

# ESTIMATED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, 2017-2018



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**REBECCA DAVID**  
MANAGER OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

**KEVIN HESLA**  
DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION



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## ESTIMATED PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, 2017-18

### CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT GROWTH

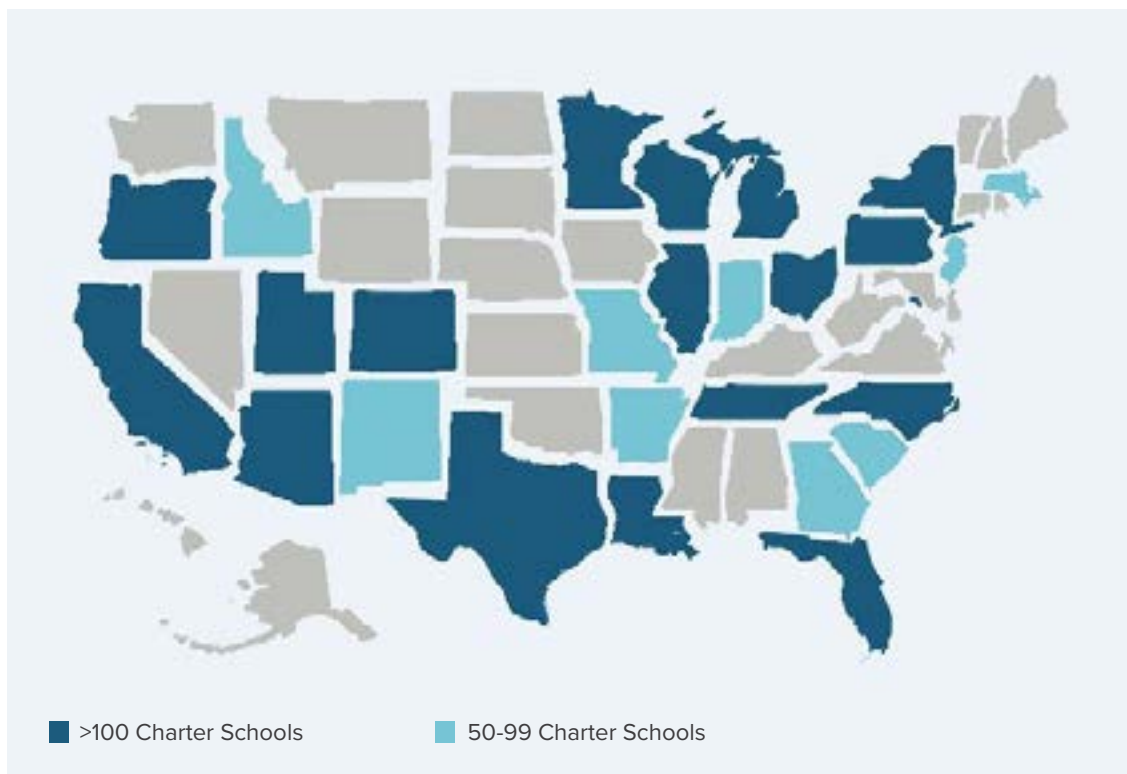
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Across the country, more than 300 new public charter schools opened in fall 2017. Charter schools are unique public schools that are allowed the freedom to be more innovative while being held accountable for advancing student achievement. Every year, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (National Alliance) collects data on the number of charter schools that opened and closed in each state that has operating charter schools. This information is used to determine the current number of charter schools in each state and to estimate total charter school enrollment at the national level.

In 2017-18, more than 7,000 charter schools enroll nearly 3.2 million students. Between 2016-17 and 2017-18, estimated charter school enrollment increased by more than 150,000 students. The estimated 5 percent growth in charter school enrollment between fall 2016 and fall 2017 demonstrates continued parental demand for innovative and high-quality educational options.

### The Number of Charter Public Schools Continues to Grow

In 2017-18, 17 states, plus the District of Columbia, have at least 100 charter schools, and 9 states have between 50 and 99 charter schools.



## UNMET CHARTER SCHOOL DEMAND

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In September 2017, Phi Delta Kappan (PDK) [found](#) that 17 percent of parents would choose a public charter school for their child if location and capacity were not an issue. And in November 2017, EdChoice [found](#) that 16 percent of parents would like to send their child to a public charter school — which is up nine percentage points since 2013. Together, these two surveys indicate that the potential number of charter school students in the U.S. is between 8 and 8.5 million. In 2017-18, there are nearly 3.2 million charter school students. This means that the potential size of the charter school sector — based on current parent demand — is almost three times larger than today's actual enrollment. In order to satisfy this demand, the sector would need to open, and find suitable homes for, thousands of charter schools over the next 5 to 10 years.

The National Alliance promotes meeting the demand for high-quality school options and encouraging well-planned school openings. We also support authorizers setting and enforcing high performance standards. The continued annual growth in the numbers of both charter schools and charter students is positive evidence of a strong and growing movement as more than 300 new charter schools opened across the country.

The following states experienced the largest number of charter school openings:

- California: 65 schools opened
- Texas: 47 schools opened
- Florida: 36 schools opened
- Arizona: 20 schools opened
- New York: 16 schools opened

While the charter school movement saw many new schools open this year, there were also 238 charter schools that ceased operation. These schools closed for a variety of reasons, including low enrollment, financial concerns and/or low academic performance. The charter model gives charter schools the freedom to be more innovative, while being held accountable for improving student achievement. School closures provide evidence that the accountability part of the charter model is being upheld.

The following states experienced the largest number of charter school closures:

- California: 46 schools closed
- Florida: 31 schools closed
- Ohio: 27 schools closed
- Texas: 22 schools closed
- Arizona: 16 schools closed

ESTIMATED ENROLLMENT, 2017-18								
STATE	NEW CHARTERS, FALL 2017	CLOSED CHARTERS, SPRING 2017	NET GAIN CHARTERS, 2017-18	TOTAL CHARTER SCHOOLS, 2017-18	CHARTER SCHOOL GROWTH %	ESTIMATED ENROLLMENT, 2017-18	CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENT GROWTH %	SOURCE
AL	1	0	1	1	N/A	300	N/A	†
AK	0	0	0	29	0%	7,000	4%	#
AR	9	1	8	82	11%	28,200	3%	†
AZ	20	16	4	556	1%	188,000	1%	†
CA	65	46	19	1,275	2%	630,300	5%	†
CO	15	3	12	250	5%	120,700	5%	†
CT	0	0	0	24	0%	10,100	5%	†
DC*	2	0	2	122	2%	43,800	5%	#
DE	0	1	-1	24	-4%	16,500	9%	#
FL	36	31	5	661	1%	302,000	7%	#
GA	6	0	6	87	7%	70,500	9%	†
GU	0	0	0	2	0%	600	17%	#
HI	2	0	2	36	6%	11,100	4%	#
IA	0	0	0	3	0%	400	-1%	#
ID	1	0	1	53	2%	21,900	2%	†
IL*	0	5	-5	142	-3%	67,300	3%	#
IN	5	9	-4	96	-4%	38,800	-11%	†
KS	0	0	0	10	0%	3,500	8%	#
LA	10	7	3	154	2%	80,200	4%	†
MA	3	5	-2	82	-2%	45,200	7%	†
MD	1	0	1	49	2%	23,900	9%	#
ME	0	0	0	9	0%	2,400	25%	#
MI	7	10	-3	301	-1%	143,500	-1%	#
MN	3	9	-6	162	-4%	55,900	4%	#
MO	1	0	1	61	2%	24,200	6%	#
MS	0	0	0	3	0%	900	80%	†
NC	7	2	5	174	3%	104,900	13%	#
NH	1	0	1	26	4%	3,800	12%	#
NJ	5	4	1	89	1%	49,100	8%	†
NM	1	3	-2	97	-2%	26,600	6%	#
NV	5	0	5	45	13%	46,000	15%	†
NY	16	2	14	281	5%	141,000	10%	†
OH	8	27	-19	345	-5%	115,400	-1%	#
OK	0	3	-3	34	-8%	29,000	20%	†
OR	3	6	-3	127	-2%	34,100	6%	#
PA	3	7	-4	179	-2%	135,100	1%	#
RI	0	0	0	30	0%	8,800	9%	†
SC	2	3	-1	69	-1%	34,400	6%	†
TN	9	3	6	112	6%	42,900	23%	#
TX*	47	22	25	774	3%	337,100	10%	#
UT	9	1	8	132	6%	74,800	5%	†
VA	0	1	-1	8	-11%	1,200	-2%	†
WA	1	0	1	8	14%	2,200	29%	†
WI	5	11	-6	230	-3%	43,700	-2%	#
WY	0	0	0	4	0%	500	6%	†
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>7,038</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3,167,800</b>	<b>5%</b>	

Note: # denotes a National Alliance estimate, + denotes enrollment numbers were obtained from the state department of education, and † denotes an estimate was provided by the state charter support organization. Data for D.C., Illinois, and Texas represent campuses, rather than charters. In those states (and D.C.), a single charter can be held for multiple for campuses.

## METHODOLOGY

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Data for this report were collected by contacting state departments of education and charter support organizations in each state to determine how many new schools opened in fall 2017 and how many schools closed during or after the last school year (2016-17).

Enrollment estimates were determined by using two-year average charter school growth rates for schools that have been open for three or more years and using statewide two-year average charter school growth rates for schools that have been open for less than three years. For schools that have been open for less than three years, the average statewide growth rate was multiplied by 1.75 to reflect the typically higher rate of growth for newer schools as they add additional grades and students. Schools that opened in fall 2017 were assumed to be the same size as the average new charter school that opened in the previous two years in that state.