

# EXPANDING HORIZONS

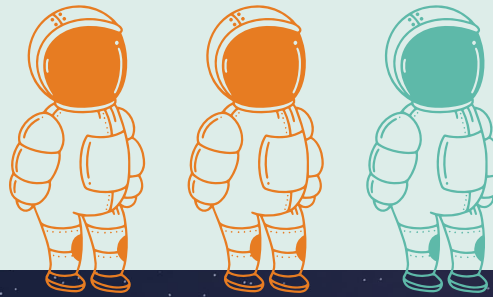
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF TEXAS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Far too many Texas students lack access to high-quality public schools that work for them.

In 1995, the state legislature launched a mission to expand the horizons for these students. Lawmakers created public charter schools – free to attend and open to all – so more children could find the right fit and reach their potential.

# 576,000

Texas high school students are zoned to an ISD campus rated C or lower.



But nearly **TWO THIRDS** of those students have access to an A or B-rated public charter high school.



Our geographic systems analysis of Texas high-school age students shows that 575,834 (34% of all students) are residentially assigned to an ISD campus rated C or lower.<sup>1</sup>

**We then asked:** How many of those students live within a 15-minute drive of an A or B-rated public charter high school? The result was eye-opening: **368,305 (or 64%)** have an easy trajectory and convenient access.

## Voyaging to Success Across the State

Texas public charter schools help more students make the right journey for *them*. That leads to improved student outcomes:

- Better college and career readiness
- More industry certificates and college degrees
- Higher wages that make Texas more prosperous<sup>2</sup>

Metro Area	Students Zoned to a HS Rated C or Lower	How Many Have Access to an A or B-Rated Charter
San Antonio	89,329	83%
Dallas/Ft. Worth	120,034	81%
Austin	53,463	64%
Houston	96,584	62%
El Paso	14,333	57%
Statewide	575,834	64%

But with 70,000 students on charter waitlists, expanding their horizons matters more than ever.<sup>4</sup>





## More Alamo City Students On the Path to Success

In the San Antonio metro area, about 53,800 students are zoned to an A or B-rated ISD high school. But an **additional** 74,500 students live within a 15-minute drive of an A or B-rated public charter high school.

In other words, public charter schools have more than doubled access to high-performing public high schools — expanding it from 38% of students to 90% of students.

Highly-rated public charter high schools create valuable opportunities for the children who most need them. Compared to their A and B-rated ISD counterparts, they enroll nearly twice as many low-income students (60% vs. 35%) and five times as many English learners (35% vs. 7%).<sup>3</sup>

Many public charter schools emphasize college access and career readiness. At the School of Science and Technology, for example, students choose to focus on engineering, biomedical science, or computer science.



## Public Charter Schools Lead to New Possibilities



**Danny Martinez**

Graduate, KIPP Texas and UT Permian Basin

“If it were not for a public charter school such as KIPP, I would have ended up in jail or dead in the streets. I beat the odds by graduating from high school and now from college with a Bachelor’s in Petroleum Engineering.”



**Ana Abundis**

Parent, Triumph Public High Schools

“My daughter started showing excitement and commitment. Most importantly, she started believing in herself again. She graduated with honors, and now she’s in college pursuing her child psychology degree.”



**Angel Anthony Cordero**

Graduate, Da Vinci School for Science and the Arts and UTEP

“I got more access to scholarships, finishing my high school career with \$1.26 million in offers across 30 different schools where I was accepted.”



**Dr. Atikah Shemshack**

Superintendent, Jubilee Academies

“Every day, Jubilee students across South Texas are proving what is possible with the right support. High schoolers are earning associate degrees and their industry-based certifications before they graduate. Each success adds up to something powerful.”

**All Texas students can reach the stars. It’s time to make sure that every child has access to a great public school.**

### Data Notes

1. We overlaid all standard accountability Texas high school attendance zone boundaries on US Census demographic data. For more details, see the [Data Appendix](#).
2. See our fact sheet [Engines of Opportunity](#) for our findings about the impact of public charter schools on student outcomes
3. TEA’s 2025 Academic Accountability Report
4. 2025 TEA Charter School Waitlist Report

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