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KENTUCKY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Pamela Manning-Hamilton

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KENTUCKY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

by

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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

The College of Education and Human Services Department of Educational Studies, Leadership,

and Counseling

at Murray State University

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

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P-20 & Community Leadership

Specialization: pK-12 Leadership

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Abstract

Kentucky public charter school law was introduced in 2017, the purpose of the new innovative schools were to close the achievement gap among the education system within the state. Charter schools are new-age schools that have a smaller class size, use differentiated instructional strategies that integrate technology to promote engagement, which in turn increases student growth and success. Advantages of charter schools within other states include differentiated environment, culture, and performance. Disadvantages of charter schools involve taking resources from traditional schools, higher resource costs, and demands. The study was approached using a basic qualitative research method. The purpose of the study was to determine the stakeholders' prior knowledge of public charter schools, how the schools can be effective in promoting student success, comparing a public charter school to a public traditional school, and determining reasons why parents would send their child to a public charter school over a traditional public school. The survey questions were grouped to fit one of the four categories, prior knowledge, effectiveness, comparison, and parental reasons. By analyzing the questions within each group, an overall trend was determined. Further research is needed to determine the reasons why survey respondents oppose the formation of charter schools and oppose the funding of charter schools.

Keywords: charter schools, engagement, innovative, formation, funding

Dedications

Family means a great deal to me, and it started early in my childhood when I expressed the desire to go to college. My grandfather Charles Manning taught me early in life that if I wanted something, that all I had to do was to be motivated and to not let anything stand in my way. To my loving parents, Joe and Elizabeth Manning, with all of my accomplishments, it was the two of them always cheering me on and pushing me to do my very best. To Moma, I am very grateful for always listening to me and providing strong words of encouragement that lasted throughout this whole journey. Moma encouraged me to apply and wished me luck during my interview, and fate would have me constantly wondering what she would say or do to help me to accomplish achieving a doctorate degree. Daddy, gone too soon too, just like Moma and Granddad, did get to see me begin the journey of taking doctoral classes, and he always seemed interested in whatever class I was taking or paper I was writing. Daddy always said I should teach and do research because he said he could tell I was interested in it. To my teacher friend, Emily Lee, I am thankful for providing ideas and her help with technology tools. To my husband Neal and my son Noah, who did not mind me working on schoolwork or my paper, I am very blessed that the two of them were always understanding. I am thankful to my sister, Leslie Hudson and my mother in law, Tabatha Roberts who helped me with Noah when I had to attend classes. To my family and friends that sent me good thoughts and prayers along the way, I am grateful. Last, but definitely not least, God, for allowing me the opportunities to accomplish my dream. Everyone provided me with love and understanding by participating in shaping me to the individual that desires education and continuously strives to gain knowledge.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Overview

Education contains four basic purposes, the components include developing an individuals' personal area, cultural area, social area, and economic area (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). The purpose of education is to enable students to understand the world around them and the talents they possess so they can become fulfilled individuals and active, compassionate citizens (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). A student who contains more motivation within them, then they are more likely to evolve as a whole and become a well-rounded individual.

In the present, educators are realizing not all students learn the same way, which in reality makes it difficult for an educator to use differentiated teaching styles to meet all of the diverse learning styles of all students. Education has huge implications for economic prosperity (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). To some individuals education is one of the main ways community members pass their values and traditions from one generation to the next.

The Kentucky Department of Education released House Bill 520, which created a new section of Kentucky Revised Statute 160, which deals with the organization of a traditional public school. House Bill 520 is divided into 12 sections, which ranges from charter school definitions, charter school contracts, and a savings clause. House Bill 520 defines what a Kentucky charter school is and establishes how a Kentucky Public Charter school can become into existence, as well as regulations to be followed.

The Kentucky Department of Education established House Bill 471, which deals with how charter schools are supposed to be funded regarding operating the institution, resources for the teachers and students, and transportation. House Bill 471 discusses how funding will be

similar to the procedure used in allocating money based on students attendance, which is based on the school districts allocated SEEK (Support Education Excellence in Kentucky) fund.

A charter school residing in a traditional district will receive funding by the superintendent of the district, who is responsible to divide the appropriate amount of funding to the charter school (*House Bill 471, 2017*). Does this mean the local district controls or runs the charter school? Another way of funding deals with occupational tax (*House Bill 471, 2017*). If the traditional school receives money from the county they reside in, then students of the charter school are required to receive a portion of the tax money for the students who attend the charter school (*House Bill 471, 2017*).

The Kentucky Department of Education has a responsibility of helping students to progress within student learning and to help provide opportunities to students who increase engagement for learning and develop the student properly in order for the individual to be prepared for opportunities within higher education or the workforce (*House Bill 471, 2017*). The parents of students want the flexibility in choosing the best school model meeting their child's individual needs.

Kentucky is the forty-fourth state to allow charter schools to be established within the United States. Twenty-five years ago, Minnesota passed the first charter school law within the nation. Public charter schools serve nearly 3 million public school students in more than 6,700 schools (*What is a Charter School, 2018*).

Charter Schools

Charters are written contracts allowing the institutions to be created and are deemed a new type of public school (Bixby & Davis, 2018). Charter school refers to a type of public school, but originally it was a public school created by a charter, a chartered public school

(Bixby & Davis, 2018). Public schools or traditional public schools are schools, which are divided in grades, and the schools are governed by school districts, whereas a charter school is governed by an independent board of directors (Bixby & Davis, 2018). Both school types, traditional and charter schools are similar in which the institutions are considered a public type school, not a private type school, within Kentucky (*House Bill 471*, 2017).

Charter schools have existed for over three decades within the United States, with the first charter school legislation and development of a charter school within Minnesota in 1991 (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). The charter movement is to create new institutions receiving public revenue but function without following the guidelines of existing school district structures (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). Normally, charter schools are open to all students whose parents can choose to apply and the institution does not have to follow the same procedures as a public traditional school, which is required by the state education system (Kelly & Loveless, 2012).

In the late summer of 1996, the first charter school in Florida, Liberty City Charter School opened, which paved the way for hundreds of others (McGrory, 2015). By Jeb Bush helping to develop the first charter school within Florida, he also gained a deep interest in educational policy and became a leader in the national educational reform movement (McGrory, 2015). A foundation within Florida devoted time and resources to the new concept of education, charter schools. The Foundation for Florida's Future wanted to learn as much as possible about charter schools. Charter schools are privately managed, but publicly funded, and would promote innovative teaching and learning practices (McGrory, 2015). Charter schools will provide parents with empowerment to play a larger role within their child's education (McGrory, 2015). Bush stated guidelines within charter schools, which include, students focusing on reading and math, small class size, build student character, and parents have to commit to involvement

(McGrory, 2015). Many changes within educational policy stemmed from Jeb Bush's work with charter schools in Florida, after leaving office in 2007, he continued to work with foundations helping other states adopt Florida-style educational policies (McGrory, 2015).

Charter schools are a less controversial form of privatization than vouchers because they do not involve church-state issues and eliminate democratic control (Ravitch, 2016). Charter schools are public schools, which are given greater freedom of their practices in exchange for greater accountability to their goals (Golann, 2015). Charter schools are not allowed to discriminate against students on any basis, and the institution is not allowed to be a religious organization (*House Bill 471*, 2017).

Charter schools are not allowed to base their decision on student admission using entrance exams either (*House Bill 471*, 2017). Charter schools are open to any student whom a parent wishes for their child to attend the organization (*House Bill 471*, 2017). Charter schools are free to student's parents and the institution is generally funded by local, state, and federal tax dollars (*House Bill 471*, 2017). The funding for charter schools is based on the student enrollment of the institution.

Charter schools have more flexibility to better serve parents and the student's individual needs, but educators within charter schools are expected to meet higher levels of accountability to make sure to improve student achievement (*What is a Charter School*, 2018). Public charter schools are unique because the institutions operate differently than a traditional public school (*What is a Charter School*, 2018). Public charter school educators are able to try new techniques with students to help obtain student achievement (*What is a Charter School*, 2018).

Public charter schools across the country have the challenge to overcome reengaging students' learning, help the students to progress to graduation, and promote long-term success

(Iachini et al., 2013). The purpose of a charter school is to help students who are not performing well in a traditional school setting, so the students can make progress in obtaining a high-school education (*House Bill 471*, 2017). In addition, charter schools must help the student to develop in order to have future opportunities within higher education or obtain the necessary skills to be successful within the workforce (*House Bill 471*, 2017).

The educators of public charter schools are able to adjust because the institution is able to use a variety of methods to meet the state education standards. Public charter schools are supposed to meet the same standards as traditional public schools, as well as the same required assessments (*House Bill 471*, 2017). Educators are able to be innovative in the types of instructional strategies used to teach students, the goal is to increase student engagement, which has a direct connection to increasing student achievement.

Public charter schools utilize positive relationships with all stakeholders, specifically including parents, educators, and students. By creating a connection with all stakeholders then the needs of the student can be better met because everyone is aware of the individual students' tasks required for progress to take place. Parents, educators, and students collaborate to help the student to grow as an individual.

Research demonstrates charter schools do not get any better results in terms of student test scores than the lowest-performing traditional school (Ravitch, 2016). In the past, charter schools in states other than Kentucky were low performing schools in comparison to traditional public schools (Ravitch, 2016). Other research contradicts stating charter schools need at least five years to effectively run their institution for students to demonstrate progress (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). Charter schools demonstrate low-test scores in the early years of operation, but

a steady increase in student achievement is demonstrated after five years of the institution being in operation (Kelly & Loveless, 2012).

Advantages of Charter Schools

The most obvious advantage of attending a charter school to a student would be the engagement factor; students are usually exposed to differentiation more often than a setting within a traditional public school (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). Another advantage is a benefit to both the educators and the students, educators collaborate more with each other to meet the needs of their students by creating engaging lessons every school day. A part of the collaboration process is finding time to discuss lessons with other educators to find the steps of the process, which worked well, and the areas, which needed improvement. Charter school educators make self-reflection a priority to develop the best lessons for students generating exceptional results for the institution (Kelly & Loveless, 2012).

Charter school educators are able to work and produce positive results without making excuses, such as working with low-economic students and not letting family-backgrounds be an obstacle within the classroom. Educators employed by the newly developed institution are individuals who are motivated to attend any professional development, which helps to improve instruction in the classroom (Whitmire, 2014). The highly motivated individuals are open individuals, by providing personal information, such as cell phone numbers and an email address, to make them available to provide students with homework instruction after school hours (Whitmire, 2014).

Another advantage of receiving instruction at a charter school is the tailored instruction fits the needs of individual students. Charter schools focus on using innovative classroom techniques and materials to provide the best education experience for students (Weiler & Vogel,

2015). Educators can explore alternative educational ideas to develop new and creative approaches to educating children and governing schools (Weiler & Vogel, 2015). In a charter school classroom, educators usually only provide direct instruction for ten minutes and then have the students participate in hands-on activities which engage the students to practice skills (Sahm, 2015).

Small classroom size is a prime example of an advantage for students and educators. Usually, children work together in small groups and the class size is reasonable so the educator can tailor lessons to meet the needs of all students (Sahm, 2015). If class sizes are larger, then assistants are present to provide additional help to students who may need more one-on-one time, so the educator is able to help as many students as possible.

Charter schools provide opportunities to disadvantage students because the money barrier is removed for the individuals. Other barriers are removed from educating students, such as the pedagogical practices of the traditional school settings hindering the students' education goals. Some charter schools have successfully altered aspects of the school government process too (Weiler & Vogel, 2015). Charter schools try to eliminate financial barriers from parents, so students have open opportunities.

Parent involvement is an expectation charter schools establish from the beginning. By the parents being involved with the educators then much needed prior information is provided to help understand the students' educational background, as well as learning styles which work best for their child. Students seem to do better in obtaining their educational goal when their parents are involved fully, it seems like a way of motivation because the student has someone encouraging them along the way (Weiler & Vogel, 2015).

Positive school culture is the type of school environment in which every stakeholder wants to be involved ensuring all individuals collaborates. An educator who works in a positive school environment strives to always do their best and when an individual enjoys work then goals are exceeded. When educators and school administration work together collaboratively, then the best is done for students because all stakeholders strive to accomplish the same goal of promoting student success. Lastly, students who feel comfortable with their educators and administrators strive to do their very best because they do not want to let their role models down.

Kentucky's Charter School Movement

A charter school within Kentucky is an organization with the right to autonomy, a self-governing institution. An independent board of directors governs charter schools. The institution is established and operated under the terms of a charter school contract. The newly established institution may utilize randomization in the means of a lottery system in selecting students. A factor not always allowed within the organization of a charter school institution is utilizing virtual components.

Kentucky Public Charter Schools exist to increase student performance by providing additional high performing schools while also displaying high expectations (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Other reasons for the stakeholders of the Kentucky Department of Education creating possibilities of students attending public charter schools include differentiation in teaching methods and scheduling aspects, close the achievement gap, and allow schools freedom and flexibility to obtain exceptional levels of success (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The House Bill 520 contains 12 sections, with the first section discussing the formal definitions of terms used within the bill so all individuals understand the use of the terminology within the sections. Section two discusses the General Assembly's purpose and findings related

to charter schools, as well as the enrollment preferences and discusses how virtual schools do not qualify as a charter school. Section three includes information about exemptions from certain statutes and regulations, requirements for health, safety, civil, and disability, and lastly athletic and extracurricular activities.

Section four of House Bill 520 discusses the application process in becoming a charter school in Kentucky. Section five includes responsibilities of authorizers, which defines an authorizer as the body or entity which reviews, approves, or denies, as well as enters into contract with the applicant and oversees public charter schools. Section six discusses the process of the Kentucky Board of Education reviewing the charter school applications and the appeal process for the applicant to utilize when dealing with the Kentucky Board of Education.

Section seven of the House Bill 520 involves the board of directors for charter schools and contract requirements for charter schools and the authorizer. Section seven, also includes the involvement details of the Board of Directors of charter schools. House Bill 520 section eight involves operational provisions of charter schools within Kentucky.

Section nine discusses the process of renewing a charter school contract and section 10 deals with the process of schools converting to a charter school. Section 11 of House Bill 520 relates to employee retirement and labor provisions and lastly, section 12 includes the savings clause. House Bill 471 relates to House Bill 520 because it discusses the financial provisions in order to fund all areas of the public charter schools.

Purpose

The importance of the study is to help community members to understand how charter schools operate and for individuals to understand how charter schools compare to traditional schools. The study is important in providing stakeholders with an understanding of what charter

schools can offer the students to promote student success. Community members need to be aware of what charter schools offer and what types of students who could benefit by attending public charter schools. The future of the community is in the hands of educated individuals who will obtain leadership roles and will make future decisions affecting everyone including individuals entering the workforce furnishing money to the economy. The community and citizens of Kentucky should be informed about charter schools to clear up any misconceptions.

The study of charter schools is interesting because of the new digital age in which the world promotes students' dependence on technology and is an engaging factor for the learning of individuals. Every year, the budget for traditional public schooling is decreased and more and more students seek other methods of obtaining an education, such as online schooling (*House Bill 471*, 2017). Educators and administrators struggle to keep up with the competition in order to provide courses to help the individual to be well rounded in all types of courses.

High Schools offer dual credit classes and advanced placement courses to help students get college credit, while in the process of obtaining high school credit too, but too many times the career pathway programs are lacking. Many of the traditional public schools focus on preparing students for only higher education and lack within preparing students with the necessary soft skills and employment skills needed after higher education (*House Bill 471*, 2017).

The purpose of the study is to inform individuals of the design of charter schools. Since charter schools are new to stakeholders within Kentucky, many individuals are unaware of what a public charter school is, and the purpose of a public charter school. The research provides an idea of what community individuals understood initially about a public Kentucky charter school. The research conducted provides insight on how charter schools compare to traditional schools.

In comparing and contrasting charter schools with traditional schools, all aspects were explored in order to explain the reason for charter schools, types of students who attend charter schools, funding, and goals of charter schools (*House Bill 471*, 2017).

Other areas of benefit in exploring charter schools are to understand why individuals would want to establish and operate a charter school. By exploring what charter schools are, stakeholders can learn about how the newly established schools in Kentucky are supposed to be effective in regards to the overall differentiated school model. Once community members understand how the charter school model is different, then the reasons why parents would send their child to a public charter school versus traditional public schools is established, to provide further understanding of the differences between the two models.

The study provides information on the reasons why students would want to attend a different setting than the traditional public school. Too many public schools do not meet the needs of all their students (*House Bill 471*, 2017). One example is the lack of funds causes some courses to not be offered to students and the lack of funds may even affect a whole career pathway not being offered to high school students or even the lack of certain subjects at the elementary level because the area is not tested until later in the students' educational career.

Majority of the issues within public traditional schools revolve around funding. Charter schools release some of the burdens by educators meeting the needs of all students, whether the students attend a traditional school or a charter school. By decreasing the number of students, then the school will only have to offer a certain number of courses and career pathways.

Another area affected is employment of a certain amount of educators, which in turn decreases the amount of funds required. Educators can increase student achievement because the focus is more manageable. Smaller schools provide a direct focus for the students of an

institution because educators can easily manage the resources allocated and develop instructional strategies tailored to meet the future career goals of those particular students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

Research Question 1

What is the prior knowledge that community members understand about public charter schools?

Research Question 2

Why do stakeholders feel that an established public charter school can be effective in students' success?

Research Question 3

How does an established public charter school compare to a public traditional school?

Research Question 4

Why would parents send their child to a public charter school, rather than a public traditional school?

Definitions of Terms

The definitions included within the section are discussed mainly with terms from the Kentucky Department of Education policy, since the research is focused within the state.

Kentucky Charter School Terms

This study contains several specific terms used in regards to understanding Kentucky charter schools. The following definitions will be utilized to help the reader understand the language within Kentucky policy.

Achievement Academy is an achievement academy, which has the same meaning as a charter school, a public education organization (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Achievement Gap means a disparity of outcomes on state standardized examinations and other academic performance measures between subgroups of students, such as grouping by socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Applicant is an eligible person or persons, organization, or entity seeking approval from a charter school authorizer to establish a public charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Charter School Application is a proposal from an applicant to an authorizer to enter into a charter contract where the proposed school obtains public charter school status (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Charter Contract, sometimes just called a contract, means a fixed term, renewable contract between a charter school and an authorizer who explains the roles, powers, responsibilities, and performance expectations for each party of the contract (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Charter School Board of Directors is the independent board of public charter schools which is party to the charter contract with the authorizer and whose members have been elected or selected pursuant to the school's application (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Conversion Public Charter School means a public charter school, which existed as a non-charter public school before becoming a public school (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Education Service Provider means an education management organization, school design provider, or any other partner entity for which a public charter school contracts for

educational design, implementation, or comprehensive management (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Local School Board is a school board exercising management and control of a local school district (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Local School District means a county or independent school district (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Parent means a parent, guardian, or other person of entity having legal custody of the child (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Public Charter School means a public school, which is a public body exercising public power, has autonomy over decisions, is governed by an independent board of directors, established and operating under the terms of a charter contract. Parents are free to send their child to the public charter schools, and can admit students on a random lottery system if more want to attend than the school. Public charter schools can accommodate, offer comprehensive instructional programs, use a specific set of educational objectives, and operate under the authorizer by following the guidelines of the charter school contract (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Public Charter School Authorizer includes individuals who reviews, approves, or denies charter applications, enters into charter school contracts, oversees public charter schools, renews, does not renew, or revokes charter contracts (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Qualified Teacher is an individual certified by the Educational Professional Standards Board (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Regional Achievement Academy is an organization that is a public charter school, which serves students across multiple school districts (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Start-Up Public Charter School means a public charter school did not exist as a non-charter public school before becoming a public charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

State Board means the Kentucky Board of Education (*House Bill 520, 2017*).
Student is an individual who is a child, who is eligible for attendance in a public school in Kentucky (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Virtual Public Charter School is a public charter school offering educational services primarily or completely through an online program (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Summary

The study provides understanding in regards to the differences between Kentucky public charter schools and Kentucky public traditional schools. Curiously, community members of Kentucky were interviewed to determine their prior knowledge of what charter schools are, and how the stakeholders think public charter schools compare to public traditional schools. A focus on how charter public schools can be more effective to student's success contrasting materials and methods to traditional public schools. Specifically, the study-developed reasons why parents would prefer to send their child to a public charter school rather than a public traditional school. By understanding the differences between the two public school options, in the future, Kentucky parents will be able to make the best school option for their child.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Introduction

Education is a term described as an organized program of learning (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). Learning is defined as the process of developing skills and acquiring new knowledge. Children are born with different amounts of real intelligence, which is the skill students need to succeed in school. Some students naturally do well in school, and other students do not because of the struggles the individual will encounter (Robinson & Aronica, 2015).

Education involves four different areas: personal area, cultural area, social area, and economic area. Within the personal area, all students need to realize their potential to live productive lives. The cultural area involves students passing their values and traditions from one generation to the next, promoting cultural tolerance. The social area is where students are provided with opportunities to prosper, succeed, and become engaged citizens. Economic prosperity depends on the education sector because a well-educated workforce is required for the national economic multitude. By developing the students' four areas, the student can understand the world around them and have the necessary skills to be successful citizens within the communities.

Schools transforming education for their students by personalizing instructional strategies to increase engagement levels help students be taught by educators personally. Students must have the proper opportunities to explore the range of their abilities and sensibilities in school. To increase student achievement in schools, the engagement factor should increase too, by occupying students individually and in a manner allowing the student to progress at his or her own distinctive pace.

Reform is nothing new to public education. In the early 1990s, the standard movement began focusing on the 'Global Education Reform Movement'. The 'Global Education Reform Movement' included different countries comparing their education system to other areas of the world. The world is continuously going through revolutionary changes, and the education sector needs to change too. Governments across the nation inform schools what to teach, imposing testing systems, and offering penalties if the minimum standards are not met (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). The 'Race to the Top' program included financial incentives for school improvement focused on standards and testing.

Education means a huge deal to the economy and the future of the communities within America. Schools develop an individuals' cognitive skills, which is a necessary skill to be used after high school, either within higher education or the workforce (Tough, 2012). Cognitive flexibility is the ability to find alternative solutions to problems and to navigate through unfamiliar tasks. Cognitive self-control can inhibit an instinctive or habitual response and substitute a more effective one (Tough, 2012). Grades or a grade point average reveal the level of motivation and perseverance an individual possesses and the presence of good study habits and time management skills.

Once the schools were directed on exactly which standards the educators are responsible for teaching in public schools and the requirement of assessments were in place to monitor schools followed the specific guidelines, the competition began among schools because rankings were established among the different public schools (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). Students compete with other students, and teachers are judged based on their students' performance measures, and districts strive to acquire much-needed

resources. Over 100 years, mass education in industrialized countries was paid by taxation and was seen as an investment in the public good (Robinson & Aronica, 2015).

Governments are currently encouraging investment within education within the private sector, obtaining an education by private corporations and entrepreneurs. Governments are promoting different categories of public school-such as academics, charters, and free schools-in which some structures of the standards movement are deliberately relaxed (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). Suggested motives for the government suggesting alternatives to traditional public schools include intensifying competition, promoting diversity of provision, ease the burden using public funds, and profit because education is one of the largest businesses (Robinson & Aronica, 2015).

From 1950 to 1980, a college degree was precious and guaranteed a job for an individual. The problem currently is not the quality of degrees but the number of degrees. In 2008, the recession left many college graduates struggling to find occupations meeting the skills obtained from completing a college degree. A gap exists between the skills schools are teaching and the careers the economy needs. Public schools' priorities are to meet the state's educational requirement, leading administration and educators to focus on college readiness and success at standardized tests, which show most vocational programs being a second priority (Robinson & Aronica, 2015).

Since schools are focused on achieving high rates and competition with other schools, the engagement factor lacks and affects millions of students and the traditional public schools' graduation rate. A North American study describes 63% of high school students reported they are disengaged and have little interest in the educational programs but stay in school to graduate (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). To help students increase

achievement, education must include a high quality of teaching, have a rich and balanced curriculum, and have informative assessment systems. Evidence exists the standards movement is not successful, so the radical change of developing schools meet students' diverse learning styles needs to be completed.

History of Charter Schools in the United States

In 1988, the original first suggestion of charter schools was introduced to allow teachers to try new ideas. Minnesota passed the first charter law in 1991, and the first charter school opened in 1992 (Ravitch, 2014). Minnesota was also the first state to offer magnet schools, a magnet school is a public school offering parents a choice for a different type of education for their child, but a magnet school does not have autonomy (Ravitch, 2014). A magnet school does not have charters, an independently operated board of directors, and is subject to the regulations and guidelines of the public-school administration (Ravitch, 2014). Nine short years later, the No Child Left Behind Law was passed, and a suggestion was made to take low-performing public schools and convert the institutions into charter schools. Charter schools provide tuition-free education services and draw students from various geographical areas (Judson, 2014).

Charter schools are public institutions, which are independently operated with greater flexibility in how the school operates. Charter schools must obtain the high goals set within the charter school contract. The charter school contract is a document providing details on the individual schools mission, programs offered to students, types of students served, performance goals, and the methods of assessing if the students achieved the set goals.

Charter schools operate using public funds and tend to work with fewer restrictions than traditional public schools. Charter schools are K-12 schools, which negotiate with the state-approved entity to obtain permission to operate and receive funding (Carr & Holley, 2014). All charter schools must abide by the same state-imposed achievement expectations as the public traditional schools, as well as financial guidelines. Both charter schools and traditional schools follow strict guidelines in dealing with federal statutes related to human and civil rights.

Charter schools are schools of choice, open to all students unless the maximum number is reached, and then the school must adopt a random process in selecting students (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). Charter schools generally use a random method to decide who will attend their institution because it must not discriminate against any student population. The charter school is overseen by autonomous boards, which are typically free of some state regulations, giving educators the ability to use a wide variety of approaches and emphases.

The number of students enrolled in charter schools has increased from 0.3 million to 1.8 million students in the past ten years (Ruble & Harris, 2014). Charter schools provide families with a choice on where their child will be educated, but only privileged families will take advantage of the option (Hill and Lake, 2010). Charter schools rely on a self-reflection process to attract students to provide additional educational opportunities for students. The unique high-performing schools utilized strict discipline and longer school days. The charter school administrators continuously strive to prove these new-age schools are superior to other schools, which causes the schools to be driven by high-stakes testing.

Charter schools institutions distinguish their unique mission from other public schools. Charter schools are a tool used for school improvement and educational equity (Wilson, 2016). The purpose of early charter schools was to provide democratic possibilities for new teachers to develop their innovative learning approaches and expand parental and community investment in education (Wilson, 2016). The schools are described as using innovative schooling.

The new-age schools allow educators to try to develop effective and engaging teaching strategies for students to progress. The overall current goal of charter schools is to provide better educational opportunities for students. Charter schools across the country strive to meet the challenges of engaging students in learning, promote graduation, and provide opportunities to encourage the students' long-term success.

Charter schools have the purpose of providing new opportunities for parents and community members to create schools meeting the needs relevant to their children (Wilson, 2016). The institutions are provided with opportunities to educate students engagingly and utilize a different approach within governing the school. These schools offer alternative education for students who want to be in public schools but do not wish to attend their traditional school due to barriers (Marsh et al., 2009).

Some examples of areas that charter schools may differ in school operations, include seeking waivers from state teacher certification laws, curriculum requirements, or regulations related to the school day or year's length. Each school can adopt education styles fitting the students' individual needs at their institution. Charter school policies provide students with educational institutions teaching differently than traditional public schools. Charter schools' autonomy should be used differently from the usual rules and

regulations to develop ways to educate students who are not successful within conventional schools. Charters can compete for students and the public education dollars, which accompany the individual student (Neumann, 2008).

Charter schools have become popular because individuals believe the innovative schools provide better opportunities for children, and the institutions tend to be student-centered. The new schools are operated by individuals who can offer new and better services to help students' progress. The schools can be responsive to the student's needs, such as the administrators and educators having more freedom to adjust the curriculum, alter the school calendar or daily schedule, and adopt new methodologies to ensure all students are learning (*What is a Charter School*, 2018).

Charter schools have evolved due to the new schools creating an element of market competition within the education sector (Jacob, 2017). Another evolving matter includes the number of states that have joined the charter school movement; forty-three states and the District of Columbia have existing public charter school legislation recorded. Kentucky was one of the last of the seven states to have laws concerning public charter schools.

Charter School Movement

Intense political pressures alter decisions within education areas; policymakers embrace the need for radical change within the education area (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). The world is undergoing revolutionary changes, and education is a sector needing evolution too. Governments guide public schools closely, informing the content educators are supposed to teach, imposing accountability systems, and offering penalties when expectations are not met.

The charter movement aims to create new institutions receiving public revenue but function outside the school districts' existing structure (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). Multiple research sources have demonstrated charter schools have helped students obtain goals, and the amount of student success is higher than students of traditional public schools. Charter school students' achievements prove all students can succeed given the right opportunity (Ravitch, 2016).

A vast amount of research has become available to the public has made state education departments curious. The individuals have initiated investigations and collected data to determine the effect of charter schools. The No Child Left Behind Law provided a great deal of insight for states to utilize charter schools to help low-performing schools. The congressional endorsement was valuable publicity for charters (Ravitch, 2014). The mentioning of charter schools by congress created public recognition and new opportunities to expand and compete with neighborhood public schools for higher test scores. The No Child Left Behind Act paved the way for federal appropriations and federal tax breaks for charter school construction (Ravitch, 2014).

Types of Charter Schools

Three charter school types exist when describing the instructional components of the charter school. The types of charter schools are brick-and-mortar schools, brick-and-mortar schools with an online element, a blended charter school type, and the fully online charter school, which this type has an additional name of cyber charters (Marsh et al., 2009). Brick-and-mortar schools resemble a traditional public school's structure and function, which requires the student to attend face-to-face classes. The blended charter school combines the other two types of charter schools, requiring both face-to-face

courses and an online component, too, creating the hybrid effect. The fully online charter school option has become the most recent preferred option because the virtual school helps with the student barrier of attendance. Technology is a tool which engages students and is tailored to meet students' individual needs too, which the devices have a role within all three types of charter schools. No matter the type of charter school individuals utilize, students' main priority is to have better educational opportunities.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantage: Differentiated Environment

A significant advantage of charter schools is the institution's ability to adapt and meet students' individual needs. Charter schools provide new opportunities for parents and community groups to create schools relevant to their needs and values (Wilson, 2016). Charter reform provides an additional policy mechanism to build schools around the community's unique needs and strengths (Wilson, 2016). Charter schools are institutions promoting innovation and provide helpful competition (Whitmire, 2014).

Charter schools strive to distinguish their school model from traditional public schools to meet students' diverse needs. Charter schools are a tool of innovation because educators are allowed to explore various instructional strategies to help students achieve academic success. Student supported environments, including smaller class sizes and greater attention to student and teacher interactions, promotes student success among these alternative settings (Bullock, 2007). Charter school legislation allows schools to expand their services to enroll more at-risk students (King et al., 2011).

The United States Department of Education defines an alternative education school as an institution, which provides nontraditional education, and many individuals

demonstrate interest within these different institutions (Bullock, 2007). The alternative setting is a type of environment promoting school success by dealing with individual students' personal, behavioral, and learning needs and unique vocational needs.

Educators' instructional strategies within alternative settings such as charter schools allow students to have intense discussions with teachers and other students. The alternative schools' curriculum is engaging, allowing students to have a flexible and creative curriculum, and as well as hands-on experimental learning opportunities.

Charter schools provide parents with a choice of where they would want their child to be educated. The improved school option offers disadvantaged students an alternative setting to be educated (Hill & Lake, 2010). Within charter schools, content is the focus of educators, and the level of rigor is increased to help students achieve high levels of success. Some of the content practiced within charter schools daily includes writing skills and scientific reasoning skills (Sahm, 2015). The primary instructional strategy utilized within the nontraditional schools is project-based learning, involving a subject for two to six weeks, and where the student practices various skills.

The educator has to think with the end in mind as the lesson's focus, and consider what does the educator want the students to know by the end of the unit. The educator must plan a lesson with a clear goal (Sahm, 2015). The task must involve the educator using precise questioning and utilizing higher-level questions to increase rigor. The educator carefully plans a set of activities leading the scholars to learn, develop, or master a new concept each day (Sahm, 2015). Usually, a lesson has only ten minutes of direct instruction, which allows the students to take ownership within the hands-on learning.

Characteristics promoting success within charter schools are individualized approach to learning, personalized attention from teachers, and personalized attention, in general (Iachini et al., 2013). Other traits promoting success include planning for the individual student regarding graduation, increased autonomy, school structure, smaller class, school size, and location. Additional factors helping students succeed in attending charter schools are schedule flexibility, school climate, less drama, and increased diversity. Charter schools typically have smaller classroom sizes and more resources because of the number of philanthropic sponsors (Ravitch, 2016). More financial sponsors for charter schools means a variety of resources are offered to students.

Advantage: Culture

Diversity is increased among charter schools because charter schools (64%) enroll more students of color than traditional public schools (43%). The new-age institutions can admit students from a wide geographical area, promoting diversity and exposure to multiple cultures (Judson, 2014). Charter schools include various students within their institutions, including free-reduced lunch students, students who require special education services, and students whose English is not their native language (Sahm, 2015). Charter schools are schools of choice and are open to various students; usually, students are chosen on a lottery system instead of taking an exam.

The diverse school culture is a safe environment for students, educators, and staff too. Charter schools are much safer than district schools (Sahm, 2015). Schools creating a safe learning culture instill discipline and values and help individuals build social and emotional skills (Sahm, 2015). Once students have the basic needs met, they are prepared to do their very best and develop the next level's necessary skills.

The culture within charter schools appears to be positive; educators are willing to endure longer school hours, adapt to precise training requirements, and relinquish personal privacy (Whitmire, 2014). Educators devote a great deal of time, especially after school hours, to help spend time with students who may require extra practice with specific skills. Educators often obtain additional professional development to do their job exceptionally well and continue to improve to meet all types of students' needs. Privacy is an area charter school educators are willing to give up because their students may need to contact their teacher after school hours regarding completing their homework.

Culture is a big reason for the success of charter schools, small and personal areas where students and educators can build relationships. The positive relationships generated are linked to being connected and trust; both factors promote student success (Toch, 2009). Students will care about their learning because the individual feels cared for by their peers and their educators. Student success depends on a positive environment where everyone feels valued.

The classroom atmosphere is informal, but the teachers are serious about helping every student (Russo, 2013). Charter schools help many special education students receive the content at their level; many different content levels are required to help all students. Open-ended assignments are frequently used in the classroom because these types of tasks allow students to engage within their level.

Frequent online assessments utilized by educators help the students to be appointed to their appropriate activity. Co-teaching is a differentiated instructional strategy common within charter schools; promoting small manageable groups for each educator. Another differentiated practice utilized is called looping; looping is where the

students stay with the same teacher multiple school years. Looping promotes comfortable situations for the students because both the educator and students know the classroom's expectations. The educator also understands the students very well because strong positive relationships already exist.

Advantage: Performance

The skills charter schools claim to promote involve critical thinking, scientific reasoning, design experiments, computational thinking, and increased interest in science and mathematical careers (Judson, 2014). Public charter schools have more leeway from state and district rules and regulations, allowing educators and administration to alter programs increase the necessary skills for life after high school, whether the choice is higher education or workforce for the student.

Educators within charter schools are held at higher standards than educators of traditional public schools; a positive characteristic is to make sure individuals are doing their very best at teaching students at all times (Oberfield, 2016). When the educators achieve the required results, they can work longer within the school year, and their salaries are higher (Oberfield, 2016). In discussing the school's operation, a public charter school is managed better because principals and administration can shape the institution's mission and goals.

The skills gained within a charter school involve creativity, deep thought, and problem solving (Russo, 2013). Charter schools utilize teaching approaches, which are designed to work with both struggling students and advanced students. The students' performance is at a higher level; the level of rigor within the classroom is increased to help all students succeed.

At the high school level, the goal is to prevent students from dropping out of high school, so to accomplish the task, the school environment must have targeted interventions helping the student succeed (Catterall, 2011). The interventions must be engaging and provide practical efforts to generate student success and accomplish high school to be prepared for life after school preparation. Instructional strategies are linked to students' performance; if educators prepare engaging lessons, students will learn and succeed.

Project-based learning is an effective instructional strategy used within effective schools. Project-based learning keeps students engaged, affecting school attendance rates and overall student graduation rate (Creghan & Creghan, 2015). Project-based learning is one tool of many leading to positive student performance. Project-based learning offers students a proactive and challenging curriculum in which all students can excel (Creghan & Creghan, 2015). Educators can impact student performance by reaching students and promoting creativity by utilizing constructivist methods to keep all types of students engaged and coming to school, which leads to academic success (Creghan & Creghan, 2015). Charter school students' achievements prove all students can succeed if given the right opportunity and use engaging instructional strategies (Ravitch, 2016).

Disadvantage: Take Resources

Many school systems leaders oppose charter schools because they believe charter schools drain away students from public schools (Ravitch, 2016). Once the students are pulled from the public schools, and then the public school's funding is affected. The amount of funding being decreased creates a ripple effect and alters the number of public school students' resources.

The privatization movement of charter schools causes existing public schools to close because education entrepreneurs see an excellent opportunity to open a charter school. The students who attend the charter school take funding from the traditional public school, which harms conventional public schools. Public education is being hurt because it attacks its effectiveness and legitimacy by laying claim to its revenues (Ravitch, 2014).

The amounts of money charter schools take from traditional public schools represent a necessary amount of money. The funds lost will cause a decrease in the conventional school budget, which causes a reduction in public school resources and a decrease in funding, which may mean a loss in staffing at the school. The decline in funds will cause the public school not to provide the best education possible, and students will suffer. The lack of funds will generate a more significant education equity gap because it does not have the funds to obtain educators and resources to educate students.

The lack of resources will hurt the entire community because individuals graduating from traditional public schools will lack the necessary skills to be productive members of society. Students who are not prepared for the workforce or higher education do harm the community. Individuals who are not prepared due to the lack of skills cannot obtain a job, and industries will not have the necessary workers required to operate their business properly. Personal benefits of completing high school include additional lifetime personal income, reduced reliance on various public services, and reduced costly behaviors such as crime (Cattrell, 2017). In turn, society benefits from the added tax revenues and decreased expense in public services for others (Cattrell, 2017). Another disadvantage of lack of resources is how poverty affects academic achievement, and

poverty is positively correlated with low academic achievement (Ravitch, 2014).

Discussing poverty in the means of lacking school resources affects the motivation of students. The lack of resources affects some students' engagement within instructional strategies, and students do not learn the necessary content. The school budget of a traditional public school not only affects resources for instructional strategies and professional development for educators, but it also affects programs helping feed students and maintaining their health too. Students who do not have the necessary resources do not learn well, and they do not perform well (Ravitch, 2014).

If a student's basic needs are not met, then the individual has no desire to care about their education. Many individuals forget about programs feeding students who live in poverty or nurse services offering free vaccinations to prevent future diseases or sicknesses, and services providing students with school supplies to succeed in the classroom. Charter schools in urban centers will enroll the poor motivated children, while the regular public schools will become schools of last resort for those who never applied or were rejected by charters (Ravitch, 2016). Charter schools are institutions where students have to use to attend their school. If only motivated students apply and attend charter schools, unmotivated students will participate in traditional public schools. Educators of conventional public schools will lose some of their motivated and high achieving students, which create a challenge for educators to develop ways of motivating and educating.

Disadvantage: High Resource Cost

Education has been under scrutiny for decades to improve student-learning outcomes with less money and resources, for a broader range of students and teachers,

with the population increasing (Weiss & Belland, 2016). Charter schools require more money to provide many opportunities for students and a variety of new-age instructional strategies. Project-based learning is a new-age instructional strategy involving a lot of time and money to implement successfully.

Charter schools are supposed to be schools of choice, and they find it easier to avoid, eliminate, or counsel out low-performing and disruptive students (Ravitch, 2016). Charter schools would have a higher resource cost for special needs students because the individual students' resources are much higher than that of a traditional student. Many charter schools do not have enough help because most charter schools are required to generate a profit. If charter schools' concepts were redesigned to focus on meeting the needs of the communities and not the plans of entrepreneurs, funds would not be an option to operate the school to maximum quality (Ravitch, 2014).

By charter schools needing more funding than traditional schools, parents' significant disadvantage is the lack of extracurricular activities for students to participate and become well-rounded individuals. Charter schools receive extra funding from investors. An example is the Walton Family Foundation investment agency. The Walton Family Foundation invests in charter schools including high-quality schools and is institutions for low-income students (Carr & Holley, 2014).

Most charter schools work with students at multiple learning levels, or the students have different learning styles, no matter the issue, to accommodate the diverse students. It requires numerous instructional strategies and a variety of tools. At their worst, charter school classrooms can include instructional strategies which feel choppy and fragmented for students, advanced kids feeling bored, and struggling kids feeling

anxious (Russo, 2013). Teachers try to reach so many kids at once, and it is difficult to do with the number of strategies and resources needed to accomplish the task (Russo, 2013).

Charter schools are pressured to have multiple new-age resources to benefit students because they choose to attend school. When choosing to send their children to a charter, parents and education authorities, when holding schools accountable for performance, usually make school quality estimates in making their decisions (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). Charter schools are funded with taxpayer dollars; some receive additional private-sector support and spend more than local public schools (Ravitch, 2014).

Disadvantage: Demands

Initially, a disadvantage includes the demands of getting a charter school started; new schools cannot be mass-produced or turned out with a cookie-cutter design (Ravitch, 2016). When a new school is open, it is challenging. The process includes recruiting a strong leader, capable faculty, obtaining a facility, developing a program, assembling a student body, creating an effective administrative structure, and building a positive culture (Ravitch, 2016). To get a charter school up and operating correctly may take as little as five years. Only some charter schools will succeed, some will not be any different from the schools they replaced, and some schools will fail (Ravitch, 2016).

Many factors go into a successful school, and all have to be perfectly aligned, which is a stressful burden on many. A school is successful because of its staff and educators' personalities, social interactions among all, the school's culture, the students, and their families, and collaboration among all stakeholders. Other factors helping to build a successful charter school include the way the educators implement policies,

procedures, and educational programs following proper guidelines, quality of the school's curriculum and instruction, the resources of the school and community, and many other factors (Ravitch, 2016).

The teachers' demands are high, which can create a strain on how teachers and students perform. Some of the instructional strategies utilized require a great deal of professional development, which involves many long hours, and some of the teachers' time is not reimbursed. Teachers have various levels of dealing with different types of students' dynamics (Weiss & Belland, 2016). The innovative instructional strategies expected to be utilized to engage students can be very demanding on teachers.

For a charter school to be successful, the data expected is high-test scores. Charter schools are allowed to be relaxed in their education methods, but in return, the students of the school are supposed to achieve high results (Neumann, 2008). High test-scores come with longer hours and weeks for educators, constant test-preparation for students, dedicated teachers, motivated students, excellent curricula, and outstanding leaders (Ravitch, 2016). Motivated students perform better, when the individuals are around motivated students, which are required of the educator to keep all students motivated all the time, which seems impossible. When educators demand to obtain high-test scores, educators begin to teach the students' state assessment. Introducing the test narrows down the curriculum and inflates test scores, which in the long-term is a negative impact on the student (Ravitch, 2016).

The skills and knowledge required of both the teacher and the student can alter the positive school environment, which once existed because of the expectations to always perform or succeed. Some other struggles both the teachers and students must deal with

are the emotional and social abilities all students face with cooperative learning. Not all students are capable or want to participate in collaborative learning instructional strategies all the time. Even teachers want to be rebellious when it comes to learning and sharing with their co-workers; teachers are usually expected to share with fellow teachers at charter schools.

Evidence Regarding Charter Schools

The United States Department of Education released a study in 2010 comparing middle school charters with regular public middle schools; it found no significant difference between the two sectors in either academic outcomes or behavior (Ravitch, 2016). In many states, charter schools get no better results in terms of student test scores than the lowest-performing traditional public schools, and sometimes they are even worse than the lowest-performing public schools (Ravitch, 2016).

On average, charter schools do not perform better within the academic performance category than public schools, and many charter schools serve much lower than public schools. The evidence upon which charter operators are systematically more effective in creating higher student outcomes nationwide cease to exist (Ravitch, 2016). Charter schools' academic performance evidence indicates they produce lower achievement gains than conventional public schools (Neumann, 2008).

Charter schools run the gamut from excellent to awful and are, on average, no more innovative, or successful than public schools (Ravitch, 2014). Charter schools have not fulfilled the hope of producing superior results compared to the traditional public schools. The results are no differences between the two types of schools if they have the same kinds of students. Another study concludes charter school students do not perform

any better than traditional public schools. The researcher even concludes, at times, charter schools harm student achievement (Judson, 2014).

The charter schools with the highest test scores had small proportions of students with disabilities and English-language learners (Ravitch, 2016). Evaluations of charters have continued to show the charters, on average, do not outperform traditional public schools (Ravitch, 2016). Types of charter schools vary widely. Some serve children with high-needs students and do not worry about test-scores, whereas other types focus on achieving high-results and using attrition to obtain the required results.

Another example of a successful charter school is KIPP schools, which stands for Knowledge is Power Program schools. The Knowledge is Power Program schools have the most impressive record of success, and in 2015, the KIPP schools served nearly 70,000 students in twenty states (Ravitch, 2016). The KIPP charter schools have longer school days, students attend some Saturdays and three weeks of summer school for all individuals.

Success charter schools are a type of charter school network located in New York has achieved high results; 64% of their students achieved proficient English ratings, and 94% of their students are trained in math (Sahm, 2015). Success students are the neediest students in New York City, and these disadvantaged monetary students outperformed other kids in the wealthiest suburbs (Sahm, 2015). Success charter schools are the only network of charter schools having achieved the stunning results of attaining high levels and growing the quickest enrollment numbers.

Twenty-five years after the beginning of the charter school movement, there is not much evidence of innovation. Some details exist on the description of high-performing

charter schools and how the institutions tend to be different from traditional public schools, including longer school days, imposing rigid discipline policies and procedures, high suspension rates, and high attrition rates among teachers and students (Ravitch, 2016). Charter schools need more research and practical research on student achievement performance (Ravitch, 2016).

Charter schools are the "no-excuses" schools and resemble old-fashioned, strict schools from a century ago. Charter schools have expanded rapidly, but there is little evidence these schools are better than traditional public schools. Observing the United States of America as a whole, only a few charter schools do meet the high standards set for them, but many states, including California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and others, do not outperform traditional public schools (Ravitch, 2016). Arizona has had charter schools for a long-time, and most of their charter schools draw students from middle-class students. Charter schools in Arizona are not doing any better than traditional public schools at raising the student-achievement level (Whitmire, 2014).

Charter schools in Chicago continue to proliferate even though there are little evidence students of charter schools perform better than their traditional counterparts (Orfield & Luce, 2016). Chicago charter school students are outperforming students of traditional schools in terms of reading and math. On the other hand, regular students perform better in areas, such as graduation rates, average ACT scores, reading and math growth rates, and reading and math pass rates (Orfield & Luce, 2016). Achievement levels of charter school students were previously higher when they were students at a traditional public school.

Many studies demonstrate charter school students initially underperform compared to traditional students, and then a few years later, the charter students catch up, and some even outperform traditional students (Kelly & Loveless, 2012). In Florida, charter school students performed low in student achievement until after four years of schools operating. Then achievement levels rose to the same level as students of traditional public schools. Across various locations, as the charter schools operation years' increased, the level of achievement increased too.

Criticisms of Charter Schools

One major issue in which charter schools receive criticism for is the student makeup or the lack of diverse students. Charter schools appeal to specific individuals based on the institutions' linguistic, ethnic, or religious identities (Wilson, 2016). Charter schools are designed to serve distinctive groups of students (Wilson, 2016). Racially isolated schools have grown in numbers for all types of racial/ethnic groups and at all levels, state and nationally. Patterns in other locations cause other schools' predictions to segregate students into groups, specifically into certain schools. Grouping types include race, class, ethnicity, and language (Wilson, 2016).

Charter schools can provide tuition-free services, which allow any students within the vast geographical area to attend their institution. Sometimes, the schools do not offer transportation, so some unfortunate students are unable to attend. Charter schools have been classified as a civil rights failure, civil rights involve racial mixing in schools, and charter schools have done little to advance the cause (Hill & Lake, 2010). Charter schools have an additional civil rights problem, including reducing racial isolation of poor and minority students of good schools and opportunities to complete school (Hill & Lake,

2010). Racial isolation is a significant problem, but charter schools alone cannot solve the issue.

Some researchers agree charter schools will increase within the following two factors: racial isolation and economic isolation (Weiler & Vogel, 2015). The Charter school movement has produced opportunities for well-informed families, while low-income families or less informed families receive fewer opportunities. If charter schools want to improve the school system within America, equal access must be provided for all students, no matter their parents' income or race. In 2003, Frankenberg and Lee found of the 1,855 charter schools operating in the United States, 95% were located in 16 states and were more segregated than the non-charter public schools (Weiler & Vogel, 2015).

The racial and ethnic composition of charter schools is stated to resemble traditional public schools (Orfield & Luce, 2016). Charter schools are at a disadvantage because most of these schools are built in areas more likely to have students from low-income families or homeless families. Kelly and Loveless (2012) stated new charter schools as compared to senior charter schools tend to serve more Hispanic students, English language learners and free-reduced lunch students. The alternative schools to traditional schools are supposed to have students within their schools were not meeting goals and they are demonstrating success, so as an alternative, the students will become members of the student body at charter schools.

Some low-performing students within educational settings are required to seek other school opportunities so that the charter schools can increase the school-wide achievement test scores. Charter schools use innovative ways to choose their students carefully, excluding or removing students who may get low test scores and enforcing

boot-camp discipline on those who remain (Ravitch, 2016). The charter school movement has intensified racial segregation because charter schools are more segregated than other school types. Charter schools in urban centers will enroll motivated children of the poor, while the regular public schools will become schools of last resort for those who never applied or were rejected by charters (Ravitch, 2016).

Another area for criticism is how public charter schools and traditional public schools compete instead of collaborating on educational issues and creating innovative instructional strategies to help students succeed. Competition exists between public charter schools and traditional public schools; charter schools drain away students and money from regular public schools (Ravitch, 2016). Charter schools have autonomy from the required state policies and procedures required of traditional public schools; many individuals suggest charter schools should be used to educate students who were not successful within their original school.

Charter schools should have a defined mission of collaborating with traditional public schools; the two institutions' goal is to educate all children (Ravitch, 2016). By charter schools having a low risk of being innovative, educators can experiment with instructional strategies, and then gained information can be passed to educators of traditional public schools. The original idea for charters was first suggested in 1988, not to promote competition but to allow teachers to try new ideas (Ravitch, 2014).

Charter schools even create competition among teachers; some charter schools have replaced teachers with various forms of technology. Public charter schools draw away the most motivated students and families in the most impoverished communities (Ravitch, 2016). Highly motivated students are persuaded to attend charter schools

because they usually perform well, and students who struggle with concepts are turned away from their institutions.

Albert Shanker, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, wanted to find alternative ways to educate disengaged students, students who dropped out, students at risk of dropping out, and difficult to educate individuals (Ravitch, 2014). Initially, teachers in charter schools would try new strategies and include concepts believed to fit within the school curriculum. Teachers of charter schools would reflect on ideas, which worked with students, and they would be suggested to share with teachers at the traditional public schools, collaboration (Ravitch, 2014). Public schools and charter schools can collaborate to pursue equal educational opportunity (Ravitch, 2014).

One last criticism to discuss is how most charter schools created and opened these schools to make a profit. Charter schools could have potential if the profit factor was removed and the institution's concept was redesigned to meet the needs of the communities and not the wants of entrepreneurs (Ravitch, 2014). Public charter schools receive money from taxpayers, and most other charters receive additional funding from private donations (Ravitch, 2014). Nonprofit groups or for-profit businesses can operate charter schools.

Politics of Charter Schools

A powerful and well-organized movement is happening to all public schools, including privatizing public schools; the process is privatization. The campaign to privatize public schools is called the reform movement, but others referred to it as the privatization movement (Ravitch, 2016). Individuals of the communities believe school

board members are incompetent in making effective decisions and should be replaced by private management.

The privatization movement includes individuals who suggest private schools are better for students who are poor and trapped in poor-performing schools. Charter schools are schools, which are supposed to use innovation to be more effective than traditional public schools. Vouchers have been in many various discussions in dealing with converting public schools into private schools. Vouchers have many different names, including "opportunity scholarships", "tax credits "or" education savings accounts". Many individuals have determined charter schools are a type of private school because of the many different qualities compared to public schools.

Charter schools are displayed to individuals as institutions superior to public schools. The shift of public dollars given to charter schools instead of public schools has created a damaging effect on public schools (Ravitch, 2016). The privatization movement is sustained by billionaires and mega-millionaires that fund charters, vouchers, and school choice advocacy groups, who contribute large sums of money to candidates and elected officials who support school choice (Ravitch, 2016). The goal of individuals in support of the privatization movement is to establish a free market. Students will be portrayed as consumers and not citizens who deserve to receive adequate education to become productive members of society.

Public education is supposed to be a service offered to all members of a community. When education becomes a marketplace, every family is left to decide where their child is to attend school. Individuals of the privatizers' movement would instead be

called reformers because the reformer word use has a positive impact on society members.

The reform movement (privatization movement) distinguishes the primary purpose of providing individuals with a school choice. The federal and state policies are believed to create competition among the education system (Ravitch, 2016). Making two competing publicly funded sectors-one public, the other nonpublic, which the competition has not improved education, has started to divide communities. To improve education, individuals cannot expect standards, testing, accountability, and school choice to be the only factors, which must change.

After No Child Left Behind, legislation came into effect, and the federal policy caused the expansion of the testing industry. Children at an early age were labeled either successful or unsuccessful. The labeling of children as students was predicted to help with the low-test scores among education.

Many individuals believe politics and the government are the last factors to help with school reforming (Ravitch, 2016). No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top led to standardized testing becoming a multibillion-dollar industry. The lobbyists who supported testing products were available to politicians in state capitals and in congressional halls to ensure, testing would remain a priority (Ravitch, 2016).

No Child Left Behind claimed no child would be left behind, the act did not create national standards, and it did not develop a national curriculum. The No Child Left Behind act demanded 100 percent proficiency among all public schools within the United States of America. Still, all students accomplishing ability was a very high standard was not attainable. Public schools were pressured to achieve higher test scores, which caused

some schools to enroll poor students to raise their test scores in the area of basic skills, or schools were forced to close (Ravitch, 2016). Public schools began to focus on teaching to the test and helping students understand how to take a standardized test, and in turn, the time teaching elective areas decreased.

Choice advocates tried to discourage opposition by insisting privatization would take place anyways and it would be successful (Ravitch, 2016). A dual school system began to take place, one school system managed by the private individuals and corporations, and the other school system which depends on public resources, which the amount of resources is drained by privately managed charter schools and left with students whom charter schools and voucher schools did not care to educate (Ravitch, 2016). The privatization movement representatives put on the front public schools were not working, and the evidence they portrayed was failing test scores. The solution suggested was to let public dollars support private institutions such as charter schools.

Before the significant national recession between 2008 and 2009, state funding decreased by more than 1 billion dollars. Public schools were trying to adjust to the lack of funds, and then the legislature authorized charter schools and opportunity scholarships (Ravitch, 2016). The 'Race to the Top' program offered nearly 5 billion dollars for institutions and administrators to accept education policies promoted corporate thinking into education by schools along with common core standards.

Education is not about competition. It is about learning, questioning, discovering, inquiring, growing, and developing (Ravitch, 2016). Education is not about making a profit. The educational process is supposed to help individuals develop the necessary skills needed to be productive members of society. All students deserve the most

effective education possible, which will develop their critical thinking skills and problem solving skills in order to be productive individuals within the community.

Kentucky Public Charter Schools

Public charter schools are supposed to increase engagement by tailoring instruction to meet the variety of students' needs. With the Charter Schools advancing, the current public education progresses because of the renewal of the commitment to the mission, goals, and diversity (*House Bill 520*, 2017, p.4). Other factors in which charter schools will help within the public education system are increasing high-quality educational opportunities and creating a focus for academic risk students. Another area to consider for progress is communication. All stakeholders will be offered opportunities to be involved in the public charter schools' education system.

History of Charter School Movement

In 2017, Governor Matt Bevin signed the House Bill 520, approved by the General Assembly, during the General Assembly's Regular Session (*Charter schools*, 2017). In June of 2017, Governor Bevin created a nine-member council to ensure future charter schools maintain the highest quality and provide stakeholders with the necessary resources for charter school tasks. The council contains three individuals from the Kentucky Board of Education, one individual of the School Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability Council, one parent who has a school-aged child, one attorney with experience in education law, one person with a business or finance background, and two individuals expertise with education policy (*Charter schools*, 2017).

The Charter Schools Advisory Council is supposed to make recommendations to the Kentucky Board of Education for the adoption of regulations regarding all aspects of

the operation, including timelines, standards, methods for acceptance and approval of applications, monitoring of charter schools, appeals, and revocation of charters (*Charter schools advisory*, 2017). The Charter Schools Advisory Council is responsible for reviewing charter school applications. It only makes recommendations to the Kentucky Board of Education, specifically dealing with appeals, renewals, non-renewals, and charter schools' revocations. The Charter Schools Advisory Council may have to perform other duties and responsibilities instructed from the Kentucky Board of Education or the requirements of legislation established from the Kentucky General Assembly.

Empirical/Political Basis for Charter Schools

By reviewing the House Bills pertaining to charter schools within Kentucky Section two of the new Kentucky Revised Statute Chapter 160 states the purpose of charter schools within Kentucky includes reducing the achievement gaps in Kentucky because the state contains potential within the workforce and economic development (*House Bill 520*, 2017). Other reasons why charter schools have been created in Kentucky include the past and current measures, which have been ineffective in helping students, make progress in decreasing the achievement gaps. Additional public school options are required to help reduce gaps within the following areas: socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic achievement gaps. Kentucky is responding to the demand for high-quality public charter schools by creating institutions in which the state wants to help student achievement to progress.

The Kentucky General Assembly established the charter school project to benefit students, parents, and community members. The charter school project develops new and innovative, and flexible ways of educating individuals within the public-school system.

The public charter school initiative exists to improve student learning outcomes, encourage the use of differentiation within instructional strategies, close the achievement gaps between high-performing schools and low-performing public schools, and allow schools the freedom to choose their methods (*House Bill 520*, 2017). In exchange for the school deciding on how the students will accomplish the tasks, the school must achieve exceptional achievement levels.

Section two of the new Kentucky Revised Statute Chapter 160 states charter schools within Kentucky include reducing the achievement gaps in Kentucky because the state contains potential within the workforce and economic development (*House Bill 520*, 2017). Other reasons why charter schools have been created in Kentucky include the past and current measures, which have been ineffective in helping students, make progress in decreasing the achievement gaps. Additional public school options are required to help reduce gaps within the following areas: socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic achievement gaps. Kentucky is responding to the demand for high-quality public charter schools by creating institutions, which the state wants to help student achievement to progress.

Theory of Practice

Some restrictions for public charter schools include the school may not be a virtual school. An authorizer, an individual reviewing the charter school applications, may authorize as many public charter schools within a boundary of a local school district in which the individual determines acceptable. Individual students who reside within the district's boundaries or districts represented by the local school board or the collaborative group may enroll in the authorized public charter school (*House Bill 520*, 2017).

Enrollment preference for a converted public school into a public charter school, priority is given to students who attended the school the previous year. Suppose the number of students enrolled does not exceed the school capacity. In that case, secondary preference is given to students who reside within the district boundaries in which the location of the public charter school is established (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Another way students are chosen to attend the public charter school is if they are a current student's sibling.

Children of the board of directors and full-time employees may attend the public charter school, as long as these individuals do not exceed ten percent of the entire student population. The charter school may prefer individuals to become students at the institution receiving free or reduced-price meals or if the individuals attended in the past a consecutive low-achieving non-charter public school. A lottery may have to occur if the charter institution has more students than allowed to attend the school. The lottery must take place for any grade level exceeding the capacity for the allotted student amount or any program at a public charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The selection of the students must be a random and transparent process. The charter school must also not require or assign any student enrolled in the local school district to attend the local area's public charter school.

A single local school board within the regional achievement zone may govern a regional achievement academy. A collaboration of local school boards may govern the public charter school within the zone boundaries. The regional achievement academy may only enroll students within the regional achievement zone's boundaries (*House Bill*

520, 2017). The state board must decide the regulations regarding student applications, the lottery process, and enrollment within the public charter schools within Kentucky.

Section 3 of the House Bill 520 discusses a public charter school shall participate in the state's public education system. Still, the institution is exempt from all statutes and administrative regulations applicable to the state board, a local school district, or a school (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The established public charter school must obey the same health, safety, civil rights, and disability rights requirements as the traditional public schools. Suppose the charter school chooses to comply with any one or more of the provisions of any state statute or administrative regulations are not required, in that case, the institution is allowed to partake.

A public charter school must be governed by a board of directors and operate under a specific set of educational standards having been defined in collaboration with the school board directors and the authorizer. The educational objectives must be recorded in the charter school contract. Students must meet the attendance requirements stated under Kentucky Revised Statute 158.030, which concerns attendance at a public school program regarding advancement without regard to age and how local boards must adopt a policy establishing petition and an evaluation process for students who do not meet the age requirements. Kentucky Revised Statute 158.100 states the educational institution is required to permit the program to a refugee student or a legal alien student.

The charter school institution must only hire qualified teachers to provide effective instruction. Every staff and employee, members of the governing board and volunteers at the charter institution must have criminal background checks. If needed, the institution must employ or contract with other organizations to help teach and

professionalism standards for teachers and support staff. The institution must collect data to provide the needed information for the authorizer and the Kentucky Department of Education to generate a school report including data from school size to the specific number of discipline referrals.

The high school offerings must comply with the state credit requirements for graduation. The educational programs must meet or exceed the Kentucky Board of Education's student performance standards. The students must participate in the required state assessments determining their performance level (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The minimum school term must be composed of 185 student attendance days, professional teacher days, and holidays. The instructional time must be equivalent to the instructional year specified for traditional public schools.

Public charter schools must follow the accepted accounting principles and follow the same financial audits, the procedures of the audits, and audit requirements as applied to the traditional public schools. Regarding purchasing requirements and limitations, the public charter school board of directors must receive a detailed monthly report of school purchases over \$10,000.00, including but not limited to curriculum, furniture, and technology (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Another similarity is the charter school must use the same procedures and programs to report student information data and financial data used within other Kentucky public schools. The meeting's open records and requirements must comply with Kentucky Revised Statute Chapter 61, which provides general provisions of how meetings should be instructed and how individuals should act.

The charter school institution acts as a public body corporate, and the institution has all the powers necessary for accomplishing all the terms of the contract. The powers

include receiving and disbursing funds for school purposes, securing appropriate insurance, and following rules and regulations within establishing contracts and leases (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Other powers to practice include establishing contracts within an education service provider, but the board of directors must oversee and lead the initiative. The established debt must be in a reasonable amount, and assets must be pledged, assigned, or encumber to be used as collateral for loans or extensions of credit (*House Bill 520, 2017*). A few more necessary actions for the charter school administration, include not solicit and accept any gifts or grants for non-school purposes. Still, individuals must follow applicable laws and the terms of the charter contract. The charter school organization must obtain property for the use of a facility or facilities, either from public or private sources (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The Finance and Administration Cabinet shall yearly publish a list of vacant and open state buildings, which may be suitable for a public charter school's operation.

The board of directors should consist of at least two parents of students attending the school. Other board of directors cannot be an employee of the charter school and an education service provider, which provides a service to the school. If a member has applied or is employed with any potential conflicts of interest with other members of the board, then a full disclosure report must be filed (*House Bill 520, 2017*). As a whole group of the board of directors, the members shall be experts in leadership, curriculum, instruction, law, and finance.

A board of directors may participate in one or more charter contracts. Each public charter school under contract with the board of directors must be separate from any other public charter school under the same board of directors (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The

board of directors must be responsible for the charter school's operation; some areas of focus include the budget, contracting services, school curriculum, and employee matters will arise. The board will make the public aware of upcoming board meetings, and the meetings are open to the public. The board meeting will consist of detailed monthly budget reports from education service providers; the board members will explore the budgets.

The public charter school may not request other fees other than school fees required by a public school; therefore, tuition and entrance requirements are not allowed for a student attending a public charter school. The public charter school can discriminate against any student, employee, or any other person based on ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, disability, special needs, athletic ability, academic ability, or any other discrimination factor (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The public charter school's academic grades must be at least one of each grade; Kindergarten through the twelve grades, the school may have more than one section of the required grades.

The public charter school must offer programs and services to a student who possesses a disability. The student's individual education program (IEP) must be followed according to the state's guidelines. The services for the disabled student must be delivered directly at the school, either by an employee of the school or contracted out by another organization (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Any student with a disability must have a developed individualized education program document describing the disability and what instructional strategies the student requires in learning content. The document must be reviewed, revised, and utilized from the student's previous school, if the student does not have a previous school, then a plan must be created.

The public charter school is eligible to participate in state-sponsored or district-sponsored academics, athletics, whether it deals with competitions, awards, recognitions, and scholarships. Students who participate in athletic and academic state and district-sponsored events must comply with the same eligibility requirements of students enrolled in traditional public schools (*House Bill 520, 2017*). A public charter school is not required to provide extracurricular activities or provide students access to certain facilities used for extracurricular tasks. The public charter school may sponsor interscholastic athletic events. The students enrolled within the organization are considered eligible to participate in interscholastic competitions by the Kentucky Board of Education or organization representing interscholastic athletics (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

A student enrolled within a public charter school, and the school sponsors a particular event, then the student is not allowed to participate at other institutions for the same event. Only if the event is not offered at the student's school, then the student can participate in the institution within the student's residence. Regarding establishing a single-sex public charter school, nothing in regards to athletic and academic events should prevent the institution from educating students. Another example is the athletic and academic regulations should not prevent establishing public charter schools focusing on expanding learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure or students with special needs (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The charter school authorizer should semiannually consider the approval of proposed amendments to the existing charter school contract. The authorizer has a choice to consider requests to the contract more often upon the mutual agreement between the authorizer and the charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The denial of an amendment

request by the authorizer is appealable by the public charter school representative, and the guidelines must be followed within Section 6 of House Bill 520.

Students are allowed to transfer from a public charter school to a traditional public school. Students who leave a public charter school may enroll within another public school within the state. The new institution has to accept any credits earned and the grades received within the public charter school's courses or institutional programs. The procedures for accepting credits from a public charter school are the same as accepting credits from a traditional public school within Kentucky.

Teachers employed by a local school board of a traditional public school, under a continuing service contract, may be granted a two-year leave of absence to teach in a public charter school if the teacher is offered employment by the charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The leave of absence begins on the first day of service at the public charter school. During the first year or the second year of absence, the teacher may notify the local board of education from the previous teaching job that the teacher intends to return to a teaching position in the past local school district. The pay for the returning teacher is based on the number of years of experience and the education level. Once the two years of leave have passed, the relationship between the teacher and the local board of education shall be determined by the local board, and the teacher is to be notified of the decision (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Section 4 of House Bill 520 begins with discussing applications and the application process. The application to establish a public charter school may be submitted to a public charter school authorizer by teachers, parents, school administrators, community residents, public organizations, nonprofit organizations, or a combination of

the mentioned (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The applicant must apply for approval of the public charter school to an authorizer and the state board, and the applications must be delivered to both at the same time. The charter authorizers must record the date and time of the received establishment application.

The application should contain a mission statement and a vision statement for the proposed charter school. The application should describe the targeted student population and the community in which the school desires to serve (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The proposed academic program should be described in detail along with the corresponding aligned state standards. A description of instructional strategies utilized to implement the program details and promote student success is required to provide the authorizer with an understanding of the proposed charter school processes. The projected school programs must have a plan for identifying and successfully serving students who are English language learners, bilingual, academically behind, and gifted (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The application should contain the student achievement goals for the proposed educational program and the evaluation methods to be utilized in determining if the students have obtained the skills and knowledge described within the goals (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The charter school's educational program should include an explanation of the improvements for the underperforming traditional students' achievement within the local school district. The plan should mention details in using external, internal, and state-required assessments to measure student progress on the performance framework discussed in detail in Section 7 of this Act (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The plan will explain how the public charter school will use data to lead instruction and the institution's continuous improvement.

The application should include general logistics, such as the school board's governance structure, along with a list of member names for the initial board of directors. Another needed piece of information is the bylaws describing the description of the qualifications, terms, and methods of appointment or election of directors (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Other requirements are the part of the application providing details to the school's organizational structure and the chain of command process, precisely the reporting procedures between all stakeholders. The stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the board of directors, school administrators, staff, advisory bodies, parent and teacher councils, external organizations that play a role in managing the school, and any stakeholders not mentioned (*House Bill 520, 2017*). A section of the plan should be devoted to parents and community involvement within the school, specifically, the details of parents and community members' roles within the school's administration and governance.

The application should contain a plan and a timeline for student recruitment, as well as enrollment. The school enrollment should be expected to serve at least 100 students unless the charter school focuses on serving special needs students or at-risk students (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Another component involves the proposed five-year budget, specifically the start-up year and projections for the following four years in addition to the first year, utilizing clearly stated assumptions. Drafts of fiscal and internal control policies for the public charter school must be present in the application. The requirements and procedures for programmatic audits and assessments are at least yearly and compared to non-charter school audits (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The purpose of the drafted handbook is to describe the public charter school's policies which explains how the board of directors will handle hiring qualified teachers, school administrators, and other school employees. The handbook will also describe everyone's roles and responsibilities and the plan to evaluate all staff within the school year. A code of ethics must be developed for the school, which provides the standards of conduct expected for each stakeholder involved within the charter school. A plan must be developed for recruiting and developing staff, in addition to a staffing chart for the school's first year and the staffing chart for the term of the charter school.

Another critical factor is the discipline policy, which the public charter school plans to utilize, explaining in full detail how students will be disciplined and how the students with disabilities will be disciplined. The discipline report must follow the guidelines of the state and federal laws and regulations and be consistent with the requirements of due process (*House Bill 520, 2017*). A suggestion for the charter school, once the school is in full operation, is to gather data regarding discipline issues because this information is displayed on the school report card for each institution.

The property will be utilized for the school must be described and provide details of the location. The building components must be described fully in how the facility supports implementing the school's academic program. If a building is not secured for the proposed charter school, then the applicant must notify the authorizer within ten business days of locating a facility. A certificate of occupancy for the facilities must be provided to the authorizer 30 days before the first student instructional day (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The plan should include the ages and grade levels the charter school will serve, including the planned, minimum, and maximum enrollment per grade year (*House Bill*

520, 2017). The school calendar and school day schedule should be equivalent to the required number of days specified in Kentucky Revised Statute 158.070, a minimum school term of 185 days. Other components of the application include the types and amount of insurance coverage the public charter school will acquire for the proposed school year. The insurances the institution needs are liability, property loss, and personal injuries for the students, which is what traditional public schools are required to do. Further discussion is needed regarding assurance and agreements, the payment of net assets or equity, after payment of debts, which will be discussed more in section nine of the House Bill 520.

Another component is the description of the health and food services to be provided to the students. The authorizer will need the procedures and policies to be utilized in case of closure or dissolution within the public charter school, which provides the plan of action in case of an emergency. The plan should also include provisions for the transfer of students in case of an emergency. The student records must be provided to the local school district or another charter school within the public charter schools' location to be used in an emergency type event.

Documentation is an essential component to the application process, the student performance data, and financial audit reports for all current and past public charter schools are needed in the future. Other forms of documentation explain any actions taken against the public charter school, past or present, in areas of academic, financial, or ethical concerns (*House Bill 520, 2017, p.19*). Lastly, the evidence must be provided to display if the current growth capacity exists; therefore, a term sheet discusses these specific areas.

The suggested areas for the evidence required to incorporate the service contract's duration, annual proposed fees to be paid to the education service provider, and roles and responsibilities of all of the school stakeholders (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Other areas of evidence to compose include the scope of services and resources provided by the education service provider, performance evaluation measures and timelines, compensation structure, contract oversight methods, and enforcement. Additional pieces of evidence include investment disclosures, conditions for renewal and termination of the contract, and disclose and explain any existing or potential conflicts of interests between the board of directors and the proposed education service providers or any other affiliated businesses (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Section five of House Bill 520 explains the roles and responsibilities of the authorizer in full detail. The public charter school authorizer is expected to fulfill sections one through eleven of the House Bill 520 Act. The authorizer must demonstrate public accountability and transparency in all matters, the openness within the charter-authorizing practices, decisions, and expenditures. The authorizer is supposed to recruit, invite, and evaluate applicants' applications (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The authorizer must closely analyze the applications for public charter schools, ensuring the application contains all of the requirements from section four of House Bill 520. If the public charter school does not meet all the needs, then the application must be denied or not approved. Another reason to decline the application is if the proposed charter school would be under control or any religious denomination direction.

The authorizer has to negotiate and execute in good faith a charter contract with each public charter school. The charter contract authorizes and monitors the school's

performance, in compliance with the contract guidelines (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Based on the public charter school following the terms of the contract, the authorizer must determine if each of the charter schools overseeing the individuals' meets the renewal or revocation requirements. The authorizer is allowed to manage multiple public charter school applications as long as the individual meets the authorizer role's expectations for each charter school.

The authorizer must establish and maintain policies and practices following the principles and professional standards for authorizers of public charter schools (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The authorizer's professional standard areas must abide by, including organizational capacity and infrastructure, soliciting and evaluating applications, performance contracting, ongoing public charter school oversight and evaluation, and approval, renewal, and revocation decision making of the public charter schools. In looking over the applications, the public charter school authorizer is encouraged to give priority to public charter schools describe intent, capacity, and capability to institutions will provide an overall learning experience to students who are at risk of academic failure or students who have special needs and require an individualized education program (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The authorizer process must follow when an application is submitted to establish a public charter school starts with a complete and exhaustive review process of the application. Next, the authorizer must conduct a face-to-face interview with the entire applicant group. An opportunity must be provided in a public forum style for the residents to voice their concerns and inputs about the charter school application (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The authorizer must provide a detailed analysis of the application to the applicant(s). The applicant must be allowed a reasonable amount of time to address any conflicts with the application, such as providing additional materials or amendments to the application to resolve any neglected areas within the entire application. At the end of analyzing the collected information from the application, interview, and public forum, the authorizer must either approve or deny a charter application based on the information provided, or the authorizer can request additional information before making a final choice.

The authorizer must approve a charter application by keeping the following areas in mind when deciding on an application; therefore, factors include granting charters to applicants who contain all required information within the application and base decisions on the documented evidence collected through the application process. Other factors in which the authorizer should follow are transparency, basing decisions on merit, and avoiding conflicts of interests (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The authorizer is allowed no more than sixty days once the application is submitted to approve or deny a charter school application. The authorizer must report all charter approval applications and any charter denial decisions to the authorizer's board of directors within an open meeting.

If the applicant does not act on any revision requests, the authorizer will deny the application. The public charter school authorizer will approve an application if the application meets all the needs described within sections one to three of the House Bill 520 Act. The applicant must demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound matter (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The application's

approval is the authorizer's belief the future charter school is likely to improve student learning and student achievement.

The authorizer has five days to provide a written explanation for the public records explaining the reasons for denial or approval for any public charter schools application. The description must explain why the public charter school meets or fails the objective criteria for establishing public charter schools. The authorizer must provide exact details of the review process, evaluation process and state the final decision. The application approval explanation must be submitted to the Kentucky Department of Education for final approval by the education commissioner (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Section six of House Bill 520 discusses the state board's role in the approval or denial of applications for establishing a public charter school. The state board will review the notice of any appeal or the motion of a request made by the state board, along with any non-renewals or revocations of a public charter school contract, as well as denials of charter amendments, and unilateral imposition of conditions (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The appeal process begins with the charter applicant or charter school providing notice of appeal to both the state board and the authorizer within thirty days after the original decision.

The notice should include a brief statement for the reasons why the public charter school applicant or charter school wants to challenge the authorizer's denial of a non-renewal or revocation of a charter or imposition of conditions which were in error (*House Bill 520, 2017*). If the decision was in the wrong of the charter applicant or the public charter school, then the appeal process must follow the proper guidelines. In about forty-five days after receiving the notice of appeal or the making of the motion to review by the

state board, then at a public hearing, the state board will review the authorizer's decision and report any new findings. Suppose the state board decides the authorizer's decision conflicted with the students' or community's best interest. In this case, the state board will provide the updated decision to the authorizer and give the individual written instructions for reconsideration regarding the previous decision (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

After thirty additional days, following the remand of a decision to the authorizer and after reasonable public notice is provided, and then at another public hearing, the authorizer will reconsider the original decision and make a final and updated decision within ten days. Suppose the decision is still the same, meaning the authorizer still denies the charter school application or refuses to renew an existing charter contract or any other negative impact. In this case, the applicant or charter school may appeal a second time within another thirty days following a recent decision (*House Bill 520, 2017*). After thirty days, the authorizer is provided with one more additional time to review the second denial decision. The authorizer is only allotted ten days to decide and inform the state board of any action.

The state board will suggest what to do with the charter school application or the existing charter school contract; the decision of the state board will be the final action. The last action made by the state board will be to subject the decision and evidence to a judicial review in the Circuit Court within the school district the public charter school will be located or is located. Charter schools in which authorizers grant after a successful appeal process with the state board will be provided with a joint oversight, the authorizer, and the state board for at least five years of the school's operation. During the entire period, the state board is in conjunction with the authorizer, all parties' communication

aspects must be open. The state board will actively participate in authorizing decisions. Once the authorizer, state board, and public charter school agree, the charter school oversight can be handled mainly by the authorizer. Once completed the authorizer is responsible for providing a detailed report to the charter applicant, board, and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, within the same time period, including a copy of the resolution decided by the authorizer's board of directors (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The report should incorporate any actions taken, the reason for the decision, and importantly the assurance of compliance concerning the procedure requirements and application components, which are described in detail with section 2 of the House Bill 520 (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Section seven of House Bill 520 describes the board of directors of the public charter school roles and responsibilities and discusses the charter school contract. The boards of directors are required to take an oath within sixty days of the final approval of a public charter school application. In seventy-five days of the approval of a charter school application, the board of directors and the authorizer must enter into a binding contract describing the academic and operational performance expectations. The public charter school application will also include measures by which the institution will be evaluated to decide if the goals are being met (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The executed charter contract will be the final authorization for the public charter school. The charter school contract will include factors such as the term of the contract, agreements to each item discussed within section 3 and section 4 of House Bill 520 Act. The contract will include the rights and duties of each party involved, describing the professional relationship between the authorizer and the administration of the public

charter school. The contract will discuss the allocation of state, local, and federal funds, specifically the schedule to disburse the funds to the public charter school from the authorizer.

The authorizer will oversee the charter schools by providing ongoing annual site visits to monitor the progress of the school and to supervise. The authorizer must monitor and evaluate the following criteria, overall academic, operating, and fiscal conditions of the public charter school (*House Bill 520*, 2017). Some of the processes the authorizer must perform include correcting any deficiencies within the annual review, revision, or amendment to the terms of the charter contract, and how to handle disputes. A few examples of processes the authorizer must be involved with are pre-opening conditions such as enrollment maximums, operational requirements, and unilaterally imposed conditions.

To determine the performance level of the institution, indicators, measures, and metrics are used by the authorizer to evaluate the public charter school (*House Bill 520*, 2017). The following indicators are used to evaluate the student progress within the institution, such as academic proficiency, academic growth, achievement gaps, attendance, suspensions, withdrawals, student exits, and recurrent enrollment from year to year. Other performance indicators for the authorizer to evaluate are financial performance, stewardship, and compliance to rules and regulations. The authorizer can use other pieces of evidence or indicators if the information is consistent with sections one through eleven of the House Bill 520 Act.

The authorizer is responsible for collecting data, analyzing the information, and reporting the evidence to the state board. The student performance data must be

disaggregated into sub groups, including race, sex, socioeconomic status, and areas of exceptionality. Achievement performance targets should be established for students and the targets should follow the guidelines required of the state accountability system. The targets created must be agreed upon by both the charter school administration and the authorizer. The targets must also follow the guidelines including measures, which are designed to help the charter school meet accepted federal, state, and authorizer goals (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The charter school contract must be signed by the chair of the governing board of the authorizer and the chair of the board of directors of the public charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*). An approved charter application does not constitute a charter contract for the public charter school. The public charter school may not commence operations without a charter contract being executed and approved in an open meeting of the governing board of the authorizer (*House Bill 520, 2017*). In five days after entering into a charter contract, a copy of the executed contract should be submitted to the commissioner of education.

The financial terms to finance the Charter Schools program include federal grants delegated by the United States Department of Education (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The commissioner of education shall apply for financial assistance through the federal government. The money should be used for planning, program design, and initial implementation of public charter schools in the state of Kentucky. The grant application period starts within sixty days after the effective date of the House Bill 520 Act or at the first available grant application period (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

After August 31, 2019, and annually thereafter, each public charter school authorizer should submit a report to the commissioner of education, the secretary of the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet and the Interim Joint Committee on Education (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The report should contain the name of every public charter school operating under the authorizer during the previous academic year closed during or after the academic year, as well as any school which had their contract non-renewed or revoked (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Additional information to be included the names of each public charter school operating under contract with the authorizer, which has not yet begun to open for students to attend.

The report will include the number of applications received, the number reviewed, and the number of applications approved. Additional details of the report are summaries of the academic and financial performances of each charter school during the previous school year. The authorizer must provide details of the duties and functions performed by the authorizer during the previous academic school year.

Section eight of House Bill 520 includes operational provision information for public charter schools within Kentucky. Once a public charter school application is approved then the institution is allowed a term of five years to operate. The board of directors of the public charter school is responsible to negotiate and execute a charter contract by using the governing body of the authorizer.

A public charter school has all corporate powers required to implement a public charter school program. The powers include the powers from a local board of education and the local school district contain. The powers that are granted to a public charter school under section eight constitute the performance of essential public purposes and

governmental purposes of this state (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The charter school can be exempt to the same level as other public schools in regards to all taxation, fees, assessments, or special ad valorem levies on its earnings and its property (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Some other examples the public charter school does not have to pay taxes are within the instruments of conveyance, any bonds or notes issued, and the income received.

A public charter school does not have the freedom to levy taxes or to acquire property by eminent domain. The charter school does have the same powers and to the same extent and under the same requirements of a traditional public school. The board of directors of the public charter school has the final authority over policy and operational decisions of the institution (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The decision-making authority may be offered to the administrators and staff of the school, if the board of directors chooses to pass the responsibilities to other individuals. The authorizer or any other stakeholders must not partake in any other civil liabilities could contrarily go against the role and responsibilities to the public charter school which the individual serves. The local school district or the Commonwealth will not be liable for the debts or financial obligations of the public charter school or any stakeholders associated with the institution (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Section nine of the House Bill 520 is concerned with the process of renewing a charter school contract. The charter contract renewal may be renewed by the authorizer for a term duration of five years. The authorizer may decrease the term to three years, instead of five years. The variation in the public charter school's term is based on the performance of the institution, demonstrated capacities, and the particular circumstances

of the school. The authorizer may grant renewal with specific conditions to improve the institution, but the inconsistent conditions may not go against anything composed within sections one through ten of House Bill 520 (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The authorizer must release the public charter school performance report within one calendar year before the expiration date of the charter contract. Another factor required to be submitted within the report is the renewal application guidance section, and the renewal section needs to be provided to the charter school. The updated report should contain summary details of the school's performance record and the report should contain the performance framework required within section seven of House Bill 520 Act (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The detailed report must provide information of the weaknesses of the institution too, so the school can take the time to fix the issues in order for the charter school to be able to successfully seek renewal. Another required component of the report is the strengths and achievements of the charter school because the positives provide details of what the school is doing correctly and evidence of why the school should be able to seek renewal. The school is allowed up to twenty days to respond to the performance report and submit any corrections or ask for any clarifications from the authorizer (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The authorizer is allowed ten days after receiving the school's response to review the information and then compose a final performance report.

The renewal application guidance is to provide the public charter school with the opportunity to present additional evidence, describe present or future improvements, and details for the plan of the next charter school term. The renewal application will provide useful information such as the performance framework criteria, which will guide the

authorizer's decision. The renewal application must be completed by the board of directors, no later than six months before the expiration date of the contract. The authorizer has 30 days after receiving the application to submit a decision on the resolution on the renewal.

The authorizer has specific components, which must be followed, such as making the decision within the suggested timeframes, if a timeframe is not followed, then the renewal application is deemed as a denial, which then the charter school board of directors can appeal. The authorizer must base the decision on the evidence of the school's performance over the entire term of the charter contract. The data the authorizer uses in making his or her renewal decision is made public to all individuals. The authorizer must provide a public report summarizing the evidence reasons for each decision (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

The charter school contract may not be renewed if the authorizer determines the public charter school has committed a material violation of any of the terms, conditions, standards, or procedures required under sections one through 10, and 11 of House Bill 520 Act and the guidelines stated within the charter school contract (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Other reasons why the charter school may not be renewed is if the institution failed to meet or make significant progress in reaching the performance goals or the failure of meeting the generally accepted standards of fiscal management, and or the failure to correct any violation mentioned by the authorizer.

Another reason which may cause the public charter school's contract to not be renewed substantially violated any material provision of law from which the public charter school was not exempt and the school failed to correct the violations were not

corrected (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The authorizer may take immediate action to revoke a charter school's contract if the violation is major enough to put students in danger because of health or safety violations. The State Board of Education may declare administrative regulations establishing a revocation and nonrenewal process for charter authorizers who provide the charter school board with timely notifications of the possibility of revocation or non-renewal as well as detailed report. Other regulations that if the authorizer follows must be properly completed are allow the charter stakeholders reasonable time to construct a response, provide opportunities for the charter holder to submit documentation and provide testimonies, allow the charter holder the right to representation by a counsel who calls on witnesses on their behalf (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Some other rights the charter holder is allowed to have are permits to record any proceedings, allows reasonable time for deliberation, and the communication factor is open by making sure the charter holder is provided with a written final determination.

Anytime an authorizer revokes or does not renew a contract then the individual is responsible for clearly stating the reasons, in resolution of the governing board on why the contract is revoked or not renewed. Within ten days of taking action, the authorizer must report to the state board of the action taken with the particular charter school. The report sent to the state board must also be shared with the public charter school in discussion. The report must be detailed in reporting a copy of the resolution adopted by the authorizer's governing board, description of the action taken, the reasons for the decision, and the assurance of the compliance with the procedures required and the proper application tasks within section four of House Bill 520 Act (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

An authorizer should develop a public charter school closure protocol to ensure the proper procedures are utilized and the process happens in a timely manner. The protocol must have the main purposes of notifying parents as soon as possible, creating an easy transition for students and student records to their new schools, and proper disposition of school funds, property, and assets (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The protocol should have the following factors within the document, such as specific tasks, timelines, responsible parties, and defined responsibilities of the school and the authorizer.

If the public charter school chooses to close on their own, then the authorizer will lead and work with the closing school to help smoothly and orderly close the institution. If the public charter school is asked to close because of violations then the authorizer is allowed to remove any or all of the charter school's board of directors, to ensure a smooth and orderly closure. The authorizer may remove the members of the board of directors, so the individuals can no longer function to hinder the closure process. Once the board of directors is removed then the authorizer is empowered to take further action to close the public charter school properly.

Section ten of the House Bill 520 discusses the process of a public charter school converting to a public charter school. An existing public school, which is not scheduled to close, can convert to a public charter school if the applicant indicates to a valid authorizer the intent to convert. A conversion public charter school may be established if the school is identified by the Kentucky Department of Education as a low performing school, specifically in the lowest five percent of its level (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Another component required for the traditional school to convert is at least sixty percent of the parents or guardians of the students have signed a conversion petition. The

petition request for a public school to convert must be approved by a majority vote of the local school board; the local board has authority over the particular school. The petition must be signed and it must describe the request to convert, the petition must be received by a valid authorizer no later than 90 days of the date of the first signature.

The Kentucky Board of Education should proclaim administrative regulations to govern the processes and procedures for the petition, the conversion, and the operation of the converted public charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The converted public charter school is to be governed by a board of directors and must abide by all federal and state requirements in dealing with all types of children. The converted school is required to accept all students who attended the school the previous year, if the students chose to attend their institution.

A converted charter school is able to hire their own employees; an employee who works in a conversion school is also an employee of the public charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017, p. 35*). A governing board is not supposed to be bound by the collective bargaining agreement for employees of a conversion public charter school. The employees of a converted public charter school may organize and collectively bargain only as a unit separate from other school employees (*House Bill 520, 2017*). A converted public charter school can use the same public-school facility for the charter school. The converted school may also have the option of using the traditional school's assets for the use of the new charter school.

The eleventh section of the House Bill 520 Act includes information about the employees' retirement and the labor provisions. The employees of public charter schools can participate in the same Teachers' Retirement System or the County Employees

Retirement System as the employees of a traditional public school (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The public charter school must satisfy the criteria set by the Internal Revenue Service to participate in a governmental retirement plan. Teachers and other certified personnel, as well as the classified employees, must make the required employee contribution to the retirement system, just like the traditional public-school employees.

The public charter school employees are not required to be a member of any collective bargaining agreement, and if an employee enters into a collective bargaining unit, then the individual must do so as a separate unit from the local school district (*House Bill 520, 2017*). The local school board cannot require any employee to be employed in a public charter school or any student enrolled in a traditional school to be required to attend a charter school. The local school board is not allowed to harass, threaten, discipline, discharge, retaliate, or in any manner discriminate against any employee involved directly or indirectly with the application to establish a public charter school (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Section twelve of the charter school act is the savings clause dealing with invalidity. If individuals do not follow the policies and procedures of the charter school act then the individual is invalid. The invalidity will not affect other provisions or applications of the House Bill 520 Act that can be given in effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of the Act are severable (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Applicants to Create Charter Schools

Many different types of individuals are able to apply to open and operate a Kentucky public charter school. Specifically, the suggestions for applicants of operating a

future institution include educators, parents, school administrators, community members, public organizations, nonprofit organizations, or a combination of the listed individuals. The individuals listed to be able to apply for opening and operating a Kentucky Public charter school are unlimited in options, it appears any stakeholder within the educational system is able to apply.

The applicants of charter schools must complete multiple tasks to properly apply for the ability to operate a Kentucky public charter school. The components of the application include, mission and vision of the future charter school, targeted student population and community of service, proposed aligned academic program with state standards, governance structure, proposed budget, personnel policies, facilities, closure procedures, code of ethics, and an education service provider, if applicable. The application must be submitted to the assigned authorizer within the area of the future public charter school, as well as the Kentucky state education board.

The applicant must follow specific guidelines, when opening and operating a public charter school. The guidelines involve factors such as, complying with student attendance guidelines, employing highly qualified educators, following general accounting procedures, actively participating in the accountability procedures, and school report card. Some other guidelines include, utilizing state student information systems and state accounting systems, conducting criminal background checks on all employees, following guidelines for open meetings and open records, and requiring board members to do disclosure reports. A couple more guidelines for the applicant to follow and be aware of when opening and operating a public charter school, include but not limit to, making sure every individual abides by procurement statutes and meet or exceed the

required state instructional time for students. Additional guidelines include, conduct a proper admissions lottery, creating and implementing individual learning plans for students with special needs, must be nonsectarian, and academic credits from charter schools must be accepted at other schools too.

Parents/Students Attracted to Charter Schools

Charter schools of Kentucky are not considered an open enrollment school, which means not all students are welcomed to attend a public charter school. Students residing in a certain county are only allowed to attend a charter school within this county. Some exceptions exist with student attendance of charter schools, if a child's parent works at a certain school, not within their county of residence then the child is able to be a student of this institution. Local school boards of neighboring counties could combine in a partnership and build public charter schools for all students of the bordering counties to attend.

Kentucky charter schools are required to accept students with special needs and the administrators and educators are required to follow all national and state guidelines regarding special education. The institution is required to offer all services required of the individualized educational plan of the special education student, if services are not offered by professionals of their institution, then the services must be contracted by other individuals. A special education student may not be denied attending a public charter school, no matter the severity of the individual's disability.

Public charter schools in Kentucky are free and open to all students who wish to attend the institutions. Kentucky charter schools are not allowed to have entrance exams and cannot charge tuition because the organizations are publicly funded by taxpayers.

Public charter schools are not considered religious institutions and therefore the organization is not allowed to discriminate against students regarding religious beliefs.

The types of students and parents Kentucky public charter schools are supposed to attract include individuals who want to be held accountable at higher levels of achievement, because the accountability standards are higher for charter schools than traditional public schools (*What is a Charter School*, 2018). Charter schools are held at higher standards than traditional public schools, but the institutions still must meet the same state guidelines and take the same assessments.

Students would like to attend public charter schools because these types of institutions are empowering. Public charter schools help students and other stakeholders to develop positive relationships, so the best decisions are made to help students succeed. Empowerment is given to the educators of charter schools so the leaders can decide on the best instructional strategies to use in order for students to become successful and develop their skills to use in the future. Educators and students will have the necessary tools to promote student learning. All stakeholders will be empowered to make the necessary decisions and take the required actions to help improve student achievement (*What is a Charter School*, 2018).

Parents may want to send their child to a Kentucky public charter school, because these institutions are described as responsive. Kentucky charter institutions are classified as responsive because all stakeholders can make every effort to try new innovative ways to improve student achievement (*What is a Charter School*, 2018). Public charter schools are institutions are allowed to respond to the students' individual needs and create an environment helping the individual students' concerns in order to help each student

succeed, while being held accountable for student learning. The educators of Kentucky charter schools are encouraged to reflect on individual student learning and make the necessary changes to help all students succeed. Some areas of concern may include educators adjusting the curriculum, school calendar or schedule, and adopt or modify instructional strategies to help increase student engagement and help students to be successful (*What is a Charter School*, 2018).

Kentucky public charter schools strive to be results driven, so students who are driven to succeed would be a perfect fit within the innovative institutions. In 2016, reports by Newsweek and U.S. News and World Report stated more than 25% of the best high schools in America are charter schools (*What is a Charter School*, 2018). In a research study conducted in 2013, stated graduates of public charter schools earn approximately 12% more within their occupation, than traditional public school graduates within their occupations. A student who is goal driven and is motivated to achieve high results would do well in a public charter school because low-income students, African-American students, and English Language Learners receive significantly more instructional time in reading and math, than traditional public school students (*What is a Charter School*, 2018).

Summary

Education is important to learn and develop new skills; educators utilize engagement in order for students to gain new information and critical thinking skills. Charter schools are organizations using innovative tools to promote student growth and develop the required skills to be a successful community member. Charter schools have advantages, including, differentiated environment, culture, and performance. Charter

schools have disadvantages as well, including, taking resources from other public schools, higher cost for a variety of resources, and all of the different demands to successfully operate a charter school.

Students who would benefit greatly from attending a public charter school are individuals who are considered at risk, students who are not performing well at traditional public schools could improve their skills by an environment utilizing innovation. Educators of public charter schools create opportunities using engaging instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of at-risk students to help promote student success. One of the main goals of Kentucky public charter schools is to close the achievement gaps among the education system, charter schools focus on students' individual needs and educators design instructional strategies fitting the individual needs of students to help promote individual student success, which overall helps to close the achievement gap one student at a time.

Chapter III: Methodology

Introduction

Charter schools are schools of the new age, but many of the community stakeholders do not fully understand what a charter school is and how these types of schools compare to the traditional public school. The purpose of this descriptive quantitative research study was to investigate what the different types of stakeholders understand regarding the future public charter schools, including if and how future charter schools allow student success, and identify reasons why parents would send their child to public charter school instead of a traditional public school. The descriptive quantitative research approach utilized within this study was to discover the perspectives of charter schools within the state of Kentucky.

To collect data a survey instrument was utilized to gather data to discover trends among the different stakeholder group types regarding the understanding of charter schools, benefits of charter schools, and reasons why parents would send their child to a non-traditional public school. The survey instrument focused on the ideas of the different stakeholder groups in regards to what they believed a charter school was, including negative and positive viewpoints. Another focus within the survey instrument included how the instructional strategies compared within charter schools versus traditional public schools.

The use of questionnaires also helped to add demographics in order to cluster individuals based on location within the state, as well as what stakeholder category to place the different individuals. Descriptive research does not fit into either type, quantitative or qualitative, but the research type blended elements of both (Knupfer &

McLellan, 2001). The survey questions were of the multiple-choice type and allowed the stakeholders to share their understanding of public charter schools within Kentucky.

Within this study, four research questions were utilized to drive the study:

RQ1. What is the prior knowledge that community members understand about public charter schools?

RQ2. Why do stakeholders feel that an established public charter school can be effective in students' success?

RQ3. How does an established public charter school compare to a public traditional school?

RQ4. Why would parents send their child to a public charter school, rather than a public traditional school?

Research Design

Descriptive research can be either quantitative research type or qualitative research type (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001). Descriptive research refers to the type of research for the study, and descriptive research does not fit the definition of either quantitative or qualitative research methodologies, but instead utilizes elements of both (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001). The purpose of descriptive research was to describe and interpret, the status of individuals, settings, conditions, or events (Creswell, 2009).

Descriptive research includes statistics, which is a quantitative type, focused on telling what is, which included survey research data (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001). Descriptive research includes statistics, statistics help to summarize the overall trends or tendencies in your data, provide an understanding of how varied your scores might be, and provide insight to how the score applies to other questions (Creswell, 2009). Educational

researchers might use observation, survey, and interview techniques to collect data about group dynamics (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001).

The data collected in a descriptive study could be used to recommend specific strategies for implementing and improving teaching strategies (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001). The intent of some descriptive research is to produce statistical information about aspects of education interesting policy makers and educators (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001). Descriptive statistics indicating general tendencies within the data, the spread of scores, or a comparison of how one score relates to all the others (Creswell, 2009).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the viewpoints of stakeholders regarding charter schools within the state of Kentucky. Specifically, this study went into detail regarding the stakeholders' current understanding of charter schools. A survey was used to collect various descriptive statistics, the survey questions were grouped based on content corresponding to the four research questions, to determine an overall trend among the four themes. Public charter schools were a specific focus within state legislation; therefore, the media focused on the charter schools, especially the aspect of funding.

Charter schools are privately operated schools, which receive public funding. In 2019, Kentucky lawmakers would take no action on charter school funding (McLaren, 2019). Kentucky legalized public charter schools in 2017, but has not been able to open a single charter school due to legislators not approving a permanent funding source.

Charter schools have been a discussion since 2017, the goal of charter schools was to provide needy families with means to have their children attend public charter schools

instead of failing public schools (McLaren, 2019). Kentucky has failed to act on the public charter school budget due to the funds needed within other areas.

This research study discovered trends within the community regarding considerations about public charter schools and how public charter schools compared to traditional public schools. Another purpose of the study, related to whether stakeholders agreed or disagreed if public charter schools were beneficial to students. Those community stakeholders in agreement examined the specific ways charter schools will help students to succeed in their academic studies. Lastly, a focus for this study was discussing and comparing reasons why some parents would choose to send their child to a traditional public school as compared to other parents choosing to send their child to a public charter school.

Research Questions

This study focused on four research questions concerning public charter schools within the state of Kentucky. The research questions of focus for this study are as follows:

RQ1. What is the prior knowledge that community members understand about public charter schools?

RQ2. Why do stakeholders feel that an established public charter school can be effective in students' success?

RQ3. How does an established public charter school compare to a public traditional school?

RQ4. Why would parents send their child to a public charter school, rather than a public traditional school?

Sampling Procedures

Participants were selected by using networking connections through the various education colleges at the public universities within the state of Kentucky and other professional organizations. Probability sampling allows the investigator to generalize results from the study to the sample of the population from which it is drawn (Merriam, 1998). Community members with partnerships among the public universities were used to help generate random individuals' contact information within the state.

The individuals within the initial sample have some sort of affiliation with the education college of the respected public university. An email was sent explaining the study and the purpose of the research. Within the email, it also contained logistic information that was collected to generate a list of individuals who were willing to participate within the study.

A type of purposeful sampling was utilized in determining individuals to interview for this study is convenience sampling. Convenience sampling specifically used in this strategy involves networking. Convenience sampling is a sample is selected based on time, money, location, availability of sites or respondents (Merriam, 1998).

By utilizing the public universities and having connections with various individuals around the state of Kentucky, a broad ranges of responses was collected. The study holds various viewpoints with a variety of individuals, in return assuring generalizability by selecting a sample representing the larger population (Seidman, 2013). In utilizing a variety of stakeholder groups across the state of Kentucky, sufficient numbers of respondents reflect the range of participants and sites which makeup the population of the state.

Population Description

The populations within the study included all different individual groups, all stakeholders within the communities of public charter schools and traditional public schools. The participants were randomly chosen from different locations around the state of Kentucky. Participants included but are not limited to, individuals such as parents of public school students, public school teachers, public school administration, business individuals, community members, charter school administration, and any state taxpayer with a viewpoint regarding public charter schools.

Any community stakeholder can describe how they view public charter schools and the data collected was analyzed for research questions 1 and 2. Research question 3 and question 4 participants were included for current parents or guardians with school-aged children to discuss reasons why parents would send their child either to public charter schools or traditional public schools. The different stakeholders chosen to survey depended on the individuals provided within the listserv and members of various organizations.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was a tested and proven survey entitled *Charter Schools within Kentucky*, which was based on the tested and proven *Education Next-Program on Education Policy and Governance-Survey 2016*, which has been utilized in other research studies. The survey tool included a variety of questions discussing current public-school practices and rating public schools to opposing or supporting discipline policies. The survey tool contained six sections, including Knowledge About and Evaluations of

Schools, School Spending, Accountability and the Common Core State Standards, School Choice Policies, Personnel Policies, and School Discipline.

In the Knowledge About and Evaluations section of the survey, **Question 1** discussed how students receive grades and the question is asking what grade would the individual give public schools within their community. **Question 2** asked the individual to grade the public schools in the nation. **Question 3a** of the survey focused on the amount of time ‘actually’ spent on reading, math, the arts, history, and science. **Question 3b** of the survey asked the individual their own opinion on how much time should be spent within each of the five subjects of school, reading, math, the arts, history, and science.

The School Spending section included questions focused on how much money is thought to be spent on each child within your local school district, for the school year. **Question 4** wanted the individual to estimate the average amount of money spent each year for a child in a public school in their local school district. **Question 5** asked the individual what they thought was the average amount of money spent on an individual child in public schools in the United States as a whole. **Question 6a** stated according to the Kentucky Department of Education, \$14, 331.00 was the average spent on each student in a public school in Kentucky, the individuals chose if they thought spending should increase, decrease, or stay the same compared to the actual average spent on an individual student. **Question 6b** focused on if the individual thought the amount of government funding for public schools as a whole should increase, decrease, or stay the same.

In the Accountability and the Common Core State Standards section, **Question 7a**, within this section asked if the individual supported or opposed the use of Common Core standards within Kentucky. The second part of **Question 7** integrated whether the individual supported or opposed using the Common Core standards to hold public schools accountable for their performance. **Question 8 part 1** within the section had the individual surveyed to identify which level of government played the largest role within, setting educational standards. **Question 8 part 2** asked which level of government decided whether a school was failing. **Question 8 part 3** asked which level of government was responsible for deciding how to fix failing schools. **Question 9** within this section discussed supporting or opposing testing in math and reading for third grade to eighth grade of each year and one year in high school. **Question 10** asked if parents should be able to decide if their child should take math and reading tests. **Question 11** asked the individual if they support or oppose using the same standardized tests in every state.

The School Choice Policies section focused on the support or opposition of the formation of a charter school. **Question 12a** of this section described how states permit the formation of charter schools, which are publicly funded and are not managed by the local school board, and the charter schools are expected to meet promised objectives but are exempted from many state regulations, and the question asked the individual if they supported or opposed the formation of charter schools. **Question 12b** did not provide any extra information along with the sole question of if the individual supported or opposed the formation of charter schools. **Question 13** within this section discussed whether the individual favored or opposed the proposal of offering a tax credit for individual or

corporate donations paying scholarships to help low-income parents to send their children to private schools.

Other similar questions include **Question 14a** asked the individual if they supported or opposed allowing families with children in public schools with a wider choice of allowing them to enroll their children in a private school with the government helping pay the tuition. **Question 14b** asked the individual if they favored or opposed the use of government funds to pay the tuition of low-income students who choose to attend private schools. **Question 14c** focused on if the individual supported or opposed giving low-income families with children in a public school a wider choice of allowing them to enroll their children in private schools with the government helping to pay the tuition. **Question 14d** asked the individual if they would support a proposal that has been made and would use government funds to pay the tuition of all students who choose to attend private schools. **Question 15a** within the School Choice Policies section asked the individual what percent of instructional time in high school do we think students should spend receiving instruction independently through or on a computer. **Question 15b** asked what percentage of time high school students learn independently through or on a computer.

The Personnel Policies section, for **Question 16** had the individual to evaluate each teacher in their local schools based on their quality of work, and the individual had to put a percent for each category according to the quality of teachers, excellent, good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. **Question 17** within the Personnel Policies section, asked the surveyor to estimate what they thought the average yearly salary of a public-school teacher within the state of Kentucky was. **Question 18** had four separate questions, the

first part, **Question 18a** asked the individual if they thought public school teacher's salaries should increase, decrease, or stay the same. **Question 18b** had the individual to answer a question based on the average teaching salary provided (\$54,372.00), if teachers' salary should increase, decrease, or stay the same. **Question 18c** asked if the individual thought taxes to fund public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay the same. The next **Question, 18d**, asked if the individual thought the taxes to fund public school teachers should increase, decrease, or stay the same. **Question 19** asked the individual if they favored or opposed basing part of the salaries of teachers on how much their students learn.

Question 20 focused on tenure, and stated teachers cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures and some say tenured teachers are protected from being fired for arbitrary reasons, and the individual is to respond if they favor or oppose giving tenure to teachers. **Questions 21** and **Question 22** focused on teacher unions, **Question 21** talked about union fees and asked the individual if they supported or opposed requiring all teachers to pay the union fees, even if they do not join the union, because all teachers get the benefits the union negotiates with the school board. **Question 22** stated some people say teacher unions are an obstacle to school reform, others say unions fight for better schools and better teachers, the individual is asked if they believed teacher unions have a generally positive effect on schools, or a generally negative effect on schools.

School Discipline is the last section within the survey, **Question 23a** asked the individual if they supported or opposed school district policies prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students.

The last question discussed specifically federal policies, **Question 23b** asked the individual whether they supported or opposed federal policies prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students.

Informed Consent

Within this research study, participants have had an informed consent section at the beginning of the survey. The informed consent section stated if the individual continues with the survey, the individual is providing consent to participate within the survey. The informed consent page had information about the study, discussing the purpose of the study and the data was used to determine trends among prior knowledge and understanding of Kentucky public charter schools.

The informed consent was used as a purpose of making sure participants understood by completing the survey it was done solely on a voluntary basis. The online informed consent had all the required information for each of the following sections: study title, primary investigator, nature and purpose of the project, participant selection, explanation of procedures, discomforts and risks, benefits, confidentiality, refusal and withdrawal, and contact information. The purpose of the informed consent was to ensure the individual was aware of the study, as well as a process provided information to the individual to help the individual understand and to decide to further participate within the survey.

Confidentiality

The study contained a general demographic section asked five questions considered general informational type questions. The first question within this section asked if the participant was female or male, or preferred not to say. The second question

asked the individual participating in the study what age range they classify themselves. The third question asked the individual to identify with an ethnicity. The fourth question within the demographic section asked the individual participating in the Kentucky Public Charter School survey to identify the highest degree or level of education completed. The fifth question within the demographic section asked if the individual is married, not married, or prefers not to state. The demographic section helped to place individuals within groups and identify the individual within a group for reporting data purposes.

The instructions at the beginning of the survey specifically informed participants demographic information will only be utilized to identify the individual within the data reporting section. From this information in the instruction, participants will understand no personal or identifying information will be used within the research written study or displayed in the data tables. Therefore, neither personal names nor any identifying personal characteristics of participating respondents will not be reported anywhere within the study. The confidentiality section of the consent was discussed within the participation agreement of the study and all information was kept private and anonymous, the individual participating in the study was not identified by demographic information obtained by the demographic questions. The online survey used did not record the IP address of the individual participating in the study, so no traceable measures were used within the study.

Variables in Study

A variable within the study was the comparison of public charter schools to public traditional schools, because the study was focusing on the new initiative of public charter schools within Kentucky. The study focused on the comparison of public charter schools

to public traditional schools because an understanding of how public charter schools differ from public traditional schools is important to understand the prior knowledge community members have and how public charter schools can be effective in promoting student success. The comparison of public charter schools and public traditional schools also determined within the research questions why parents would send their child to a public charter school versus a public traditional school.

A second variable of focus within the study of Kentucky charter schools involved stakeholders. A stakeholder within this study was any person who had an interest within a Kentucky public charter school. Stakeholders hold various roles within a public charter school, so by understanding their role, helped to understand each of the various stakeholder groups' overall understanding of the purpose of a Kentucky public charter school. A parent stakeholder had a different viewpoint and reasoning than a business owner stakeholder, so it was important to group the stakeholders within groups who share similar interests.

A third variable of focus within the Kentucky charter school study was the education level of the individuals participating within the survey. The various education levels obtained by individuals provide different viewpoints of public charter schools versus public traditional schools. The education levels also affected how the individuals value education and school choice. Education level obtained by parents helps the individuals to consider reasons why they would send their child to either a public charter school or a public traditional school.

The next variable to focus within the study was socioeconomic status of the individual participating within the study. Socioeconomic status was a social standing

involving education, income, and occupation, since education is another variable of focus, socioeconomic status in regards to income and occupation will be grouped for another variable of focus. By focusing on socioeconomic status within the study, the different groups of individuals will have a variety of opinions in regards to the importance of choosing a charter school over a traditional school. Another benefit of choosing socioeconomic status as a variable, applies to reasons why a parent would send their child to a public charter school over a public traditional school.

The last variable of focus within the research study was marital status. The marital status of the survey participant should be a focus because the viewpoint of a single individual versus a married individual will vary, an individual married may have a different opinion than an individual who is single. The marital status variable showed variations of individuals participating in the study in regards to the research questions concerning the differences between public charter schools and public traditional schools. Another variation in regards to marital status was the reasons why parents would send their child to one of the schools over the other school type.

Procedures for Data Analysis

The survey questions were disseminated into groups based on the main topic of each question. The four groups were based on similar themes to represent the four research questions, prior knowledge, effectiveness, comparison, and parental reasons. For each of the four themes, the results of each categorized question were discussed within each of the four theme summaries. By analyzing the responses to the questions, which are grouped within each theme summary, then a general trend was determined for each theme

summary. The general trend for each theme summary helped determine the findings among the research questions of the study.

The data analyzed for each of the grouped surveyed questions generated patterns. Descriptive research can involve numbers describing patterns among a category of information within a group situation (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001). A descriptive quantitative approach uses statistics to provide patterns, which are often used within education, which fits the study topic of future public charter schools within Kentucky (Knupfer & McLellan, 2001). The data generated from the survey questions provided insight on the stakeholder's thoughts towards charter schools.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated, meaning if the study is repeated then if the study is reliable then the same results are again produced (Merriam, 1998). Conducting the study within an ethical manner ensures the reliability of the study. In this descriptive quantitative study, the goal was to explain the stakeholder's understanding of public charter schools, reasons why the stakeholders thought public charter schools were successful, and the parents' individual viewpoints of why they would send their child to a public charter school instead of a traditional public school.

Since the research topic for this study was mainly based on the stakeholders' viewpoints regarding public charter schools, there was no benchmark by which to take repeated measures and establish reliability in the traditional sense (Merriam, 1998). The connection between both reliability and internal validity deals with how the study is repeated or multiple observations in the same study and the data demonstrates the same

results. Reliability can be a problem in social sciences because human behavior is never fixed.

The term reliability in regards to descriptive quantitative research is sometimes misleading, the terms dependable and consistent are practical to this type of research because rather demanding individuals get the same results, individuals just need results to make sense. The type of research conducted for this study is more of an opinion type, so if the data collected makes sense and is consistent, then the data is reliable and dependable. No matter the type of research, validity and reliability are concerns, which can be approached through careful attention to a study's conceptualization and the way in which the data were collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and presented (Merriam, 1998).

Validity

Validity depends on the relationship of your conclusions to reality, and no methods can completely assure a researcher has accomplished the task of valid data (Maxwell, 2013). Validity is a goal and it is relative, it has to be assessed in relation to the purposes and circumstances of the research (Maxwell, 2010). The goal of obtaining internal validity is to match research findings and reality and the external validity's goal are to be concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1998).

There are two specific threats in obtaining validity with research, bias, and reactivity. Bias is the researcher's theories, beliefs, and perceptual lens to the topic being researched. A researcher should identify their possible biases and how the research will deal with them is the main task of a research proposal. Reactivity is the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals being studied (Maxwell, 2013). Reactivity is

impossible to eliminate, but to understand it and how to use it productively is a goal within a quantitative study.

Methods and procedures do not guarantee validity but various multiple methods and procedures can increase the credibility and validity of the data and conclusions. The overall goal of various validity tests is to operate not by verifying conclusions, but by testing the validity of your conclusions and the existence of potential threats to the conclusions (Maxwell, 2010).

Triangulation is a type of validity test requiring a researcher to collect information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods to reduce the chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method (Maxwell, 2010). By using multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings (Merriam, 1998). Triangulation involves using different methods to check the methods with one another, and using methods to see if the different strengths and limitations all support a single conclusion (Maxwell, 2013). By triangulating the data, then the risk of biases will be reduced and it will allow the researcher to gain a secure understanding of the issue being researched.

Rich data is another validity test, which will be used to increase credibility of the data collected for the research study. Rich data is data, which is detailed and varied enough providing a full and revealing picture of what is taking place within the study. Rich data is collected within interview type qualitative studies by transcribing verbatim the responses from individuals when answering the interview questions. Not only is rich data detailed, but the data should also have a large sample size to provide numerous responses usually with long-term involvement in the collecting process. Rich data

includes thick descriptions providing enough description which readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and therefore, if the findings can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1998).

Comparison is a type of validity test involving comparisons among different groups, for the particular research, a variety of locations will be used to compare a variety of individuals interviewed. Grouping individuals among the individuals interviewed will allow for comparisons among the group. Grouping and comparisons among a variety of locations will allow the results to be applied to individuals of a greater range of situations (Merriam, 1998). In an interview research study, a heterogeneous group of interviewees will allow formal comparisons contributing to the interpretability of the research study results (Maxwell, 2010).

Ethics

A researcher should be concerned with not only validity and reliability, but also concerned the investigation or study is conducted in an ethical manner (Merriman, 1998). The federal government has established regulations to protect human subjects in biomedical, behavioral, and social research (Merriman, 1998). The regulations include the protection of subjects from harm, the right to privacy, the notion of informed consent, and the issue of deception (Merriman, 1998).

The Belmont report established three basic ethical principles must be observed in research with human beings, the three factors include, respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Seidman, 2013). Respect for persons, involves respect for the individual's autonomy and the need to protect those whose human condition results in reduced autonomy (Seidman, 2013). Beneficence involves not doing any harm by means of

minimizing the risk when researching with humans (Seidman, 2013). Justice includes the equitable selection of participants and the fairness to all participants (Seidman, 2013).

Codes of ethics are written for specific groups within a society and involve the concrete rules and principles needed to govern institutions, and various aspects (Cooper, 2004). The goal of any research is to obtain new information, but the primary ethical obligation to the people overrides the goal of seeking new knowledge (Seidman, 2013). Ethics within data collection, specifically need to focus on gathering data, the researcher should not judge, nor should they therapist within the interview (Merriman, 1998). Researchers have guidelines to turn towards in helping with dealing with ethical concerns, but the burden of producing a study, which has been conducted and disseminated in an ethical manner, lies with the individual researcher (Merriman, 1998).

Summary

Kentucky public charter schools are a new initiative, which will soon be in place within the state, but many of the community members do not truly understand the differences between public charter schools and public traditional schools. By conducting a survey contains questions within the following areas, Knowledge About and Evaluations of Schools, School Spending, Accountability and the Common Core State Standards, School Choice Policies, Personnel Policies, and School Discipline, a better understanding is determined of how the community feels about the new idea of public charter schools. The survey data helped to determine relationships among the four research questions. Each research question mentioned focuses on specific areas, such as the community members' prior knowledge about public charter schools, how stakeholders' feel about public charter school's effectiveness, the comparison of public

charter schools to public traditional schools, and the reasons why parents would send their child to a public charter school. A descriptive quantitative research approach utilized for this research study will help individuals to understand the advantages and disadvantages of future Kentucky public charter schools.

Chapter IV: Findings and Analysis

Introduction

Education and preparation of the future leaders of Kentucky are important matters. The purpose of education was to prepare students to understand the world around them and develop their critical thinking skills to help the students to be successful citizens within their own community. Charter schools within Kentucky have been a popular school agenda item within education laws and funding for years. A public charter school is a school, which receives funding from the government, but the public charter school operates independently from the state government.

A public charter school is an alternative to a traditional public school promoting engagement and utilizing a variety of instructional strategies to promote student success (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Charter schools are a way to improve education within Kentucky by using the support of a local board within the community of the newly established charter school, the local board members can do what is best for their group of students (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Kentucky public charter schools are established to increase student performance compared to the lack of performance for students in traditional public schools (*House Bill 520, 2017*). Kentucky public charter schools have high expectations to promote student success. The overall goal of a Kentucky public charter school is to create opportunities for differentiated teaching methods to increase student engagement promoting student growth and student success. Kentucky public charter schools exist to encourage closing of the achievement gap and allow schools flexibility in methods to obtain high levels of student success.

The purpose of the study was to determine how the community stakeholders feel about public charter schools in comparison to the feelings of traditional public schools. Another area of focus was to develop ideas on ways public charter schools can be effective in promoting student success. An additional area of focus also included how an established charter school compares to a traditional public school. Lastly, an additional area of focus determined reasons why parents would send their child to a public charter school over a public traditional school. A brief overview of the participant background information will be reported and majority common information of the study group will be reported, and the rest of the chapter will include common themes among the findings for the research questions of the study.

The research questions are as follows:

RQ1. What is the prior knowledge that community members understand about public charter schools?

RQ2. Why do stakeholders feel that an established public charter school can be effective in students' success?

RQ3. How does an established public charter school compare to a public traditional school?

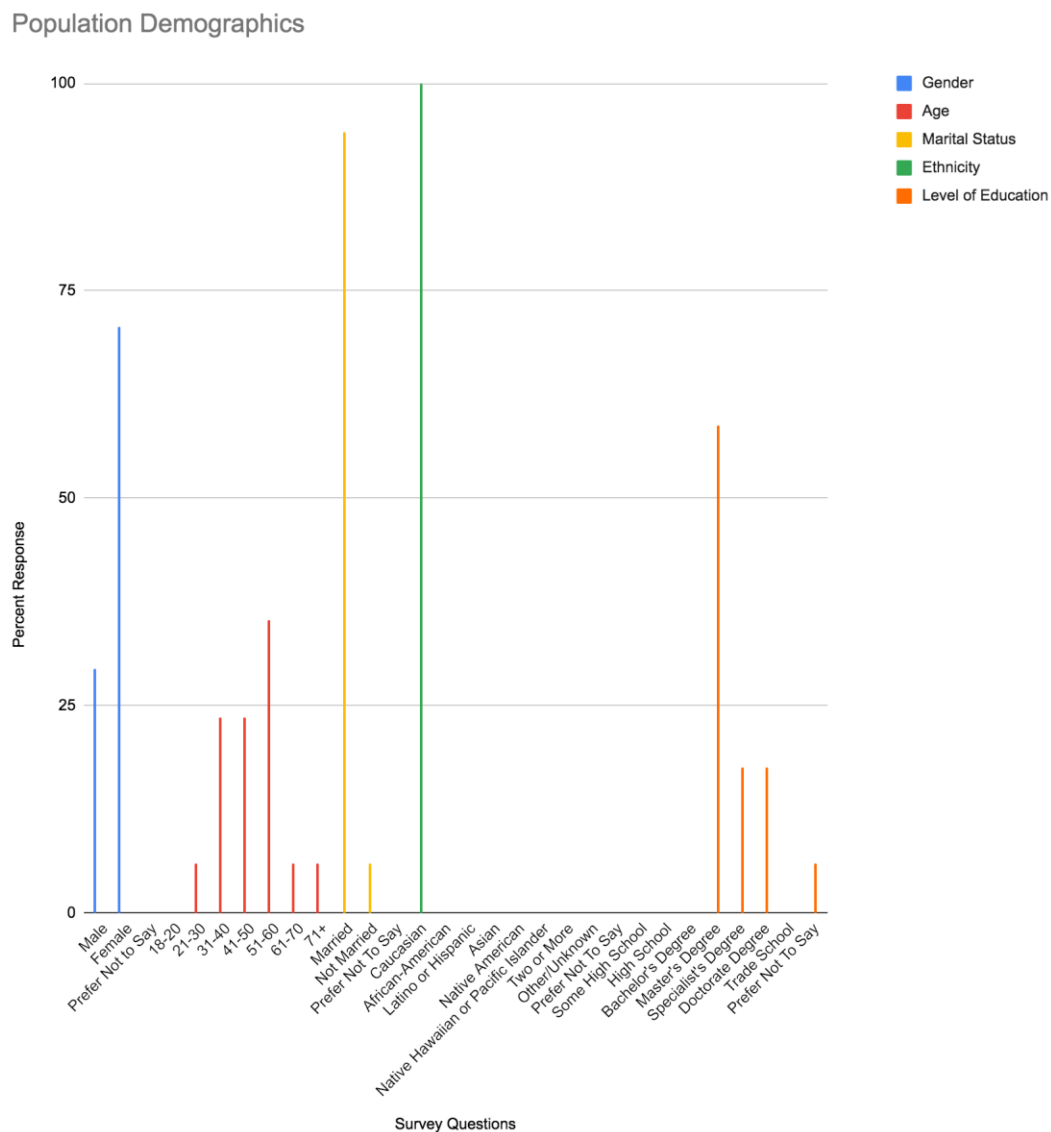
RQ4. Why would parents send their child to a public charter school, rather than a public traditional school?

In order to discuss findings for the research questions, a survey was sent to various networks to get a variety of responses among the entire state of Kentucky. The survey included five demographic questions to determine commonalities among the survey sample group. The demographic questions asked of each individual who

participated within the survey included, gender, age, ethnicity, education level, and marital status.

Figure 1

Population Demographics of Survey Participants



Note. N=21 The demographic of the survey sample size included 5 questions, including, gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, and highest level of education.

To protect the identity of the individuals who participated within the survey, only general demographic questions were asked and names and email addresses were not collected, individuals are identified with an assigned letter of the alphabet. Majority of the sample group gender is female and 51 to 60 years old. The majority of the survey group is Caucasian and married. Another demographic of the survey sample size deals with the highest education level, in which most survey participants have obtained a master's degree.

The survey was participated by 21 individuals, of the 21 individuals, 70.6% identified themselves as female, and 29.4% identified themselves as male. The age of my participants varied, 0% for 18-20 years of age, 5.9% for 21-30 years old, 23.5 % for 31 to 40 years of age, 23.5% for 41 to 50 years of age, 35.3% for 51 to 60 years of age, 5.9% for 61 to 70 years of age, and 5.9% for ages 71 and above. 100%, all of the participants are of Caucasian ethnicity.

In regards to education, most participants, 58.8% have completed a masters' degree for their highest level of education, 17.6% for participants with a doctorate degree, 17.6% for participants with a specialists degree, 0% for some high school, 0% high school, and 5.9% prefer not to say. The last question asked was to determine the participants' marital status, 94.1% are married, and 5.9% are not married.

In this descriptive type study, data was generated through the collection of information using survey data. The study conducted concerning public charter schools in Kentucky was a descriptive research study using statistics. The findings of this study consisted of recurring patterns in the form of themes. Each survey question was matched with a similar topic within one of the four research questions; some included multiple

research questions, which had a commonality because of the questions' topic. The majority response within the question determines the overall opinion of how the stakeholders within Kentucky feel in regards to the research questions concerning education, comparing public charter schools, and traditional public schools. From the survey questions, four themes were identified from the four research questions, and the public charter school themes include, prior knowledge, effectiveness, comparison, and parental reasons.

The first theme focused on the stakeholder's prior knowledge about public charter schools within Kentucky. The second theme focused on effectiveness and why stakeholders think students can be successful with future public charter schools. The third theme compared how a public traditional school compares to a public charter school. The fourth theme focused on why parents would choose to send their child to a public charter school. An overall theme, interconnection, which connects the four themes, will be discussed concerning Kentucky public charter schools.

Prior Knowledge Theme Summary

Table 1

Prior Knowledge Theme Survey Question Responses

Question Number	Completely Support %	Somewhat Support %	Neither Support or Oppose %	Somewhat Oppose %	Completely Oppose %
Formation					
12a	4.8	14.8	9.5	14.3	57.1
12b	4.8	19.0	14.3	4.8	57.1

Tax Credit						
13	0.0	14.3	19.0	23.8	42.9	
Funding Aide						
14a	4.8	14.3	4.8	28.6	47.6	
14b	4.8	0.0	4.8	42.9	47.6	
14c	4.8	4.8	0.0	42.9	47.6	
14d	9.5	0.0	0.0	33.3	57.1	

Note. Questions from the survey were grouped into categories, which had a common theme within each of the research questions. The prior knowledge theme survey includes questions, which fit within three main areas, formation of charter schools, receiving tax credits for money contribution, and government support with tuition.

The theme discussing prior knowledge of Kentucky public charter school was to determine how stakeholders feel about the establishment and funding of this type of public school. Kentucky charter law started in 2017 and the first charter school has yet to be established within the state. Research question 1 of the study discussed what was the prior knowledge community members understand about public charter schools. Most of the questions of the school choice section of the survey applied to research question 1 of the study, the creation of public charter schools and funding/tax credits of other schools than public traditional schools.

Question 12a, many states permit the formation of charter schools, which are publicly funded but not managed by the local school board. **Question 12a** continues to describe how local schools are expected to meet promised objectives, but are exempt

from many state regulations. The question for the survey participants is if they support or oppose the formation of charter schools. 71.4% of the surveyed individuals completely oppose or somewhat oppose the formation of charter schools. **Question 12b**, 61.9%, which is the majority of the survey sample, opposes the question that does not provide any information, but just asks the individual if they favor or oppose the formation of charter schools.

Kentucky public charter school funding is similar to public traditional schools; funds for each student will be paid by government funding. **Question 13**, a proposal has been made to offer a tax credit for individual and corporate donations which pay for scholarships to help low-income parents send their children to private schools, would the participant favor or oppose such a proposal? The majority, 42.9% completely oppose and 23.8% somewhat oppose the proposal of offering tax credit for individual and corporate donations which pay for scholarships to help low-income parents send their children to private schools.

Question 14a discusses a hypothetical proposal which has been made which would give families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with the government helping pay the tuition. 76.2% oppose, most completely opposing the proposal of allowing families with a wider choice of school because of the government-helping fund the tuition. **Question 14b**, 90.5% either somewhat or completely opposes a hypothetical proposal, which has been made which would use government funds to pay the tuition of low-income students who choose to attend private schools.

Question 14c, discusses a proposal which has been made which would give low-income families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition, 90.5% oppose the proposal. **Question 14d**, 90.4% somewhat and completely oppose a proposal, which would use government funds to pay the tuition of all students who choose to attend private schools. All seven questions, which apply to research question 1, are majority on the opposing side, majority of the survey participants oppose the formation of public charter schools and oppose the use of government funding for any type of private school.

Effectiveness Theme Summary

Table 2

Effectiveness Theme Survey Question Responses

Question Number	Strongly/ Completely Support/ Favor %	Somewhat Support/ Favor %	Neither Support/ Favor or Oppose %	Somewhat Oppose %	Strongly/ Completely Oppose %
Common Core					
7a	23.8	47.6	9.5	14.3	4.8
7b	9.5	52.4	14.3	9.5	9.5
Testing					
9	14.3	42.9	9.5	28.6	4.8
10	9.5	19.0	4.8	19.0	9.5
11	9.5	52.4	14.3	9.5	14.3
Teacher Pay					
19	4.8	9.5	0.0	9.5	76.2

Government Role	Federal %	State %	Local %		
8 part 1	4.8	95.2	0.0		
8 part 2	19.0	76.2	4.8		
8 part 3	5.0	70.0	5.0		
Teacher Salary Average	Salary Amount % Identified	\$30,001.00 to \$40,000.00 %	\$40,001.00 to \$50,000.00 %	\$50,001.00 to \$60,000.00 %	
17		19.0	52.4	28.6	
	Greatly Increase %	Increase %	Stay the Same %	Decrease %	Greatly Decrease %
18a	52.4	42.9	4.8	0.0	0.0
18b	42.9	52.4	4.8	0.0	0.0
18c	19.0	38.1	42.9	0.0	0.0
18d	28.6	42.9	28.6	0.0	0.0

Note. Questions from the survey were grouped into categories, which had a common theme within each of the research questions. The effectiveness theme survey includes questions, which fit within five main areas, common core, testing, estimated average teacher pay, government role, and salary changes.

Research question 2 discussed effectiveness and asked why stakeholders felt an established public charter school can be effective in students' success. Public charter schools in other states are successful in promoting student achievement by using innovation to create engaging instructional tasks. Charter schools have been effective

because they allow for flexibility for students and use creative curriculum and students are provided multiple opportunities for hands-on learning (Hill & Lake, 2010).

Other charter schools are effective by allowing students to practice content at a rigorous level. Content practice within most charter schools involves daily practice use of critical thinking skills in various student tasks (Sahm, 2015). Charter schools tend to provide more resources for students to utilize and teachers provide more personalized learning opportunities to meet the needs of all students (Iachini et al., 2013).

Educators within public charter schools tend to be held at a higher standard than educators within public traditional schools. Public charter schoolteachers can alter programs and content to encourage a higher level of achievement. Public charter schools reform policy builds a school around the unique needs and strengths of the community (Wilson, 2016).

Question 7a applies to the theme of effectiveness, because a public charter school is able to utilize the teaching curriculum and is able to be altered, as long as the state standards are being met. **Question 7a** discusses in the last few years how states have been deciding whether to use Common Core, which are standards for reading and math are the same across the states. **Question 7a** goes on to discuss the states having this type of standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance, the question specifically as the survey participants if they support or oppose the use of the Common Core standards in your state. 71.4% of the surveyed participants strongly support or somewhat support the use of Common Core standards in the state of Kentucky.

Question 7b of the survey focuses on how other states have been deciding whether to use standards for reading and math are the same across states. In the states having these standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance, 52.4 % somewhat support and 9.5% completely support the use of these standards in the state of Kentucky. **Question 8, part 1**, states based on your best guess, what level of government currently plays the biggest role in each of the following, setting educational standards for what students should know, 95.2% identified the state level of government.

Question 8 part 2, asks the participants to identify the level of government, which decide whether a school is failing. 76.2% identified the state government.

Question 8 part 3 asks the participants to identify the level of government which decides how to fix failing schools. 70% of the survey participants identified the state level of government, which is responsible.

Question 9 of the survey asks the participants if they support or oppose the federal government continuing to require all students be tested in math and reading each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school. 42.9% of the survey respondents stated they somewhat support the requirement of testing for students, yearly in grade 3 to grade 8, and once in high school. **Question 10** of the survey focuses on if the survey participant supports or opposes the federal government continuing to require all students should take state tests in math and reading, others say parents should decide whether or not their child should take the discussed tests. 47.6% completely oppose letting parents decide whether to have their child take state math and reading tests.

Question 11 asks the survey participants if they support or oppose using the same standardized tests in every state. 61.9% combined somewhat and completely support the same state test should be used in every state across the United States of America.

Another area within the theme of effectiveness deals with teachers, educators are responsible for the standards being taught at a higher level and developing engaging lessons to promote student achievement. **Question 17** of the survey had the survey participants to identify the average yearly salary of a public school teacher within Kentucky, 52.4% of the participants guessed the salary in the \$40,001.00 to \$50,000.00 range. **Question 18a** then followed up and asked the survey participants if the public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay the same, 52.4% stated teacher's salaries should greatly increase.

Question 18b states a public school teacher in Kentucky are paid an average annual salary of \$54,372.00 and asks if the individual surveyed thinks a public school teacher's salary should increase, decrease, or stay the same, 42.9% stated greatly increase, and 52.4% stated the salary of a teacher should increase. **Question 18c**, 42.9% of the participants discussed whether taxes to fund public school teacher salaries should stay the same. **Question 18d** discusses the average salary of a teacher is \$54,372.00 and then 42.9% stated the taxes to fund public school teachers should increase, and 28.6% stated the taxes should greatly increase, a combined total of 71.5% is in the increase category of taxes to fund public school teacher salaries. Within **Question 19**, 76.2% of the participants stated they completely oppose the salaries of teachers should be based on how much their students learn.

Overall, within theme 2, majority of the survey participants agreed standards which are used across the nation should also be utilized within Kentucky and the state government level is responsible for setting educational standards for what students should learn, decide whether a school is failing, and decide how to fix failing schools. The participants support testing should be implemented to enforce the standards being taught in all schools across the state of Kentucky, and completely oppose the parent deciding if their child should participate in student state testing. The survey participants support the increase of teachers' salaries within Kentucky, but the participants want the taxes to support the teacher salaries to stay the same. Nevertheless, when the average salary was reported with the question, the majority of the participants agreed taxes should be increased to pay for an increase in the teachers' salaries.

Comparison Theme Summary

Table 3

Comparison Theme Survey Question Responses

Question Number	\$0.00 to \$2,000.00 %	\$2,001.00 to \$4,000.00 %	\$4,001.00 to \$6,000.00 %	\$6,001.00 to \$8,000.00 %	\$8,001.00 to \$11,000.00 %
Per Child Spending					
4	14.3	33.3	14.3	9.5	28.6
5	14.3	28.5	33.3	4.8	19.1
Government Funding	Greatly Increase %	Increase %	Stay About the Same %	Decrease %	Greatly Decrease %
6a	23.8	38.1	38.1	0.0	0.0
6b	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.0	0.0
Technology	0-20 %	30-40 %	50-60 %	70-80 %	90-100 %

Instruction					
15a	42.9	47.6	9.5	0.0	0.0
15b	52.4	28.6	14.3	4.8	0.0
Teacher Tenure	Completely Favor/+ %	Somewhat Favor/ + %	Neither Favor or Oppose %	Somewhat Oppose/ - %	Completely Oppose/ - %
20	42.9	23.8	4.8	23.8	4.8
Teacher Union					
21	4.8	9.5	0.0	28.6	57.1
22	14.3	38.1	19.0	23.8	4.8

Note. Questions from the survey were grouped into categories, which had a common theme within each of the research questions. The comparison theme summary includes questions, which involve the following topics, spending per student in state and national, government funding, technology instruction time, teacher tenure, and teacher unions.

Charter schools have smaller class size and more resources because more people will sponsor or donate to the institution (Ravitch, 2016). By charter, schools having more financial money donated then the number and variety of resources educators can use in the classroom. The funds for a public charter school not only come from the government, but also from donors want to support the charter school movement. The increase in funds will provide a variety of opportunities, which are lacking at a traditional public school.

Technology is another factor, which is different from traditional public schools. A charter school has educators, which are expected to utilize a variety of technology tools increase engagement to promote student learning. The skills students gain from a public charter school involve deep thought, creativity, and problem solving, technology tools aid

in the critical thinking skills students need (Russo, 2013). Students are fully engaged when technology is utilized, focusing on an authentic task is considered a real-life problem they may encounter in the real world.

Teacher demands in charter schools are a challenge; educators in public charter schools are required rigorous professional development to help them to meet the needs of their students. A teacher union clarifies how to properly implement policies, procedures, and educational programs promoting the success of a public charter school. The purpose of a teacher union is to empower their teachers with the proper tools to provide a quality public school education (Krauth, 2021).

Question 4 of the survey states based on your best guess, what is the average amount of money spent each year for a child in public schools in your local school district, a mixed amount of responses for this question. 19%, the majority stated \$3,001.00 to \$4,000.00 on average is spent for each child in a local public school within Kentucky. **Question 5**, based on your best guess, what is the average amount of money spent each year for a child in public schools in the United States as a whole. 19% of the respondents answered \$4,001.00 to \$5,000.00 and 19% of the survey respondents chose \$3,001.00 to \$4,000.00.

Question 6a, according to the most recent information available reported on Kentucky Department of Education website, an average of \$14,331.00 is being spent each year per child attending public schools in your district. 61.9% of the respondents stated government funding for public schools in their district should increase. **Question 6b**, 66.6% of the surveyed individuals think government funding for public schools in their district should increase.

Question 15a, asked the respondents to estimate what share of instructional time in high school do you think students should spend receiving instruction independently through or on a computer, 47.6% of the respondents stated 30% of the instructional time should be on or using a computer. **Question 15b**, 33.3% of the respondents estimated 10% of time in high school students should spend learning independently through or on a computer.

Question 20 discusses teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures; some say tenure protects teachers from being fired for arbitrary reasons. The question continues to state others say it makes it too difficult to replace ineffective teachers, 42.9% completely favor giving tenure to teachers. **Question 21** states in some states; all teachers must pay fees for union representation even if they chose not to join the union. **Question 21** continues to describe an example in which some say all teachers should have to contribute to the union because they all get the pay and benefits the union negotiates with the school board. Question continues to explain; others say teachers should have the freedom to choose whether to pay the union, 57.1% completely oppose requiring all teachers to pay these fees even if they do not join the union. **Question 22**, discuss how some people say teacher unions are a stumbling block to school reform, others say unions fight for better schools and better teachers. 52.3% both completely and somewhat positively agree teacher unions have a generally positive effect on schools.

Overall, for this theme, the majority, 19% of the respondents stated on average for the schools in their state \$3,001.00 to \$4,000.00 is spent on average for each student in Kentucky. The survey participants were mixed on the average amount spent for all

schools within the state, 19% of the respondents stated on average for any school in the United States is \$3,001.00 to \$4,000.00 spent on each student, and 19% of the survey participants had estimated \$4,001.00 to \$5,000.00 is spent on each child in the nation. In comparison, question 6 stated on average in Kentucky, \$14,331.00 is spent on each student, and the participants stated the funding on each student in Kentucky should increase. In discussing computers and technology, the majority of the respondents stated that 30% of the instructional time should be spent on or using computers, but on the other hand when asked about the amount of computer time for high school students, the time is decreased to 10% of the instructional time. Lastly, in discussing teacher unions, the majority of the participants were in favor of giving tenure to teachers, the majority opposed requiring teachers to pay the fees if they do not want to join the union, and the majority agreed teacher unions have a positive impact on schools.

Parental Reasons Theme Summary

Table 4

Parental Reason Theme Survey Question Responses

Question Number	A	B	C	D	Fail
School Grades					
1	23.5	58.8	11.8	5.9	0.0
2	5.9	47.1	35.3	11.8	0.0
Subject Time Spent	Reading %	Math %	The Arts %	History %	Science %
3a	30	30	10	20	20
3b	20	20	10	20	20
Teacher	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	

Ratings	%	%	%	%	
16	40	30	10	10	
Student Policies (Ethics)	Completely Support %	Somewhat Support %	Neither Support or Oppose %	Somewhat Oppose %	Completely Oppose %
23a	14.3	23.8	14.3	28.6	19.0
23b	14.3	23.8	14.3	28.6	19.0

Note. Questions from the survey were grouped into categories, which had a common theme within each of the research questions. The parental reason theme summary includes questions, which include, school grades, instructional time spent on each subject, teacher ratings, and ethical student discipline policies.

Charter schools overall goals are to engage students in learning, promote graduation, and promote long-term success. Charter schools are a tool, which is used for school improvement, and promote educational equity. Kentucky public charter schools exist to increase student performance using schools that have high expectations (*House Bill 520, 2017*).

Charter schools are schools utilizing innovation, and these schools strive to differentiate from a traditional school in order to meet the needs of their diverse student population. Charter schools have an alternative setting, which is engaging, allowing students to have flexible, creative, and hands-on learning. A large amount of the content taught within charter schools involves writing and science reasoning.

Teachers of public charter schools are required to be innovative and to practice modern teaching strategies to help their students to achieve higher levels. Charter schoolteachers have positive relationships with their students and they can provide

individualized instruction helping their students to succeed. Charter school educators tend to obtain a great deal of professional development to do their job on a rigorous level and to help their students to the best of their ability.

Charter schools have a variety of individuals as students, increasing diversity. Racial and ethnic composition of charter schools is stated to resemble a traditional school (Orfield & Luce, 2016). Charter schools in today's time serve more Hispanic students, English language learners, and free-reduced lunch students (Kelly & Loveless, 2012).

Question 1 describes to the survey participants that students are often given grades of A, B, C, D and Fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves were graded in the same way. The survey participant determined what grade they would give the public schools in their community, 58.8% would give schools in their community a B grade. **Question 2** asks the survey participant what grade they would give the public schools in the nation. 47.1% of the participants would give public schools as a whole within the United States a grade of a B.

Question 3a states considering only the amount of time spent on just five subjects listed below, not counting recess, lunch time, extracurricular activities, and so forth, the participants are asked to predict what percentage of time is spent on each subject at your local schools. The answers are supposed to add up to 100%, most of the participants stated 30% of the time is spent on reading, 30% of the time spent on math, 10% of the time spent on the arts, 20% of the time spent on history, 20%, and of the time spent on science. **Question 3b** focuses on considering only the amount of time spent on just five subjects listed, reading, math, arts, social studies, and science. The participant has to decide what percentage of time should be spent on each subject at your local schools; the

answers are to add up to 100%. Majority of the participants stated 20% of the time should be spent on reading, 20% of the time should be spent on math, 10% of the time should be spent on arts, 20% of the time on history, and 20% of the time spent on science.

Question 16 asks the survey participants to suppose they had to evaluate each teacher in your local schools for the quality of their work. The participants are supposed to estimate what percentage of the teachers would be in each of the categories, including excellent, good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. For **Question 16**, the majority of the survey participants stated 40% of the teachers are in the excellent category, 30% of the teachers are in the good category, 10% of the teachers should be placed in the satisfactory category and 10% of the teachers are placed in the unsatisfactory category.

Question 23a, asks the survey participants to either choose to support or oppose school district policies prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students. 28.6% of the participants, the highest percentage within the choices, stated they somewhat oppose school district policies prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students. **Question 23b**, asks the survey participants to either choose to support or oppose federal district policies prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students. 28.6% of the participants chose to somewhat oppose federal district policies prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students.

Overall, for this theme, the survey participants rated schools within Kentucky a grade of B, same as all of the schools collectively within the nation. The survey participants feel math and reading should both receive 30% of the total instructional time,

and they think schools should equally spend 20% on each of math, reading, science, and social studies, and at least 10% of the time spent on the arts. The survey participants agreed 70% of the teachers within the state of Kentucky are on the positive end, whereas the participants agreed 20% of the teachers are on the negative end. 28.6% for both question 23a and question 23b matched in response for opposing local school and federal district policies prevent schools from disciplining, specifically suspending, or expelling black or Hispanic students more than other students.

Interconnection of Themes

The four themes, prior knowledge, effectiveness, comparison, and parental reasons are related because these are four main factors of an effective public charter school. The first theme focused on the community, specifically Kentucky, how all stakeholders feel about public charter schools and describes the prior knowledge about the new age school system which came into law in Kentucky, in 2017. By clearing up the stakeholders' misconceptions, then the community can understand how public charter schools are different from traditional public schools. The knowledge and understanding of the information about the operation and guidelines the public has about a public charter school can promote the success of students and the school system. The second theme dealt with the effectiveness of charter schools within other states.

Charter schools are effective within other states because the use of technology and a variety of instructional strategies promote student engagement, which in turn promote student achievement. The third theme discussed the effectiveness of charter schools, by comparing public charter schools in other states and the innovative strategies promoting creative thinking and the development of critical thinking skills, and the differences

between a charter school and a traditional school can clearly be established. The differences between the two schools connected to the fourth theme: parental reasons are the reasons why parents would send their child to a public charter school instead of a public traditional school.

Summary

The themes, which emerged from the study, provided a great deal of insight in discussing the characteristics of Kentucky public charter schools. The themes were in close relation to the four research questions. The first theme, prior knowledge, discussed the community prior knowledge of public charter schools. The stakeholders viewpoint of public charter schools help to understand what the community actually knows and the misconceptions have generated since the charter school law has come into effect in Kentucky since 2017. The second theme described the effectiveness of public charter schools within other states, by understanding how effective charter schools are then the information can help individuals understand the future possibilities and effectiveness within Kentucky public charter schools.

The third theme involved the comparison between public charter schools and public traditional schools. Within the comparison theme, teacher tenure, teacher salaries, and teacher unions are important because successful charter schools use those as determining factors to recruit well-qualified educators. By revealing the areas of improvement within Kentucky public traditional schools, then stakeholders are able to experiment with other strategies and approaches which help close the achievement gap and prepare student's with the necessary skills for success. The fourth theme focused on parental reasons, specifically why parents would send their child to a public charter

school over a public traditional school. All four themes interconnected because the future success of Kentucky public schools depends on the understanding and misconceptions of all stakeholders, the effectiveness of other public charter schools by relating policies and procedures to this state, contrasting traditional and charter schools, and providing strong reasons to parents demonstrating student growth and development.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Discussions

Introduction

Kentucky public charter schools will be innovative schools utilizing critical thinking to promote student success. Charter schools are public schools which are governed by an independent board of directors, the schools still follow the guidelines for standards taught and testing, but the educators have freedom on choosing the instructional strategies, content and materials (Bixby & Davis, 2018). The study has four themes, which align with the research questions about Kentucky public charter schools including, prior knowledge, effectiveness, comparison, and parental reasons.

The prior knowledge theme summary within the study has provided insight on how the community feels about the establishment of the new creative school types and a focus concerning funding is a main part of the theme. The effectiveness theme summary focuses on why stakeholders believe a public charter school can be effective. By incorporating effectiveness strategies from other states, which have charter schools, and applying within the Kentucky education system, which increases effectiveness.

The comparison theme summary compares and contrasts traditional public schools and charter public schools, government directed versus individuals who know the students and community, funding and how the funds could benefit students with more resources, such as engaging technology, and a variety instructional strategies utilized by educators. The theme involving parental reasons provides insight on reasons why parents would send their child to a public charter school over a public traditional school, within this theme summary a focus is concerning current ratings of public schools in Kentucky, amount of time spent on certain subjects, and the productiveness of current traditional

public-school teachers. By having an understanding of how the stakeholders within the community think about public charter schools, then further research could elaborate on the common misconceptions about charter schools.

Limitations & Delimitations

In discussing sample size of the study, a limit was not discussed but an expectation of at least 50 survey participants was the goal. The flaws and shortcomings of this study include small sample size; the lack of participation within the survey decreased the variety of responses among the different demographics across the state of Kentucky. The sample size included 21 individuals who participated in the survey. In discussing the demographics, all of the participants were of Caucasian ethnicity, so the lack of diverse ethnic groups alters the overall thoughts from a diverse stakeholder group.

Another example within the sample size is gender. 71% of the survey participants are women, so equal participation from the male group is lacking. Another demographic factor, which was more heavily one group over the other, is the marital status. 94.1% of the sample size was married. The age demographic with the sample size was the most diverse, except within the sample size, 0% of the survey participants were identified within the 18-20 age group. The last factor within the demographic section is the level of education, respondents from some high school, high school, and trade school did not exist within the sample group.

Another limitation is the survey format; the format included 37 multiple-choice questions and an estimated time of 15-20 minutes to complete the survey. The small sample size could be due to the time estimated to complete the survey and the number of questions. Another limitation of the data collection tool is the lack of elaboration on

certain questions in order to get a better understanding on why the participants chose a particular choice. The survey tool consisted of multiple-choice type questions; the lack of open-ended questions did not provide the survey participants with a chance to provide reasoning for choosing certain question responses. The lack of open-ended questions did not provide specific detailed information among the data to answer the research questions.

Another limitation involved the network of the potential survey participants; the low number of emails sent to people decreased the percentage of potential survey respondents. The low number of emails sent containing the survey resulted in a low sample size for the study. The low sample size affected the lack of diversity among the sample size, which limits the true representation of how Kentucky as a whole would feel concerning public charter schools. Another reason why the network is a limitation is the lack of types of networks, most, if not all the networking groups were affiliated with education. By only sending surveys to education networking groups, the data lacked an overall feel from a variety of individuals within different careers.

Findings: Interpretations of Data Results

The prior knowledge theme summary implies the survey participants completely oppose the formation of public charter schools in Kentucky. Majority of the survey participants opposed providing tax credits to individuals or corporate organizations donated money to low-income families to be used to allow their child to attend a private school. The survey participants completely oppose allowing the government to provide funding for children to attend other institutions, rather than the traditional public school. Overall, in the different questions dealing with funding, the participants completely

oppose any government funding for all low-income students and all students to attend any other school than a traditional public school.

The effectiveness theme involves common core standards, the survey group completely favors the use of Common Core standards in math and reading in Kentucky, just as the other states in the nation. Most of the survey participants completely support schools being held accountable for the use of Common Core standards in the classroom. The respondents stated the state government level is responsible for setting the educational standards to be used in the schools. The state level was identified as the level of government which decides if a school is failing and how to fix a failing school.

In regards to testing, the majority of the survey respondents somewhat support testing students yearly in grade 3, grade 8, and once in high school in reading and math subjects. Parents are completely opposed in deciding when and if their child should be tested in school. The survey respondents support the use of the same assessment used in Kentucky, just as used across the country.

In discussion of teacher salaries, the majority identifies a teacher salary in the state of Kentucky for an average is in a range of \$40,001.00 to \$50,000.00 and should greatly increase. The average teacher salary in Kentucky is \$54,372.00 and respondents still stated a teacher's salary should greatly increase, but the sample group stated taxes to fund public school teacher's salaries should stay the same. In another question, which discussed a teacher's salary and taxes, the majority of the respondents support the tax category to fund public schools should greatly increase. The salaries of teachers based on how much a student learns was completely opposed in regards to basing a teacher's pay on what a student learns.

The comparison theme summary started discussing the average amount of money spent on a student, \$3,001.00 to \$4,000.00 was determined to be spent on each student in Kentucky, which compared to \$3,001.00 to \$5,000.00 estimated spent on average for every student in the nation. The Kentucky Department of Education reported on an average, \$14,331.00 is spent on every student, which respondents stated the average should greatly increase for their district and for the entire state. An estimate of 30% of the instructional time should be on or using a computer and only 10% of the instructional time should involve independent learning.

In discussing tenure for teachers, the majority favor teachers should be able to obtain tenure status. The requirement of teachers paying fees to join the teacher union is completely opposed. Teacher unions in Kentucky have a positive effect on schools by fighting for better schools and teachers.

The parental reason theme summary determined schools within the community would receive an overall B grade and the schools on average in the nation would receive a B grade. The participants estimated the amount of instructional time spent on core classes to be, 30% on reading, 30% on math, 20% on history, 10% on the arts, and 20% on science. The respondents estimated all five areas, reading, math, history, the arts, and science should equally have 20% of the instructional time spent on each class content subject.

The majority of the survey group put 30% of the teachers in their local community in the excellent category, 30% of the teachers are classified as good, and 10% of the teachers are determined to be satisfactory, and 10% of the teachers are unsatisfactory. In discussing school policies, most of the individuals surveyed chose to

somewhat oppose school policies prevent schools from expelling and suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than students of other ethnicities. Majority of the survey respondents also somewhat opposed policies mandated by the federal district level prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at a higher rate than other students.

Implications about the Research Findings

The study findings discuss the overall rating for schools in Kentucky is a B grade and some of the survey questions imply there are areas of improvement within Kentucky's education system. The practices of instructional time, assessment, funding, and teacher pay are a few areas which have been identified as requiring changes. Kentucky public charter schools could be explained how innovation could be utilized to increase engagement, which in turn relates to student success and the overall rating of the schools within the education system.

The research findings, which strictly apply to the charter school topics, can be used to determine the stakeholders of Kentucky schools' feelings towards the future of Kentucky public charter schools. The current understanding of public charter schools can help with further research to determine specifically the misconceptions the stakeholders have concerning the operations of public charter schools.

An implication of funding could be further researched to determine the best method to fund public charter schools without negatively affecting traditional public schools. Another implication from the study is in regards to state assessment, majority of the respondents agree state assessment should be in common with the other states in the nation. Overall, the results of the study suggest public schools of Kentucky have areas of

improvement, such as resources, funding, instructional time, technology use, and teacher pay. Further research concerning public charter schools within Kentucky could provide the stakeholders with needed information on public charter schools to determine which students could benefit from an innovative type of school to promote student success to close the achievement gap.

Assumptions

A public charter school in Kentucky is publicly funded but is exempt from many state regulations. The results of this study suggest the survey participants, the stakeholders of Kentucky, have a negative feeling about the future of public charter schools. Based on research question 1, the prior knowledge the community has about public charter schools is the new school type will have a negative impact on current public traditional schools. The stakeholders of the community completely oppose the formation of public charter schools.

In discussing funding for charter schools, the stakeholders of Kentucky completely oppose offering tax credits to individuals and organizations donating money for low-income families to send their child to a private school. The stakeholders of Kentucky completely oppose the proposal allowing families to send their child to a private school instead of a public school, with the help of the government funding the tuition. The survey participants oppose the government funding the tuition of all the students of private schools in Kentucky. Overall, the stakeholders have a negative opinion about the formation and funding of public charter schools in Kentucky.

P-20 Leadership Connections

The mission of the Doctorate in P-20 and Community Leadership is to develop innovative P-20 leaders who create educational and economic opportunities for their regions. The program values and beliefs possess leaders who are masters of change and innovation, understanding of education, policy, and economics. A P-20 leader must also be knowledgeable of learner and learning needs and exhibits a diverse worldview and maintain an ethical center. A P-20 leader must be prepared to explore creative and alternative solutions to educational problems.

A few applications from this study applies to all four of the P-20 student learning outcomes, including innovation, implementation, diversity, and leadership. Student learning outcome 1 involves innovation, by incorporating concepts, theories, and practices of innovation to explore solutions to complex problems. Innovation is connected to this study because charter schools are a different approach to traditional public schools applying creative ideas to instructional strategies in which educators utilize to increase student engagement and promote student learning while closing the achievement gap. Innovation involves technology-helping students to develop critical thinking skills to be successful after high school.

Student learning outcome 2, P-20 implementation, involves demonstrating advanced knowledge and understanding the integrated P-20 approach to education through the ability to implement related initiatives. An example of implementation within the charter school study is the knowledge of all learners, the students who attend college, and the students who will enter the workforce after high school. A traditional public high school requires all students to take the American college test; the focus seems for all

students to go to college. The focus on college prep and the decreasing school funds puts the technical school programs on hold for students. Kentucky charter schools could provide opportunities for students who are focused on the career pathway and prepare the students with the necessary skills to be successful in trade type careers.

Student learning outcome 3 deals with diversity, students will embody principles of inclusiveness and diversity. Student learning outcome 3 applies techniques, tools, and strategies reflecting these beliefs in his or her decision making as a P-20 leader. Charter schools use diverse instructional strategies to promote student engagement, which in turn develops into student success. Teachers of public charter schools can explore creative instructional tasks, tools, and technology. The culture of charter schools includes a variety of cultures; educators and leaders promote positive relationships, which benefits students because of the safe and nurturing school environment.

Student learning outcome 4 involves leadership; leadership capacity will be built by using research, practice, and individual professional growth. Charter schools utilize leaders who develop programs providing a variety of programs to promote individual student success by providing specialized opportunities to practice critical thinking skills. The study provided much needed research about public charter schools in all the other states within the nation and it provides a little insight to current charter school misconceptions.

Personal Reflections Social Significance

Kentucky public charter school law came into existence in 2017, House Bill 520 established the guidelines, policies, and procedures for a public charter school and House Bill 471 is the guidelines of how the government will fund charter schools. The goal of

Kentucky public charter schools is to use an innovative approach to promote student learning of all students and to close the achievement gap among failing schools. A high school student will tell you it seems leaders assume students will not be successful unless a student attends college. Many jobs within the trade area are lacking because many students are encouraged to go to some form of higher education after high school.

By using the research process, knowledge was gained to help understand how to gather data and process information to support the personal opinion trade students are lacking in training for their future workforce careers. The government money decreases every year for public schools, so guidelines force administration to provide the minimum number of required classes. The lack of funds provided by the state government creates a ripple effect, less money to pay teachers to teach elective classes, and to offer exposure to a variety of career pathways for students to explore different career fields.

Recommendations

The research findings of this study do not provide much information about public charter schools. The study did provide the most information for research question 1 of this study, the stakeholders of Kentucky completely oppose the formation of charter schools and oppose government funding of public charter schools. Further research should be conducted to determine why the stakeholders oppose public charter schools within Kentucky.

The replication of this study will provide a better representation of the stakeholders in Kentucky because by increasing the sample size, including increasing diversity among the survey respondents. Altering the survey to include open-ended response type questions could provide rich detailed data providing insight to the negative

feelings towards public charter schools. Personal interviews are recommended to provide further discussion about public charter schools. The additional information could be obtained to help determine answers to the other research questions involving, charter school effectiveness, comparing charter schools to public schools, and parental reasons why they would send their child to a public charter school over a traditional public school.

Summary

The majority of the stakeholders in education within Kentucky oppose the formation of public charter schools, as well as the government funding the public school alternative types. Charter schools have been around for over 20 years, and the innovative schools are options for students in most of the states within the nation. The study had four themes, which were applied to the research questions of this study, including the following themes, prior knowledge, effectiveness, comparison, and parental reasons.

By replicating the study, an increase in the sample size could provide more information from a more diverse group of individuals. Further research is also a suggestion to survey individuals to elaborate reasons why they oppose the formation and funding of public charter schools within Kentucky. The study conducted provided data suggesting the education system within Kentucky has areas for improvement.

Charter schools in other states have advantages, such as a differentiated environment, diverse culture, and a higher level of student performance. Charter schools have disadvantages too, including taking resources, higher resource cost, and demands. The survey respondents of the study oppose the formation and oppose the funding of public charter schools, which an implication of the respondents negative feelings towards

these schools of change is because resources and funding will be taken away from current traditional public schools.

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Appendix A

IRB Exemption Determination Letter



Research Consent Letter

Study Title: Kentucky Public Charter Schools

Investigator: Pamela Manning-Hamilton and Dr. Jamie Mahoney, College of Education and Human Services

Faculty Sponsor Information: Dr. Jamie Mahoney, 1-270-809-3019, College of Education and Human Services, 3209 Alexander Hall, Murray, Kentucky 42071

You are being invited to participate in a research study conducted through Murray State. In order to comply with federal regulations, your agreement to participate in this project is necessary. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate. The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of participation. You may ask the investigator any questions you have to help you understand the project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read (or listen to) this explanation and discuss with the investigator any questions you may have. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

- 1. Nature and Purpose of the Project:** Charter schools are a type of public school that receives funding from the state government, but the school is governed by an independent board of directors. The objective of this study is to determine what the community members understand about public charter schools, focusing on how public charter schools compare to public traditional schools and the reasons why parents would send their child to a public charter school.
- 2. Explanation of Procedures:** Participants will be asked to participate in a survey for research for a Doctorate dissertation. Informed consent will be included at the beginning of the survey, before the demographic questions. The survey tool used is the Education Next-Program on Education Policy and Governance-Survey 2016, which includes 37 questions that will help the researcher to understand the community of Kentucky's viewpoint of the current education system. The survey should take the respondents about 15-20 minutes to complete.
- 3. Discomforts and Risks:** No known risks or discomforts.
- 4. Benefits:** None for participants, but the data collected will help us to understand how the community feels about public education in regards to the prior knowledge concerning Kentucky public charter schools.

5. Confidentiality: All of your responses will remain anonymous. There will be basic demographic information collected from participants.

6. Refusal/Withdrawal: Your participation is strictly voluntary and you are free to withdraw/stop participating at any time with absolutely no penalty.

I acknowledge that the risks and benefits involved and the need for the research have been fully explained to me; that I have been informed that I may withdraw from participation at any time without prejudice or penalty; and the investigator has offered to answer any inquiries that I may make concerning the procedures to be followed or my rights as a participant, and has answered to my satisfaction any questions that I have.

I understand that by answering the researcher's survey questions, I voluntarily consent to participate in this research project.

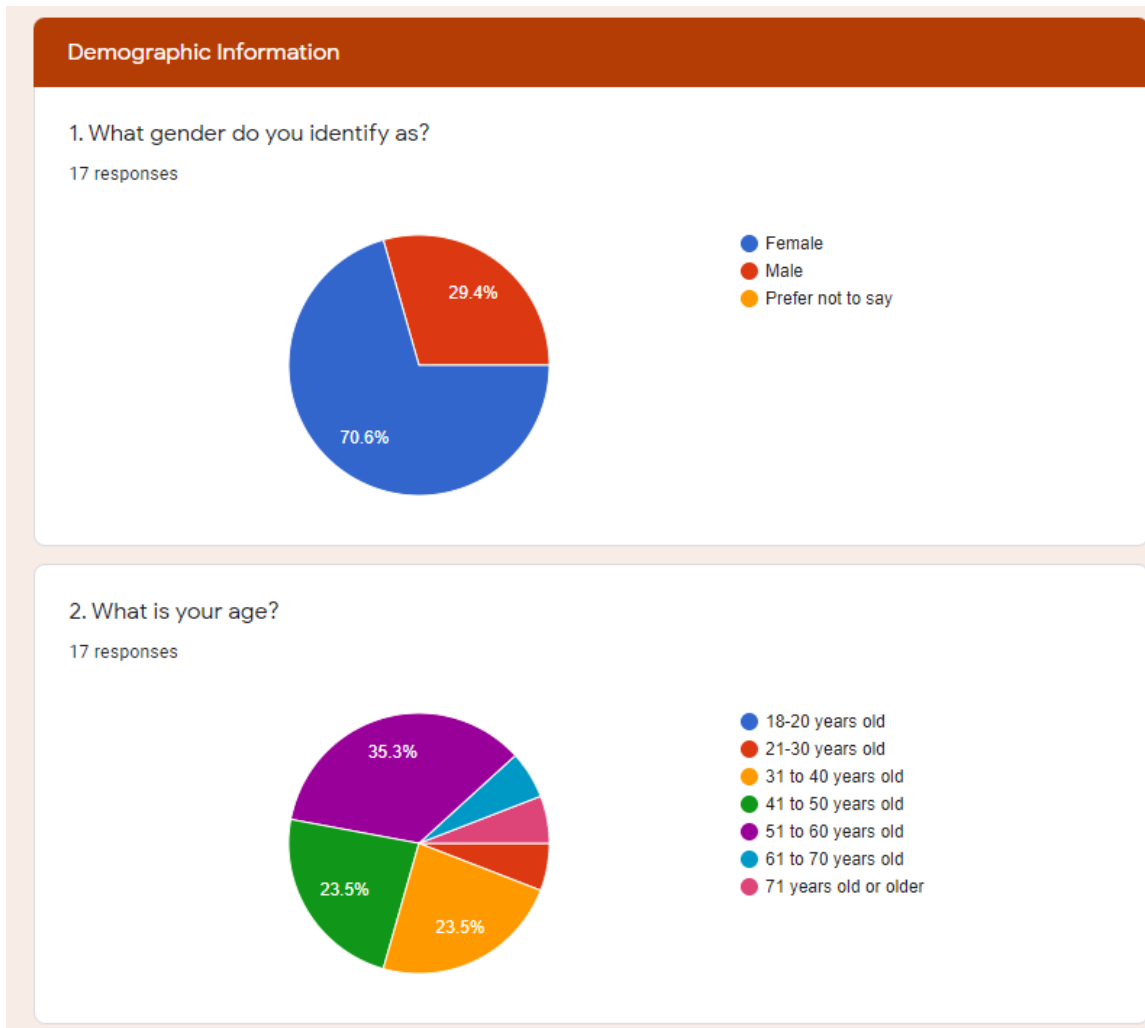
THE DATED APPROVAL STAMP ON THIS DOCUMENT INDICATES THAT THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS. ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RIGHT AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF DR. JAMIE MAHONEY AT 1-270-809-3019 OR jmahoney3@murraystate.edu. ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE IRB COORDINATOR AT (270) 809-2916, 328 WELLS HALL, MURRAY, KY 42071 OR BY EMAILING msu.irb@murraystate.edu. If you would like to know the results of this study, please contact Dr. Jamie Mahoney.



Appendix B

Education Next-Program on Education Policy and Governance Survey 2016

“Kentucky 2021 Survey Results”



3. Please specify your ethnicity.

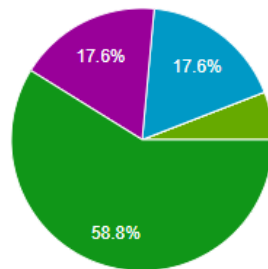
17 responses



- Caucasian
- African-American
- Latino or Hispanic
- Asian
- Native American
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Two or More
- Other/Unknown
- Prefer not to say

4. What is your highest degree or level of education you have completed?

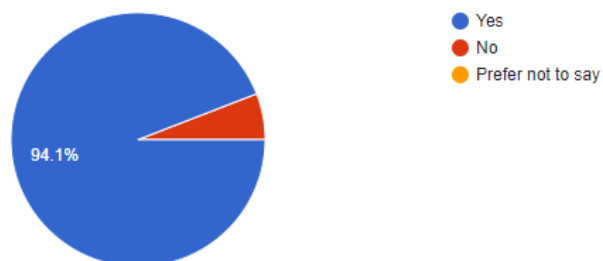
17 responses



- Some High School
- High School
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Specialist's Degree
- Doctorate Degree
- Trade School
- Prefer not to say

5. Are you married?

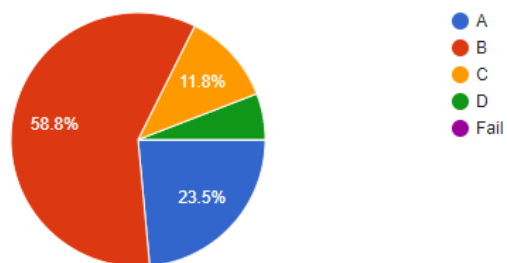
17 responses



Knowledge About and Evaluations of School

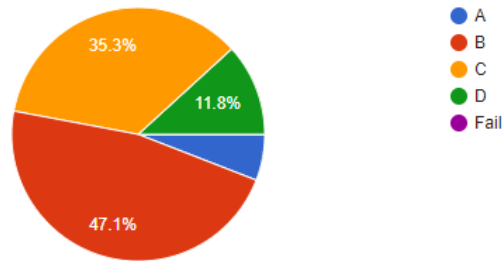
1. Students are often given the grades of A,B,C,D and Fail to denote the quality of their work. Suppose the public schools themselves were graded in the same way. What grade would you give the public schools in your community?

17 responses

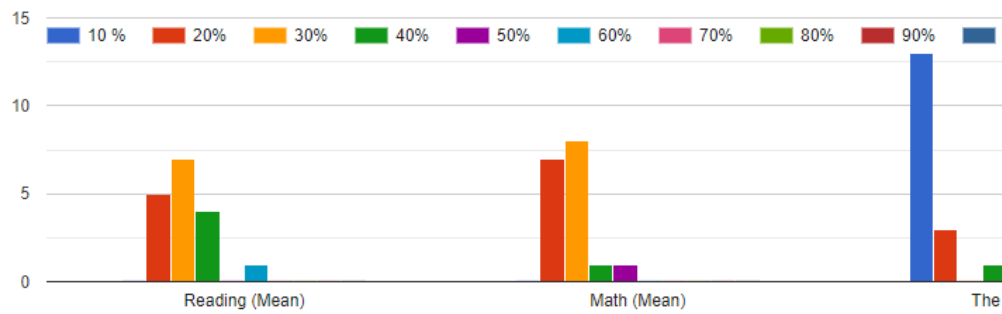


2. How about the public schools in the nation as a whole? What grade would you give them?

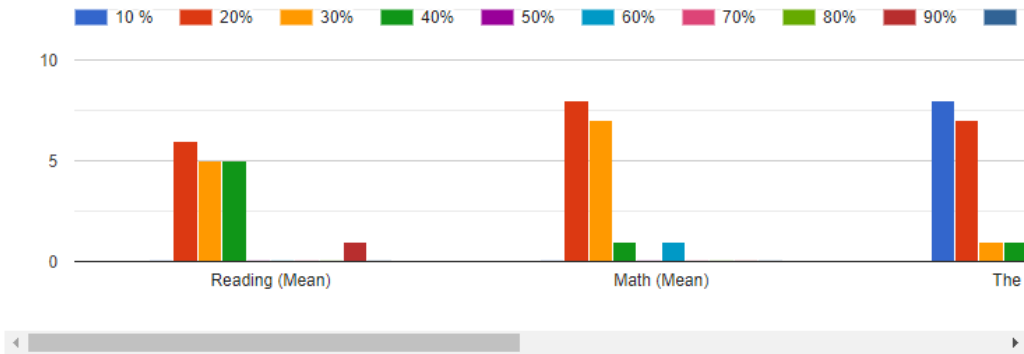
17 responses



3a. Considering only the amount of time spent on just five subjects listed below (not counting recess, lunch time, extracurricular activities, and so forth), what percentage of time is spent on each subject at your local schools? Your answers should add to 100%.



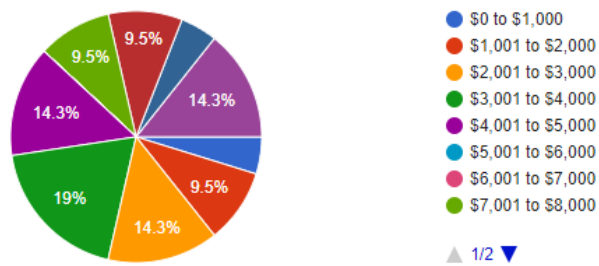
3b. Considering only the amount of time spent on just five subjects listed below (not counting recess, lunch time, extracurricular activities, and so forth), what percentage of time should be spent on each subject at your local schools? Your answers should add to 100%.



School Spending

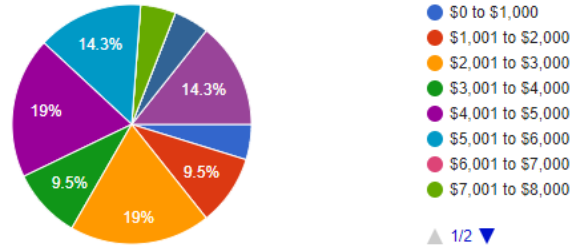
4. Based on your best guess, what is the average amount of money spent each year for a child in public schools in your local school district?

21 responses



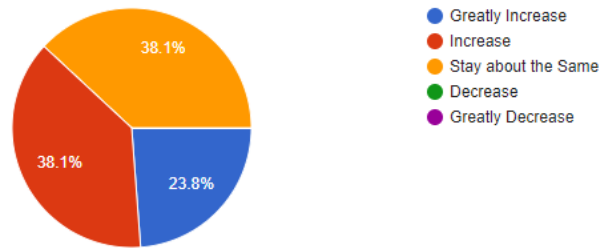
5. Based on your best guess, what is the average amount of money spent each year for a child in public schools in the United States as a whole?

21 responses



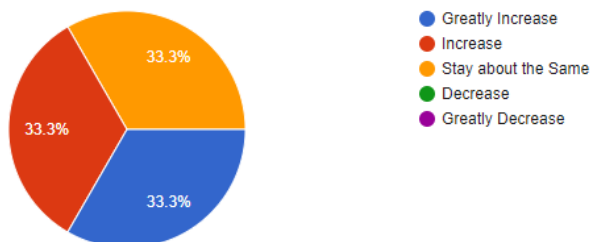
6a. According to the most recent information available reported on Kentucky Department of Education website, an average of \$14,331 is being spent each year per child attending public schools in your district. Do you think that government funding for public schools in your district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

21 responses



6b. Do you think that government funding for public schools in your district should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

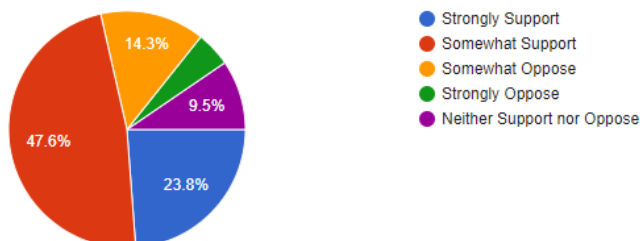
21 responses



Accountability and the Common Core State Standards

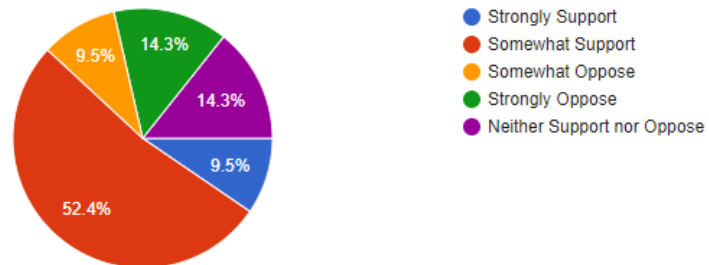
7a. As you may know, in the last few years states have been deciding whether or not to use the Common Core, which are standards for reading and math that are the same across the states. In the states that have these standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance. Do you support or oppose the use of the Common Core standards in your state?

21 responses



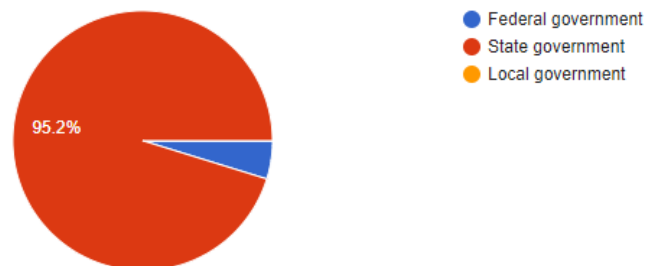
7b. As you may know, in the last few years states have been deciding whether or not to use standards for reading and math that are the same across the states. In the states that have these standards, they will be used to hold public schools accountable for their performance. Do you support or oppose the use of these standards in your state?

21 responses



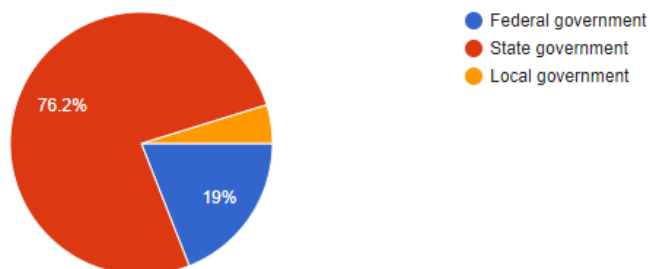
Based on your best guess, what level of government currently plays the biggest role in each of the following: 8/Part I. Setting educational standards for what students should know.

21 responses



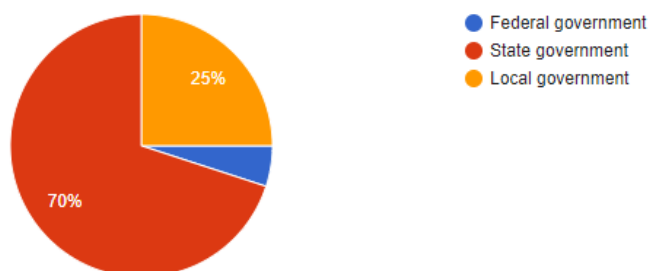
Based on your best guess, what level of government currently plays the biggest role in each of the following: 8/Part II. Deciding whether or not a school is failing.

21 responses



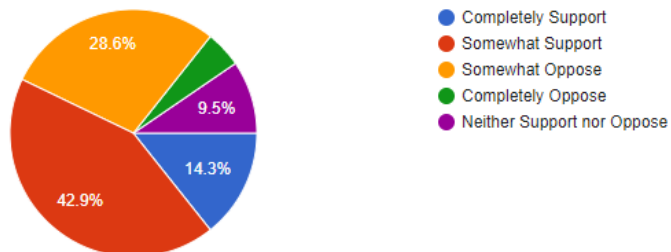
Based on your best guess, what level of government currently plays the biggest role in each of the following: 8/Part III. Deciding how to fix failing schools.

20 responses



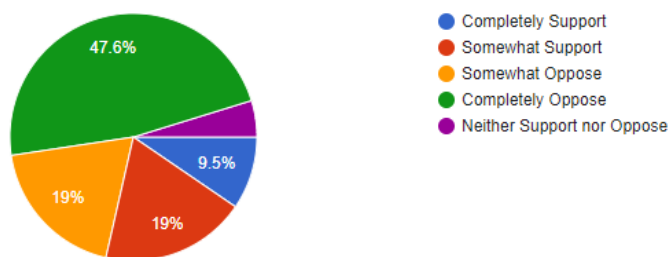
9. Do you support or oppose the federal government continuing to require that all students be tested in math and reading each year in grades 3-8 and once in high school?

21 responses



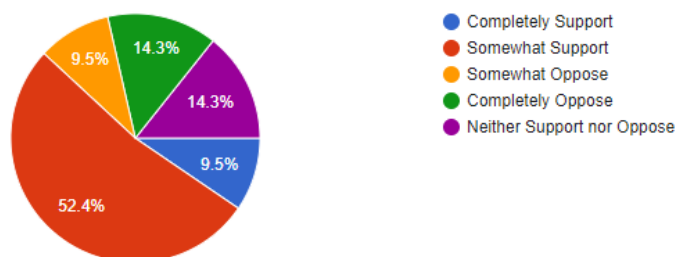
10. Do you support or oppose the federal government continuing to require that ALL students should take state tests in math and reading. Others say that parents should decide whether or not their child take these tests. Do you support or oppose letting parents decide whether to have their children take state math and reading tests?

21 responses



11. Do you support or oppose using the same standardized tests in every state?

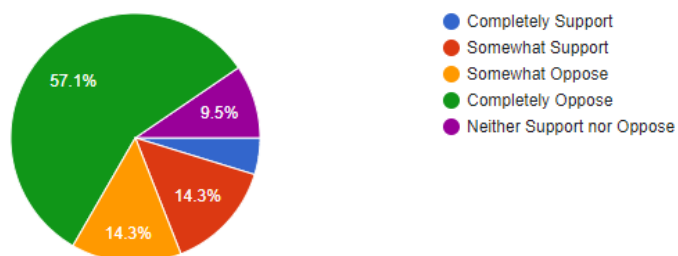
21 responses



School Choice Policies

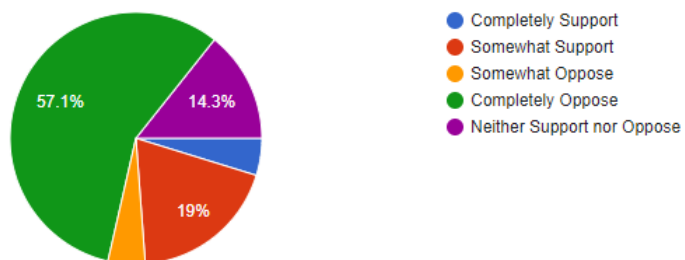
12a. As you may know, many states permit the formation of charter schools, which are publicly funded but are not managed by the local school board. These schools are expected to meet promised objectives, but are exempt from many state regulations. Do you support or oppose the formation of charter schools?

21 responses



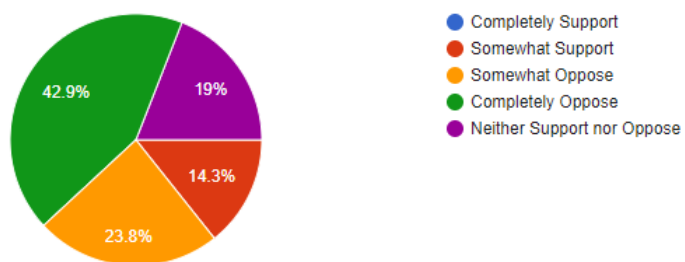
12b. Do you support or oppose the formation of charter schools?

21 responses



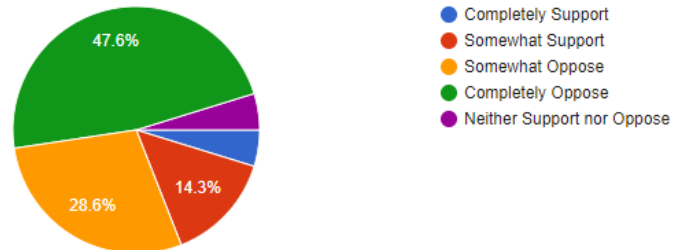
13. A proposal has been made to offer a tax credit for individual and corporate donations that pay for scholarships to help low-income parents send their children to private schools. Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?

21 responses



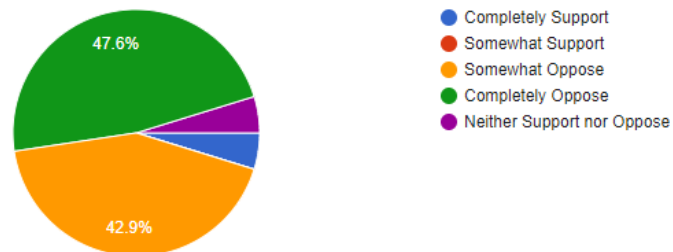
14 a. A proposal has been made that would give families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with the government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

21 responses



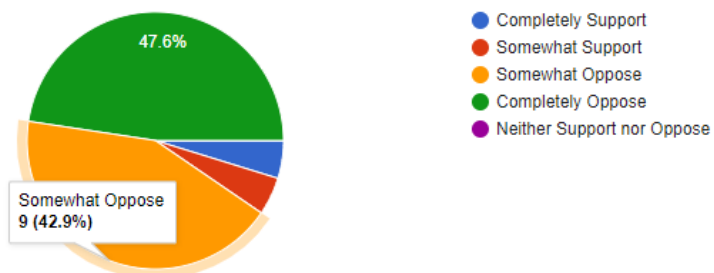
14 b. A proposal has been made that would use government funds to pay the tuition of low-income students who choose to attend private schools. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

21 responses



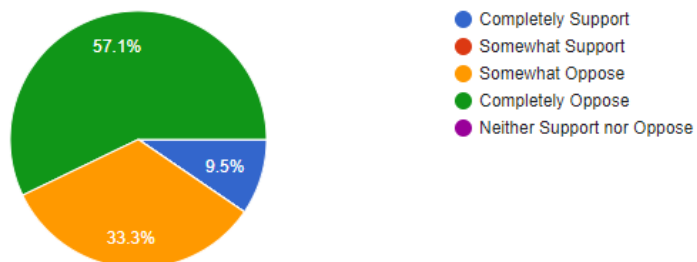
14 c. A proposal has been made that would give low-income families with children in public schools a wider choice, by allowing them to enroll their children in private schools instead, with government helping to pay the tuition. Would you favor or oppose this proposal?

21 responses



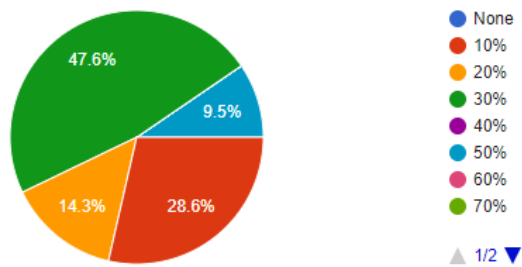
14 d. A proposal has been made that would use government funds to pay the tuition of all students who choose to attend private schools. Would you favor or oppose the proposal?

21 responses



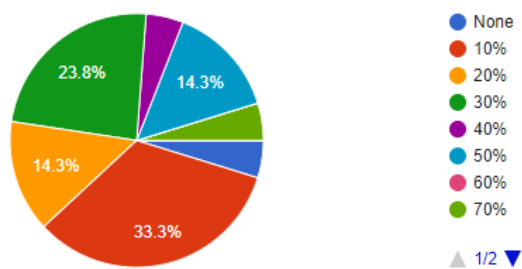
15 a. About what share of instructional time in high school do you think students should spend receiving instruction independently through or on a computer?

21 responses



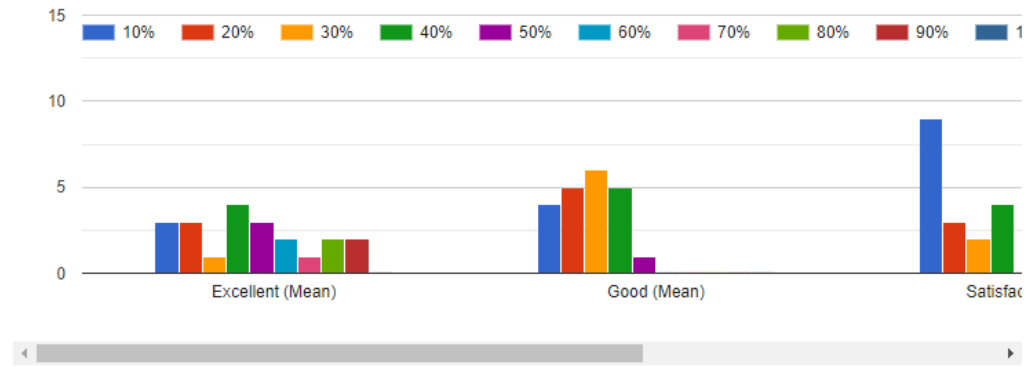
15 b. About what share of time in high school do you think students should spend learning independently through or on a computer?

21 responses



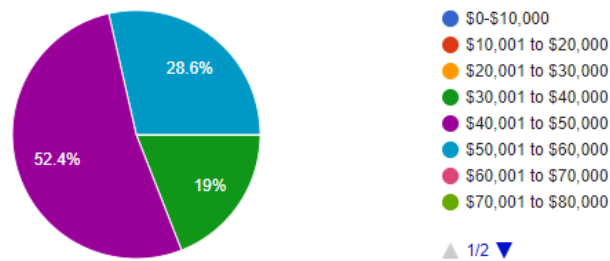
Personnel Policies

16. Suppose you had to evaluate each teacher in your local schools for the quality of their work. What percent of teachers in your local schools would you put in each category? Your answers should add up to 100%.



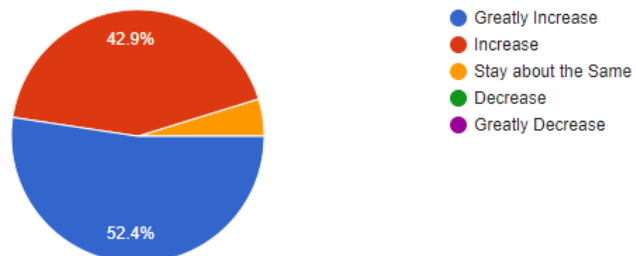
17. Based on your best guess, what is the average yearly salary of a public school teacher in your state?

21 responses



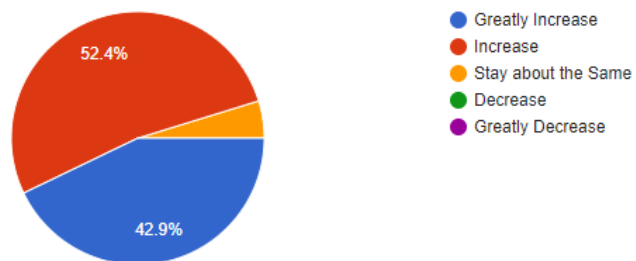
18 a. Do you think public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

21 responses



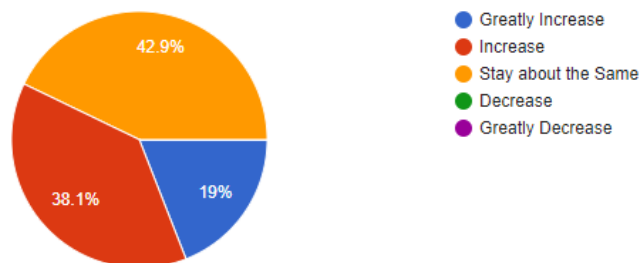
18 b. As it turns out, public school teachers in your state are paid an average annual salary of \$54,372.00. Do you think that public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

21 responses



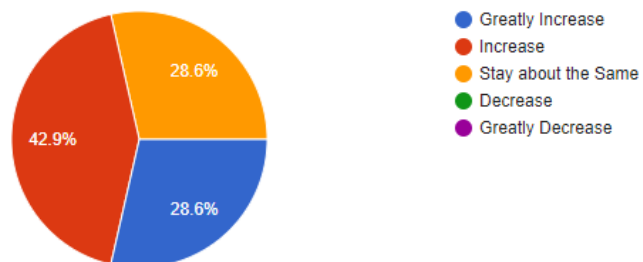
18 c. Do you think taxes to fund public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

21 responses



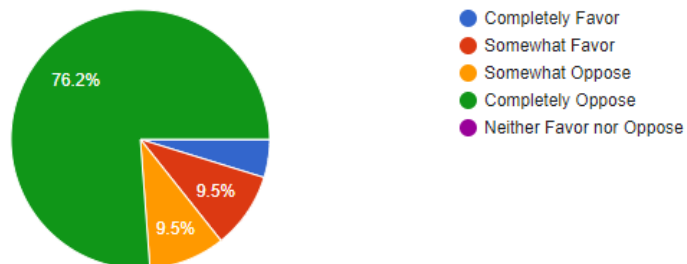
18 d. As it turns out, public school teachers in your state are paid an average annual salary of \$54, 372.00. Do you think taxes to fund public school teacher salaries should increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

21 responses



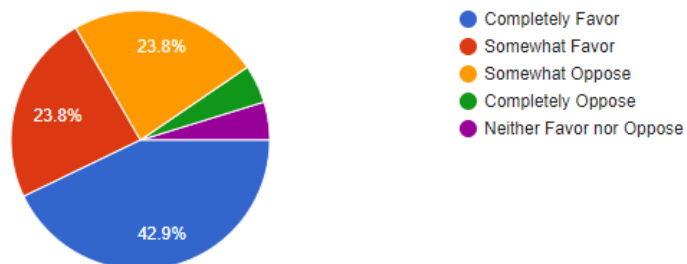
19. Do you favor or oppose basing part of the salaries of teachers on how much their students learn?

21 responses



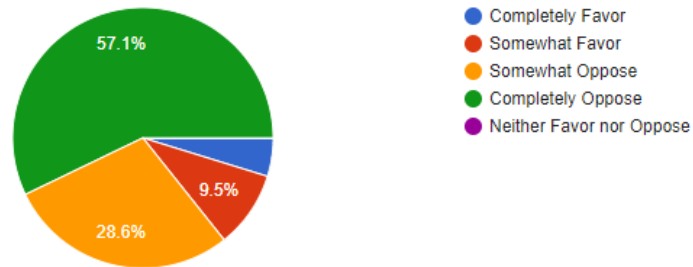
20. Teachers with tenure cannot be dismissed unless a school district follows detailed procedures. Some say that tenure protects teachers from being fired for arbitrary reasons. Others say that it makes it too difficult to replace ineffective teachers. Do you favor or oppose giving tenure to teachers?

21 responses



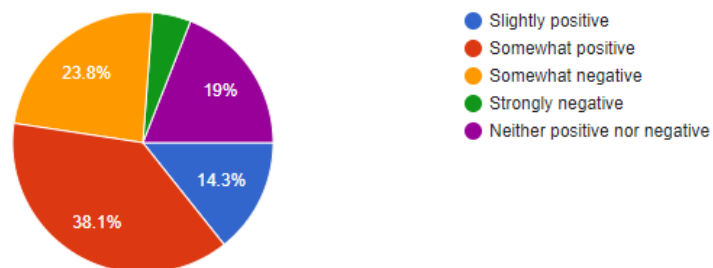
21. In some states, all teachers must pay fees for union representation even if they chose not to join the union. Some say that all teachers should have to contribute to the union because they all get the pay and benefits the union negotiates with the school board. Others say that teachers should have the freedom to choose whether or not to pay the union. Do you support or oppose requiring all teachers to pay these fees even if they do not join the union?

21 responses



22. Some people say that teacher unions are a stumbling block to school reform. Others say that unions fight for better schools and better teachers. What do you think? Do you think teacher unions have a generally positive effect on schools, or do you think they have a generally negative effect?

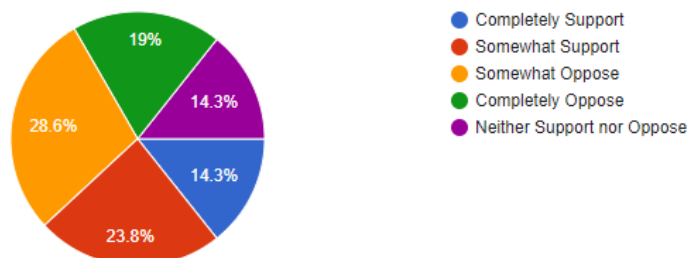
21 responses



School Discipline

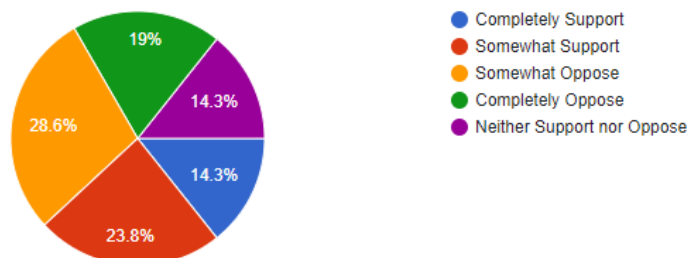
23 a. Do you support or oppose school district policies that prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students?

21 responses



23 b. Do you support or oppose federal policies that prevent schools from expelling or suspending black and Hispanic students at higher rates than other students?

21 responses



Appendix C

Survey Overview/Instructions

0 of 0 points

Score released Sep 8 8:11 AM

Survey Overview

The purpose of the study is to determine how citizens of Kentucky feel in regards of public charter schools. Charter schools are public schools that receive funding from the government, but the charter school is governed by an independent board of directors.

The survey questions are questions from the Education Next-Program on Education Policy and Governance Survey 2016. A demographic section is included to obtain basic information, the demographic section contains general questions to help categorize data for the study only, containing 5 questions. A total of 37 questions are included within the 6 subsections of this survey. The survey is expected to take 15-20 minutes to complete.

* Required