



Department of Education

Florida's Charter Schools 2003-2004

Senate Education Committee

January 11, 2005



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Charter Schools are Public Schools of *Choice*

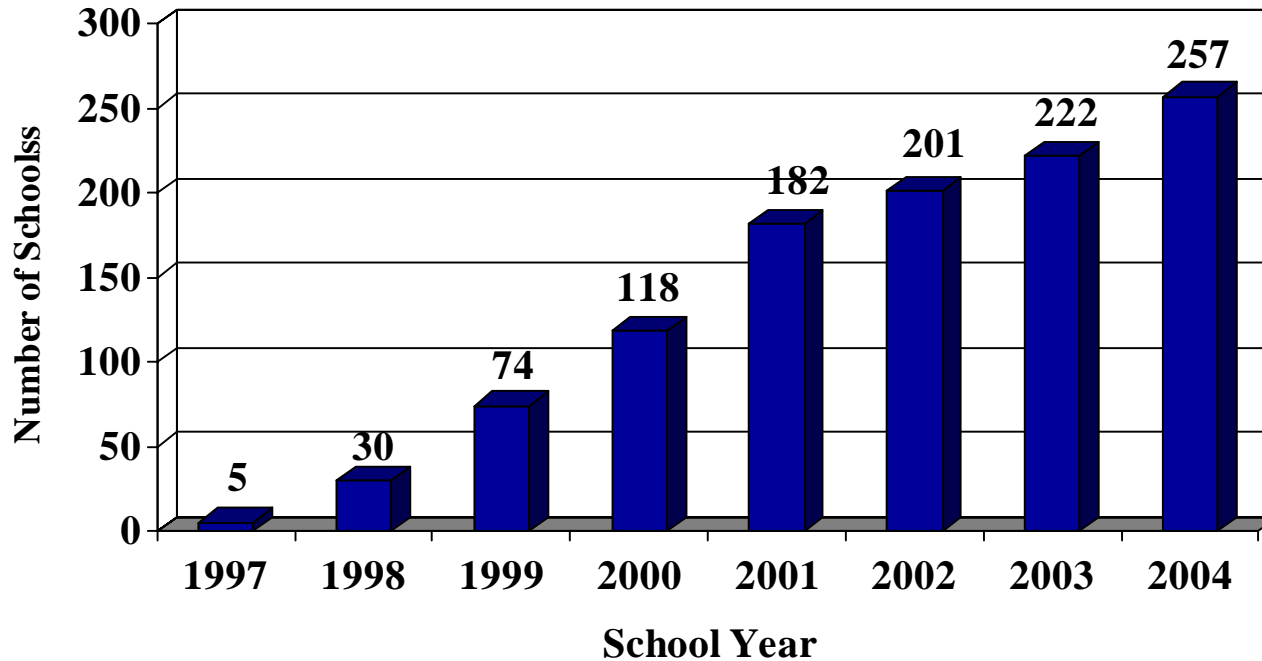
- Charters face market pressure to perform
- Charters have additional flexibility
 - Curriculum
 - Hiring and salaries and benefits
 - School philosophy
- Charters are approved and reviewed by school districts



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Florida Ranked Third in Nation

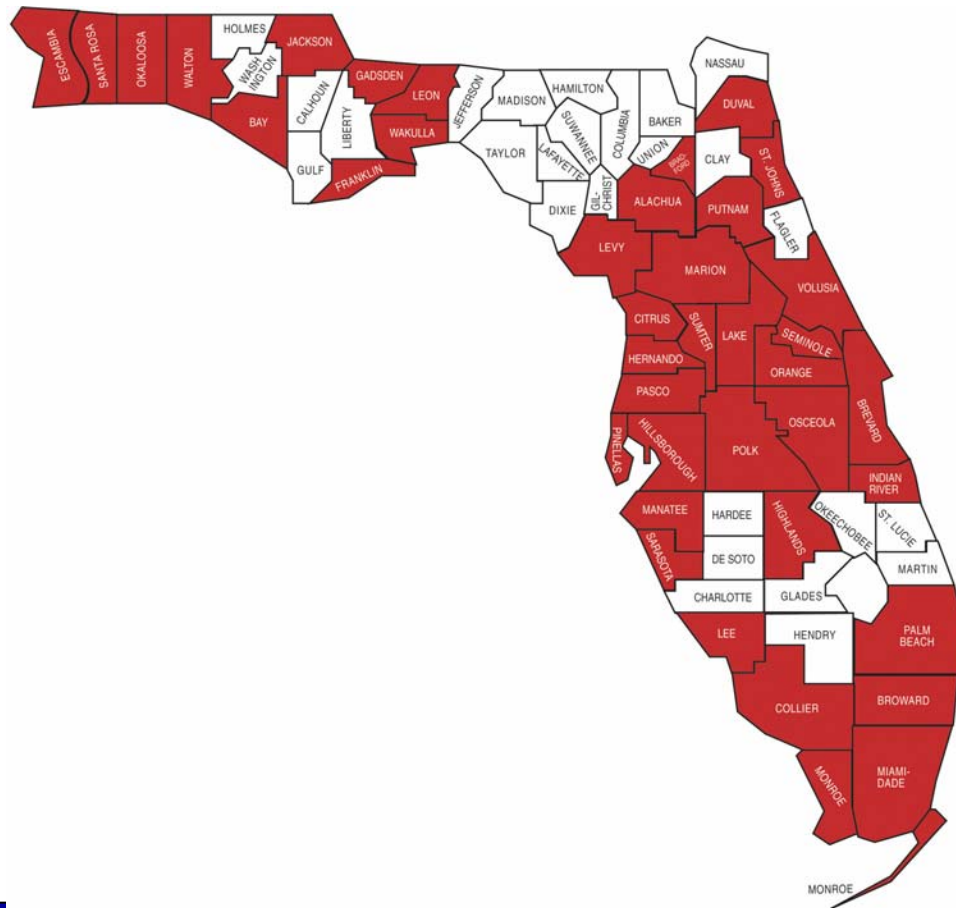
Growth in Florida's Charter Schools
1997-2004





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Charter Schools in 39 School Districts





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School Districts Without Charter Schools

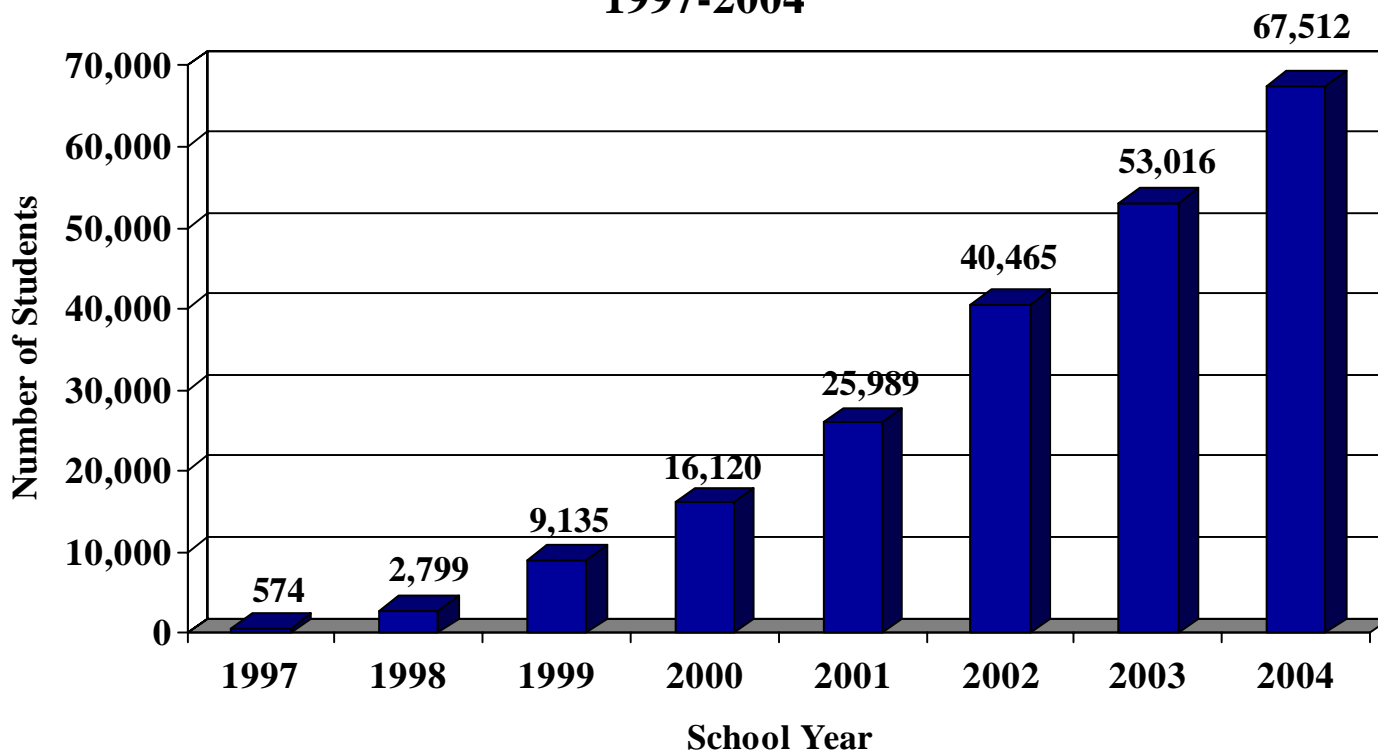
- 22** - Small, rural districts
- 3** - Operated schools that closed prior to 2003-04
- 2** - Approved applications for schools that were not opened in 2003-04
- 1** - Had students attending a charter school in a neighboring district
- 2** - Have since approved applications for schools to open in 2004-05 and 2005-06



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Florida's Charter Students

Students in Charter Schools
1997-2004





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Charter Student Characteristics

	% of Charter School Students	% of Traditional Public School Students
Elementary (K-5)	54%	47%
Middle (6-8)	27%	24%
High (9-12)	19%	29%
Black	25%	24%
Hispanic	25%	21%
Limited English Proficient	6%	8%
Eligible, Free and/or Reduced Lunch	36%	45%
Students with Disabilities	14%	20%



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Charter School AYP Results

	Number of Charter Schools	% of Charter Schools	Number of Traditional Public Schools	% of Traditional Public Schools
Yes	67	27%	650	21%
No	164	66%	2,187	70%
No Designation	19	8%	286	9%



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Charter School Grades

	Number of Charter Schools	% of Charter Schools	Number of Traditional Public Schools	% of Traditional Public Schools
A	53	38%	1,209	48%
B	15	11%	525	21%
C	33	24%	582	23%
D	18	13%	166	7%
F	19	14%	30	1%



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Some Recent Charter Studies Have Not Reported Positive Findings

- “Compared to students in regular public schools, charter school students had lower achievement both in grade 4 and grade 8.”
 - *Charter School Achievement on the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress*, American Federation of Teachers. August 2004.
- “...charter schools were less likely to meet performance standards compared with traditional public schools”
 - *Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program*, United States Department of Education. December 2004.
- “...results showed a lower average mathematics score overall for fourth-grade students in charter schools.”
 - *America’s Charter Schools: Results from the NAEP 2003 Pilot Study*, United States Department of Education. December 2004.



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Status Models are Inappropriate to Measure Charter School Student Achievement

A “snapshot” of one year’s student achievement status will tend to show lower scores on the part of charter school students because of who the schools serve.

- Parents often choose a charter school after their child has struggled in a traditional school
- Students enter charter schools already behind academically
- Charter students transition to other schools within a few years but are replaced by incoming students, also struggling in their original school



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Status Models Show that Florida's Charter Schools Have Lower Average Test Scores

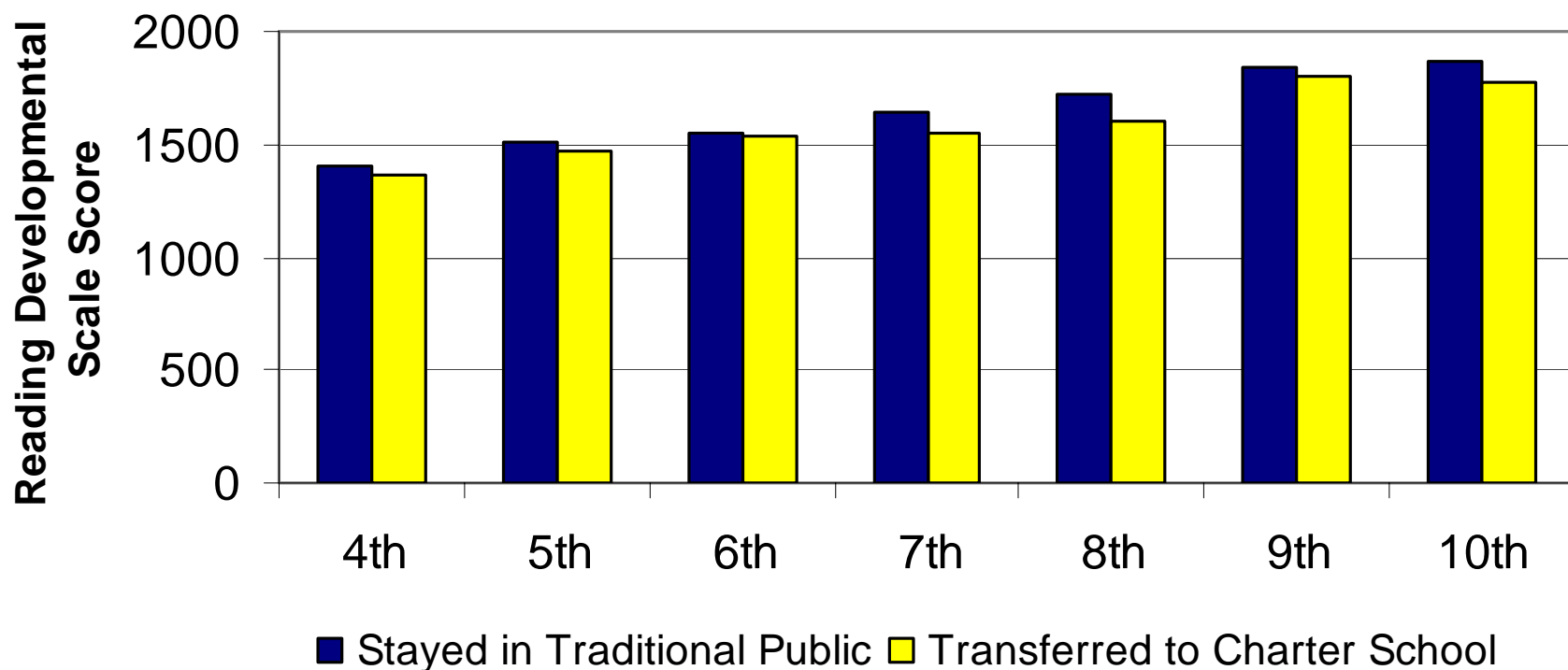
2003-04 FCAT Reading Developmental Scale Scores				2003-04 FCAT Math Developmental Scale Scores		
	Traditional	Charter	Difference	Traditional	Charter	Difference
3rd	1356	1339	-17	1372	1349	-23
4th	1598	1578	-20	1529	1509	-21
5th	1578	1568	-10	1630	1608	-22
6th	1651	1651	0	1650	1636	-14
7th	1726	1729	3	1770	1757	-13
8th	1829	1824	-5	1869	1856	-13
9th	1849	1853	5	1908	1097	-1
10th	1942	1908	-34	1986	1951	-35



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Students Transfer to a Charter School Already Behind their Peers in Traditional Public Schools

2002-03 FCAT Results for 2003-04 Students

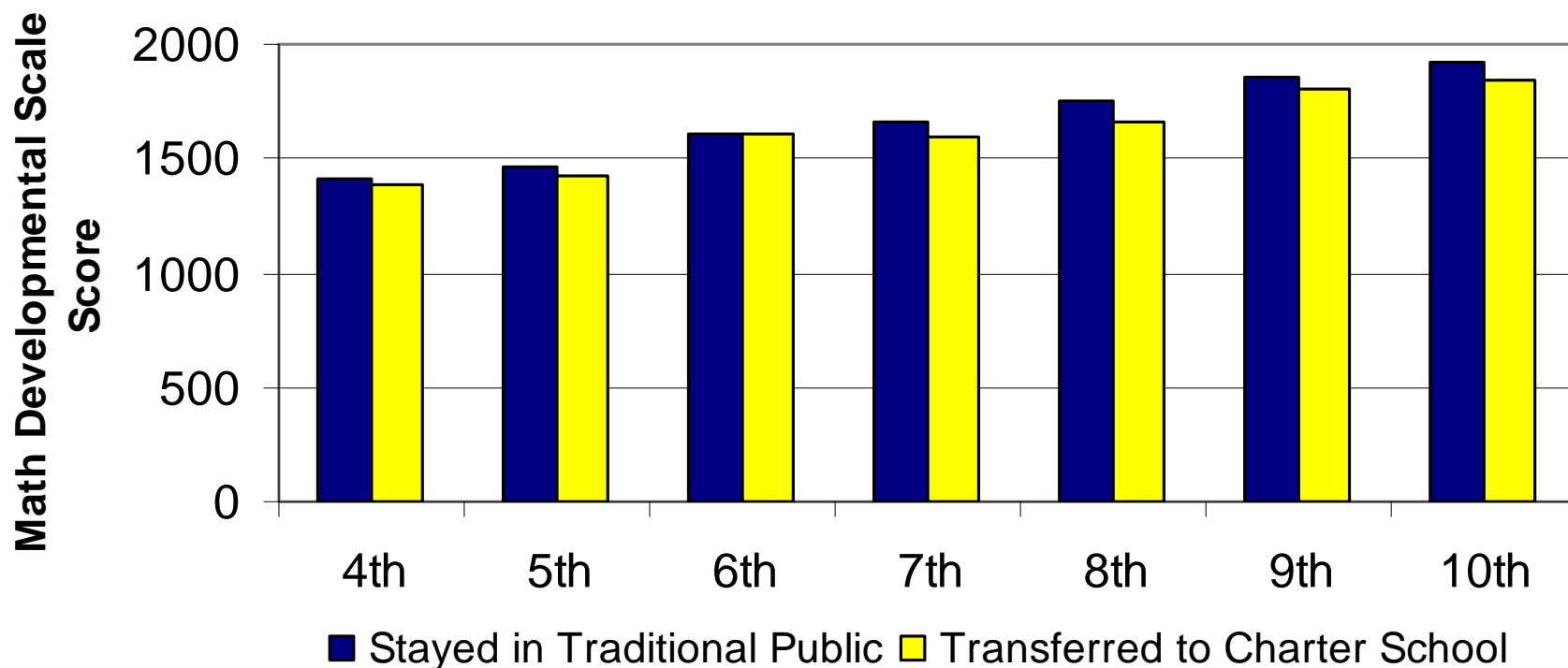




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Students Transfer to a Charter School Already Behind their Peers in Traditional Public Schools

2002-03 FCAT Results for 2003-04 Students





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Retained Students are More Likely to Move to Charter Schools

- A retained student is about 2 times more likely to transfer out of their schools early
- A retained student is about 6 times more likely to go to a charter school when in the school's final grade level



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Learning Gains Models Provide a Better Measure of Charter School Performance

- **Learning Gains or growth models focus on “value added”**
 - Examine growth over time instead of current status
 - Focus is on improvement and a school that improves student learning adds value
 - Charter schools, on average, add value in reading and are at least comparable in math
- **Based on four years of test scores from 2000-01 to 2003-04**



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Florida's Charter Schools Add Value When Learning Gains are Compared to Traditional Schools

	Average Gain for Standard Curriculum, non-gifted Students	Charter Value Added	Charter Value Added (%)
FCAT Reading Developmental Scale Score	54	+9	+17%
FCAT Math Developmental Scale Score	67	No statistical difference	NA
FCAT Reading Norm Referenced Test	4.4	+1.6	+36%
FCAT Math Norm Referenced Test	6.2	+1.8	+29%



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Charter Schools Add Value for Florida's Students

- Charter schools tend to attract students who enter already struggling academically
- As a result, charter schools will often have lower test scores and school grade when compared to traditional schools in status models
- However, the annual learning gains for charter school students match or exceed those in traditional schools



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Charter Schools Add Value for Florida's Parents

- Offer parents an option for choosing the best learning environment for their children
- Nearly 70% of parents of charter school students in Florida graded their child's school and A+ or A in a 2003 survey



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Areas for Potential Improvement

- Improving the likelihood for successful charter school start-up and operation
- Providing more focused and specialized technical assistance
- Strengthening accountability to ensure high quality schools and increased performance
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities of program partners



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Florida Department of Education
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0010