

Search

[Home](#) [Newsroom](#) [Media](#) [Administration](#) [NJ's Priorities](#) [Contact Us](#)

[Press Releases](#) [Public Addresses](#) [Executive Orders](#) [Press Kit](#) [Reports](#)

[Home](#) > [Newsroom](#) > [Press Releases](#) > 2017

Governor Christie Heralds New School Year With Charter School Opening

Monday, August 28, 2017 Tags: [Education](#)



M.E.T.S. Charter School High School One of 89 Charter Schools For 2017-18 School Year

LEGACY OF UNPARALLELED CHARTER SCHOOL GROWTH: Demonstrating his strong commitment to investing in innovative charter schools that outperform and exceed expectations at every level, Governor Christie today helped cut the ribbon for the new M.E.T.S. Charter School high school in Newark, one of 89 charter schools operating in New Jersey this school year. There were 67 charter schools in place at the start of this administration.

M.E.T.S. opened in Jersey City with a focus on Mathematics, Engineering, Technology, and Science and now has 560 students in grades 6 through 12. The high school program has been highly successful with a 95 percent and 100 percent graduation rate the last two school years and it was decided there was a need to expand to a second campus in Newark. School will start tomorrow at the temporary location on Broad Street with up to 250 students in grades 9 through 12 and a waiting list of 400. M.E.T.S. plans to purchase a permanent school from the county vocational school system.

This year, 56,416 charter school seats were authorized around the state, more than double the number of students served in charter schools in 2010. Despite the increase, there are still not enough seats for students who want them – there are currently 33,443 students on waiting lists to enter charter schools.

EXPANDING CHARTER SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION TO UNDER-SERVED STUDENTS: Five new schools – two of which are in Newark -- are opening this year, approved by the NJ Department of Education after meeting a rigorous, multi-stage approval process. The review process is in place to ensure the school has the structures in place to ensure academic success, equitability, financial viability and organizational soundness. During Governor Christie's tenure, he also has shuttered 20 underperforming schools.

In districts like Newark and Camden, charter schools are educating nearly 35 percent of the public school population, proving that charter schools are a valued option in the public education system and that every child, regardless of his or her zip code, deserves access to a high-quality school. That said, Newark has approximately 11,000 students who are now on waiting lists to get a charter school seat; similarly, Camden has approximately 2,700 students on charter school waiting lists, further demonstrating how critical it is that more charter school opportunities are provided for these students.

Watch: Charter Schools – Changing The Face of Education

Stay Connected
with Social Media

Stay Connected
with Email Alerts

LIKE THIS PAGE? SHARE IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS.

...

Charter Schools: Changing The Face Of Education



INCREASED ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOLS

Expanding Educational Opportunities For Children And Families

Governor Christie has improved the authorizing and application process, encouraged more charter school applicants, created greater flexibility with administration and finances, and allowed districts to convert failing public schools into charters. The Christie Administration has increased the overall number of charter schools in New Jersey to 89 in the current fiscal year, while relentlessly focusing on quality and holding all schools accountable for results as 21 low-performing charter schools have closed during the past eight years.

The Host District Support Aid funding category created in fiscal year 2017 continued in fiscal year 2018, and ensured the base per pupil funding provided to charter schools is not less than the prior year base per pupil funding. In addition, the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program is increasing educational opportunities for students and their families by providing students with the option of attending a public school outside their district of residence without cost to their parents.

The Fiscal Year 2018 budget is projected to **support more than 52,000 charter school students and more than 5,000 choice students in 129 choice districts in the 2017-18 school year.**

Governor Christie continues to support educational options for our children by providing over \$51 million for Charter School Aid in fiscal year 2018. This funding supports over 52,000 students projected to be in our charter schools in FY2018. This is in addition to the tens of millions of dollars in State Aid that flow through the districts to charter schools. In certain districts, like Newark and Camden, charter and renaissance schools are educating more than 1 out of every 4 of the public school population.

Easing The Regulatory Burden Facing Charter Schools

In 2016, Governor Christie announced a series of reforms at the 8th annual New Jersey Charter Schools Conference born from input received through meetings with charter school leaders in the fall of 2015. The New Jersey State Board adopted these reforms in 2017. Among the reforms adopted were:

- The state will allow single-gender charter schools that meet appropriate criteria and single-purpose charter schools for educationally disadvantaged students, such as a school serving over-age, under-credited students who, because of life circumstances, are unable to graduate in four years.
- Charter renewal will be expedited for schools with a track record of high academic performance and no fiscal or organizational issues. Charter schools that do not meet fiscal management/ compliance standards or present concerns regarding their fiscal viability will remain subject to deeper review.
- Weighted lotteries will be expanded by adding language explicitly allowing weighted lotteries for educationally disadvantaged students. Redundancies will be reduced by removing the requirement that charters send corrective action plans to the Executive County Superintendent as they already are submitted to the DOE Charter Office.
- The funding monitoring requirement will be relaxed since it has become unnecessary because of the new charter performance system. DOE will continue to monitor if charter schools are adequately allocating funds to impact what is happening in the classroom. And, cash fund procedures, which are difficult to navigate, will be updated and simplified.
- Districts will be required to report to DOE, on a rolling basis, any closed, unused or unoccupied school facility available for lease that would be posted online in order to facilitate cooperation between districts and charter schools.
- Satellite campus regulations will be redefined to allow charter schools to operate on multiple campuses within their approved district or region of residence. The requirement that charter leases cannot exceed the length of the charter – a barrier to obtaining financing – will be removed.
- New regulations will clarify renovations, expansion and reconstruction exemptions from the Charter School Act's restriction on construction with State or local funds.
- The Christie Administration approved the expansion of several of the state's highest performing charter

schools.

- In March, 20 charter schools were approved to expand to provide more than 5,000 additional seats in high performing schools in the coming years.

- According to an independent report by The Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO), "Compared to the educational gains that charter students would have had in a traditional public school (TPS), the analysis shows that students in New Jersey charter schools on average make larger learning gains in both reading and mathematics:

In Newark: "When we investigate the learning impacts of Newark charter schools separately, we find that their results are larger in reading and math than the overall state results."

"On average, charter students in New Jersey gain an additional two months of learning in reading over their TPS counterparts. In math, the advantage for charter students is about three months of additional learning in one school year. Charter students in Newark gain an additional seven and a half months in reading and nine months in math."

Among Black Students: "Black students enrolled in charter schools show significantly better performance in reading and math compared to Black students in TPS."

Among Hispanic Students: "In both math and reading, Hispanic students in charter schools perform significantly better than Hispanic students in TPS."

- According to a 2015 independent report on Urban Charter Schools by The Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO), students enrolled in charter schools in Newark, on average, make statistically significantly greater gains in both reading and math compared to their counterparts enrolled in Newark's traditional public schools. While, in Newark, charter schools on average are doing a better job of closing achievement gaps than are traditional public schools.

K-8 Schools:

From 2009 to 2014, charter schools serving K-8 students improved 6 percentage points in Language Arts Literacy and 15 percentage points in Mathematics, in the aggregate, on the NJASK.

Based on NJASK data in 2014, 64 out of 74 charter schools outperformed their comparative districts in language arts literacy.

Based on NJASK data in 2014, 64 out of 74 charter schools outperformed their comparative districts in mathematics.

◦ **High Schools:**

From 2009 to 2014, charter schools serving high school students improved 17 percentage points in both Language Arts Literacy and Mathematics, in the aggregate, on the 'Banked' HSPA.

Based on HSPA data, in 2014, 15 out of 15 charter schools outperformed their comparative districts in language arts literacy.

Based on HSPA data, in 2014, 12 out of 15 charter schools outperformed their comparative districts in mathematics.

Across all charter schools in 2014, the graduation rate was 90% compared to a state-wide graduation rate of 89.

• **2016 Charter Schools PARCC Data**

Charter schools continue to outperform their district counterparts. In the elementary grades 3-5, 63 percent of charters outperformed the average across their district elementary schools in Math and 84 percent did so in ELA. In the middle school grades 6-8, 84 percent of charter schools outperformed their district middle school average in Math and 89 percent did so in ELA.

Charter schools serving grades 6-8 showed impressive gains in academic performance, as measured by median School Growth Percentiles (mSGPs). Almost half of all charters serving grades 6-8 achieved growth scores that are better than those of two-thirds of all public schools serving grades 6-8 in the state.

• **Newark Charter Schools PARCC Performance**

Charter schools in Newark are effectively accelerating student learning: in a district typically underperforming statewide achievement results, for two consecutive years students in grades 3-8 in Newark charter schools have met or exceeded expectations on PARCC assessments at the same rate as their peers around the state. For example, in 2015-16, the last year with available data, 51 percent of students in grades 3-8 in Newark charter schools met or exceeded expectations on a PARCC assessment in ELA compared to 50 percent of students in grades 3-8 across the state. In the same year, the percent of students in grades 3-8 who met or exceeded expectations on a PARCC assessment in math was 43 percent for Newark charter school students compared to 43 percent statewide.

Charter schools in Newark are effectively accelerating student learning for traditionally underserved subgroups: Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and minority students enrolled in grades 3-8 in Newark charter schools are meeting or exceeding expectations on PARCC assessments at a greater rate than their counterparts across the state. For example, in 2015-16, 63 percent of Hispanic students enrolled in grades 3-8 in Newark charter schools met or exceeded expectations on a PARCC assessment in ELA compared to 36 percent of Hispanic students statewide.

Newark charter schools have virtually eliminated the achievement gap for economically disadvantaged students. In 2015-16, statewide proficiency rates for students eligible for free or reduced price lunch trailed those for non-eligible students by 30 percentage points in both ELA and math. Those gaps shrinks to 3 and 2 percentage points, respectively, in Newark charter schools.

- Since taking office, state funding to support the local share of funding for students transferring out-of-district to approved school choice districts has increased by over \$40 million.
- School choice funding has increased commensurately, and has surpassed \$55 million in fiscal year 2018.
- Announced pilot educational program between Harlem Children's Zone and City of Paterson.

Improving Oversight

The Christie Administration has worked to improve accountability for charter schools by instituting an oversight program that sets clear expectations for charter school performance and serves as the basis for school evaluation, monitoring, and intervention.

The Performance Framework sets the academic, organizational and fiscal standards by which all New Jersey public charter schools are evaluated, informing officials about school performance and sustainability. NJDOE officials expanded the rigorous standards and metrics by which each and every public charter school is evaluated. This enabled NJDOE officials to take multiple factors into account when evaluating public charter schools across the state.

Press Contact:

Brian Murray
609-777-2600



[Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Legal Statement & Disclaimers](#) | [Accessibility Statement](#) | 

Statewide: [NJ Home](#) | [Services A to Z](#) | [Departments/Agencies](#) | [FAQs](#)
Office of the Governor: [Home](#) | [Newsroom](#) | [Media](#) | [Administration](#) | [NJ's Priorities](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2018
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000