

2018-19 Annual Report



MCCCSA
Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers

**Vision.
Creativity.
Excellence.**

Dear Friends,

After a quarter century with thousands of happy families and successful graduates, public charter schools are delivering the educational results Michigan needs.

Created to offer free, responsible choices to parents and families, Michigan's public charter schools have made substantial contributions to the lives of tens of thousands of children.

Today, Michigan public charter schools continue to transform education across our state, providing access to quality learning opportunities regardless of race, zip code, educational needs or income level.

Michigan public charter schools offer:

- Innovative teaching styles and campuses that empower educators to push the boundaries of traditional teaching
- Holistic, engaging experiences that nurture student performance and growth
- Strong partnerships between parents and educators to uncover the best school option for every student

Boosting performance. Improving outcomes. Innovating to put students first.

At the helm of it all are authorizers – the public bodies entrusted with building, overseeing, tracking, and supporting these schools, and whose Council continually strives to set a bold vision for each new tomorrow.

It's challenging, rewarding work. And in all that effort, there are meaningful stories to tell – in numbers, in pictures, and in narrative.

This report is intended to share those stories. We hope you will read it and be inspired, as we continually are, to do even more.



Robert T. Kimball

Associate Vice President for Charter Schools
Grand Valley State University
Chair, Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers



Innovation.

Michigan's Public Charter Schools

What is a charter school? Charter schools are free, public, independently operated schools that have the flexibility and autonomy to meet their students' needs.

In 1994, Governor John Engler signed Michigan's public charter school legislation into law, officially enacting a bold vision for a better education future. Twenty-five years later, that vision is realized in over 300 public charter schools providing choices for educational innovation and excellence to families across the state.

It's been a slow, but steady, march forward.

That fall, in 1994, Michigan's first nine public charter schools opened their doors. The 100-school milestone was met in the fall of 1997, when 106 schools welcomed students to the new year. In 1999, 150 schools opened across the state, thanks to parent demand and support, officially hitting the legally mandated "cap" for university-authorized public charter schools. And in 2011, after a decade of hard work and proven achievement, Governor Rick Snyder signed legislation to remove the limit on new schools.

The idea always was to be different: to break down barriers, get creative, bust through bureaucracy, revolutionize learning, and deliver great educational outcomes for students and parents.

Today, Michigan's robust, diverse public charter school landscape shapes vibrant, creative learning opportunities that meet the needs of every student, helping them realize their goals, passions, and highest potential.

Michigan public charter schools:

- Offer parents – regardless of residence, race, wealth or heritage – diverse, high quality educational options.
- Provide freedom, resources and access to empower schools, teachers and communities to deliver diverse, imaginative learning opportunities.
- Champion systems of evaluation that measure meaningful student and instructor growth, utilizing strategies that allow for innovation.
- Treat each student as an individual, shaping their educational experience in a way that suits their learning style, supports their success, and embraces their uniqueness.
- Demonstrate high performance in key student success measures, anchored by a robust system of multiple authorizers that enables dynamic reform.

Established under
Governor Engler
9 schools in 1994
106 schools in 1997
2011 cap lifted
300+ schools today



Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers - “The Council”

The Council is a collaborative, non-profit, non-partisan professional organization that allows for sharing of issues, ideas, resources and best practices among all public charter school authorizers working in the state.

For more than a decade, The Council has provided a valuable role in supporting, coalescing, and representing public charter school authorizers across Michigan, including serving as a voice for the important work authorizers do to advance public educational excellence, innovation, choice, and accountability for Michigan K-12 students.

Council governance is its ten-member board of directors who meet monthly and hold a common vision and values to operate based on the following guiding principles:

- Choice is a necessary element in today's system of public education.
- Quality must remain the most central focus for authorizers, school operators, and policymakers alike.
- Autonomy and innovation are essential to ensure the promise of Michigan's public charter school movement and contribute to the success of K-12 education in general.
- Accountability is crucial. Quantifiable, data-driven results must be achieved and supported at all levels of K-12 public education.
- Public charter schools that fail to achieve adequate results pursuant to the terms of their contracts should face appropriate consequences, up to and including closure.
- Authorizers have a responsibility to provide input, advocacy and support for public discourse on K-12 education issues.
- Policymakers and authorizers alike must ensure appropriate levels of accountability and oversight for all Michigan schools.

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296
Public Charter School Districts
(376 Buildings)

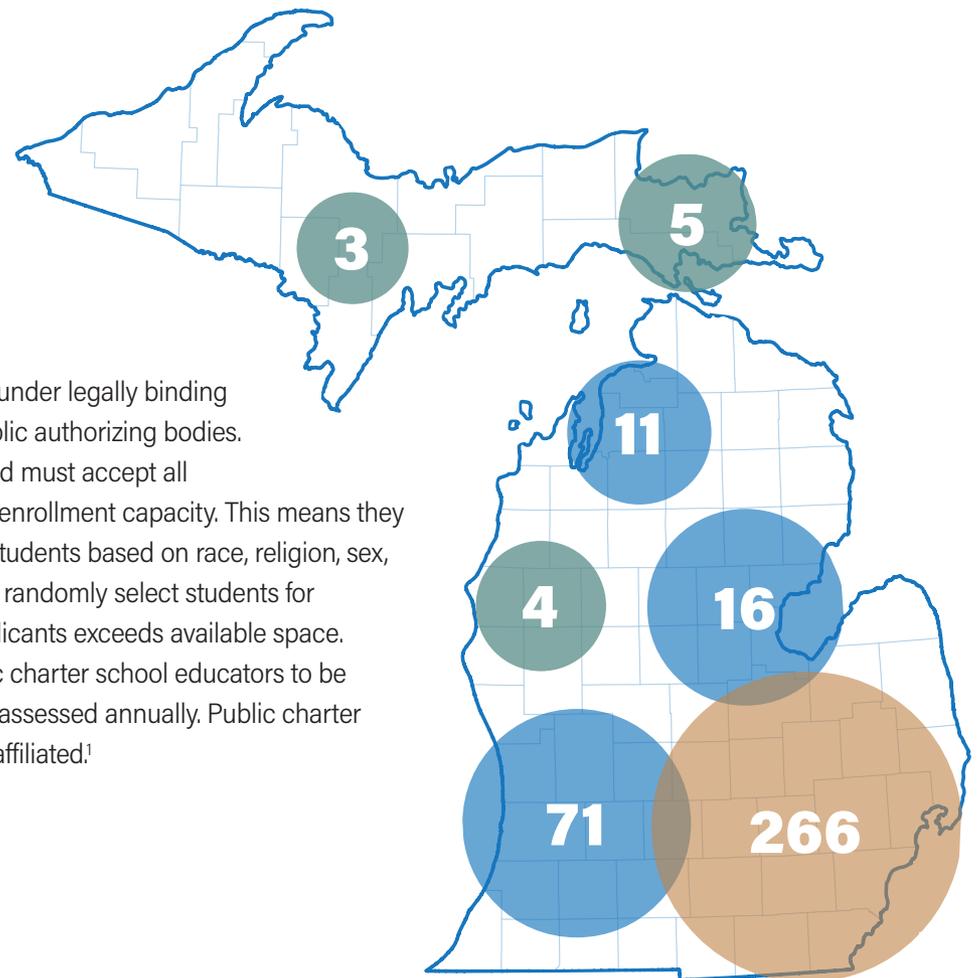
Openings Fall 2018: 20

Closings Spring 2019: 7

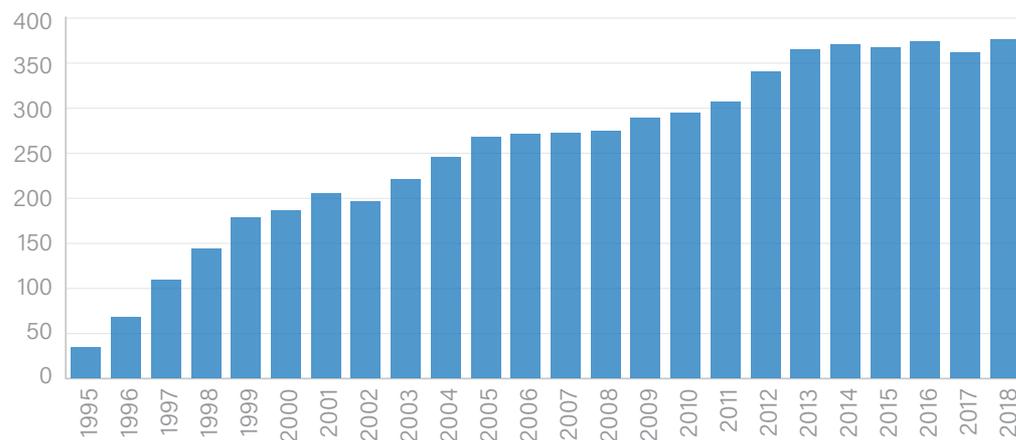
School grade level configurations²
K-8 schools: 242
9-12 schools: 149

Schools

Public charter schools operate under legally binding charter contracts issued by public authorizing bodies. They may not charge tuition, and must accept all students who apply, up to their enrollment capacity. This means they are prohibited from screening students based on race, religion, sex, or educational ability, and must randomly select students for admission if the number of applicants exceeds available space. Michigan law requires all public charter school educators to be certified, and all students to be assessed annually. Public charter schools may not be religiously affiliated.¹



Public charter school growth





SCHOOL FUNDING

Public charter schools receive state funding through the per-pupil foundation allowance. Michigan law stipulates that this amount cannot exceed the per-pupil allowance received by the local school district where the public charter school is geographically located.³

On average, Michigan public charter schools receive about 20% less funding per pupil than conventional public schools, yet are **32% more cost-effective** than the average conventional public school in the same city.⁴

Fiscal Year	Public Charter School Minimum	School District Maximum	Gap
1995	\$4,200	\$6,500	\$2,300
1996	\$4,506	\$6,653	\$2,147
1997	\$4,816	\$6,808	\$1,992
1998	\$5,124	\$6,962	\$1,838
1999	\$5,170	\$6,962	\$1,792
2000	\$5,700	\$7,200	\$1,500
2001	\$6,000	\$7,500	\$1,500
2002	\$6,300	\$7,800	\$1,500
2003	\$6,700	\$8,000	\$1,300
2004	\$6,700	\$8,000	\$1,300
2005	\$6,700	\$8,000	\$1,300
2006	\$6,875	\$8,175	\$1,300
2007	\$7,085	\$8,385	\$1,300
2008	\$7,204	\$8,433	\$1,229
2009	\$7,316	\$8,489	\$1,173
2010	\$7,316	\$8,489	\$1,173
2011	\$7,316	\$8,489	\$1,173
2012	\$6,846	\$8,019	\$1,173
2013	\$6,966	\$8,019	\$1,053
2014	\$7,076	\$8,049	\$973
2015	\$7,251	\$8,099	\$848
2016	\$7,391	\$8,169	\$778
2017	\$7,511	\$8,229	\$718
2018	\$7,631	\$8,289	\$658
2019	\$7,871	\$8,409	\$538

Source: State of Michigan, Enacted School Aid Budgets

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT SPECTRUM

Public charter schools utilize a variety of management structures to run day-to-day school operations.

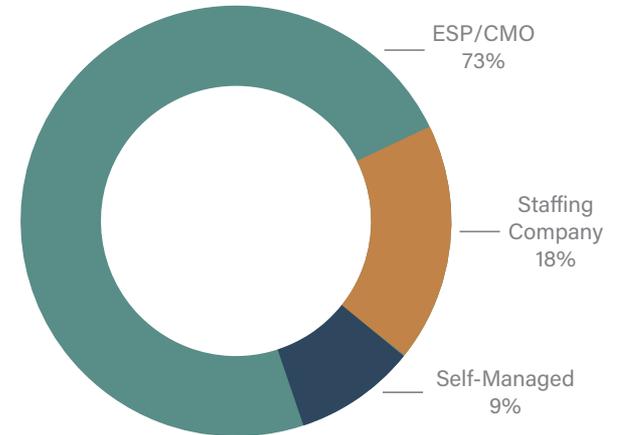
Education Service Provider (ESP) & Charter Management

Organization (CMO) – Public charter school boards contract with these providers to provide some or all educational, financial, and personnel services. The board holds the ESP accountable to the contract terms, and does not provide human resources functions. Typically, the ESP handles daily managerial decisions.

Staffing Company – These providers contract with a public charter school board to provide staffing and some limited managerial services. The board does not provide human resources tasks, but oversees a contract with the provider who employs the staff. The board typically works in partnership with the provider on managerial issues.

Self-Managed – Under this management structure, a public charter school board relies on administration and employees they hire, and operates similar to a conventional district in terms of human resources and managerial decisions.

Council Member School Structures



SPECIALTY SCHOOLS AND CURRICULUM

A World In Motion STEM

African-Centered

Alternative/Pregnant &
Parenting Teens

Aviation

College Prep

Credit Recovery

Early/Middle College

Environmental Science

Homeless Students

K-8 Language Study/
Arabic ESL

Language Immersion

Media Arts

Montessori

Moral Focus

Multicultural and

Arabic Language

Performing Arts

Self-Paced

Special Education

Strict Discipline Academy

Trades/CTE

Virtual/Cyber



PATHWAYS ACADEMY

Detroit Public Schools Community District authorizes Pathways Academy, a public charter school in Detroit that serves pregnant teens and young parents in grades 7-12. In a caring and supportive environment, Pathways Academy gives students the academic and ethical skills necessary for success. The school uses Apex Learning, a curriculum correlated with the Michigan Core Curriculum Content Standards and the Common Core State Standard, and students work with certified instructional staff to master the skills necessary to meet those standards. Day care and early childhood education services are provided on-site, and accelerated credit recovery opportunities are offered.

At Pathways Academy, students work at their own pace while applying time management skills and preparing for college and career paths. Community service is part of the curriculum, and students are taught to see the connections between their coursework and their real world aspirations.

Myra Cox-Taylor (right), a 2019 graduate of Pathways Academy, is pictured with her daughter, Skylar (center).

"In the community that I serve, Flint, Michigan, there are so many families struggling, and the kids already are coming from homes that have so many barriers. And no matter what they're going through, that seed is there. And so when you see the success stories, it's just amazing."

— Wanda Brown
board vice president,
FLEX High Michigan, Flint

FEDERAL CSP GRANT RECIPIENTS

In 2018-19, the Michigan Department of Education won a competitive \$47 million Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education for the creation of high-quality public charter school planning and implementation sub-grants. Funds are being distributed over five years to support the opening of new schools or the expansion/replication of existing schools that meet the federal definition of high quality:

- Evidence of strong academic results which may include strong student academic growth as determined by the state;
- No significant issues of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance; and
- Demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the school.

Four public charter schools were rewarded with CSP sub-grants in 2018-19:

- **Frontier International Academy** – A public charter school district serving students in grades K-5 at its Warren campus and 9th-12th grades at its Detroit campus; goes well beyond the curriculum mandates by offering Arabic education, after school programs, tutoring and more.
Grant Use: grade level expansion to add a K-5 elementary school in 2019-20
Authorizer: Bay Mills Community College
- **Lincoln-King Academy** – A K-8 public charter school where highly-qualified, passionate faculty and staff create lessons that are challenging, relevant, and meaningful, while caring for the whole child. Students are exposed to career options from an early age, which, together with academic achievement and character building, prepares them to lead fulfilling lives.
Grant Use: building acquisition and renovation to expand the school to K-10 in 2019, with eventual expansion to more than 1,000 students in grades K-12.
Authorizer: Grand Valley State University

Vision.

- **Orchard Academy** - A “diverse-by-design” K-5 public charter school planned for the North End neighborhood of Detroit, whose mission is to help children achieve academic excellence and a love of learning and sense of mission and purpose in life. Orchard Academy will offer small class sizes and a strong partnership with parents, and be driven by a clear mission that incorporates high expectations for academic achievement and moral/character development.

Grant Use: building acquisition and planned opening for fall 2020

Authorizer: Central Michigan University

- **Star International Academy** - A nationally recognized public charter school and one of Michigan's top high schools, per U.S. News and World Report. SIA's programs focus on the study of international cultures, and deliver an innovative, world-class education that inspires students and prepares them to be responsible citizens and future leaders. Focuses on at-risk, special education, and English language learner students.

Grant Use: campus/facility site expansion in fall 2020

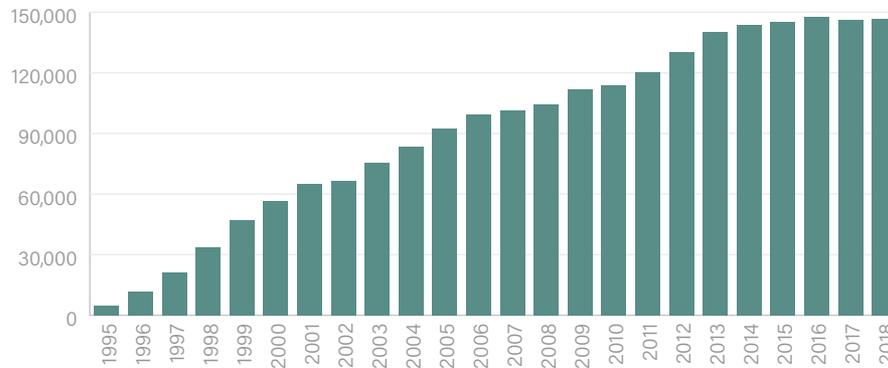
Authorizer: Bay Mills Community College

Students

Michigan public charter schools enrolled 146,736 students in 2018-19, about 10% of total statewide public K-12 enrollment for that year.⁵

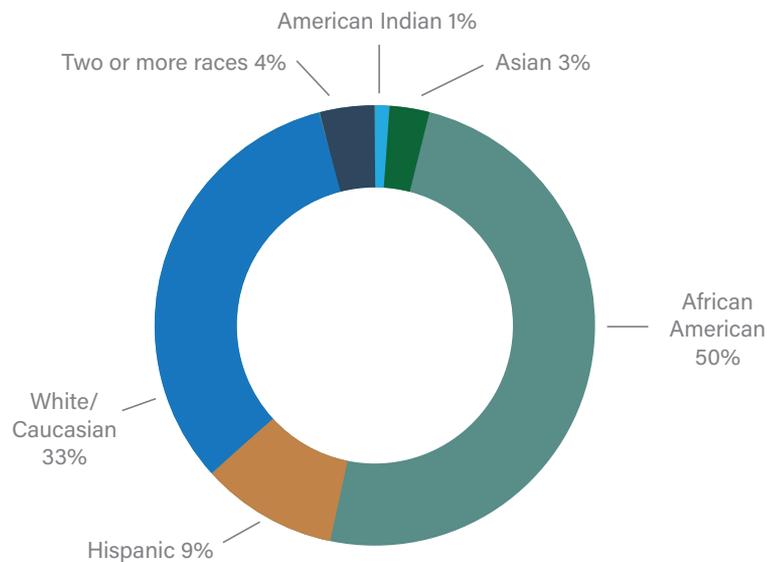
From the earliest days in 1995, Michigan's public charter school sector has seen steady enrollment growth, as families have consistently exercised their right and responsibility to choose the best educational option for their children.

Enrollment history



Student Race/Ethnicity⁸

Public charter school students exemplify great racial, social, educational, and economic diversity.



*Free and Reduced Lunch: **75%**⁶
compared to statewide 50%
and non-charter 47%*

*English Language Learners: **12%***

*Special Education: **11%**⁷*

Alumni Spotlight



Sharalle Richardson - University Preparatory Academy

A 2008 graduate of University Preparatory Academy in Detroit, Sharalle Richardson is the founder of Mirror Me Images, a Grand Rapids community organization established to support and inspire girls globally, through education, empowerment, and mentoring. Richardson leads a team of thirteen dedicated volunteers who teach a unique and inspiring curriculum throughout west Michigan. Richardson credits University Preparatory Academy for providing her the education, relationships, accountability, and support that helped make her a community leader in west Michigan. She adds that her teachers challenged her norm and encouraged a paradigm shift that empowered her to pursue success.

"They never put limitations on me and instead helped me actualize my dreams," said Richardson. University Preparatory Academy is authorized by Grand Valley State University.

"They never put limitations on me and instead helped me actualize my dreams."



Carly De Leeuw - Excel Charter Academy

Carly De Leeuw teaches sixth grade reading, math, and social studies at Excel Charter Academy in Grand Rapids, the same school she attended from 1998-2006. She is thrilled to be teaching in the same classrooms where so many great teachers once taught her – teachers she credits with nurturing her love of education and commitment to students.

"My public charter school is the reason I became a teacher," said De Leeuw. "I always felt incredibly safe, comfortable, and had so much fun learning. I knew that my teachers genuinely cared about me and about what they were teaching, and I loved going to school. It made me realize from an early age that I wanted to go back and perpetuate that feeling for other students today." Excel Charter Academy is authorized by Grand Valley State University.

"My public charter school is the reason I became a teacher."

Educators

2018-19 MICHIGAN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL **TEACHER OF THE YEAR: JOEL HOCKIN**

Joel Hockin is a science teacher at University Prep Science and Math Middle School, a remarkable school that shares a campus with the Michigan Science Center in midtown Detroit.

Hockin brings the real world into his classroom through complex and unusual hands-on lessons. For example, his students learn about the science surrounding the forecasting of natural disasters by analyzing real-time data from NASA, and even conduct their own study using the data.

On standardized testing, Hockin's students regularly experience two years of academic growth in a single year. The school is authorized by Grand Valley State University.

10,516

Teachers sector wide

22,416

*All staff
(includes teachers)*



2018-19 MICHIGAN PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL **ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR:** KOREE WOODWARD

Koree Woodward, principal at Grand River Preparatory High School in Grand Rapids, has led her school to become one of the highest-ranked high schools in Michigan. Grand River was named Michigan's 13th best high school in the 2019 U.S. News and World Report "Best High Schools" list. Seventy-two percent of Grand River students are minorities, and half the student body is economically disadvantaged, according to the report. As principal, Woodward excels due to her perseverance, innovation, and commitment to student success. "To say we prepare all students for college success is easy. What's hard is to commit to that every day," said Woodward. "It takes courage, intentionality, creativity, and the desire to challenge the status quo." The school is authorized by Grand Valley State University.



*"It takes courage,
intentionality, creativity,
and the desire to
challenge the status quo."*

School Boards Appointed by Council Authorizers

Board Member Appointment Process

Quality governance is one of the foundations of high performing schools, and authorizers have established rigorous processes for making qualified public charter school board appointments. Prospective candidates must be nominated by a school board, complete an application for board service, undergo extensive vetting, and pass a criminal history background check. If appointed by the authorizer, they then must swear an Oath of Public Office at the first meeting following their appointment. The Oath of Office must be administered in the presence of a Notary Public and filed with the authorizing office.

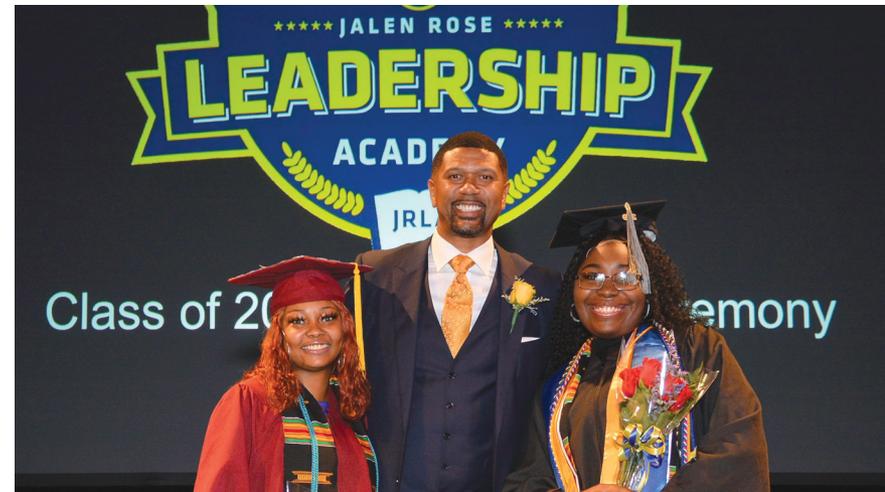
Board Member Professional Development

Council authorizers provide regular enrichment opportunities for school board members, and many require participation in new member orientations and ongoing professional development. Training sessions on academics, fiscal oversight, good governance, and a host of other topics equip board members to fulfill their oaths of office and lead their schools effectively. Ferris State, Lake Superior State, and Northern Michigan universities pool their resources to provide professional development webinars to members located across the state, and other authorizers maintain timely and pertinent online resources to educate members on topics that affect their boards.

- 258** Boards
- 1,377** Board members
- 231** New board members appointed 2018-19
- 2,623** Board meetings per year
- 60%** of Board members have served 3 years+
- 251** Founding board members
- 53%** of board member hold bachelor's degrees or higher

Jalen Rose Jalen Rose Leadership Academy, Detroit

Detroit native, Jalen Rose, is an ABC/ESPN analyst and former NBA star who founded the Jalen Rose Leadership Academy (JRLA) and serves as the board president. A graduate of Detroit Southwestern High School, Rose attended the University of Michigan where he was one of five freshman basketball players known as the “Fab Five.” Rose brings his knowledge of the sports and entertainment industries, his commitment to philanthropy, and his passion for Detroit to lead a team of educational experts and community leaders in helping JRLA students achieve their goals. JRLA is authorized by Central Michigan University.



Wanda Brown FLEX High Michigan, Flint

Wanda Brown is bursar and Title IX deputy investigator at Mott Community College where she oversees the college’s vast financial operations and leads its response to complaints of sexual harassment, assault, or discrimination. Brown holds a Master of Business Administration and ATIXA Civil Rights Investigator Level 3 certification, and is a professional member of the American Association of Women in Community Colleges and Michigan Association of Student Financial Services Administrators. Brown is vice president of the board of directors for FLEX High Michigan in Flint. FLEX High Michigan is authorized by Central Michigan University.



A. Paul Schaap, Ph.D. Detroit Merit Charter Academy

Dr. Paul Schaap, former Wayne State University (WSU) faculty, is a biotech entrepreneur known for his groundbreaking work in the field of organic chemistry, particularly the invention of luminescence-generating substances used in medical diagnostics. His wide-ranging philanthropy includes major gifts to his alma mater, Hope College; scholarships and capital funding to WSU; and \$5 million to protect city retiree pensions and the Detroit Institute of Arts collection during the 2013 Detroit bankruptcy. Schaap serves on the board of directors at Detroit Merit Charter Academy, and personally funds scholarships for inner-city Merit students to attend the following top-rated private high schools: De La Salle Collegiate, Regina, University of Detroit Jesuit, and University Liggett. Detroit Merit Charter Academy is authorized by Grand Valley State University.



Who Authorizes Public Charter Schools in Michigan

Local School Districts

Center Line Public Schools
 Detroit Public Schools Community District
 Eaton Rapids Public Schools
 Gobles Public School District
 Grand Rapids Public Schools
 Highland Park City Schools
 Madison District Public Schools
 Manistee Area Public Schools
 Mesick Consolidated Schools
 Muskegon Heights School District
 Ovid-Elsie Area Schools
 Oxford Community Schools
 Port Huron Area School District
 Stephenson Area Public Schools
 Traverse City Area Public Schools
 Vestaburg Community Schools
 Whitmore Lake Public School District

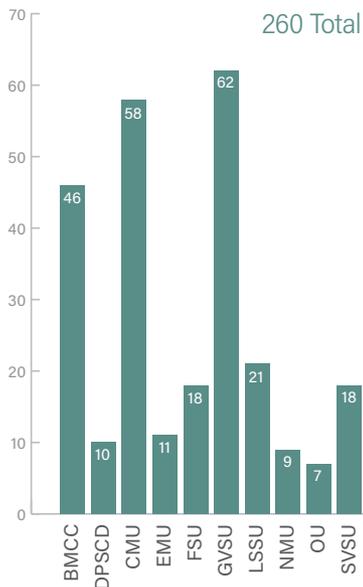
Community Colleges

Bay Mills Community College
 Jackson College
 Washtenaw Community College

Universities

Central Michigan University
 Eastern Michigan University
 Ferris State University
 Grand Valley State University
 Lake Superior State University
 Northern Michigan University
 Oakland University
 Saginaw Valley State University

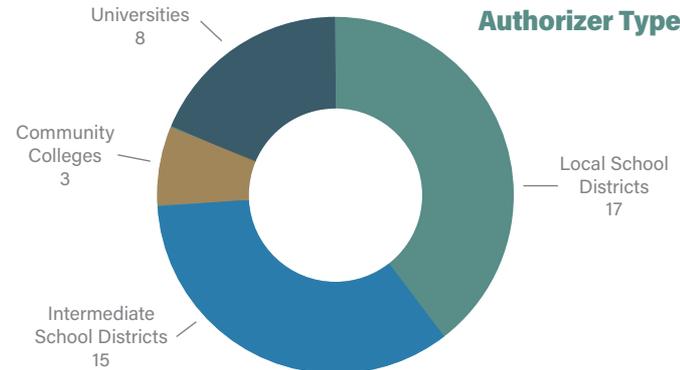
Schools Authorized by Council Members



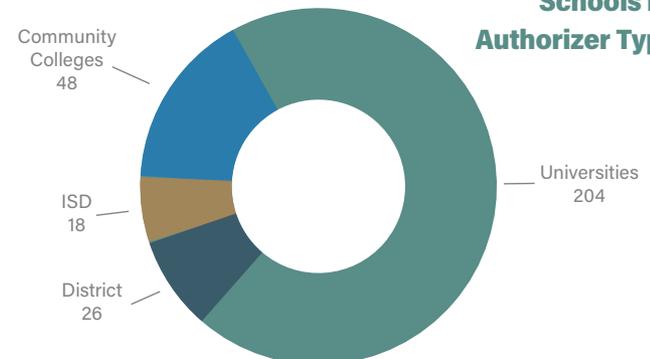
Intermediate School Districts

Allegan Area Educational Service Agency
 Bay-Arenac ISD
 C.O.O.R. ISD
 Eaton RESA
 Hillsdale ISD
 Iosco RESA
 Kalamazoo RESA
 Macomb ISD
 Manistee ISD
 Midland County Educational Service Agency
 Saginaw ISD
 St. Clair County RESA
 Washtenaw ISD
 Wayne RESA
 West Shore Educational Service District

Authorizer Types



Schools by Authorizer Type



An Authorizer's Work

Academic Performance

State law explicitly requires public charter schools to enter into contracts with their authorizers, and these legally binding agreements define and protect a school's autonomy and governing authority, while clearly specifying performance expectations and conditions for renewal. Academic oversight is an authorizer's paramount focus.

On the state school index⁹ public charter schools across Michigan **perform at the 49.6 percentile, despite far outpacing the statewide average for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) student populations:**

- Public charter school FRL: 75%
- Statewide FRL: 50%
- Non-charter FRL: 47%

Detroit public charter schools also outperform their counterparts on the School Index:

- Detroit charter avg.: 40%ile
- Detroit avg.: 37%ile
- Detroit non-charter avg.: 34%ile

In the 2018-19 school year, **seventy-one (71) public charter schools ranked in the top 25th percentile on the Michigan School Index.**

These four top-performing public charter schools scored in the 99th percentile:

- Achieve Charter Academy (GVSU – Canton)
- Honey Creek Community School (Washtenaw ISD – Ann Arbor)
- Kingsbury Country Day School (SVSU – Oxford)
- Washtenaw Technical Middle College (Washtenaw CC – Ann Arbor)

Michigan public charter schools average a graduation rate of 62% compared to the state average of 66%.¹⁰ In 2018-19, these three public charter schools had a **100% graduation rate:**

- Academy for the Arts in Charlevoix, authorized by SVSU
- A.G.B.U. Alex and Marie Manoogian School in Southfield, authorized by CMU
- Trillium Academy in Taylor, authorized by CMU



*Now in its fifth year as a public charter school, **Kingsbury Country Day School**, in Oxford, has a long history of independent education that emphasizes environmental studies and nurtures talent and creativity. With a mission of instilling lifelong learning and critical thinking, this K-8 school provides a rigorous, well-rounded academic program on a one hundred acre, wooded campus.*

An Authorizer's Work - continued

Fiscal Performance

The expectation for public charter schools to be fiscally solvent is spelled out in their contracts and required by law. Council authorizers have developed processes to review quarterly and audited financial statements in order to identify financial challenges and help schools make adjustments to avoid a deficit. For public charter schools, a deficit likely will lead to a notice of intent to revoke the contract, and a requirement that the school create a corrective action plan – which includes a deficit elimination plan required by law. The number of public charter schools in deficit has declined significantly over the years thanks to these proactive practices.

Reporting Compliance and Oversight

During the 2018-19 school year, Council authorizers processed a total of 13,199 compliance items related to school operations and support.¹¹ Examples include transparency reporting, measures of academic progress, teacher certification, special education reviews, quarterly financial statements, audited financial statements, student counts, school schedules, board meeting schedules, budgets, and more.

Law/Policy Implementation

Authorizers ensure the schools in their portfolios properly implement new laws or policies enacted at the state and federal levels. In this regard, public charter schools are subjected to an extra layer of accountability, compared to their conventional school counterparts, due to the legally binding performance contracts that authorizers administer.

Authorizer Funding

State law allows public charter school authorizers to collect up to three percent of their schools' total state aid to ensure performance measures are met and schools remain in compliance with the law. Funds collected are used for authorizers' general operations to oversee and support public charter schools.

The vast majority of authorizers, however, collect their three percent only from the foundation allowance portion of state aid, rather than from any additional "categorical" distributions, which means millions of dollars stay with the schools.

*During the 2018-19 school year, Council authorizers processed a total of **13,199 compliance items** related to school operations and support.*

Authorizers also typically invest a significant portion of their operational fees in their schools, via numerous supports and services. In 2018-19 alone, Council authorizers gave back over **\$7.7 million**. Here's where the money went:

\$1,467,345	Educator professional development/ continuing education
\$1,675,772	Authorizer fee discount
\$1,112,403	School grants/awards
\$926,373	Testing support
\$796,924	Student scholarships
\$502,270	Compliance and accountability support
\$462,101	Board development
\$157,155	Board policy services
\$67,815	Business manager professional development
\$592,276	Other

How The Council Leads

Accreditation and Assurance

In 2014, The Council established the nation's first statewide public charter school authorizing accreditation and assurance process, to demonstrate the commitment to quality that Michigan authorizers strive to achieve.

Partnering with nationally-recognized Cognia (formerly AdvancED), The Council set about moving beyond the basic practice known as "continuous improvement" to create a more rigorous process by including a set of assurances required to be an effective public charter school authorizer.

Today, **Michigan leads the nation with an authorizer accountability system** that not only includes the Cognia standards, but also The Council's thirteen assurances, demonstrated compliance, and Michigan Department of Education Assurance and Verification Visits.

The assurances are the first step in the process; these standards adjust with changes in law, and must be met in order to begin the accreditation process. The accreditation functions typically, with documentation and review, to ensure an authorizer continually meets the standards. Every accreditation review includes recommendations for improvement and subsequent monitoring for implementation.

Central Michigan University, Detroit Public Schools Community District, Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, and Saginaw Valley State University are fully accredited. Lake Superior State University, Northern Michigan University, and Oakland University have completed the assurance review and are qualified to begin the accreditation process.



Practitioner Workgroups

To facilitate the sharing of information and best practices, four Council workgroups meet several times a year: academic, finance, governance, and special education. The workgroups provide a valuable peer network for problem solving and building capacity within authorizer teams. The workgroups host experts from organizations such as the state departments of Education and Treasury, to ensure authorizers are up-to-date on current laws and policies and to build strong working relationships across sectors and networks.

A-GAME

Nationally, public charter school authorizers have found that measuring effectiveness or quality of an alternative education campus (AEC) can be challenging.

To assist in this effort, the National Charter Schools Institute and Momentum Strategy & Research have joined forces with the U.S. Department of Education to create the Advancing Great Authorizing & Modeling Excellence (“A-GAME”) grant. This federal program supports research, best-practice sharing, and creative strategy to identify workable outcome-based targets.

Michigan authorizers have been at the forefront of this important work to develop new measures. Representatives from the public charter school offices at Central Michigan University and Ferris State University sit on the National Authorizer Leadership Team, and Grand Valley State University has a seat on the National Advisory Committee.

Initially, the conversation has focused on recommendations, with plans for state conferences to continue the dialogue nationally and then move into an implementation phase. In 2018-19, Michigan had 46 AEC public charter schools, three authorizers in A-GAME networks, and 19 AEC schools in A-GAME networks.

“What began as a dream for my old neighborhood has become a reality. JRLA has set out to change the course of the lives of Detroit youth and their families through the power of education, and that is exactly what we are doing.”

*— **Jalen Rose**, board president,
Jalen Rose Leadership Academy*



How The Council Leads - continued

Special Education: School Supports and Interventions

The success of a public charter school depends not only on the quality of education services it provides to children without disabilities, but also on whether it provides appropriate and challenging educational opportunities to students with disabilities as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Each public charter school in Michigan is responsible for providing a free, appropriate public education to children with IDEA-eligible disabilities who are enrolled in the school. On average, about eleven percent of public charter school students have special education needs.¹⁴ In 2018, The Council, together with Dykema Gossett PLLC, produced a guide called, "Special Education Services in Charter Schools: What Authorizers and School Leaders Should Know." This free resource serves as an educational document and reference manual for authorizers and others involved in the oversight of public charter schools.

University Value-Add

University authorizers leverage their campus resources to benefit public charter school students in a number of ways:

- College exposure
- College preparation/advising
- College credit opportunities
- Student scholarships
- Student summer camps/outreach programs
- Teacher preparation/placement
- Teacher professional development
- College of education faculty-teacher partnerships
- Administrator professional development
- School board professional development
- Degree awards for educators
- Research



SVSU PSA Scholar, Maryssa Hadley, a Public Health major who graduated from Pontiac Academy of Excellence, wants to become a school health educator after graduation. She credits the program for its guidance, activities and rich opportunities, like a study abroad trip to Ghana.

University Value-Add **SVSU Public School Academy Scholar Program**

Created in 2004, the Public School Academy (PSA) Scholarship Program at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) makes college accessible and affordable for students who graduate from SVSU-authorized public charter schools. For eligible high school graduates who are admissible to SVSU, the program provides a four-year, \$6,000 renewable scholarship.

To increase college graduation and retention rates for these students, SVSU also runs the Public School Academy Transition Program. Founded in 2011, the PSA Transition Program partners with the university's enrollment management and student service offices to recruit students and support them both financially and academically throughout their college careers. Program supports include one-on-one tutoring, volunteer experiences, leadership opportunities, employment, and academic advising.

How The Council Leads - continued

Detroit Authorizers' Meetings

Since 2017, authorizers in Detroit have convened regularly to coordinate with partners across the city's broad education spectrum. Formed in response to the idea that public charter school leaders are too scattered and inaccessible, these collaborative meetings provide a one-stop place where concerns or opportunities can be voiced and then reliably communicated throughout the chartering community. Detroit's nine authorizing bodies, representing approximately 78 school buildings, meet monthly with philanthropy and other key stakeholders, including the mayor's office, Detroit Public Schools Community District, and the Community Education Commission, to stay connected and aware of happenings that impact Detroit students. From school openings and closings, to relocations and reconfigurations, authorizer changes, and more, partners at the table share valuable information and perspective that help inform authorizing decisions. In providing this forum, the meetings promote healthy dialogue among authorizers and the Detroit community, and ensure all voices are represented in authorizing decisions.

"Over the last three years, the authorizing community has been integral in bringing about more and better coordination between the leading organizations in Detroit's educational ecosystem. Participating in the monthly charter coordination meetings has given us access to actionable, transparent information that informs the Community Education Commission's work for our city's families. We are proud to have a seat at that table."

— Community Education Commission

CITATIONS

- ¹ Michigan Department of Education, "Michigan Charter Schools - Questions and Answers." November, 2017.
- ² Michigan Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) Educational Entity Master (EEM) for 2018-19, downloaded February 18, 2019.
- ³ 1979 PA 94, as amended, Article 2 §388.1620(6).
- ⁴ DeAngelis, Cory and Ben DeGrow, "Doing More with Less: The Charter School Advantage in Michigan." Mackinac Center for Public Policy, 2018.
- ⁵ Statewide enrollment was 1,465,964, per Michigan Department of Education 2018-19 Bulletin 1014
- ⁶ MI School Data
- ⁷ Michigan Department of Education public reports use what is known as cell suppression. Whenever a group results in fewer than 10, the data won't be displayed in a graph or a spreadsheet cell. They are displayed as <10. For aggregation purposes, we converted all <10 in the public data file to 9.
- ⁸ MI School Data
- ⁹ Photo courtesy of Michigan Association of Public School Academies
- ¹⁰ Photo courtesy of Michigan Association of Public School Academies
- ¹¹ MI School Data, School Index Report
- ¹² MI School Data, Graduation/Drop Out Rates
- ¹³ National Charter Schools Institute, Epicenter
- ¹⁴ See citation #7.



MCCSA

Michigan Council of Charter School Authorizers

www.michiganauthorizers.com