



# CALIFORNIA CHARTER SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

Advocacy • Quality • Resources

## California Charter School Fact Sheet

Charter schools are public schools that are responsive to students' needs and are held accountable for improved student achievement.

### **Charter Schools...**

- Are open to the public
- Are tuition-free
- Participate in state tests
- Employ credentialed teachers<sup>1</sup>
- Do not discriminate<sup>2</sup>

The Charter Schools Act of 1992 gives charter schools the freedom to make quick and effective changes to respond to students' needs.

### **Charter School Momentum**

There are currently 750 charter schools serving 276,000 charter school students in California.

Over the past 10 years, California charter schools have consistently grown by an average of 50 schools a year.

Charter schools serve a mix of students similar to those in California's traditional public schools.

### **Charter School Achievements**

Research shows charter schools do a better job increasing student achievement than traditional public schools.<sup>3</sup>

A recent analysis found that 12 of the 15 top performing public schools in California serving children in poverty are charter schools.<sup>4</sup>

Over 506 charter schools in California are committed to standards and accountability through the Certified Charter Schools Program.

Charter school parents cited challenging curriculum and individualized student attention as key reasons for their high level of satisfaction according to a 2007 University of Southern California (USC) field study.<sup>5</sup>

To learn more, visit [www.myschool.org](http://www.myschool.org)

<sup>1</sup> Under California law, charter schools are required to employ credentialed teachers in core and college preparatory classes.

<sup>2</sup> Under California law, charter schools cannot discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, gender, national origin, religion or ancestry.

<sup>3</sup> Research based on the California Department of Education's Academic Performance Index from 2004-2007 indicates that 11% more charters than traditional public schools show substantially higher student achievement by the end of the school year.

<sup>4</sup> A November 2008 analysis conducted by the California Charter Schools Association examined 2008 Academic Performance Index (API) Growth Scores of California public schools with 70% or more Free and Reduced Price Lunch participants and found that 12 of the 15 top performing schools were charter schools.

<sup>5</sup> A 2007 USC field study entitled Charter Schools and Customer Satisfaction: Lessons from Field Testing a Parent Survey by Wohlstetter, Nayfack & Mora-Flores.