

# African American Student Performance in Charter Schools Overview

Charter schools are tuition free, independently-run public schools that are open to all children. Learn more: [www.ccsa.org/understanding](http://www.ccsa.org/understanding)

**603,000**

Estimated Number of Charter Students in California in 2016-2017

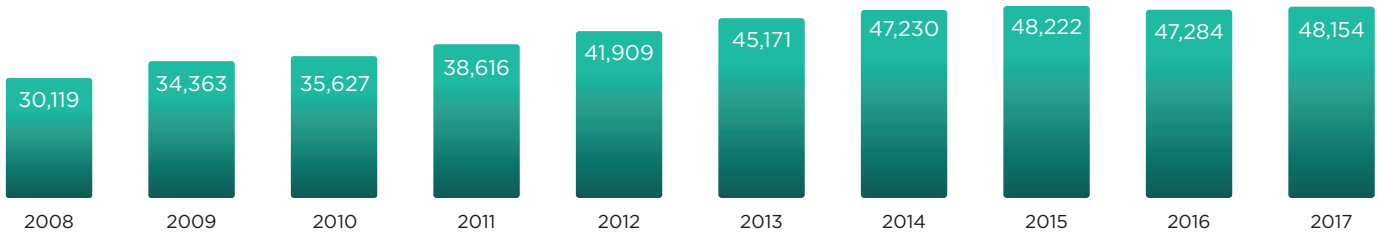
**CALIFORNIA CHARTER SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE**

**1,200**

Estimated Number of Charter Schools in the State of California

## African American Student Enrollment

Statewide, the number of African American students enrolled in charter public schools has grown since 2008, with growth leveling off in 2014.



## African American Charter Student Enrollment Over Time

In the 2016-17 academic year, more African American students attend charter public schools than traditional district schools. In a majority of districts we analyzed, African American students are more likely to attend charter public schools.

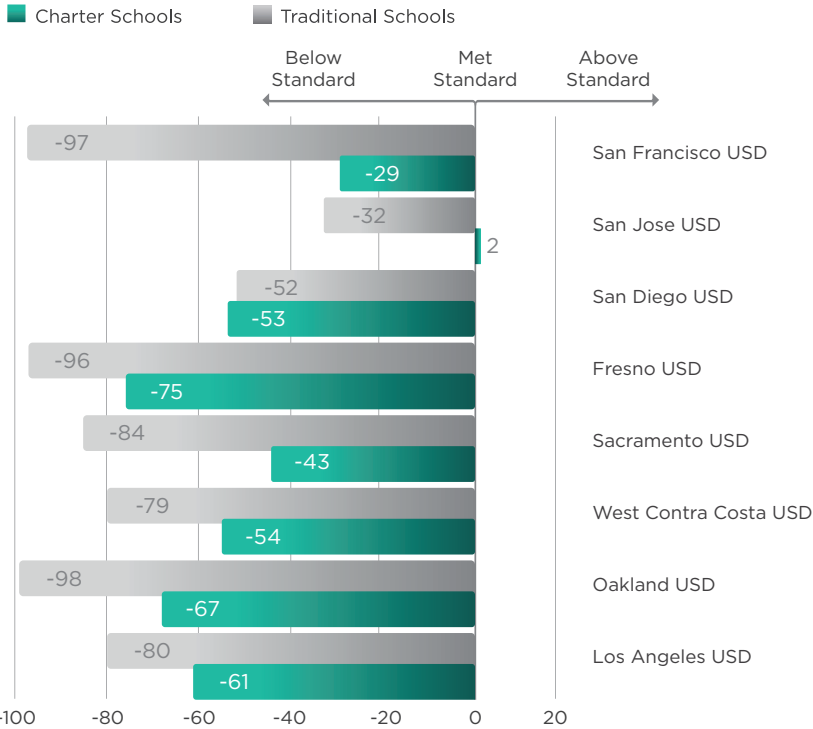
Geographic Area	Charter	Non-Charter
All of California	8%	5%
Los Angeles Unified (LAUSD)	9%	8%
Oakland Unified (OUSD)	20%	26%
San Francisco Unified (SFUSD)	21%	7%
Sacramento City (SCUSD)	30%	14%
San Jose Unified (SJUSD)	4%	3%
San Diego Unified (SDUSD)	12%	8%
Fresno Unified (FUSD)	9%	8%
West Contra Costa Unified (WCCUSD)	12%	17%

# Student Academic Performance

Unfortunately we know that across the state, California's schools have further to go in supporting African American students to reach academic proficiency. However, the data below demonstrate that African American students in charter schools are closer to reaching grade-level proficiency than their counterparts in traditional public schools.

## 2016 Average Point Difference

According to this metric, in seven out of eight major school districts in California, charter students are academically outperforming their peers in traditional district schools.



### Average Point Difference:

CCSA has designed a measure – now adopted by the California State Board of Education – that illustrates how far above or below grade-level proficiency the average student is at a school (using SBAC scale scores).

Learn more: [www.ccsa.org/advocacy/accountability/apd](http://www.ccsa.org/advocacy/accountability/apd)

### Smarter Balanced Assessments:

Commonly referred to as SBAC, these computer based tests measure student knowledge of California's English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics standards for students in grades three through eight and grade eleven. After students take the tests, their results are reported in two primary ways: Scale Scores and Achievement Levels. A Scale Score is the number that a student scored on the test, and Achievement Levels are broader proficiency categories students fall into based on their Scale Scores. Proficiency levels include: Standard Not Met, Standard Nearly Met, Standard Met and Standard Exceeded.

## 2016 Smarter Balanced Assessments

Another way that the state has reported SBAC scores is to look at the percent of students that meet/exceed standards. We see a greater percentage of African American students in charter schools meeting/exceeding standards than their peers in traditional public schools.

### 2016 SBAC % MET/EXCEEDED AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

Geographic Area	Charter	Non-Charter
All of California	30%	27%
Los Angeles Unified (LAUSD)	34%	24%
Oakland Unified (OUSD)	23%	15%
San Francisco Unified (SFUSD)	34%	16%
Sacramento City (SCUSD)	26%	19%
San Jose Unified (SJUSD)	46%	33%
San Diego Unified (SDUSD)	34%	34%
Fresno Unified (FUSD)	22%	17%
West Contra Costa Unified (WCCUSD)	29%	20%

\*Performance data excludes Alternative/ASAM and small schools (<30 test-takers)

# College Readiness

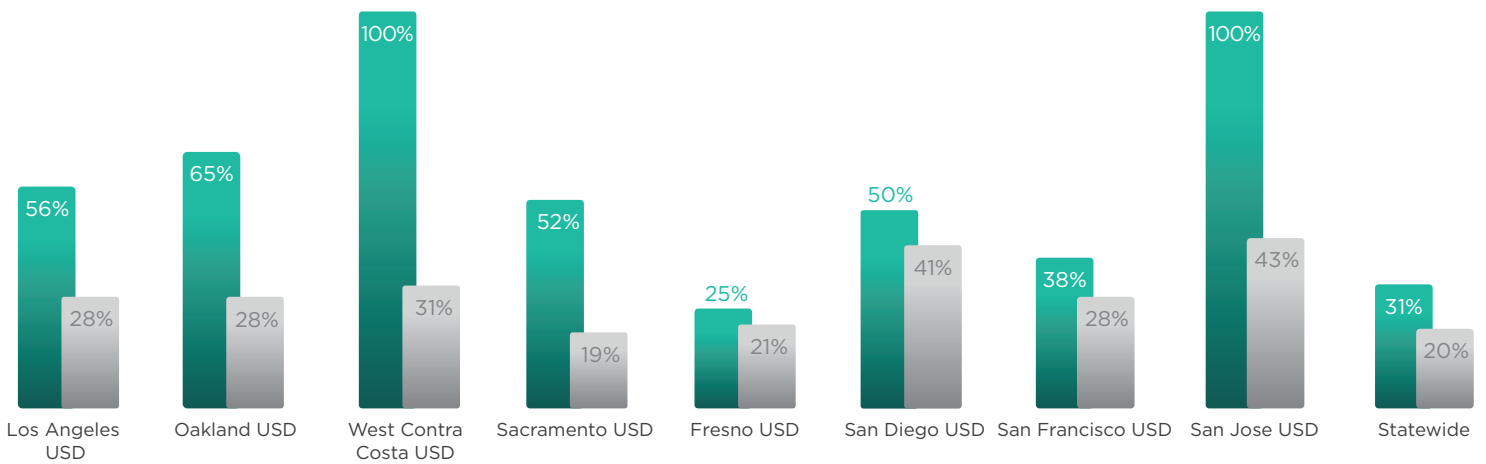
College readiness is one of the most powerful measures of academic success. By creating a college-going culture, charters are providing all students access to higher education.

## 2015-16 A-G Completion Rates

A-G Courses are a set of 15 one-year college prep courses high school students must take to be eligible to enter either the California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) systems.

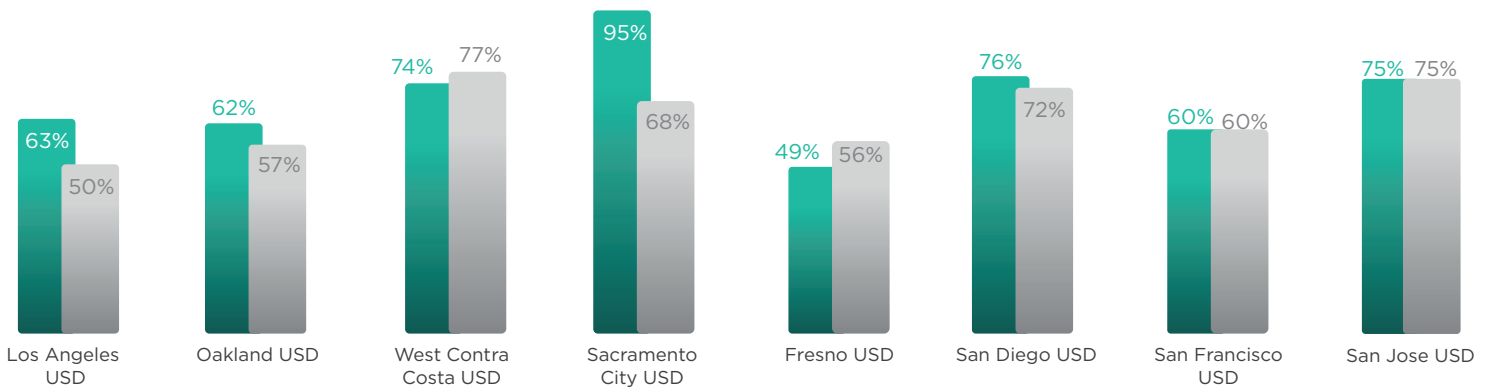
In every school district we examined, African American charter public schools students are more likely to complete A-G courses than their peers at traditional district schools. This means that African American students in charter schools graduate better prepared for four-year college admissions, making access to higher education a more attainable goal.

2015-16 AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT A-G COMPLETION RATES



Cohort graduation rates track all students 9th grade through 12th grade, and calculate percent of students that graduate from high school in 4 years. In a majority of districts, charter students are more likely to graduate high school in 4 years.

2015-16 AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT COHORT GRADUATION RATES



## Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO)

Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO), the nation's foremost independent analyst of charter school effectiveness, has released several comprehensive reports that offer unprecedented insight into the effectiveness of charter schools, in particular results for African American students.

All of CREDO "virtual twin" studies control for similar student demographics. Findings document that charter schools' stronger outcomes are not a result of selective admissions practices but rather increased student learning with the students who enter the charter school.

### Urban Charters Study 2015

This study documented that African American students in charter schools in California's urban centers gain weeks and months of additional learning as a result of being in charter schools.

The California regions studied in the report included the Bay Area (San Francisco and Oakland), Central California (Sacramento and Fresno), South Bay (greater San Jose area), and Southern California (Long Beach, Los Angeles, and San Diego).

- In the Bay Area, African American charter school students gain +3 months in reading, +4 months in math.
- In Central California, African American charter school students gain +2 months in reading, +7 weeks in math.
- In the South Bay, African American charter school students gain +4 weeks in reading, -10 weeks in math.
- In Southern California, African American charter school students gain +14 days in reading, +4 weeks in math.
- Across all urban regions nationwide, African American charter school students gain +26 days in reading and +36 days in math.

### California 2014 Report

This study documented that African American students in charter schools across California (particularly African American students in poverty) gain weeks and months of additional learning as a result of being in charter schools.

- African American charter school students gain +22 days of learning in reading, +7 days in math.
- These findings document particularly strong gains in student learning for African American charter school students in poverty (+5 weeks in reading and +6 weeks in math).

### Los Angeles 2014 Report

This study documented that African American students in Los Angeles charter schools (particularly African American students in poverty) gain weeks and months of additional learning as a result of being in charter schools.

- African American charter school students gain +14 days in both reading and math.
- African American charter school students in poverty gain +5 weeks in reading, +2 months in math.

## Additional CCSA Research

### Special Education Study

CCSA's 2016 study "Meeting the Needs of Every Student Through Inclusion" showed that California charter schools embrace student differences and recognize all students learn better together in the general education classroom, regardless of ability. This research demonstrated that increased autonomy over their own special education program leads to a higher percentage and broader range of students with disabilities enrolled in California charter schools.

Key findings in this study include the following:

- Charter schools that are LEAs in the El Dorado Charter SELPA, which represents nearly 70% of all charter LEAs in the state, increased the percentage of students with disabilities from 7.5% in 2010-11 to 9.2% in 2015-16 (as compared to 10.4% of K-12 statewide enrollment of students with disabilities). In the same timeframe, LEA-like charter schools in Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) increased their proportion of students with disabilities from 8.1% to 11%.
- These charter schools have also achieved large gains in the proportion of students with more significant, "lower-incidence" disabilities. The composition of students with disabilities in these schools is approaching the statewide average composition, especially when compared to historical data from six years ago before charter schools had increased special education autonomy.
- Not only are charter public schools beginning to serve a similar proportion and population of students with disabilities to traditional schools, they are doing so in more inclusive settings. According to a recent analysis by the California Department of Education (CDE), the nearly 400 charter school LEAs for special education purposes educate nearly 90% of their students with disabilities in general education for 80% or more of their school day, compared to 53% statewide.

### African American Student Suspensions in California Charter and Traditional Public Schools

CCSA conducted analysis of public data on suspensions in California in 2014 and again in 2015. CCSA's analysis revealed the following.

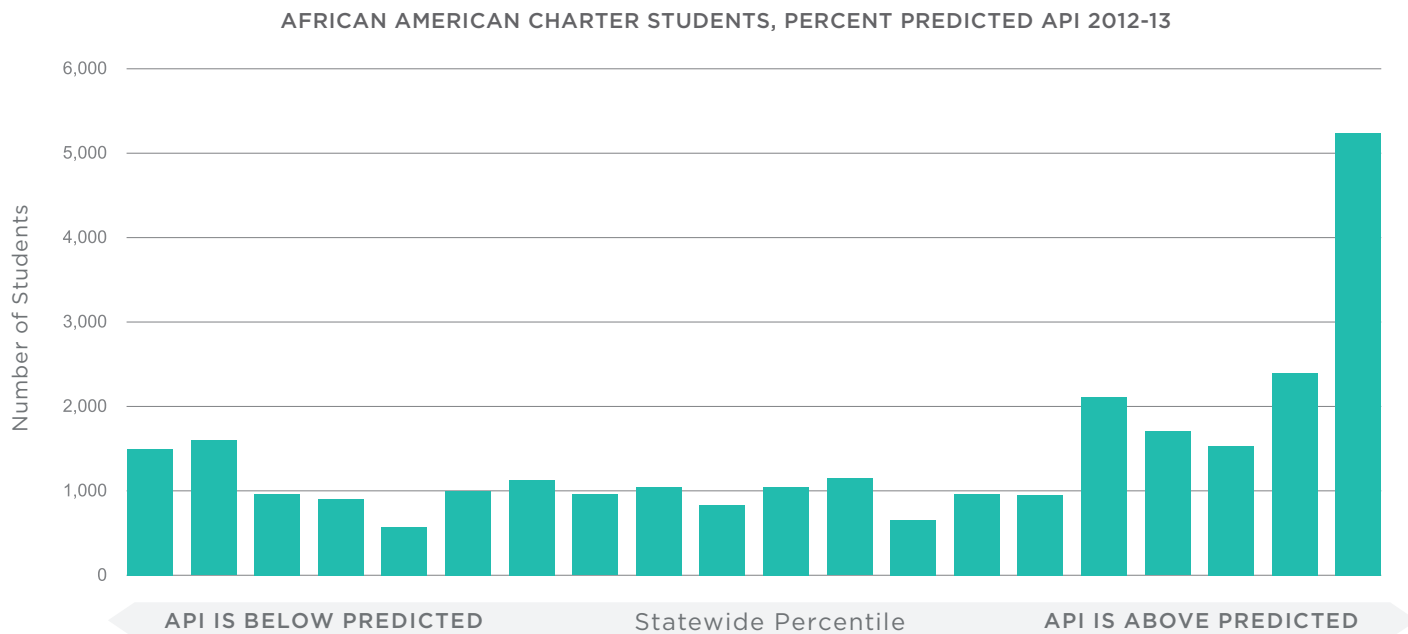
- California's charter schools, on average, suspend students at the same or lower rates than do traditional public schools.
- When we break this down by grade level, we see similar rates for elementary schools. But for middle and high schools, we see that charters have statistically significantly lower suspension rates than do traditional public schools
- Moreover, for every racial subgroup, the average rate of suspensions for charter schools is lower than traditional schools. In some cases, the differences are dramatic. **For African American students, the out-of-school suspension rates in charter schools are only about half of traditional schools' suspension rates.**

**DUPLICATED SUSPENSION RATES**  
(the rate of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students)

	2012			2013			2014			2015		
	Total	Charter	Non-Charter	Total	Charter	Non-Charter	Total	Charter	Non-Charter	Total	Charter	Non-Charter
Latino	8.53	4.85	8.76	7.35	4.28	7.57	5.96	3.36	6.17	5.73	3.64	5.87
African American	25.11	12.30	26.62	22.37	10.40	23.95	19.03	8.17	20.56	20.71	12.23	21.57
White	6.21	1.67	6.61	5.48	1.65	5.88	4.59	1.47	4.95	4.75	2.47	4.93
Total	8.26	4.28	8.54	7.19	3.78	7.47	5.91	3.02	6.17	6.20	4.08	6.35

## Portrait of the Movement

CCSA's 2014 Portrait of the Movement documented that charter schools serving historically disadvantaged students are likely to be among the most outperforming schools in the state. In particular, an African American student is enrolled in a charter school is three times more likely to be enrolled in a school that is performing in the top tenth percentile statewide on a Similar Student Measure and six times more likely to be in a school in the top five percent.



Demographics			Percent Predicted API				Total Students Excluding ASAM, Alt. + <50 tested
			Bottom 5%	Bottom 10%	Top 10%	Top 5%	
African American Students	Charter	%	5%	11%	27%	19%	28,254
		#	1,500	3,098	7,630	5,235	
	Traditional	%	5%	10%	8%	3%	222,655
		#	10,897	23,214	17,877	7,337	

## Statewide College-Readiness Findings for African American and Latino Students

In 2013, CCSA assembled a statewide report, [A Step Up: How Charter Schools Provide Higher Levels of California Public University Access](#), that included data from the University of California (UC), Cal State University (CSU) and all California public high schools, including charter schools. This data demonstrated that charter schools are helping increase access to college for thousands of students by creating a college-going culture in their schools. College readiness is one of the most powerful measures of academic success.

37% of African American and Latino high school graduates completed A-G requirements at charter schools, compared to just 21% of those students at traditional schools.

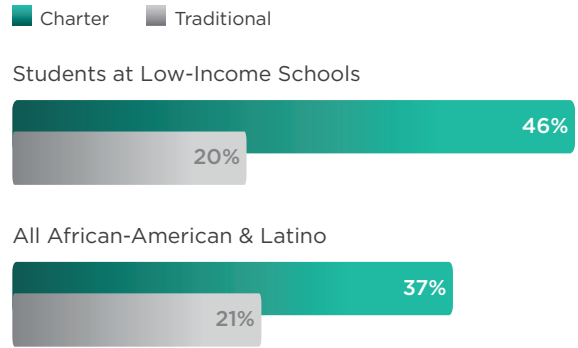
*California Department of Education, 2013*

35% of African American & Latino students at charter schools applied for UCs, compared with only 19% of those students at traditional public schools.

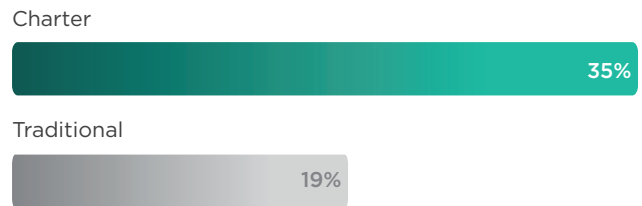
*University of California, Office of the President, 2013*

The UC Acceptance rate for African American & Latino charter school graduates was 19%, compared with just 11% for those graduates of traditional public schools.

### A-G Completion Rates Show Historically Disadvantaged Students Benefiting the Most at Charter Schools



### African-American & Latino Charter Students More Likely to Apply to UC



### Charters are Closing the UC Acceptance Rate Gap for Under-represented Students

