



State of New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority

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Charter School Funding Informational Series by New Mexico Public Schools Facilities Authority 2019 National Data on Charter Schools in District-Owned Facilities

SUMMARY:

- **Statistics on Charter Schools in District-Owned Facilities**
- **State by State examples Laws Related to Charter Schools in District-Owned Facilities**

National Charter School Resource Center (CSRC) funded by USDOE
Report on “Finding Space: Charter School in District-Owned Facilities”
<https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov/sites/default/files/Finding%20Space.pdf>

Accessing affordable facilities has long been identified as one of the most significant challenges facing charter schools. In response to this challenge, an array of policy and market-based approaches has emerged over the years. Examples of these approaches include: public and private credit enhancement, tax-exempt bond financing, community development lending, commercial facilities development, state per pupil facilities aid, constitutional mandates for fair treatment, state facilities grant programs, federal tax credits, co-location with other public schools, and charter schools accessing vacant district facilities.

In order to conduct our analysis, we primarily relied on data from the Charter School Facilities Initiative (CSFI) dataset. CSFI is a national project to research and quantify charter school access to adequate space and funding for educational facilities. It originated from a facilities survey, developed by the Colorado League of Charter Schools to collect reliable data on the condition and cost of charter school facilities.

Nationally, 22% of Charters are in district-owned facilities.

Annual facilities expenditures as a percent of per pupil revenue for charters:

In district-owned space: 0.9% In privately-owned space: 5.8% (a difference of \$420/student)

Number of charter schools in district spaces: Of the 1,540 charter schools that participated in the CSFI survey, 343 – 22% of the schools surveyed – occupied district facilities at the time of the survey. Of the 14 surveyed states, four have a significant proportion of charter schools in district space: California (45%), New York (31%), Georgia (25%), and South Carolina (23%). Of the total number of charter schools in district owned facilities, 81% come from two large states: California (65%) and New York (16%). The volume and, to some extent, experiences of charter schools in these two states thus exert a significant influence on the overall findings of this report.

Currently, fifty-nine percent of the charter schools in district buildings are sole occupants, with the remaining 41% in shared buildings. Of the charter schools that are sharing space, roughly half co-located with another public school, with an equivalent proportion sharing space with a non-school entity and 2% sharing space with both another public school and a non-school entity.

PSFA, in partnership with New Mexico's school districts, provide quality, sustainable, and well maintained school facilities for our students and educators.

State level policy increasingly supports charter schools accessing district space. Of the 43 states (including the District of Columbia) with charter laws, 27 have enacted policies that try to provide charter schools with better access to district facilities. Of these 27 states, at least 12 have updated their guidance on providing charter schools with access to district space since 2000. The three states with recently enacted charter school legislation – Maine, Mississippi and Washington – all have provisions that try to address the issue of charter school access to district facilities.

The impact of state policy is especially visible in California. In 2000, California voters approved Proposition 39, a constitutional provision requiring districts to provide charter schools that serve a minimum of 80 students with facilities that are “sufficient” in size given the charter’s enrollment and “reasonably equivalent” to facilities occupied by traditional public schools in the district. Proposition 39 ranks as the nation’s strongest statewide policy statement mandating charter school access to district-owned space, and is the major reason for the large number and percentage of charter schools occupying district spaces in the state.

The impact of Proposition 39 has been significant. 45% of California’s charter schools are in district-owned buildings, the highest percentage among surveyed states. Those schools involve arrangements with 79 different authorizing school districts, from big cities like Los Angeles and San Diego to small towns like Nevada City.

In 2004, Chicago, IL, former Mayor Daley and former Superintendent Arne Duncan launched Renaissance 2010, a citywide initiative to increase quality education options in the city. The district’s efforts eventually included the Shared Facility Policy in 2005, which assured charter schools equal status in shared facilities.

In New York City, NY, 62% of the city’s 197 schools are in district spaces, encouraged in part by a use cost of \$1 a year. Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg and former Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education Joel Klein are widely credited with ensuring the large-scale presence of charter schools in district spaces. NYC spent \$44m in 2018 for 63 charter schools’ lease assistance. State law allows charters to pay up to 30% of their total per-student funding to help with rent.