

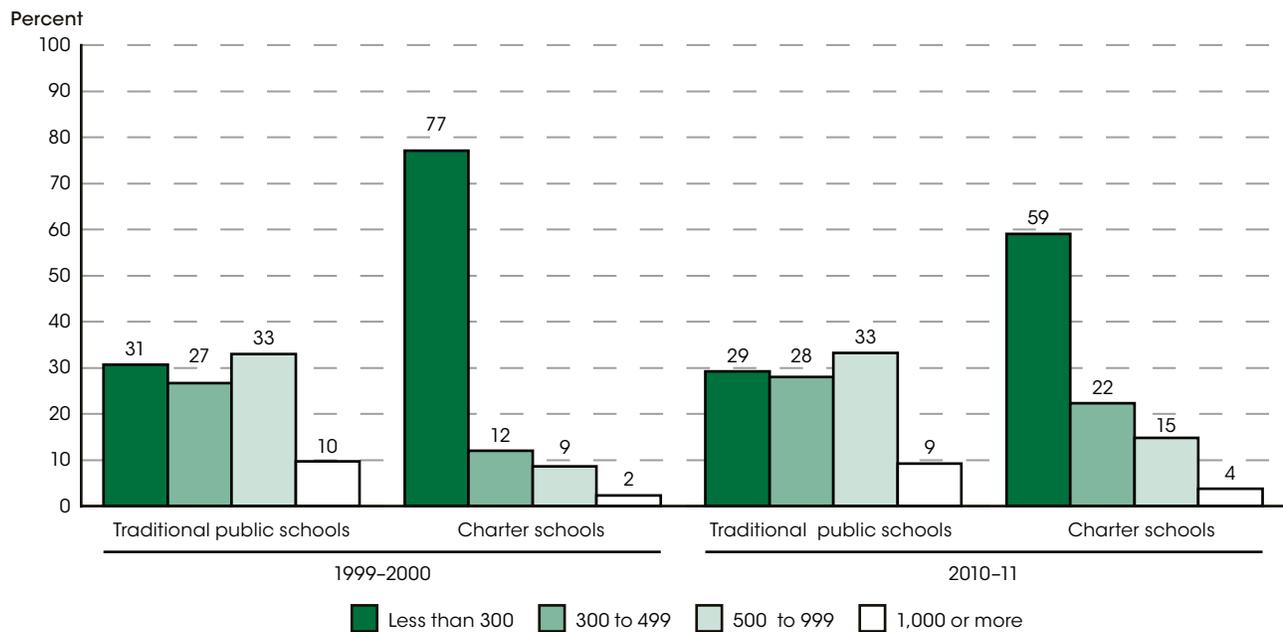
Characteristics of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools

In school year 2010–11, about 33 percent of traditional public schools were in rural areas, compared with 16 percent of charter schools. In contrast, 25 percent of traditional public schools were in cities, compared with 55 percent of charter schools.

In school year 2010–11, there were 98,817 public schools in the United States, including 93,543 traditional public schools and 5,274 charter schools. These numbers have increased from school year 1999–2000. In 1999–2000, there were a total of 92,012 public schools, with 90,488 traditional public schools and 1,524 charter schools. Over two-thirds of traditional public schools (69 percent) were

elementary schools in 2010–11, compared with 54 percent of charter schools. By contrast, 19 percent of charter schools in that year were combined schools, meaning that they began with grade 6 or below and extended to grade 9 or above, compared with just 5 percent of traditional public schools.

Figure 1. Percentage distribution of public schools, by school control and enrollment size: School years 1999–2000 and 2010–11



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 1999–2000 and 2010–11. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 116.

Charter schools tend to be smaller, in terms of enrollment, than traditional public schools. In 2010–11, some 29 percent of traditional public schools were small (enrollment of fewer than 300 students), compared with 59 percent of charter schools. In that same year, 9 percent of traditional public schools were large (1,000 or more students), compared with 4 percent of charter schools.

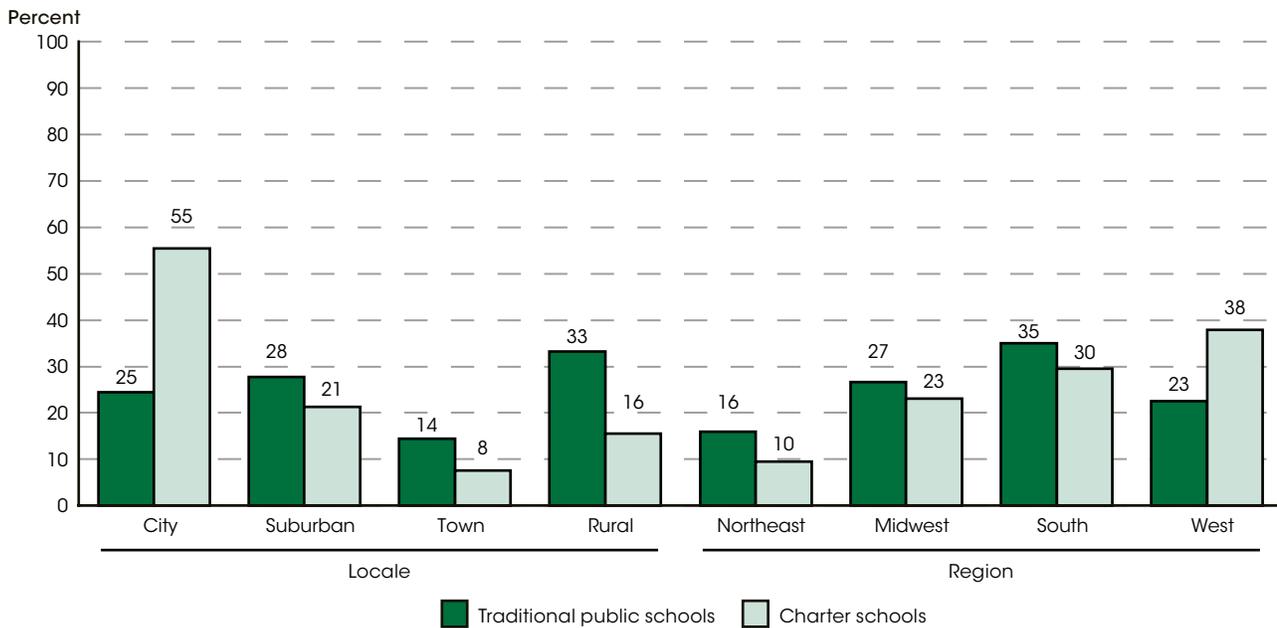
In 2010–11, some 60 percent of all public schools had enrollment in which more than half of the students were White, while 11 percent of public schools had enrollment

in which more than half of the students were Black, and 14 percent of public schools had enrollment in which more than half of the students were Hispanic. Looking at charter schools only, 38 percent had more than 50 percent White enrollment, 25 percent had more than 50 percent Black enrollment, and 21 percent had more than 50 percent Hispanic enrollment.

High-poverty schools, in which more than 75 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) under the National School Lunch Program

For more information, see the Reader's Guide and the Guide to Sources.

Figure 2. Percentage distribution of public schools, by school locale, region, and control: School year 2010-11



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 1999-2000 and 2010-11. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 116.

(NSLP), comprised 21 percent of all public schools in 2010-11, compared with 12 percent in 1999-2000. In 2010-11, some 21 percent of traditional public schools were high poverty, compared with 33 percent of charter schools.

In 2010-11, about 33 percent of traditional public schools were in rural areas, compared with 16 percent of charter schools. In contrast, 25 percent of traditional public schools were in cities, compared with 55 percent of charter schools.

Regionally, the highest percentage of traditional public schools was in the South (35 percent) in 2010-11, followed by the Midwest (27 percent), the West (23 percent), and the Northeast (16 percent). Charter schools followed a different pattern. In 2010-11, some 38 percent of charter schools were in the West, 30 percent were in the South, 23 percent were in the Midwest, and 10 percent were in the Northeast.

Reference table: *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 116

Glossary: Traditional public school, Charter school, Private school, Elementary school, Secondary school, Combined school, National School Lunch Program, Free or reduced-price lunch