



Charter Schools 101

Matthew Pahl
Executive Director



How we'll spend our time today

1. New Mexico's education laws enable choice, and you have choices.
2. Charter Schools are an important part of this mix, empowering communities to create schools that meet their needs.
3. Charter Schools have a track record of moving education forward in the state and provide **QUALITY OPTIONS** for kids.



New Mexico's Laws Provide Choice!

FREE, PUBLIC-SCHOOL OPTIONS

DISTRICT	MAGNET	CHARTER	BIE
Traditional neighborhood schools with standards-based curriculum & instruction.	District/Zone schools with a focus/approach that can be integrated into student experience & curriculum.	Mission-Driven (focus), Independently Operated & Under Contract	Federally funded or operated schools with a focus on culturally relevant instruction.
Open Enrollment	Open Enrollment, by request	Enrollment Open or via Lottery	Open enrollment for tribal members with admission requirements

PRIVATE & HOMESCHOOL OPTIONS

PRIVATE	HOMESCHOOL
Schools that are privately owned and operated by non-governmental agencies. Funded largely by TUITION and without assistance from local, state or federal governments.	When a parent or legal guardian of a school-age person operates a home study program, including, but not limited to, reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.



What is a Charter School in NM?

- **CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE ALWAYS PUBLIC SCHOOLS!**
- **Charter schools are FREE to attend.** No tuition!
- Charter schools have an open enrollment system. They cannot select their students.
 - Enrollment lottery exists so students have an equal chance of filling available seats.
- Charter schools are funded the same ways as district schools but with less funding overall.
 - Only 98% funding, and limited access to certain funds.
- In New Mexico, for-profit charter schools are banned in law.
- In NM, charter schools are led by local educators that saw a need for something different in their communities

More Public Charter School Facts

- Charter schools have been part of New Mexico's public school system since 2001.
- Currently, there are 99 charter schools in the state.
- Over 30,000 students attend charter schools in NM
- Families rushed to charter schools during the pandemic.
 - Charter schools' enrollment increased 6.7%, while district schools' enrollment decreased 4.9%
- Albuquerque metro has the largest number of charter school students at about 18,500.

Charter schools offer education that families want.

**Independent
Community-Based
Mission-Driven
Accountable**



Independent

Charter schools make decisions at the school level.

- Charter schools are their own independent, public school.
 - They have their own governing board, budget, educational program, organization and systems
 - Charter school Governing Councils have public meetings that must be announced and publicly posted (subject to Open Meetings Act).
- Charters have the flexibility to be responsive to student needs much faster than traditional schools



Community-Based

Charter schools in New Mexico are born out of our communities.

- A unique public sector experiment: Any community, any group can come together to apply to start a charter school that meets their community need.
 - It starts with an idea of how to make schools best meet the needs of their kids
 - Teachers, parents and community leaders have established charter schools across New Mexico
- The education model you want, in a public school that is open to all.
- The process is rigorous and long.
 - It takes about 2 years from the idea of a school to opening a school.



Mission-Driven

A charter school's mission communicates the school's focus.

- Every charter school has a mission that serves as its north star
- Guides school leadership and staff
- Charter Schools can do things differently because the law allows them to:
 - Design or adopt their own curriculum
 - Plan their school calendar to meet needs of families
 - Manage and hire staff around their program
 - Charter schools must still adhere to school personnel act



Accountable

Charter schools are under a public contract.

- Must follow state and federal laws
- Charter schools are held responsible by an elected body (Authorizer)
 - Contract includes goals and parameters the school must meet
 - Enrollment limits
 - Regularly scheduled on-campus performance reviews
 - Intervention / Corrective action plan / Closure
 - Additional campuses and enrollment increases

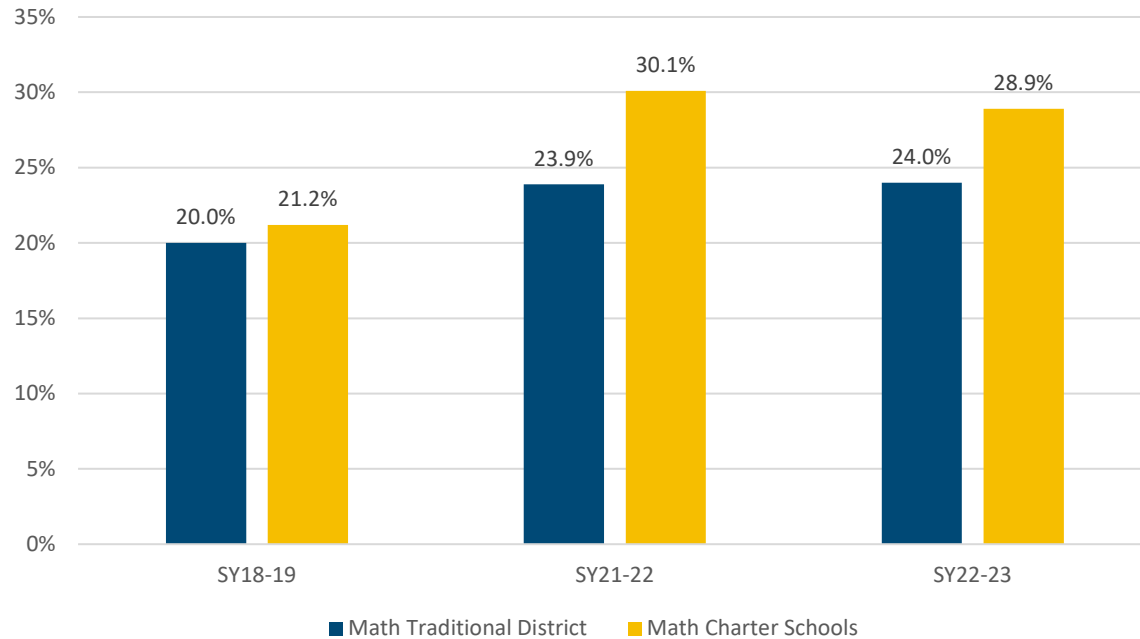
Independent + Mission + Community = Innovation

- Independent, mission-driven schools have blazed a trail for what is possible in New Mexico schools
- Community-based charter schools offered the first comprehensive programming for:
 - Arts
 - College & Career Prep (Dual Credit)
 - Project-based learning
 - STEM
 - Blended learning
 - Extended school days
 - Virtual learning
 - International Baccalaureate
 - New Mexican Culture
 - Bi-Lingual schools
 - Montessori
 - Social Emotional Learning

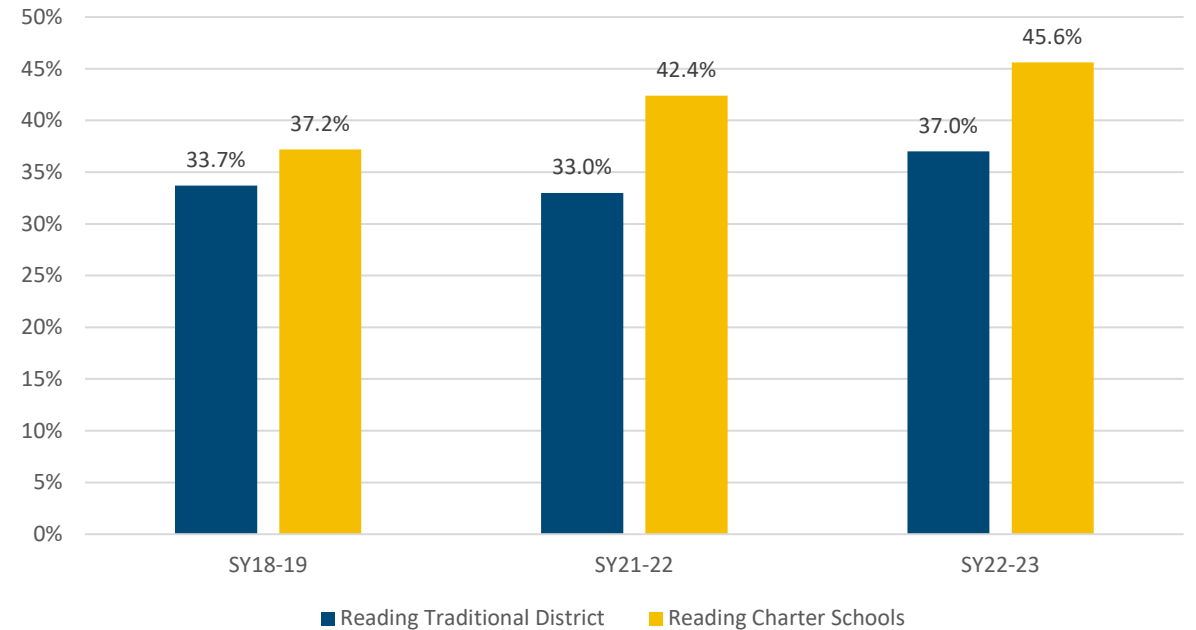
The Environment

Increasingly, being a charter school means being a quality school in New Mexico. Our performance with students across the board has rebounded substantially since the pandemic, with gains that outmatch our traditional district schools. This is particularly true for low-income students and key subgroups in the Yazzie Martinez Lawsuit.

Math Results by Public School Type, SY19-23



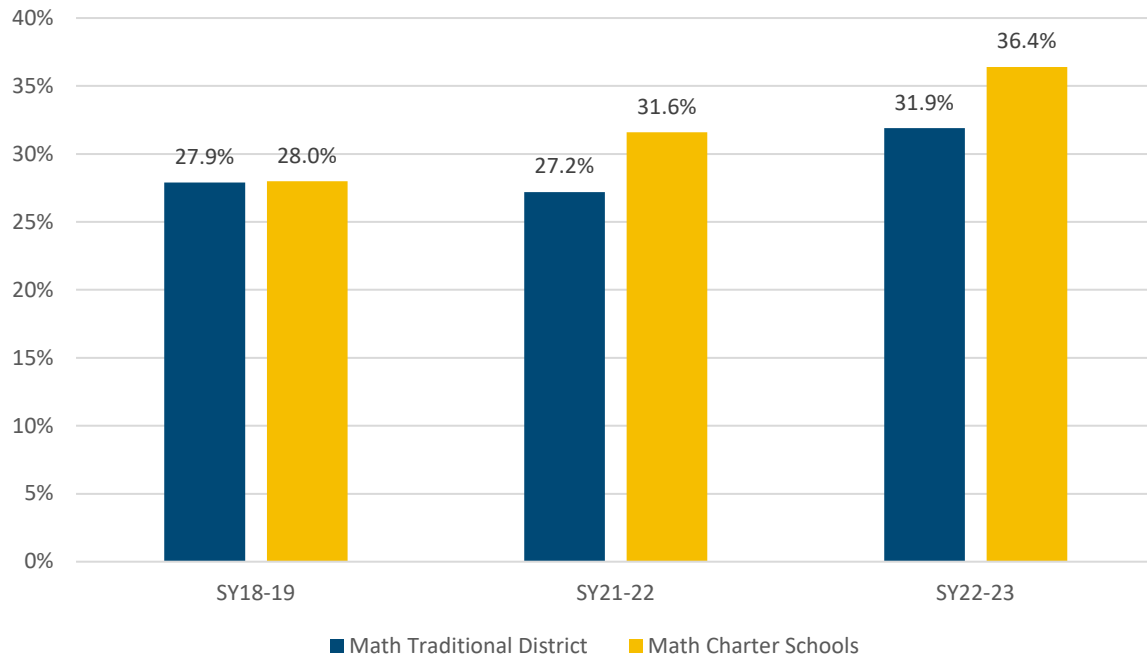
Reading Results by Public School Type, SY19-23



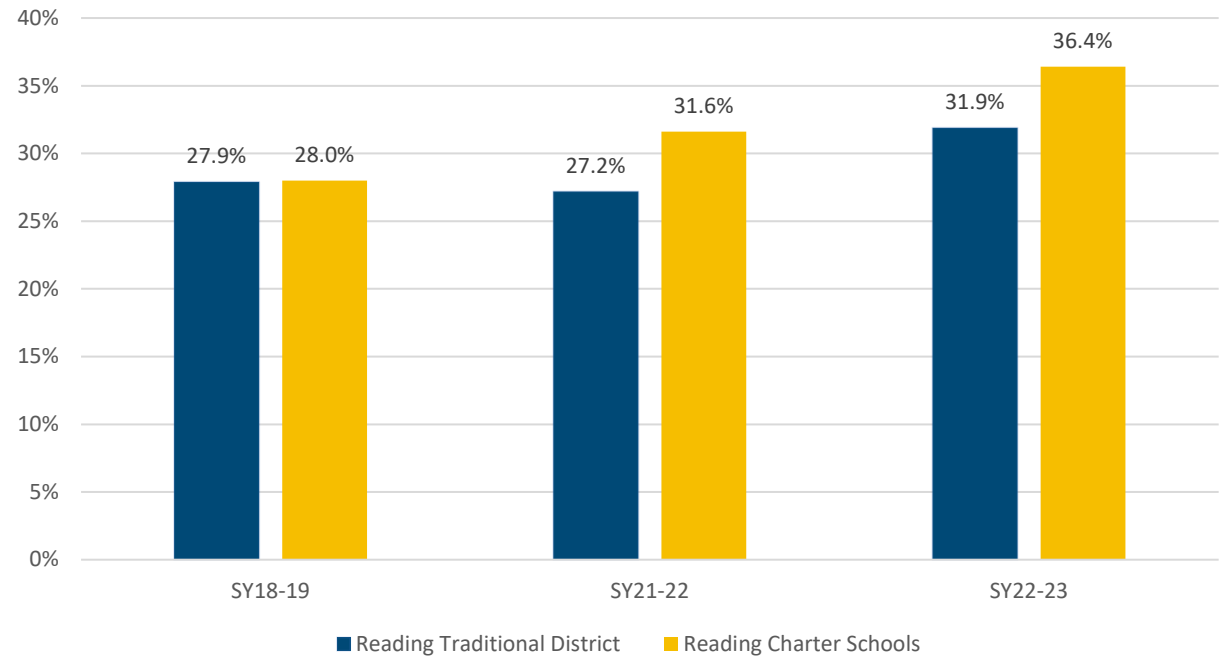
The Environment

Increasingly, being a charter school means being a quality school in New Mexico. Our performance with students across the board has rebounded substantially since the pandemic, with gains that outmatch our traditional district schools. This is particularly true for low-income students and key subgroups in the Yazzie Martinez Lawsuit.

Math Results by Public School Type, SY19-23, Low-Income Students



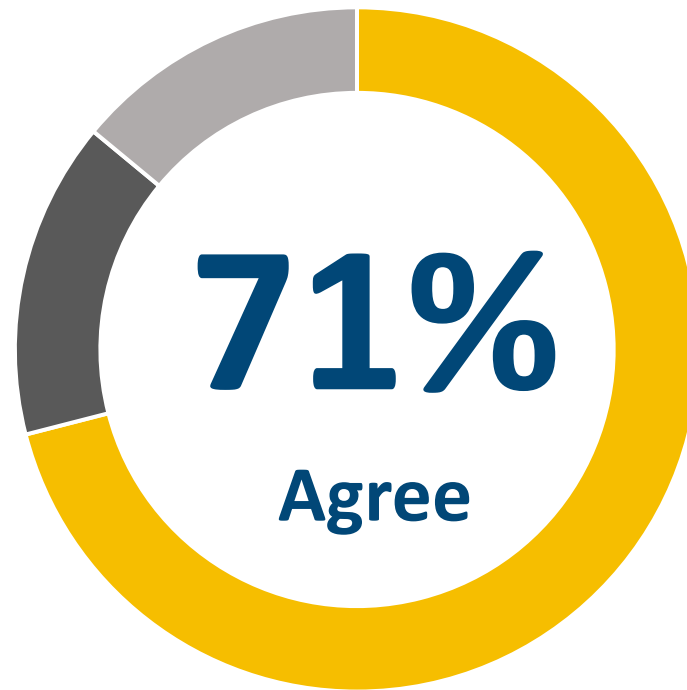
Reading Results by Public School Type, SY19-23, Low-Income Students



The Environment

Annually, we work with our partners to poll New Mexicans on their attitudes toward charter schools. We consistently hear from national education organizations that these are some of the highest statewide polling numbers in the country. The survey was completed by Research and Polling in September 2024, with a sample size of 506 New Mexicans.

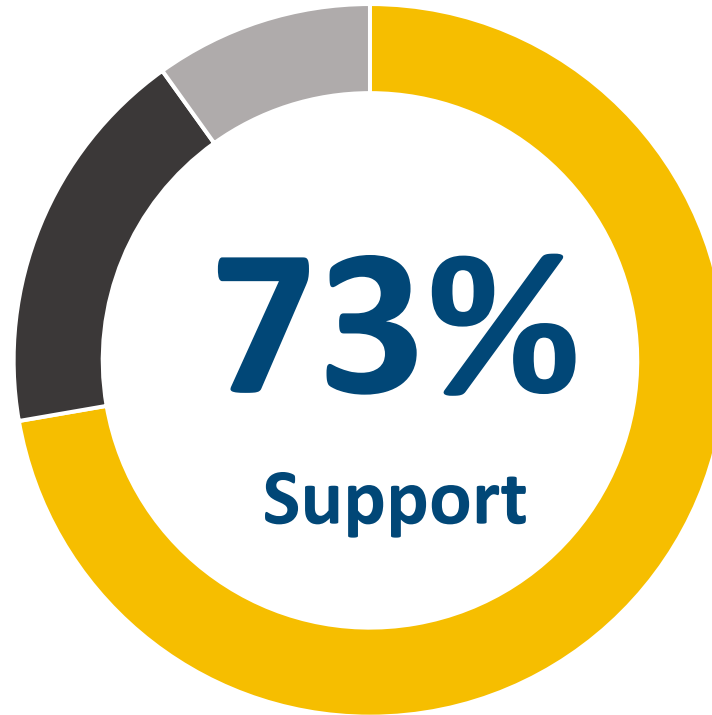
Agree/Disagree: Public Charter Schools Help Improve Public Education in our State



The Environment

Annually, we work with our partners to poll New Mexicans on their attitudes toward charter schools. We consistently hear from national education organizations that these are some of the highest statewide polling numbers in the country. The survey was completed by Research and Polling in September 2024, with a sample size of 506 New Mexicans.

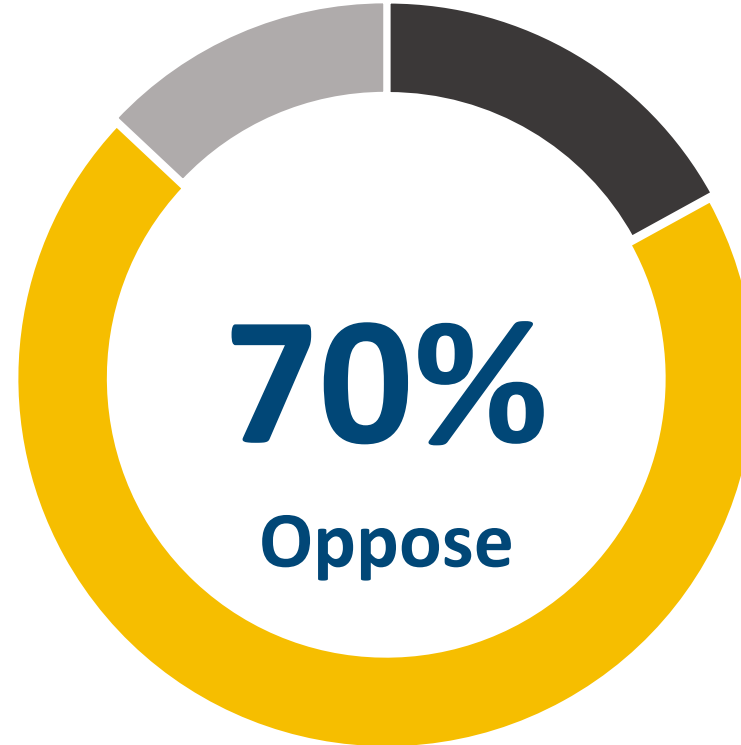
Support or Oppose New Mexico Continuing to Develop and Open More Public charter Schools in the State



The Environment

Annually, we work with our partners to poll New Mexicans on their attitudes toward charter schools. We consistently hear from national education organizations that these are some of the highest statewide polling numbers in the country. The survey was completed by Research and Polling in September 2024, with a sample size of 506 New Mexicans.

Support / Oppose New Mexico Passing a State Law That Would Stop the Opening of New Public Charter Schools Either Across the State or in Specific Communities for Several Years





**PUBLIC CHARTER
SCHOOLS of
NEW MEXICO**

Questions?



Stay Connected with PCSNM

- NM Charter Day at the Capitol is February 10th!
- Facebook, Instagram, Twitter @PCSNewMexico
- Visit your schools!
- Expand the use of charter school facts
- **Sign up for our Newsletter**

