

Executive Summary
Charter School Evaluation Report
December 1998

Background Charter school legislation directs the Department of Public Instruction to evaluate the charter schools, especially to examine (1) the growth in student achievement over one year, (2) the impact on other public schools, and (3) best practices in charter schools. The State Board of Education is directed to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by January 1, 1999 with a recommendation to modify, expand, or terminate the charter schools approach.

Evaluation Reports and Information The Charter Schools Evaluation for 1997-98 was carried out by the Evaluation Section, Division of Accountability Services in cooperation with the Charter Schools Office and the University of North Carolina. This collaborative evaluation is presented in three reports (one for each evaluation component), plus a synthesis of findings across all reports. The reports are: (1) *Selected Characteristics of Charter Schools, Programs, Teachers and Students*, (2) *First Year's Impact of North Carolina Charter Schools on Local Education Agencies and Their Schools* and (3) *Case Studies Cross-Site Analysis*. At the November 1998 SBE meeting, additional information was requested on a proposed timeline for evaluation, exceptional children's services, and excess costs to the state. Additional information includes: (1) a proposed timeline to provide for a reasonable evaluation of charter schools, (2) update on audit plans for exceptional children in charter schools, and (3) additional costs of charter schools to the LEAs and to DPI. Several policy recommendations for discussion follow this Executive Summary

Attachments Attachments for the evaluation information are as follows:
Policy recommendations and emerging issues/lessons follow this Executive Summary.
5a – Additional Information Requested by the State Board of Education
5b – Synthesis of the Three Evaluation Reports
5c – Report 1: Selected Characteristics of Charter Schools
5d – Report 2: First Year's Impact of North Carolina Charter Schools on Local Education Agencies and Their Schools
5e – Report 3: Charter School Case Studies Cross-Site Analysis

Action Requested The evaluation report is presented to the SBE for approval.
