ENGINES OF OPPORTUNITY

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF TEXAS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

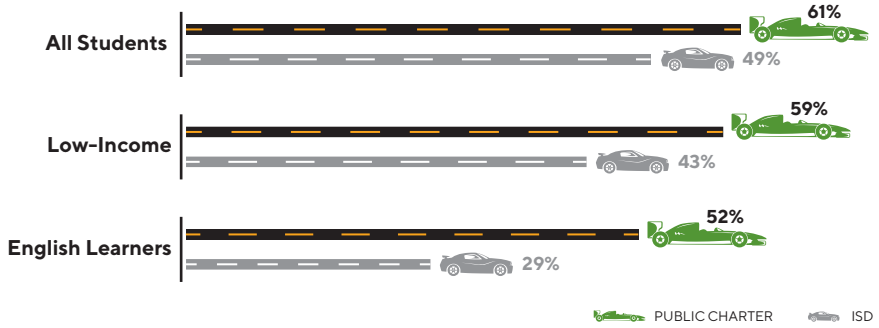
Public charter schools rev up great careers and make Texas more prosperous.

NEW ON-RAMPS — *Charter Schools Increase College Access*

Public charter school students enroll in college at a rate **about 12 percentage points higher** than students in traditional districts. The gap has widened over the last decade.[1]

This is remarkable because public charter schools enroll *more* low-income students and English learners.

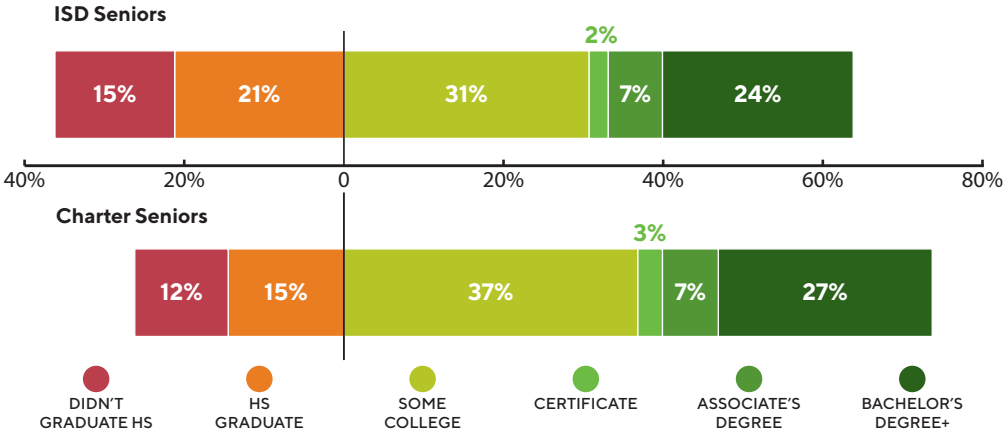
College Enrollment for Texas HS Grads



HIGH GEAR — *Charter Graduates Earn More Degrees*

Educational Attainment of Texas High School Seniors

Percentage of HS Seniors By Outcome



We analyzed degree attainment for students continuously enrolled in a public high school from 2011 to 2014.[2] These students are now in their late 20s.

Even after controlling for student demographics, **about 74% of public charter school students** completed at least some college by 2023 — compared to 64% of non-charter students.

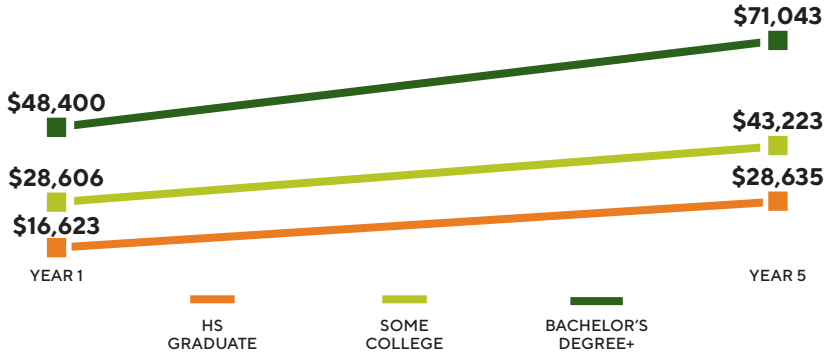
HIT THE GAS — *Credentials Power Higher Wages*

Better academic preparation leads to higher earnings for public charter school graduates. Completing at least some college means earning:

- **$12,000** to **$32,000** more upon entering the workforce, versus a high school degree alone.[3]
- A total of **$61,000** to **$187,000** more over the first five years in the workforce.

Public charter schools drive opportunity towards self-sufficient adults, stable families, and a more prosperous Texas.

Texas Average Annual Wages By Years In Workforce



UP TO

$663 million

ADDED TO THE TEXAS ECONOMY ANNUALLY

Nearly half the state's alternative education campuses are public charter schools, including dropout recovery programs for a second chance at a high school diploma.

From 2000 to 2023, about **103,700 students graduated** from public charter school dropout recovery programs.[4]

Earning a high school degree is transformative. On average, an adult with a high school degree in Texas earns **$6,400 more annually** than a high school dropout.[3]

The Texas economy could be up to $663 million larger annually thanks to dropout recovery public charter schools.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) SPOTLIGHT

In the Rio Grande Valley, graduates from Vanguard Academy can immediately start high-paying jobs as welders. Others become certified nursing assistants, phlebotomy technicians, and firefighters.

Still others complete high school with Associate's degrees already in hand — well on their way to careers in biology and engineering.

Vanguard Academy is a small district with just three high schools, but it's among the public charter schools punching above weight in CTE. It offers 11 programs — including health science, business entrepreneurship, culinary studies, agriculture, and information technology — and embeds career readiness from seventh grade onwards.

Diana Ybañez, director of CTE and college, career, and military readiness, carefully tracks every student's progress and focuses on the state's highest-demand fields. More than 75% of Vanguard's most recent graduating class completed an industry certification, which is 40% more than the statewide average.[5]

"Our CTE programs of study are intentionally aligned with the workforce needs of our region and our state, ensuring that students graduate with the skills employers are actively seeking," Ms. Ybañez said. "We are preparing students not just for graduation, but for success in the careers our economy needs most."

"We are preparing students not just for graduation, but for success in the careers our economy needs most," Ms. Ybañez says.

Texas public charter schools put more students in the driver's seat and ask, "Where do YOU want to go?"

Data Sources

1. *College enrollment data for standard accountability campuses from TEA's Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR)*
2. *We applied a covariate balancing methodology to minimize differences based on student demographics alone. See Data Appendix for more details*
3. *2023 Earnings data from the University of Houston's Education Research Center*
4. *Based on an analysis of student-level year over year data from the University of Houston's Education Research Center*
5. *2024-25 Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR)*

Questions? Contact communications@txcharterschools.org