



For Immediate Release

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55,000 Students are on Texas Charter School Waitlists

65% of charter campuses have more applicants than available seats

AUSTIN -- More than 55,000 students are on waitlists to attend public charter schools in the state, according to figures released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

There are 552 charter campuses -- or 65% of all charter schools -- where the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats.

The numbers show just how many families want more opportunities within the public education system. If all 55,059 students on public charter school waitlists were in their own school district, it would be the 16th largest district in Texas -- about equivalent in size to El Paso ISD.

Parents are seeking out public charter schools in part because even the highest-rated ISD campuses have significant achievement gaps separating White students from their peers of color. [Research shows that charters are closing, and even reversing, these gaps.](#)

The data was released as part of the state's first ever annual report on public charter school applications. The report is required every spring after the passage in 2019 of Senate Bill 2293.

Demand for public charter schools is highest in kindergarten, with 7,434 students on waitlists. At least 5,000 students are on charter waitlists for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, and sixth grade.

At 15 different charter school districts, there aren't enough seats to accommodate 1,000 or more students who want to attend.

Dolores Amaro, a mother in Houston, remembers what it was like searching for the right school environment for her children -- and waiting to see if they would receive seats at Harmony Public Schools.

"My children did have to wait, but we are so lucky they were ultimately able to begin attending," she said.

One of Amaro's children graduated from Harmony and two others are current students. She feels fortunate to have found the right school that meets their needs.

"I have a son with a disability who has a 504 plan. His charter school is so dedicated to his success," Amaro said. "They have specific processes and updates that make us feel empowered in his educational trajectory."

To arrange an interview with a charter school leader, a parent, or TPCSA CEO Starlee Coleman, please contact Brian Whitley at bwhitley@txcharterschools.org.

Read the TEA waitlist report here:

https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/2020_charter_School_waitlist_report.pdf