



# The Herald

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The following article is reprinted with permission from the North Carolina Association of Public Charter Schools. We are glad for the proliferation of good North Carolina charter schools and proud of our achievements; however, please know that test scores are not MCA's end goal, but only one marker along the way. In the end, we envision intelligent, virtuous citizens who pursue truth, goodness, and beauty and who lead in a constitutional republic, a goal which goes well above and beyond test scores.

## The State of North Carolina Charter Schools

By Eddie Goodall, Executive Director, NC Charter Schools Association

Three years ago, Sen. Richard Stevens of Wake County filed Senate Bill 8, "No Cap on Number of Charter Schools," which eventually removed the 15-year, 100 charter school limit. This anniversary is a good time to assess the bill's impact on North Carolina's K-12 public education as well as where the charter movement is headed.

First, let's look at the landscape today. There are 127 charters operating, with two facing impending closure. It should be noted that charters, by law, must meet minimum academic performance standards or face loss of the charter. Traditional public schools, or "district" schools, are not faced with such sanctions. Twenty-seven new charter boards will open schools this year, yielding 152 N.C. charters by this August.

Let's look at classroom achievement. Charters continued to outpace their district school cousins in 2012-2013 in educational value added, or growth (85 percent of charters versus 71 percent of district schools). Also, according to data from the N.C. Department of Public Instruction,



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39.7 percent of charter school students in grades 3-8 were proficient in math and reading, while only 32 percent of district school students earned proficiency. Charters must administer the same tests required of the district schools while many also use nationally normed exams which give a better view of students' progress when compared with their peers across America.



Let's look at operations. Charters operate with about 15 percent less funding (\$72 million a year) than that provided to district schools. Are parents still choosing charters? Yes. Twenty-two of the 25 schools that opened this past August had 75 percent or more of their year one enrollment limit reached and 18 of those exceeded 90 percent. There are 59,000 charter students in 127 schools. We have about 4 percent of public school students in charters versus 4.6 percent nationally. The students going to charters opening this year will likely increase our charter enrollment to that national average.

If you'd like to know more about North Carolina charter schools and The NC Charter Schools Association please visit [www. http://ncpubliccharters.org](http://ncpubliccharters.org).

*Eddie Goodall*

Executive Director, NC Public Charter Schools Association

OFFICE OF ADVANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT – MILLENNIUM CHARTER ACADEMY, CFA

500 Old Springs Road Mount Airy, NC 27030

336.789.7570 (p) 336.789.8445 (f) [www.mccademy.com](http://www.mccademy.com) [mca@mccademy.com](mailto:mca@mccademy.com)