

# VOICES FOR CHANGE

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR  
**PUBLIC  
CHARTER  
SCHOOLS**

# INTRODUCTION

**The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools is the leading national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the charter school movement.**

## MISSION

Our mission is to lead public education to unprecedented levels of academic achievement by fostering a strong charter school movement.

## VISION

Our vision is that every family can choose a well-funded, high-performing public school that delivers an excellent education for their children.

## VALUES

- **Collaboration** – We work in partnership with charter school leaders, other stakeholders, and each other to achieve our collective goals.
- **Diversity** – We model what we ask of the movement. Our team includes talented people from a variety of backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of charter schooling and our coalitions and partners.
- **Quality** – We expect the best work from each other and ourselves and won't settle for anything less.
- **Results** – We make decisions based on evidence and judge our own work by whether it ultimately advances our mission.
- **Sector Leadership** – We seek to lead and serve the charter school movement by deeply understanding opportunities and challenges and anticipating and responding to the movement's needs.
- **Sense of Urgency** – We are urgent in our pursuit of increasing the number of high-quality charter schools, recognizing that for any given family, there is no time to wait.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 04** United in Purpose
- 06** Who We Are and What We Do
- 08** Fighting for Charter Schools at Capitol Hill
- 10** Winning for Families in the States
- 12** Best in Class: Celebrating Outstanding Teachers During National Charter Schools Week
- 14** Building Awareness: Inspiring and Educating the Public
- 15** Amplifying Teacher Voices
- 16** Cultivating Student Voices
- 18** Defining the Legal Landscape
- 19** Shaping the Narrative: Media Features
- 20** Chartering Success: Key Reports on Charter Schools
- 22** Where the Movement Meets
- 23** Major Supporters and Advocates Council
- 24** Financials
- 25** Board of Directors
- 26** National Alliance Staff

# UNITED IN PURPOSE



It's getting loud out there. From social media to traditional news outlets, voices on every side of every issue are aggressively making their views known. Partisanship is high, and people seem more and more inclined to listen exclusively to the voices with whom they agree, regardless of whether those voices make sense or are telling the truth.

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools is determined to cut through the clutter and make sure charter school students, educators, and families are heard by the people who make and influence policy. School leaders themselves continue to be our best advocates in Washington, D.C. In 2023, we welcomed more than 50 school leaders of color to Capitol Hill for our annual School Leaders of Color congressional event. These leaders from across America met with more than 160 federal policymakers to explain how their schools are changing lives and improving communities. We also facilitated a day of action for 20 state leaders to engage

with their federal representatives on Capitol Hill and advocate for charter schools.

In coordination with leaders from across the nation, our persistent, effective advocacy efforts delivered progress on Capitol Hill—a rarity these days. The U.S. House of Representatives' Education Appropriations Subcommittee approved a \$10 million boost for the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) to \$450 million for fiscal year 2024, the first proposed funding increase in several years. The CSP supports the creation, replication, and expansion of more high-quality public education options for families who are eager to access one of these unique public schools. Due to ongoing partisan politics, we expect flat funding for the CSP in 2024, however the proposed increase this was a welcome signal of support for the mission of public charter schools, and we remain optimistic we will see an increase in the future.

We also rallied champions in both parties to improve the CSP and ensure more high-quality charter school operators—including teachers and principals who want to start their own schools—have access to this crucial start-up funding. And we succeeded in raising attention for charter schools' facility needs, so that our schools can spend more per-pupil dollars on classroom learning rather than on classroom maintenance and building costs.

The National Alliance was very active in state capitals, too. Three cheers for Montana on becoming the 46th state to pass a charter school law, thanks to the robust advocacy efforts of the National Alliance and our state partners, as well as the leadership of legislators and the governor.

Getting a charter school law passed is just the first step in making charter schools accessible to students. That's why we continued to work with local supporters in some of the most recent states to adopt charter school laws—including Alabama, Kentucky, Iowa, West Virginia, and Wyoming—to establish a healthy foundation for charter school development. Building a sustainable infrastructure now will help local stakeholders build a thriving sector that grows stronger each year.

Political support is fueled by public demand, so the National Alliance continued to shape public opinion of charter schools, including through public awareness campaigns in critical states that explained what charter schools are and why they're so effective at delivering high-quality educational opportunities for students. At a time when families are seeking better, more personalized school options, these advertisements have yielded millions of impressions across the country.

Our research is also helping people develop a clearer picture of how charter school educators view their schools and their role in society. In collaboration with The Harris Poll, we released a new survey of more than 1,200 public school teachers. A key finding: Nearly all charter school teachers (97%) say they are satisfied in their job as a teacher, which is markedly higher than their district school counterparts (83%). Importantly, teachers in every type of school want to spend more time on teaching and less on the political fights that seem to dominate the headlines.

Finally, the National Alliance continued to convene voices from across the sector to share perspectives, confront challenges, and develop coordinated action plans. Specialized gatherings like our Association of Public Charter School Attorneys meetings ensure that education lawyers everywhere have the resources to fight for the rights of charter schools and their students and educators. And the National Charter Schools Conference in Austin, Texas, brought together more than 4,000 school leaders, teachers, philanthropists, advocates, and other stakeholders to network, learn, and celebrate charter schools' success.

It's an honor for everyone at the National Alliance to work alongside, advocate for, and serve this dynamic, passionate community of inspiring change-makers. Whether school leaders, advocacy partners, community activists, students, or parents, everyone in our community has a great story to tell, and we will continue to ensure the voices of our movement reach everyone who needs to hear them.



# WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

## FEDERAL POLICY AND ADVOCACY

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools is the leading advocate for charter schools at the federal level. We are the movement's voice in Congress and with the administration, activating supporters and working aggressively to ensure the interests of charter schools are known to lawmakers when legislation is being crafted and regulations are being written. We are committed to driving a policy agenda that protects and supports charter schools.

## STATE POLICY AND SUPPORT

States play a crucial role in charter school growth by establishing the legal and regulatory environment in which charter schools operate and fighting for the freedom and funding charter schools need to be successful. Our legislative advocacy work with state-based partners cultivates state policy environments in which charter schools can flourish. We also provide strategic support to new and emerging state sectors to ensure they attract quality leaders, and we assist founding groups to implement best practices.

## LEGAL ADVOCACY

In courthouses across the nation, the National Alliance fights for laws and policy that support our mission and enable charter schools to serve more students with greater flexibility, equitable funding, access to facilities, and the freedom to grow and innovate. Charter schools regularly encounter legal threats to their growth and sustainability; these threats can have a ripple effect and copycat cases may pop up across the nation. To counter these threats and prepare for future challenges, the National Alliance provides technical assistance, expert analysis on emerging legal issues, and funding for significant legal cases. We also support cases that will extend and secure charter school rights and expand opportunities for more students.

## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

The National Alliance publishes major reports that highlight and advance progress toward our policy agenda. We also help to shape the public understanding and narrative about charter schools through thought-provoking analyses and reports that drive national conversations. Our Data Dashboard – available on the National Alliance website – provides policymakers, parents, and journalists with comprehensive data and metrics on charter schools, charter student demographics, charter school finance, and charter school management.

## NATIONAL EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Through publications, digital communications, and earned and paid media campaigns, the National Alliance's communications team promotes accuracy in reporting about charter schools and broadens public understanding of what charter schools are and how they benefit children, families, and communities. We also elevate the voices of educators, families, and students, who are our movement's top spokespeople. In addition, the annual National Charter Schools Conference serves as the premier forum for the charter school community to convene, learn from each other's experiences, and build a stronger movement.



**MORE THAN**  
**3.7 MILLION**  
**STUDENTS ATTEND**  
**CHARTER SCHOOLS**

**MORE THAN**  
**7,900**  
**CHARTER SCHOOLS**  
**NATIONWIDE**

**MORE THAN**  
**250,000**  
**CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**TEACHERS**

**97%** **OF CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS SAY THEY ARE AS OR MORE MOTIVATED TO TEACH THAN WHEN THEY INITIALLY ENTERED THE PROFESSION ACCORDING TO [THE HARRIS POLL](#).**

**CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENT ENROLLMENT**  
**INCREASED 9%**  
**FROM THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR TO THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR,**  
**ACCORDING TO OUR [PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT ANALYSIS](#).**

# FIGHTING FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS ON CAPITOL HILL



Former President and CEO Nina Rees with Congresswoman Julia Letlow (LA-05)

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools leads the charter school sector on all matters related to federal policy, with a special emphasis on protecting and growing the Charter Schools Program (CSP). This past year was no different as the team continued to connect with policymakers, staff, and national partners to ensure the Charter Schools Program remains available and is able to support school leaders' current and future needs through enhanced flexibility and funding.

## CONTINUING TO FIGHT FOR THE CSP

The CSP is the only source of federal funding for the start-up, replication, and expansion of high-quality charter schools. For the past four years, the CSP, has been funded at \$440 million. The National Alliance was pleased to avoid any proposed cuts, and proud to see a \$10 million increase proposed by the U.S. House of Representatives, in addition to adding the National Alliance's suggested language to provide the Department of Education with flexibility in the disbursement of funds. The National Alliance is proud of the efforts made and will keep pushing to see these changes adopted in the future.

As a result of a change in a law that the National Alliance pushed to enact, the U.S. Department of Education provided \$470,331,358 to the following state entities to support the planning, program design, and implementation of public charter schools, as well as to support the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools:

<b>INDIANA</b> (\$109,740,731)	<b>WISCONSIN</b> (\$58,000,000)	<b>LOUISIANA</b> (\$55,555,555)	<b>MISSOURI</b> (\$35,555,557)*
<b>OKLAHOMA</b> (\$55,141,012)*	<b>NEW MEXICO</b> (\$52,777,778)*	<b>MINNESOTA</b> (\$37,579,122)	<b>WEST VIRGINIA</b> (\$12,382,792)*
	<b>MARYLAND</b> (\$28,720,811)*	<b>IDAHO</b> (\$24,878,000)*	

\*Denotes if funding was awarded to a state Charter Support Association

## GAME-CHANGING LEGISLATION FOR THE SECTOR

Two new pieces of proposed legislation will, if enacted, have a profound impact on the charter school sector. The National Alliance worked closely with legislators on both sides of the aisle, a rarity in today's political climate, to have the bills introduced and will continue to shepherd both pieces of legislation through the legislative process.

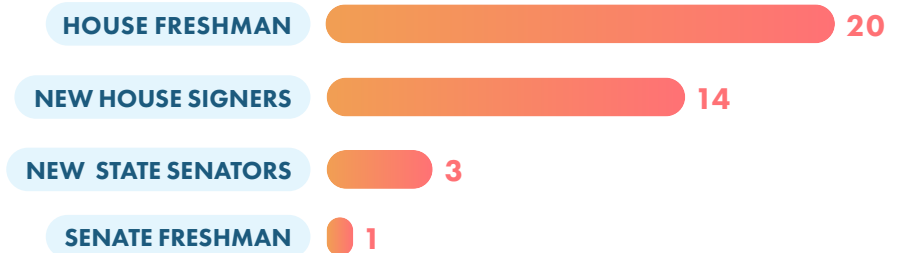
During National Charter Schools Week in May 2023, Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) came together to reintroduce the Equitable Access to School Facilities Act, which amends the CSP to improve the quality and affordability of facilities for charter schools. Access to proper facilities is often cited as a barrier to charter growth and these grants would improve equity of facilities funding, promote charter schools' access to public buildings, and improve access to facilities in low-income and rural communities. After the initial introduction, the National Alliance discussed the bill extensively with senators to help secure more co-sponsors to the bill.

In October, a bipartisan group of senators, including Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA), John Cornyn (R-TX), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Tim Scott (R-SC), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Mike Braun (R-IN), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), and Brian Schatz (D-HI) introduced the Empower Charter School Educators to Lead Act. This legislation, which the National Alliance helped draft and is based on the National Alliance's 2023 federal recommendations, would allow CSP grant funding to be allocated for pre-planning grants to school leaders and educators looking to start high-quality public charter schools. While the CSP supports schools that have already launched, this bill offers the needed resources to encourage educators to get charter schools off of the ground.

**105** MEMBERS SIGNED "DEAR COLLEAGUE" LETTERS FOR THE CSP APPROPRIATION

**82** HOUSE + **23** SENATE

INCLUDING **38** NEW MEMBERS OF CONGRESS



**26** NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SIGNED THE PARTNER LETTER IN SUPPORT OF THE CSP

# WINNING FOR FAMILIES IN THE STATES

In 2023, The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools collaborated with local leaders in states across the country to protect and support charter schools. The National Alliance placed an extra emphasis on states with no laws or with emerging charter school sectors where current policy stifles the infrastructure needed to grow and effectively serve students on a larger scale. Below are a few major policy victories that best demonstrate the organization's success.



National Alliance Senior Director, State Advocacy Lisa Grover with Montana State Senator Kenneth Bogner

## MONTANA

On May 16, 2023, Montana Governor Greg Gianforte signed The Community Choice Schools Act (HB 562) into law, bringing new public education options to students and families throughout the state and enacting a strong charter school law in Montana. Until this year, Montana was one of the only five states in the nation that did not allow public charter schools, depriving families of the opportunity to choose innovative public schools that best fit their students' needs. All public charter schools, or community choice schools as they are called in HB 562, are public schools and free to attend. Assisted by the National Alliance and in-state partners, HB 562 was championed by citizens who saw a need for public education options in their state. Since then, the National Alliance and charter school supporters have been mounting a defense against a lawsuit to stop these innovative public schools from opening. A narrow injunction was granted to allow a statewide commission to form. Throughout the next year, the National Alliance will continue to fight to defeat the lawsuit, supporting the state commission and assisting groups that want to start charter schools.

## IDAHO

In Idaho, the National Alliance supported in-state partners to pass two critical pieces of legislation. The two laws will support increased access to funding for facilities, allowing charter schools to use more of their per-pupil funding in the classroom and on students. The first piece of legislation, SB 1042, raised a statutory cap to allow more charter schools to take advantage of a credit enhancement financing tool that will allow them to receive access to lower interest rates on bonds. The second piece of legislation, SB 1043, created a \$50 million revolving loan fund that helps charter schools secure lower interest rates on their facility financing loans. On both pieces of legislation, the National Alliance provided strategic and communications support to local allies.

## NEW MEXICO

In New Mexico, the charter school sector was aggressively attacked through various proposed legislative measures. The National Alliance acted quickly to support its allies as they worked to defeat several negative bills, including legislation that would have placed a moratorium on charter school growth in districts with more than 20% of students in charter schools.

## WYOMING

In Wyoming, the National Alliance successfully passed legislation that established a new statewide authorizer to approve new charter schools and hold those schools accountable for their academic performance. The legislation also clarified that charter schools are entitled to 100% of state average daily membership funding, 100% of state transportation funds and special education funds, and 100% of retirement funds. These funding changes will result in a significant increase in the amount of per-pupil funding that charter schools receive each year.



*“The long-awaited passage of Montana’s charter law was in no way inevitable. We only succeeded in surmounting the tactics and force of the opponents because of the guidance and support we received from the Alliance. Now in round two, we continue to rely on the expertise of NAPCS to help our state overcome the wanton legal challenge to an excellent charter school law. The people of Montana are grateful to the Alliance’s leadership team and nationwide supporters as we acutely understand that without the collective desire to extend charter options to all students in the country, Montana would not be in a position to finally create and offer independent, high-quality charter schools.”*

— Trish Schreiber

Senior Education Fellow for the Frontier Institute

# BEST IN CLASS: CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING TEACHERS DURING NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

During National Charter Schools Week in May, the National Alliance honored the 2023 recipients of the annual Changemaker Award, all seven of whom are public charter school teachers or founders. The Changemaker Award honors individuals who are making an exceptional difference in their charter schools, and who go above and beyond to shape their students' lives for the better. During an event on Capitol Hill, the Changemakers shared why they chose to become educators, how the charter school model supports the teaching profession, and how to attract and retain more educators in the field.



Changemaker Andrea Thomas and Dream Dine Charter School Leader Nadine Chatto with Senator Martin Heinrich of New Mexico



Changemaker Nathaniel Dunn III with Congressman Robert Aderholt (AL-04)



**Cielo Acosta (SLAM! Miami, Miami, FL):** Ms. Acosta teaches eighth-grade language arts, sponsors several student clubs, and is an alumna of SLAM! Miami. She believes it is essential for educators to also instill the importance of kindness, compassion, and self-growth.



**Nathaniel Dunn III (i3 Academy, Birmingham, AL):** Mr. Dunn is a third-grade teacher and was recognized as the Henry Nelson Teacher of Excellence by the Alabama Charter School Commission in 2021. In addition to teaching third grade, Mr. Dunn is a baseball coach, mentor, and Ed Farm Teacher Fellow.



**Tiffany Ortego (One City Preschool, Madison, WI):** Ms. Ortego is the kindergarten lead teacher. In her time at One City, Ms. Ortego helped create the preschool garden space and created the school's 4K Volunteer Reading and Early Literacy Program.



**Coach Jermar Rountree (Center City Public Charter – Brightwood Campus, Washington, DC):** Coach Rountree is the district teacher lead and teacher of the health and physical education departments. Coach Rountree was recognized as D.C.'s 2023 Teacher of the Year and was a finalist for the 2023 National Teacher of the Year, the nation's highest honor.



**Dr. Alissa Russell (Life High School Oak Cliff, Dallas, TX):** Dr. Russell is a master teacher and math department head. Dr. Russell was appointed to an advisory council convened by Texas Senator Royce West (D) and has served on a Texas Education Agency think tank. She has also been named the Life Schools District Teacher of the Year, Oak Cliff Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Year, and Texas Public Charter Schools Association Teacher of the Year.



**David Singer (University Prep, Denver, CO):** Mr. Singer founded University Prep in 2011, a network of two public charter schools serving nearly 700 children, which was approved in 2021 to open its third campus.



**Andrea Thomas (Dream Diné Charter School, Shiprock, NM):** Ms. Thomas is a third- and fourth-grade teacher, a TeachPlus Fellow, and a community leader from the Diné tribe. In addition to teaching, Ms. Thomas is also the Vice President of the Navajo Nation Board of Education.

# BUILDING AWARENESS: INSPIRING AND EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

## AWARENESS

In 2023, the National Alliance continued building on the success and proven effectiveness of past ad campaigns to build awareness and knowledge about charter schools. This culminated in the creation and launch of “Free, Public, and Open to All,” a national ad campaign for awareness and recruitment. The idea for “Free, Public, and Open to All” came directly from messaging research on what moves the needle on support for charter schools and qualitative research from the field on their greatest marketing need—recruitment advertising. The organization worked closely with partners on the ground in more than 20 markets to produce locally tagged creative assets and place digital and radio ads. This campaign continues to provide voters, parents, and communities with facts, tools, and resources to combat misinformation about charter schools, reclaim the public charter school narrative, and ultimately create a more welcoming environment for the growth of public education options.

The organization also continued to run atmospheric and values-based multimedia advertising campaigns in Colorado, Georgia, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Utah to build awareness about these unique public schools.

## STORYTELLING

In addition to national and local awareness efforts, the National Alliance curated and ran individualized campaigns to support on-the-ground partners. These real-life storytelling initiatives help inform communities and stakeholders about what is happening in charter schools and how they change the lives of the students, families, teachers, and leaders. These #BestForMe campaigns ran in several states. In Colorado, it was focused on Native voices, students, and school leaders. In New Mexico, the campaign focused on the stories of teachers and connection to Native communities; the Wyoming campaign was focused on telling the story of rural schools.



# AMPLIFYING TEACHER VOICES

## There's Something Special About The Experience Of Charter School Teachers

Teacher shortages plagued schools nationwide in 2023. The National Alliance set out to learn more about teachers' experiences, opinions, motivations for staying or leaving the classroom, and the challenges they are facing in the public education system. The National Alliance commissioned The Harris Poll to survey more than 1,200 U.S. public school teachers in both district and charter schools. The report, [Listen to Your Teacher: An Analysis of Teacher Sentiment on the State of Public Education](#), provided insight into the teacher shortage, major concerns, and possible solutions. On many issues, charter school and district school teachers shared similar feelings. There were, however, some important differences in the experiences of charter school teachers.

**ABOUT 4 IN 5 TEACHERS AGREE** PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE IS IMPORTANT FOR BOTH FAMILIES AND TEACHERS.

**97%** CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS REPORTED BEING SATISFIED WITH THEIR JOBS, COMPARED TO 83% OF DISTRICT SCHOOL TEACHERS.

**87%** CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS SAY THEY ARE AS OR MORE MOTIVATED THAN WHEN THEY INITIALLY ENTERED THE PROFESSION. 66% OF DISTRICT TEACHERS REPORT FEELING LESS MOTIVATED NOW THAN BEFORE.

**52%** CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS ARE FAR MORE LIKELY TO SAY THEY NEVER CONSIDERED LEAVING THE PROFESSION. ONLY 20% OF DISTRICT SCHOOL TEACHERS SAY THE SAME.

**90%** CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHERS REPORT FEELING VALUED BY THEIR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION, COMPARED TO 68% OF DISTRICT SCHOOL TEACHERS.



# CULTIVATING STUDENT VOICES

The Rising Leaders Initiative (RLI), a one-year advocacy training program for high school students who attend charter schools, completed its first year in 2023. The inaugural cohort defied the odds to imagine a world where student voices create impact, and their actions inspire other students, educators, and communities to fight for and demand high-quality public education options.

## FIRST YEAR IMPACT BY NUMBERS

- **400 STUDENTS** participated in education advocacy clubs nationally
- **150 LETTERS** sent to members of the U.S. Congress
- **100 PEOPLE** registered to vote by Rising Leaders
- **8 APPEARANCES** by Rising Leaders at national and state events
- **2 INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES** in advocacy and policy
- **1 PIECE OF LEGISLATION** drafted by a Rising Leader

In the fall of 2023, the National Alliance welcomed the program's second cohort. Ten charter high school students were selected from more than 100 applicants to grow their leadership and advocacy skills through intensive programming, team building, and opportunities outside of their school classrooms.



**Abdullah Celik (Senior, Gateway Science Academy in Missouri):** Abdullah's drive to make a lasting positive impact on the world fuels his desire to be a change-maker and contribute meaningfully to society. He actively takes on leadership roles in his school and community, participating in the student council, National Honors Society, Concept Young Scholars Program, and Youth Club. Outside of school, Abdullah has strong ties to his Turkish heritage and frequently visits his hometown in Turkey, maintaining a close relationship with his family there. He dedicates his time to volunteering as a weekend school tutor at the Turkish American Society of Missouri.



**Anthony Ayer (Senior, Baxter Academy in Maine):** A natural-born leader, Anthony has served on the Principal's Table and Town Hall Committee at his STEM-based charter school. His extracurriculars extend to Model UN, various leadership programs, and working on his Eagle Scout project as a Life Scout, showcasing his commitment to community service. He enjoys exploring the great outdoors through hiking, lifting weights, and immersing himself in literature and writing. Music is another cherished aspect of his life; he loves listening to and playing music. Through his advocacy and efforts, he aims to build a better future for education in his community and beyond.



**Cameron Mirmelli (Junior, BASIS Scottsdale in Arizona):** Cameron has always been passionate about helping others and learning. Serving as the captain of her Mock Trial and Varsity Basketball team, starting a public speaking club at her school, and finding an advocacy platform ([thepurplelining.com](http://thepurplelining.com)) for young people, she has become a key leader of her school and enthusiastic public servant of her community. Beyond just education advocacy, Cameron is passionate about mending the partisanship in Congress, revising the foster care system, and ensuring that all voices are heard. Whether this is a future in law or government, she hopes to use her resources to make further progress in these endeavors.



**Darren Paredes (Junior, ASK Academy in New Mexico):** Growing up in the multicultural and multilingual state of New Mexico, Darren has always been motivated to contribute to improving his community. He has diverse interests, including reading, participating in Model UN, running, and occasionally delving into poetry and video-making. He participated in the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange Program, allowing him to spend 10 months attending a German high school. Back home, Darren aims to bridge the gap between his school, community, and generation, ensuring their voices are heard in the decisions that impact them now and will continue to shape their future.



**Kamila Almazan (Senior, YES Prep Gulfton in Texas):** Kamila is passionate about fostering positive change and is the proud founder and president of the Neurodiversity Committee at her school. Kamila's dedication lies in creating an inclusive and supportive environment through organizing events, activities, and lessons that promote understanding. Outside of school, she volunteers as an Ecoteen and serves as a summer teaching assistant at the Houston Science Museum, expanding her knowledge in accessibility and acceptance. Her ultimate vision is to build a world where diverse minds can thrive, emphasizing the importance of collaboration.



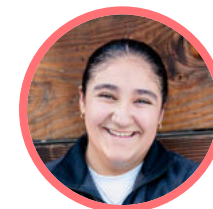
**Maya Maliakal (Junior, Harmony Science Academy Carrolton):** Through her role as student council president, Maya was crucial in guiding her school to be elected as the vice president school for district three of The Texas Association of Student Councils. She has also been involved in other leadership organizations, such as NJHS/NHS, where she contributes to leading and participating in various service-related activities to benefit her community. Outside of school, she has a significant role in a state-wide conference held at the Texas State Capitol for The Service Leadership Society. Her passion for participating in different organizations reflects her desire to create positive change in her community.



**Nathan A. Duguid (Senior, Great Oaks Legacy Charter School in New Jersey):** Nathan is a multi-talented individual who wears many hats as a journalist, poet, rapper, and songwriter. Alongside his artistic endeavors, Nathan is actively engaged in various leadership roles. He serves as the vice president of his school's Student Government Association, where he spearheads initiatives to enhance student welfare. As the founding Editor-in-Chief of the school newspaper, Nathan utilizes his platform to amplify marginalized voices and shed light on important issues. He is also working with the Civic Spring Fellowship, where he is passionately involved in organizing a community event addressing educational inequities.



**Olivia Jones (Senior, University Prep Art & Design High School in Michigan):** Olivia is an exceptional honors student with an impressive 4.09 GPA and her dedication extends beyond academics. Olivia is part of Detroit Area Youth Uniting Michigan and serves as the Student Council vice president. She also holds the esteemed position of president of the National Honors Society and is a member of Student Leaders. Her passion for advocacy and social justice shines through her extensive extracurricular commitments, aligning with her ultimate goal of becoming a civil rights attorney. Olivia's continuous effort and hard work are evident in everything she undertakes, both inside and outside school.



**Rosamaria Villasenor (Sophomore, Elevate Academy in Idaho):** Rosamaria is a dedicated individual eager to make a difference in her community and beyond. Her commitment to personal growth and compassion for others makes her an inspiring and valued member of any team. Recently, she was selected to participate in Business Professional of America where her exceptional skills in job interviews led her to the finals. Outside of school, Rosamaria's passion extends beyond academics. Homelessness, teen substance abuse, hunger, and racism are among the causes she is devoted to addressing. Through advocacy, Rosamaria aims to positively impact and create meaningful change in these areas.



**Sahaana Rajagopalan (Senior, Charter School of Wilmington in Delaware):** Sahaana is a natural-born leader determined to grow and sustain her initiatives while promoting inclusive and diverse policies. As the founder of The S.P.A.R.K.S. Project, she is dedicated to bridging the STEM education gap for K-5 students. Sahaana also serves on the board of NerditCares, a non-profit focused on reducing the digital divide in communities through technology, skills, and support. She also volunteers several hours weekly at the Ronald McDonald House. At school, Sahaana takes on leadership roles in organizations like Speech and Debate, Health Occupations Students of America, and CSW Connections.

# DEFINING THE LEGAL LANDSCAPE

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools' Legal Action Fund, the only national litigation fund supporting public charter school families and schools, has been active and effective this year. The U.S. Supreme Court declined to review a case challenging the public nature of charter schools. The National Alliance has long argued that public charter school students, like all public school students, have constitutional rights in school that must be protected and respected.

Last year, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma attempted to establish a religious public school, and the litigation fund sprang into action. Working with local partners and local counsel, the Legal Action Fund continues to support legal challenges to prevent the religious charter school from opening. Like all public schools, public charter schools cannot be religious in their curriculum, admissions, or hiring. In addition, the Legal Action Fund is supporting state constitutional defense of charter statutes in Kentucky, Montana, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Minnesota, New Jersey, and California.

Legal battles for funding equity produced big wins in 2023. In Florida, the National Alliance supported the team that successfully fought and won legal challenges that provided tens of millions more dollars to charter school students. In Missouri, the National Alliance helped the team that successfully defended St. Louis public charter schools' rights to more than \$80 million in sales tax revenue. These funds were withheld following the review of a 1999 desegregation agreement. Based on a flawed interpretation, charter schools were deemed ineligible to receive this revenue and therefore inappropriately paid.

The Legal Action Fund remains committed to preserving the opportunity for families to choose the best public school option for their children by harnessing the power of the courts.



*"The Legal Action Fund's support was critical towards ensuring that we were able to be victorious in Florida. Through both financial and strategic assistance, their help was invaluable for our efforts. I am incredibly thankful for our partnership and am excited to continue collaboration with the Legal Action Fund."*

— Shawn Arnold  
Co-Founder, The Arnold Law Firm

# SHAPING THE NARRATIVE

With more than 220 placements in 2023, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools continues to be the voice of the sector. Whether through reports and analyses or timely statements on emerging issues, the organization serves as a resource for journalists and media outlets to get the very latest on charter school happenings and movement-advancing commentary.

The National Alliance's work to influence the sector and define the brand can be seen in the following top-tier national media hits for 2023.

- **The Wall Street Journal**, [Public Schools Lost More Than One Million Students During Pandemic](#), By Ben Chapman and Andrea Fuller, January 5, 2023
- Opinion: **The Washington Post**, [Charter schools are public schools. Period.](#), By Nina Rees, January 9, 2023
- Editorial: **The Wall Street Journal**, [Why Does New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy Hate Charter Schools?](#), By The Editorial Board, January 11, 2023
- **USA TODAY**, [School choice is still on parents' minds following COVID closures. Where are students going?](#), By Kayla Jimenez, February 11, 2023
- **The Washington Post**, [Oklahoma Catholics could open the door for religious charter schools](#), By Moriah Balingit, March 7, 2023
- Opinion: **USA Today**, [Here's what 'Abbott Elementary' and Quinta Brunson get wrong about charter schools](#), By Debbie Veney, March 22, 2023
- **The New York Times**, [A Campus With a Smokestack: Converting Old Factories Into Schools](#), By Patrick Sisson, May 9, 2023
- **FOX News**, [Catholic charter schools? Oklahoma City tests the waters](#), By Producers Sally Parsons and Alexandria Hoff, May 10, 2023
- **The New York Times**, [Oklahoma Approves First Religious Charter School in the U.S.](#), By Sarah Mervosh, June 8, 2023
- **Univision**, Segun Encuesta, Escuchar a Tu Maestro (Listen to Your Teacher), Anchor Carolina Peguero, August 10, 2023
- **USA Today**, [Why parents who moved kids to alternative schools amid pandemic are keeping them there](#), Kayla Jimenez, August 28, 2023
- Editorial: **The Wall Street Journal**, [Charter Schools Keep Winning Students From Union Schools](#), December 25, 2023

## PODCAST APPEARANCES



## MEDIA APPEARANCES



# CHARTERING SUCCESS: KEY REPORTS ON CHARTER SCHOOLS

CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE THE ONLY PART OF PUBLIC EDUCATION THAT IS **GROWING**

HISPANIC STUDENTS MAKE UP THE FASTEST-GROWING COMMUNITY IN CHARTER SCHOOLS, **INCREASING BY ALMOST 14% SINCE 2019.**



CHARTER SCHOOLS ENROLLED **10X AS MANY NEW STUDENTS** AS DISTRICT SCHOOLS IN THE LAST YEAR:

CHARTER SCHOOLS: **72,241** vs. DISTRICT SCHOOLS: **7,458**

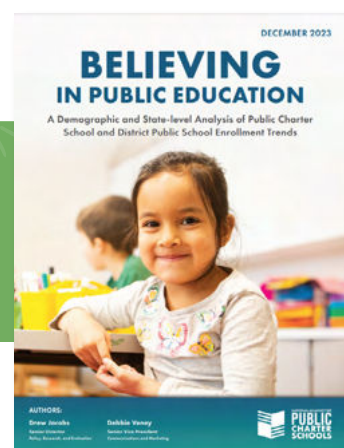
FROM 2021-22 TO 2022-23, THERE WAS A

**2%** YEAR-OVER-YEAR GROWTH RATE FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS

WHILE DISTRICT SCHOOL ENROLLMENT REMAINED FLAT.

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT **INCREASED**

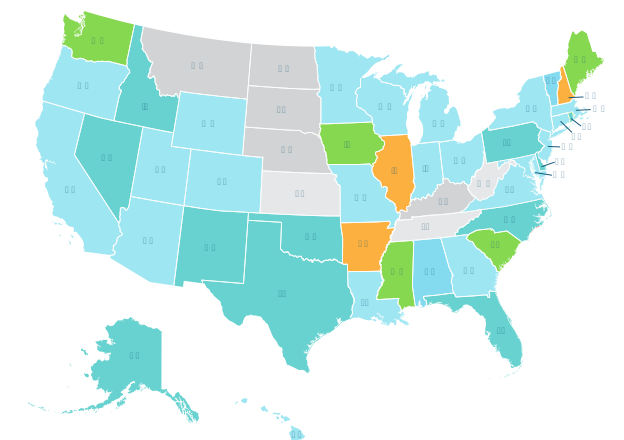
AMONG WHITE, BLACK, AND HISPANIC STUDENTS AND OUTPACED STATE POPULATION SHIFTS IN THE MAJORITY OF THE STATES EXAMINED.



**December 11: Believing in Public Education: A Demographic and State-level Analysis of Public Charter School and District Public School Enrollment Trends**

CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT **GREW IN 40 STATES** OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS.

CONVERSELY, ALL OTHER PUBLIC SCHOOLS LOST STUDENTS IN NEARLY EVERY STATE.



Over the last four school years (2019-20 to 2022-23), charter schools gained more than 300,000 students, an increase of 9%. Meanwhile, district public schools have been unable to recover the 1.5 million students they lost during the pandemic, a 3.5% loss. Charter school enrollment growth is even outpacing expected numbers based on population growth trends.

# WHERE THE MOVEMENT MEETS: THE NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS CONFERENCE



By every measure, the National Charter Schools Conference was a success, with 4,238 attendees convening in Austin. The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools' post-Covid plans to re-envision the conference with more opportunities for community, conversations, and experiences paid off, resulting in the event's highest-rated content ever. The general sessions focused on inspiring and visionary charter school leaders with keynotes by Principal Salome Thomas-El and School Founder Luma Mufleh. Attendees also heard from Texas Commissioner of Education Mike Morath and from a diverse group of speakers presenting over 80 sessions. As the conference took place during Juneteenth, the National Alliance recognized the holiday and its ties to Texas history with a student art and history exhibit and a video exhibit highlighting African American charter school leaders.

# MAJOR SUPPORTERS AND ADVOCATES COUNCIL

Anonymous Donor

The Arthur and Joan Weisberg Family Foundation, Inc.

Arthur Rock and Toni Rembe Rock

The Beth and Ravenel Curry Foundation

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Bloomberg Philanthropies

California Charter Schools Association

Charter School Growth Fund

The City Fund

Daniels Fund

Educational Promise Foundation

Hastings/Quillin Fund

J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation

Lozick Family Foundation

Mike and Gillian Goodrich

Nanar and Tony Yoseloff

The Norman R. Rales and Ruth Rales Foundation

Stand Together Trust

U.S. Department of Agriculture

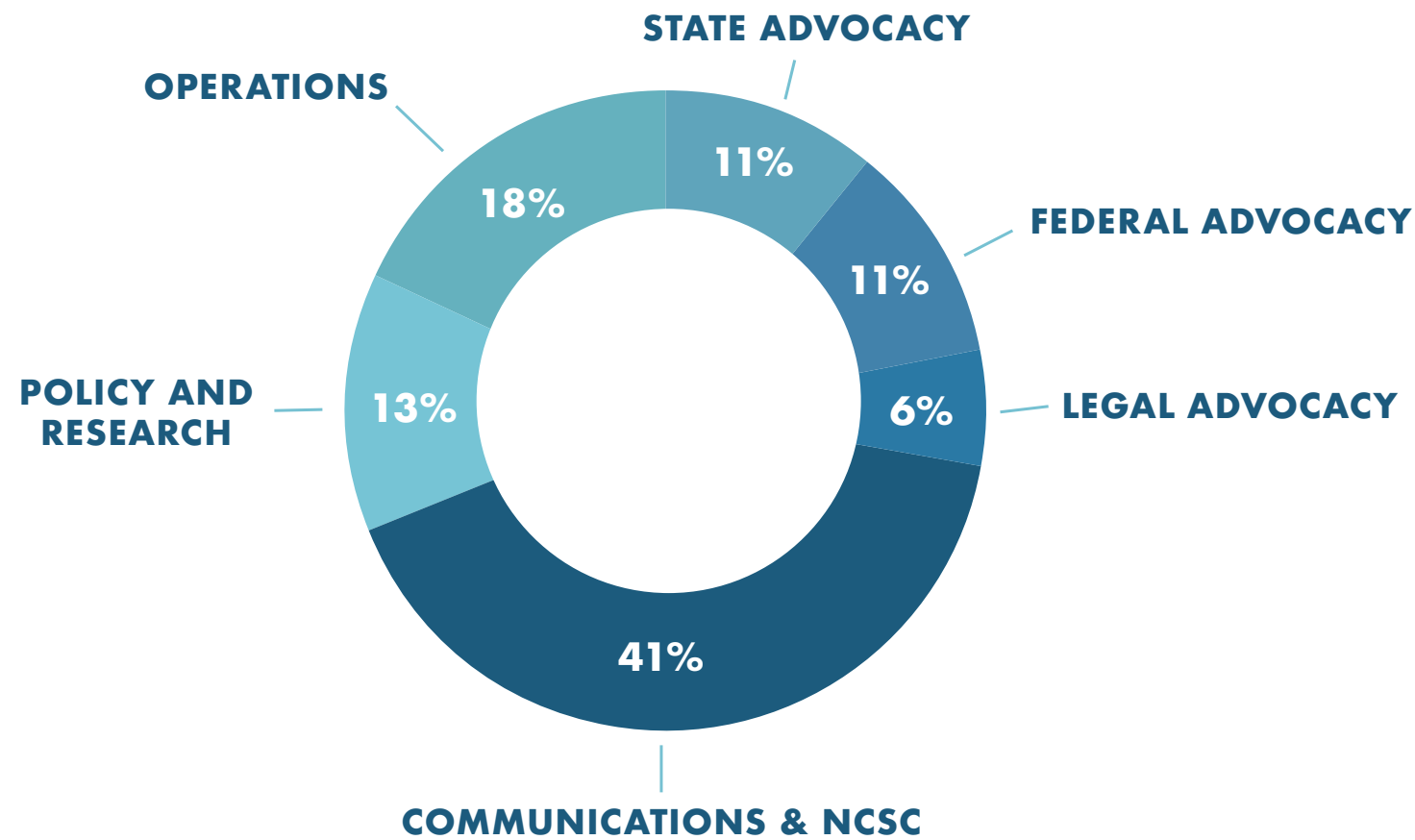
U.S. Department of Education

The Veto Family Charitable Gift Fund

Walton Family Foundation

# FINANCIALS

Since its inception, the National Alliance has remained an excellent steward of its financial resources. In 2023, nearly \$16 million was invested in vital education initiatives—working to ensure all children have access to high-quality public education options.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Rick Cruz**

Chair of the Board; Past Chair, DC Public Charter School Board



**Richard Berlin**

Vice Chair of the Board; Co-Chief Executive Officer, DREAM



**Joanne Weiss**

Treasurer of the Board; President, Weiss Associates



**Patrick Dobard**

Secretary of the Board; Partner, City Fund



**Caroline Roemer**

Chair, State Leaders Council; Executive Director, Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools



**Derrell Bradford**

President, 50CAN



**Myrna Castrejón**

President and CEO, California Charter Schools Association



**Reed Hastings**

Co-founder and Executive Chairman, Netflix



**Bill Kurtz**

CEO, DSST Public Schools



**Marc Lampkin**

Shareholder, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck



**Tim Nicolette**

Executive Director, Massachusetts Charter Public School Association



**Ana Ponce**

Executive Director, Great Public Schools Now

# NATIONAL ALLIANCE STAFF



## Albertina Clayton

Senior Manager, CRM Management and Strategy

## Jake Custer

Vice President, Human Resources and Operations

## Jennifer Diaz

Vice President, Communications

## Natalie Ethridge

Vice President, Strategic Initiatives

## Marlon Greatrex

Senior Manager, Government Relations

## Patricia Guidetti

Senior Director, Programs

## Lisa Grover

Senior Director, State Advocacy

## Celia Hagerman

Senior Director, Major Gifts

## Laura Hawkes

Manager, Federal Advocacy and Outreach

## Andrew Hodgson

Senior Director, Stakeholder Engagement

## Drew Jacobs

Senior Director, Policy, Research, and Evaluation

## Alanna Klein

Senior Manager, Media Strategy

## Kayley Pham

Manager, Social and Digital Media

## Sindy Pierre-Noel

Director, Programs

## Robert Reed

Vice President, Legal Affairs

## Ronald Rice

Senior Director, Government Relations

## Fiona Sheridan-Mciver

Director, Policy

## Russ Simnick

Senior Director, State Advocacy

## Daniel Tellez

Manager, Marketing

## Melinda Tolliver

Director, Digital Strategy

## Marlene Voelker

Executive Assistant and Office Manager

## Jamison White

Director, Data and Research

## Gabrielle Wszalek

Manager, National Advocacy Content

## Cynthia Xu

Senior Manager, Data and Research

## Eric Paisner

Interim President and Chief Executive Officer

## Will Burns

Executive Vice President, National Advocacy

## Debbie Veney

Senior Vice President, Communications and Marketing

## Christy Wolfe

Senior Vice President for Policy and Planning

## Todd Ziebarth

Senior Vice President, State Advocacy and Support

## Brittnee Baker

Senior Manager, Marketing Communications and Marketing

## Kyle Breckenridge

Director, Strategic Initiatives

## Charlie Bufalino

Senior Director, State Advocacy and Support

## Katie Burke

Senior Director, Policy

## Bree Butler

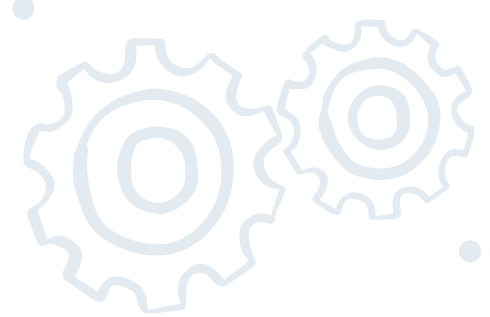
Coordinator, Media and Communications

## Natalie Camarena Lopez

Manager, Data and Research

## Angela Christophe

Executive Producer, National Charter Schools Conference





NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR  
**PUBLIC  
CHARTER  
SCHOOLS**

[www.PublicCharters.org](http://www.PublicCharters.org)

800 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20006



@charteralliance



[facebook.com/charterschools](https://facebook.com/charterschools)



@charteralliance



@charteralliance



@charteralliance