



## What are charter schools?

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools with unparalleled innovation and flexibility. By forming a strong partnership among parents, students and teachers, charter schools are able to create an environment that's specially tailored for the students who go there. An environment where:

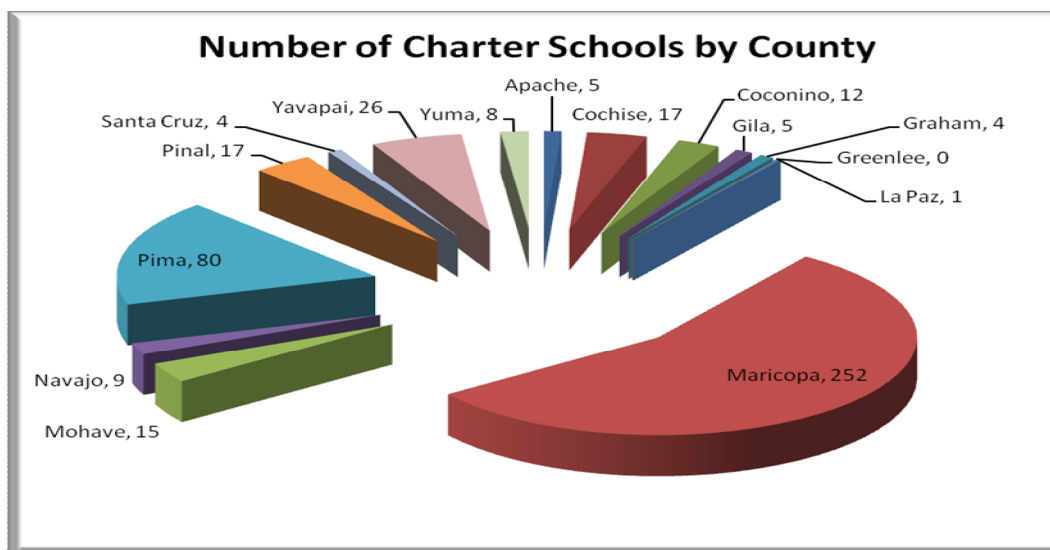
- Parents are encouraged to be involved
- Teachers have the freedom to innovate
- Students have the chance to learn
- All three are held accountable for improving student achievement

Arizona charter schools were created through legislation in 1994. Charter schools contract with the State Board of Education, the State Board for Charter Schools, or a district to provide an education service. Charter schools cannot charge tuition.

Charter schools enter into a contract with a charter authorizer to operate in accordance with academic and fiscal standards established in federal and state law and are held accountable to their charter contract. Arizona charter schools also function according to a business plan that guides their overall governance and operational structure.

## Charter Schools in 2006-2007

For the 2006-2007 school year, 455 charter schools operate in fourteen of the fifteen counties in Arizona. One in every four public schools in Arizona is a charter school, with 73% of all charter schools statewide operating in Maricopa and Pima counties.



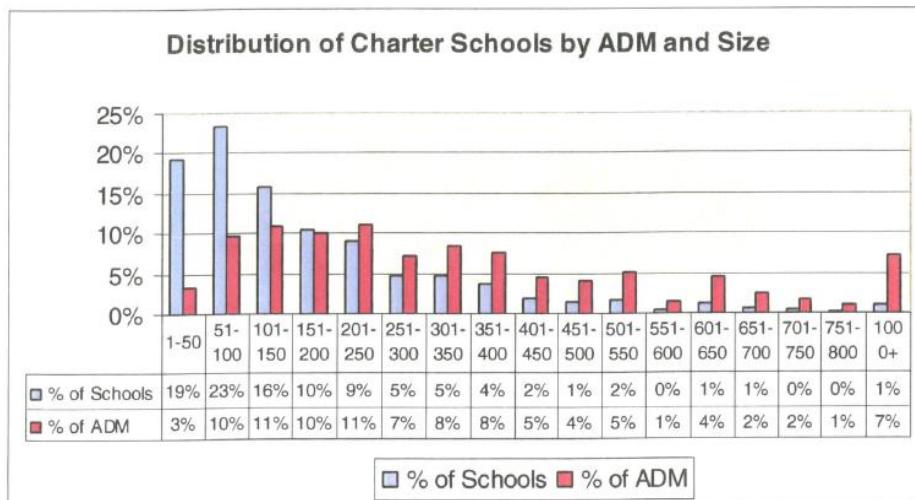
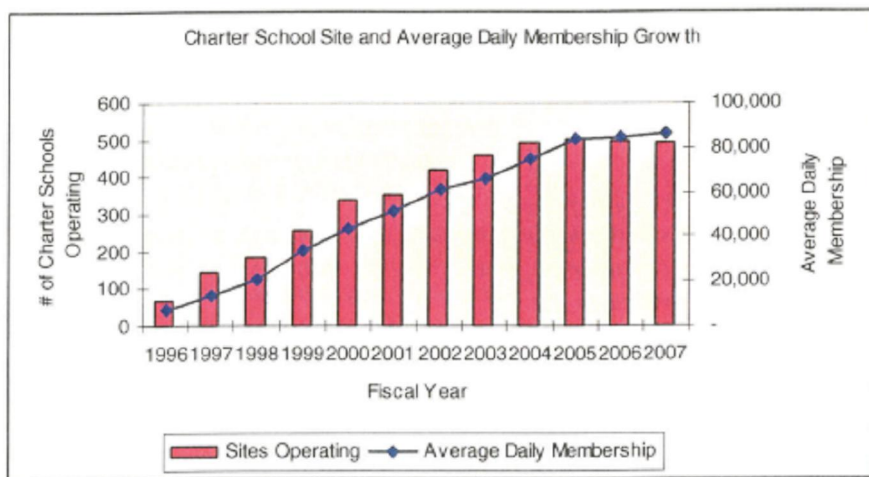
**Arizona Charter Schools Association**  
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## Who attends charter schools?

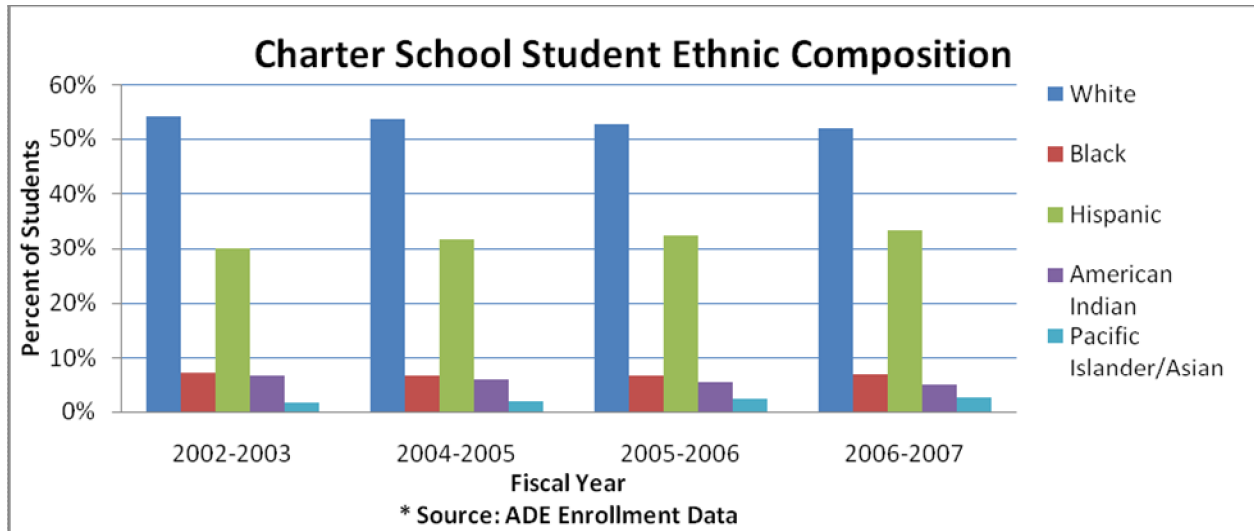
Nearly 10% of students in Arizona’s public schools are in charter schools. Arizona’s charter schools comprise approximately 13% of charter schools nationwide.

Approximately 67% of Arizona charter schools work with students in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. About 53% of charter schools serve students in grades 9 through 12. There is overlap in some schools, because some serve kindergarten up to the high school level.





The ethnic composition of the charter school population is similar to district schools. In the 2005 – 2006 school year, charter schools enrolled 7.5% fewer Hispanic students, 6.9% more white students, and 1.7% more black students than district schools.<sup>1</sup>



### Free and Reduced Lunch

Of the 147 charter schools that participate in the National School Lunch program, 67% of the students are eligible for free or reduced price lunches.

### Special Education

Approximately 10% of charter school students are enrolled in and are provided special education services. These students make up less than 1% of the state’s total public school population. Approximately 11% of district school students are enrolled in and are provided special education services.

### Quick Facts about the Arizona Charter Schools

- In the 2006-2007 school year, 356 charter holders operated 455 school sites across the state. (327 charter holders operated 413 schools directly chartered by Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools also oversees 24 charter holders operating 36 schools under the State Board of Education. An additional 7 charter holders operating 7 sites are sponsored by local school districts.)

<sup>1</sup> These data do not include students currently listed as enrolled in a juvenile facility.



- 331 Arizona State Board for Charter Schools charters have been approved since 1994, with an additional 31 pending
- The first wave of charter renewals will begin in 2009
- 35 Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and 18 State Board for Education charters were voluntarily relinquished
- 10 Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and 2 State Board for Education charters were revoked.
- Number of charter schools serving each grade

Grade	Schools
K	230
1	231
2	231
3	230
4	227
5	230
6	249
7	223
8	222
9	240
10	235
11	230
12	226

## Arizona Charter Schools Association Mission and Goals

Arizona Charter Schools Association envisions a time in the immediate future when an Arizona Charter Schools Association “seal of excellence” issued to a member school is likely to drive up enrollments, assist the school with its long-term financing and advance expansion planning. Vendors and providers of goods and services will want to sponsor Arizona Charter Schools Association and establish a “preferred status” in order to gain access to members and maximize their exposure. Arizona Charter Schools Association will become an invaluable resource to policy makers, media, and perhaps most importantly to parents and their children. In order to accomplish this, the Arizona Charter Schools Association has proposed a plan including:

- A data-driven system of quality assurance and quality review across all schools
- Impeccable research, promulgated in support of both new and established schools
- Direct support for charter schools, either needing start-up assistance or ongoing interventions
- Interface with state Legislature, the State Board of Charter Schools, and the few school district authorizers
- Proposing and advancing an advocacy agenda on behalf of charter school issues
- Becoming recognized as the leading source of information about issues facing charter schools and providing valuable services within the community

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The Arizona Charter Schools Association is committed to the opportunity to positively influence the future of school choice and education reform in one of the country's most important and watched laboratories: Arizona.

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