



Indiana Charter School Demographics for 2006-2007

Report 2007-2
May 2007



W. Holmes Finch
Director of Charter School Research

Mary E. Baker-Boudissa
Assistant Director of Charter School Research

Tracy L. Cross
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies,
Research, and Assessment

**OFFICE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RESEARCH
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY**

www.bsu.edu/teachers/ocsr



Executive Summary

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The Office of Charter School Research (OCSR), located in Teachers College at Ball State University, was created to study the effectiveness of Indiana's charter schools. In particular, the OCSR focuses on the academic performance of pupils attending these schools. This report (2007-2) highlights the demographic makeup of students enrolled in Indiana's 37 charter schools for both the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years.

- Most of the 37 Indiana charter schools have high minority enrollment and high enrollment from students living in poverty, as defined by students qualifying for free or reduced lunch status.
- The percentage of minority student enrollment in Indiana's charter schools continues to exceed the average for all Indiana schools.
- Over the past year, there was an increase in the percentage of students identified with disabilities in both the charter schools authorized by Ball State University—from 11.0% in 2005-06 to 12.2% in 2006-07—and those authorized by the Indianapolis Mayor's Office—from 9.5% in 2005-06 to 10.8% in 2006-07.
- Thirty-four of the total number (37) of Indiana Charter Schools have joined the Virtual Special Education Cooperative (VSEC). The remaining three schools receive special education services through a neighboring school corporation. The VSEC administers federal funds for students with disabilities and provides support, training, and intervention strategies through consultation and direct services.
- Learning disabilities and communication disorders, respectively, are the most common types of disabilities among the students attending Indiana's Charter Schools.

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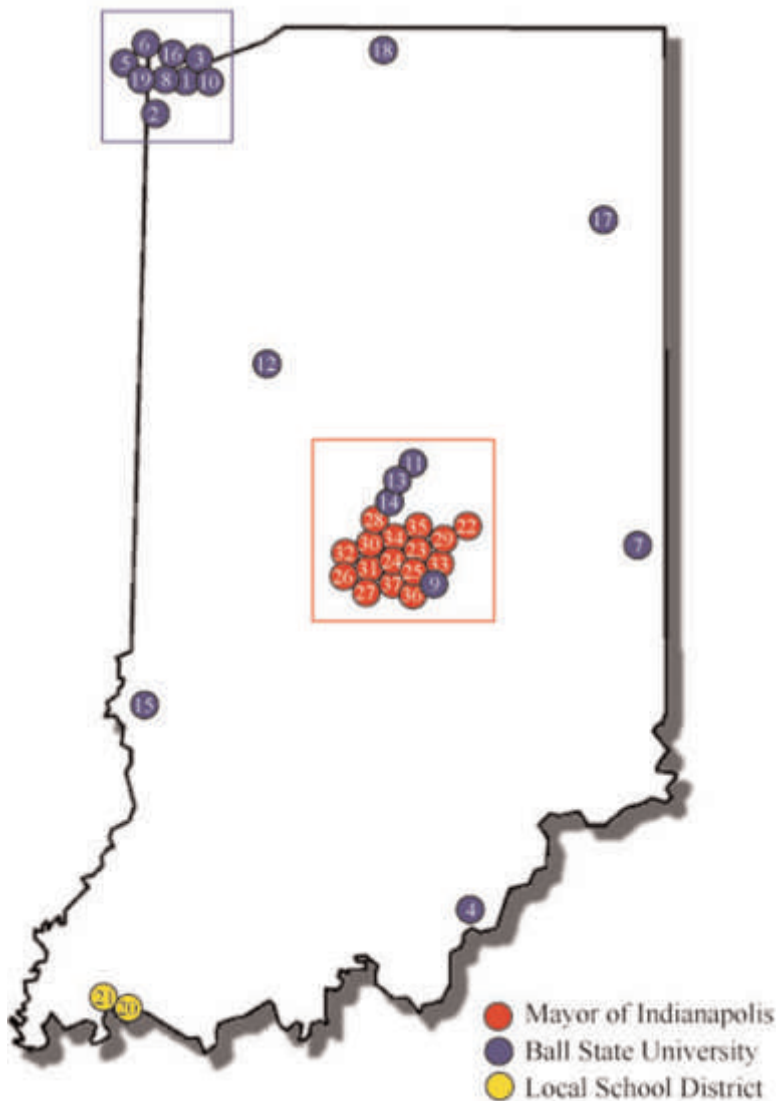
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Indiana, the 20th state to enact legislation providing for the existence of public charter schools, has seen considerable growth since it joined the charter school movement in 2002. In the 2006-07 school year, now in its fifth year of having charter schools, Indiana boasts 37 operating public charter schools (see Figure 1). Sixteen schools are sponsored by the Mayor of Indianapolis, nineteen through Ball State University, and two through local school districts, with a total enrollment of 9,028 students statewide. As the number of charter schools increases, so does public interest in both the methods and the makeup of these schools. It is up to charter school stakeholders, then, to communicate effectively the ways in which charter schools seek to provide quality, innovative education to increase student achievement. This report addresses the question of current charter school demographics.

Figure 1
Map of Indiana Featuring Charter Schools



1. 21st Century Charter School (Gary)
2. Campagna Academy (Schererville)
3. Charter School of the Dunes (Gary)
4. Community Montessori (New Albany)
5. East Chicago Lighthouse Charter School (East Chicago)
6. East Chicago Urban Enterprise Academy (East Chicago)
7. Galileo Charter School (Richmond)
8. Gary Lighthouse Charter School (Gary)
9. Irvington Community School (Indianapolis)
10. KIPP LEAD College Preparatory Charter School (Gary)
11. Montessori Academy at Geist (McCordsville)
12. New Community School (Lafayette)
13. Options Charter School (Noblesville)
14. Options Charter School (Carmel)
15. Rural Community Academy (Graysville)
16. Thea Bowman Leadership Academy (Gary)
17. Timothy L. Johnson Academy (Fort Wayne)
18. Veritas Academy (South Bend)
19. West Gary Lighthouse Charter School (Gary)

20. Joshua Academy (Evansville)
21. Signature School (Evansville)

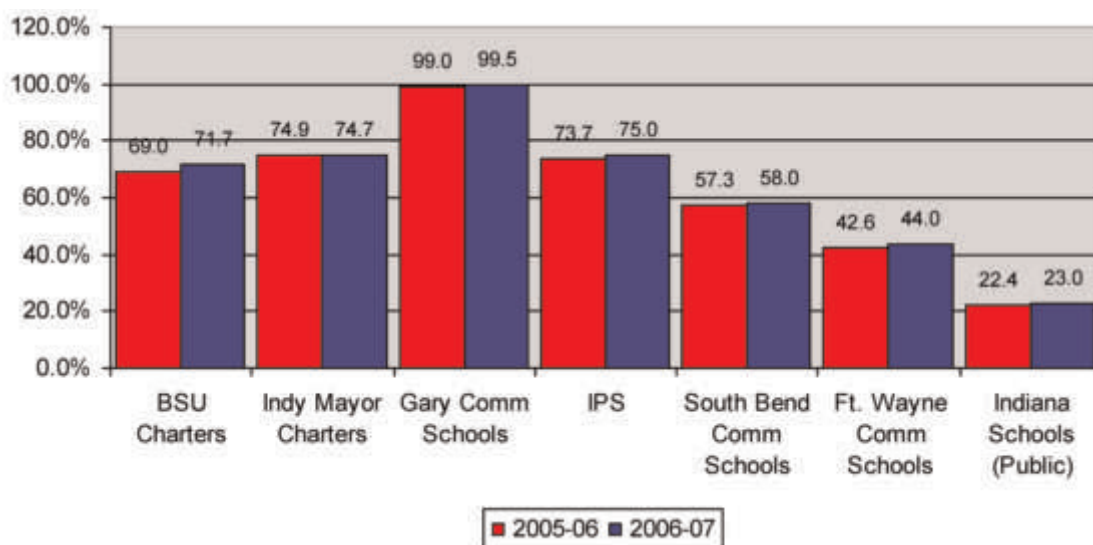
22. Lawrence Early College High School (Indianapolis)
23. 21st Century School Fall Creek (Indianapolis)
24. 21st Century School Fountain Square (Indianapolis)
25. Andrew J. Brown Academy (Indianapolis)
26. The Challenge Foundation Academy (Indianapolis)
27. Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School (Indianapolis)
28. Christel House Academy (Indianapolis)
29. Decatur Discovery Academy (Indianapolis)
30. Flanner House Elementary School (Indianapolis)
31. Herron High School (Indianapolis)
32. Hope Academy (Indianapolis)
33. Indianapolis Lighthouse Charter School (Indianapolis)
34. Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy 1 (Indianapolis)
35. Indianapolis Metropolitan Career Academy 2 (Indianapolis)
36. KIPP Indianapolis College Preparatory (Indianapolis)
37. Southeast Neighborhood School of Excellence (Indianapolis)

“A charter school is a public school that is nonsectarian and nonreligious and operates under a charter. Under Indiana Code, charter schools are established to serve the different learning styles and needs of public school students, to offer public school students appropriate and innovative choices, to afford varied opportunities for professional educators, to allow freedom and flexibility in exchange for exceptional levels of accountability, and to provide parents, students, community members, and local entities with an expanded opportunity for involvement in the public school system.”¹

Data presented here show that most of the 37 charter schools have high minority enrollment and high enrollment from students living in poverty, as defined by free or reduced lunch status. Charter school enrollment continues to represent academic, socio-economic, and ethnic diversity, as is evidenced by the figures that follow.

In Figures 2 and 3, minority and free or reduced lunch enrollment for the charter schools in both 2005-06 and 2006-07 is depicted. These statistics are a strong indication that the critics have underestimated the appeal of charter school choice for a diverse group of families.

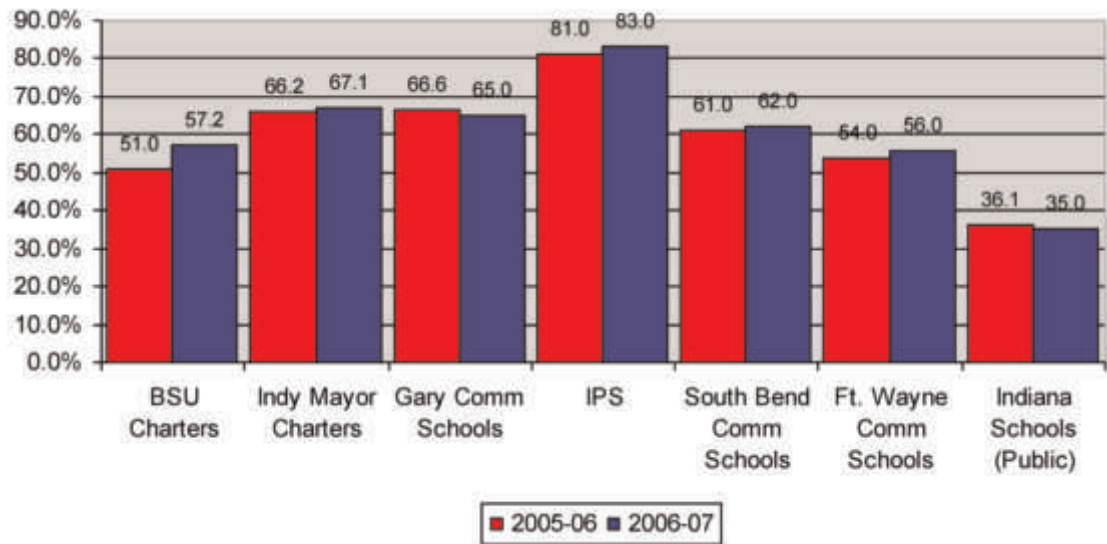
Figure 2
Percent Minority Enrollment in Indiana Schools for Selected School Years²



¹Source: Indiana Department of Education Web site at <http://doe.state.in.us/charterschools/faq.html#1>. Retrieved January 26, 2007.

²Source: Indiana Department of Education Web site for K-12 school data at <http://doe.state.in.us/htmls/education.html>. Retrieved March 1, 2007.

Figure 3
Percent Free and Reduced Lunch Enrollment in Indiana Schools
for Selected School Years³



Minority enrollment in large urban school districts far exceeds that of Indiana public schools taken collectively. In charter schools, too, which are largely concentrated in the urban cities of Gary and Indianapolis, the percent minority enrollment continues to exceed Indiana schools. The charter schools show similar minority enrollment as IPS, but remain behind that of Gary Community Schools.

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With respect to students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, the percentage in charter schools is comparable to that of other large districts in Indiana, with the exception of Gary Community Schools. The increase in percentage of free and reduced lunch students from 2005-06 to 2006-07 for both the Indianapolis Mayor's Office and Ball State University schools indicates that charters continue to present an educational alternative for economically disadvantaged students.

Charter schools can employ innovative strategies to impact student achievement, offering parents and students educational opportunities that may boost performance. The charter schools, however, face a tremendous challenge, given that the majority of students entering the school are behind their peers in other public schools academically. This is evidenced by ISTEP+ pass rates in Ball State and Indianapolis Mayor-sponsored charter schools that have been in operation for more than one year. Pass rates for other urban school corporations in Indiana, as well as ISTEP+ information for the state as a whole, are included for comparison.

Figures 4 through 10 show ISTEP+ pass rates for Grades 3 through 10 across 4 years. These results indicate patterns of performance, with progress in the proficiency of cohorts of students (highlighted here in corresponding colors).

³Ibid.

Figure 4
ISTEP+ Pass Rates in 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Year
Ball State-Sponsored Charter Schools⁴

Grade	English				Math				Both (English & Math)				Science			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
3rd	55%	47%	61%	51%	45%	38%	52%	42%	37%	31%	44%	34%				
4th		44%	56%	51%		43%	58%	45%		34%	48%	36%				
5th		51%	56%	55%		36%	51%	47%		31%	40%	41%	53%	34%	42%	39%
6th	44%	47%	66%	53%	48%	43%	68%	60%	43%	35%	57%	47%				
7th		47%	54%	50%		46%	59%	53%		33%	43%	43%			24%	28%
8th			55%	46%			43%	40%			36%	34%				
9th			14%	46%			11%	35%			3%	29%				
10th	22%	47%	28%	28%	22%	30%	18%	11%	9%	28%	13%	9%				

Figure 5
ISTEP+ Pass Rates in 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Year
Indianapolis Mayor-Sponsored Charter Schools⁵

Grade	English				Math				Both (English & Math)				Science			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
3rd	51%	59%	67%	57%	35%	50%	56%	48%	30%	41%	49%	38%				
4th		52%	65%	58%		52%	63%	59%		40%	52%	47%				
5th		42%	70%	55%		49%	72%	56%		36%	60%	44%	23%	27%	33%	34%
6th	52%	59%	45%	59%	33%	61%	53%	70%	29%	47%	36%	54%				
7th		61%	55%	46%		57%	67%	66%		43%	45%	39%			24%	21%
8th		47%	56%	47%		44%	56%	52%		34%	41%	35%				
9th		44%	59%	40%		30%	47%	27%		24%	42%	25%				
10th			53%	42%			28%	25%			26%	22%				

Figure 6
ISTEP+ Pass Rates in Gary Community Schools⁶

Grade	English				Math				Both (English and Math)				Science			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
3rd	56%	59%	58%	60%	57%	55%	54%	56%	44%	44%	45%	45%				
4th		45%	48%	54%		42%	46%	51%		33%	37%	42%				
5th		49%	43%	56%		43%	45%	52%		33%	33%	41%	22%	22%	25%	34%
6th	43%	43%	46%	51%	37%	42%	45%	61%	28%	30%	35%	43%				
7th		39%	38%	37%		33%	41%	38%		24%	27%	26%			10%	10%
8th	35%	37%	38%	33%	32%	31%	29%	31%	24%	23%	23%	22%				
9th		34%	31%	30%		24%	23%	20%		19%	17%	15%				
10th	33%	33%	36%	28%	25%	19%	19%	18%	20%	15%	16%	14%				

⁴Source: Indiana Department of Education ISTEP+ Results media reports for 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006, retrieved from <http://doe.state.in.us/istep/welcome.html> on January 26, 2007.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

Figure 7
ISTEP+ Pass Rates in Indianapolis Public Schools⁷

Grade	English				Math				Both (English and Math)				Science			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
3rd	62%	64%	65%	61%	65%	64%	65%	62%	52%	52%	53%	49%				
4th		58%	59%	60%		62%	64%	61%		49%	50%	49%				
5th		57%	62%	56%		57%	67%	59%		44%	53%	45%	32%	36%	40%	36%
6th	43%	45%	48%	57%	44%	49%	59%	70%	31%	34%	41%	51%				
7th		39%	44%	42%		41%	50%	53%		28%	34%	34%			18%	20%
8th	37%	40%	44%	36%	36%	38%	42%	38%	26%	28%	32%	27%				
9th		35%	36%	36%		33%	33%	31%		23%	23%	23%				
10th	38%	38%	36%	32%	34%	30%	27%	26%	26%	24%	21%	19%				

Figure 8
ISTEP+ Pass Rates in South Bend Community School Corporation⁸

Grade	English				Math				Both (English and Math)				Science			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
3rd	52%	63%	63%	64%	52%	56%	57%	59%	39%	47%	50%	50%				
4th		55%	59%	67%		56%	61%	62%		45%	49%	55%				
5th		56%	54%	59%		57%	58%	59%		45%	44%	48%	41%	40%	38%	39%
6th	53%	55%	55%	58%	60%	63%	66%	65%	46%	48%	50%	52%				
7th		55%	50%	55%		61%	63%	66%		47%	46%	49%			30%	32%
8th	48%	53%	52%	52%	54%	56%	55%	56%	42%	45%	44%	44%				
9th		51%	51%	52%		53%	56%	52%		42%	44%	42%				
10th	50%	54%	50%	50%	46%	49%	47%	50%	39%	42%	38%	42%				

Figure 9
ISTEP+ Pass Rates in Fort Wayne Community Schools⁹

Grade	English				Math				Both (English and Math)				Science			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
3rd	69%	66%	66%	66%	76%	72%	71%	69%	63%	59%	59%	58%				
4th		66%	63%	66%		71%	70%	70%		59%	58%	59%				
5th		64%	65%	64%		69%	71%	71%		56%	58%	59%	54%	54%	55%	53%
6th	59%	60%	59%	59%	67%	70%	72%	72%	54%	54%	55%	55%				
7th		59%	57%	57%		67%	70%	72%		54%	52%	53%			40%	41%
8th	54%	58%	58%	56%	65%	66%	63%	60%	49%	52%	51%	48%				
9th		58%	58%	57%		61%	64%	61%		50%	51%	49%				
10th	58%	57%	56%	57%	57%	56%	51%	54%	48%	48%	45%	46%				

Figure 10
ISTEP+ Pass Rates in Indiana Public Schools¹⁰

Grade	English				Math				Both (English & Math)				Science			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
3rd	74%	75%	75%	74%	71%	73%	73%	72%	63%	65%	65%	64%				
4th		73%	73%	75%		73%	75%	75%		64%	66%	66%				
5th		72%	73%	75%		72%	76%	76%		63%	66%	67%	61%	62%	64%	66%
6th	69%	70%	71%	71%	72%	75%	78%	80%	62%	63%	66%	67%				
7th		68%	68%	68%		73%	76%	77%		61%	63%	63%			52%	54%
8th	65%	67%	68%	67%	71%	71%	72%	71%	58%	61%	61%	60%				
9th		67%	67%	67%		68%	70%	67%		59%	60%	58%				
10th	69%	68%	68%	66%	67%	64%	64%	65%	60%	57%	57%	57%				

⁷Ibid.

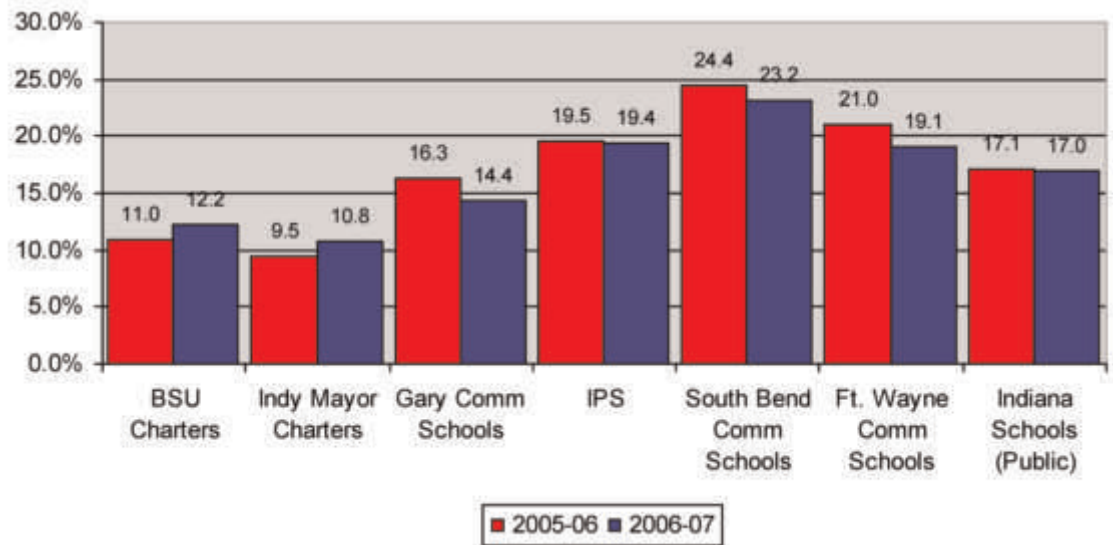
⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

Public charter schools, like traditional public schools, must be equipped to serve the needs of all students. This includes not only minority students and those from low-income families, but, also, those students with disabilities, who require special services. For many of the charter schools operating in 2005-06, the number of students with disabilities increased in 2006-07. Figure 11 depicts the percentage of students receiving special education services in Indiana schools for both 2005-06 and 2006-07. Of all the school districts shown, only the Ball State-sponsored charter schools and the Indianapolis Mayor-sponsored charter schools, taken collectively, had an increase in the overall percent of students with disabilities enrolled. In Ball State charter schools the increase was from 11.0% in 2005-06 to 12.2% in 2006-07; for Indianapolis Mayor's Office charters the increase was from 9.5% special education enrollment in 2005-06 to 10.8% in 2006-07.

Figure 11
Percent Special Education Enrollment for Select School Years
in Indiana Schools¹¹

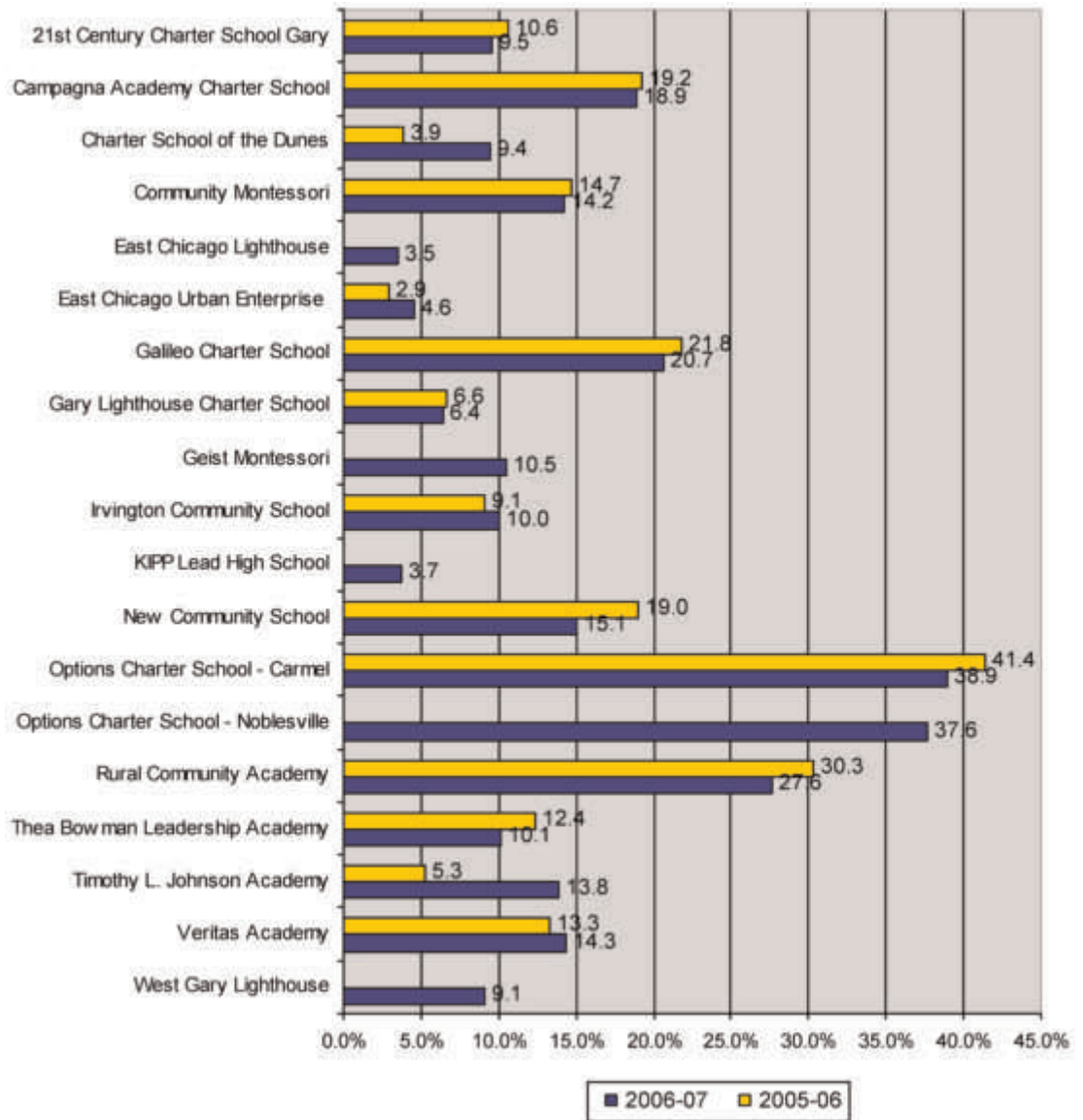


Charter schools have responsibility for addressing the needs of students with disabilities as specified in individual student education plans (IEPs). Most of Indiana's charter schools have joined the Virtual Special Education Cooperative (VSEC), which maintains accountability for mandates under federal special education law and state regulations for its member schools. In addition, the VSEC administers federal funds for students with disabilities and provides support, training, and intervention strategies through consultation and direct services. Although the VSEC uses virtual communication methods to bridge the statewide geographic distribution of the VSEC member schools, the VSEC staff members are visible in their work in the schools with students and staff members.

¹¹Source: Indiana Department of Education Division of Exceptional Learners, Incidence Rates for December 1, 2006 (Certified March 2007).

Figures 12 through 14 show special education enrollment in each individual charter school for the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years. All schools shown are current members of the VSEC except Decatur Discovery Academy, Hope Academy, and Lawrence Early College High School, who receive services through a neighboring school district. For those schools that opened for the first time in fall 2006, only 2006-07 special education data is available.

Figure 12
Percent Special Education Enrollment:
Ball State-Sponsored Charter Schools¹²



¹²Ibid.

Figure 13
Percent Special Education Enrollment: Indianapolis Mayor-Sponsored Charter Schools¹³

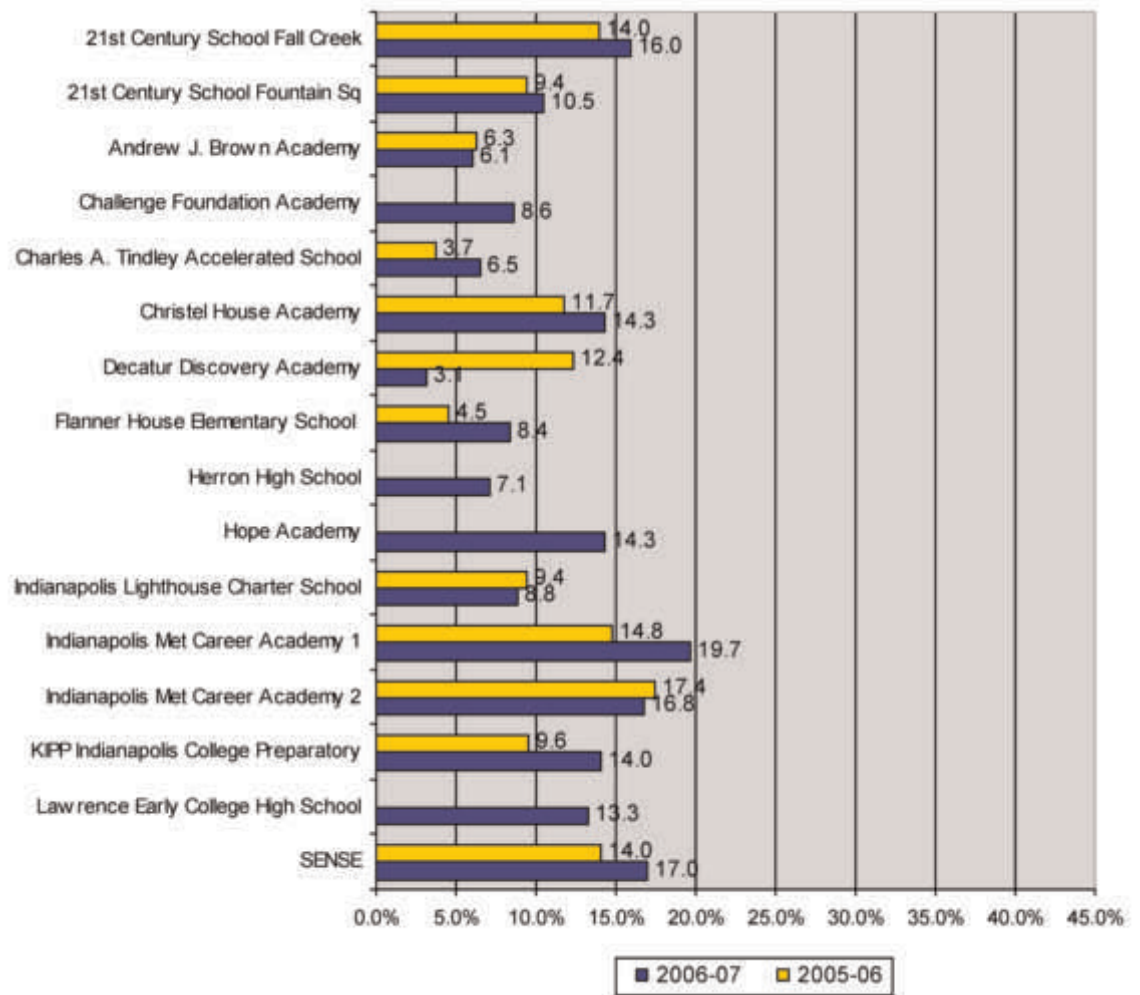
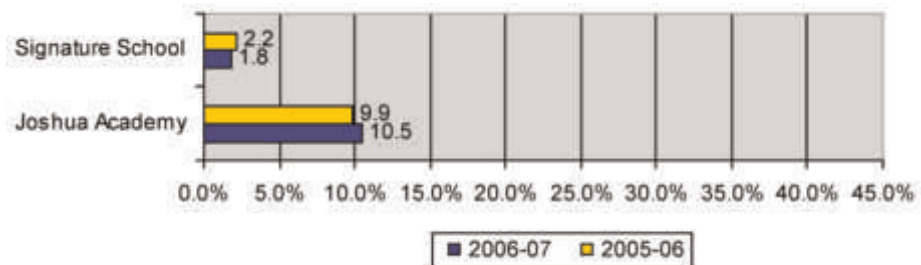


Figure 14
Percent Special Education Enrollment: Local District-Sponsored Charter Schools¹⁴

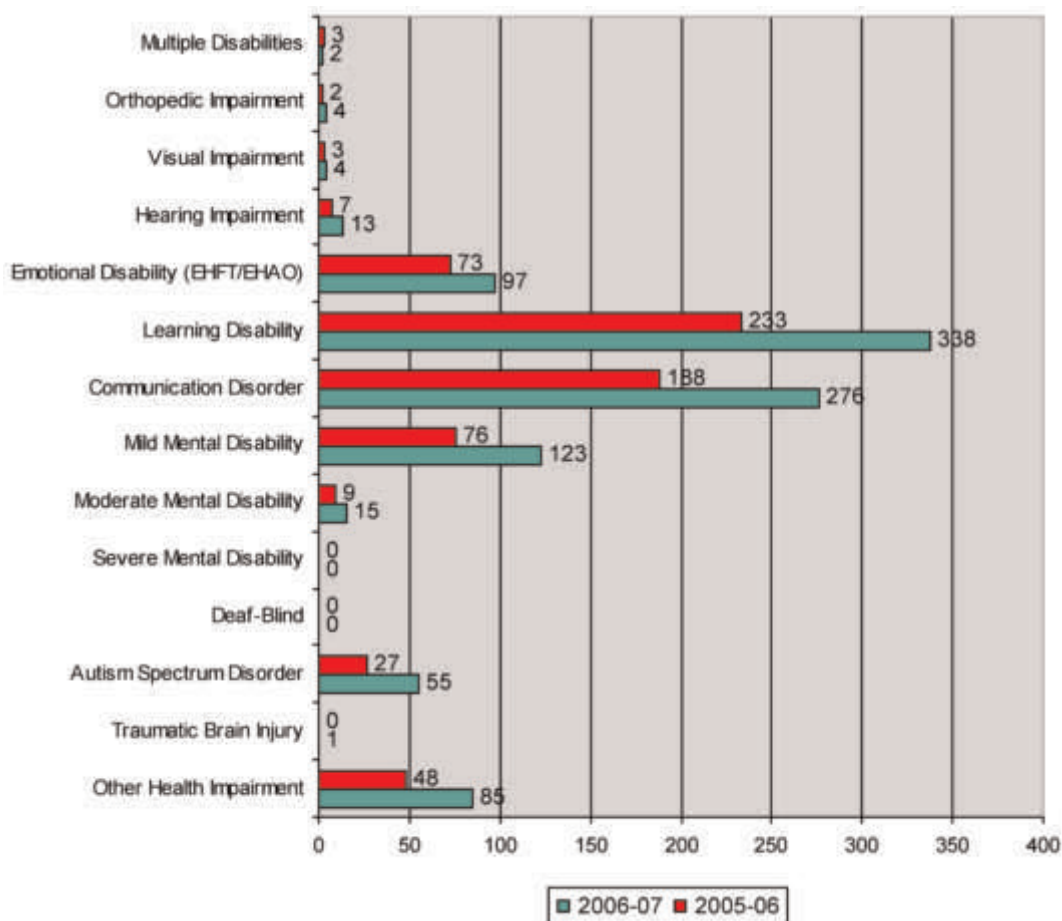


¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

Figure 15 depicts the special education count by specific disability for all Indiana charter schools.

Figure 15
Charter School Special Education Student Count by Primary Disability¹⁵



Indiana charter school demographics for the past two years represent an increase in the number of minority students, students who receive free or reduced lunch, and students with disabilities.

Most students who are eligible for special education services in Indiana charter schools are identified as having learning disabilities or communication disorders. It is imperative that these students have access to appropriate instruction and specialized supports that facilitate their educational progress in the least restrictive environment. Membership in the VSEC ensures that charter schools will have access to a full range of administrative, instructional, and therapeutic support services in their efforts to improve the educational outcomes for all students with special needs.

Indiana charter school demographics for the past two years represent an increase in the number of minority students, students who receive free or reduced lunch, and students with disabilities. Charter schools will continue to address their unique educational needs to increase student achievement among those who are at an educational disadvantage because of social, physical, or economic factors. Because there has been a steady increase in total charter enrollment over the five years that charter schools have been in existence in the state, there are even more students who have a stake in the success of these nontraditional public schools. With that in mind, the Office of Charter School Research will continue to monitor the trends in charter school enrollment, as well as the impact of charter school strategies on student achievement.

¹⁵Ibid.



Office of Charter School Research
Muncie, IN 47306
(765) 285-4465
csresearch@bsu.edu
www.bsu.edu/teachers/ocsr