

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, the PEC and districts authorize new charters, creating a need for space to house these schools.

As charters locate in new facilities, the amount of public school gross square footage increases.

Section 22-8B-4 requires all newly authorized and relocated charters locate in public facilities by 2015. To date, fewer than half meet this requirement.

Charter schools account for 3% of total public school gross square feet and over 5% of all public school membership.

Charter schools can waive various spaces in facilities if they demonstrate an alternative method of delivery. Gyms, libraries and media centers are examples of spaces charters can waive, meaning that PSFA does not require them to meet "adequacy".

PSFA staff prepared this brief and reviewed by the Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC)

### INTRODUCTION

Each year the Public Education Commission (PEC) and school districts consider authorization of new charter schools. The growth of charter schools has been significant and creates several issues for the schools themselves, the PSCOC, and the Public School Facilities Authority (PSFA) particularly when it comes to facilities. The PSFA has organized this report around four problem statements associated with their work on charter school facilities.

#### Problem Statements:

1. Some Charter schools could benefit from PSFA, PED's or the Charter School Coalition's experience or expertise in planning for their facility needs and/or managing those facilities in which they locate.
2. Section 22-8B-4 NMSA 1978 requires school districts to offer available space to charter schools but there is no administrative procedure to implement this provision.
3. Charter schools could benefit from using standardized leases.
4. Charter schools may differ significantly from traditional schools in facility needs based upon their educational programs.

### OBJECTIVE OF ANALYSIS

The purpose of this brief is to identify the issues that PSFA experiences in working with charter schools from a facilities standpoint. It also presents policy considerations and analysis of ways to improve charter school facility planning and management.

### KEY FINDINGS

In preparing this report, PSFA identified the following key findings:

- As of the recently completed 2013-14 school year, there are 98 charter schools operating in New Mexico, 54 of which are state-authorized and 44 are district-authorized. Some of these schools are still in their planning year and have yet to enroll students.

- Certified 40-day enrollment numbers for the 2013-14 school year showed that charter school enrollment numbered 19,795 or 5.8% of all public school students in New Mexico.
- The applicant charter schools in 2014 could increase the charter school enrollment to over 20,000 students if PEC and districts authorize all.
- Charter school Gross Square Footage (GSF) totals 2,669,334 or 4.5% of all public school GSF. In total, all public schools comprise approximately 59 million GSF.
- Out of the 98 charters, 25 have located in public facilities, 7 are in a lease purchase situations, and 14 lease from non-profits. All of these situations meet the requirements of Statute 22-8B-4.2, requiring charters to be in public facilities by 2015 or meet certain exceptions. In total 48 schools or 49% meet the requirement.
- Charter schools can waive various spaces in facilities if they demonstrate an alternative method of delivery. Gyms, libraries, and library/media centers are examples of spaces charter schools can waive in a facility, meaning that PSFA does not require them for the school to meet adequacy.