



The State of Public Charter Schools in New Jersey

November 2015

*New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Charter Schools*



Agenda

NJ Charter Schools Overview

- Basic Facts
- NJ Charter Landscape

Charter School Oversight

- Office of Charter Schools' Role
- Performance Framework
- Key Policy Shifts

Charter School Data

- Enrollment
- Demographics
- Performance



NJ Charter Schools Overview



New Jersey Charter School Facts

- The *Charter School Program Act of 1995* authorized the Commissioner of Education to establish a charter school program.
- The state's charter school law was passed to give parents choices for their children's education. The law is intended to:
 - ✓ Improve student learning and achievement
 - ✓ Increase the availability of choice to parents and students when selecting a learning environment
 - ✓ Encourage the use of different and innovative learning methods
 - ✓ Establish a new system of accountability for schools
 - ✓ Make the school the unit for educational improvement
 - ✓ Establish new professional opportunities for teachers
- Charter schools are public schools:
 - ✓ Free and cannot charge tuition
 - ✓ Open-enrollment
- Charter schools operate differently from traditional public schools:
 - ✓ Authorized by the Commissioner of Education
 - ✓ Run on four to five year contracts
 - ✓ Governed by an independent non-profit board of trustees
 - ✓ Increased flexibility from regulations
 - ✓ Receive 90% of per pupil funds in certain aid categories



New Jersey Charter School Landscape

Mission

- The Office of Charter Schools (OCS) provides **New Jersey families** with **quality schools**.

Authorizer Overview

- The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is the **state education agency** and **sole authorizer** of charter schools in New Jersey.
- **Commissioner of Education**, appointed by **the Governor**, has final **authority** in the approval, opening, monitoring and renewal of charters in New Jersey.

Charter School Data

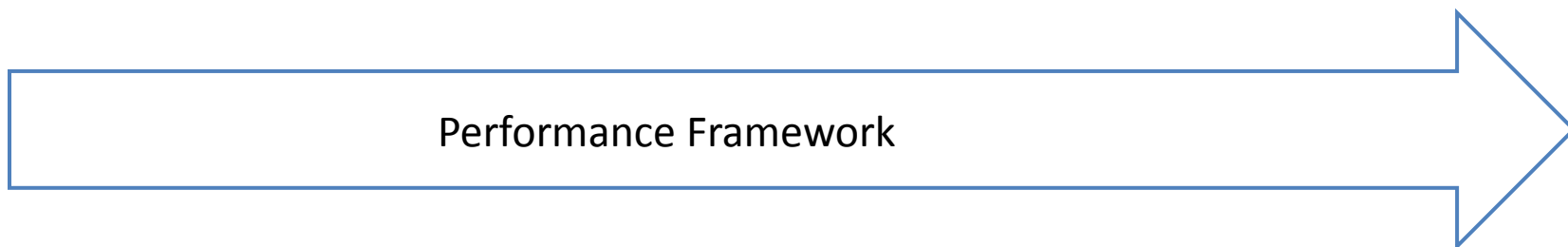
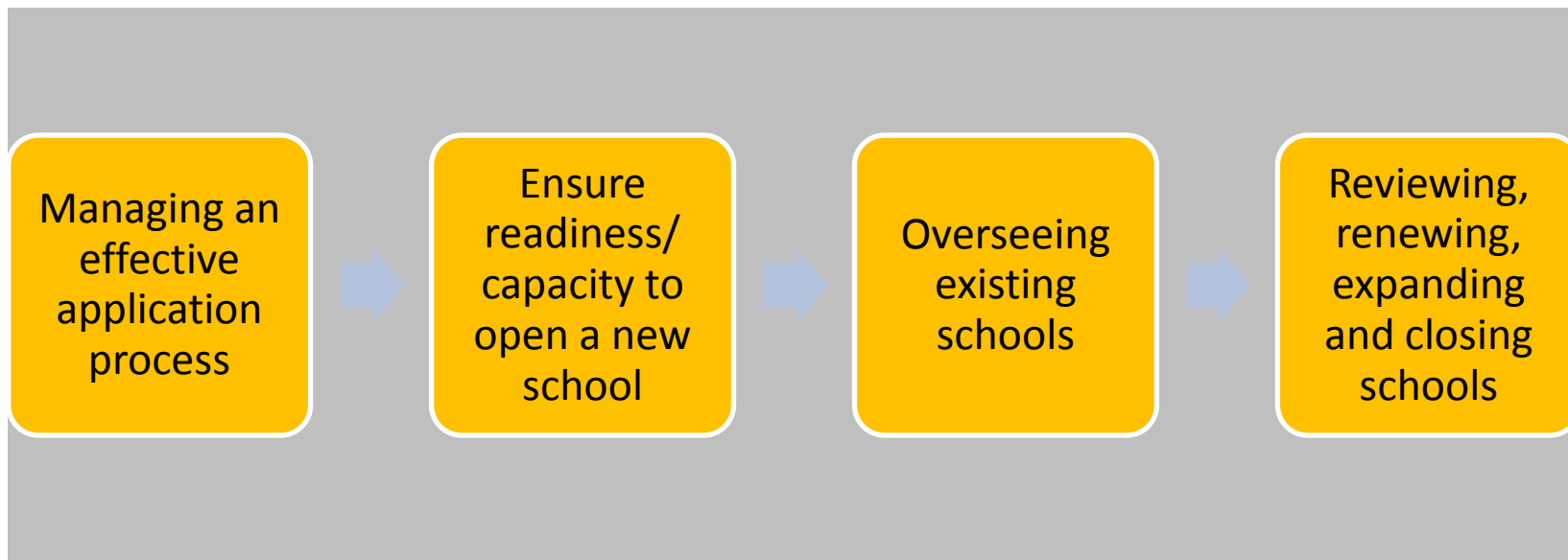
- **89** charter schools serving **41,424** students, in **41 cities** and **16 counties**.
- Most charter schools are **located** in our **urban centers** such as **Newark, Camden, Jersey City** and **Trenton**.



Charter School Oversight



Office of Charter Schools' Core Functions



The Performance Framework provides a consistent definition of school success, from application through renewal, that is aligned with DOE goals for all schools.



Performance Framework Guiding Questions

Academic	Financial	Organizational
Is the school's academic program a success?	Is the school financially viable?	Is the school equitable and organizationally sound?



Academic Tiers

Tier 1

- Replication or Expansion
(Schools must demonstrate consistent academic success and capacity to grow)

Tier 2

- Intervention considered

Tier 3

- Warning Letter
- Probation / Remedial Plan
- Non-Renewal or Revocation

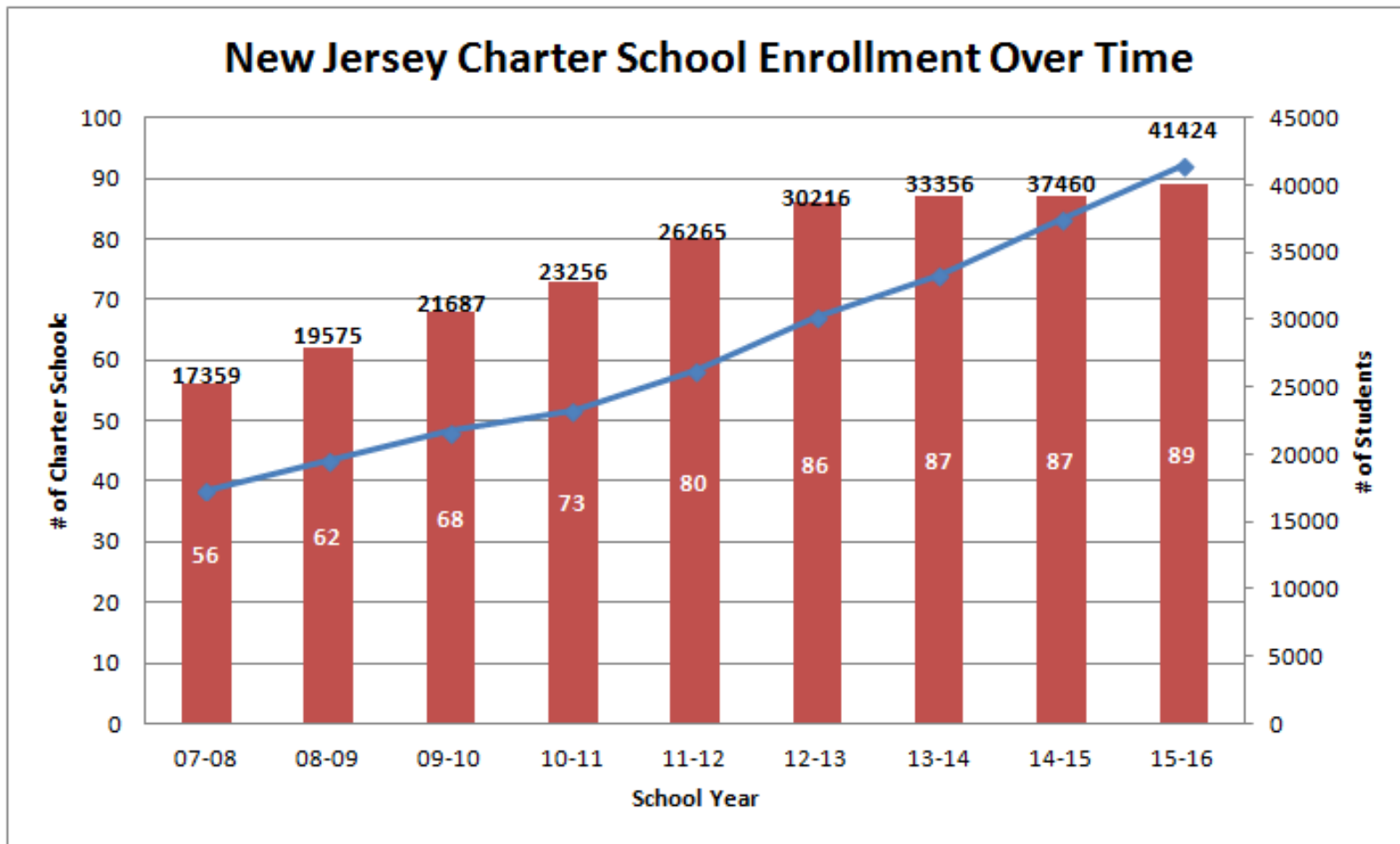


Key Policy Shifts Since 2010

- Shift the focus from compliance to student outcomes.
 - ✓ Increased capacity in Charter Office
 - ✓ Development of Performance Framework
- Increase charter autonomy
 - ✓ Exempted charters from the state's educator evaluation system
 - ✓ Streamline tenure redefined
 - ✓ Alternative route for charter certification
- Spotlight on high-need districts
- Focus on access and equity



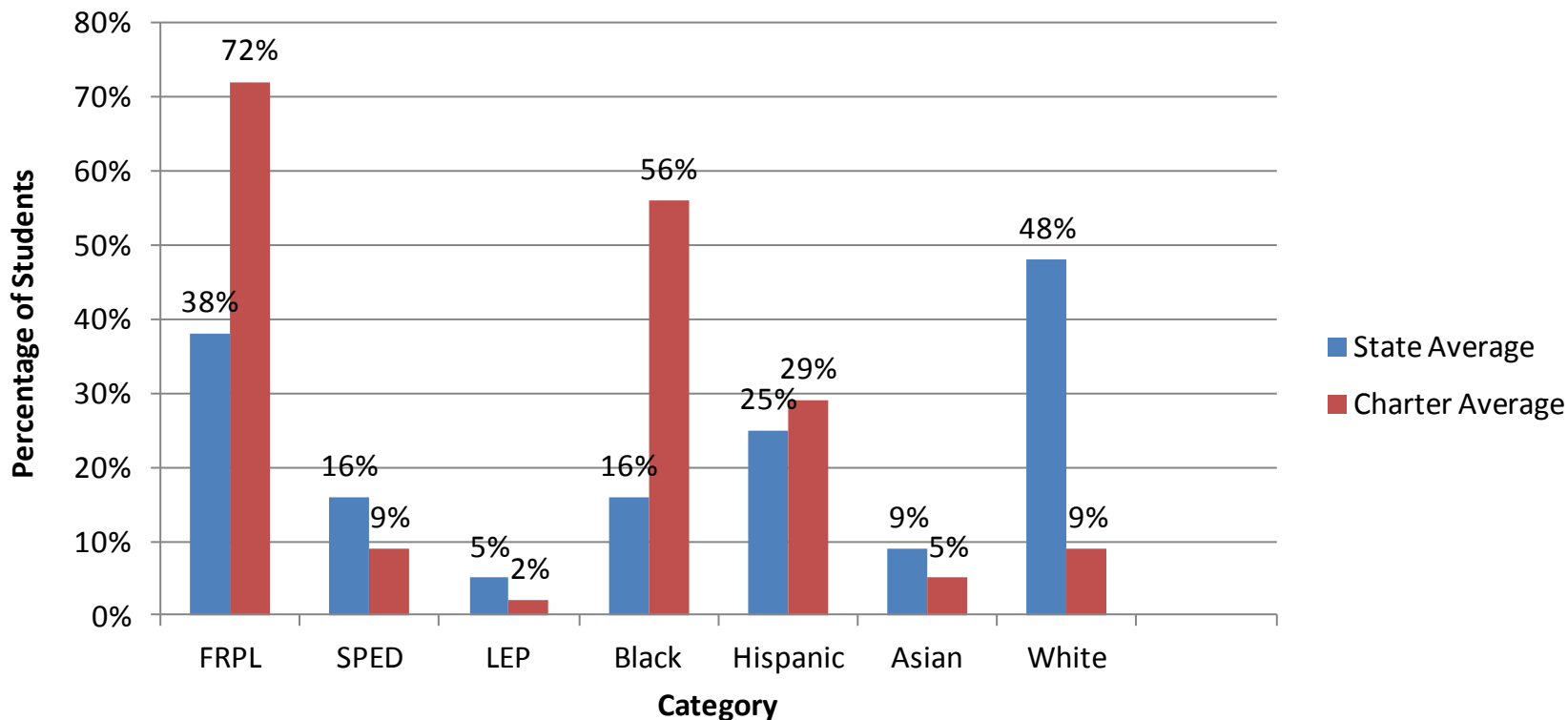
NJ Charter School Data



Since 2010, 39 new charter schools have opened and 17 have been closed.



New Jersey Public School Demographics 2014-15



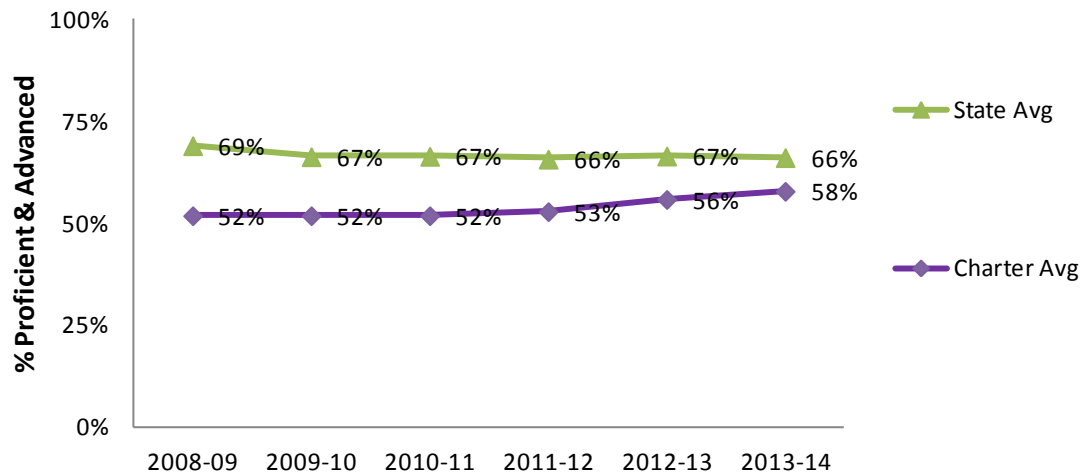
Charters are serving a disproportionate number of economically disadvantaged and Black and Hispanic students. However, charters are serving a smaller proportion of special education and LEP students.



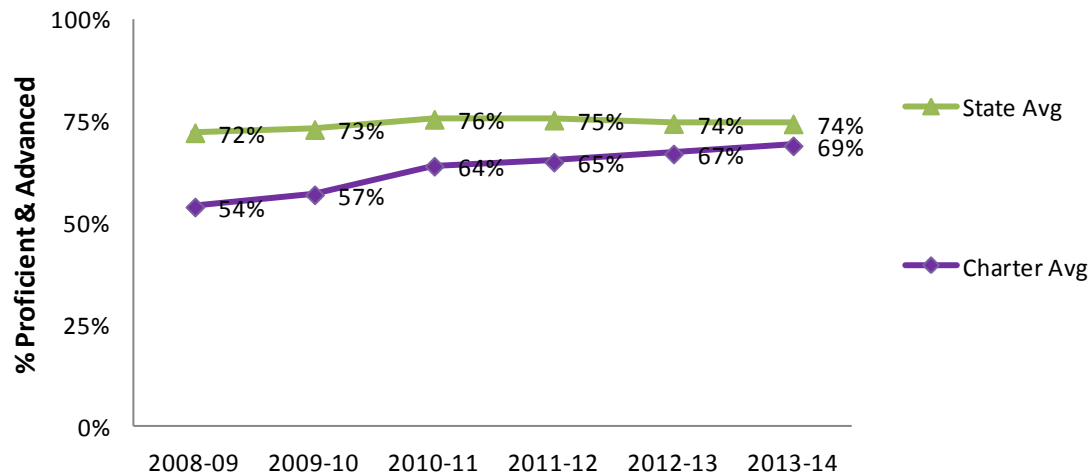
NJASK Results Grades 3-8

Over the last six years, charters have improved 6% points in LAL and 15% points in Math.

NJASK Language Arts and Literacy % Proficient & Advanced - Trends



NJASK Mathematics % Proficient & Advanced - Trends





HSPA Results High School

Over the last six years, charters have improved 17% points in LAL and 17% points in Math.

