

Archived Information

Objective 1.6: Greater public school choice will be available to students and families.

Our Role. The Department of Education promotes and supports public schools of choice that equitably serve all children, improve academic performance, and provide valuable lessons that could be used to improve public education in general. The Education Department supports well-designed public school choice—defined as any approach to improve teaching and learning that:

- Provides new, different, high-quality choices in educational courses, activities, programs, or schools to families and students in public schools, in order to better meet different learning styles, interests, and needs;
- Holds schools and programs accountable to the public for results;
- Stimulates educational innovation for the continuous improvement of all public schools, contributes to standards-based school reform efforts, and promotes high expectations and high achievement for all students;
- Results in voluntary options that are accessible to all students, including those who are poor, members of a minority group, or have limited English proficiency or disabilities;
- Promotes educational equity and increased opportunities for students to receive the educational benefits that diversity provides; and
- Increases family involvement in the education of their children.

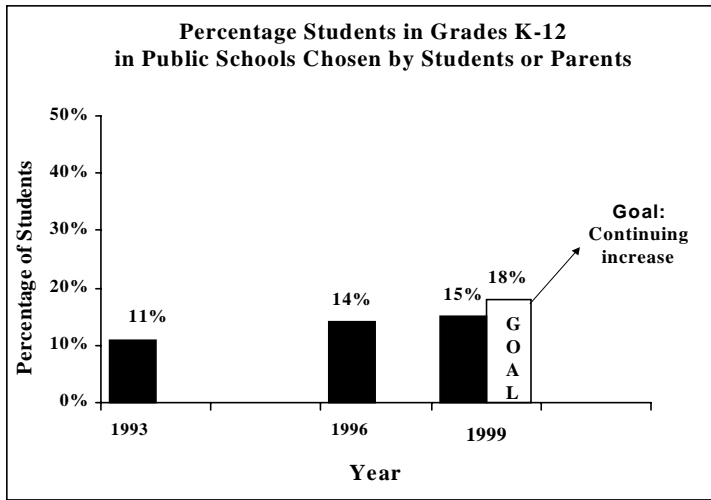
Our Performance

How We Measure. The Education Department measured its progress toward meeting the objective of increased public school choice by tracking 1) the percentage of students in public schools of choice; 2) the number of states with charter school authorizing legislation; and 3) the number of charter schools operating nationwide.

Indicator 1.6.a. By 2003, 25 percent of all public school students in grades K-12 will attend a school that they or their parents have chosen.

Assessment of Progress. There is positive progress toward the goal. The 1999 goal was not met. The 1999 data show that 15 percent of students in grades K-12 attend public schools of their choice (including a neighborhood school to which a student was assigned, but would have chosen anyway). These performance data show that some progress was made, but performance fell short of the goal of 18 percent by three percent. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 1.6.a.1

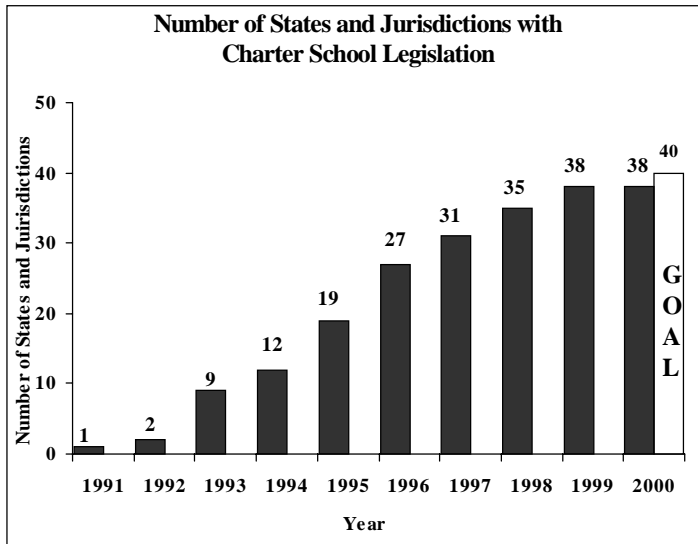


Source: NCES, National Household Education Surveys, 1993, 1996, and 1999 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). *Frequency:* periodic (1993, 1996, 1999, and 2003) *Next Update:* 2003.
Validation procedure: Data validated by NCES review procedures and *NCES Statistical Standards*.
Limitations of data and planned improvements: No known limitations.

Indicator 1.6.b. By 2000, a minimum of 40 states will have charter school legislation.

Assessment of Progress. The goal for 2000 was not met. Since Minnesota became the first state to enact legislation authorizing charter schools in 1991, 37 states have followed suit as of 2000. Thus, the goal was missed by two states (see Figure 1.6.b.1). [All references to the number of "states" with charter school legislation or with operating charter schools include the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.]

Figure 1.6.b.1

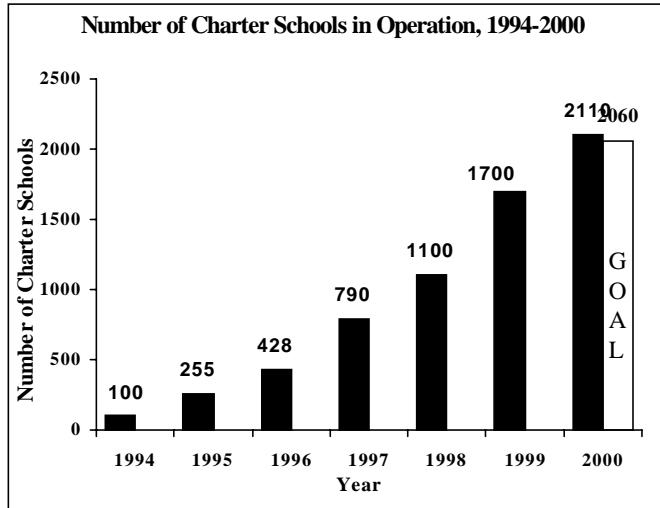


Source: State Educational Agencies; State legislatures. *Frequency:* Quarterly. *Next Update:* summer 2001.
Validation procedure: Data validated by the Education Department staff and corroborated by information from other sources. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** The definition of state charter school legislation varies.

Indicator 1.6.c. By 2002, there will be at least 3,000 charter schools in operation around the Nation.

Assessment of Progress. The goal for 2000 was exceeded. More than 2,100 charter schools are in operation in the current 2000-2001 school year, which exceeds the goal of 2,060 charter schools (see Figure 1.6.c.1).

Figure 1.6.c.1



Source: State Education Agencies; State legislatures; Center for Education Reform (as a cross-reference). *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* summer 2001. **Validation procedure:** Data verified by the U.S. Department of Education data quality attestation process and the Education Department's *Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Indicators*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** Cross-referencing sources has helped validate figures received from various sources. The nature of state laws significantly influences the growth of charter schools; although 38 states have authorizing legislation, the majority of charter schools are located in seven states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, and Texas).