KEYSTONE ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS FACT VS. FICTION

KEYSTONE ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS
212 NORTH THIRD STREET, SUITE 1B
HARRISBURG, PA 17101
(717) 547-6613
WWW.KEYSTONECHARTERS.ORG

: /KAPCSPA

: @KAPCS_CHARTERS

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS: FACT VS. FICTION

As of the 2015 -16 school year, nearly 100,000 students were enrolled in Pennsylvania's 162 public brick-and-mortar charter schools.

Since their inception in 1997, public brick-and-mortar charter schools have been mischaracterized and painted with a broad brush of underperformance and financial mismanagement.

The following information is to correct the record and separate fact from fiction about Pennsylvania's public brick-and-mortar charter schools.

FICTION	FACT
• Charter schools are private, for-profit schools that are operated by private entities.	• Charter schools are non-profit public schools that are required to follow the same laws and regulations as school districts.
• Charter schools do not offer special education services.	• Charter schools cannot and do not turn away students with disabilities.
• Charter schools are selective in which students are enrolled.	• Charter schools are required to use a lottery system to enroll students.
• Charter schools are not required to have certified teachers.	• Charter schools are required to have certified teachers.
• Charter schools do not provide 180 days of instruction.	• As public schools, charter schools are required to offer a minimum of 180 instructional days per school year.
• Charter schools are financially hurting school districts.	• Charter schools, on average, receive 25 percent less funding per student than school districts. o In fact, public charter school students have lost $100 million in funding over the last five years.
• Charter schools are not required to administer the state's standardized tests.	• As public schools, charter schools are required to administer the PSSAs and Keystone Exams.
• Charter schools are not required to follow the Right to Know Law.	• As public schools, charter schools are required to follow and adhere to the Right to Know Law.
• Charter schools receive more funding than they need.	• Charter schools receive less funding than school districts. Charter schools do not receive facility funding for their buildings and capital expenses.
• Charter schools are harming the public education system.	• Charter schools provide high-quality academic opportunities to students in locations where school districts are failing.

Background on Public Charter Schools

In 1997, the Pennsylvania General Assembly enacted into law legislation that authorized the creation of alternative public schools (charter schools) to provide students and their families with opportunities to access high-quality schools and educational programs.

The Charter School Law, Act 22 of 1997, was designed to "provide pupils and community members [the opportunity] to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure," to "improve pupil learning; increase learning opportunities for all [students]; encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods; create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site; provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and hold the schools established under this act accountable for meeting measurable academic standards and provide the school with a method to establish accountability systems."