

Charter School Fact Sheet Methodology Notes



In March 2015, Equip for Equality released comments about the charter school reauthorization process and informational fact sheets about specific charter schools that will be considered for reauthorization by Chicago Public Schools in 2015 or 2016. The data from these fact sheets come from three sources: 1) a compilation of data posted by CPS on its website; 2) EFE review of charter school admissions documents, websites, and discipline policies; and 3) analysis of student enrollment data obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests.

In compiling this information, EFE followed the following procedures:

- Schools were categorized as elementary or high school, with middle schools counted at elementary schools.
- Schools were categorized as Alternative, Career, Charter, Citywide Option, Classical, Contract, Magnet, Military, Neighborhood, Regional Gifted, Selective, Small, or Special Education based on the descriptions from CPS.edu.
- For analysis, charter schools were compared to groups of CPS schools:
 - “Comparison” schools were Neighborhood, Magnet, and Small schools.
 - “Selective” schools were Career, Classical, Military, Regional Gifted, Selective Enrollment schools, which all have test score entrance criteria.
- Alternative and citywide option schools (both charter and non-charter) were analyzed separately and excluded from the general analysis.
- “SY13” refers to the 2012-13 school year; “SY14” refers to the 2013-14 school year.
- “SWD” refers to a student with a disability who has an IEP.
- Percent of students who un-enroll from the school for *any reason*. CPS produced a count of students who were removed from the roster at each school at any point between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013 (for the 2012-13 school year, for example). This un-enrollment rate is a count of students who un-enrolled, divided by the fall 20th day enrollment (e.g. October 1, 2012).
- Fall enrollments are as of the count day (20th day). Spring enrollments are as of the last day of school the following June.
- “Net change in student body” is a comparison of the fall to spring enrollment counts. This is the count of students in the fall, less students who left, plus new students who enrolled. For SWD counts, differences could be caused by both students (un)enrolling, and students being found eligible or ineligible for an IEP.

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- “Change in Percent SWD” is absolute change in the percent of the student body that has an IEP from the 20th day to the last day. If 15.3% of students have an IEP on the fall count day, and 13.9% have an IEP on the last day, the change is -1.4%.
- Data Attendance and behavior criteria for promotion come from an EFE review of charter school policies. “Yes” indicates that there is a concrete criteria for promotion beyond a generic statement that “attendance may be considered.”
- Expulsion rate is expulsions per 1,000 students as reported by CPS.
- “Quality Scores” and test data come from the publicly released School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) dataset from CPS based on 2013-14 information. Elementary test score information is NWEA data; ACT for high schools.
- “Sweat the small stuff discipline code” refers to discipline policies that require specific consistent consequences for low-levels of behavior that aggregate mechanically to more significant punishments such as detentions and suspensions, often referred to as “demerits.”
- “Use restorative practices” means that the school code of conduct refers to the use of peer mediation, peace circles, or peer juries
- “Zero-tolerance for gangs or fights” means that the written code of conduct requires a minimum of at least 1 day of out of school suspension for *either* fighting (general fighting with peers) or a gang offense.

If you have specific questions about any of the information contained on the fact sheets, please contact Charlie Wysong, Staff Attorney at Equip for Equality, at Charlie@EquipforEquality.org, or (312) 895-7340.