



Department of Education

Florida Charter Schools

Presented by Dr. J.C. Bowman
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to Senate Education
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Jim Horne, Commissioner of Education

What are Charter Schools?

- Charter Schools are:
 - Non-Selective
 - Non-Discriminatory
 - Non-Elitist
 - Non-Sectarian
- Operate Under a Performance Contract
- Free From Most Rules & Regulations

The term "independent public schools" is often used to describe charter schools.



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Characteristics & Statistics

- 40 States have Charter School Laws
- Almost 2700 Schools operating nationwide
- Nationally 2/3 are “start-ups”; 1/3 are “conversions”
- Majority of Start-ups serve primarily “at-risk” or special needs children
- Increased Parental Involvement



Growth of Charter Schools in Florida

- Florida Charter Schools have grown from
 - 5 Schools in 1996
 - 222 Schools in 2002-2003
- Charter School enrollment has increased:
 - 600 Students in 1996
 - 50,695 Students in 2002-2003



Application Status of Charter Schools for 2003:

- 95 Charter Applications have been received by local school boards for 2002 as of 1/30/03
- 42 Applications have been Approved
- 27 Applications were Denied
- 4 Applications Still Pending Action
- 22 Have Withdrawn or Postponed Proposals
- 4 Appeals Have Been Filed with the State Board of Education



Charter Schools

- Charter Schools are Popular. Many Charter Schools in the state have waiting lists. Charter Schools are an innovative way to increase family and community involvement in a child's education.
- Charter Schools are Effective. Charter Schools deliver programs that are tailored to educational excellence and community needs. Because they are schools of choice, they are held to the highest level of accountability - consumer demand.
- Charter Schools participate in the A+ Accountability Plan. However, many schools were not graded due to numerous reasons.



Demographic Indicators for 2002-03

- **Racial Demographics:**
46% Caucasian, 29% African-American,
22% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 2% Multiracial
- **Economic Indicators:**
36% Economically Disadvantaged
- **Exceptional Education:**
16% of Students Receiving Exceptional Education



Types of Charter Schools

- **Start-ups: Small, Specialized Schools**
 - At-risk, Disadvantaged, Special Needs Students
 - Also many Core Academic, Back-to-Basic Schools
- **Conversion Schools**
 - Existing public schools adopting charter status
 - Change agent for active public school reform
- **Community Partnership Schools**
 - Schools-in-the-Workplace for Greater Family Access
 - Communities & Cities Helping to Operate Schools
 - Universities & Museums Starting Their Own Schools



Charter School Partnerships

- **Community Partnership Schools**
 - Pembroke Pines Charter School
 - North Lauderdale Academy
 - Marco Island Charter School
- **University Partnerships**
 - University of South Florida
 - Barry University
 - Florida State University
- **Museum Partnership**
 - MOSI (Museum of Science & Industry, Tampa)



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Charter School Partnerships

- **Schools-in-the-Workplace**
 - Ryder, Inc.
 - The Villages
 - JFK Charter School
- **Real Estate Developers**
 - Seaside, Robert Davis
 - St. Joe/Arvida/Southwood
 - The Somerset Community, Broward
- **Conversion Schools** (Public schools adopting Charter status)
 - Lake County, Monroe County, St. Johns County, Polk County, Volusia County (11 conversion schools statewide)



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Florida Cities / Municipalities Developing Charter Schools

- Pembroke Pines
- North Lauderdale
- Coral Springs
- Miami Shores
- North Miami



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Student Academic Requirements

- Must Participate in the State Assessment System
Must participate in the A+ Education Plan, grade 3-10
- Must Meet State Graduation Requirements
- Must Achieve Locally-Negotiated Student Performance Goals -
“Outcomes to be Achieved”
- Must Comply with Florida Statutes for Florida’s System of
School Improvement and Accountability



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Teacher Requirements for Charter School Employment

- Must be Certified, According to Chapter 1012, F.S.
- Must be Fingerprinted, According to 1012.32, F.S.
- Qualifications of All Teachers Must be Disclosed to Parents Prior to Student Enrollment
- Salary & Benefit Levels of All Employees Must be Disclosed in end-of-the-year Annual Report



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Positive Indicators

- Serving Minority, Low-Income & ESE Students
- Abundance of Parental Interest -- Waiting Lists
- Very High Attendance & Parent Involvement Rates
- Examples of Innovative Programs & Practices
- Some New Models of Charter School Partnerships Developing Rapidly -- Cities, Universities, Schools-in-the-Workplace, and Public Conversions



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Challenges

- Enhance Application Components
 - Reading
 - Money Management
 - Customized Curriculum
 - Financial Management & Administrative Expertise of Some Charter School Organizers
 - Strengthen Accountability



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