



Evaluation of Florida's Charter School Program Grant Implementation

Semi-annual Report 2015~November 1, 2015

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LIST OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1. ALT: Assisted Learning Technology
2. CAPES: Collaborative Assessment and Program Evaluation Services
3. CPALMS: Collaborate, Plan, Align, Learn, Motivate, Share
4. CSP: Charter School Program (grant)
5. CSU: Charter Support Unit
6. DEP: Department of Environmental Protection
7. DOE: Department of Education
8. EDW: Education Data Warehouse
9. FSA: Florida Standards Assessment
10. IBP: Instructional Best Practices
11. IEPC: Independent Education and Parental Choice
12. IGP: Individual Graduation Plans
13. IHSGR: Improving High School Graduation Rates
14. LEA: Local Education Agency
15. OEE: Office of Environmental Education
16. PERA: FL DOE Bureau of P20 Education Reporting and Accessibility
17. PLC: Professional Learning Communities
18. RLIS: Rural and Low Income Students
19. SCS: Sigsbee Charter School
20. STE: Science, Technology and the Environment
21. STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
22. SWD: Students With Disabilities
23. TBD: To Be Determined
24. SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely
25. UCP: United Cerebral Palsy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this semi-annual report is to describe the progress of the Collaborative Assessment and Program Evaluation Services (CAPES) team in its efforts to assist in the improvement of the Independent Education and Parental Choice (IEPC) Office's Charter School Program (CSP) grant project since the May annual report. A brief summary of the year four annual report, research and evaluation strategies, tasks and activities being conducted, and any emerging issues, needs, and concerns will be provided.

The IEPC office has contracted with the CAPES external evaluation team to assist in the attainment of their four project objectives regarding their 2011-2016 Charter School Program (CSP) grant application and processes:

Objective 1: To increase access to high-quality charter schools for educationally disadvantaged students.

Objective 2: To improve the authorizing practices and capacity of the Local Education Agency (LEA) authorizers.

Objective 3: To increase the number of high-quality charter schools in Florida.

Objective 4: To increase the academic achievement of charter school students.

CAPES is specifically charged with achieving the following two goals during the course of the 2011-2016 project:

- 1) Prior to submission of the IEPC 's annual CSP report to the US DOE, the CAPES team will review the internal report for authenticity and reliability of the data and provide recommendations for improvement of CSP implementation processes if necessary.
- 2) The CAPES evaluation team will determine if the IEPC has appropriate systems in place to sustain and grow a high-quality charter school sector by addressing the following questions:
 - a. How can the IEPC improve its CSP application and review process to better screen for quality?
 - b. What are the strengths and weaknesses in the CSP sub-grant application and review process?
 - c. What is the impact of CSP funding on student achievement?
 - d. What is the impact of each of the dissemination grants funded by the department?

YEAR FOUR ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY WITH SUGGESTIONS AND UPDATES

Goal One

Conclusion: Based upon the current and cumulative data, evidence of current and planned activities, collaborations, and trainings regarding process and outcome performance measures, the CAPES external evaluation team concluded that in year four of this project, reasonable progress had been made towards goal one—achieving the four Charter School Program Grant objectives.

Idea 1: While most of the goal one objectives have had steady progress, the creation of rural charter schools has been slow. Objective process performance measure 1.d (and resulting outcome process performance measure 1.3 and 1.4) will need specific attention for year five. While much of the outreach aimed at future potential rural charter schools has been sent to rural district offices (and should continue), other creative avenues of outreach targeting professionals and community members who would be interested in charter school options and the CSP grant should also be explored as many of these districts may not be desirous of charter schools and may not share information promoting or encouraging them readily.

Update: This was discussed at length in the June conference call between the CAPES evaluators and the IEPC team. The last CSPG cohort does not contain any rural schools, so while the IEPC's goal of funding ten new rural charter schools will not be realized by the conclusion of this project, the CAPES team has agreed to examine this issue further for the IEPC Office in year five of this project so that any potential subsequent CSP grants will have a plan of action regarding increasing charter school options in rural areas.

Idea 2: Future progress regarding process performance measure 3.a, may need to be re-evaluated given the continuing drop in CSP applicants each year. The external evaluation team does not consider this a failure to meet the objective, as more than 60 new charter schools have been funded for three grant years and it could be expected that many areas of Florida may very well have reached a saturation point regarding new charter schools.

Update: While awarding CSP grants to 50 new and deserving high quality charter schools is an excellent goal for a CSP Project, the external evaluation team has noted that many other states that have received USDE CSP grant projects in the past (NY, AZ, etc.) typically provide larger CSP grant awards but to fewer schools each year. As mentioned above, the external evaluation team does not consider the most recent funding of 38 schools (instead of 50) a detriment to the project, but more likely a natural cresting of the creation of new charter schools, given the incredible growth over the past several years.

Idea 3: The dissemination grants awarded as a result of objective four have been very successful in distributing instructional best practices, which is of great use to charter schools that may not have full access to district professional development. One dissemination grant (process performance measure 4.e) was not awarded, and while discussions of variations of this sub-grant have been created and discussed over the past year, there will likely not be time left in this project cycle for the release of this grant. If the IEPC Office seeks additional federal charter school grant project funding in the future, the external evaluation team would highly recommend the creation and release of additional dissemination grants to further assist charter schools in their development, particularly in the areas of teacher recruitment and retention (given our teacher attrition findings/data and stakeholder surveys indicating the importance of an effective and well-compensated staff).

Update: TBD

Idea 4: Objective two specifies measures to improve the authorizing practices and capacity of districts. One suggestion that has been put forth by both districts and charter schools is more regular communication from the IEPC Office. While the IEPC Office does provide information via email blasts and through the annual Florida Charter Schools Conference, it was suggested by districts this year (and last year) that either a charter school newsletter and/or charter school monitoring program be provided to inform and assist the typically sparsely staffed district charter offices. Some type of monthly or quarterly communicate that provides a calendar or update of important deadlines, trainings, legislative news, grant opportunities, etc., could also assist the IEPC Office by heading off typical/repeating questions or issues.

Update: There is no current information regarding this suggestion, however district-charter school compacts are being encouraged and expanded as evidenced by the FL DOE IEPC Office's funding of district-charter compacts via RTT funds to improve authorizing practices and facilitate collaborations. Dade and Duval have been approved and three other districts (Hillsborough, Orange, and Polk) have also submitted a letter of interest regarding the compacts ([APPENDIX A](#)). The anticipated success and proliferation of these will hopefully assist in improving the authorizing practices and capacity of districts as well as lead to better relations overall between charter schools and their district authorizers.

Goal Two

Conclusion: The IEPC Office has continued to improve the CSP grant application and review process. The CAPES external evaluation team has concluded that as of the beginning of year five, the IEPC Office has made progress to ensure that appropriate systems are in place to sustain and grow a high-quality charter school sector in Florida.

Ideas: There were no suggestions regarding improvements in the CSP grant application or review process at the conclusion of year four, as it was evident that both were refined and improved upon each year, with increasing approval ratings from reviewers and applicants.

CURRENT OFFICE OF INDEPENDENT EDUCATION AND PARENTAL CHOICE UPDATES

Charter School Support Unit (CSU)

The Charter Schools Support Unit (CSU), created by the Charter School Services Corporation, began providing services to Florida's new charter schools in August of 2012. Requests for assistance may be made, free of charge, regarding any topic or issue that a new school could face—financial, curricular, instructional, etc. This short-term, targeted assistance offered varies by need and can take the form of “hotline” phone call assistance, online webinars, on-site school reviews, professional development to staff or board members, document or budget review services, etc. The CSU reports quarterly to the IEPC Office, and has met or exceeded their deliverables consistently.

- 1) The CSU is will send the annual needs assessment survey to charter schools (in September of 2015) for the IEPC Office and the results will be shared with the CAPES External Evaluation team and used to plan for additional trainings and assistance.
- 2) Hotline assistance to schools: Contact log and summary are submitted to the IEPC Office each quarter. Goal of fielding 3 calls per week was almost met with an average of 2.06 calls or 140 total; school assistance goal (50 schools) was surpassed (59 schools were represented).
- 3) The log regarding school consultations was submitted to the IEPC Office, and their goal of assisting/consulting with 10 schools was surpassed as 14 schools were assisted.
- 4) Document review: The initial goal of reviewing submitted documents from 10 schools was not met, however, three schools did request documents reviews and 44 new documents were created by CSU, bringing the total number of document resources to 115. Last year the CSU suggested that this service still be offered, but that it be condensed in with their model documents offerings instead of as a stand-alone service, which seems to be working well.
- 5) Webinars: The goal was to have 14 well-attended webinars—this was surpassed with 20, which are all posted online. These reached over 367 individuals across 220 charter schools, averaging 29 participants per webinar.
- 6) A CSU “Clearinghouse” of documents, webinars, and other information potentially

- useful to charter schools is online and has been redesigned for clarity and ease of use (<http://www.flcsu.org/clearinghouse/allitems/>). There were over 25,168 page views this past year; 33% of the visitors were return users and 5,324 were new to the site.
- 7) A budget template tool has been created and updated several times as the revenue estimator was updated with 753 views for the year; the template is posted online at <http://www.flcsu.org/budgettemplate/> .
 - 8) The CSU successfully presented at the 2014 Florida Charter Schools Conference and had an informational booth as well. The CSU also presented at other FL DOE training sessions (New Charter School Operators' Trainings in Orlando and Miami), and did several presentations to governing boards about the resources available to them.
 - 9) Documentation has been provided to the IEPC Office documenting marketing efforts by the CSU to increase participation in their offerings via direct mailings, advertising in the FLCSC program, emails on the FL DOE charter schools LISTSERV, etc.
 - 10) Surveys were sent out to those schools or individuals that had used one or more of the CSU services. Responses indicated that the assistance they received from the CSU were beneficial to the operation of their schools and that the CSU personnel were knowledgeable and responsive to their needs.

CPALMS Charter Contract (2014-16) Goals

1. Statewide professional development: Statewide professional development (focusing on the components/tools available through CPALMS Charter and CPALMS) will include webinars, school site-based face-to-face training, and conference sessions for Florida public charter schools. This professional development program will consist of a minimum of 17 workshops/conference per year for a total of 34 over two years that will reach a minimum of 400 participants per year, totaling 800 over a two year period. These trainings will include a one-hour and three-hour presentation at the FLCSC in 2014 and 2015 and two CPALMS Charter Summer Institutes (2014 and 2015).

→Progress: CPALMS coordinators delivered 66 training sessions this past year to over 2,018 participants, well exceeding their goals.
2. Statewide communication plan: There is continued development and implementation of CPALMS Charter as a communication platform for Florida charter schools to include both CPALMS Charter (www.cpalmscharter.org) and CPALMS (www.cpalms.org) websites; Twitter(www.twitter.com/cpalmscharter) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/cpalmscharter) as social media outlets. CPALMS uses user profiles to send notifications, resources, posts, and tools via email to users. Flyers, brochures and webinars will also be used to disseminate information to charter school teachers and administrators. Expected outcome is that the charter school community can communicate more efficiently with state staff.

→Progress: Trainers continue to remind training participants of the CPALMS Facebook and Twitter accounts, and as of May 15, 2015, there were 81 Twitter followers and 45 Facebook followers. CPALMS also maintains an active ListServ of approximately 600 participants for email blasts, blogs, and other updates.

3. Changes will be made to the organization and content of the CPALMS website to enhance users' navigation and experiences. Annual needs assessments, surveys and verbal feedback are listed as formative data that will be used to determine success.

→Progress: There were 262 total respondents to the annual needs assessment, which is not a large number, but did provide some feedback. The majority of respondents (37%) indicated that they mainly used the CPALMS resources, while 25% suggested that they used the Florida standards, almost 15% used the PD calendar, and the rest used the webinars and "other" options. The vast majority of survey participants also indicated that they would be using CPALMS in the near future, and feedback was offered regarding desired training topics in the future (improve content area knowledge, help with new Florida assessments and standards, etc.).

4. Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting: Allow stakeholders to create positive change in the websites and training sessions. Formative data on the success of this goal will be based upon the evaluation forms, annual needs assessments, surveys, and verbal feedback at training sessions.

→Progress: A large number of needs assessment participants offered suggestions regarding future training session topics and formats; respondents were also asked what other professional development options they utilized and what made those appealing, and were asked what CPALMS could do to increase their usefulness.

Overall comments/suggestions: Upon the conclusion of the CPALMS dissemination grant, the IEPC Office contracted with CPALMS to continue teacher trainings and to maintain other online capabilities and services. CPALMS Charter is on track regarding their contract goals to date.

Science, Technology, and the Environment (STE II)

The Office of Environmental Education (OEE) in the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) cultivated and supported environmental citizenship: the awareness, understanding and appreciation of Florida's environment; and the capacity to think critically and participate constructively in its protection. The OEE's core program included outdoor experiential environmental

education for middle school students, the annual Florida Green School Awards Program, and summer teacher professional development workshops. The OEE concluded its contract with Florida Charter Schools Program Office after the fall of 2015 after providing 47 high quality and free professional development opportunities to Florida charter schools across 20 different counties to 610 teachers and charter school administrators. These workshops provided teachers with interdisciplinary activities correlated to state/common core standards used to enhance their STEM programming. The workshops were not only plentiful, but well-received; workshop facilitators and the content they provided were consistently highly ranked, as illustrated by 91% of participants agreeing with the statement that “overall, the course was excellent.”

When evaluated, workshop facilitators consistently received high ratings in quality, preparedness, and knowledge at each of the trainings (Appendix D & F). Furthermore when questioned on the overall quality of the workshop 91% of the participants reported agreed with the statement “Overall, the course was excellent.” Extending this grant was considered, however, the OEE has subsequently closed due to lack of funding.

RESEARCH STRATEGIES AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Trends, positive achievements, and challenges

As the final year of the external evaluation for the Florida IEPC Office’s CSP grant project begins, it may be useful to note some of the trends, positive outcomes, and challenges that have emerged. Some of these will discussed in the final annual report (CSP Grant goal attainment, validation of the grant application review process, etc.), however many will be touched on here, and elaborated upon within this report.

Trends

Trends of interest revolve around the CSP grant recipient schools themselves. Are they improving academically? Are they growing in enrollment? Is parent satisfaction at these schools good or improving?

As you will see from our results, student achievement by the CSP grant schools is a mixed bag. Some new schools are able to start off as “A” or “B” schools right away, but others struggle initially. The external evaluation team was encouraged to see individual school grade improvements made from one year to the next by many of the schools, particularly for the 2012-13 CSP cohort. For that cohort ALL of the schools that had grade changes from one year to the next were improvements—all D’s and F’s improved to a C or higher from 2013-2014. The 2011-12 schools also showed school grade improvements overall given time. The external evaluation team is eager to obtain the most recent student testing data to see if this trend continues.

Another potential measure of a successful school is growing student enrollment and satisfied parents that feel that their children's needs are being met. Fifteen CSP grant schools had site visits multiple years from the CAPES external evaluation team, and of these, 13 schools saw increased enrollment numbers. All five schools visited three years in a row saw student enrollment numbers increase each year. While this data does not encompass all of the new CSP grant awarded charter schools, it does offer some insight as to the need and subsequent growth of many of these schools. Parents of the CSP grant awarded schools are also very satisfied with their current charters as illustrated by their CSP satisfaction survey results (89% satisfied in 2012, 94% in 2013, and 91% in 2014).

Positive Achievements

In terms of positive outcomes, the 6 dissemination grants funded by the CSP grant have impacted hundreds of Florida charter school teachers, providing innovative professional development trainings and resources in targeted areas of need (best practices regarding special population students, technology, creating a positive school culture, high school graduation rates, etc.). While there were often challenges in drawing viable dissemination grant candidates given the heavy workload most charter school administrators and teachers already carry on a day-to-day basis, those dissemination grants that were awarded were typically very successful in achieving their grant goals and as such, were an effective use of grant funds ([APPENDIX B](#)).

One of the main goals of the Florida CSP grant is to increase the number of charter schools in the state, which it has successfully done. According to the FL IEPC Office's online Charter Schools Project Tracking site, 239 charter schools have been funded through the start-up grant, and the state currently has over 640 charter schools enrolling over 251,000 students. The IEPC Office has also supported other projects and programs to help non-CSP grant awarded charter schools succeed (dissemination grants, Public Consulting Group trainings to help with the new state standards, Charter School Support Unit to assist with a myriad of potential new charter school issues, etc.).

Challenges

The challenges regarding the external evaluation itself have been minimal, but revolved initially around data access. Data requests regarding student and school data originally went through the FL DOE's main data depository, the EDW or Education Data Warehouse. Last year, the DOE re-organized their data offices and processes and data requests were shifted to the FL DOE's PERA Office (Bureau of PK-20 Education Reporting and Accessibility).

Another challenge that was anticipated, and will likely continue will be survey responses rates. The external evaluation team annually surveys all CSP grant site-visited schools' parents, teachers, administrators and governing board members, as well as CSP grant

applicants and IEPC Office personnel involved with the grant. CAPES is only able to analyze and report on the responses we receive, and while the responses have been relatively consistent, increased numbers would improve the depth of our feedback.

Charter School CSP Cohort School Grade Data

Beginning with the 2011 CSP cohort, we have provided school grade data annually beginning in 2012: overall in table form by CSP cohort year (to determine if CSP schools were obtaining higher school grades overall), and individually by school (year by year school grades shown in an excel). One hindrance in determining academic improvement in CSP awarded schools has always been that many CSP grant recipient schools did not receive a school grade (of the 149 CSP schools from the 2011, 2012 and 2013 cohorts combined, only 84 had school grade data for 2014). The new FSA (Florida Standards Assessment) testing used in 2015 by Florida schools to measure student growth and school grades has “education accountability revisions” that will result in more schools receiving school grades. Schools will only be graded on the components for which they have enough data, but schools that don’t have enough data for one or more components will still receive a grade-and schools that don’t have enough data for a component will no longer receive the district average for a component (FL DOE Accountability Update, 2015). Below are each CSP cohort groups with their school grades for each year. Please note that the 2015 school grades will be provided either as an addendum to this semi-annual report or in the final report since these grades will not be released until December or January. The 2015 school grades resulting from the new grading system will serve as a baseline from which to determine future student and school growth given the new state tests; no consequences for low school grades will follow until the results of year two (spring 2016) from the new grading system are determined.

2011-12 CSP COHORT

SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL MSID #	2012 GRADES	2013 GRADES	2014 GRADES
Galileo School for Gifted Learning	59-9233	NG	A	A
Renaissance Charter School Inc. d/b/a Duval Charter High School	16-1311	A	B	PENDING
Duval MYcroSchool of Integrated Academics and Technologies	16-531	NG	NG	NG
The Waverly Academy, Inc.	16-1331	C	C	D
Seacoast Charter Academy	16-1371	NG	A	B
The One Room School House, Inc.	01-1010	NG	A	B
Burns Science and Technology Charter	64-7631	F	D	B

School				
Polk Pre-Collegiate Academy	53-8002	NG	A	A
Florida High School for Accelerated Learning - Tampa Campus	29-6659	NG	NG	NG
Community Charter Middle School of Excellence	29-6660	F	D	B
New Springs Elementary School	29-6657	NG	C	D
Plato Academy South K-8	52-7381	A	A	A
Ben Gamla Charter School	52-7321	NG	NG	NG
21st Century High School of Pinellas, Inc. (Newpoint?)	52-7371	C	C	PENDING
Advantage Academy of Pinellas, Inc. d/b/a Pinellas Academy of Math and Science	52-7291	NG	C	C
Plato Academy North K-8 Tarpon Springs	52-7581	NG	A	A
SKY Academy	58-110	A	B	C
Marco Island Academy	11-9032	C	D	PENDING
RAMZ Academy 6-8 MS	13-6005	NG	F	F
Florida High School for Accelerated Learning - Miami Campus	13-7067	NG	NG	NG
North Gardens High School	13-7068	NG	NG	NG
Florida High School for Accelerated Learning - Miami-Dade Campus South Cutler High School- (North Park HS Charter)	13-7069	NG	NG	NG
Advantage Academy of Miami, Inc. d/b/a Advantage Academy of Miami (Everglades Prep Academy?)	13-5006	NG	C	C
Ben Gamla Charter School - Miami Beach	13-5022	A	A	A
Youth Co-Op Preparatory High School	13-7070	NG	A	B
Imagine Middle School West	06-5042	NG	A	A
Advantage Academy of Broward, Inc. d/b/a West Broward Academy	06-5052	NG	NG	NG
Kathleen C. Wright Leadership Academy	06-5045	F	F	NG
Renaissance Charter School at Cooper City (Formerly of Broward South)	06-5049	NG	A	A
Advantage Academy of Broward, Inc.	06-5407	NG	NG	B

d/b/a Broward Advantage Academy				
Renaissance Charter School at University (formerly of Broward - East	06-5048	NG	C	A
Franklin Academy D	06-5037	NG	NG	C
Florida High School for Accelerated Learning - Palm Beach County Campus	50-3421	NG	NG	NG
Ben Gamla Charter School	50-3941	NG	A	A
Gardens School of Technology Arts, Inc.	50-3961	C	C	C
Florida High School for Accelerated Learning - West Palm Beach Campus	50-3401	NG	NG	NG
21st Century Academy of Pensacola, Inc Newpoint Pensacola High School	17-2141	A	A	PENDING
21st Century Academy of Pensacola, Inc Newpoint Academy Middle School	17-2124	F	C	C
UCP Transitional Learning Academy High School	48-183	NG	NG	PENDING
Cornerstone Academy Charter High School	48-146	A	A	PENDING
Orange Charter School/Renaissance Charter School at Chickasaw Trail	48-185	NG	F	B
Einstein Montessori School Orlando East	48-39	NG	NG	NG
Aspire Charter Academy	48-163	NG	NG	F

Nineteen out of 43 cohort schools above are excelling academically (A or B) schools (some with pending scores, but that have a history of doing well), with 11 never being graded annually, 6 schools with a “C”, 2 “D” schools, 2 failing or “F” schools, and 3 schools with recent grades pending/undetermined.

2012-13 CSP COHORT

SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL MSID #	2012 GRADES	2013 GRADES	2014 GRADES
Duval Charter School East - dba Duval Charter School at Baymeadow	16-1321	A	A	A
Kids Community College Charter (SE) Elementary	29-6667	NG	NG	NG
Bay Area Charter School at Hillsborough dba Henderson Hammock Charter School	29-6662	NG	C	B
Winthrop Charter School	29-6658	C	B	A
Cape Coral Preparatory & Fitness Academy	36-4231	NG	D	C
Governors Charter Academy	37-1441	NG	C	C
Manatee Charter School	41-2121	NG	F	C
Alpha Charter of Excellence, Inc	13-5410	NG	NG	F
Everglades Preparatory Academy HS	13-7060	NG	D	B
Just Arts and Management Charter MS	13-6083	NG	B	A
Mater Academy North Campus K-8 (Mt Sinai)	13-5054	NG	NG	NG
Bridgepoint Academy East (Interamerican)	13-5020	NG	F	B
Academy for Intl Education CS	13-5044	NG	C	C
Ocean Studies Charter School	44-381	NG	NG	NG
Montessori of Winter Garden	48-172	NG	NG	A
Sunshine HS-Greater Orlando	48-202	NG	NG	NG
Renaissance Charter School of South Osceola/Poinciana	49-149	NG	D	A
Acclaim Academy FL, Inc	49-151	NG	F	PENDING
Renaissance Charter School at West Palm Beach d/b/a Renaissance Charter School at Palm West	50-3431	NG	D	C
Windsor School	52-7301	NG	NG	F
New Beginnings HS	53-8004	NG	NG	NG
Putnam Academy of Arts & Sciences	54-61	NG	F	C
Somerset Academy Eagle High School	13-1381	NG	NG	F
Somerset Academy Bay Charter Middle School	13-6128	NG	NG	A
Somerset Academy Bay Charter High School	13-7110	NG	NG	NG
Somerset Bay Academy K-5	13-5062	NG	NG	A
Franklin Academy E-Miami Dade	13-5060	NG	NG	NG
Renaissance Charter School at Orlando	48-185	NG	F	B
Renaissance Virtual School of Osceola or iVirtual League Academy	49-154	NG	NG	NG
Renaissance Charter School of North Osceola	49-152	NG	NG	NG
New Alternative Ed HS of Palm Beach Co., Inc. (Mavericks High at Palm Springs)	50-3971	NG	NG	NG
Somerset Academy Canyons High	50-4013	NG	NG	B
Renaissance Charter School at South Palm Beach (Summit)	50-4002	NG	NG	D

Renaissance Charter School at East Palm Beach	50-4000	NG	NG	C
Pinellas MYcroSchool of Integrated Academics and Technologies	52-7491	NG	C	C
EDGE for Educational Excellence, Inc.- Putnam Co. New Tech Charter HS	54-071	NG	NG	F
Franklin Academy E-Broward	06-5037	NG	NG	C
Franklin Academy F-Broward	06-5046	NG	NG	A
Gulf Coast Middle School	27-4422	A	A	A
Richard Milburn Academy Middle School	64-7892	NG	NG	NG
iGeneration Empowerment Academy of Collier Academy	11-9033	NG	NG	NG

Out of the 41 2012-2013 CSP awarded schools, the most current scores resulted in 14 “A” or “B” schools, 9 “C” schools, 1 “D” school, and 4 “F” schools. Twelve schools have never received a school grade, and one school’s grade for 2014 is pending. What is encouraging is that ALL of the schools that had grade changes from one year to the next were improvements—all D’s and F’s improved to a C or higher from 2013-2014.

2013-14 CSP COHORT

SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL MSID #	2014 GRADES
Odyssey Charter Preparatory Academy (Brevard)	05-6541	F
VIERA CHARTER SCHOOL	05-6540	A
Flagler High School formerly Florida High School for Accelerated Learning - Metro Broward Campus	06-5032	NG
Melrose High School formerly Florida HS for Accelerated Learning - Greater Ft Lauderdale Campus	06-5323	NG
Florida Virtual Academy at Broward County	06-5059	D
iGeneration Empowerment Academy of Davie	06-5242	NG
Magnolia School for the Arts and Technology	06-5311	NG
N.E.W. Generation Preparatory High School of Performing Arts	06-5390	F
Panacea Prep Charter School	06-5801	NG
Renaissance Charter High School of Broward	06-5807	NG
Renaissance Charter School	06-5050	NG
Somerset Academy Hollywood formerly Somerset Academy (Pompano) North	06-5387	F
Somerset Academy Pompano Middle 6-8	06-5413	B
Somerset Academy Hollywood Middle School formerly Somerset East Prep Middle (Davie)	06-5419	A
South Broward Montessori Charter School	06-5717	NG
Sunshine Charter Academy of North Broward County	06-5060	NG
University Preparatory Academy-Broward	06-5783	NG
iMater Academy High School, aka iMater Preparatory Academy High School	13-7090	C

iMater Academy Middle School	13-6014	C
iMater Academy formerly Mater Academy South Campus	13-5384	B
Sports Leadership and Management Charter Middle School	13-6015	C
Acclaim Academy Charter - Duval Center	16-5351	F
Acclaim Academy Charter - Duval North	16-5361	NG
Biscayne High School formerly Florida HS for Accelerated Learning - Greater Jacksonville Campus	16-5421	NG
San Jose Preparatory High School formerly Jacksonville High School	16-5381	F
San Jose Academy formerly Jacksonville Middle Academy	16-5391	F
Lucious and Emma Nixon Academy of Technology and Science	16-5431	NG
Duval Charter School at Westside formerly Renaissance Charter School at West Duval	16-5411	F
River City Science Academy-Innovation	16-5441	NG
Seaside Community Charter School	16-5401	NG
Somerset Preparatory Academy formerly Somerset Academy Duval/Somerset K-8	16-5501	F
Brooksville Engineering Science & Technology Academy	27-4461	C
HILLSBOROUGH ACADEMY OF MATH AND SCIENCE	29-6671	C
Bell Creek Academy formerly NEW TAMPA ACADEMY	29-6668	B
University Academy-Hillsborough	29-7674	NG
DJB Technical Academy	36-3402	NG
James Madison Preparatory Charter High School	40-0121	A
Visible Men Academy	41-2161	NG
Oasis Preparatory Academy Charter formerly Odyssey Charter Preparatory Academy (Orange County)	48-0192	NG
Learning Path Academy, Inc.	50-4037	NG
Somerset Academy Canyons Middle School	50-4012	B
South Tech Preparatory Academy	50-3441	A
Discovery Academy of Science	52-7331	NG
Plato Academy of St. Petersburg formerly Plato Academy Non Profit Inc.	52-7681	NG
University Preparatory Academy-Pinellas	52-7311	F
Newpoint Pinellas Academy Charter School formerly Windsor Middle Academy	52-7361	F
Polk State Lakeland Gateway To College Charter High School formerly PSC Lakeland Pathways Charter HS	53-8003	NG
Sarasota Academy of the Arts	58-0113	C
Renaissance Charter School at Tradition	56-721	A

Out of the 48 cohort schools from 2013-14, 23 did not have school grades assigned, and those schools with grades had mixed results. Four schools received a grade of “A,” 4 schools were “B” schools, 6 schools received a “C,” 1 school received a “D,” and 10 schools received a grade of “F.”

The 2013-14 cohort was the most disappointing academically, with the fewest “A” and “B” scored schools and the most “F’s,” however, the CAPES team will be eager to see if this cohort is similar to the 2012-13 cohort that was able to make huge strides in raising all of their “D” and “F” school grades to a “C” or higher in one year.

Teacher Attrition

Two years ago the CAPES external evaluation team began to examine within-year teacher attrition in charter schools (and later those of traditional schools for comparison) as a potentially harmful influence as cited by several new CSP grant site-visited schools. Within-year teacher attrition (with teacher numbers taken from state survey 2 in early fall and compared to state survey 3 in late spring of the same year) was examined because it was considered more detrimental to a school for teachers to leave shortly after school started or at mid-year as opposed to the end of year, when experienced replacements are more readily available. Data has been obtained from the Florida Department of Education PERA Office (Bureau of PK-20 Education Reporting and Accessibility) for the school years of 2011, 2012, 2013 and recently, 2014. Please note that the following data excludes those teachers who were no longer employed due to their school closing. The chart below shows charter school teacher attrition consistently higher each year than traditional school teacher attrition. While there is no definitive reason for this, charter school teacher salaries are typically lower than their traditional school counterparts, they do not typically have access to the state retirement system, and the vast majority of new charter schools examined via external evaluation site-visits and surveys have limited or no formal teacher mentoring programs to fully support a new teacher at a school.

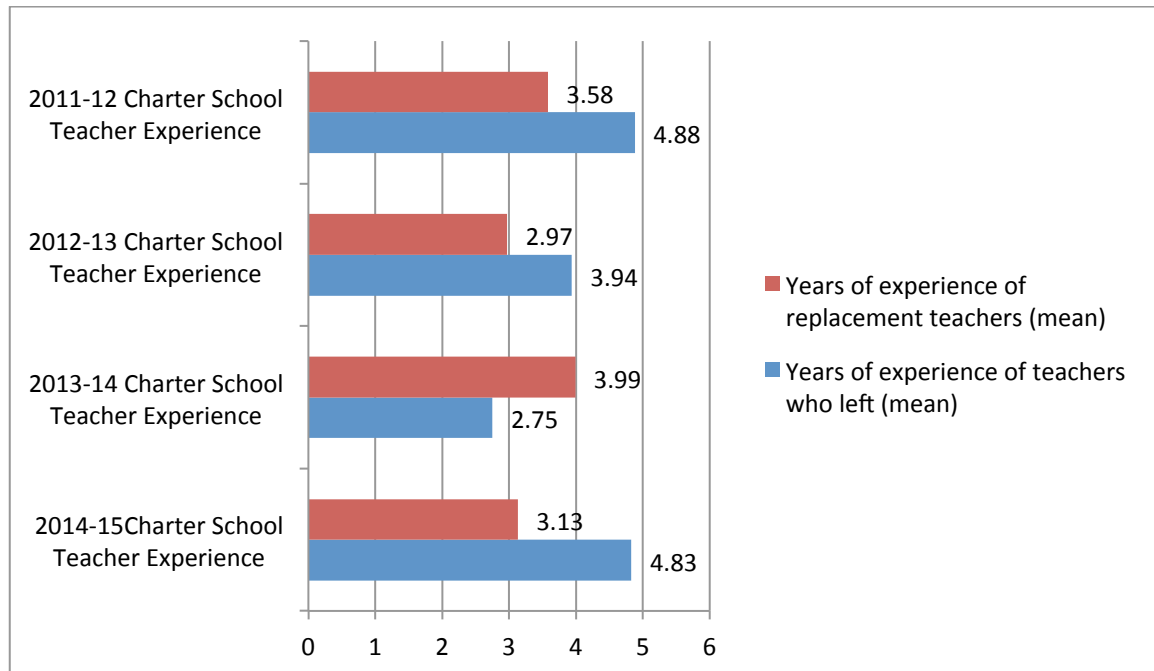
Charter School Teacher Attrition

School year	School type	Attrition percentage	Number of teachers who left
2011	Charter	10.07 %	809
2011	Traditional	3.50 %	5358
2012	Charter	9.52 %	783
2012	Traditional	4.88 %	7471
2013	Charter	11.08 %	975
2013	Traditional	3.89 %	5924
2014	Charter	8.92 %	839
2014	Traditional	3.96 %	5828

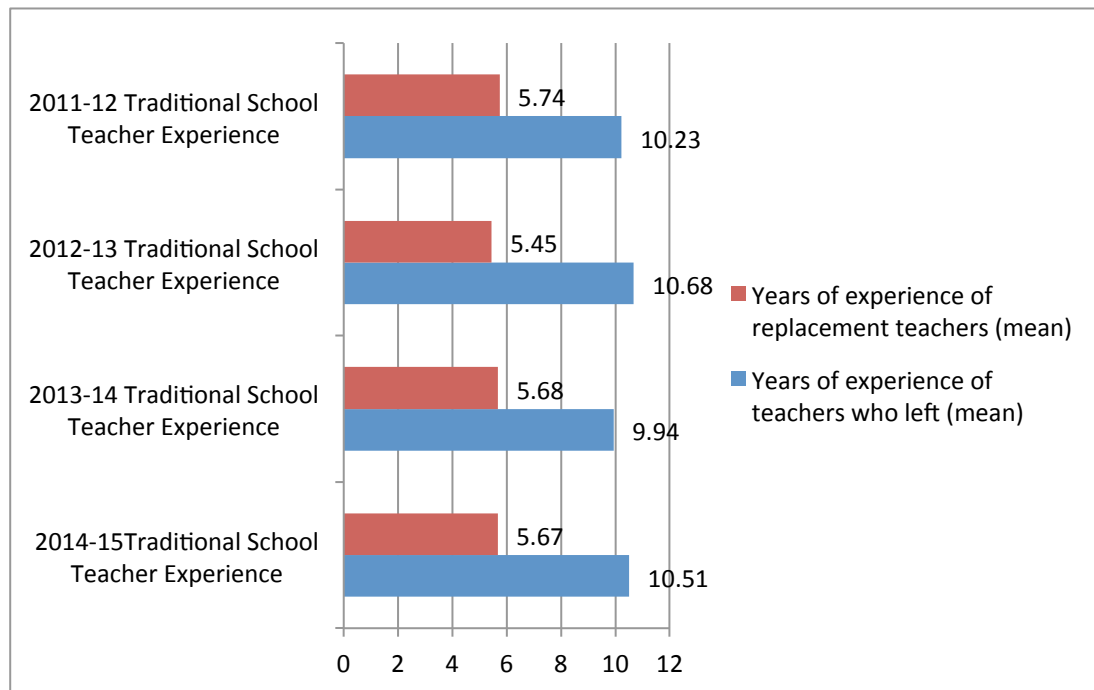
Besides the loss of a teacher mid-year (costing valuable academic time and money), another issue that attrition brings with it is less experienced teachers. In all but one year below (2013-14 for charter school teachers), those teachers who are hired to replace those teachers who leave a school during the year (for both charter and traditional schools) have fewer years of teaching experience ([LINK 1](#) and [LINK 2](#)). This can negatively impact a school and the academic achievement of its students (Loeb, S., Ronfeldt, M., & Wyckoff, J., 2013).

EXPERIENCE OF REPLACEMENT CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS

(THOSE TEACHERS HIRED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR)



EXPERIENCE OF REPLACEMENT TRADITIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (THOSE TEACHERS HIRED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR)



Teacher Attrition Data Suggestions

The problem of teacher attrition/retention is complex and, like most topics with practical and policy implications, requires greater attention than can be presented in this report. The relatively large and focused research base in this area is incredibly useful. The key researcher in this area is Richard Ingersoll from the University of Pennsylvania. Leaders in Florida's charter schools interested in learning more about retention might want to start with his most recent literature.

The research literature, including policy analyses, confirms patterns regarding teacher attrition that hold up across time and school contexts. The likelihood of a teacher leaving teaching after the first five years of their career decreases markedly compared to those in their first years of teaching. While a simple interpretation of the timeframe suggests the most vulnerable teachers are those in the first five years of one's teaching career, a closer examination across studies presents sufficient evidence to suggest that approximately 50% leave their initial assignments and not teaching completely. Some of those who leave do so for personal reasons unrelated to teaching, such as child care.

Teacher retention nationally is more of a problem at the secondary school level than in elementary schools. It also is more of a problem in mathematics and science than in other subject areas. Also notable, schools with higher proportions of lower income, lower academic achievement, and higher minority see greater teacher turnover (by white teachers in particular), than other schools. Working conditions are often singled out as a factor in retention. The research literature supports this

conclusion on some factors of job satisfaction and retention. Generally, schools with high levels of direct, hands-on administrative support specific to the context of the school and focused on student learning retain more teachers. There is a growing research base on supports and instructional coaching specific to understanding what to expect and how to engage diverse students in moving toward desired learning targets.

One factor that rivals workplace satisfaction and knowledgeable, specific administrative guidance is salary. The finding is not surprising, but the evidence is particularly strong on the salary factor, especially when examined concurrently with the overall notion of positive working conditions. One conclusion that might be overlooked, and should not be, is not the amount of salary earned. Rather, those interested in retaining teachers should examine relative salary – that is, salary in comparison to nearby schools/districts (and states in northern Florida in particular).

Many other factors emerge in discussions of teacher retention and most have inconclusive evidence to generate any recommendation. Some of the factors that have inconclusive evidence to improve teacher retention are selectivity factors such as level of academic degree and hiring package incentives. Some of the factors associated with working conditions during teaching often proclaimed to lead to higher levels of job satisfaction such as class size, higher/lower workloads, and job advancement options generally have limited or inconclusive evidence to support.

Given many charter schools are designed specifically to meet the needs of traditionally disadvantaged student population, leaders and policy makers might pay the most attention to the nature of the school leader since working conditions is such an important factor. Highly engaged school leaders/instructional coaches well versed in the knowledge as well as skills necessary to educate students effectively and efficiently can provide supports that increase job satisfaction and likely increase retention. The other primary factor of salary is more complex, however, given the nature, geography, and politics of Florida's school districts.

For reference, the best summary of retention (and related issues such as recruitment and qualifications) can be found in reports by the Education Commission of the States. One example is the September 2005 report by Michael Allen titled "Eight Questions on Teacher Recruitment and Retention: What Does the Research Say?"

Research Update: Matched Schools

IEPC Office CSP grant project outcome performance measures 1.1 and 1.2 described the comparison of 25 new high quality charter schools opened within low achieving areas with demographically matched traditional public schools in math and reading. The external evaluation team has matched several 2011 CSP grant recipient schools (fewer than 25 due to inconsistencies with the data available) with traditional schools using hierarchical linear modeling to compare the effect of being in a charter school for selected populations including school type (elementary, middle, high), ethnicity, and SES (using eligibility for free or reduced lunch programs). A single cluster (school) level logistic regression model was created to obtain propensity scores for our cohort of charter schools and traditional schools, and optimal matching was used to create the matched sample. Multi-level model analysis will reveal if there is a significant charter school effect on student learning and the magnitude of such an effect.

While the external evaluation team has also intended to match schools according to size, this proved too difficult as the vast majority of new charter schools were significantly smaller in enrollment than the traditional schools. The external evaluation team did weight the adjusted estimates based on student characteristics, however, so school size should not affect the outcomes of the matching results.

The external evaluation team was able to successfully demographically match ten 2011 CSP grant recipient charter high schools with 10 traditional high schools. In reading, the charter high school students did not do as well as the traditional school students, however, with each year, this gap was reduced. Math scores were not available for the matched high schools (see “Matched Schools: High Schools” table below). As an example, in a charter school with the same characteristics, the predicted reading achievement of a 9th grade high school student in 2011 would be 7.46 points lower.

Matched Schools: High Schools

CSP GRANT COHORT YEAR	READING SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 9TH GRADE	READING SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 10TH GRADE
2011	-7.46 (6659 total students matched)	-10.36 (6005 total students matched)
2012	-7.12 (5980 total Students matched)	-7.75 (8858 total students matched)
2013	-4.79 (5820 total students matched)	-5.13 (7636 total students matched)

Eleven elementary charter schools were matched with traditional schools, and no significant difference was found in the overall scores of students in grades 3, 4 or 5 in reading. However, in

math for the three matched years (2011, 2012, and 2013) charter school students scored significantly lower than traditional school students in 2011 (highlighted). Below is a table with the significant difference between the math scores of charter school students as compared to traditional students for 2011, 2012, and 2013 for grades 3-5. Despite this significance in the scores for 2011, in 2012 and 2013 there was no significant difference in the traditional school students' scores and that of charter school students, so any discrepancies or issues in 2011 appear to have been resolved.

Matched Elementary Schools: Math Results for 2011, 2012, and 2013
(highlighted areas show a significant difference)

MATH: CSP GRANT COHORT YEAR	MATH SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: GRADE 3	MATH SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: GRADE 4	MATH SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: GRADE 5
2011	-6.53	-9.31	-10.08
2012	-5.23	-3.89	-3.92
2013	1.05	-2.91	-3.53

While the 3-5th graders' math scores leveled out and they appear to be doing as well as their traditional school counterparts in 2012 and 2013, the 6th graders (at the 11 matched schools) attending charter schools did not do as well in reading in 2012 and 2013 (highlighted areas show statistically significant lower scores), indicating a trend that might be worth following (these students may be having a difficult transition into middle school, etc.). There were no significant differences between traditional and charter school students in grades 6, 7, and 8 in math; for the 2011 7th and 8th grade scores in reading and math, there were very few matched schools so the results were not considered robust enough to report.

Matched Schools: Middle Schools (highlighted areas show a significant difference)

READING: CSP GRANT COHORT YEAR	READING SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 6TH GRADE	READING SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 7TH GRADE	READING SCORE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 8TH GRADE
2011	-1.89	-----	-----
2012	-4.22	-0.60	-2.8
2013	-4.25	-2.35	-1.30

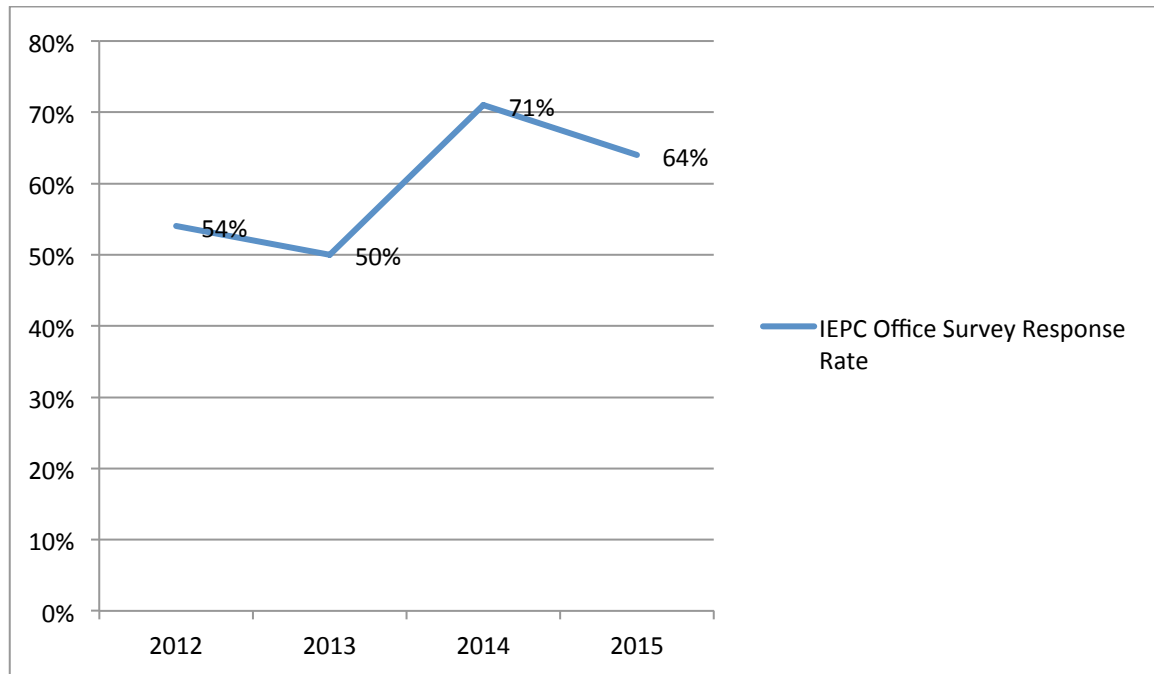
MATH: CSP GRANT COHORT YEAR	MATH SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 6TH GRADE	MATH SCORE ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 7TH GRADE	MATH SCORE FOR CHARTER STUDENTS COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL: 8TH GRADE
2011	0.41	-----	-----
2012	-2.93	0.58	-2.80
2013	-3.69	-2.76	0.35

One thing to note is that the charter schools being compared to the traditional schools are newly created schools, whereas the traditional schools had been in existence much longer. This should be considered when examining our results as the charter schools did show significant improvement in their achievement over the three years they were examined. Full data results are available in the appendix ([APPENDIX C](#)).

IEPC OFFICE SURVEYS

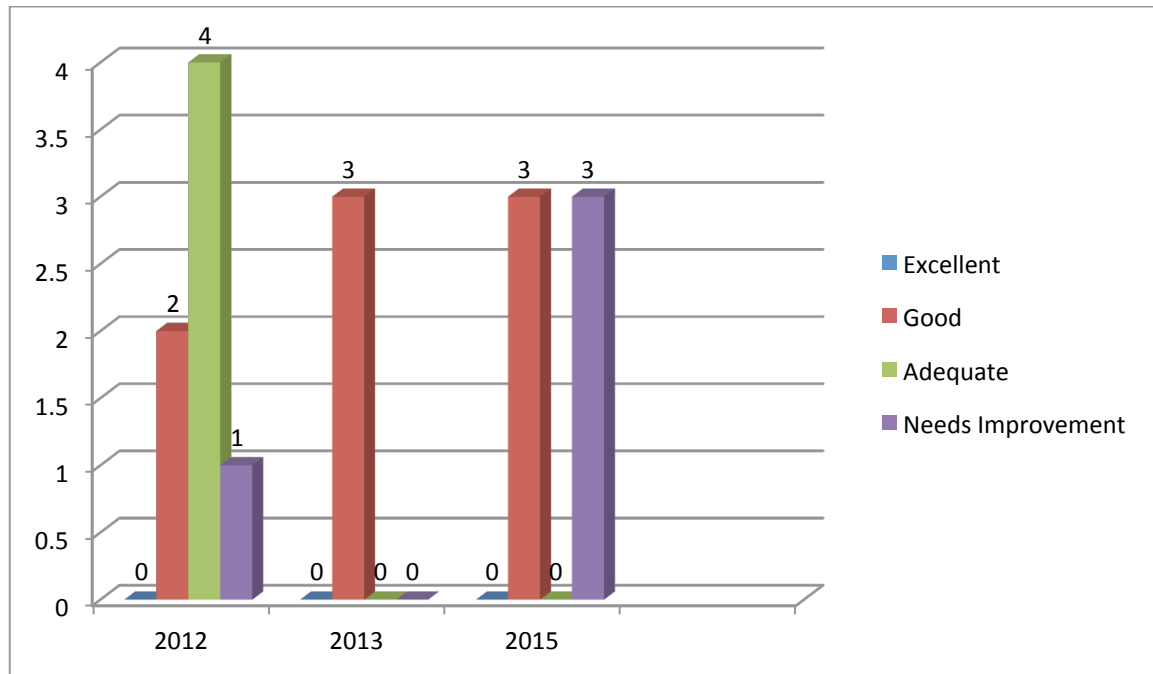
IEPC CSP grant staff surveys have been conducted for the last three years of the grant in an effort to gather anonymous feedback from those who know the CSP grant application and application process best. The 7 question survey was sent to 11 members of the IEPC Office that are considered to have a stake/experience regarding the CSP grant and/or application ([APPENDIX D](#)). Seven of the 11 members completed an anonymous Survey Monkey survey (64% response rate). The response rate has been somewhat consistent as seen in the following chart. Each year has seen the loss and addition of 1-2 IEPC Office staffers, along with job assignments that have adjusted and shifted along with these changes. Some staff members may consistently work on the CSP grant project and others may only work on the periphery and so may have chosen to not take part in the survey.

IEPC CSP Grant Application and Review Process Survey Results



Each year, the CSP grant application and review process has undergone changes in continued efforts to improve the grant application itself and the review process based on feedback from grant applicants, reviewers, and IEPC Office personnel. The grant application and review process is now online, changes in point values to different sections have been made, and reviewer numbers have been reduced based upon their scoring reliability. The grant application review process has been examined by the external evaluation team and determined to be statistically valid and reliable. During the project period, the IEPC Office personnel have been asked how they would rank the current CSP grant application review process. These results are below.

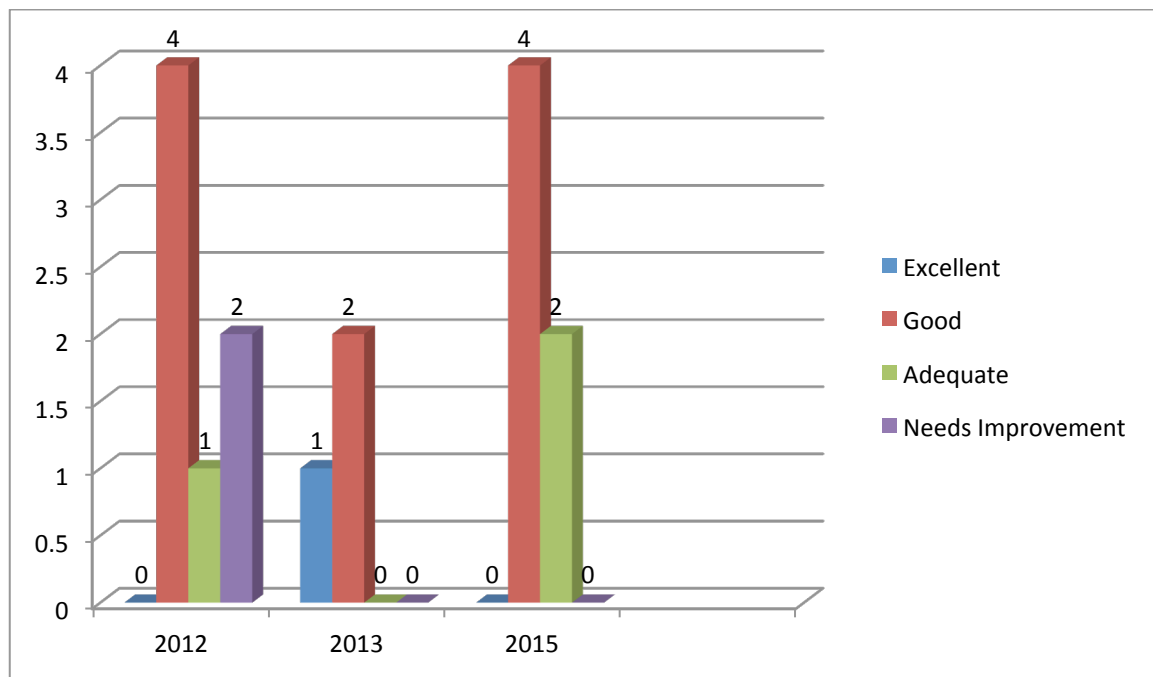
IEPC Office Personnel Survey: How would you rate the current CSP grant review process?



*Please note that there is no survey chart data for this question for 2014. A new survey format with more narrative-style questions was used in an attempt to increase the IEPC Office personnel response rate, and this question was omitted.

The chart above appears to indicate that those IEPC Office staff responding to this question have not considered their CSP grant review process an excellent one, but one that has progressed from being adequate, to good, to good but also needing continued improvement. One concern consistently raised by IEPC personnel when asked about the CSP grant review process is the use of paid grant writers by charter school management company run schools, possibly giving them an advantage over the smaller grass root charter schools. IEPC staffers were specifically asked their thoughts on how the grant application or review process could be modified to mitigate any potential or perceived advantages in this year's survey, and several suggestions were offered: provide a grant writing workshop or seminar to assist those smaller schools with little grant writing experience; change the CSP grant's questions and format each year so that all of the grant input is original and not recycled; and incorporate questions with a less open format so that factual data is what is scored and not writing ability .

IEPC Office Personnel Survey: How would you rate the current CSP grant application?



*Please note that there is no survey chart data for this question for 2014. A new survey format with more narrative-style questions was used in an attempt to increase the IEPC Office personnel response rate, and this question was omitted.

The majority of those IEPC Office personnel who have taken part in the survey each year consider the CSP grant application “good.” The remaining opinions have seemed to move from the application needing improvement to being adequate. Survey-takers this year (2015) were also asked if they considered the current CSP application effective in screening potential awardees. Three individuals indicated that they did believe the application did a good job of screening applicants; one felt that the grant application did not do a sufficient job and that more emphasis needed to be placed on a school’s administrative abilities and past compliance. When IEPC Office personnel this year were asked what they considered to be the best and worst aspects of the CSP grant application/process, only 3 individuals provided input. Positive feedback included the following viewpoints: the current application and process were effective as they are, that the grant team is doing a better job communicating with schools, and the online aspect of the application makes it easier to complete and process. Negative aspects of the current grant are that the process can be cumbersome for applicants (a lot of work for the money received), and the online aspect of the grant can lead to errors and IT (Information Technology) issues. With another Federal CSP Grant cycle as a possibility, survey-takers were asked if their office applied for another CSP grant, what should some of the new CSP grant goals be? Suggestions included having the same or similar goals as this grant cycle (financial assistance in initial implement to help increase the number of charter schools), more dissemination grants (suggested three times), professional development for schools (suggested three times), and to offer implementation grants to charter schools who can respond to specific district needs as outlined by individual district superintendents.

CSP GRANT APPLICANT SURVEYS

With the help of the IEPC Office, the survey response rate for CSP grant applicants has been 100% for the past two years (up from 12% in 2011-2012 and 13% in 2012-2013). Survey links were initially sent by the external evaluation team to the emails of CSP grant applicants, but even with reminder emails, the results were dismal. The IEPC Office subsequently allowed a survey question to be added to the conclusion of application itself, resulting in very useful and pertinent feedback. The question asked was: "If you could make one suggestions to improve the grant application or application process, what would that be?" ([APPENDIX E](#))

This year's responses included:

- The prompts and rubric language for some sections (e.g., school-wide goals and brief program description in section seem redundant or duplicative of subsequent sections). Given the word count parameters, it is challenging to ensure all required content is provided.
- This year's application reduced the word limitation in Section 6 from 600 to 300 words, while expanding the content areas to be addressed. In order to adequately provide documentation for this array of content, additional space would have been appreciated.
- Shorter initial RFP application/pre-screen those for final applications.
- Spacing did not work with the cut and paste and I was unable to create charts. Additionally the boxes made it difficult to see the entire entry you were making at once.
- The application process was very well advertised. I received many emails. The on-line tool was easy to use. I would recommend increasing the word count on the special populations (ESE/ELL) section to 1800.
- Thank you for not making the deadline around the holidays this time.
- If we could make one suggestion, it would be to ensure that the offline template is aligned to the online template i.e., the offline template for Section 6 - Strategic Priorities allows two sections at a maximum of 300 words each for a total of 600 words. When we got to the online template, Section 6 permits a maximum of 300 words only.
- Some sections seem very similar so it is concerning to be repeating information. Perhaps allow ability to upload supporting documentation.
- Update Appendix A resource information with high school grades once released.
- Start the process earlier.
- Uncertain on how to address field where it is not necessary to complete (Appendix B).
- Provide applicants with an in-person/on-line chat/webinar or a written "general orientation" so they understand all the steps related to the CSP grant. Include the mechanics of the application AND the post-award/reimbursement process -- Stage I, Stage II, and Post-Award processes. Applicants need to understand the big picture early on so that they can adequately plan the time that is required to manage federal fund reporting requirements.
- Having a template provided beforehand to format the information before uploading was extremely advantageous.
- We believe that our school, as well as other schools, would benefit considerably by reallocating a significant amount of the total grant to the pre-opening / Implementation I period. This is the period when schools are expending significant funds for furniture and technology and yet funding is not yet being received by the school district.

Of the 38 applicants, most (20) also commented on what an efficient, user-friendly application process/system was in place. The IEPC Office has proven to be very responsive to suggestions

offered by CSP grant applicants as evidenced by the growing number of positive responses to the grant application and processes and the shift in the areas of concern regarding applicants as issues have been addressed. In reviewing past applicant suggestions, year two applicants were most concerned with the quality and training of grant reviewers and additional clarity regarding the application budget section specifically; year three applicants saw and noted improvements in the grant application (specifically that was online), but also requested more targeted assistance in completing each section of the grant application and more overall information on the timing of spending the funds, etc. Most of the suggestions offered by applicants last year (like this year) were very specific and technical in nature (use word limits instead of page limits on the RFP; the online application does not allow applicants to move from one page to the next without completing each page of the RFP; allow for tables, graphs or diagrams in the application, etc.). The consistent refinement of the application and review process has resulted in a grant application and process that now only needs minor corrections and modifications.

2015-16 SCHOOL SITE VISITS

The CAPES external evaluation team will continue a longitudinal analysis of the site-visited schools and has selected 15 schools from the 25 site-visited schools from last year (5 original 2011-12 CSP grant cohort school, 5 year two 2012-13 CSP grant cohort schools, and 5 schools from last year's 2013-14 cohort). Ten new schools were selected for CSP grant site visits from a potential pool of 26 implementation CSP grant awardees from the 2014-15 cohort/school year (64 schools total-including planning schools). Our site visit list for 2015-16 has 25 schools ([APPENDIX F](#)) using stratified randomization based upon the following criteria in descending importance: schools had to be open, which meant that the 10 new schools selected had to be implementation schools; schools designated as RLIS or PLA schools; school type (middle, elementary, high, combination school); schools with unique characteristics (online charter schools, military schools, etc.).

Schools will be contacted in November and site visits will be scheduled (for December of 2015-March of 2016) and surveys emailed. Our timing is dictated by the school calendar and grant funding—CAPES team members wish to ensure that enough time has passed to allow these new schools to have used some of their initial grant funds, but early enough to not interfere with the typical testing that begins in the spring. The principal/director, teachers, PTA/PTO presidents, and governing board members of each school selected for a site visit will be surveyed to further analyze each school's processes and the perceived impact of the CSP grant; an informational email with the survey links and a request to schedule a site visit will be sent to all selected site visit schools ([APPENDIX G](#)).

A school site visit matrix is used to collect data during the school site visits each year, and while this instrument remains fairly consistent from year to year so that annual results are comparable, questions have been added and modified each year as areas of interest have emerged through research (school mission, teacher attrition, etc.). New questions have been added to this year's matrix and some removed to better ascertain areas that will impact the schools' achievement, culture, and growth ([APPENDIX H](#)).

SUMMARY OF SCHOOL STAKEHOLDER SURVEY DATA TO DATE

Prior to the individual CSP grant school site visits, survey links are emailed to each school administrator so that feedback can be obtained and analyzed from different stakeholder groups: school administrators, governing board members, teachers, parents, and PTA/PTO members (for community feedback). All of the following results have been pulled from prior years' annual reports. Stakeholder feedback has fluctuated as evidenced below:

Year	Parent	PTA/PTO President	Governing Board Members	Teachers	School Administrators
2012-13 (25 schools)	127	n/a**	48	217	32
2013-14 (25 schools)	522*	14	39	295*	26
2014-15 (24 schools)	357	21	59	230	28

*Note: In 2013-14, one school (Baymeadows, in Duval County) had over 300 parents and over 50 teachers participate in the surveys.

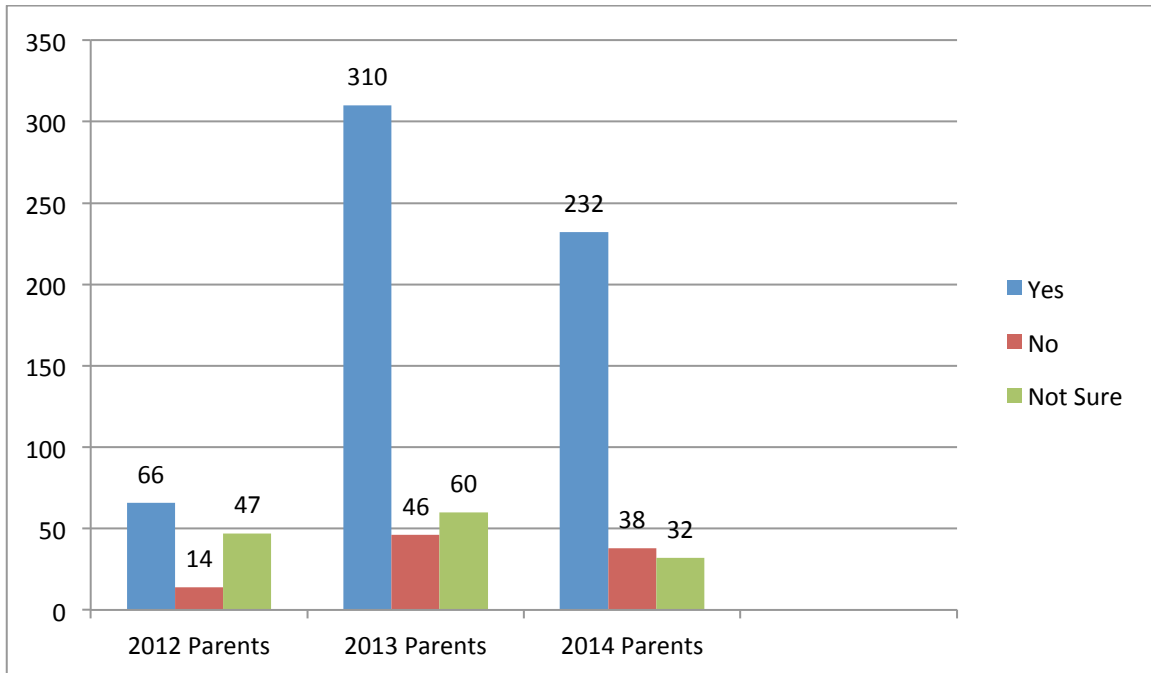
**Note: A PTA/PTO survey was not sent in 2012-13; phone surveys of feeder schools were done to establish community impact/feedback. It was later determined that each school's PTA/PTO president would also be knowledgeable of community concerns or support of the new schools, so PTA/PTO president surveys were used in lieu of the phone interviews.

Each stakeholder group has grown regarding feedback (with the exception of Baymeadow's huge input noted in 2013-14), however, fewer assistant principals/directors did provide feedback in 2014-15 than in 2012-13. The surveys have been relatively consistent each year, but some questions have been removed as others added as areas of interest (attrition, professional development, etc.) arose. Some questions have been constant each year, and will be examined in the following tables.

Parent Survey Comparisons

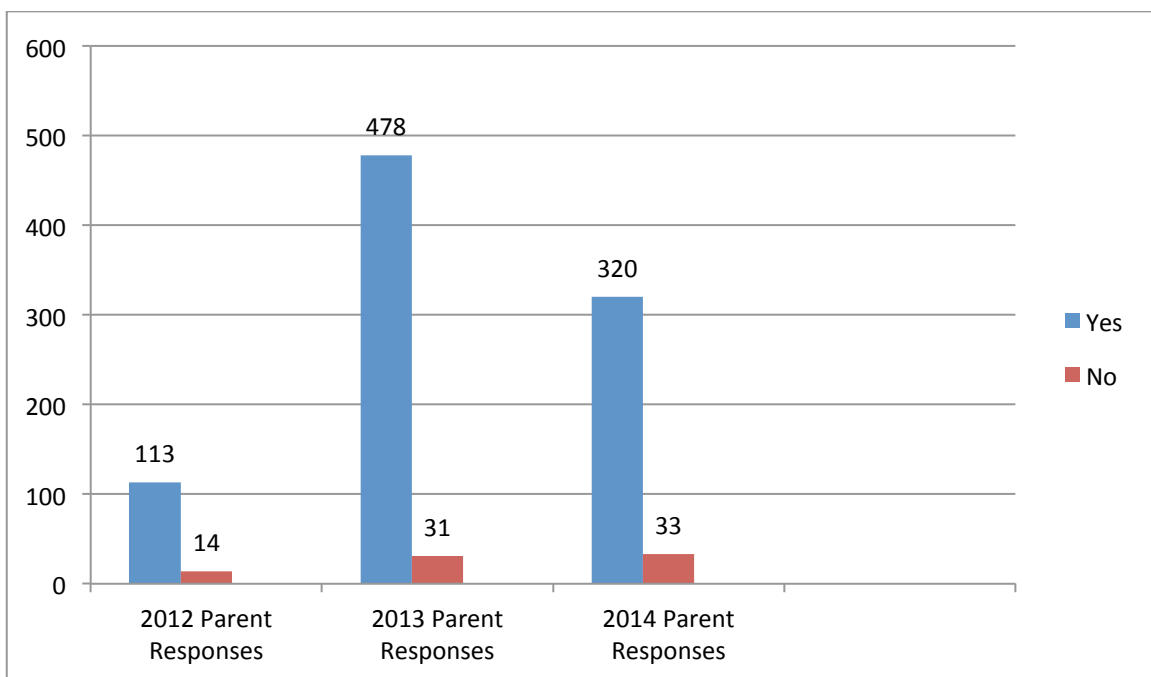
Parent feedback is vital to the analysis of any school because it offers the viewpoint of the consumer, which can lend valuable insight as to satisfaction levels and possible areas in need of improvement. Please note that in the charts below, the full number of the parents surveyed may not be represented as parents could opt to "skip" some questions.

Your child's school was awarded funding through the Charter Schools Program Grant. Have you seen an impact (materials, programs, etc.) as a result of this?



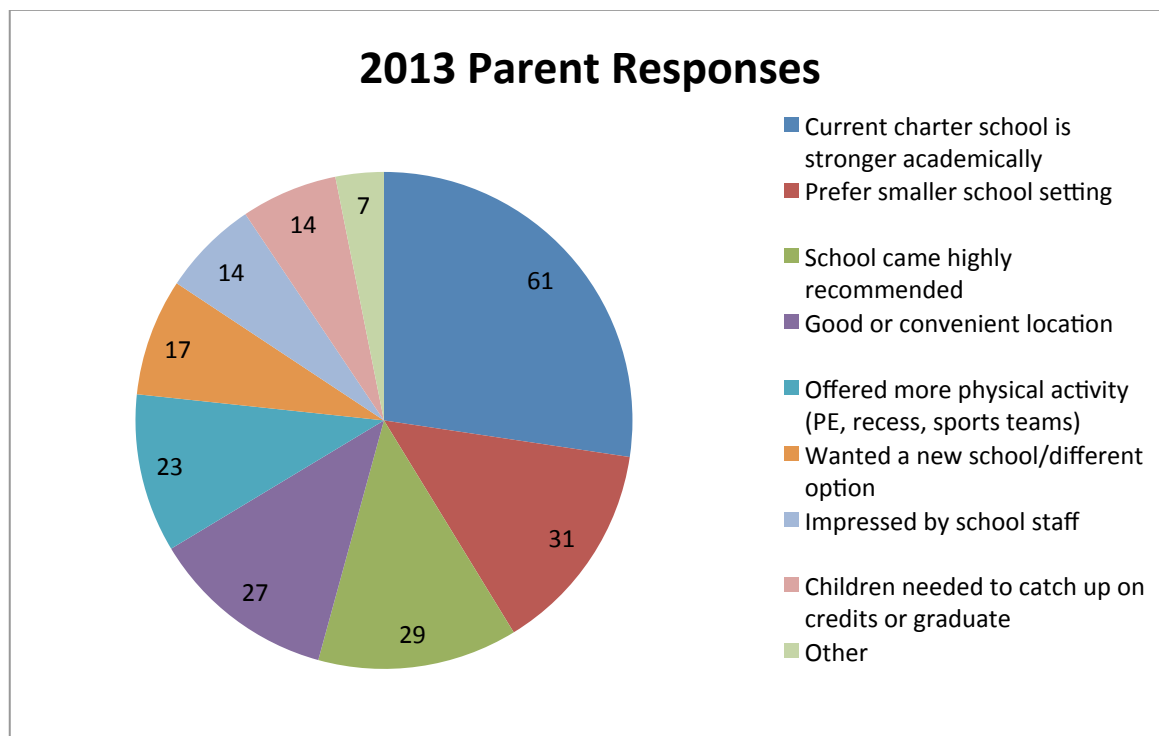
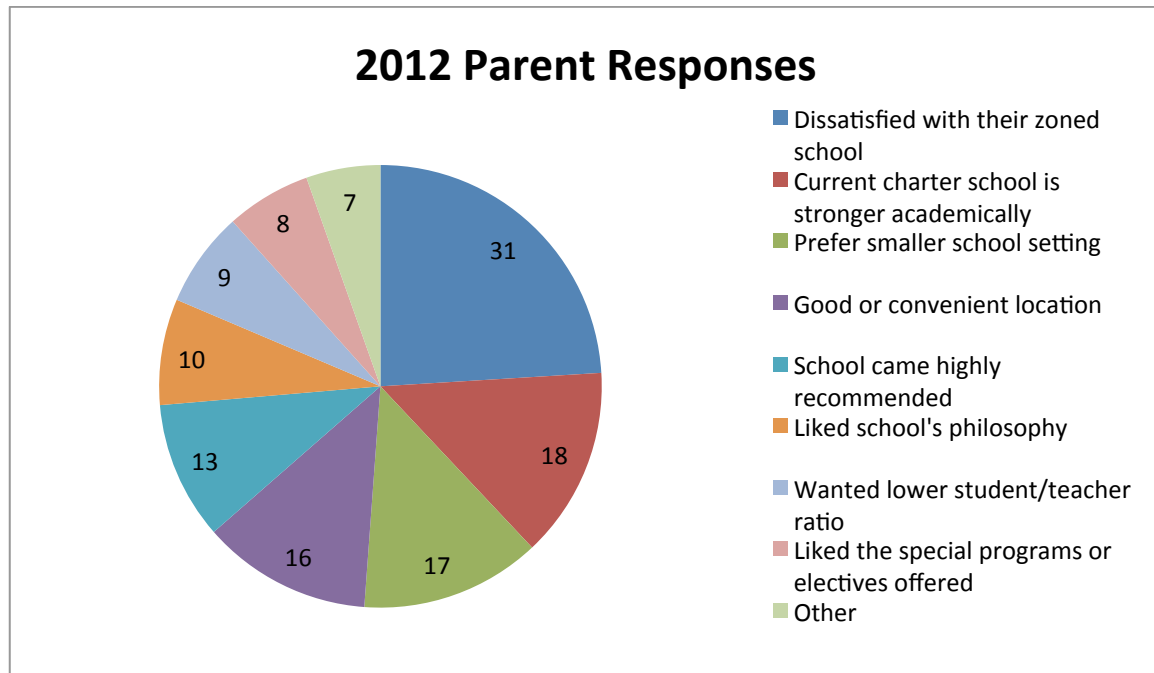
Parents overwhelmingly indicated that they noticed an impact in their schools as a result of receiving the CSP grant. Many were knowledgeable and commented on specific items they had observed in the schools purchased with grant funds (computers, smartboards, etc.).

Overall, are you satisfied with your child's school?

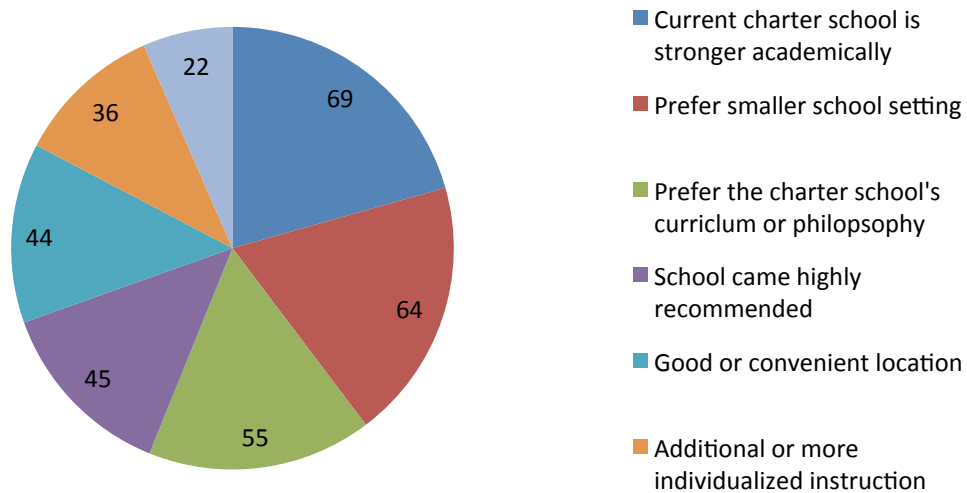


Parents who responded to the external evaluation survey were typically very satisfied with their child's school (above). These are very positive results given these schools were new, and these parents likely experienced the new school issues, changes, and "hiccups" typical with the opening of any new organization or enterprise

Why did you enroll your child at their current charter school?



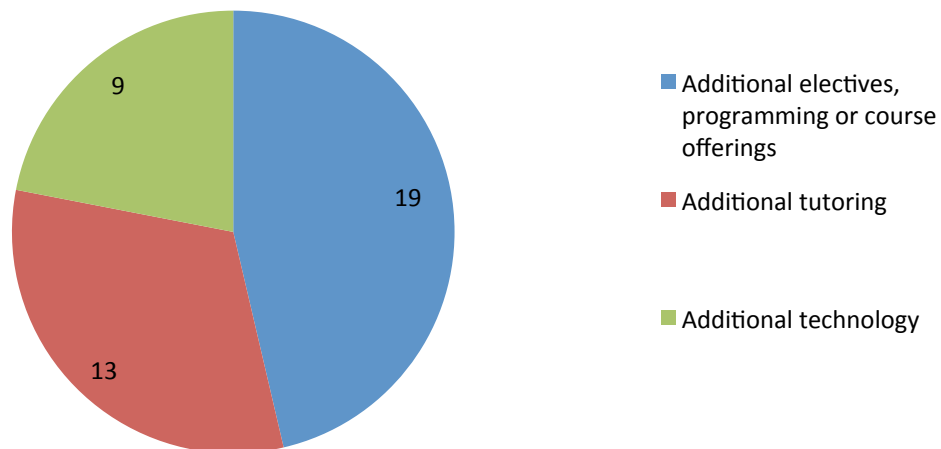
2014 Parent Responses



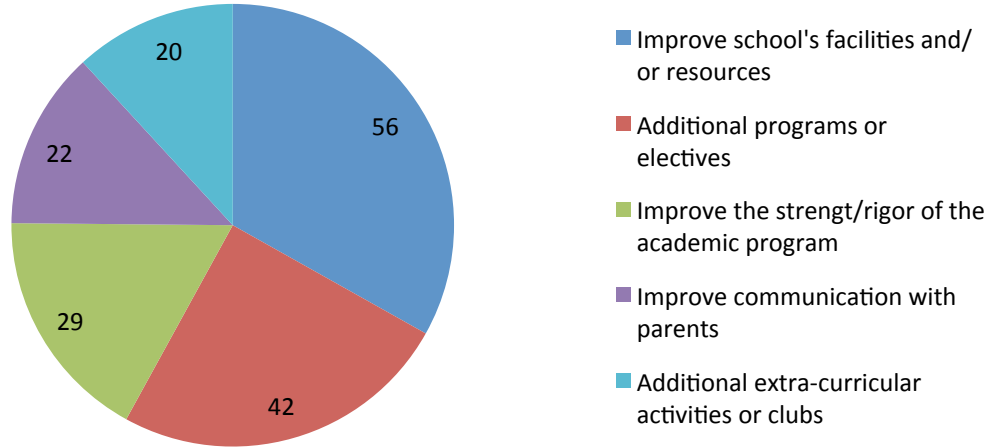
Parents were allowed to provide more than one reason for selecting their child's charter school (above), and for all three years, they indicated that they considered their child's charter school a stronger option academically, and that they wanted a smaller school setting for their child.

What could your child's charter school do to improve your child's achievement or learning experience?

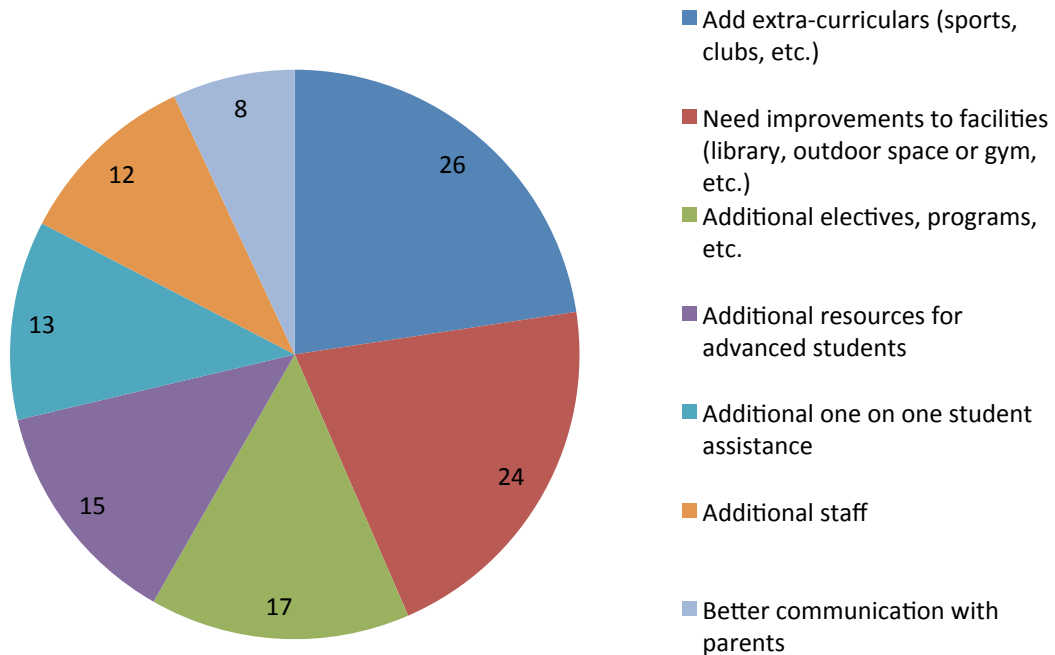
2012 Parent Responses



2013 Parent Responses



2014 Parent Responses

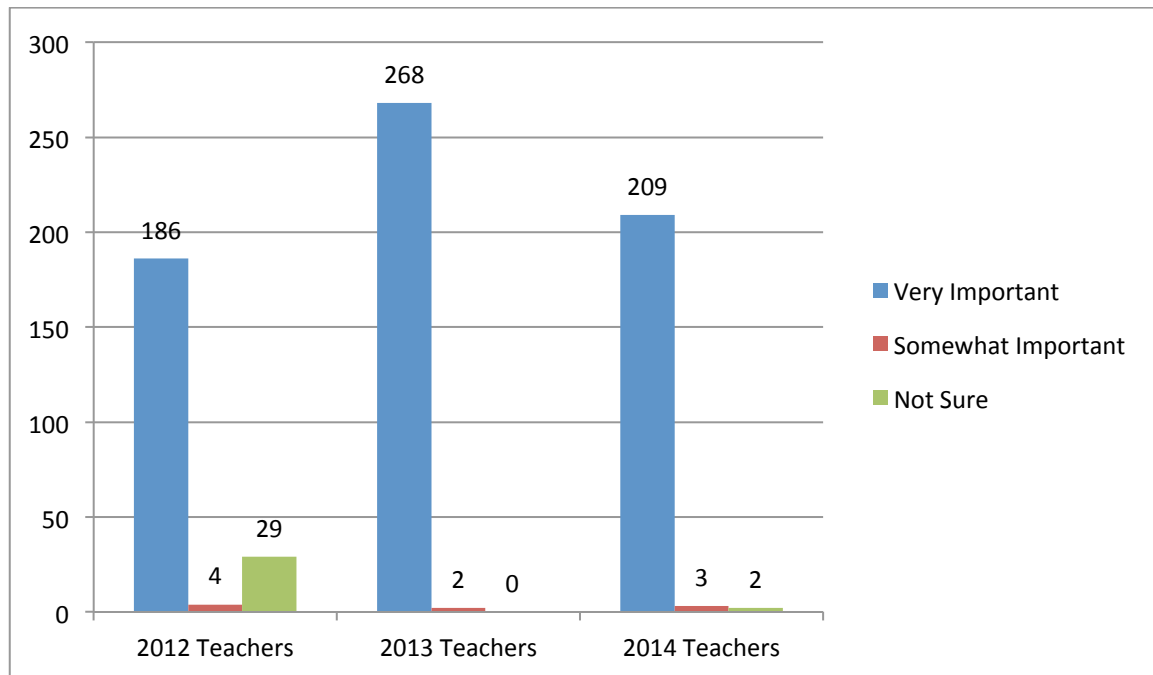


Parents in all three years suggested additional elective courses and improvements to facilities (including outdoor spaces, technology, etc.) important to improving their child's experience at their individual charter school. Extra-curricular activities such as clubs, sports teams, etc., were also highly suggested by parents.

Teacher Survey Comparisons

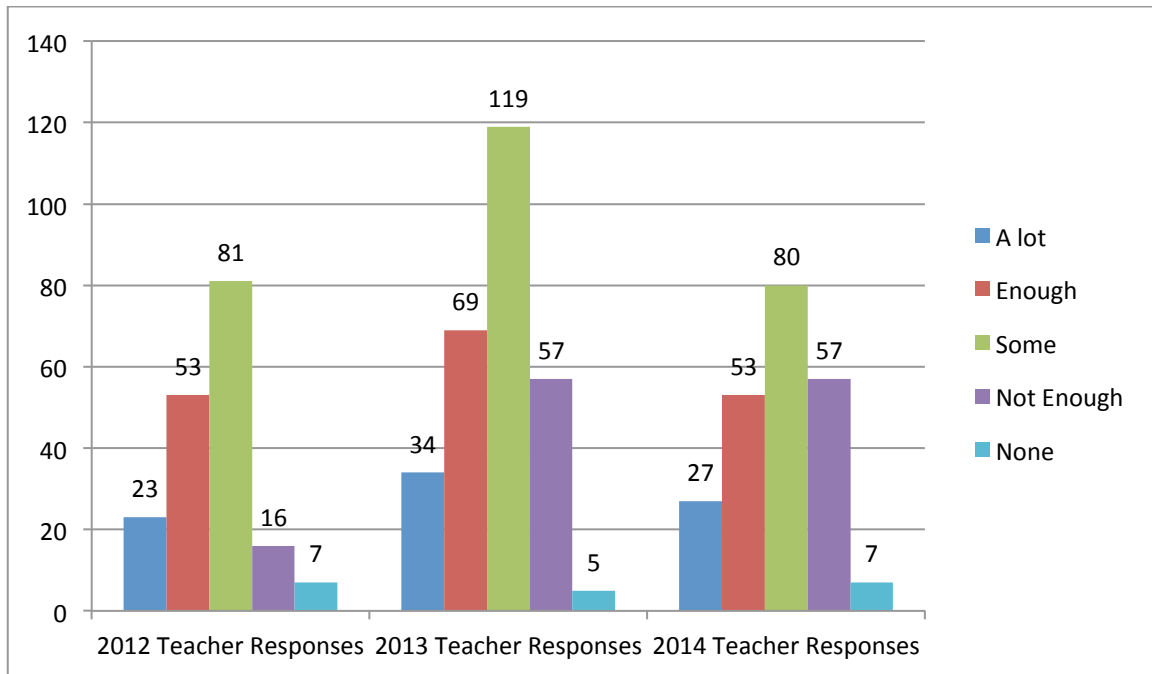
Teacher feedback is critical for any school improvement efforts. Given the importance of teacher support and buy-in of a school mission or program, the CAPES external evaluation team also surveyed teachers of the site-visited schools each year to ascertain their perceptions of their individual schools.

Your school was awarded funding through the Charter Schools Program Grant. How important was receiving the grant to your school?



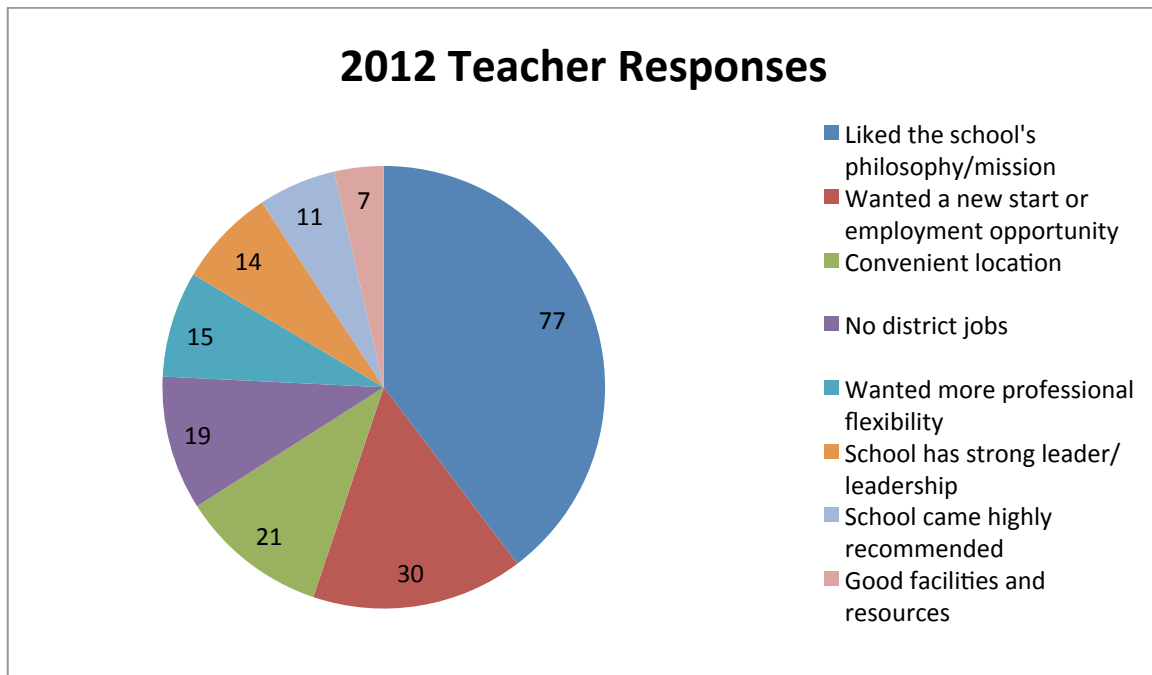
Teachers considered receiving the CSP Grant very important to their funding efforts all three years. In 2012, several teachers indicated that they were “not sure” how important the grant was to their school; since the CSP grant was new, it is likely that several schools’ staff members were unaware of their receipt of this grant as their administrators, governing board members, or a grant writer likely applied for the grant for their schools.

How much support do you think your school receives from your district office?

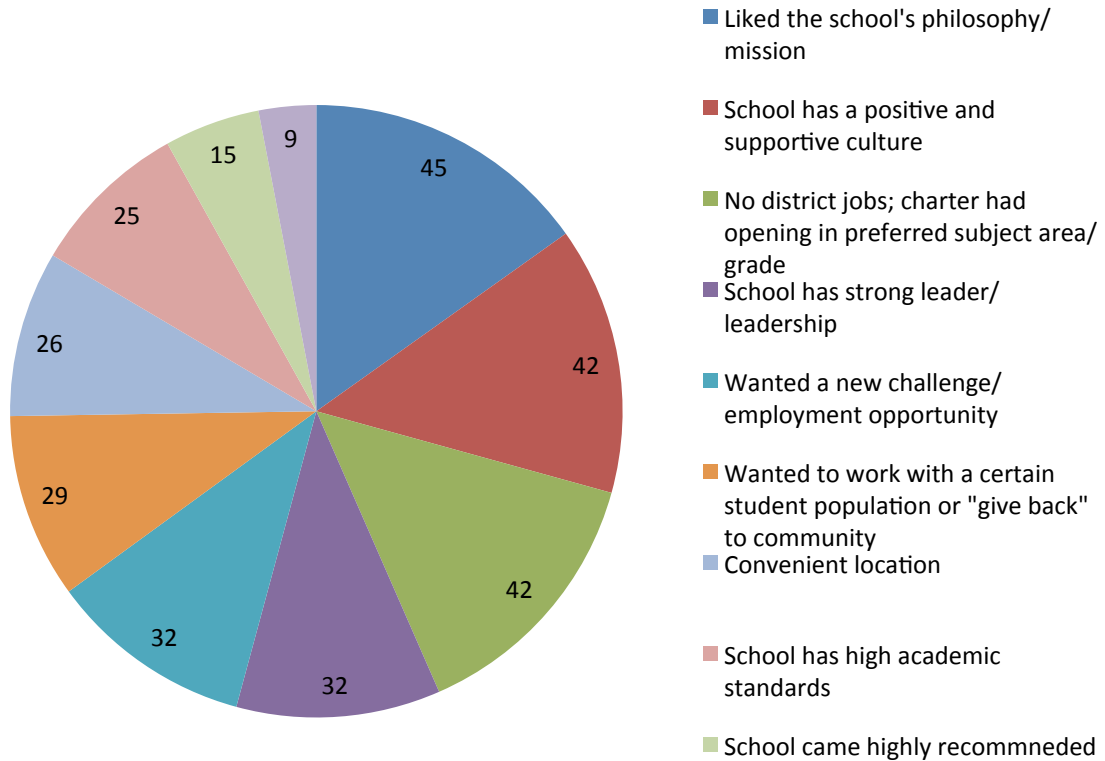


Results were very consistent for the three survey years regarding charter school teachers' views of how supportive each of their school district offices was. It is interesting to note the spike in teachers indicating that districts provided "not enough" support after 2012. It is likely that after 2012, teachers may have become more aware of the financial inequities charter schools often encounter (Curtis, 2011).

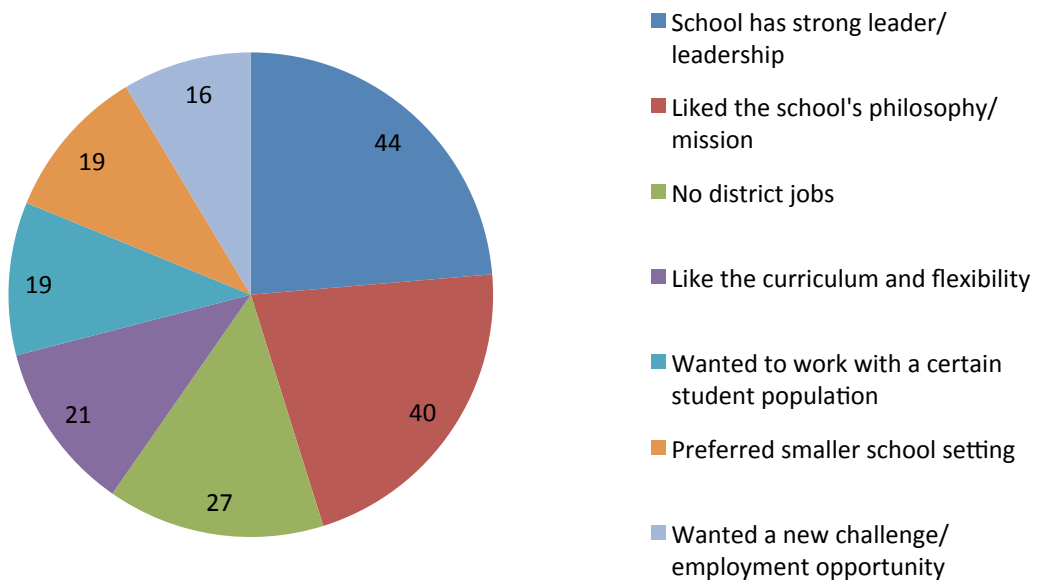
Why did you decide to teach at your current charter school?



2013 Teacher Responses



2014 Teacher Responses

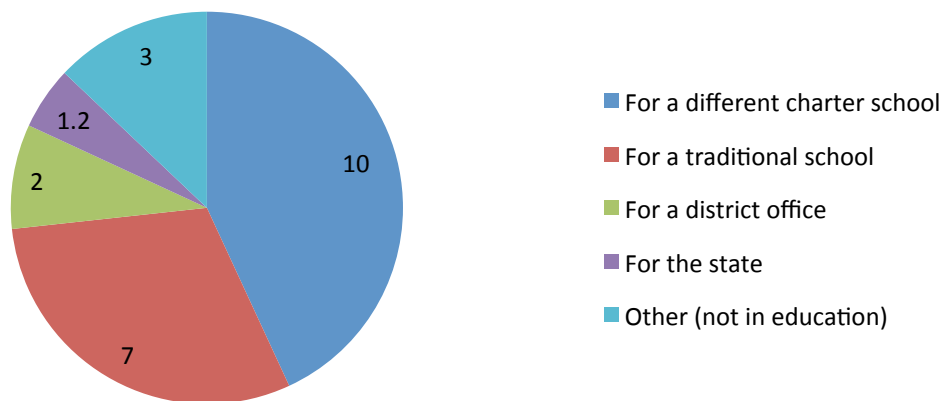


For each of the three years surveyed teachers were drawn to teach at their current charter schools for a myriad of reasons, but there was some consensus that they connected with their charter school's philosophy/mission, there was not a job/preferred position in their district schools, and that their specific charter school has a strong leader/leadership.

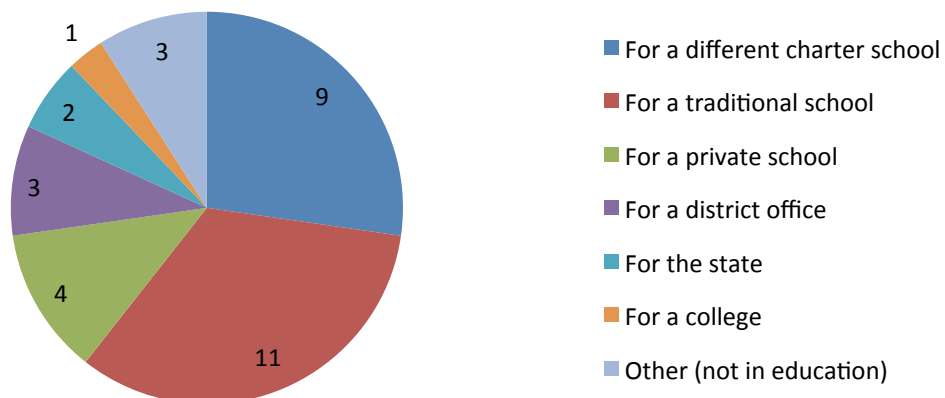
Administrator Survey Comparisons

Where do administrators for new charter schools come from?

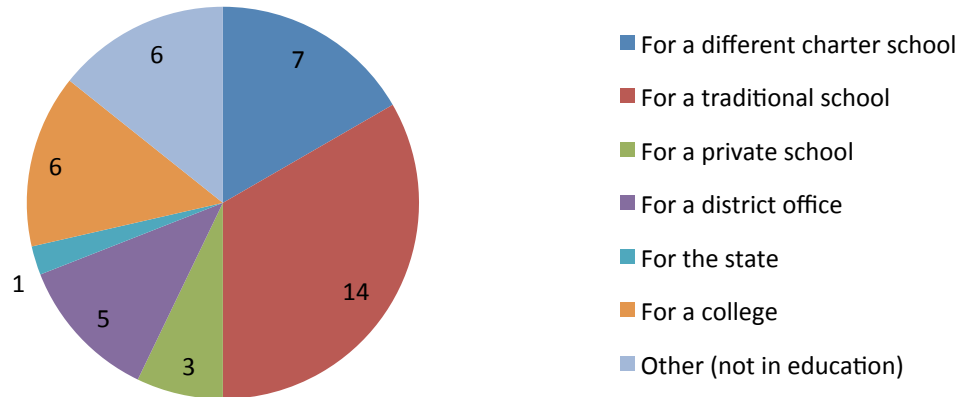
2012 Administrators: Prior to this charter school, I worked:



2013 Administrators: Prior to this charter school, I worked:

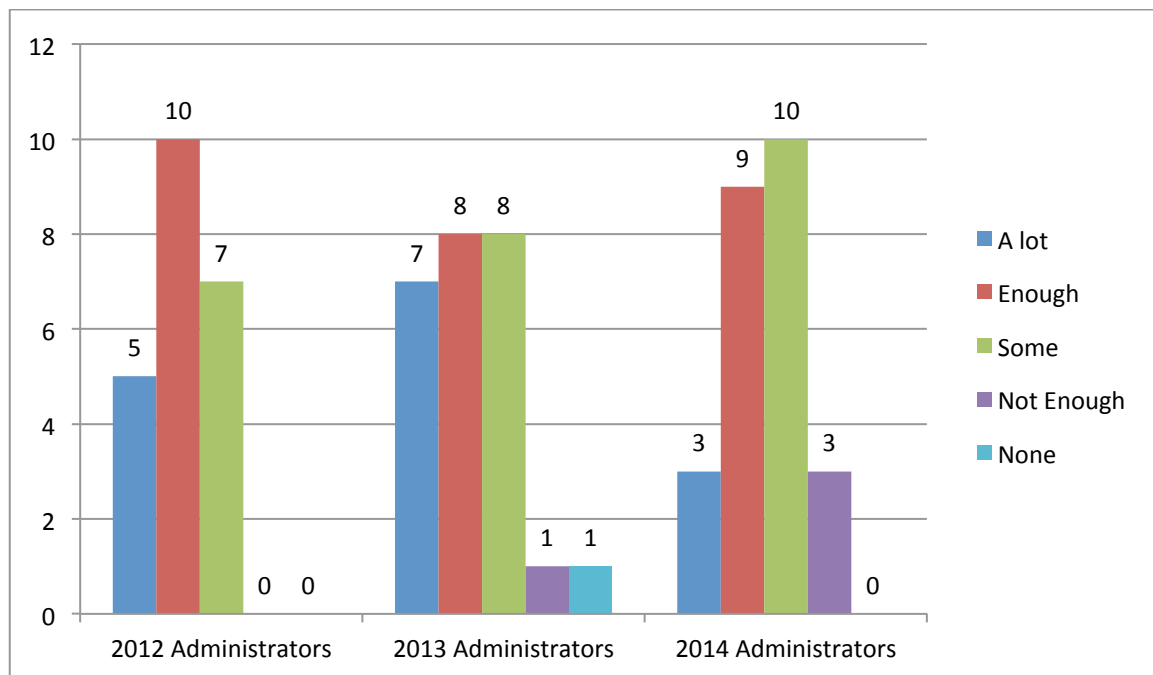


2014 Administrators: Prior to this charter school, I worked:



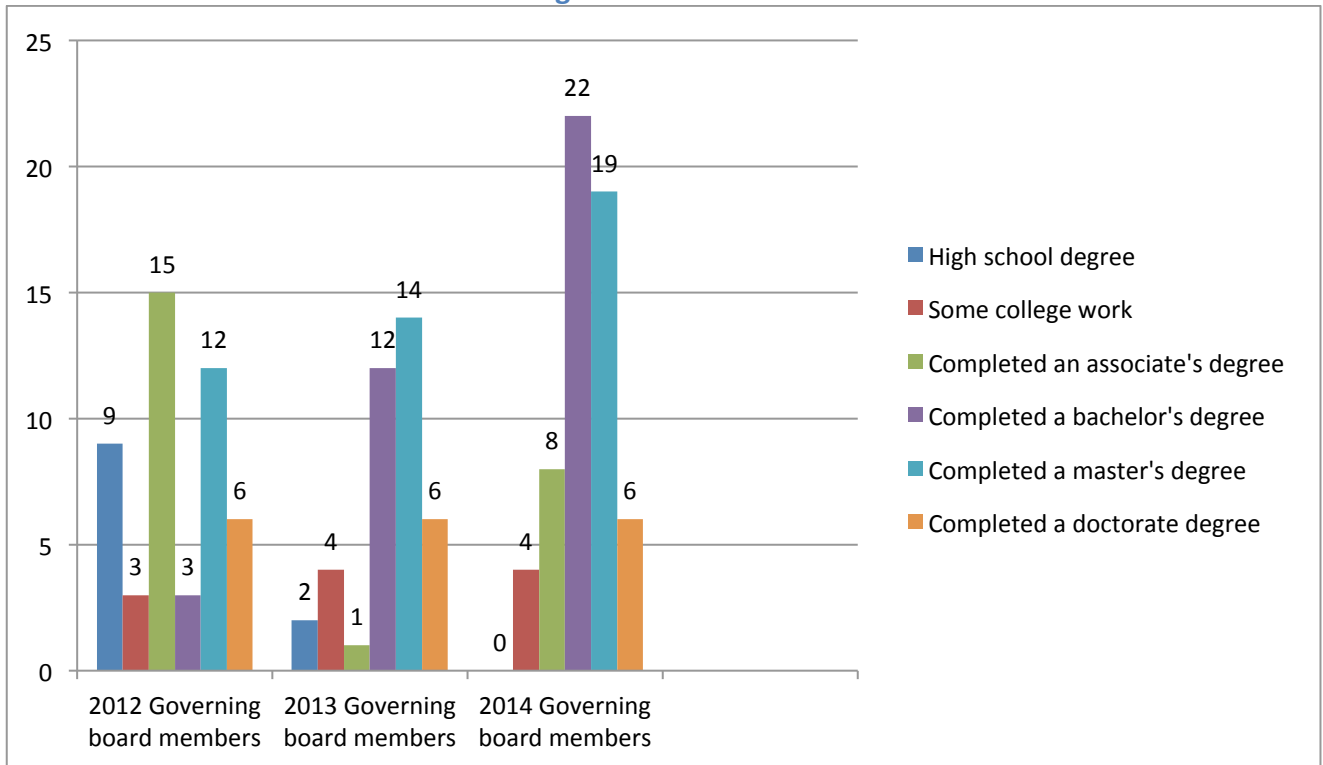
Finding a good school leader is necessary to the continued growth and improvement of any school, so ascertaining where CSP grant site-visited charter schools are finding their principals/directors is important, especially given that surveyed charter school teachers saw their school leaders as a draw for their schools. For the past three years, most of the surveyed CSP grant site-visited schools' administrators came to their charters from a different charter school, followed by a traditional school. District offices, private schools, and "other" (non-educational settings) were also training grounds for some of the school leaders.

How much support do you think your school receives from your district office?



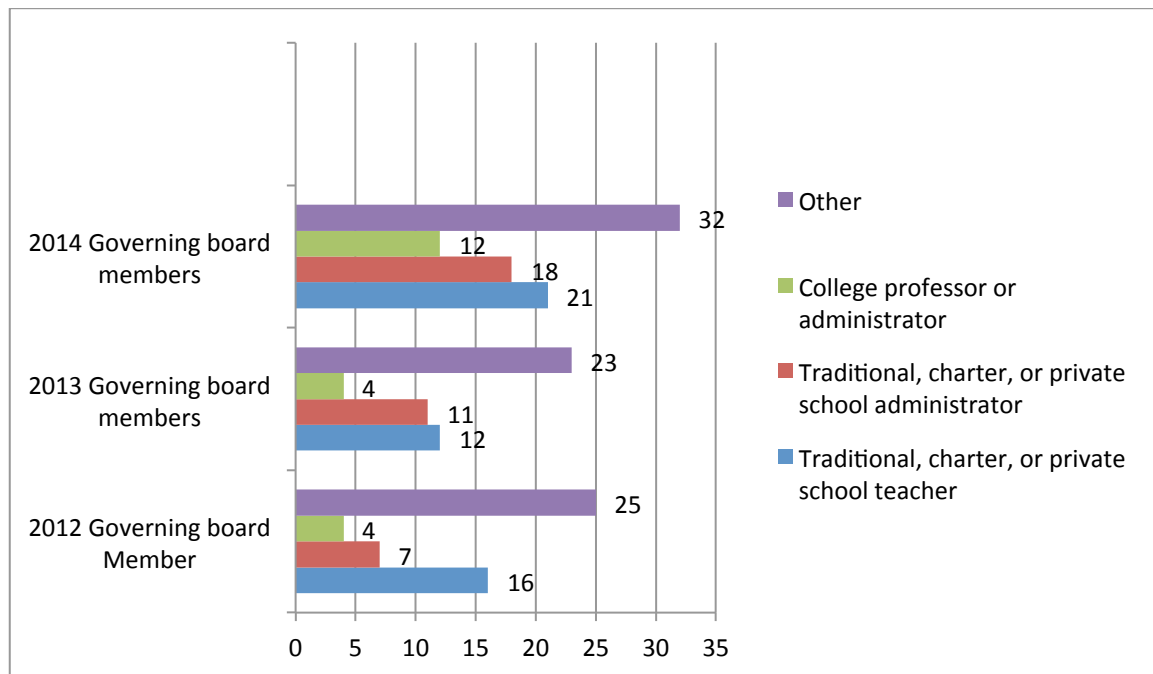
When examining the above chart, school administrators have been pretty consistent in their views on how supportive their individual district offices have been with “enough” and “some” support encompassing the most prevalent viewpoints. It is interesting to note, however, that most administrators initially (in 2012) considered the support provided to their schools as “enough,” then falling to be even with “some” support in 2013, and finally being surpassed by “some” support in 2014. This does show a downward trend (although by the slightest of margins) in school site administrators’ perceptions of the assistance or help provided by their districts.

Highest Level of Education Achieved by Site-visited Charter School Governing Board Members



The educational level of governing board members appears to have increased since 2012, as evidenced by the growth of those members with bachelor degrees: 6% in 2012, to 37% by 2014. Those with a master's degree or doctorate remained consistent each year, while those with only a high school diploma, some college coursework, or an associate's degree remained low after 2012.

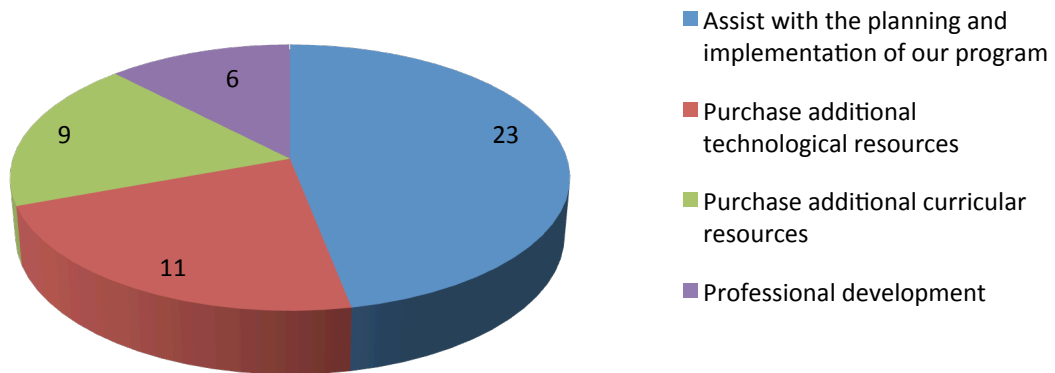
Prior Educational Experience of Site-visited Charter Schools' Governing Board Members



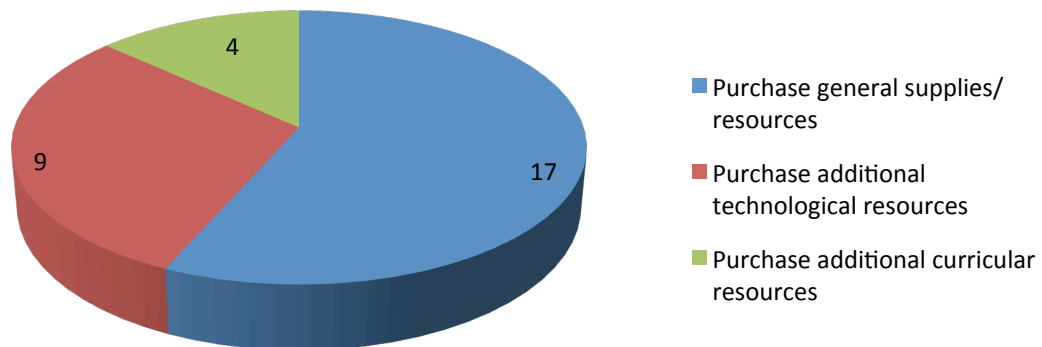
“Other” work experience is what most governing board members had for each year of the CSP grant site-visit surveys; this included some educational occupations such as school resource officer, school registrar, athletic director, community educator (public health community outreach, vocational director for youth), educational consultant, etc., and other non-education related professions such as attorney, banker, etc. A change noticeable above is the increase in college professionals (professors or administrators) serving as governing board members in the third year of surveys (2014). Many of the governing board members also have experience as charter school teachers, which could be useful in terms of their understanding of how a charter school functions and some of the potential issues or challenges that could arise.

How have the CSP grant funds positively impacted your school?

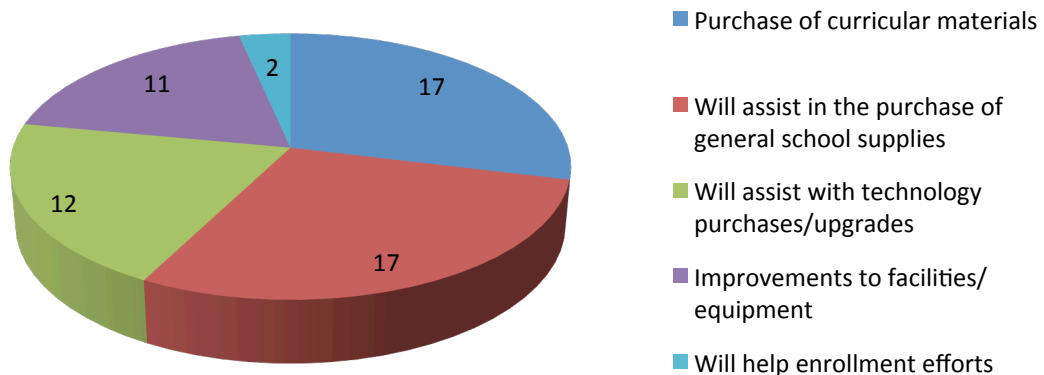
2012 Governing Board Members



2013 Governing Board Members



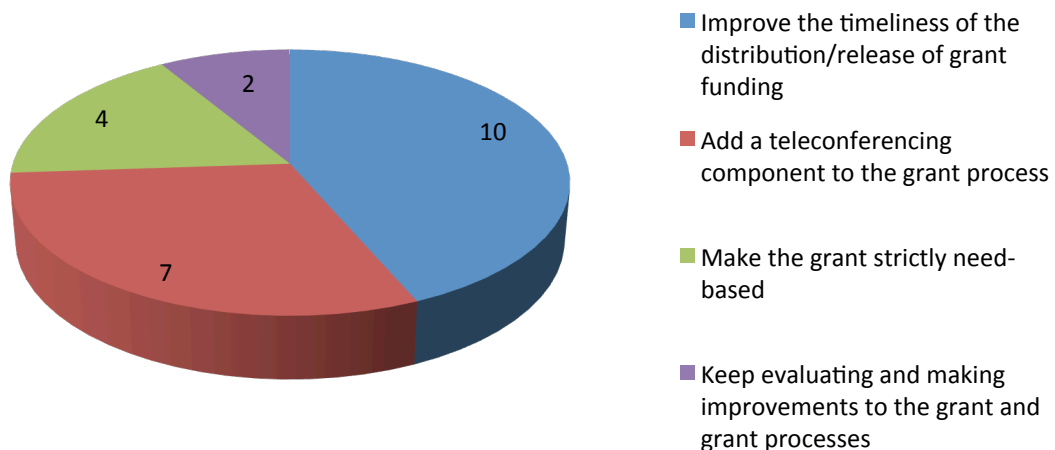
2014 Governing Board Members



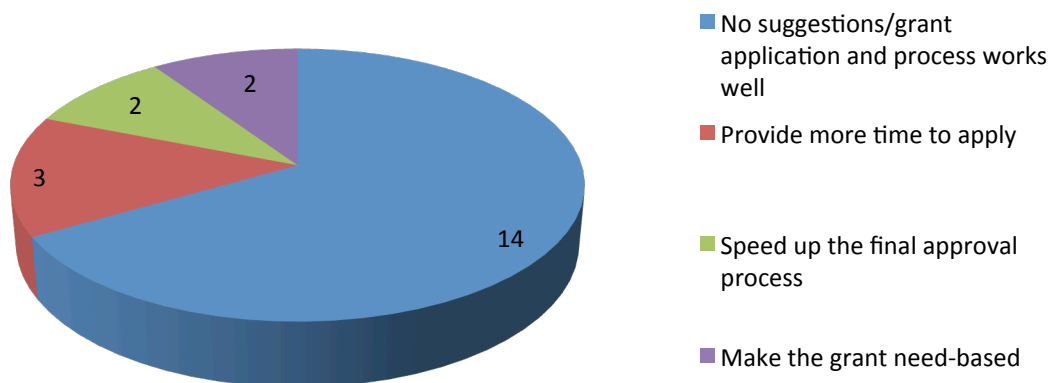
The perceived usage of the CSP grant funds by the governing board members each year were similar: technology purchases, curricular material purchases, general supplies, and overall funding to support the program/facilities topped off each year's list.

How could the CSP grant application and application process be improved?

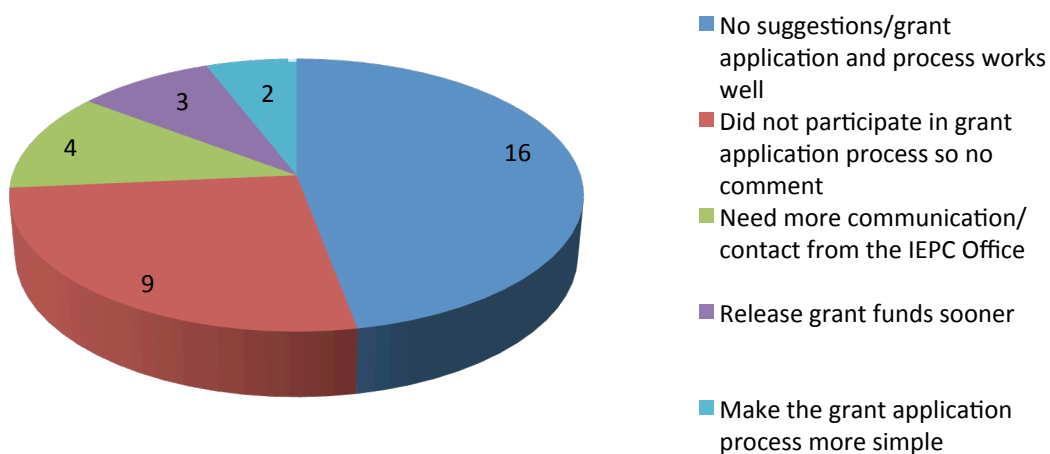
2012 Governing Board Members



2013 Governing Board Members



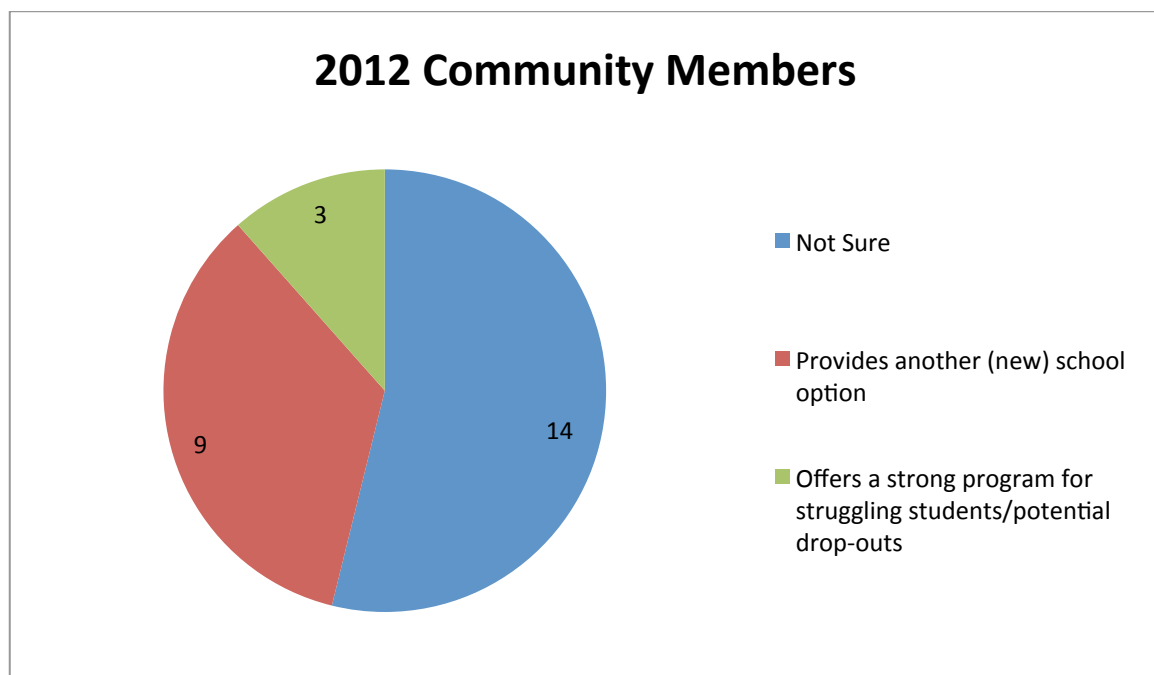
2014 Governing Board Members



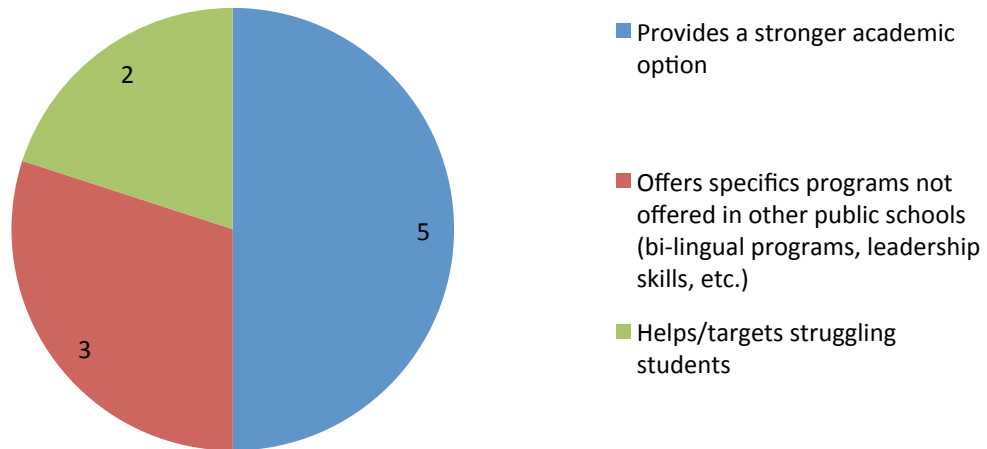
The perceptions of charter school governing board members have changed each year regarding the CSP grant application and application process. In the initial year, governing board members were most concerned with a timely release of the funds, but seemed less concerned with this in later years, possibly because they eventually educated by the IEPC Office as to the time frame of the release of funds from the state. The CSP grant application also went online for 2013, which greatly streamlined the application process, possibly leading to the “no suggestions” category.

Community feedback is helpful because it provides a different perspective on the new charter schools—how those in the community may think of the charter school and its efforts. For the external evaluation’s first year (2012), community input was obtained by phone surveys that were conducted over a three week period from January 23-February 6th, 2013, to gain a general sense of community knowledge of the new charter schools and any perceived impact by the community as a stakeholder in these new schools. Two community members were selected (convenience sample) and contacted for each school: for the sixteen elementary or K-8 schools, preschools within a 5 mile radius were selected (those closest were first options) and private elementary school and middle schools and/or teen or youth centers within a five mile radius were contacted as community member representatives for the 2 middle, 2 middle and high (6-12), and 2 high schools. For this CSP grant year (2012), exactly half of the sample had no awareness of these schools, and while that, itself, provides a degree of feedback and insight, additional information could be useful to the IEPC office and/or the schools. To address this, for the remaining site visit and survey cycle, CAPES decided to instead add additional questions to the parent, school administrator, advisory board member, and teacher surveys, inquiring as to how they think their school will/has impacted the community and created a separate (and new) online Survey Monkey survey for the president of each site-visited school’s PTA or PTO (Parent/teacher association or organization) inquiring as to the impact anticipated with each school’s community, as they would have a great deal of community contact and interaction.

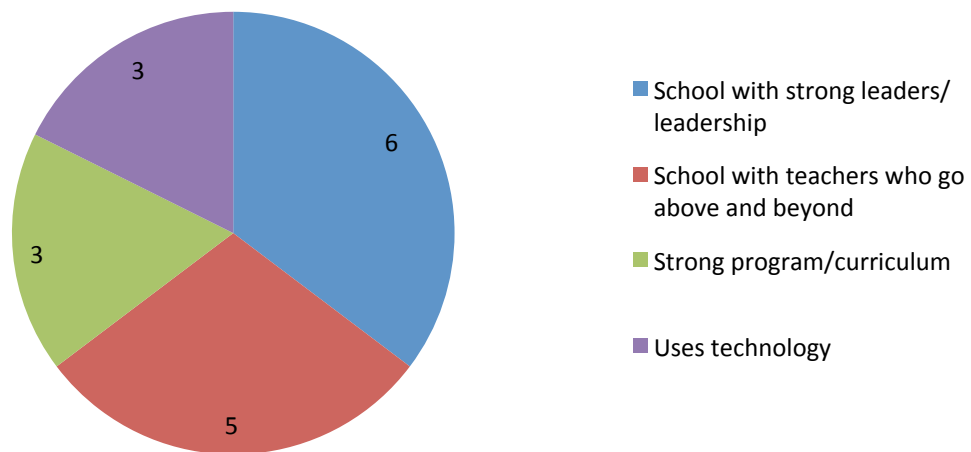
What need or void does your specific community charter school fill?



2013 PTA/PTO Presidents



2014 PTA/PTO Presidents



All three charts seem to illustrate a community perception that the new charter schools offer a new program or curriculum (that is different from the traditional school and/or considered potentially stronger academically) and that it may help target struggling or disenfranchised students.

2015-16 DISTRICT INTERVIEWS

Each year five new school district offices are visited (15 total to date); meetings are held with the superintendents, and/or the assistant superintendents, along with the district directors of charter schools to discuss their perceptions of their CSP grant awarded charter school(s) and to gather information regarding the district climate towards charter schools and the perceived impact of charter schools within each community. The districts selected for this year's interviews are: Alachua, Brevard, Citrus, Pasco, and Sarasota ([APPENDIX I](#)). Each year an effort is made to visit districts in different areas of the state to gain a broader district perspective since the student populations, charter school numbers/availability, economy, etc., may differ greatly, impacting how districts view and effectively work with their new charter schools. The year five annual report will yield some of the cumulative findings and perceptions from a total of 20 districts across the state of Florida, however, the cumulative findings from years 2-4 are on the following pages.

The questions to be asked are kept generally consistent so that responses from year to year can be compared, and feedback requested regarding issues facing the charter schools in their specific districts, community support of charter schools, etc. ([APPENDIX J](#)).

Some overall feedback from the following chart:

Question 1: "How would you characterize your district's relationship with its charter schools? Good, bad, or developing?" Twelve out of 15 of the districts indicated, "good," 2 said "developing," and 1 indicated that it depended on the charter school in question.

Question 2: "What do you think are some issues your current charter schools have or face?" The most common answer (8/15) was lack of funding or resources.

Question 4: "How much overall support and assistance do you believe you provide to your charter schools (not enough, enough, more than enough)?" Six considered the support they provided as "more than enough," three offered that they provided a mix of "more than enough and enough," and six believed that they offered what would be considered "enough" support to their charter schools.

Question 5: "How much overall support do you think your charter schools would say you provide (not enough, enough, more than enough)?" Only one district thought that their charter schools would consider their assistance "more than enough." Nine thought that their charters would think they provide "enough;" two thought their charters would indicate that they provide "enough to not enough" depending on the situation. Two more districts thought their charter schools would indicate "not enough" support, and one district really wasn't sure.