

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



**Illinois Charter School
Annual Report**

January 2005

Illinois Charter School Annual Report Requirements

This report is submitted for the 2003-2004 school year in compliance with Section 27A-12 of the Illinois Charter Schools Law (105 ILCS 5/27A-12). This section reads in part:

On or before the second Wednesday of January 1998, and on or before the second Wednesday of January of each subsequent calendar year, the State Board shall issue a report to the General Assembly and the Governor on its findings for the school year ending in the preceding calendar year.

In the annual report required by this Section, the State Board shall (i) compare the performance of charter school pupils with the performance of ethnically and economically comparable groups of pupils in other public schools who are enrolled in academically comparable courses, (ii) shall review information regarding the regulations and policies from which charter schools were released to determine if the exemptions assisted or impeded the charter school in meeting their stated goals and objectives, and (iii) shall include suggested changes in State law necessary to strengthen charter schools.

This report is structured to provide an overview of charter schools in Illinois and to address the required elements.

Illinois Charter School Overview

Charter schools in Illinois are public schools of choice, selected by students and parents for their unique offerings. The Illinois statute governing charter schools was enacted in April 1996 as Article 27A of the School Code to encourage educational excellence and promote new options. In authorizing charter schools, 105 ILCS 5/27A-2 states that it is the intent of the General Assembly:

To create a legitimate avenue for parents, teachers and community members to take responsible risks and create new, innovative and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system. The General Assembly seeks to create opportunities within the public school system of Illinois for development of innovative and accountable teaching techniques. The provisions of this Article should be interpreted liberally to support the findings and goals of this Section and to advance a renewed commitment by the State of Illinois to the mission, goals and diversity of public education.

To help them meet these goals, charter schools are exempt from The School Code mandates except those specified in the Charter Schools Law (e.g., health/life safety, criminal background checks for employees, student discipline, child abuse reporting act, student records act, and state goals/standards/assessment). However, charter schools are not exempt from any civil rights laws or any federal special education requirements. They are accountable for meeting rigorous school content standards as defined in the Illinois Learning Standards, and students must participate in the state assessments. Thus, schools exchange accountability for flexibility. The orientation of charter schools varies widely. Some are designed to serve specific student populations such as the primary grades or dual language pupils. Others provide a specific curriculum such as Montessori, back-to-basics, or Direct Instruction. Yet others are designed with governance and parent involvement components that are integral to their mission.

During 2003-2004, there were 23 charter schools in operation in Illinois serving 13,000 students. In school year 1998-1999, charter schools reported serving 209 students with disabilities. This number has increased each year since, and for school year 2003-2004 schools reported serving 1,047 students with disabilities. A brief description of each charter school that operated in 2003-2004 is provided below. Table 1 follows and chronicles the history of Illinois charter schools from the 1996-1997 school year to the present.

Academy of Communications and Technology Charter School (*The Academy*) – Chicago 299

This school serves grades 6-12 and is located on the far west side of Chicago. Founded by two former Chicago public school teachers, the school has a college preparatory curriculum that incorporates a strong focus on communication arts and technological literacy. The Academy cultivates a small school environment and considers all community members (founders, teachers, parents, students, and neighbors) partners in creating a school that attempts to break the cycle of poverty.

Alain Locke Charter School (*Alain Locke*) – Chicago 299

Developed by 21st Century Urban Schools, a partnership of the Inner City Teaching Corps and the Ryan Foundation, this school is dedicated to bringing excellence in academic and social development to children in an under-resourced urban community and to help them achieve their full potential. There is a strong focus on early literacy and enrichment after-school activities to keep the children engaged in the learning process. The school will serve grades preK-12 at full implementation.

Betty Shabazz International Charter School (*Betty Shabazz*) – Chicago 299

Located in the Grand Crossing community on Chicago's South Side, this K-8 school balances core instruction with African-centered themes, arts and humanities, and technology and links students to local community resources as well as those in South Africa, Brazil, and Ghana. Parental involvement is central to this "maximum expectation" learning institution.

Chicago International Charter School (*Chicago International*) – Chicago 299

The Chicago Charter School Foundation runs this multi-campus school. The Foundation's mission is to operate K-12 charter schools that provide a rigorous, college preparatory education to every student.

Choir Academy Charter School (*Choir Academy*) – Chicago 299

Originally approved as the sister school to Passages under Global Villages Charter School, Choir Academy applied for and was granted its own charter for the 2003-2004 school year. The school will serve grades 4-12 at full implementation and seeks to provide students with the foundation for success in school and life by offering an in-depth academic and social development program using music as an organizing focus.

Fort Bowman Academy Charter School (*Ft. Bowman*) – Cahokia 187

Located in Cahokia District 187, this school is sponsored by Educating for the Future, a group founded by parents. It will serve grades K-12 at full implementation.

KIPP Ascend Academy Charter School (*KIPP*) – Chicago 299

Seeking to serve students in grades 5-8, this school provides a rigorous academic program to provide educationally underserved students with the knowledge skills and character

needed to succeed in top quality high schools, colleges and the competitive world beyond. Through the power of the joint commitment of the students, parents, and teachers supporting the education of the students, KIPP strives to break the cycle of poverty endemic in Chicago's poor neighborhoods and enable children to choose to enjoy the productive, successful and self-directed lifestyle of the well educated.

Lawndale Educational And Regional Network Charter School (*LEARN*) – Chicago 299

Serving students in grades K-8, this school provides a rigorous academic program utilizing the Core Knowledge curriculum and a low student-teacher ratio to prepare students for success in high school, college and beyond. LEARN also focuses on bringing parents into the school.

Mirta Ramirez Computer Science Charter School (*MRCSCS*) – Chicago 299

The mission of MRCSCS is to provide a rigorous and comprehensive high school education, integrated with practical and advance instruction in the latest computer technology. Students will have access to technical and scientific knowledge that bridges the “digital divide” and prepares at-risk students for the spectrum of post-secondary opportunities, such as attending college, continuing into advanced vocational training and professional certification, or finding meaningful employment and developing a successful career.

Noble Street Charter High School (*Noble Street*) – Chicago 299

Led by two former Chicago public high school teachers in partnership with the Northwestern University Settlement House, this charter school prepares urban youth in grades 9-12 to function successfully in society by emphasizing commitment to educational excellence; civic responsibility; and respect for the community, the environment, and others. A unique feature of the schools is the daily Advisory class, which covers study skills, career exploration and college preparation, conflict resolution and ethical behavior, ecological awareness, and physical fitness and nutrition. The school also requires students to do 20 hours of service learning per year.

North Kenwood/Oakland Charter School (*North Kenwood*) – Chicago 299

Affiliated with the University of Chicago's Center for School Improvement, this school provides an education to students in grades preK-8 while also serving as a school development center for urban teachers. The curriculum is based on the most current research in literacy and mathematics, and its technological infrastructure supports the curriculum.

North Lawndale Charter School (*North Lawndale*) – Chicago 299

This college preparatory high school integrates high academic expectations with community service, work experience, and technology education to encourage and enable students in the North Lawndale community to successfully attend college. The school serves grades 9-12 and offers block scheduling, extended study and intercessions in which students pursue learning goals through long-term projects.

Octavio Paz Charter School (*Octavio Paz*) – Chicago 299

Affiliated with the United Neighborhood Organization, this school serves students in grades K-8 and provides a highly structured curriculum based on the Direct Instruction method. It uses repetition, reinforcement, and mastery to improve student achievement and it provides a disciplined environment, high academic standards, and intensive English instruction. It serves a diverse student population from Pilsen and the Near West Side.

Passages Charter School (*Passages*) – Chicago 299

Originally approved as the sister school to Choir Academy under Global Villages Charter School, Passage applied for and was granted its own charter for the 2003-2004 school year. Serving pre-K through sixth grade students, Passages' primary mission is to provide immigrant and refugee children and their families educational programming geared toward high achievement standards and the needs of immigrant learners through a full-service school offering comprehensive social support services, a site for professional development opportunities for teachers from diverse backgrounds, and an educational environment built upon parental and community involvement and service.

Perspectives Charter School (*Perspectives*) – Chicago 299

This school provides a rigorous education program and a character development plan called A Disciplined Life for students in grades 6-12. This plan focuses on creating positive self-perceptions, building strong communication techniques, and helping students recognize their responsibility to make a valuable contribution to the community. Students experience internships, community service, and one-on-one mentoring travel programs.

Prairie Crossing Charter School (*Prairie Crossing*) – Woodland 50 and Fremont 79

Located in Grayslake, this school serves youngsters from two Lake County districts. The environment is the school theme. Prairie Crossing will serve grades K-8 at full implementation and is the only school for which the Illinois State Board holds the charter directly.

Robertson Charter School (*Robertson*) – Decatur 61

The result of a community member's desire to provide more resources to an underserved population, this school has a focus on at-risk students. The school will serve students in grades K-8 at full implementation.

Southern Illinois University East St. Louis Charter School (*SIU-E. St. Louis*) – East St. Louis 189

This school is a partnership between Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and the district and serves at-risk students in grades 9-12. Students have access to a wide range of health and social services as a result of the university connection.

Springfield Ball Charter School (*Springfield Ball*) – Springfield 186

This school has a theme of literacy and numeracy, operates an extended school year, and offers Spanish language instruction for all grades as an integral part of the curriculum. It is designed to serve grades preK-8 at full implementation.

Tomorrow's Builders Charter School (*Tomorrow's Builders*) – East St. Louis District 189

In association with YouthBuild USA, this school serves at-risk youth aged 14 through 21 to rebuild their lives through education, counseling, and leadership development while they are rebuilding the community by renovating abandoned buildings and constructing new units for low-income housing.

Triumphant Charter Middle School (*Triumphant*) – Chicago 299

This school serves grades 6-8 and is committed to transforming the average or below average student into a scholar poised for success in high school, college and beyond. Classes are of mixed age and ability. The curriculum includes foreign language, algebra, and integrated thematic, project-based humanities teams that explore identity, community and justice. Students enjoy the opportunity to take college courses at the nearby Olive Harvey City College and to take study trips throughout the state, country and world.

Young Women’s Leadership Charter School (*Young Women’s*) – Chicago 299

This school follows the small schools model and will serve grades 6-12 at full implementation. The focus is on a rigorous career and college preparatory curriculum emphasizing math, science, and technology; leadership; and personal and social development.

Youth Connection Charter School (*Youth Connection*) – Chicago 299

This is an alternative-type high school program operating at multiple sites throughout Chicago. Youth Connection Charter School students often enroll after months, and sometimes years, of being out of school. The educational environment emphasizes basic skills, life skills, social development, and job readiness.

Table 1. Illinois Charter Schools to date: Operation and Enrollments

Charter School	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	Est. 2004-2005
ACE Tech									125
Chicago Math & Science									225
Lincoln Charter School									50
Namaste									100
KIPP								83	170
Choir Academy								130	244
Mirta Ramirez								211	275
Passages								193	208
Tomorrow's Builders							45	117	160
Global Village						189	330	See ¹	
LEARN						94	108	113	285
Robertson						71	97	126	167
KEYS						23	25	See ²	
Young Women's					150	301	325	325	325
Governors State					64	67	See ³		
Alain Locke				132	130	175	289	367	413
Noble Street				127	256	365	465	455	482
Prairie Crossing				59	120	159	222	266	300
Thomas Jefferson				64	62	73	72	See ⁴	
SIU-E. St. Louis				100	100	112	100	100	112
Ft. Bowman			136	167	198	234	247	262	300
North Kenwood			113	165	171	269	313	255	392
North Lawndale			86	153	236	353	371	382	406
Octavio Paz			527	700	777	789	783	702	783
Betty Shabazz			266	246	273	285	295	303	315
Springfield Ball			175	236	278	259	360	402	421
Chicago International		1456	1552	1920	2366	2404	3079	4302	4717
Perspectives		117	130	148	149	154	154	161	276
The Academy		132	155	244	238	273	305	298	330
Nuestra America		100	117	150	179	171	See ⁵		
Youth Connection		1013	1475	1450	1550	1484	2554	3323	3700
Triumphant		160	170	170	176	185	195	200	200
Chicago Preparatory Charter School		113	See ⁶						
Peoria Alternative Charter School	75	100	100	See ⁷					

¹ This school's two campuses applied for and were granted separate charters for the 2003-2004 school year.

² Ceased operation at the end of the 2002-2003 school year.

³ Charter revoked at the end of the 2001-2002 school year.

⁴ Ceased operation at the end of the 2002-2003 school year.

⁵ School did not renew charter at the end of the initial charter period.

⁶ Ceased operation mid-year of the 1998-1999 school year.

⁷ School did not renew charter at the end of the initial charter period.

Tables 2A – 4B display additional information regarding the 23 charter schools in operation in Illinois throughout 2003-2004. Much of the charter school information is self-reported. Annual school report card data supplements information when available. Please note that two schools school failed to respond to requests for information.

Part of the flexibility of charter schools is the freedom to select their own school calendar and hours of operation apart from the district they serve. They can also select the grades or ages they wish to serve. Once that determination is made, enrollment is open across the district to all students of that age or grade range. If there is an enrollment larger than the potential number of students allowed, a lottery must be held. In many instances, the charter schools had more applicants than seats available.

Table 2A. Charter School Demographic Data for 2003-2004

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>Grades Served in 2003-2004</i>	<i>Full Planned Grade Range</i>	<i>Number of Sites</i>	<i>Lottery Use for 2003-2004</i>	<i>Number of Instructional Days</i>	<i>School Hours</i>
The Academy	6-12	6-12	1 site	130 applications, 100 new students	179 days	8:30-3:30
Alain Locke	PreK-5	K-12	1 site	363 applications, 96 new students	193 days	8:30-5:00
Betty Shabazz	K-8	K-8	1 site	100 applications, 28 new students	176	8:15-3:15
Chicago International	PreK-12	PreK-12	7 sites	2,305 applications, 993 new students	195	8:00-3:30
Choir Academy	4-8	4-12	1 site	130 applications, 40 new students	169	8:00-4:00
Ft. Bowman	K-11	K-12	1 site	156 applications, 34 new students	174 days	8:00-4:00
KIPP	5	5-8	1 site	150 applications, 90 new students	170 days	7:25-5:00
LEARN	K-8	K-8	1 site	273 applications, 26 new students	210 days	8:30-3:00
Mirta Ramireze	9	9-12	1 site	233 applications, 211 new students	182 days	8:55-4:00
Noble Street	9-12	9-12	1 site	324 applications, 176 new students	177 days	7:55-4:15
North Kenwood	PreK-8	PreK-8	1 site	283 applications, 62 new students	174 days	8:20-3:00
North Lawndale	9-12	9-12	1 site	355 applications, 110 new students	181 days	8:00-3:30
Passages	PreK-5	PreK-6	1 site	138 applications, 22 new students	185 days	9:00-3:30
Octavio Paz	K-8	K-8	2 sites	126 applications, 90 new students	176 days	8:10-2:40
Perspectives	6-12	6-12	1 site	397 applications, 43 new students	172 days	8:30-3:15
Prairie Crossing	K-6	K-8	1 site	168 applications, 50 new students	185 days	8:00-3:30

Table 2A (continued). Charter School Demographic Data for 2003-2004

Name of Charter School	Grades Served in 2003-2004	Full Planned Grade Range	Number of Sites	Lottery Use for 2003-2004	Number of Instructional Days	School Hours
Robertson	K-5	K-8	1 site	150 applications, 36 new students	181 days	8:30-3:10
SIU E. St. Louis	9-12	9-12	1 site	61 applications, 45 new students	176 Days	8:15-3:15
Springfield Ball	PreK-8	PreK-8	1 site	174 applications, 35 new students	188 days	9:00-3:30
Tomorrow's Builders	9-12	9-12	1 site	None needed	175 days	8:00-2:30
Triumphant	6-8	6-8	1 site	93 applications, 93 new students	184 days	8:00-4:00
Young Women's	7-12	6-12	1 site	175 applications, 60 new students	169 days	8:30-3:30
Youth Connection	9-12	9-12	24 sites	3,225 applications, 1,605 new students	177 days	9:00-3:30

Table 2B. Student Demographic Data for 2003-2004

Name of Charter School	Low Income % School and [District]	Limited English Proficient	% Drop Out	% Suspended	% Expelled	High School# Graduates
The Academy	88.6%	0.7%	5.9%	16.0%	0.0%	14
Alain Locke	88.6%	0.0%	N/A	9.0%	0.0%	N/A
Betty Shabazz	60.5%	0.0%	N/A	10%	0.0%	N/A
Chicago International	74.0%	3.5%	0.2%	28.0%	1.0%	82
Choir Academy	65.6%	1.6%	N/A	10.0%	0.4%	N/A
Ft. Bowman	29.1%	0.0%	0.0%	21.0%	0.0%	N/A
KIPP	96.4%	0.0%	N/A	28%	1%	N/A
LEARN	94.6%	0.0%	N/A	2.0%	0.0%	N/A
Mirta Ramirez	88.7%	6.9%	1.0%	16.0%	0.0%	NA
Noble Street	85.7%	2.1%	1.9%	12.0%	0.0%	81
North Kenwood	67.7%	0.0%	N/A	4.8%	0.0%	23
North Lawndale	91.9%	0.3%	3.4%	15.7%	Less than 1.0%	58
Octavio Paz	91.5%	11.9%	N/A	7%	0.0%	53
Passages	63.2%	23.8%	N/A	Less than 1.0%	0.0%	N/A
Perspectives	79.5%	1.9%	3.3%	20.0%	0.0%	20
Prairie Crossing	0.0%	0.0%	N/A	0.0%	0.0%	N/A
Robertson	90.4%	0.0%	N/A	19.8%	0%	N/A
SIU-E. St. Louis	76.5%	0.0%	4.1%	5%	3%	21
Springfield Ball	27.7%	0.0%	N/A	5.2%	Less than 1.0%	N/A

Table 2B (continued). Student Demographic Data for 2003-2004

Name of Charter School	Low Income % School and [District]	Limited English Proficient	% Drop Out	% Suspended	% Expelled	High School# Graduates
Tomorrow's Builders	100.0%	0.0%	128.9%	30%	Less than 1.0%	14
Triumphant	90.6%	0.5%	N/A	0.0%	0.0%	N/A
Young Women's	61.9%	0.6%	4.3%	11.0%	0.0%	60
Youth Connection	90.5%	0.6%	62.0%	2.0%	0.0%	864

Table 2C. Student Retention Data for 2003-2004

Name of Charter School	# Of Students Leaving for District Public School	# Of Students Leaving for Public School out of the District	# Of Students Who Did Not Return in 2003-2004 (other than graduates)
The Academy	7	4	40
Alain Locke	12	12	29
Betty Shabazz	14	6	20
Chicago International	183	61	422
Choir Academy	17	10	N/A
Ft. Bowman	2	17	19
KIPP	13	3	N/A
LEARN	2	10	12
Mirta Ramirez	17	7	N/A
Noble Street	29	14	12
North Kenwood	30	5	35
North Lawndale	41	6	58
Octavio Paz	35	13	27
Passages	23	10	27
Perspectives	17	5	14
Prairie Crossing	5	11	18
Robertson	6	8	14
SIU-E. St. Louis	15	2	26
Springfield Ball	4	7	24
Tomorrow's Builders	0	0	6
Triumphant	11	1	12
Young Women's	6	11	22
Youth Connection	44	53	864

With students attending charter schools by parent choice, the student body is determined by parent selection plus a lottery process when the school is oversubscribed. This selection process means that the district population is not necessarily mirrored in the school's demographics. Table 2D lists racial ethnic data for each school by district, as well as the district data.

Table 2D. Charter School Racial Ethnic Enrollment Data by Percentage for 2003-2004

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Native American</i>
The Academy	0.0%	98.3%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Alain Locke	0.0%	99.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Betty Shabazz	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Chicago International	5.3%	66.5%	26.8%	1.4%	0.1%
Choir Academy	5.7%	77.5%	14.8%	2.0%	0.0%
KIPP	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
LEARN	0.0%	96.4%	2.7%	0.9%	0.0%
Mirta Ramirez	2.5%	3.9%	93.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Noble Street	3.4%	12.2%	82.5%	1.7%	0.2%
North Kenwood	0.3%	99.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
North Lawndale	0.0%	90.8%	9.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Octavio Paz	0.0%	45.3%	54.4%	0.3%	0.0%
Passages	9.3%	30.6%	18.7%	40.9%	0.5%
Perspectives	1.9%	53.4%	44.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Triumphant	0.5%	98.0%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Young Women's	15.2%	66.6%	17.3%	0.9%	0.0%
Youth Connection	3.7%	69.1%	26.3%	0.5%	0.4%
Chicago 299	9.1%	49.7%	37.6%	3.3%	0.2%
Ft. Bowman	71.6%	28.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Cahokia 187	15.5%	82.9%	1.5%	0.1%	0.0%
Prairie Crossing	84.5%	1.9%	3.0%	9.1%	1.5%
Woodland District 50	69.1%	7.2%	13.5%	10.1%	0.2%
Fremont District 79	85.5%	0.9%	5.3%	7.4%	9.9%
Robertson	9.6%	90.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Decatur 61	52.1%	45.7%	1.2%	0.9%	0.1%
SIU – E. St. Louis	0.0%	99.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tomorrow's Builders	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
East St. Louis 189	0.1%	99.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Springfield Ball	62.2%	32.3%	1.7%	3.5%	0.2%
Springfield 186	58.9%	37.7%	1.2%	1.9%	0.2%

Charter schools must enroll students in the district of the appropriate age and grade range if parents choose that school. Students with disabilities must be accepted on the same basis as other students. If there is an oversubscription of students, then a lottery is held. Charter schools must observe all of the civil rights protections for students in their enrollment processes. Services included on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for children and youth with disabilities must be provided. Frequently, there is a contract between the charter school and the home school district to provide such services and the per capita tuition rate is reduced to cover the cost (e.g., 90% rather than 100% per capita tuition).

Table 2E. Students With Disabilities by Type in 2003-2004

Name of Charter School	Unduplicated Students With Disabilities	Learning Disabilities	Speech/Language	Emotional/Behavior	Mild to Moderate Mental Impairment	Traumatic Brain Injury	Visual Impairment	Hearing Impairment	Physical Impairment	Other Health Impairment	Autism	Developmental Disabilities	Moderate to Severe Mental Impairment
The Academy	38	28	6	3	6	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0
Alain Locke	29	13	7	15	4	0	0	0	3	3	0	1	0
Betty Shabazz	20	10	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chicago Int'l	245	225	70	20	0	0	0	1	60	0	0	0	0
Choir Academy	25	16	4	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ft. Bowman	24	11	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
KIPP	10	7	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LEARN	15	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0
Mirta Ramirez	30	27	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Noble Street	50	50	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
North Kenwood	*	19	11	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
N. Lawnwood	30	28	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Octavio Paz	17	19	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Passages	8	7	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Perspectives	24	20	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prairie Crossing	31	10	18	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	1	0	0
Robertson	11	5	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SIU E. St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Springfield Ball	47	16	26	1	1	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	0
Tomorrow's Builders	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Triumphant	24	14	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Young Womens	*	39	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
Youth Connection	301	250	0	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

According to the Charter Schools Law in effect for 2003-2004, instructional staff can either hold Illinois teacher certification as required in order to teach in traditional public schools or have a bachelor's degree **and** at least five years of relevant experience **and** pass the state tests of basic skills and relevant subject matter. Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, at least 50% of the instructional staff in Chicago charter schools established after July 2003 shall hold teaching certificates. In the 2006-2007 school year, the minimum number of certified instructional staff increases to 75%.

Administrative personnel are not required to have certification or particular qualifications.

Table 3A. 2003-2004 Instructional Staff Certification Status

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>Certified</i>	<i>Total Instructional Personnel</i>
The Academy	14	23
Alain Locke	12	16
Betty Shabazz	5	14
Chicago International	186	232
Choir Academy	6	18
Ft. Bowman	15	16
KIPP	4	5
LEARN	3	6
Mirta Ramirez	5	11
Noble Street	24	30
North Kenwood	21	24
North Lawndale	14	25
Octavio Paz	1	45
Passages	5	11
Perspectives	10	13
Prairie Crossing	16	28
Robertson	6	6
SIU-E. St. Louis	7	7
Springfield Ball	18	18
Tomorrow's Builders	4	4
Triumphant	2	12
Young Women's	27	28
Youth Connection	62	124

Table 3B. 2003-2004 Administrative Staff Certification Status

<i>Name of Charter School</i>	<i>Certified</i>	<i>Total Administrative Personnel</i>
The Academy	1	3
Alain Locke	2	4
Betty Shabazz	1	1
Chicago International	7	37
Choir Academy	0	4
Ft. Bowman	1	4
KIPP	0	3.5
LEARN	1	1
Mirta Ramirez	0	3
Noble Street	0	9
North Kenwood	2	2
North Lawndale	0	3
Octavio Paz	3	4
Passages	0	2
Perspectives	0	8
Prairie Crossing	1	2
Robertson	1	1
SIU-E. St. Louis	0	1
Springfield Ball	1.5	1.5
Tomorrow's Builders	0	1
Triumphant	2	2
Young Women's	0	8
Youth Connection	15	23

Charter School Student Performance

Schools have accountability agreements with the charter authorizers and are ultimately accountable at renewal time. However, charter schools are not exempt from state testing requirements. Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) results for five years are presented in Table 4A, along with the districts' composite results; four years of Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE) data are available and presented in Table 4B. The notation "Not applicable" indicates that the school did not have any tested grade levels that year or was not open that year. The district total reflects the district's percent of meets and exceeds.

Table 4A. Comparison of Overall ISAT Test Performance 2000-2004

<i>Charter School/District Name</i>	<i>Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2000</i>	<i>Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2001</i>	<i>Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2002</i>	<i>Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2003</i>	<i>Percentage Meet + Exceeds 2004</i>
The Academy	*	15.0	29	21.6	40.1
Alain Locke	Not applicable	Not applicable	14	32.4	59.9
Betty Shabazz	24	34.1	44	50.9	43.2
Chicago International	42	44.6	45	57.2	56.2
Choir Academy	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	37.6
KIPP	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	55.0
LEARN	Not applicable	Not applicable	46	43.6	53.8
North Kenwood	51	53.9	51	54	61.3
Octavio Paz	21	28.6	43	45.5	61.3
Passages	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	62.5
Perspectives	26	41.0	50	38.5	45.2
Triumphant	16	19.7	29	28.1	35.1
Young Women's	Not applicable	Not applicable	57	45.9	40.8
Chicago District 299	36.9	38.3	39.5	41.9	45.3
Ft. Bowman	61	42.1	42	54.8	59.7
Cahokia District 187	39.5	39.4	41.1	44.9	51.6
Prairie Crossing	Not applicable	96.0	95	91.1	91.7
Woodland Dist. 50	73.6	75.4	75.9	74.8	74.5
Fremont District 79	79.3	81.9	82.1	81.7	84.0
Robertson	Not applicable	Not applicable	30	52.7	47.9
Decatur District 61	53	52.9	50.7	52.8	53.7
Springfield Ball	75	64.4	67	74.5	63.3
Springfield Dist. 186	51.8	51.8	53.2	54.5	54.7
State	62.7	63.1	62.7	63.9	65.9

Table 4B. Comparison of Overall PSAE Test Performance 2001-2004

Charter School/District Name	Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2001	Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2002	Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2003	Percentage Meets + Exceeds 2004
The Academy	12.0	10.7	12.1	12.9
Chicago International	18.1	19.6	27.4	34.6
Mirta Ramirez	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Noble Street	Not applicable	45.2	38.5	50.7
North Lawndale	14.8	15.0	9.7	17.1
Perspectives	17.6	25.5	18.1	18.0
Young Women's	N/A	N/A	26.9	13.6
Youth Connection	11.1	8.9	19.3	19.1
Chicago District 299	29.3	29.9	29.8	32.0
SIU-E. St. Louis	3.2	3.1	7.8	4.5
Tomorrow's Builders	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
East St. Louis Dist. 189	13.1	17.7	17.7	14.1
State	55.7	56.1	55.2	56.4

New Schools for 2003-2004

KIPP and Mirta Ramirez charter schools (Chicago District 299) were opened for the 2003-2004 school year. In addition, Choir Academy and Passages (Chicago District 299) began operating individually under separate charters after having operated together as Global Villages since the beginning of the 2001 school year.

Denied Proposals

Each of the following applied to their respective districts for a five-year charter and, based on noncompliance with the Charter Schools Law, their requests were denied at the local level. Upon appeal to and review by ISBE staff, the State Superintendent found the proposals were not in compliance and thus did not overturn the district denials.

- Dynamic Learning Charter School*** – Mattoon Community Unit District 2
- Chicagoland Science, Art and Language Institute Charter School*** - Elgin District U-46
- Learning Success Charter School*** –Chicago Public School District 299
- East St. Louis Preparatory Charter School*** – East St. Louis District 189
- Aurora Academic-Technology Charter School*** - Aurora East School District 131
- Children's Academy Charter School*** – Cahokia Community Unit District 187

Charter Renewals

Charter agreements may be renewed by the authorizer at the end of the charter term unless the school meets one or more of the following criteria for non-renewal or revocation of a charter as noted above. Several charter schools participated in the charter renewal process over the spring and summer of 2004 and charter renewals were issued for four schools. Chicago Public School district issued three renewal charters for ***Alain Locke, Noble Street, and ACT*** Charter Schools. East St. Louis District 189 issued a renewal for ***SIU East St. Louis Charter School*** .

Charter School Use of Flexibility

The Charter Schools Law exempts charter schools from most School Code of Illinois requirements except those deemed essential. The rationale for this exemption is consistent with the purpose of the law, which is to ensure that charter schools have maximum flexibility for serving students while being held accountable for results. Major decisions such as curriculum, service delivery, and program options are left to the discretion of the charter school governing board rather than being subject to state school mandates.

As in the last several years, the responses from charter schools operating throughout 2003-2004 specified that having personnel flexibility served their school and students well. Nearly every response noted that the current law allows schools to hire teachers regardless of certificate status (although they must meet qualification requirements as outlined in the Charter Schools Law). Another area of flexibility noted by all the schools was the ability to design curriculum independent from the school district.

Other areas of flexibility reported were:

- Flexibility with administrator certification.
- Autonomy to set educational priorities.
- Autonomy to design curriculum independent from the school district.
- Autonomy to allow teaching methods that are new or different from the school district.
- Autonomy to design different, additional performance standards.
- Autonomy to set unique school and school year schedules.
- Autonomy to manage fiscal affairs independent of the school district.
- Autonomy to set employee compensation rates and/or provide bonuses.
- Autonomy to contract with external providers for various services.

Statutory Changes Suggested by Charter Schools

Facility and Finance Needs

- Allocate additional operating funds to charter schools beyond the per capita assistance from the authorizing district.
- Provide facilities financing.
- Provide state grants to all schools, including those in renewal periods.
- Increase the amount of state start-up grants to up to \$1,000 per enrolled student.
- Provide transportation funding.
- Mandate 100% per capita funding.
- Allow loan repayment after the initial charter term.
- Allow for-profit management companies for all schools.
- Allocate funds to provide incentive grants to districts that approve charter schools.
- Appropriate monies sufficient to fully fund state start-up grants as well as transition impact aid to districts.
- Prohibit districts from charging rent for district buildings used by charter schools.

Administrative Needs

- Extend the charter renewal period to up to 10 years.
- Allow ISBE to authorize charter schools without first presenting to local districts.
- Allow multiple campuses for all schools.
- Allow employees children to attend regardless of their home district.
- Allow additional enrollment preferences such as gender, ethnicity and economic status to create a more diverse environment.
- Remove the requirement that charter schools give the same standardized tests as the authorizing district.
- Eliminate the teacher certification requirements included in Public Act 093-0003.
- Increase the cap to allow more charter schools to open.
- Allow for-profit management companies for all schools.
- Facilitate charter schools ability to join special education cooperatives.
- Create an independent authorizer for Illinois charter schools.
- Allow additional enrollment preferences, such as targeting immigrant and refugee populations.
- Allow extra 15 days for district review of proposals. (27A-8)

State Board of Education Charter School Legislative Agenda

- Amend response timelines from 14 days to 30 days to allow for adequate time to review charter school proposals.
- Set an October 1 deadline for the submission of new charter school proposals to the local districts in order to provide adequate time for the completion of the approval process prior to the beginning of the next school year.
- In addition to school employees, require criminal background investigations for board members of the charter school.
- Add the requirement of a conflict of interest statement for charter school board members.
- Limit proposal submission for a new charter school to one time per school year.

In summary, charter schools have fulfilled the intention of the General Assembly to create an avenue for parents, teachers, and community members to create new and more flexible ways of educating children within the public school system.

ADDENDUM 1

Table 6. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for charter schools and local districts

<i>Charter School/District Name</i>	<i>State test(s) taken</i>	<i>Is this school/district making AYP?</i>	<i>Is this school/district making AYP in Reading?</i>	<i>Is this school/district making AYP in Mathematics</i>	<i>Has this school/district been identified for School/District Improvement?</i>
The Academy	ISAT/PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Alain Locke	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Betty Shabazz	ISAT	No	No	No	No
Chicago International	ISAT/PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Choir Academy	ISAT	No	No	No	No
KIPP	ISAT	No	No	Yes	No
LEARN	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Mirta Ramirez	PSAE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Noble	PSAE	No	Yes	No	Yes
North Kenwood	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
North Lawndale	PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Octavio Paz	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Passages	ISAT	No	No	Yes	No
Perspectives	ISAT/PSAE	No	Yes	No	Yes
Triumphant	ISAT	No	No	No	Yes
Young Women's	ISAT/PSAE	No	Yes	No	No
Youth Connection	PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Chicago District 299	ISAT/PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Ft. Bowman	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Cahokia District 187	ISAT/PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Robertson	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Decatur District 61	ISAT/PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
SIU-E. St. Louis	PSAE	No	No	No	No
Tomorrow's Builders	PSAE	No	No	No	No
East St. Louis Dist. 189	ISAT/PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Springfield Ball	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Springfield Dist. 186	ISAT/PSAE	No	No	No	Yes
Prairie Crossing	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Woodland Dist. 50	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Fremont District 79	ISAT	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Fourteen schools did not make AYP: five elementary schools, five high schools, and four elementary/high school combined. All fourteen schools are located in districts that did not made AYP. Seven schools made AYP while the districts in which they are located did not. One school and its two resident districts all made AYP and one school had no students at the grade level tested. Seven schools have been identified for School Improvement.

ADDENDUM 2 - School Improvement status – Charter Schools (2004-2005 school year)

Table 7A. Charter Schools in 2004 Academic Watch Status

School	First Year in Watch Status	In School Improvement Status	School Improvement Status
The Academy	Yes	Yes	Choice & SES
Chicago International	Yes	Yes	Choice & SES
North Lawndale	Yes	Yes	Choice & SES
Perspectives	Yes	Yes	Choice & SES
SIU-East St. Louis	Yes	No	
Triumphant	Yes	Yes	Corrective Action
Youth Connections	Yes	Yes	Choice & SES

Table 7B. Charter Schools in 2004 Academic Early Warning Status

School	First Year in AEWS Status	In School Improvement Status	School Improvement Status
Noble Street	Yes	Yes	Choice
Young Women's	Yes	No	

Table 7C. Charter Schools in 2004 School Improvement Status

School	School Improvement Status	Years in School Improvement Status
The Academy	Choice & SES	2
Chicago International	Choice & SES	2
Noble Street	Choice	1
North Lawndale	Choice & SES	2
Perspectives	Choice & SES	2
Triumphant	Corrective Action	4
Youth Connections	Choice & SES	2

Charter Schools receiving Title I funds and in School Improvement status can request assistance from System of Support at ISBE.