



## Agency Priority Goal (APG) Action Plan

# Improve the Access to and the Quality and Transparency of School Choice Options for K-12 students

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**APG Deputy Goal Leader:** Ellen Safranek, Director of the Charter Schools Program, OESE

# Overview

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## Goal Statement

- By September 30, 2019, the Charter School Program (CSP) will support the creation and expansion of 300 new charter schools nationally. The CSP will also support the enrollment of 50,000 students in new charter schools. Additionally, by September 30, 2019, the Department will disseminate eight resources, at least one per quarter, on evidence-based and promising practices related to school choice.

## Challenge

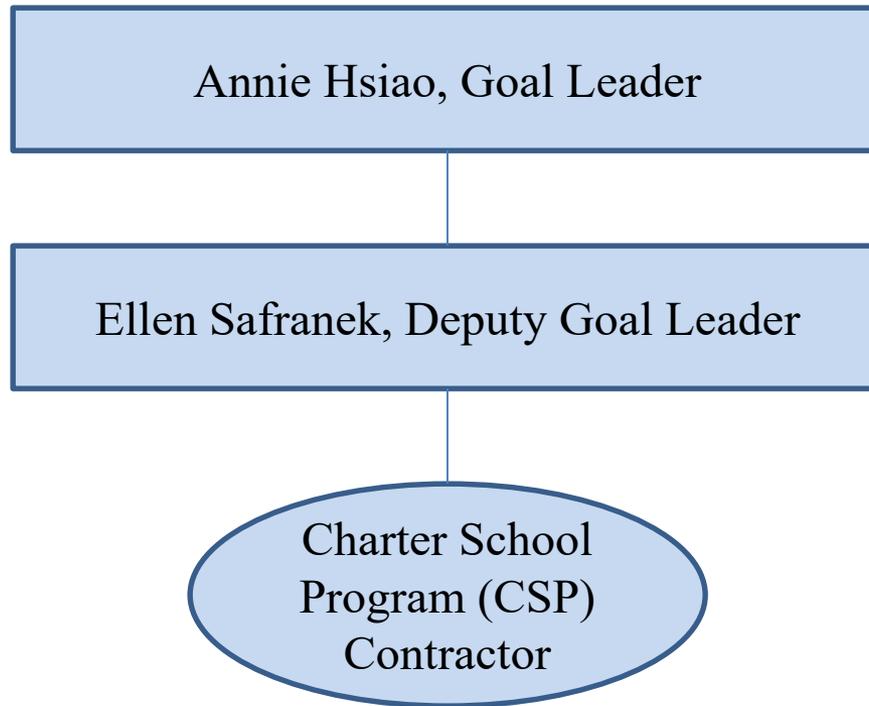
- Deliver high quality technical assistance to grantees to support them in their creation of new charter schools and increase student enrollment in charter schools.
- Charter school expansion may be limited by State and local laws and policies.
- Misunderstanding the public nature of charter schools may impact the opening of and increased enrollment in charter schools.

## Opportunity

- Increasing the number of new charter schools nationally and the number of students enrolled in charter schools will provide opportunities for educational alternatives and choices that will better prepare students for the 21st century.
- Increasing public and private school choices that empower parents, local communities, and students to achieve their educational goals and career ambitions, which includes being more transparent about school choice opportunities.

# Leadership

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# Goal Structure & Strategies

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The Department will:

- Conduct Charter School Program (CSP) grant competitions to award new grants to entities such as State Entities (SE) and Charter Management Organizations (CMOs).
- Monitor and provide technical assistance to grantees and review grantee performance reports for information on the creation and expansion of new charter schools and increased student enrollment.
- Determine the net new schools and student enrollment by comparing grantee reported data with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data.
- Work closely with Department-funded National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC) in preparation of evidence-based and promising practices resources.

# Summary of Progress – FY 2019 Q1 & Q2

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- During Quarter 1, the [CSP](#) sustained its responsibilities to seven grant programs. Also during Quarter 1, CSP program staff have worked to ensure that the requirements of ESSA have been met and that the five grant competitions were set into motion to meet required timelines. These five competitions are in various stages of development from Notice Inviting Applicants (NIAs) to rulemaking to peer review.
- In October 2018, the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) released ["Presenting School Choice Information to Parents: An Evidence-Based Guide."](#) The guide presents findings from an online experiment conducted with 3,500 low-income parents that suggests parents generally preferred looking at school information displays that had graphs as well as numbers, more rather than less data, and a list of choices ordered by each school's distance from home.
- During Quarter 2, program officers conducted monthly monitoring calls to review and discuss the grantee implementation progress, drawdowns, and spending patterns. Additionally, CSP conducted two site visits (DeSoto and Houston Independent School Districts) that included four to five school tours in each district and a meeting with project staff.
- In FY 2018, two grant programs contained “choice” priorities in the NIA. As of Quarter 2, four NIAs are expected to include choice priorities (two have been published with them, and two more are scheduled).

## Next Steps

- The Charter School Program office is working with its counterparts across the Department to further identify and develop evidence-based promising practices that reflect and address the needs of the Charter sector.
- Post the Credit Enhancement, State Incentive, and Developer competitions for late Spring to be competed Summer FY19.

# Key Milestones

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Milestone Owner	Comments
Establish timelines for preparation of resources with Charter School Program (CSP) contractor	Q2 2018	Completed	CSP Director	This milestone impacted the timeline for the development and dissemination of resources on evidence-based and promising practices related to school choice.
Publish Notices Inviting Applications (NIA) for new grants	Q3 2018	Completed	CSP Director	<p>The Charter Management Organization (CMO) program, a notice of proposed priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria were published.</p> <p>The CMO NFP* and NIA published in November 2018 and were awarded in March 2019.</p>

\*NFP: notice of final priority

# Key Milestones

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Milestone Owner	Comments
Release first set of resources	Q4 2018	Complete	CSP Director	CSP conducted a kickoff meeting with the Department's contractor on the profiles of best practices related to charter schools, charter school authorizing, and charter management organizations. CSP awarded a new NCSRC contract however full implementation is delayed pending the resolution of a contract challenge.
Award new grants	Q1 2019	Complete	CSP Director	CSP regulated on its Charter Management Organization (CMO) program and Credit Enhancement Program during Q1.

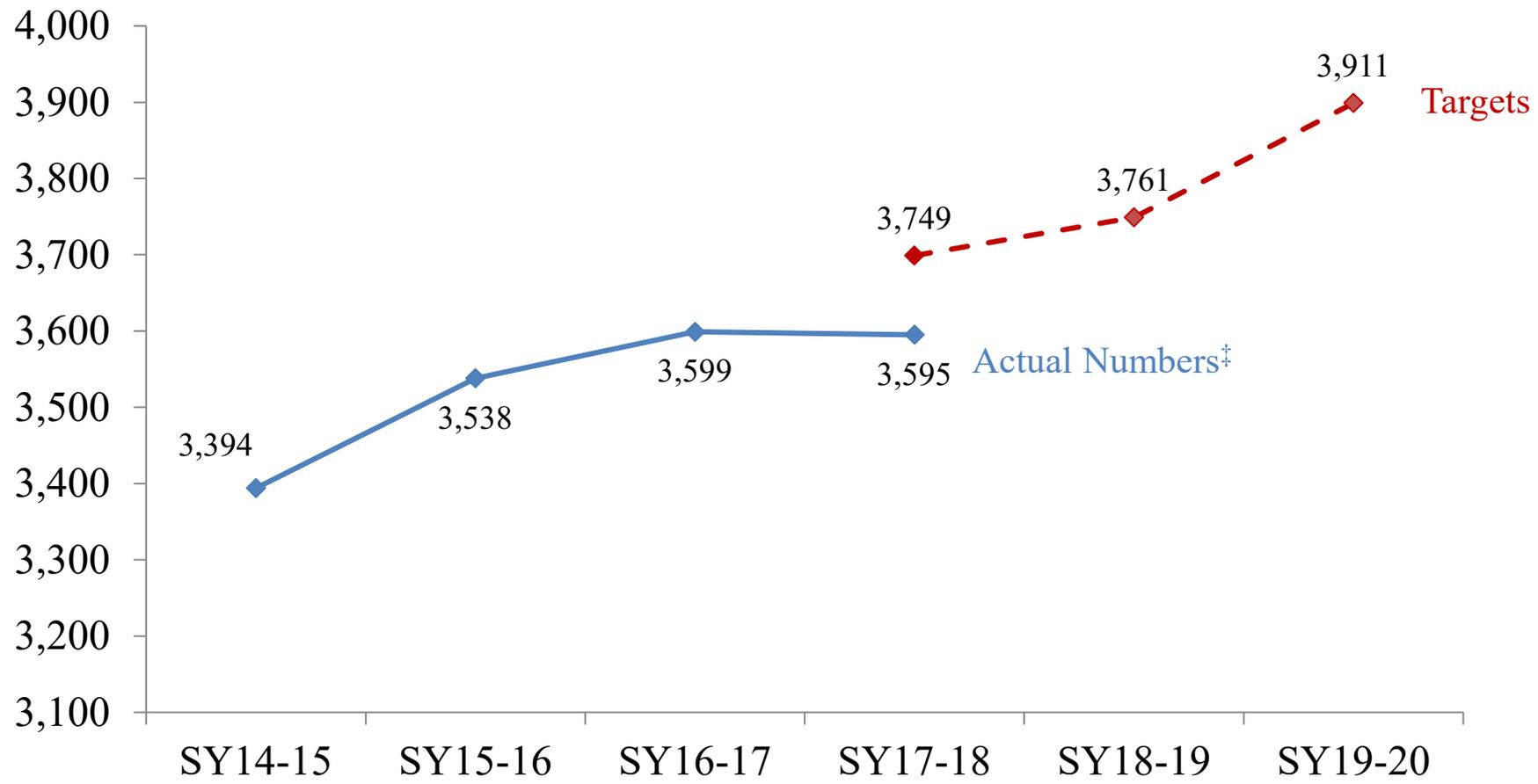
\*\*SE: Expanding Opportunities Through Quality CSP Grants to State Entities; CMO: Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter School Grant program; Developer: Developer Grants for the Opening of New Charter Schools and for the Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools; CE: Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program; State Incentive: State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants Program.

# Key Milestones

Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	Milestone Due Date	Milestone Status	Milestone Owner	Comments
Award grants	Q2 2019	Completed	CSP Director	CSP competed and awarded FY18 CMO grant awards. FY18 CMO funds were not due to be awarded until March FY19. CSP also made FY19 State Entity grant awards.
Publish Notices Inviting Applications (NIA) for new grants	Q3 2019	In Progress	CSP Director	CSP anticipates running grant competitions for Credit Enhancement, State Incentive, and Developer grants FY19 late Spring/Summer. SOAR grants were awarded.
Release resources	Q4 2019	In Progress	CSP Director	

# Key Indicators

## Aggregate # of Open and Operating CSP-Funded Charter Schools

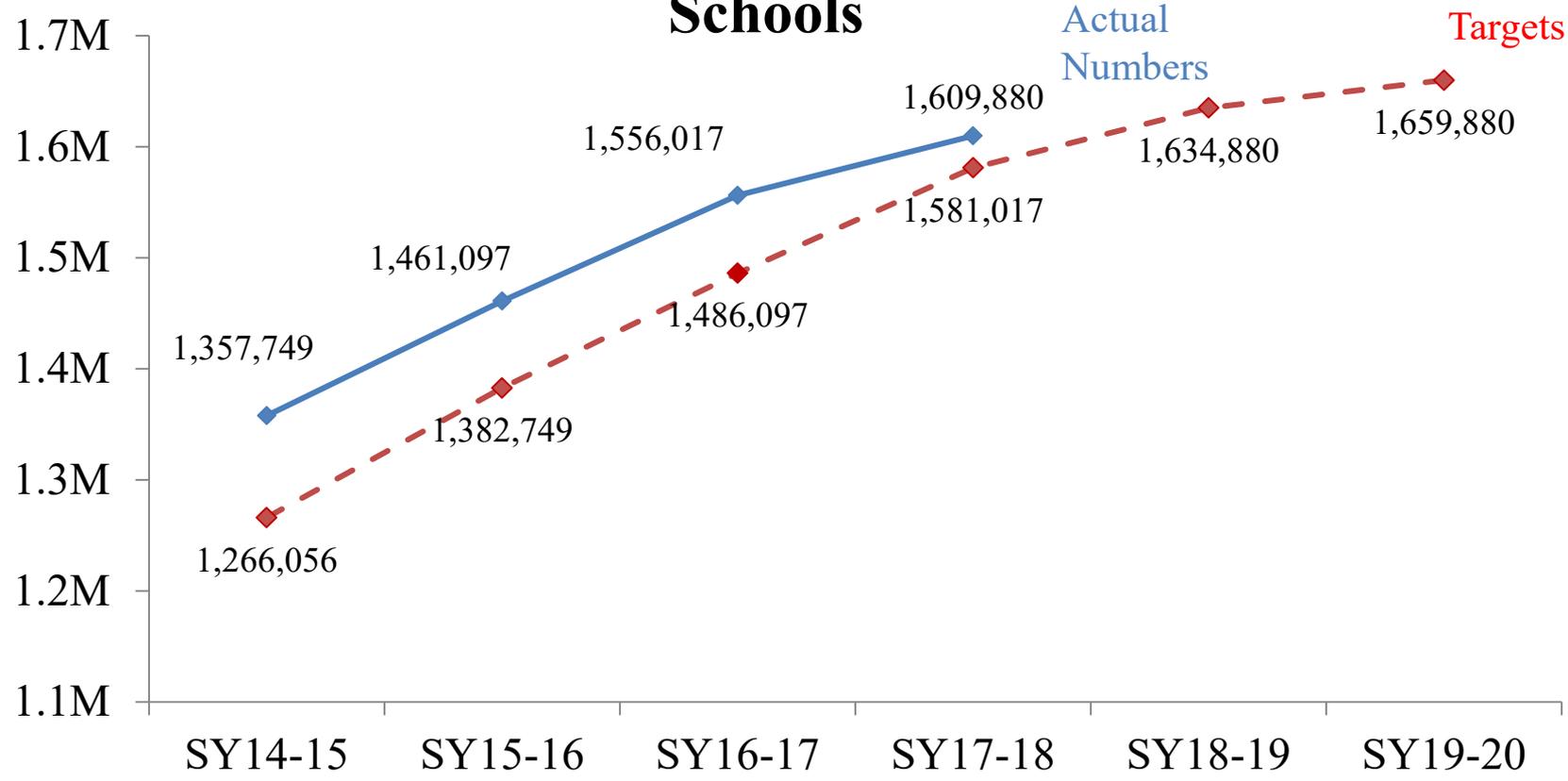


‡ In SY 2017-18: 134 new, CSP-supported charter schools opened and 101 charter schools expanded under a CSP grant.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics CCD (<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/>) and Grantee Annual Performance Reports.

# Key Indicators

## Student Enrollment in CSP-Funded Charter Schools



Source: National Center for Education Statistics CCD (<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/>) and Grantee Annual Performance Reports.

# Data Accuracy and Reliability

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The data for open and operating charter schools and for students enrolled in charter schools derive from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD) and Charter School Program (CSP) grant annual performance reports (where schools are identified in the grant applications). The CSP team will calculate the cumulative actual—using the self-reported data—in grantee annual performance reports and will provide the aggregated data for reporting. These data are compared to data in the NCES CCD (which includes a list of all charter schools, from which the CSP will identify which charter schools have received CSP funds). CSP staff will verify the data in annual performance reports with their grantees and with the CSP contractor, who will reconcile CSP-funded charter schools to the NCES CCD.

CSP and NCES will establish a process for reconciling and validating the data.

# Additional Information

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## Contributing Programs

### Organizations:

- Department of Education: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) and Institute of Education Sciences, including National Center for Education Statistics
- Charter School Program Grantees
- State Educational Agencies and State Authorizers
- Charter Management Organizations

### Program Activities:

- Grant Competitions
- Monitor existing grants and grantee reports on their performance.

### Regulations:

- The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA)

### Other Federal Activities:

- National Charter School Resource Center

## Stakeholder / Congressional Consultations

The Department conducted Congressional consultation as part of the development of its FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan and the FY 2018-19 Agency Priority Goals. Additionally, the work of CSP involves collaboration with Congress and key constituents to support the work of the programs and CSP grantees.