

# Charter Schools

## Information & Statistics

### What are Charter Schools?

- Charter schools are best understood as educational models for choice and reform.
- May function as “lab” schools where innovative teaching and curricula are developed and tested.
- All are accountable for student results via the Hawaii State Assessment.
- Many are also designed to deliver programs tailored to educational excellence in the context of needs within communities they serve.

## CHARTER SCHOOL DEFINITION

- Charter schools are public schools, funded on a “per pupil” allocation separate from the Department of Education.
- They are state-legislated, legally independent, innovative, outcome-based public schools operating under contract (charter) with the Charter School Review Panel.

## Organization / Governance

- Charter schools in Hawaii are authorized by a separate entity called, the Hawaii Charter School Review Panel (CSRP), and governed by their local school boards (LSBs).
- The Charter School Review Panel authorizes new charter schools and approves amendments to existing charter schools' Detailed Implementation Plans (DIPs).
- Law establishes a limit on charter schools at 25 for new start up charter schools and 25 for schools that want to convert from a DOE school to a charter school.
- Charter schools are state public schools but do not come under the Department of Education (DOE). The Charter School Review Panel has oversight of Hawaii's charter schools.

## Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO)

- The Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO) supports Hawaii's charters as an advocacy office, offering technical assistance, acting as a state liaison, and is responsible for allocations of state and federal funds.

## Charter Schools Nationally

- Charter schools are one of the fastest and most successful educational growing reforms in the country.
- The first charter school opened in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1992 and now there are more than 4,500 charter schools serving over 1.3 million children across 40 states and the District of Columbia.

## How are charter schools different?

Charter schools operate on three basic principles:

- *Choice*: Charter schools give families the opportunity to choose the school most suitable for their children's educational well being. Teachers choose to create and work at schools where they directly shape the best working and learning environment for their students and themselves.
- *Accountability*: Charter schools are judged on how well they meet the student achievement goals established by their charter contract. However, because charter schools are schools of choice, the highest measure of accountability is student enrollment...if students and their families are unhappy, they will leave.
- *Freedom*: While charter schools must adhere to the same major laws and regulations as all other public schools, they are freed from the red tape that often diverts a school's energy and resources. Hawaii's charters are held accountable to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the State's Content and Performance Standards.

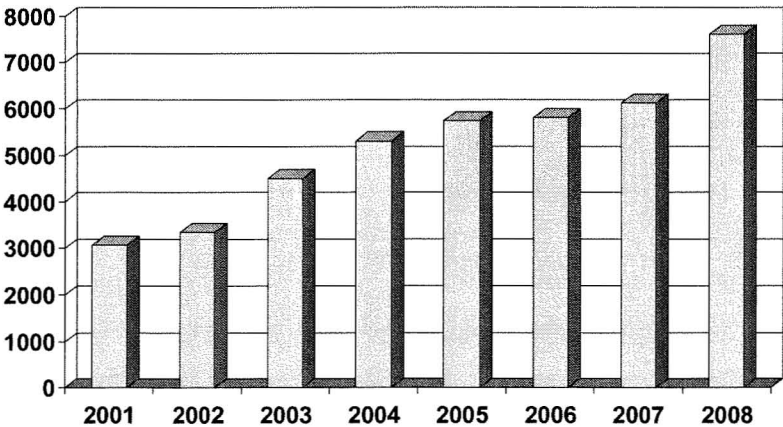
## Hawaii's Charter Schools

- **NUMBER OF CHARTER SCHOOLS IN HAWAII:**  
31
- **ISLAND LOCATIONS:**  
Oahu, Maui, Kauai, Hawaii and Molokai
- **NUMBER OF STUDENTS:**  
7,603 (K-12)
- **NUMBER OF CHARTER SCHOOL EMPLOYEES:**  
1000+

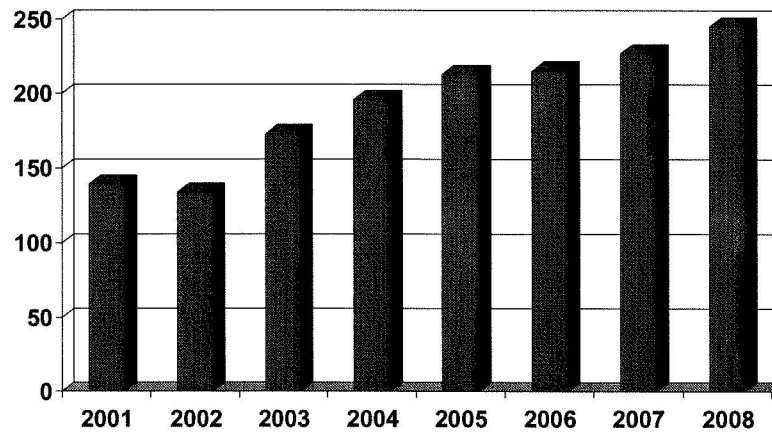
# Enrollment Summary

- Enrollment has steadily increased every year with 3,066 students in 2001-02 to 7,603 in 2008-09
- Since 2001-02, the number of charter schools has increased from 22 to 31
- From 2003-2008, enrollment in Hawaii's charter schools grew by 76 percent even though only four new schools were established.
- The average enrollment per school has increased nearly every year from 139.36 in 2001-02 to 245.26 in 2008-09

## Total Charter School Enrollment Growth



## Average Enrollment per School

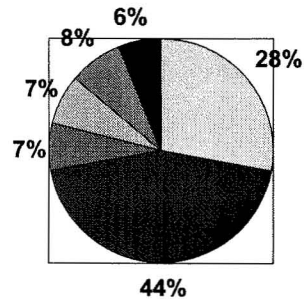


## Waitlist Summary

- The estimated total of students on waitlists at charter schools this year (2008-09) is almost 3,000
- About 1,200 people were on the waitlist at Education Laboratory this year

## Where Are Charter Students Coming From?

- Of the schools that reported, 44% of new students this year are from DOE, 28% are incoming kindergarteners, 8% from home schooling, 7% from private schools, 7% from other charters and 6% new to the State



## Why are Charter Schools so popular?

- *Educational Quality:* The primary reason is to make sure every child has access to a quality education.
- *Focus on the kids:* A charter school is established around the needs of children, with programs designed to help children succeed.
- *Safer, stronger communities:* Charter schools engage their communities to help provide services and resources to the school and its families. They also typically have a large support base from families, friends, the local community and businesses. Charter schools are beginning to show that they have a proven effect on the strength and safety of a community.

## Hawaii Charter Schools' Focus Areas

- A little more than one half, 17, are Hawaiian culture-based
- Others have strong art and science components
- Two are virtual hybrid schools.
- The majority bring environmental awareness and stewardship of the earth into their curricula.

## Ethnicity

- Ethnic breakdown greatly varies depending on the school and its location
- About 58% of students at all reporting charter schools are considered Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian
- Some Hawaiian focused charter schools have reported having 100% of their students being of Hawaiian ancestry



## Hawaiian Focused Charter Schools

- About 88 percent of the 3,500 students that these schools serve have Hawaiian ancestry.
- These schools also serve a high proportion of socio-economically and educationally disadvantaged children.
- The Hawaiian focused charter schools are more likely than their counterparts in other public schools to have students who live in “at risk” conditions.

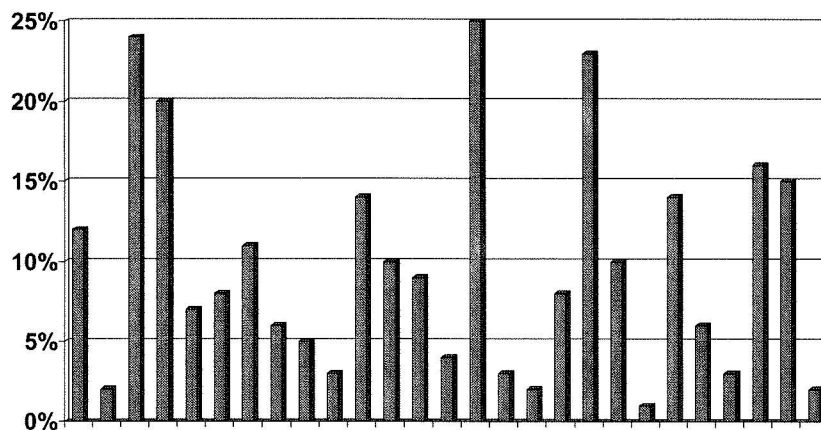
## Early Indicators Of Success

- ***Early indicators of success*** show that students in Hawaiian focused charter schools are more likely to move out of well below reading and math proficiency, between 3rd and 4th grade and 8th to 10th grades, than their counterparts in public schools.
- They are more likely to experience parent involvement in schooling, caring school climate, high teacher/parent expectations and time at home for school projects.
- Students in Hawaiian focused charters are seven times less likely to be excessively absent than those in other public schools.

## SPED Summary

- The percentage of SPED students ranges greatly depending on the school
- Of reporting schools, the high end for 2007-08 includes Ke Ana La'ahana (25%), Hakipu'u (24%), and Kua o ka Lā (23%)
- The low end includes Myron B. Thompson Academy (1%), Education Laboratory (2%), and West Hawaii Explorations Academy (2%)

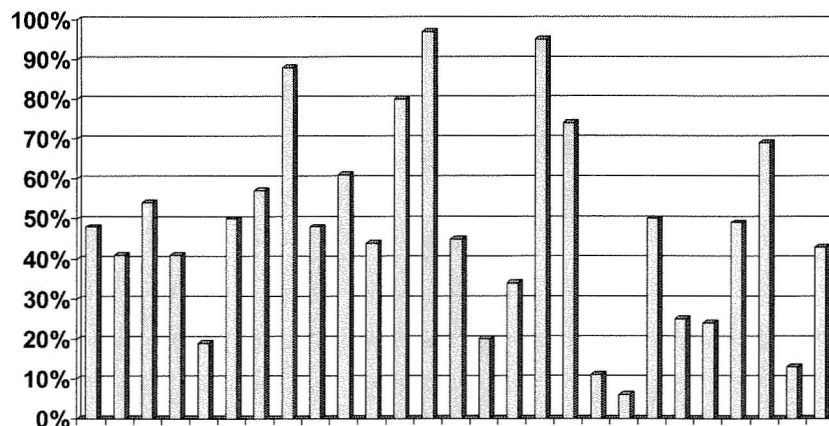
Percentage of SPED 2007-08  
by School



## Free & Reduced Lunch Summary

- Like SPED, the percentage of students receiving F&RL varies
- Of reporting schools, the total average for 2007-08 is 47%
- The high end includes Ke Kula Ni'ihau O Kekaha (97%) and Kua o ka Lā (95%)

## Percentage of F&RL 2007-08 by School



## Average Daily Attendance Rate Summary

- The vast majority of the schools reported that for 2008-09 their average daily attendance rates were higher than 90%, with over a third reporting in the highest range of attendance at 95-98%

## Student Retention Rate

- According to the 2007-08 AYP, 8 of 14 charter schools have 0% retention rates (percentage of students that are held back a grade)
- Five others have 1-3% retention rates

## Graduation Summary

- Graduation rates, according to the 2007-08 AYP results, range from 100% (4 schools) to 50% (1 school)
- However, the way AYP is reported negatively impacts graduation results of charter schools because of their smaller populations
- AYP requires schools to track students when transferring out of schools otherwise the student is regarded as a drop out
- It is not always possible to track students effectively

## College Acceptance Rate Summary

- Of the 10 schools that reported, eight had college acceptance rates between 83-100% in 2007-08 while the bottom two had rates of 66% and 50%

## AYP Status

- Eight out of 27 charter schools made AYP in 2007-08
- 17 charters are “In Good Standing”

## Math Proficiency

- According to the 2007-08 AYP, the highest charter school score was 74% proficient and the lowest 7%
- According to the Spring 2008 HSA results, the highest score was 68% and the lowest was 3%

## Reading Proficiency

- According to the 2007-08 AYP, the highest charter school score was 87% proficient and the lowest 11%
- According to the Spring 2008 HSA results, the highest score was 88% and the lowest was 4%

## How are Charter Schools Funded?

- The budget for charter schools is prepared by the CSAO and is approved by the Charter School Review Panel, Budget & Finance/Governor's Office and the State Legislature.
- Charter schools are public schools.
- The State has an obligation to fund all students in public schools.
- Hawaii's charter schools are funded according to enrollment and receive funding from the State according to the number of students attending.
- Hawaii's charter schools are funded by the Hawaii State Legislature with a lump sum amount allocation and Hawaii's Charter School Administrative Office (CSAO) distributes this allocation, by law, to each school by a per pupil amount. Although federal funds are also allocated, the formula for equitable distribution between DOE and charter schools is unclear.
- *It is the charter schools' position that funding for charter schools should be equitable to that received by DOE schools and that a funding formula be developed to that end.*

## Charter Schools' Facilities Needs

- When charter schools were first approved, facilities and maintenance funding was an issue, but was not included in the overall funding for charter schools.
- Today, it is increasingly becoming clear that facilities costs are one of the highest costs for charter schools, including lease rents, repair and maintenance.
- Some early thinking was that charter schools, governed by local school boards, could raise the funds from private and other sources.
- Today, it is clear that many charter schools are located in rural and/or lower socioeconomic areas, making fundraising an unreliable alternative. In addition, fundraising requires an entirely different skill set and a considerable amount of time. Charter schools would, in effect, have to stretch or increase their budgets for both additional resources and time.
- *It is the charter schools' position that funding related to facilities and their improvement and maintenance should be equitable to that received by DOE schools.*

## Geographic Area

- Kauai (4)
- Oahu (12)
- Maui (1)
- Molokai (1)
- Hawaii (13)
- Only five charter schools are located in urban Honolulu; the majority serve rural Oahu and Neighbor Island communities.



## Examples of Charter School Excellence

- Innovations and West Hawaii Explorations Academy are among the top schools in the State in HSA scores.
- Kua O Ka Lā is one of only 2 schools in our nation to have a computer lab that is totally solar powered.
- Kanu O Ka 'Āina on the Big Island in Waimea is considered an exceptional model of indigenous education on a global scale.
- Kihei STEM Academy is the State's first complete STEM Academy.

## How Do Charter Schools Impact The Public School System?

- Conventional public schools often view charter schools as a threat or a drain on the budget, but time has shown that these new schools can serve a valuable teaching role.
- Increasingly, members of the traditional public school system are turning to charter schools for examples regarding everything from curriculum to staffing and teacher retention.
- Instead of viewing charter schools as nuisances, many realize the need for improvement spurred on by charter schools.
- For a summary of charter school research findings- overwhelmingly supporting the viability and success of charters- see [What the Research Reveals About Charter Schools](#).

## BOTTOM LINE

- **Charter schools are serving the children of Hawaii by offering an alternative to traditional education that is demonstrating results and are beneficial to students, their parents and our state.**