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Texas Charter School System Suffers Low Graduation Rates

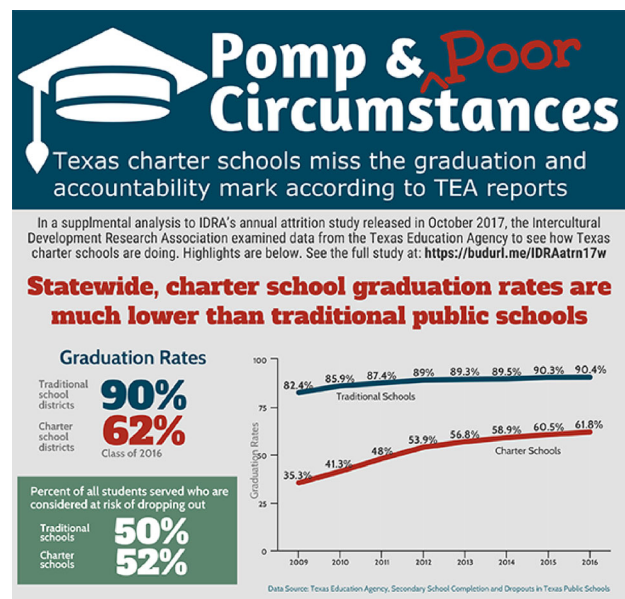
New Study Released by IDRA

The Class of 2016 saw Graduation Rates of 62% in Charter Schools compared to 90% in Traditional Public Schools

San Antonio (December 13, 2017) - Texas students in charter schools are not necessarily faring better than their peers in traditional public schools. With significantly lower graduation rates and lower accountability ratings reported by the Texas Education Agency, the state's planned expansion of charter schools is troubling.

In an additional analysis to IDRA's [annual attrition study](#) released in October, IDRA examined the annual dropout and longitudinal graduation rates in Texas charter schools from 2009 to 2016.

Key findings show:



- The Class of 2016 saw graduation rates of **62 percent in charter schools compared to 90 percent in traditional public schools.**
- While some charter schools serve some of the students in highest need, analysis of TEA data for 2016-17 statewide reveals that there is **very little difference in the percentage of students served who are considered at risk of dropping out:** 50 percent in traditional schools compared to 52 percent in charter schools.
- Nearly one **out of every five charter campuses (22.9 percent) failed to achieve "meet standard"** or the lower "alternative standard," compared to about one of every 25 traditional public schools.
- **Texas public schools serve 5.4 million students, while charter schools serve only 273,000.**
- **State funding for charter schools increased at a much faster rate** than for public schools in the last decade, with an 8 percent increase for traditional school compared to a 236 percent increase for charters.

"Texas needs to let go of the claim that charter schools can 'rescue' students from their so-called failing neighborhood public schools. As our communities predicted, the data show otherwise. Our families and communities don't need 'rescuing' by lottery. They demand strong neighborhood public schools," said Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel , IDRA president and CEO.

"The state of Texas is required to provide an excellent education for all students. Rather than funneling tax money to private interests or to charter school operators that are not accountable to the public, our state must shore up neighborhood public schools where all students graduate from high school prepared for college or the world of work, no matter what the color of their skin, the language they speak, or where they happen to be born. Our children are worth more than education by lottery," she continued.

With a three-year grant of \$59,164,996 from the U.S. Department of Education, the State of Texas is planning the expansion of 115 new charter schools.

IDRA's **Quality School Action Framework™** guides communities and schools in identifying weak areas and strengthening public schools' capacities to graduate and prepare all students for success. IDRA's book, **Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework** shows how communities and schools can work together to be successful with all of their students.

IDRA's attrition study and supplemental reports are available online at: <https://budurl.me/IDRAatrn17w> .



Pomp & Poor Circumstances

Texas charter schools miss the graduation and accountability mark according to TEA reports

In a supplemental analysis to IDRA's annual attrition study released in October 2017, the Intercultural Development Research Association examined data from the Texas Education Agency to see how Texas charter schools are doing. Highlights are below. See the full study at: <https://budurl.me/IDRAatrn17w>

Statewide, charter school graduation rates are much lower than traditional public schools

Graduation Rates

Traditional school districts

90%

Charter school districts

62%

Class of 2016

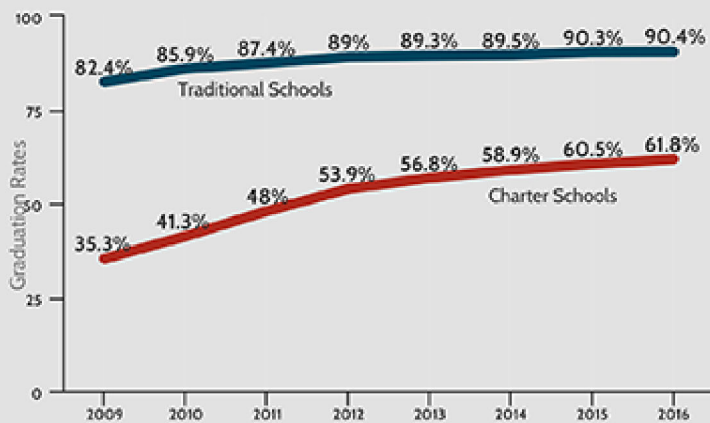
Percent of all students served who are considered at risk of dropping out

Traditional schools

50%

Charter schools

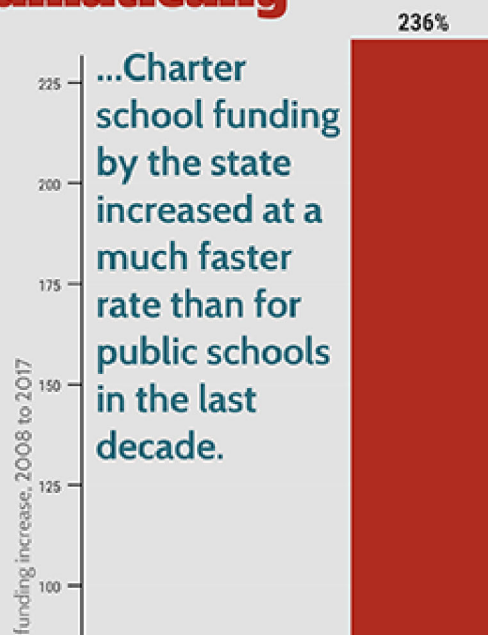
52%



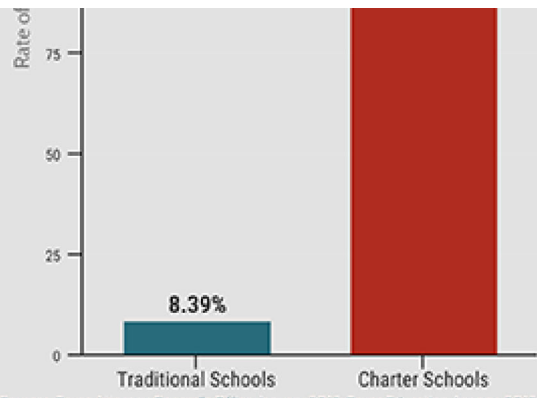
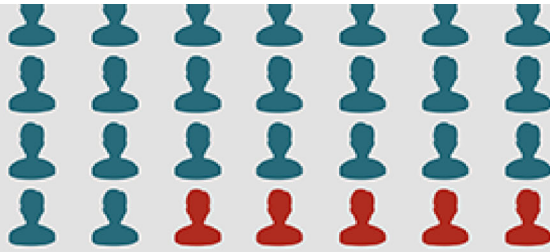
Data Source: Texas Education Agency, Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools

State funding for charter schools has grown dramatically

Texas public schools serve 5.4 million students, while charter schools serve only 273,000...

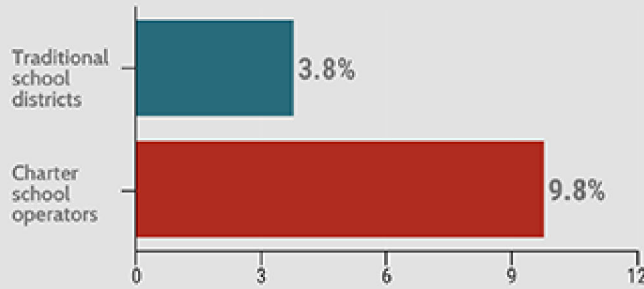


...Charter school funding by the state increased at a much faster rate than for public schools in the last decade.



Data Sources: Texas Attorney General's Office, January 2013; Texas Education Agency, 2017

Texas charter schools had twice the failure rate of traditional schools in 2016



Percent of Schools Rated by the Texas Education Agency as "Improvement Required"

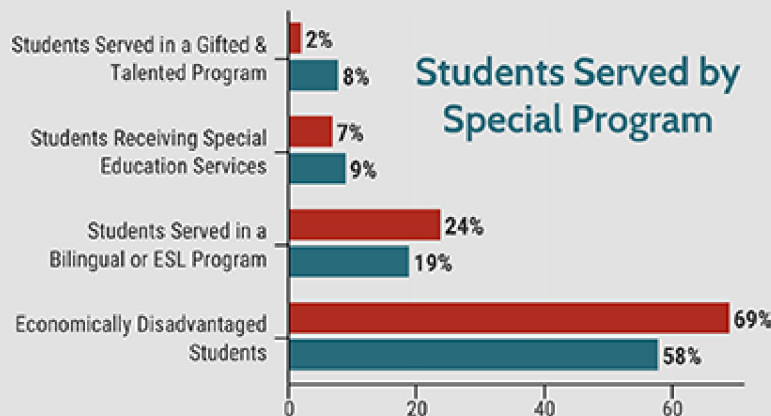
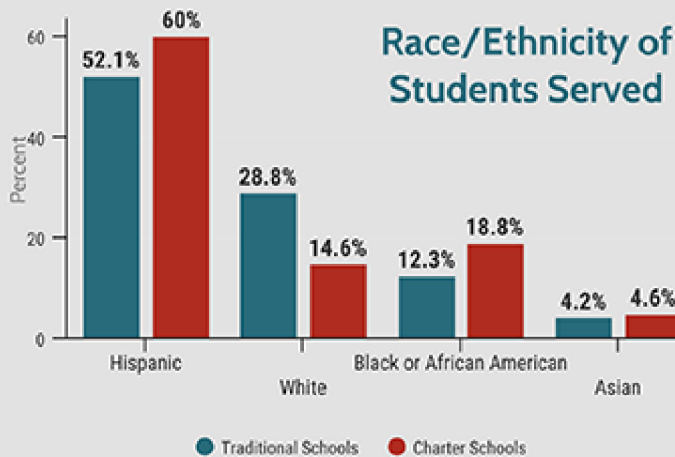
Data Source: Texas Education Agency, Comprehensive Biennial Report on Texas Public Schools, 2016



Texas needs to let go of the claim that charter schools can "rescue" students from their so-called failing neighborhood public schools. As our communities predicted, the data show otherwise. Our families and communities don't need rescuing by lottery. They demand strong neighborhood public schools.

Dr. María "Cuca" Robledo Montecel, IDRA President & CEO

Texas charter schools impact a higher proportion of students of color



Data Sources: Texas Education Agency, (April 5, 2017). Student Program and Special Populations Reports, PEIMS Standard Reports and Texas Education Agency, (April 5, 2017). Student Enrollment Reports, PEIMS Standard Reports. Note: TEA masks some data with aggregates fewer than five students in order to comply with the FERPA. In those cases,



See IDRA's Texas Public School Attrition Study 2014-16

<https://budurl.me/IDRAatrn17p>



See the feature on charter school attrition

<https://budurl.me/IDRAatrn17ch>



IDRA Attrition Study & Resources Online

Charter School Attrition Article - Annual Dropout and Longitudinal Graduation Rates in Texas Charter Schools, 2009-2016

Infographic: Pomp and Poor Circumstances - Texas charter schools miss the graduation and accountability mark according to TEA reports

News Release: Texas High School Attrition Reaches All-Time Low of 29% for Hispanic Students - 32nd Annual Texas Public School Attrition Study Released by IDRA

2017 Full Study (PDF) - Texas Public School Attrition Study, 2016-17

Infographic: Texas public schools are losing one out of four students

Look Up Your County - See attrition rates and numbers over the last eight years

County List - See which counties had attrition rates go up or down

eBook on types of dropout data

College Bound and Determined - A report profiling what happens when a school district raises expectations for students instead of lowering them

Checklist Tool - Quality School Holding Power Checklist

Courage to Connect: A Quality Schools Action Framework



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The Intercultural Development Research Association is an independent, non-profit organization. Our mission is to achieve equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college. IDRA strengthens and transforms public education by providing dynamic training; useful research, evaluation, and frameworks for action; timely policy analyses; and innovative materials and programs.

We are committed to the IDRA valuing philosophy, respecting the knowledge and skills of the individuals we work with and build on the strengths of the students and parents in their schools.