–13 year, but were closed in March 2013. All six schools were located in San Antonio ISD. Their students are not included in counts of charter school students, but are part of the other public school counts shown in this table.

[3] DAEP = Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs

[4] JJAEP = Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Programs

Data show that the largest number of both charter and traditional public schools in the state were elementary schools. Elementary schools comprised 48% of charter schools, and 59% of traditional schools (excluding Residential Treatment Facilities, DAEP campuses, and JJAEP campuses). The smallest number of both charter and traditional schools were residential treatment facilities (7% of charter schools and under 1% of traditional schools). However, the 41 residential treatment facilities operating under charters represented 47% of the residential treatment centers in Texas. While there were 294 DAEPs and JJAEPs in Texas in 2012−13 (3% of schools in the state), none of these were charter schools.

Among charter schools, the majority (89%) were open-enrollment charter campuses, followed by campus charter school campuses (11%). No home-rule charters have ever been authorized.

Alternative Education Accountability Campuses. Schools in Texas, including charter schools, may apply to TEA for designation as an alternative education accountability (AEA) campus. These AEA campuses including those that are charter school campuses, must serve students "at risk of dropping out of school" as defined in TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter C, § 29.081(d)[6] and provide accelerated instructional services to them. To be an AEA campus, a school must have a student enrollment of which at least 75% are classified as at-risk. Additionally, at least 50% of students must be in Grades 6 through 12. An AEA campus is also designated as a dropout recovery school if at least 50% of enrolled students are 17 years of age or older as of September 1 of each school year. While accountability measures are the same for AEA campuses and traditional campuses, AEA campuses are evaluated under different accountability standards than are used for other schools.

Table 2 shows the number of charter school campuses and traditional public schools in Texas which were AEA campuses in 2012−13. Of the 396 AEA campuses in Texas, 154 (39%) are charter school campuses, the majority of which (93%) are open-enrollment or university charter school campuses. Additionally, 47% of residential facilities, which are evaluated under AEA procedures, also operate as charter school campuses within the state of Texas.

---

[6] TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter C, § 29.081 defines a "student at risk of dropping out of school" as a 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 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.

Table 2. Charter Schools Designated as Alternative Education Accountability Campuses, 2012–13

	Program Type		
Campus Type	AEA[1] Campuses (excluding Residential Treatment Facilities)	AEA Residential Treatment Facilities Campuses	Total
Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses	102	30	132
Open-Enrollment University Charter School Campuses	0	11	11
Campus Charter Schools	11	0	11
Home-Rule Charter	0	0	0
Total AEA Charter School Campuses	**113**	**41**	**154**
Total AEA Traditional Public School Campuses	196	46	242
Total in Texas	**309**	**87**	**396**

Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from TEA 2012−13 downloaded from the TEA website: 2013 Accountability System data file titled "Accountability Index Scores and Rating" (variables: Campus 2013 Flag – Alternative Education Campus of Choice and/or Residential Treatment Facility under AEA Procedures, Campus 2013 Flag - Charter School, Campus 2013 Flag – DAEP, Campus 2013 Flag – JJAEP). ERC PEIMS data file: p.campus13 charter school designation (variable: CAMP_CHARTTYPE).
[1]AEA = Alternative Education Accountability.

Student Demography. During the 2012−13 school year, 212,711 Texas students attended charter schools; these students represented slightly over 4% of the state's public school students. Table 3 details student counts by charter authorize type. Among students who attended charter schools, the majority (84%) attended open-enrollment charter schools.

Table 3. Student Counts for Open-Enrollment Charter, Campus Charter and Other Public Schools, 2012–13

	Student Count	**Percentage of Students in Texas**
Open-Enrollment Charter Schools[1]	179,120	3.5%
Campus Charter Schools[2]	33,591	0.7%
Total Charter Schools	**212,711**	**4.2%**
Other Texas Public Schools	4,863,129	95.8%
Total in Texas	**5,075,840**	**100.0%**

Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from TEA 2012−13 fall enrollment data combined with charter identifier from PEIMS file p.campus13 (CAMP_CHARTTYPE).
[1] University open-enrollment charter schools have been combined with other open-enrollment charter schools.
[2] There were six campus charter schools that served students for most of the 2012–13 year, but were closed in March 2013. All six schools were located in San Antonio ISD. Their students are not included in counts of charter school students, but are part of the other public school counts shown in this table.

Table 4 presents selected demographic characteristics of all students in Texas in the fall of 2012−13. Counts include charter school students and students in other Texas public schools, including traditional schools, Residential Treatment Facility campuses, DAEP campuses, and JJAEP campuses. The table illustrates demographic characteristics as defined by the Texas Education Agency:

- Percentage of Students Identified as At-Risk: Students are identified as at risk of dropping out of school based on a number of factors which include failing grades, State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness® (STAAR) scores which fall below the passing level for their grade and other circumstances (See Appendix A for a full definition).
- Percentage of Students in Career and Technical Education Programs: TEA describes career and technical education (CTE) programs as offering students a sequence of courses designed to provide them with coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and with the relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for further education and careers in current or emerging professions.
- Percentage of Students Identified as Economically Disadvantaged: Students who are economically disadvantaged are those who qualify for free or reduced price lunches. Based on the 2012 Federal Poverty Guidelines for a family of three, the income limit for free lunch was $24,817 and the income limit for reduced-price lunch was $35,316.
- Percentage of Students Identified as Gifted/Talented: In 1987, the Texas Legislature mandated that all school districts must identify and serve gifted and talented (G/T) students at all grade levels. However, open-enrollment charter schools are not required to serve G/T students unless G/T services are included in their charter.
- Percentage of Students who are Limited English Proficient: The TEC §§ 29.051-29.064 defines a student who is Limited English Proficient (LEP) as one whose primary language is other than English and whose English skills are such that the student has difficulty performing ordinary class work in English. More than 16% of Texas public school students are classified as LEP; this group is also referred to as English Language Learners (ELLs).
- Percentage of Students Served by Special Education: Special education services are provided to students with disabilities as defined in 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), § 300.8(a), subject to the provisions of 34 CFR, § 300.8(c), the TEC § 29.003.

Data in Table 4 suggest that in 2012−13, charter schools served students with demographic characteristics that differed from the characteristics of students in other Texas public schools.

Table 4. Full State Demographic Characteristics of Students in Open-Enrollment Charter, Campus Charter and Other Public Schools, 2012–13

	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools[1]	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools[1]	Campus Charter Schools[2]	Campus Charter Schools[2]	Other Public Schools	Other Public Schools
Students	%	#	%	#	%	#
Total	3.5%	179,120	0.7%	33,591	95.8%	4,863,129
Race/Ethnicity						
Hispanic	**55.7%**	**99,708**	**66.2%**	**22,229**	**51.1%**	**2,484,189**
African American	**21.8%**	**38,963**	**18.9%**	**6,351**	**12.4%**	**600,868**
White	**16.1%**	**28,907**	**11.8%**	**3,948**	**30.6%**	**1,488,696**
Asian	**4.6%**	**8,242**	**1.9%**	**629**	**3.6%**	**174,918**
American Indian or Alaskan Native	**0.4%**	**694**	**0.3%**	**92**	**0.4%**	**21,009**
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	**0.1%**	**134**	**0.1%**	**35**	**0.1%**	**6,475**
Two or more races	**1.4%**	**2,472**	**0.9%**	**307**	**1.8%**	**86,974**
Program Type						
At-Risk	44.8%	80,209	49.8%	16,740	44.6%	2,167,866
Career and Technical Education	8.9%	15,818	8.6%	2,887	22.5%	1,092,905
Economically Disadvantaged	70.1%	125,384	77.9%	26,179	59.8%	2,907,331
Gifted and Talented	1.5%	2,750	10.6%	3,569	7.8%	381,304
Limited English Proficient	18.6%	33,365	19.2%	6,440	17.0%	824,877
Special Education	6.6%	11,767	5.1%	1,711	8.8%	427,092
School Level[3]						
Elementary	54.5%	97,644	39.9%	13,397	50.5%	2,457,062
Middle School	20.6%	36,892	33.6%	11,283	22.0%	1,072,288
High School	24.9%	44,584	26.5%	8,911	27.4%	1,333,779

Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from TEA 2012−13 fall enrollment data combined with charter identifier from PEIMS file p.campus13 (CAMP_CHARTTYPE). Note: this includes residential treatment facilities when looking at the entire state.

[1] University open-enrollment charter schools have been combined with other open-enrollment charter schools.

[2] There were six campus charter schools that served students for most of the 2012–13 year, but were closed in March 2013. All six schools were located in San Antonio ISD. Their students are not included in counts of charter school students, but are part of the other public school counts shown in this table.

[3] For this report campuses were classified by traditional grade groupings for elementary, middle and high school categories. Some campuses enroll students in grade levels different from than these traditional categories. In these instances the campus was placed in the category with the largest enrollment of students.

Instances in which characteristics of open-enrollment charter school students differed by more than 10% from characteristics of students in other Texas public schools are detailed below.

Students in open-enrollment charter schools were *more* likely to be:

- African American (21.8% versus 12.4% for students in other Texas public schools); and
- Economically disadvantaged (70.1% versus 59.8% for students in other Texas public schools)

Students in open-enrollment charter schools were *less* likely to be:

- White (16.1%, versus 30.6% for students in other Texas public schools); and

- In CTE programs (8.9%, versus 22.5% for students in other Texas public schools).

Instances in which characteristics of campus charter school students differed by more than 10% from characteristics of students in other Texas public schools were also found.

Students in campus charter schools were *more* likely to be:

- Hispanic (66.2% versus 51.1% for students in other Texas public schools);
- Economically disadvantaged (77.9% versus 59.8% for students in other Texas public schools); and
- In middle school (33.6% versus 22.0% for students in other Texas public schools).

Students in campus charter schools were *less* likely to be:

- White (11.8%, versus 30.6% for students in other Texas public schools);
- In CTE programs (8.6% versus 22.5% for students in other Texas public schools); and
- In elementary school (39.9% versus 50.5% for students in other Texas public schools).

DATA SOURCES AND PROCEDURES

As discussed previously, the 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2013), SB 2 added TEC § 12.1013 (a)-(d), requiring the commissioner to select a Texas Education Research Center (ERC) to prepare an "annual report concerning the performance of open-enrollment charter schools by authorizer compared to campus charter schools and matched traditional campuses." This report presents comparisons for 2012–13, and includes comparisons among:

1. open-enrollment charter schools authorized by the SBOE, including college or university charter schools;
2. campus charter schools; and
3. traditional public schools.

One charter school authorizer type included in the legislation could not be addressed in this report. While open-enrollment charter schools were able to be authorized by the Texas commissioner of education with the passage of SB 2 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session), there were no data available for this type of charter for 2012−13. The first full year during which commissioner-authorized charter schools can operate is 2014−15. Please see Appendix A, which details additional limitations which apply to the information presented in this report.

As required by the legislation, comparisons are presented for indicators of student achievement adopted under § 39.053 [assessment, dropout, graduation] and for student attrition rates. The report also presents the required ratings of the aggregate performance of elementary, middle and high schools by charter authorizer type (TEC § 12.1013(d)(2)).

Data Sources

The Texas ERCs provide access to high quality, longitudinal data from the TEA, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC), and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The ERC at The University of Texas at Austin provided some of the data used in this report, including data from TEA's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and state assessment files. The PEIMS data used were the fall 2012−13 enrollment and campus level information, including the charter designation. Data identifying residential treatment facility charter campuses were provided by TEA. Finally, TEA Performance Index data, mobility rates, graduation rates, and dropout rates were downloaded from the TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) website as noted in Appendix A. The TAPR pulls together a wide range of information on the performance of students in each school and campus in Texas every year. The TAPR was previously known as the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

School Matching Procedures

TEC § 12.1013 (a) specifies that the performance of charter campuses of all authorizer types will be compared to *matched* traditional campuses (emphasis added).

Data for this report began with the full population of Texas public schools. The first step in creating a data base was to identify and remove charter campuses for which appropriate traditional campus matches could not be made. Residential treatment facilities (including the 41 residential charter AEA campuses), DAEPs and JJAEPs were excluded because their scope and purpose are typically very different from those of traditional public schools and of most charter campuses. Additionally, no DAEP or JJAEP facility operated under a charter during 2012−13 (refer to Table 1), and residential treatment facilities will no longer be rated in the Texas Accountability System. Six campus charter schools which did not remain in operation for the full 2012−13 school year were also excluded from the data base.

The resulting data set included a total of 579 charter schools; of which 503 were open-enrollment charter school campuses, 8 were open-enrollment university charter school campuses, and 68 were campus charter schools. One hundred and thirteen (20%) of these campuses were rated as AEA campuses.

Each open-enrollment charter school campus and campus charter school that remained in the data set was matched to a group of 40 traditional public schools. For this report, matching variables included campus type, campus size, racial composition, gender ratio, ELL ratio, economically disadvantaged ratio, gifted and talented ratio, special education ratio, at-risk ratio and a variable indicating location--whether the school is in an urban/suburban/rural setting. It is also important to note that the percent of students who are mobile could not be used as a matching variable, as it was an outcome measure in this report. The use of multiple matching variables was important to assure that outcome comparisons were made using traditional schools that had student populations similar to those of the charter schools.

Procedures used to form comparison groups for these remaining charter school campuses were based on TEA's Accountability Rating System's method for awarding distinction designations to campuses (TEA, 2013, Accountability Manual), but did not replicate them exactly. In TEA's methodology, each campus eligible for distinction was assigned a unique comparison group of 40 other public schools (which may include charter campuses). For purposes of this report, charter campuses were not used as matches.

A propensity score matching process[7] was used to find the 40 traditional matching campuses for each charter campus (see Appendix A). Based on each campus' values for the demographic characteristics listed above, a score was given to each campus; scores range between 0 and 1. Traditional campuses that are similar to the charter campus being matched have scores close to 1, while campuses that are

[7] The propensity score matching procedures were performed in STATA13 statistical software. StataCorp. 2013. Stata Statistical Software: Release 13. College Station, TX: StataCorp LP.

less similar have scores closer to zero. Appendix B contains the average distance score (standardized z-score) of its 40 traditional matched campuses and the individual distance score each matched traditional campus. In addition, Appendix C compares demographic information about schools of each charter authorizer type with demographic information for the traditional schools which were matched to them. Appendix D compares demographic information for schools of each charter authorizer type with demographic information for the traditional schools which were matched to them disaggregated by school level (elementary, middle or high). Note that due to the matching process, the percentages between charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school comparison campuses are similar, but variation across the variables does exist even after the matching process was conducted. Although in most cases the variation is minor, these differences could result in differences seen in the outcome analyses.

Outcome Measures

TEC § 12.1013 (c) specifies the outcome measures that are to be included in the Charter School Authorizer Accountability report. These are: indicators of student achievement adopted under § 39.053 [assessment, dropout, graduation] and student attrition rates. This section describes each required outcome measure.

Assessment. Two types of academic performance (assessment) data are included in this report.

The first assessment measure is the percentage of students passing the STAAR-Reading and Mathematics tests at the current passing standard (phase-in 1 Level II and Above). The STAAR testing program includes annual assessments which are administered to public school students in Grade 3 and above, and is designed to measure to what extent a student has learned, understood, and is able to apply the concepts and skills expected at each tested grade level as defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

For Grades 3−8, passing rates included in this report are based on the reading and mathematics STAAR tests. In high school, students take subject-specific end-of-course (EOC) STAAR exams. In this report, high school math averages are based on the Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II EOC exams, while high school reading averages are based on the English I, English II, and English III exams[8]. Passing standards vary by grade level and test. Passing rates, therefore, represent the percentage of tests taken by students in a given school's accountability subset that met the corresponding standard, but do not represent the same level of performance. The campus accountability subset includes STAAR results for students who were enrolled at

[8] The results presented in this report use the EOCs in statute in 2012-13. HB 5, 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session decreased the number of required EOCs to five, including Algebra I and English I and II, for mathematics and reading. Subsequent reports will reflect these changes.

a given campus at the time of TEA's fall membership count and who completed STAAR assessments at that same campus.

The second measure of student achievement consists of measures from the Performance Index of TEA's Accountability Rating System for Public Schools and Districts in Texas. The Performance Indices were first introduced in 2013 and include:

1. Index 1: Student Achievement, as measured by STAAR passing rates.
2. Index 2: Student Progress, as measured by improvement from prior STAAR testing.
3. Index 3: Closing Performance Gaps, as measured by improvement from prior STAAR testing of students identified as economically disadvantaged and of students in a school's two lowest performing ethnic groups.
4. Index 4: Postsecondary Readiness, as measured by a combination of high school graduation rates with the degree programs which graduates fulfilled (Recommended High School Program/ Distinguished Achievement Program or Minimum High School Program). This index is reported for high schools only.

Each of the four indexes yields a score of 0 to 100, representing campus performance as a percentage of the maximum possible points for that campus. Campus scores for each index are a part of the annual school accountability summary created by TEA; campus and district accountability summaries can be accessed through the TEA's Performance Reporting Division's home page on the worldwide web. The 2013 accountability targets for each Performance Index are shown in Appendix A.

Student Attrition. TEA defines an attrition rate, for the purposes of estimating a dropout rate, as the percentage change in fall enrollment between two grades across years. Because the analyses for this report require the aggregation of data across schools with different grade configurations, a methodology to calculate an attrition rate for this purpose will need to be developed to ensure the validity of the aggregations and subsequent comparisons. This methodology, which will focus on operationalizing student attrition as a function of changes in student enrollment due to student loss and retention from one year to the next, will be included in subsequent reports. For the purpose of this current report, campus mobility rate was used as a substitute for measuring student attrition rate. It should be noted while these rates are similar; they measure different aspects of student movement. A student is considered to be mobile if he or she has missed more than six weeks at a particular school. Because the mobility rate is calculated at the campus level, students may be enrolling in another campus in the district (e.g., moving from a charter school campus to a traditional public school campus within the same district) and therefore this student may not impact an aggregate attrition rate overall, as he or she would still be enrolled in a school in the state.

Dropout Rates. Texas uses the National Center for Education Statistics definition to define a dropout. Under this definition a dropout is a student who is enrolled in public

school in Grades 7−12, who does not return to public school the following fall. The student is not expelled, has not graduated or received a GED, has not continued school outside the public school system, begun college, or died.

This report presents annual dropout rates (Grades 9−12) for 2011−12, as published in the TAPR. There is a one year lag for the publication of dropout rates, so the 2011−12 rates were the most recent available for this report.

Graduation Rates. Graduation rates used in this report are the Class of 2012's four-year longitudinal rates (Grades 9−12), as published in the TAPR. As is the case with dropout rates, there is a one year lag time for the publication of graduation rates.

Results presented below are for 2012−13, the most recent school year for which data were available. Appendices E through I present data for the 2011−12 school year. While the information these appendices contain is from the year which precedes the requirement for this report, they include data that might be used for comparison purposes. They also assure that this report includes data which reach back to the first year of implementation of the STAAR.

AGGREGATED COMPARISONS OF OPEN-ENROLLMENT AND CAMPUS CHARTER SCHOOLS TO MATCHED TRADITIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Comparisons in this section examine outcomes for both charter school authorizer types (open-enrollment, 511 campuses, and campus charter, 68[9] schools) which are aggregated across school levels (elementary, middle and high) and across accountability rating systems (standard and AEA). As specified by TEC § 12.1013 (b) and (d)(1), the aggregated charter school outcomes are compared to outcomes for matched traditional public schools. As noted previously, one charter school authorizer type included in the legislation could not be addressed in this report. While open-enrollment charter schools were able to be authorized by the Texas commissioner of education with the passage of SB 2 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session), there were no data available for this type of charter for 2012−13. The first full year during which commissioner-authorized charter schools can operate is 2014−15.

Data Analysis

Averages for each outcome measure were created for each charter authorizer type (open-enrollment and campus charter schools), and for their respective traditional public school comparison groups of 40 schools. For each charter authorizer type, this is an average for each variable across all schools of that type; for traditional public school comparisons, this is an average across all comparison schools which were matched to schools of that charter authorizer type. For example, for campus charter schools, averages are based on 68 schools; for their traditional school comparisons, averages are based on 2,720 schools (68 X 40). Note that due to the matching process, the percentages for charter school campuses and their matched traditional public school comparison campuses are similar. However, variation across the variables does exist, even though, in keeping with TEA's procedures for establishing accountability comparison groups (TEA Accountability Manual, 2013), the traditional public school comparison campuses are the 40 closest available matches for each charter school campus. It can be particularly difficult to obtain close matches if a school serves special or unique populations of students. Although in most cases variation is minor, these differences could have affected the results obtained for outcome measures. See Table 5 below and refer to Appendix C.

[9] There were six campus charter schools that served students for most of the 2012-13 year, but were closed in March 2013. All six schools were located in San Antonio ISD. They are not included in this count of campus charter schools.

Table 5. Demographic Characteristics of Students in Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools and Traditional Public Schools Included in the Comparison Sample, 2012–13

	Open-Enrollment Charters School Campuses[1]	OE[2] Traditional Public School-Comparison	Campus Charter Schools[3]	Campus Charter Traditional Public School-Comparison
Number of Campuses[4]	**511**	**511**	**68**	**68**
	%		**%**	
Race/Ethnicity				
Hispanic	**54.0%**	**54.4%**	**63.2%**	**62.0%**
African American	**23.4%**	**19.4%**	**25.7%**	**22.4%**
White	**18.0%**	**22.1%**	**8.6%**	**12.8%**
Asian	**3.1%**	**2.4%**	**1.4%**	**1.4%**
Program Type				
At-Risk	**49.5%**	**50.9%**	**49.4%**	**51.1%**
Career and Technical Education	**12.2%**	**19.5%**	**11.7%**	**31.0%**
Economically Disadvantaged	**69.9%**	**71.1%**	**77.5%**	**76.5%**
Gifted and Talented	**1.1%**	**4.2%**	**9.6%**	**8.8%**
Limited English Proficient	**17.1%**	**17.2%**	**15.8%**	**15.8%**
Special Education	**7.5%**	**8.9%**	**5.9%**	**8.5%**

Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from TEA 2012−13, TAPR 2012−13 data combined with charter identifier from PEIMS file p.campus13 (CAMP_CHARTTYPE). This represents the matched subset of the 511 open-enrollment charter campuses and the 68 campus charter schools matched with 40 traditional public school campuses.

[1] University open-enrollment charter school campuses have been combined with other open-enrollment charter school campuses.

[2] OE = open-enrollment – average of 40 matched campuses.

[3] There were six campus charter schools that served students for most of the 2012–13 year, but were closed in March 2013. All six schools were located in San Antonio ISD. Their students are not included in counts of charter school students, but can be part of the other public school counts shown in this table.

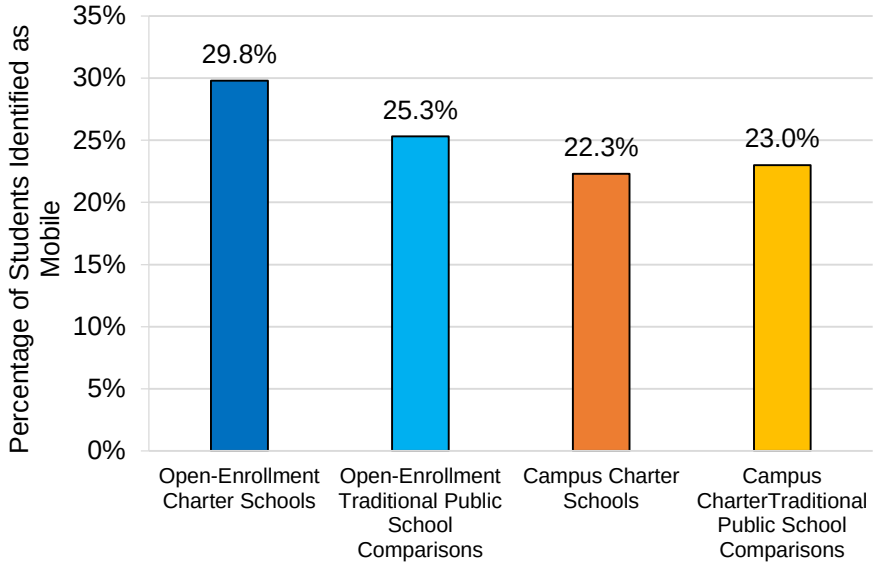
[4] The 40 campus matches are averaged by aggregating to create a one-to-one match.

Outcomes

Student Mobility Rates. Figure 2 presents student mobility percentages by authorizer type for charter school campuses and their matched traditional comparison schools.

As Figure 2 shows, open-enrollment charter school campuses have an average mobility rate of 29.8%, while the rate for their matched traditional comparison group is 25.3%. Rates of mobility for campus charter schools; however, are nearly identical to mobility rates for their traditional comparison schools. The Texas Association of School Boards (2014) reported that open-enrollment charter school campuses consistently have higher rates of student mobility than traditional public schools; findings here are consistent with that pattern.

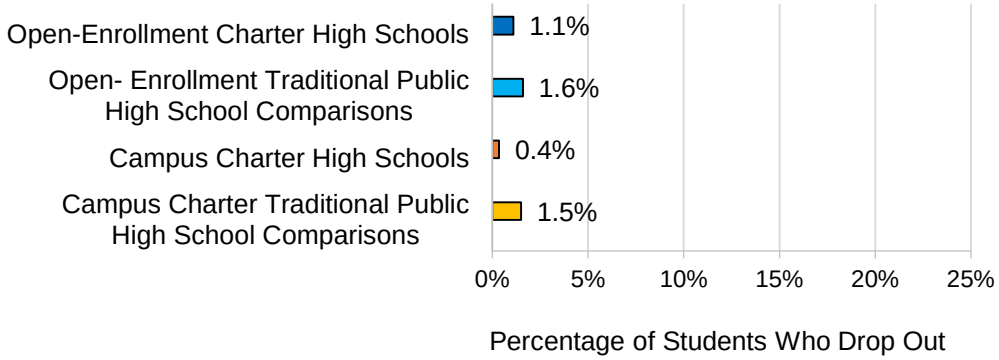
Figure 2. Student Mobility Rates for Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools and Matched Traditional Schools, 2012–13



Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.

Dropout Rates. While other outcome results in this section were aggregated across school levels (elementary, middle and high school), dropout rates are presented for Grades 9–12, and are from the 2011–12 school year. These data were the most recent available at the time this report was prepared. As Figure 3 illustrates, high school student dropout rates are less than 2.0% for both types of charter schools and for their matched traditional comparison groups. Dropout rates for both types of charter schools are slightly lower than dropout rates for their comparison schools.

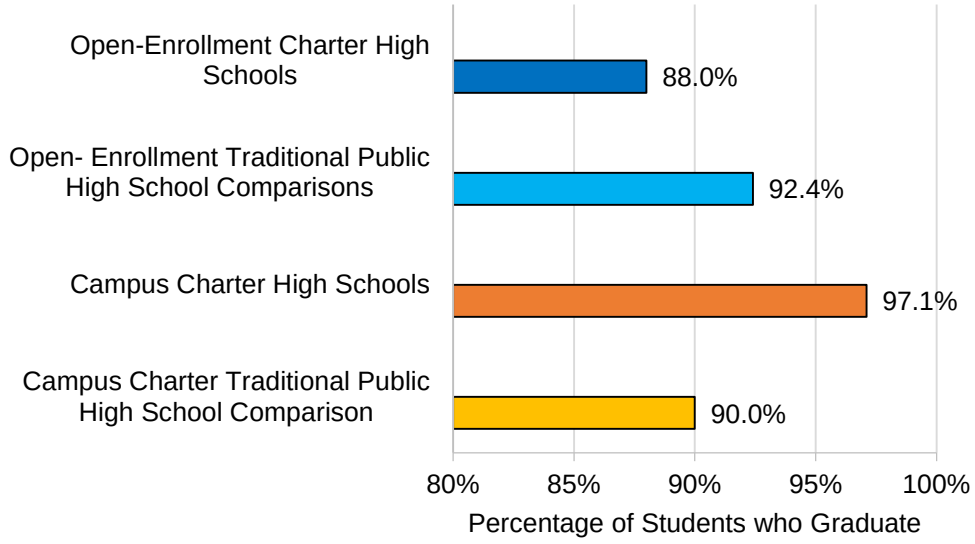
Figure 3. Dropout Rates for Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools and Matched Traditional High Schools, 2012–13



Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR), 2012–13.
Note: Data are for Grades 9–12 for 2011–12. For this report campuses were classified by traditional grade groupings for elementary, middle and high school categories. Some campuses enroll students in grade levels different from these traditional categories. In these instances the campus was placed in the category with the largest enrollment of students. In these cases the dropout rate reported for schools classified as high schools includes only students in Grades 9-12, even if the school served other grade levels.

Graduation Rates. Figure 4 shows Class of 2012 four-year longitudinal graduation rates for each charter authorizer type. These rates were the most recent available for this report.

Figure 4. High School Graduation Rates for Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools and Matched Traditional Schools, 2012–13

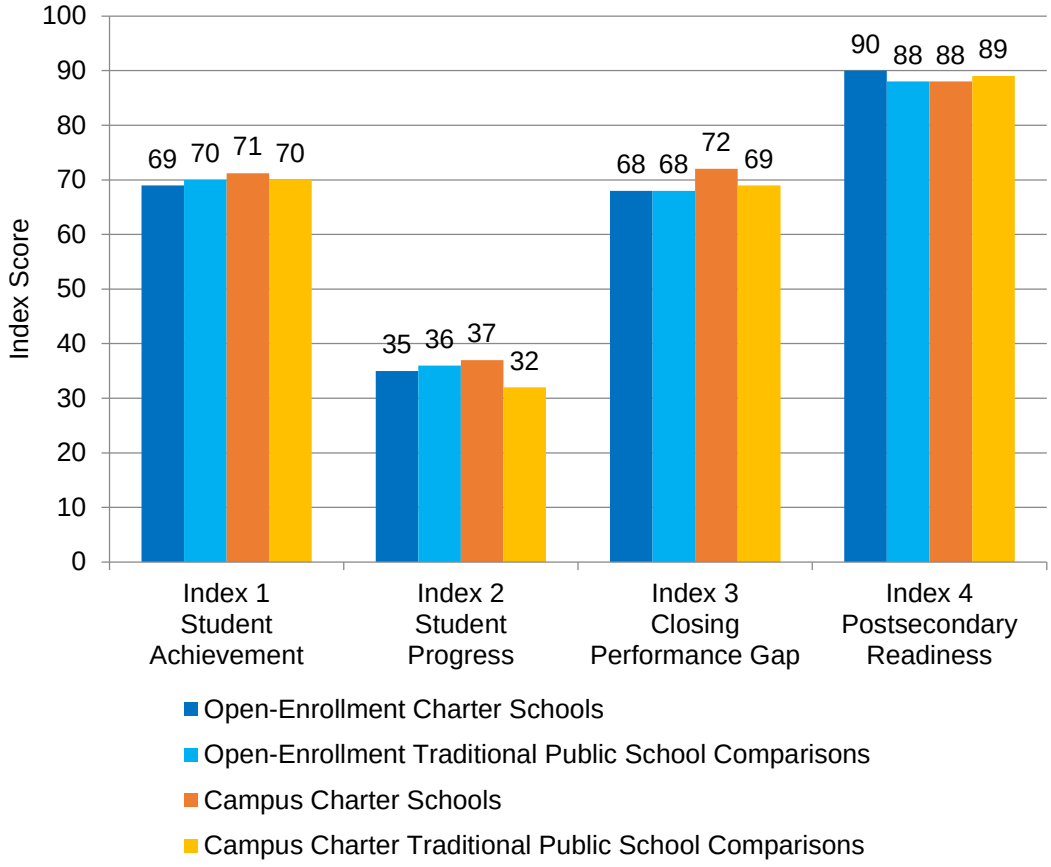


Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note: Data are Class of 2012 four-year longitudinal rates (Grades 9–12). For this report campuses were classified by traditional grade groupings for elementary, middle and high school categories. Some campuses enroll students in grade levels different from these traditional categories. In these instances the campus was placed in the category with the largest enrollment of students. In these cases the graduation rate reported for schools classified as high schools includes only students in Grades 9-12, even if the school served other grade levels.

Graduation rate patterns appear to differ by authorizer type. While the graduation rate is slightly lower for open-enrollment charter school campuses than for their traditional comparisons, the graduation rate for campus charter schools is slightly higher than the rate for their traditional comparisons.

TEA Performance Indices. Figure 5 presents scores on each index for charter school campuses by authorizer type and for their traditional school comparisons. Numbers in the figure are the average score on each index.

Figure 5. TEA Performance Index Scores for Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools, and Matched Traditional Schools, 2012–13



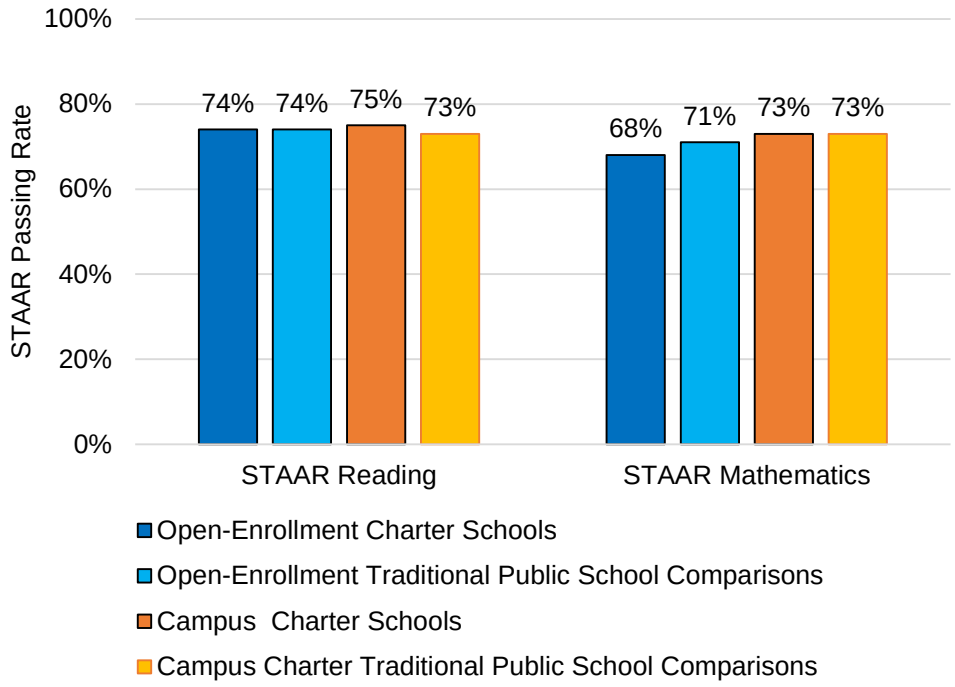
Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13. 2013 Accountability System data file titled “Accountability Index Scores and Rating”
Note 1: Each index yields a score of 0 to 100 which represents campus performance as a percentage of the maximum possible points for that campus.
Note 2: Index 4, Postsecondary Readiness, includes only high schools.

Both types of charter schools attained scores on each index which are highly similar to the scores of their matched comparisons. The largest difference occurs for campus charter schools on Index 2 (Student Progress), where campus charter schools’ scores are 5 points higher than those of their matched traditional schools comparisons.

Index 2 is based on differences between current scores and scores from the previous year, and is intended to provide a measure of growth rather than an overall level of achievement.

STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Passing Rates. Figure 6 presents the percentage of students passing the STAAR in reading and mathematics by authorizer type. It is important to remember that passing rates vary by grade level, such that different levels of performance are represented in the figure.

Figure 6. STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Passing Rates for Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools and Matched Traditional Schools, 2012–13



Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note: Passing rates include students who achieved the phase-in 1 Level II and Above passing standard.

Passing rates on STAAR-Reading for each type of charter school and its matched comparisons exceed 73% in all cases, and differ at most by only 2 percentage points. Passing rates on STAAR-Mathematics are also similar for all school types, and exceed 68% in all cases. The largest difference between any charter authorizer type and its matched comparisons (3%) is found for the STAAR-Mathematics passing rate for open-enrollment charter school campuses. These schools had a 68% passing rate, while the passing rate for their matched comparisons was 71%.

Summary

The analysis of the 579 charter schools found that these schools are performing at a comparable level as that of similar traditional schools. Percentages and scores for student mobility, graduation rates, dropout rates and academic assessments show only small differences. The largest difference in the rate or score for any outcome for any charter authorizer type and its comparison schools was found between graduation rates of campus charter high schools and their matched comparisons (7.1% difference; 97.1% for campus charter high schools; 90.0% for matched comparisons). However, graduation rates include only high schools. When comparisons that include all school levels are considered, the largest difference found between open-enrollment charter school campuses and their matched comparisons was a 4.5% difference in student mobility rates (29.8% versus 25.3%, respectively). The largest difference for campus charter schools and their matched comparisons occurred for TEA's Performance Index 2 (Student Progress). Campus charter schools attained an average score of 37; their matched comparisons attained an average score of 32.

AGGREGATE PERFORMANCE OF ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CHARTER CAMPUSES BY AUTHORIZER TYPE

TEC § 12.1013 (d)(1) requires that the Charter Authorizer Report rate the aggregate performance of elementary, middle and high schools by charter authorizer type, and further requires that these ratings be made as though all students enrolled at each school level (and authorizer type) were enrolled in one school. This section presents these ratings, which are based on Index 2 of the TEA Performance Indices.

Data in this section also include comparisons for all previous outcome measures for each school level (elementary, middle or high). Outcomes for each charter school level and authorizer type are compared to the outcomes for matched traditional public schools of the same school level. Results are based on 511 open-enrollment charter school campuses and 68 campus charter schools, and include both standard accountability and AEA-rated campuses. Because many outcomes might be considered as the performance of a group of schools is rated, these additional measures are included to provide a more nuanced picture of the performance of charter schools at each school level. Additionally, as noted previously, one charter school authorizer type included in the legislation could not be addressed in this report. While open-enrollment charter schools were able to be authorized by the Texas commissioner of education with the passage of SB 2 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session), there were no data available for this type of charter for 2012−13. The first full year during which commissioner-authorized charter schools can operate is 2014−15.

Data Analysis

To obtain the results presented in this section, students from both traditional public schools and charter schools were categorized by school level, (elementary, middle or high school)[10], and by charter authorizer type to create 12 different groups. These included 6 groups for each type of charter authorizer as follows:

Open-Enrollment Charter Groups. (Based on 511 schools; 272 elementary, 89 middle schools and 150 high schools which include both open-enrollment charter schools and open-enrollment university charter schools)

1. All elementary students enrolled in the open-enrollment charter school campuses,
2. All elementary students enrolled in the matched comparison campuses for the open-enrollment charter school campuses,
3. All middle school students enrolled in the open-enrollment charter school campuses,
4. All middle school students enrolled in the matched comparison campuses for the open-enrollment charter school campuses,

[10] For this report campuses were classified by traditional grade groupings for elementary, middle and high school categories. Some campuses enroll students in grade levels other than those that are typical for these traditional categories. In these instances, the campus was placed in the category with the largest enrollment of students.

5. All high school students enrolled in the open-enrollment charter school campuses, and
6. All high school students enrolled in the matched comparison campuses for the open-enrollment charter school campuses.

Campus Charter Groups. (Based on 68 schools; 22 elementary, 18 middle schools and 28 high schools)

1. All elementary students enrolled in campus charter schools,
2. All elementary students enrolled in the matched comparison campuses for the campus charter schools,
3. All middle school students enrolled in campus charter schools,
4. All middle school students enrolled in the matched comparison campuses for the campus charter schools,
5. All high school students enrolled in campus charter schools, and
6. All high school students enrolled in the matched comparison campuses for the campus charter schools.

Data for these groups have been treated as if each group were one big school. For example, the passing rate on the STAAR, is the percentage of students across all schools in each group that met the phase-in 1 Level II and Above standard on the mathematics or reading STAAR test (see Appendix A).

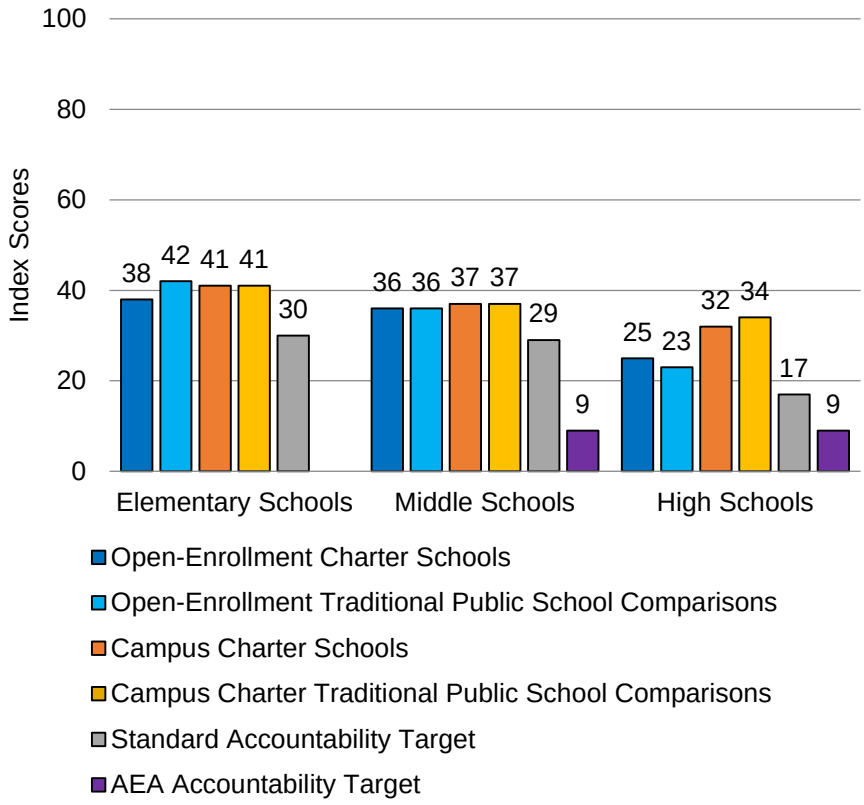
Ratings on TEA Performance Index 2

Performance Index 2 of TEA's Accountability Rating System for Public Schools and Districts in Texas was chosen to address the rating of performance by school level described in TEC § 12.1013(d)(2). Performance Index 2 is designed to measure student progress by subject and student group. Scores on this measure reflect progress without considering overall achievement level; that is, a school might have a high score on Index 2 if students achieved higher STAAR scores than they had achieved during the previous school year, even if not all students passed STAAR exams. (The percentage of students passing STAAR is the basis for TEA Index 1, Student Achievement.)

Progress is measured using gain scores, and each gain is classified as not meeting growth expectations, meeting growth expectations or exceeding growth expectations. In 2012–13, these gain scores were based on STAAR-Reading and Mathematics scores for students in Grades 4–8, and on EOC exams for English I Reading, English II Reading, Algebra I and English II Writing (TEA Accountability Manual, 2013). In addition to incorporating scores for all students, the Performance 2 Index reflects progress for nine student subgroups: students who receive special education services, ELLs, African American students, American Indian students, Asian students, Hispanic students, Pacific Islander students, White students and students of Two or More races. Accountability targets for 2012–13 were set to reflect approximately the fifth percentile of campus progress performance.

Figure 7 shows scores on Index 2 by school level and charter authorizer, along with scores for matched traditional comparison schools and accountability targets. As has been described, schools in Texas are rated using either standard or AEA accountability procedures. Both targets are shown in Figure 7 because schools which use both types of accountability ratings are represented in the data.

Figure 7. Ratings Using TEA Performance Index 2 Scores for Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools and Matched Traditional Schools by School Level, 2012–13



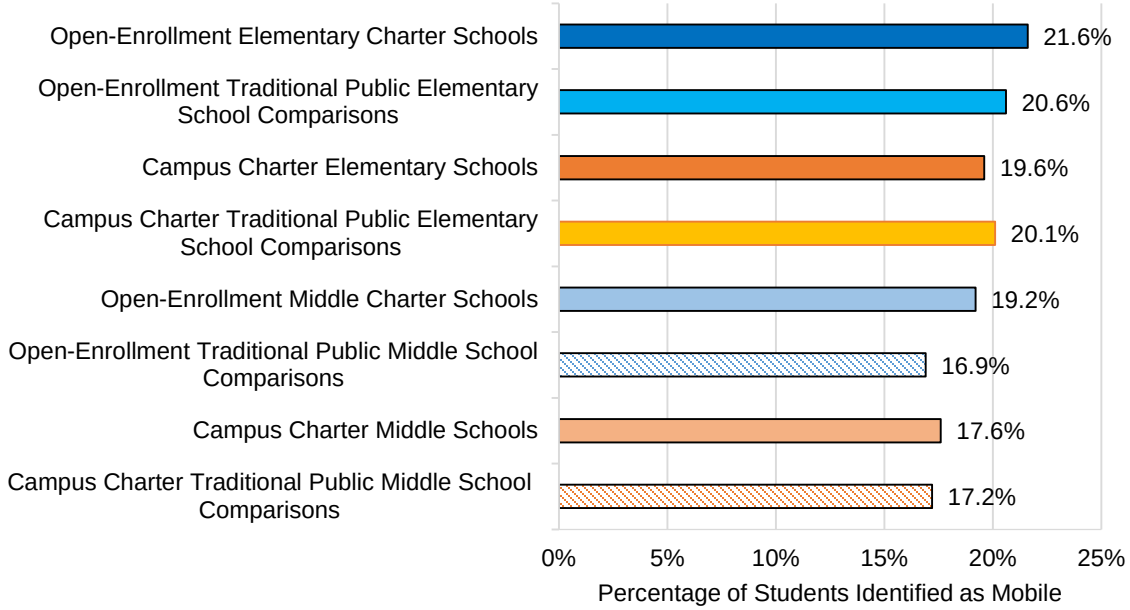
Sources: Data from TEA 2013 Accountability System data file titled “Accountability Index Scores and Rating”; TEA 2013 Accountability Manual.
Note1: Performance Index 2 yields a score of 0 to 100 which represents campus performance as a percentage of the maximum possible points for that campus.
Note 2: Only middle and high schools are eligible to apply to be evaluated under the Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) procedures; therefore no target is set for elementary schools.

As Figure 7 shows, if all students enrolled in open-enrollment and campus charter schools were considered to be enrolled in one large school at each level, those schools (elementary, middle and high) would have achieved both the standard and the AEA accountability target for 2012–13. The same is true for matched comparison schools at all levels.

Other Outcomes

Student Mobility Rates. Figures 8 and 9 present mobility rates for elementary, middle, and high schools of both charter authorizer type and for their matched traditional public school comparisons.

Figure 8. Mobility Rates for Elementary and Middle Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Schools and Matched Traditional Schools, 2012–13

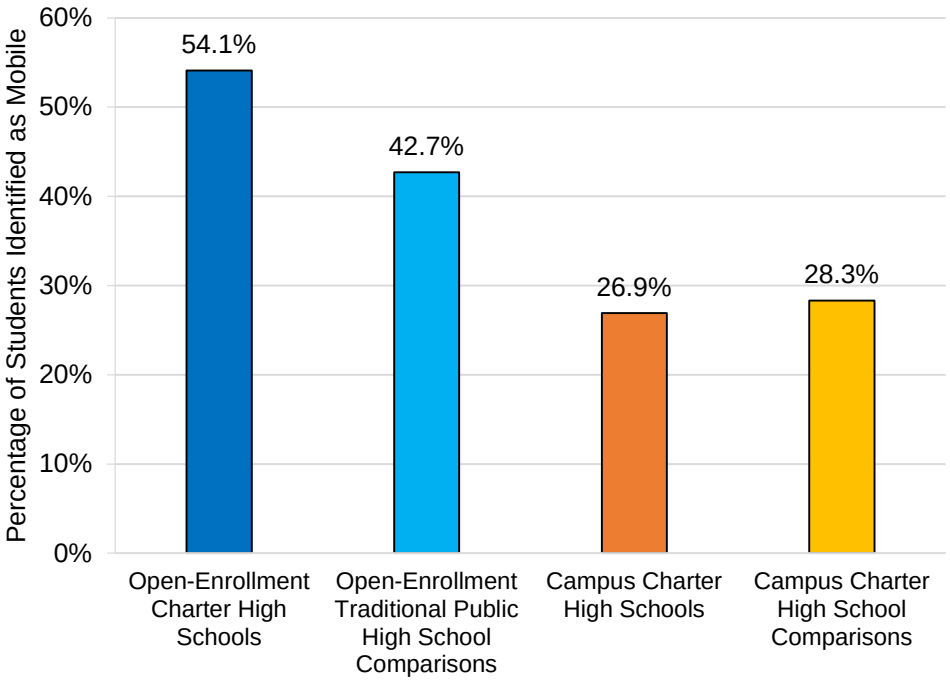


Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.

As Figure 8 shows, for both elementary and middle schools, there is little variation in mobility rates for the two types of charter schools and their matched traditional public school comparisons. Rates for all elementary schools fall between 19.6 and 21.6%, while rates for all middle schools fall between 16.9 and 19.2%.

Mobility rates are presented in Appendices J, K and L for each individual charter school and its traditional public school comparison group. At the individual campus level, mobility rates range from 0% to 100%.

Figure 9. Mobility Rates for Open-Enrollment Charter High School Campuses, Campus Charter High Schools and Matched Traditional High Schools, 2012–13



Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.

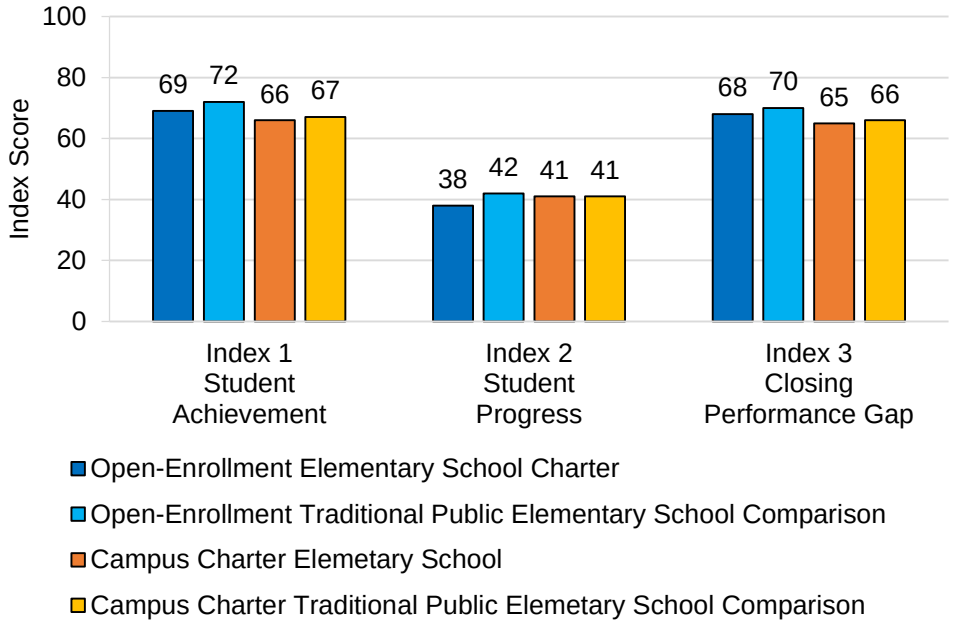
As shown in the Figure 9, mobility rates are higher for high schools than for elementary and middle schools. However, mobility rates for campus charter high schools and their traditional high school comparisons remain similar (26.9% and 28.3% respectively). Greater differences are found between open-enrollment charter high school campuses and their traditional public school comparisons; mobility rates are also highest for this set of schools (54.1% for charters; 42.7% for traditional schools). It should be noted that many of the open-enrollment charter high school campuses serve populations that are highly likely to be mobile, as they include campuses for "dropout recovery" and for at-risk students.

Dropout Rates. As illustrated previously in Figure 3, high school dropout rates (Grades 9–12) were less than 2.0% for both types of charter schools and their comparison groups. A review of dropout rates for individual charter high schools identifies the highest dropout rate to be 55.3% (See Appendix L).

Graduation Rates. Graduation rates are available for high schools students only in this report, and are the Class of 2012 four-year longitudinal rate for Grades 9–12 as published in TAPR (there is a one year lag time for publication of graduation rates). These rates were shown previously in Figure 4. The average graduation rate was highest (97.1%) for campus charter high schools and lowest for open-enrollment charter high school campuses (88.0%). A review of the graduation rates of individual charter high schools shows that these rates vary widely (see Appendix L).

TEA Performance Indices. Figures 10, 11, and 12 present scores for the four TEA Performance Indices described earlier for charter elementary, middle and high school campuses and their traditional matched comparisons. Appendices J through L present scores on each index for individual charter campuses and their comparisons groups.

Figure 10. TEA Performance Index Scores for Open-Enrollment Elementary Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Elementary Schools and Matched Traditional Elementary Schools, 2012–13



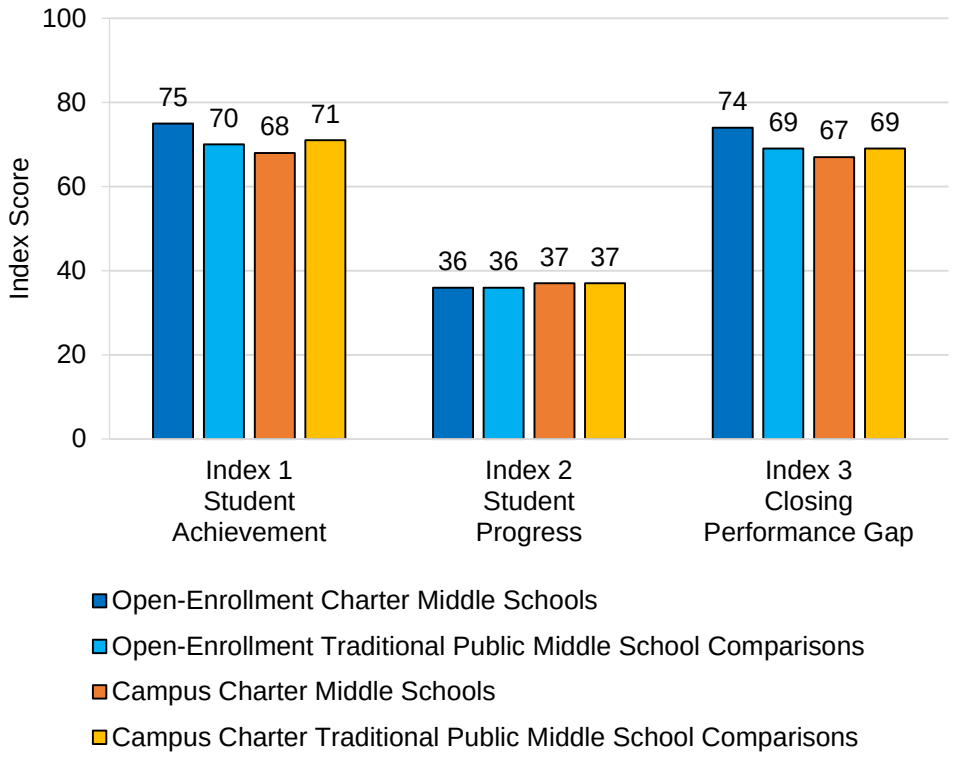
Source: Data from TEA 2013 Accountability System data file titled “Accountability Index Scores and Rating”.
Note: Each index yields a score of 0 to 100 which represents campus performance as a percentage of the maximum possible points for that campus.

Open-enrollment elementary charter school campuses, campus charter elementary schools and their matched comparison schools all have scores on each index which are close to one other. All school groups achieve their lowest scores on Index 2 (Student Performance). Across indices, the greatest difference in scores occurs for Index 2 (Student Progress), with traditional open-enrollment elementary comparison schools outscoring open-enrollment elementary charter school campuses by 4 points.

Figure 11 shows scores on each index for each school type for middle schools and illustrates that there is only a small amount of variation in scores for each index. As for elementary schools, both charter middle schools and their traditional comparison schools achieve their lowest scores on Index 2 (Student Progress). Open-enrollment charter middle school campsuses have higher scores than their traditional comparisons on both Index 1 (Student Achievement; difference of 5 points) and Index 3 (Closing Performance Gaps; difference of 5 points). This pattern is not found for campus charter

schools, in that their traditional comparisons have higher scores on Indices 1 and 3. However, the largerst difference in scores is only 3 points.

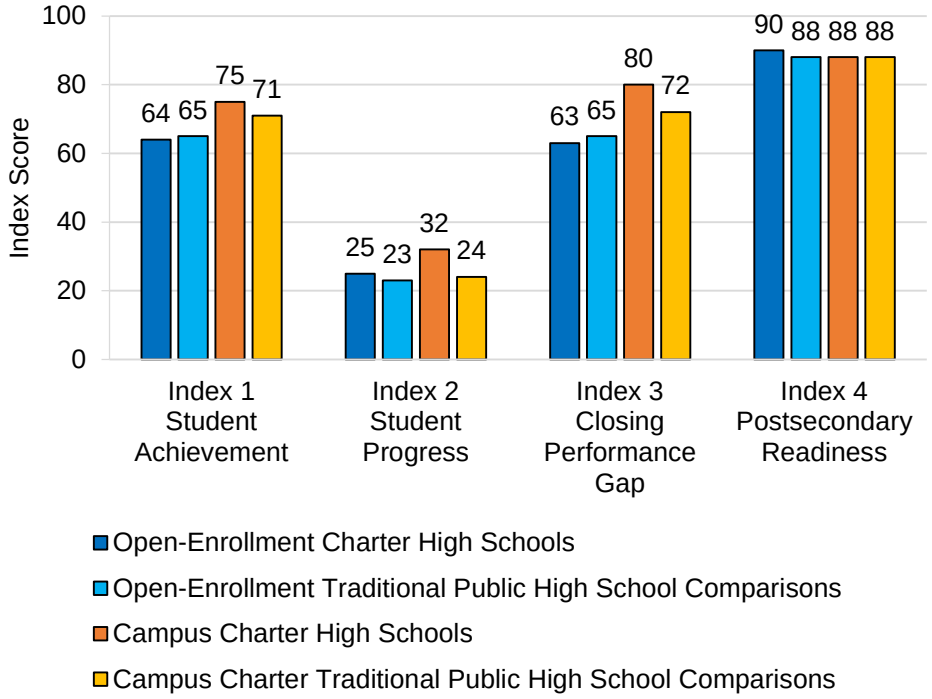
Figure 11. TEA Performance Index Scores for Open-Enrollment Middle School Charter Campuses, Campus Charter Middle Schools and Matched Traditional Middle Schools, 2012–13



Source: Data from TEA 2013 Accountability System data file titled “Accountability Index Scores and Rating”.
Note: Each index yields a score of 0 to 100 which represents campus performance as a percentage of the maximum possible points for that campus.

Scores on each index for high schools are shown in Figure 12. As before, both charter and traditional schools achieve their lowest scores on Index 2 (Student Progress). However, both open-enrollment and campus charter high school campuses have scores on this index which are higher than those of their traditional school comparisons. Campus charter high schools also outscore their traditional comparisons on Index 1 (Student Achievement) and Index 3 (Closing Performance Gaps).In contrast, scores on these two indices for open-enrollment charter high school campuses and their traditional comparison schools are nearly equal. Scores for both charter and traditional high schools are also nearly equal on Index 4 (Postsecondary Readiness).

Figure 12. TEA Performance Index Scores for Open-Enrollment High School Charter Campuses, Campus Charter High Schools and Matched Traditional High Schools, 2012–13



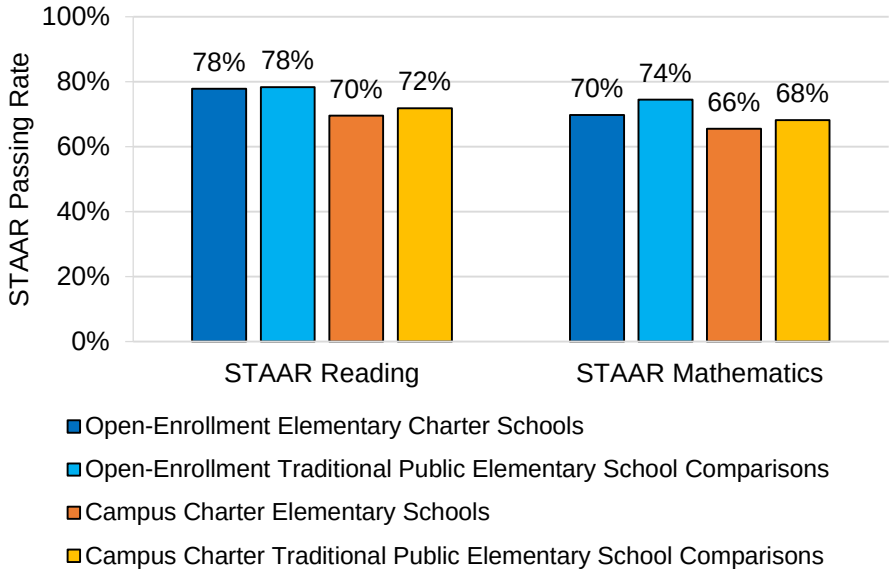
Source: Data from TEA 2013 Accountability System data file titled “Accountability Index Scores and Rating”.
Note: Each index yields a score of 0 to 100 which represents campus performance as a percentage of the maximum possible points for that campus.

Looking across indices and school levels, the greatest score differences between charter schools and their traditional comparisons are as follows:

- Index 1 (Student Achievement): Scores for open-enrollment charter middle school campuses exceed the scores of their traditional school comparisons by 5 points (on a 100 point scale).
- Index 2 (Student Progress): Scores for campus charter high schools exceed the scores of their traditional school comparisons by 8 points (on a 100 point scale).
- Index 3 (Closing Performance Gaps): Scores for campus charter high schools exceed the scores of their traditional school comparisons by 8 points (on a 100 point scale).
- Index 4 (Postsecondary Readiness; High schools only): Scores for open-enrollment charter high school campuses exceed the scores of their traditional school comparisons by 2 points (on a 100 point scale).

STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Passing Rates. Passing rates are based on STAAR exams in mathematics and reading for students in Grades 3 through 8. For high schools students, mathematics averages include Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II EOC exams, while the reading averages include the English I, English II, and English III EOC exams. Campus level passing rates for STAAR-Reading and Mathematics for individual charter schools and their comparison group are listed in Appendices J, K and L. Figure 13 shows STAAR passing rates for elementary schools by school type.

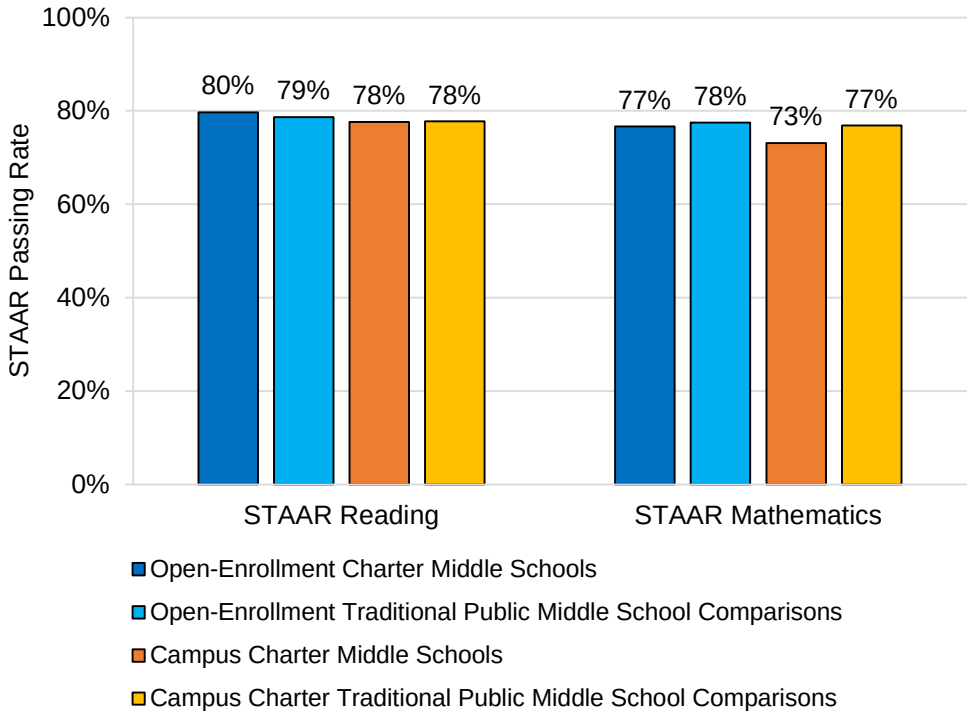
Figure 13. STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Passing Rates for Open-Enrollment Elementary Charter School Campuses, Campus Charter Elementary Schools and Matched Traditional Elementary Schools, 2012–13



Source: TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13
Note: Passing rates include students who achieved the phase-in 1 Level II and Above passing standard.

There are not large differences among STAAR-Reading and Mathematic passing rates at the elementary level between charter schools and their traditional comparisons. Passing rates in both reading and math are slightly lower for both elementary campus charter schools and their traditional comparisons than for open-enrollment elementary school campuses and their comparison schools.

Figure 14. STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Passing Rates for Open-Enrollment Middle School Charter Campuses, Campus Charter Middle Schools and Matched Traditional Middle Schools, 2012–13

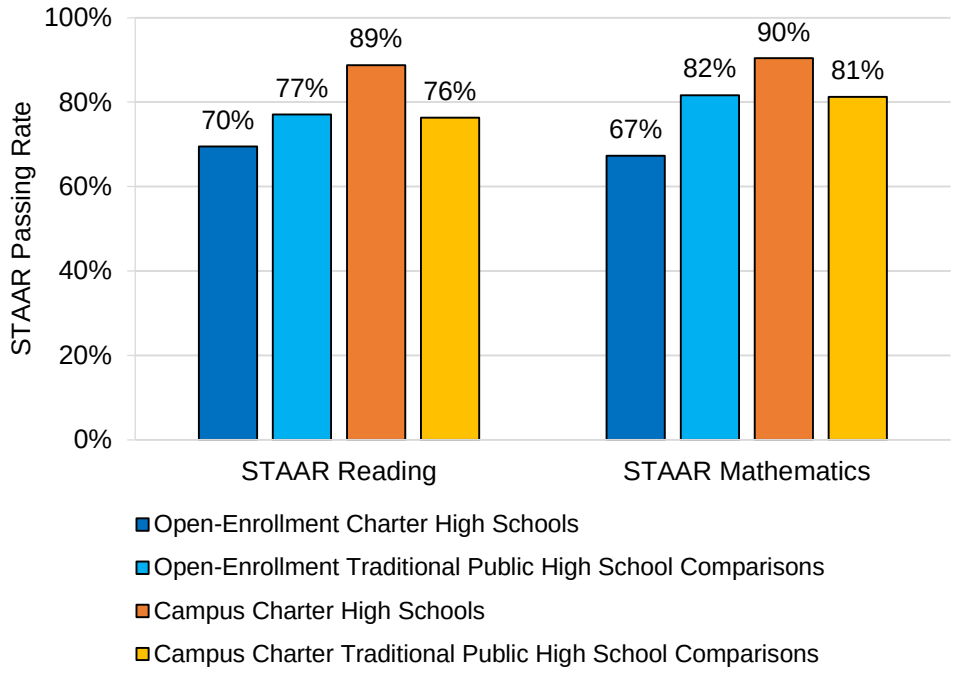


Source: TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note: Passing rates include students who achieved the phase-in 1 Level II and Above passing standard.

As Figure 14 shows, STAAR passing rates for middle school charter schools and their comparison schools are extremely close. Passing rates vary by more than 1% for only one of the four comparisons shown in the figure. Campus charter middle schools had a slightly lower mathematics passing rate than did their traditional comparisons (73% and 77% respectively).

Figure 15 shows STAAR passing rates for high schools. These rates are based on English and mathematics EOC exams, as described above.

Figure 15. STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Passing Rates for Open-Enrollment High School Charter Campuses, Campus Charter High Schools and Matched Traditional High Schools, 2012–13



Source: TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note: Passing rates include students who achieved the phase-in1 Level II and Above passing standard.

STAAR high school passing rates show more variation than do rates for elementary or middle schools. The passing rate for open-enrollment charter high school campuses is lower than the passing rate for their matched comparisons for both reading (7% lower) and for mathematics (15% lower). The opposite is true for campus charter high schools; their passing rate for reading is 13% higher than the rate for their matched comparisons and their passing rate for mathematics is 9% higher than the rate for their matched comparisons.

Summary

The data presented above suggest that there is little variability in student mobility or scores on student assessment measures between charter schools and their matched traditional comparison schools at the elementary and middle school levels. All school types have mobility rates between 16.9% and 21.6%, and achieve their lowest Performance Index Score on Index 2 (Student Progress). Passing rates for STAAR-Reading range between 70% and 80% (70% to 78% for elementary schools and 78% to 80% for middle schools), and passing rates for STAAR-Mathematics fall between 66 and 78% (66% to 74% for elementary schools and 73% to 78% for middle schools). No school type (open-enrollment charter school, campus charter school or the traditional

school comparisons for each) presents a profile which markedly stands out from other school types.

Outcomes for high schools show greater variability. Although differences are generally small, open-enrollment high school campuses tend to have outcomes which are equal to or less desirable than those of their traditional comparison schools. They have the highest rate of mobility (54.1%) among the four schools types (open-enrollment charter, campus charter school, and each type of charter's traditional comparisons), and a lower graduation rate than their comparison schools (88.0% versus 92.4%). Their dropout rate, however, is slightly lower than that of their comparison group (1.6% versus 1.1%). Scores for these schools on the TEA Performance Indices are, for all practical purposes, equal, as no difference exceeds 2 points. STAAR passing rates for both reading and mathematics are lower than the rates for their comparison schools.

In contrast, campus charter high schools tend to have outcomes which are higher/more desirable than those of their traditional comparison schools, although as before, differences are generally small. Among the four sets of schools, student mobility rates are lowest for campus charter high schools (26.9%) and these schools also have the highest graduation rate (97.1%) and the highest scores on TEA Performance Indices 1 (Student Achievement), 2 (Student Performance) and 3 (Closing Achievement Gaps). Finally, STAAR passing rates for campus charter high schools are higher than those for all other school types (89% for reading and 90% for mathematics).

COMPARISONS OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY CHARTER SCHOOL CAMPUSES TO MATCHED ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY SCHOOL CAMPUSES[11]

AEA campuses, including AEA charter school campuses, must serve students "at risk of dropping out of school" as defined in TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter § 29.081(d)[12] and provide accelerated instructional services to these students. These schools and residential treatment facilities provide non-traditional learning environments that are responsive to the unique needs of students, offer options to enhance student achievement, and ensure that at-risk students demonstrate satisfactory performance on the state assessments and meet graduation requirements. State compensatory education funds provide financial support for programs and/or services designed by districts to increase the achievement of students at risk of dropping out of school.

Alternative performance measures for AEA campuses were first implemented during the 1995–96 school year in Texas. These procedures include the same indicators as are used in the standard accountability system, but the standards (targets) differ for AEA campuses. Alternative standards are needed because the characteristics of AEA campuses affect many components of the accountability system. They are smaller on average than standard accountability campuses and have higher student

[11]The final section focusing on charter schools that operate under Alternative Education Accountability (AEA) procedures was not required by SB 2 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session). However, because many charter schools are evaluated under AEA provisions for state accountability, it is important to examine these schools separately. To be evaluated under AEA provisions, campuses must meet specific criteria based on the percentage of at-risk and Grade 6-12 students enrolled at the campus and therefore may serve a different population of students than campuses operating under standard education accountability procedures.

[12] TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter C, § 29.081 defines a "student at risk of dropping out of school" as a 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 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.

mobility rates, which complicate evaluation of AEA campus performance data. Additionally, some AEA campuses provide education services to students in residential treatment programs.

There were 396 campuses rated under AEA procedures in Texas in 2012–13. Of these 154 (39%) were charter school campuses and included 41(27%) residential treatment facilities (see Table 6).

Data Analysis

Outcomes presented in this section are based on a new data set which contains different matches than were used previously. The initial data base for the new data set included the 154 AEA charter school campuses described above. The matching procedure followed the same process described earlier in the text and in Appendix A. However, because the number of AEA campuses in Texas is relatively small, each AEA charter school campus was matched to ten (rather than 40) traditional AEA public schools.

Even though the matches for each AEA charter school campus could contain repeated matches (i.e., an AEA campus which was not a charter school campus could be matched to more than one AEA charter school campus), 10 acceptable matches could not be found for all 154 AEA charter school campuses. Matches were found for 131 (85%) of the AEA charter school campuses. The AEA charter school campuses for which 10 matches were found served mainly students who were of high-school age.

Table 6 compares the number of AEA charter school campuses, which could be included in the sample for this analysis, to the number of total AEA charter school campuses in Texas in 2012–13. Comparisons by charter authorizer type and residential status are presented. As noted previously, one charter school authorizer type included in the legislation could not be addressed in this report. While open-enrollment charter schools were able to be authorized by the Texas commissioner of education with the passage of SB 2 (83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session), there were no data available for this type of charter for 2012−13. The first full year during which commissioner-authorized charter schools can operate is 2014−15.

Table 6. AEA Charter School Sample Compared to AEA Campuses in Texas, 2012–13

Campus Type	AEA Campuses (excluding Residential Treatment Facilities)[1]	AEA Residential Treatment Facilities[2]	Total in the Sample	AEA Campuses Not in the sample	All AEA Campuses in the State
Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses	102	30	115	17	
Open-Enrollment University Charter School Campuses	0	11	9	2	
Campus Charter Schools	11	0	7	4	
Home-Rule Charter Schools	0	0	0	0	
AEA Charter School Campuses	**113**	**41**			**154**
AEA Traditional Public Schools	196	46			**242**
Total in AEA Charter School Sample	**98**	**33**	**131**	**23**	
Total in AEA Match Sample[3]	**155**	**31**	**186**	**56**	
Total different AEA campuses	**253**	**64**	**317**	**79**	**396**

Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
[1] AEA = Alternative Education Accountability
[2] All residential treatment facilities in the state were designated as AEA campuses.
[3] The matches for each AEA charter school could contain repeated campuses for matches—using the same match for multiple charter school campuses.

AEA Campus Student Demography

In order to provide a context for the outcomes to be examined, demographic characteristics of students enrolled in AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses and AEA campus charter schools were compared to the characteristics of students who were enrolled in schools which were rated using the standard accountability system. Comparisons between each type of AEA charter school campus and their matched AEA comparison schools are also presented.

As Table 7 illustrates, there are some differences in the student characteristics particularly between the AEA campus charter schools and their matched comparison AEA-rated schools. This illustrates the difficulty in matching campuses that serve diverse special populations. Appendix M presents further data that indicate that differences are larger overall for the AEA matches then for the traditional school matches.

Table 7. Demographic Characteristics of Students in AEA Charter School Campuses, Matched AEA Campuses and Standard Accountability Schools, 2012–13

	AEA[1] School Status				
	AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses[2]	AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campus Matches	AEA Campus Charter Schools	AEA Campus Charter School Matches	Standard Accountability Schools
Student Count	21,915	14,156	1,398	1,044	5,014,889[3]
Ethnicity					
Hispanic	56%	59%	47%	53%	49%
African American	16%	13%	41%	25%	13%
White	25%	26%	11%	20%	33%
Asian	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%
Limited English Proficient	11%	7%	18%	9%	17%
Special Education	17%	13%	12%	10%	10%
Gifted and Talented	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	7%
Economically Disadvantaged	76%	69%	62%	65%	63%
At-Risk	90%	92%	78%	90%	45%
Career and Technical Education	36%	37%	20%	34%	16%

Source: Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data from TEA 2012–13 fall enrollment.
[1] AEA=Alternative Education Accountability
[2] University open-enrollment AEA charter school campuses have been combined with other open-enrollment AEA charter school campuses.
[3] This total does not include students in the 79 campuses not used in any AEA campus match (see Table 6).

Data in Table 7 suggest that in 2012–13, AEA campuses served students with demographic characteristics that differed from the characteristics of students served in schools which were rated using standard accountability procedures. Instances in which characteristics of AEA open-enrollment charter school campus students differed by more than 10% from characteristics of students in schools which used standard accountability procedures are detailed below.

Students in AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses were *more* likely to be:

- Economically disadvantaged (76% versus 63% for students in schools which used standard accountability procedures);
- At-risk (90% versus 45% for students in schools which used standard accountability procedures) and
- Enrolled in CTE programs (36% versus 16% for students in schools which used standard accountability procedures).

Instances in which characteristics of AEA campus charter school students differed by more than 10% from characteristics of students in schools which used standard accountability procedures are also shown.

Students in AEA campus charter schools were *more* likely to be:

- African American (41% versus 13% for in schools which used standard accountability procedures), and
- At-risk (78% versus 45% for students in in schools which used standard accountability procedures).

Students in AEA campus charter schools were *less* likely to be:

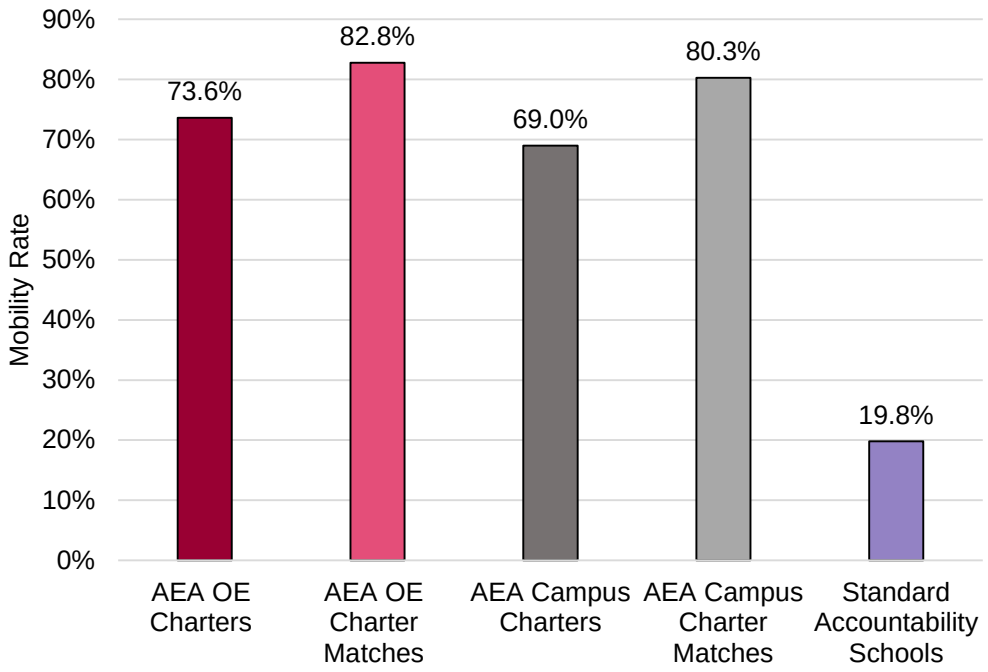
- White (11%, versus 33% for students in schools which used standard accountability procedures).

Outcomes

In addition to comparing AEA charter school campus outcomes to those of matched AEA campuses, outcomes in this section are compared to outcomes for students who attended schools which used standard accountability procedures. Since AEA students represent a select and challenging population, outcomes for students who attended standard accountability schools are intended to provide a referent for what might be a more typical outcome for the age/grade groups represented.

Student Mobility Rates. Figure 16 shows mobility rates for each type of AEA charter school campus, for their AEA campus comparison school groups and for schools which used standard accountability procedures.

Figure 16. Mobility Rates for AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, AEA Campus Charter Schools, Matched AEA Charter School Campuses and Standard Accountability Schools, 2012–13



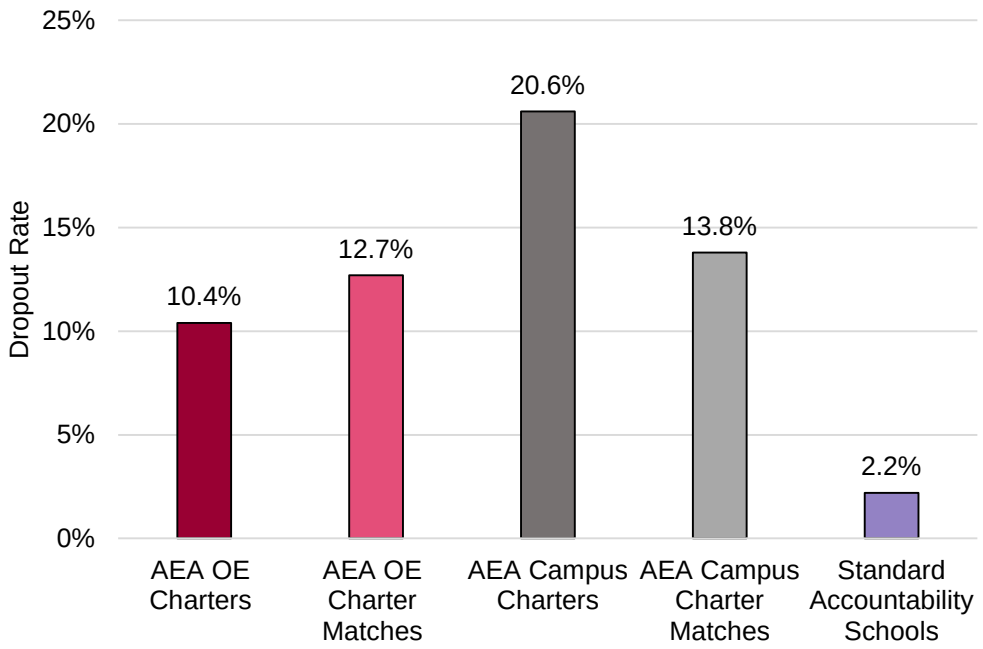
Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13
Note: AEA=Alternative Education Accountability, OE=open-enrollment.

As might be expected, mobility rates are far lower for standard accountability schools than for AEA campuses. In each AEA campus comparison, however, mobility rates are lower for AEA charter school campuses than for their matched AEA comparison schools. The difference is slightly greater for AEA campus charter schools (11.3% lower) than for AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses (9.2% lower). It has been documented that, in general, many of the AEA campuses serve populations that are highly likely to be mobile.

Appendix N shows mobility rates for individual AEA charter school campuses and averages for their matched AEA comparisons.

Dropout Rates. Dropout rates for all AEA campus types and for standard accountability schools are shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Dropout Rates for AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, AEA Campus Charter Schools, Matched AEA Charter School Campuses and Standard Accountability Schools, 2012–13



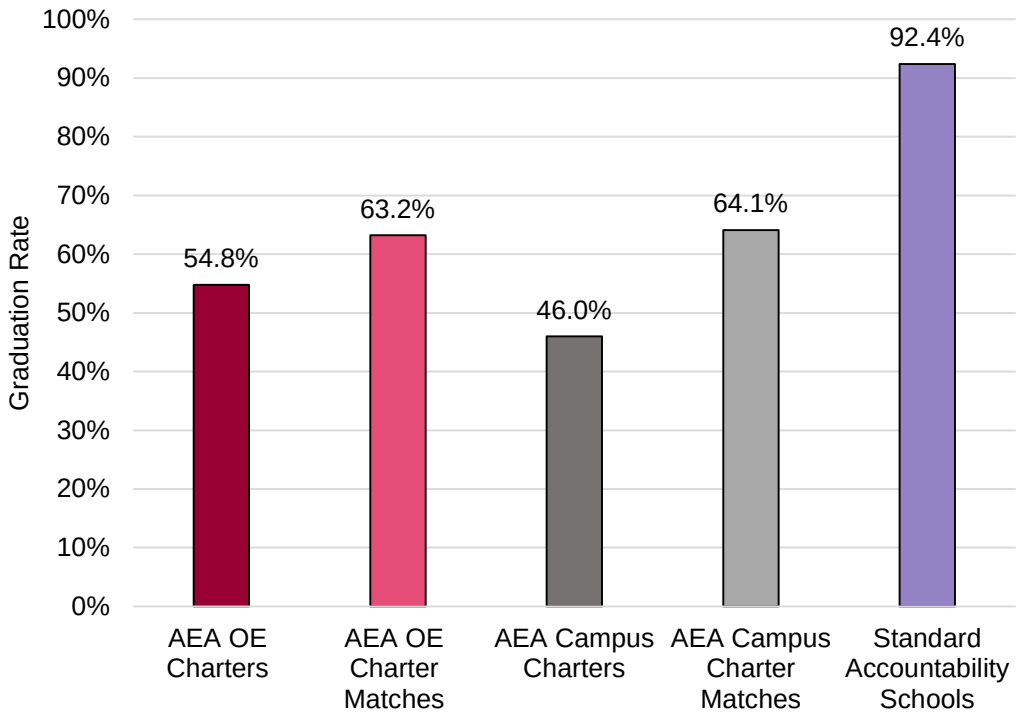
Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note: AEA=Alternative Education Accountability, OE=open-enrollment.

Since AEA-rated campuses include campuses for "dropout recovery" and for at-risk students, dropout rates are likely to be higher at AEA campuses than dropout rates of standard accountability schools. As Figure 17 shows, this is indeed the case. However, dropout rates are similar for AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses and their matched AEA comparisons (10.4% and 12.7% respectively). While the AEA campus charter schools have the highest dropout rate (20.6%), it still falls within 10 percentage points of the dropout rate for their matched AEA comparison schools (13.8%; difference of 6.8%). Since there are only seven schools in the AEA campus charter group, greater variation in their scores might be expected.

Appendix N shows dropout rates for individual AEA charter school campuses and averages for their matched AEA comparisons.

Graduation Rates. Class of 2012 four-year longitudinal graduation or GED rates were calculated for AEA campuses. TEA uses a modified graduation rate calculation to credit AEA campuses, including those which are chartered, for graduates and GED recipients (see Figure 18 and Appendix A).

Figure 18. Graduation Rates for AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, AEA Campus Charter Schools, Matched AEA Charter School Campuses and Standard Accountability Schools, 2012–13



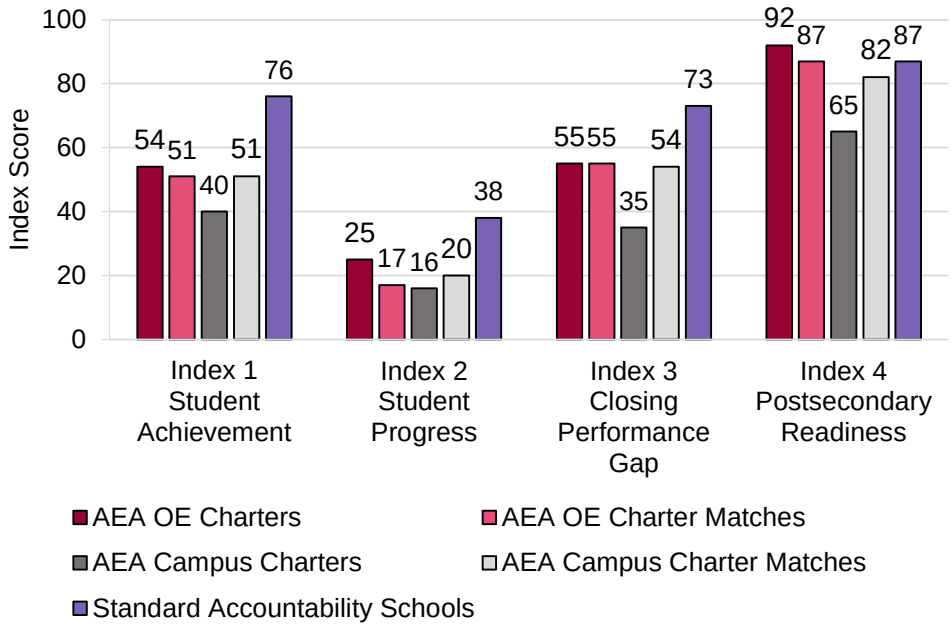
Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note: AEA=Alternative Education Accountability, OE=open-enrollment.

Even with these modifications, graduation rates are lower for AEA campuses than for standard accountability schools. Graduation rates are also lower for both AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses and campus charter schools than for their matched comparison groups. The difference is smaller for open-enrollment AEA charter school campuses (8.4% lower) than for AEA campus charter schools (18.1% lower).

Appendix N provides graduation rates for individual AEA charter school campuses and averages for their matched AEA comparisons.

TEA Performance Indices. Figure 19 presents scores for the four Performance Indices described earlier for both types of AEA charter school campuses and their comparisons. It is important to note that dropout rates for campuses rated under the AEA system are used differently from the way in which they are used in the standard accountability rating system. The annual dropout rate conversion is modified to give AEA campuses and districts points in Index 4 for annual dropout rates lower than 20%.

Figure 19. TEA Performance Index Scores for AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, AEA Campus Charter Schools, Matched AEA Charter School Campuses and Standard Accountability Schools, 2012–13



Source: Data from TEA 2013 Accountability System data file titled “Accountability Index Scores and Rating”.
Note 1: Each index yields a score of 0 to 100 which represents campus performance as a percentage of the maximum possible points for that campus.
Note 2: AEA=Alternative Education Accountability, OE=open-enrollment.

Scores on Index 4 (Postsecondary Readiness) achieved by AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses exceed scores for both standard accountability schools and scores for their matched comparison AEA schools. This is of note, as it is the only instance in which the AEA schools have scores which are higher than or equal to those of standard accountability schools. Scores for the other three indices, and for Index 4 for AEA campus charter schools and their matched comparison AEA schools fall below the scores for standard accountability schools.

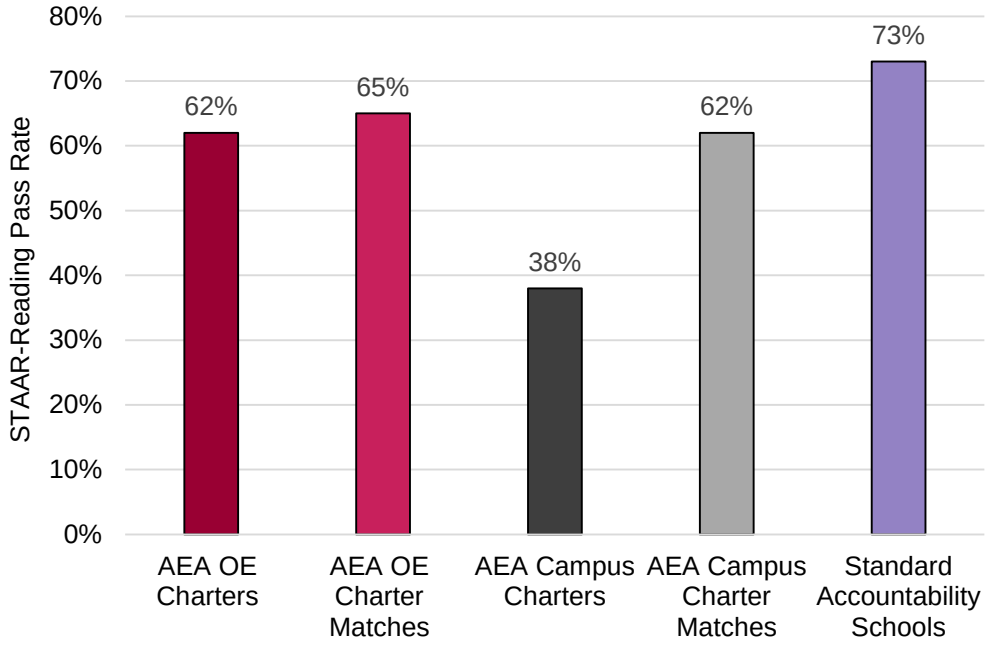
Although differences are small, scores for AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses exceed those of their matched comparison AEA schools for three of the four Performance Indices (Student Achievement, Student Progress and Postsecondary Readiness). Scores for the two groups are equal for Index 3 (Closing the Performance Gap). Scores for AEA campus charter schools are lower than those of all comparison groups for all four indices.

Appendix N provides scores on each index for individual AEA charter school campuses and averages for their matched AEA comparisons.

STAAR-Reading and Mathematics Passing Rates. Figure 20 presents STAAR-Reading passing rate averages for AEA campuses and their matched comparisons by charter authorizer type and for standard accountability schools. As has been mentioned,

most of the students in the AEA charter school sample were high school students. STAAR-Reading passing rates for high schools were based on the English I, English II, and English III EOC exams.

Figure 20. STAAR-Reading Passing Rates for AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, AEA Campus Charter Schools, Matched AEA Charter School Campuses, and Standard Accountability Schools, 2012–13



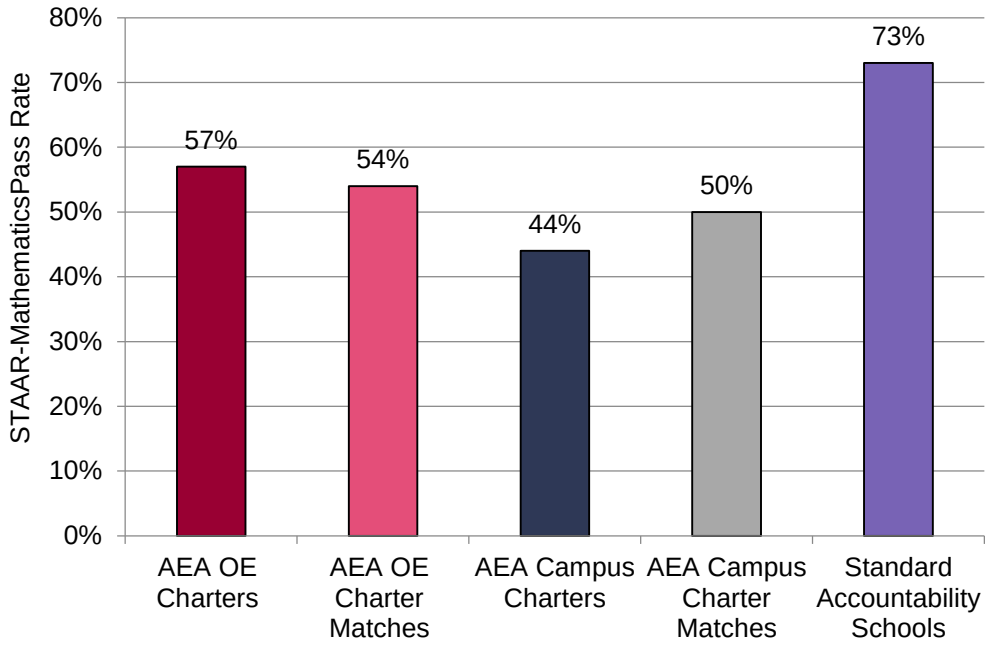
Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note 1: Passing rates include students who achieved the phase-in 1 Level II and Above passing standard.
Note 2: AEA=Alternative Education Accountability, OE=open-enrollment.

As illustrated in Figure 20, AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses achieved nearly the same STAAR-Reading passing rate as did their matched AEA comparison schools, and came within 11 percentage points of the passing rate for standard accountability schools. STAAR-Reading passing rates for AEA campus charter schools were lower than those of both their matched AEA comparison schools and of standard accountability schools (24% and 35% lower, respectively).

Appendix N provides STAAR-Reading passing rates for individual AEA charter school campuses and averages for their matched AEA comparisons.

In this report, high school STAAR-Mathematics passing rate averages included the Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II EOC exams. Figure 21 shows these rates by authorizer type for AEA campuses and their matched comparisons as well as for standard accountability schools.

Figure 21. STAAR-Mathematics Passing Rates for AEA Open-Enrollment Charter School Campuses, AEA Campus Charter Schools, Matched AEA Charter School Campuses and Standard Accountability Schools, 2012–13



Source: Data from TEA Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) 2012–13.
Note 1: Passing rates include students who achieved the phase 1, Level II and Above passing standard.
Note 2: AEA=Alternative Education Accountability, OE=open-enrollment.

As has been the case for most other outcomes, AEA charter school campuses and their matched comparisons did not achieve the same STAAR-Mathematics passing rates as standard accountability schools achieved.

Both types of AEA charter school campuses achieved STAAR-Mathematics passing rates which are comparable to those of their matched AEA comparison group. The passing rate for AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses exceeds the passing rate for their matched comparisons by 3%; the passing rate for AEA campus charter schools is 6% lower than the passing rate for their matched comparisons.

Appendix N provides STAAR-Mathematics passing rates for individual AEA charter school campuses and averages for their matched AEA comparisons.

Summary

When compared to schools in Texas rated using standard accountability procedures, AEA charter school campuses have lower scores/passing rates for most of the outcomes addressed. These include student mobility, dropout rates, graduation rates, scores on the TEA Performance Indices and STAAR-Reading and Mathematics passing rates. Most educators would predict this, given the challenging characteristics of the students that AEA campuses serve. By definition, an AEA campus must have a

student enrollment of which at least 75% are classified as at-risk. In addition, examination of demographic characteristics of the students in the AEA charter school campuses in this sample suggested that open-enrollment charter school AEA campuses more often serve students who are economically disadvantaged, and who are enrolled in CTE programs, than do standard accountability schools. AEA campus charter schools more often serve students who are African American, and who are economically disadvantaged. Finally, 33 of these AEA charter school campuses were also residential treatment facilities.

There is one notable exception to the pattern of AEA charter school campus scores being lower than scores for standard accountability schools. Scores for Performance Index 4 (Postsecondary Readiness) for AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses exceed scores for standard accountability schools, and also exceed scores for their matched comparison AEA schools (5 points higher than standard accountability schools and 5 points higher than their matched comparisons on a 100 point scale).

In examining comparisons between AEA open-enrollment charter school campuses and AEA campus charter schools and their matched AEA comparison schools, it is important to keep in mind that the number of schools which could be used to create the samples for analyses was limited. It was only possible to find 10 suitable comparison AEA campuses for 131 of the 154 AEA charter school campuses, and only 7 of these were campus charter AEA schools. Therefore, only tentative conclusions can be drawn.

Nonetheless, outcomes for the 124 open-enrollment charter school AEA campuses compare favorably to outcomes for their matched AEA campus comparisons. While graduation rates for open-enrollment AEA charter school campuses are lower by 8.4% than those of their AEA comparison schools, their dropout rates and mobility rates are also lower (10.4% versus 12.7% for dropouts; 73.6% versus 82.8% for mobility rates). Their scores are equal to or higher than those of their comparison AEA schools for all four TEA Performance Indices, although the largest difference is 8 points (on a 100 point scale). This difference occurred for Index 2 (Student Progress). Finally, their passing rates for STAAR-Mathematics exceed those of their comparison schools (difference of 3%).

Campus charter AEA schools did not fare as well. While their mobility rates were lower than those of their AEA comparison schools (69.0% versus 80.3%), all other outcomes were higher/more favorable for their AEA comparison schools. The smallest difference was found for scores on Performance Index 2 (Student Progress) on which scores for AEA campus charter schools were 4 points lower than scores for their matched AEA comparison schools (on a 100 point scale). The largest difference was found for STAAR-Reading passing rates (38% for AEA campus charter schools; 62% for matched comparison AEA campuses; 24% difference.) It is critical to remember that the number of schools that were available for these comparisons was very small.

CONCLUSIONS

This report responds to SB2 of the 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2013) request for an annual report concerning the performance of open-enrollment charter schools by authorizer compared to campus charter schools and matched traditional campuses, (TEC § 12.1013(a)).

The 620 charter schools that were in operation in Texas during the review period were a collection of diverse educational entities that included traditional campuses, schools that focused on dropout prevention and recovery, and a variety of residential treatment facilities. These schools frequently serve students of color, students who are at risk of dropping out and students who are economically disadvantaged. The charter schools serve these special subgroups in greater proportions than do many other schools in Texas. The majority of these schools operated under open-enrollment charters (89%); the rest operated under campus charters (11%).

Each open-enrollment charter school campus and campus charter school was matched to a group of 40 traditional public schools. A variety of demographic characteristics were used as matching variables. The use of multiple matching variables was important to assure that outcome comparisons were made using traditional schools that had student populations similar to those of the charter schools. In examining the four outcomes specified by TEC § 12.1013 (assessment, dropout rates, graduation rates and student attrition), a large number of comparisons were made between rates or scores attained by charter schools and rates or scores attained by the comparison group of schools.

The analysis of the 579 charter schools found that these charter schools are performing at a comparable level to that of similar traditional schools. Percentages and scores for student mobility, graduation rates, dropout rates and academic assessments show only small differences. No school type (open-enrollment charter school, campus charter school or the traditional school comparisons for each) presents a profile which markedly stands out from other school types. In addition, the data presented above suggest that there is little variability in student mobility or scores on student assessment measures between charter schools and their matched traditional comparison schools at the elementary and middle school levels.

Outcomes for high schools show greater variability, although differences are generally small. Open-enrollment high school campuses tend to have outcomes which are equal to or less desirable than those of their traditional comparison schools. In contrast, campus charter high schools tend to have outcomes which are higher/more desirable than those of their traditional comparison schools, although as before, differences are generally small.

Finally, outcomes for the 124 open-enrollment charter school AEA campuses compare favorably to outcomes for their matched AEA campus comparisons. Open-enrollment AEA charter school campus student performance scores are equal to or higher than those of their comparison AEA schools for all four TEA Performance

Indices. The largest difference is 8 points (on a 100 point scale). This difference was found for Index 2 (Student Progress). In the vast majority of cases, comparisons suggested that charter schools in 2012–13 were no more, or no less, successful with the student population that they served than were traditional public schools.

REFERENCES

National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (2013). *Dashboard; a comprehensive data resource from the national alliance for public charter schools.* Washington, DC. Online. Available: http://dashboard.publiccharters.org/dashboard/schools/page/overview/year/2012. Accessed: June, 2014.

StataCorp. 2013. *Stata Statistical Software: Release 13*. College Station, TX: StataCorp LP.

Texas Association of School Boards. (2014). *Charter schools in Texas: facts and figures.* Online. Available: https://www.taS.org/Legislative/Issue-Based Resources/documents/charters.aspx. Accessed: June, 2014.

Texas Education Agency (2013). 2012–2013 Public Education Information Management System. Available: http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/about.aeis.html.

Texas Education Agency (2013). 2012–2013 Texas Academic Performance Reports. Available at: TEA Performance reports: http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/tapr/2013/.

Texas Education Agency (2013). 2013 Accountability Manual for Texas Public School Districts and Campuses. Available: TEA 2013 Accuntability Manual: http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2013/index.html.