



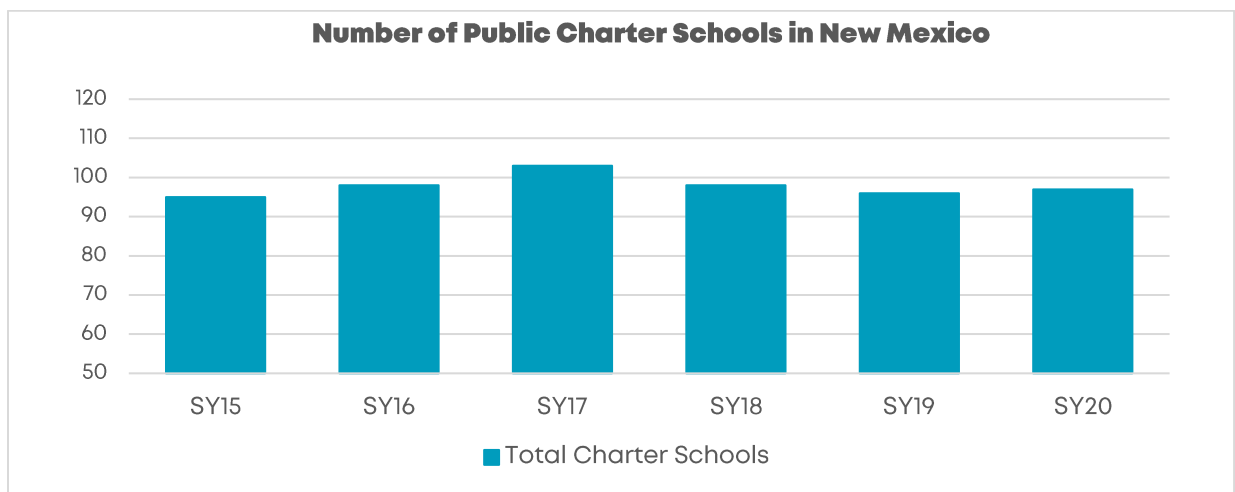
## 2021 Policy Platform

Public Charter Schools of New Mexico (PCSNM) has a two-pronged mission to support and advocate for New Mexico's charter schools. Charter schools in New Mexico have a history of using their autonomy to accelerate student achievement and reimagine public education. The mission-centric education provided by our schools appeals to families and students across the state. Public charter schools are still the only way parents and students can fully engage in Montessori, project-based, performing arts and STEM education in a public setting. For many places they represent the best option for families to get a quality education.

To serve our families and meet their needs, Public Charter Schools of New Mexico presents the following legislative platform for 2021:

### ***We Oppose Bills That Attempt to Restrict Charter School Development and Enrollment***

We oppose a moratorium on charter schools or any proposals to limit charter school enrollment in New Mexico. To do either goes against the wishes of families and students who want more public school options. In the past 6 years, the number of charter schools has remained steady. Further, as charter school enrollment increases, public charter schools continue to serve a rising number of at-risk students.





***We support Expanded Access to Long-term Facility Funds and Simplified Short-term Facility Assistance***

PCSNM supports mechanisms that allow charter schools greater access to existing facility funding as well as the ability to obtain public financing in New Mexico. This includes the establishment of a revolving loan fund for charter schools. Permanent buildings for charter schools allow them to support the students that want to attend their schools as well as decrease recurring charter facility costs. To simplify short-term facility assistance, the legislature should create a per student distribution of lease assistance funds.

***We Support A Plan for the SEG that Provides Stability and Ensures Every Student is Funded***

Funding for public schools should allow administrators to create a plan this summer to meet student needs. To do this, we need to approach funding for next school year with two priorities: 1) provide every school baseline funding that uses historical enrollment beyond the last school year, and 2) rely on the 40d adjustment for those that enroll more students than the baseline funding to ensure every student enrolled at a public school next year is funded.

***We Support Fixes to Small School Size Adjustment***

The legacy of changes to small school size adjustment has meant a large reduction of funding to at-risk students in charter schools. We believe that new discussions on budget realities created by this legislation need to be focused on equity. The reductions in small school size adjustment disproportionately affect schools serving low-income populations. Raising the rural enrollment threshold to 3,800 and halting future reductions in small school size adjustment are needed.

***We Support Funding Equity in At-Risk Funding***

We support an investigation into solutions that allow the at-risk index to fairly distribute units to schools with higher proportions of at-risk students. The results of the Yazzie/Martinez lawsuit give this long-time charter school issue new urgency. We are interested in a few new proposals, including the Family Income Index, which may alleviate the problems with the current application of the at-risk index to charter schools. An investigation of the factors included in the at-risk index may also be necessary.



***We Support Pathways for Adults to Earn High School Diplomas***

The external diploma pathway was passed last year but was not adequately funded. Public schools recently lost the ability to serve adult students, and these students are left with limited options to obtain a diploma. This pathway should be directed to the Higher Education Department and funded with the potential for public schools to provide services. It is more critical than ever that the state must act to ensure there is an option for these students, and New Mexico charter schools with a history of serving these populations should continue to.

***We Support COVID Recovery Funds that Support Families***

Public schools in New Mexico are seeing firsthand the impact the pandemic is having on families in the state. As the legislature considers packages to assist New Mexicans suffering from the effects of COVID-19, we believe a focus on New Mexico families is appropriate.

***We Support Establishing a Fully Functional Real-Time Data System***

Charter schools, along with small school districts, are sensitive to administrative burdens from state reporting. PED's data pilot was designed to reduce administrative burden by streamlining data submission. We want this project to progress and support additional funding for this important project.