Virtual Public Charter School Pilot Program

Final Report
SL 2014-100 (SB 744)

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Overview

- Background and Legislation
- Student Enrollment and Withdrawals
- Instructional Programming
- Student Performance
- Implementation, Administration, and Funding
- Recommendations

Background

- North Carolina Session Law 2014-100 (SB 744, Budget Bill) required the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a pilot program to authorize the operation of two virtual charter schools serving grades K-12.

- The legislation authorized the pilot program to begin with the 2015-2016 school year and continue for a period of four years, ending with the 2018-2019 school year.

- Prior to the end of the four-year pilot, Session Law 2018-5 (SB 99, Budget Bill) extended the pilot program for an additional four years. Session Law 2022-59 (SB 671) authorized the virtual charter schools pilot program to continue **through the 2024-2025 school year**.

- This report satisfies the final reporting requirement of a November 15, 2022 report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee.

Pilot Legislation

- Pilot legislation outlines several requirements governing everything from enrollment to funding.

- The two virtual charters are subject to Article 14A of Chapter 115C with a few exceptions such as enrollment caps and teacher ratio mandates.

Enrollment

- Legislation caps enrollment at 2,592 beginning in the fourth year of the pilot (2018 school year). Also allows SBE to waive the max student enrollment beginning in 2018.

- Specific enrollment allowances were made through COVID related legislation.

Enrollment

- The pandemic-related enrollment expansions were not extended past the 2021-2022 school year. On August 4, 2022, at its regular meeting, the SBE adopted a motion regarding further enrollment expansions.

- **North Carolina Cyber Academy was permitted up to 2,705 students and North Carolina Virtual Academy was permitted up to 3,425 students.** The motion included the condition that no new students may be enrolled during the 2022-2023 school year to replace withdrawals, unless and until the enrollment at either school drops to the statutory cap of 2,592.

- By operation of law, with further action by the General Assembly, the maximum enrollment cap of 2,592 will resume for the 2022-2023 school year.

Enrollment: NC Cyber Academy

- Over the course of the pilot program, NCCA has grown from a student enrollment (Membership Last Day, Month 9) of 1,353 to 2,595.

- **Cumulative enrollment increase of 91.8%.**

- The cumulative withdrawals (Month 9) have varied over time with a low of 359 withdrawals in the 2020-2021 school year and a high of 719 withdrawals in the 2018-2019 school year.

Enrollment: NC Virtual Academy

• Over the course of the pilot program, NCVA has grown from a student enrollment (Membership Last Day, Month 9) of 1,283 to 3,116.

• **Cumulative enrollment increase of 142.8%.**

• The cumulative withdrawals (Month 9) have varied over time with a low of 547 withdrawals in the 2020-2021 school year and a high of 650 withdrawals in the 2018-2019 school year.

Instructional Programing

- Students receive both synchronous and asynchronous instruction.

- Average 2-3 hours synchronous instruction. Time online varies depending on student need and efficiency.

- Classes are offered in honors/AP.

- Wide variety of electives offered at each school.

Student Performance and Accountability Data

- Subject to the same accountability requirements as all brick and mortar charter schools:
  - A charter school shall conduct the student assessments required by the State Board of Education. § 115C-218.85(a)(3).
  - If a charter school earned an overall school performance grade of D or F, the charter school shall provide notice of the grade in writing to the parent or guardian of all students enrolled in that school. § 115C-218.65.
  - Reading Proficiency and Student Promotion requirements. § 115C-218.85(b).

Student Performance and Accountability Data

- **Low-performing charter schools** are those that earn an overall school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. § 115C-83.15.
- A **continually low-performing charter school** is a charter school that has been designated as low-performing for at least two of three consecutive years.
- For the entirety of the pilot program both virtual charter schools have earned an overall school performance grade of D and a growth score of "not met expected growth" and therefore are continually low-performing charter schools. 115C-218.94(a)

Academic Data – NC Cyber Academy

	Performance Grade	Growth Status	Growth Index
2021-2022	D	Not Met	-11.83
2018-2019	D	Not Met	-17.48
2017-2018	D	Not Met	-13.13
2016-2017	D	Not Met	-10.69
2015-2016	D	Not Met	-16.26

Subgroups – NC Cyber Academy (21-22)

Subgroup	Subgroup Letter Grade (SLG)	Subgroup Performance Score (SPS)
American Indian	I	
Asian	B	82
Black	F	39
Hispanic	D	45
Two or More Races	D	45
White	D	47
Economically Disadvantaged	F	37
English Learner	F	36
Students With Disabilities	F	31

Grade/Subject – NC Cyber Academy (21-22)

Subject	Not Proficient	Percent Level 3	Percent Level 4	Percent Level 5	Percent Level 3 and Above (GLP)	Percent Level 4 and Above (CCR)
Biology	65.0	9.3	20.1	5.6	35.0	25.7
English II	39.4	29.5	26.2	5.0	60.6	31.1
Math Grade 3	66.4	18.4	11.2	<5	33.6	15.2
Math Grade 3-8	73.2	14.0	9.6	<5	26.8	12.8
Math Grade 4	64.0	19.2	12.0	<5	36.0	16.8
Math Grade 5	78.1	10.0	8.1	<5	21.9	11.9
Math Grade 6	75.1	13.6	8.0	<5	24.9	11.3
Math Grade 7	69.5	14.6	14.2	<5	30.5	15.9
Math Grade 8	78.8	12.1	6.2	<5	21.2	9.2
NC Math 1 (9-12)	70.8	20.8	8.3	<5	29.2	8.3
NC Math 3 (9-12)	63.7	14.3	15.7	6.3	36.3	22.0

Grade/Subject – NC Cyber Academy (21-22)

Subject	Not Proficient	Percent Level 3	Percent Level 4	Percent Level 5	Percent Level 3 and Above (GLP)	Percent Level 4 and Above (CCR)
Reading Grade 3	59.4	15.6	15.6	9.4	40.6	25.0
Reading Grade 3-8	52.5	21.2	19.1	7.1	47.5	26.3
Reading Grade 4	53.6	17.6	21.6	7.2	46.4	28.8
Reading Grade 5	59.1	15.9	17.7	7.3	40.9	25.0
Reading Grade 6	57.2	23.3	13.5	6.0	42.8	19.5
Reading Grade 7	52.6	23.3	16.2	7.9	47.4	24.1
Reading Grade 8	42.4	24.8	26.7	6.1	57.6	32.8
Science Grade 5	58.9	15.2	22.2	<5	41.1	25.9
Science Grade 5&8	39.1	11.5	40.0	9.3	60.9	49.3
Science Grade 8	28.8	9.6	49.3	12.3	71.2	61.6

Academic Data – NC Virtual Academy

	Performance Grade	Growth Status	Growth Index
2021-2022	D	Not Met	-8.29
2018-2019	D	Not Met	-17.48
2017-2018	D	Not Met	-13.13
2016-2017	D	Not Met	-10.69
2015-2016	D	Not Met	-16.26

Subgroups – NC Virtual Academy (21-22)

Subgroup	Subgroup Letter Grade (SLG)	Subgroup Performance Score (SPS)
American Indian	I	
Asian	C	61
Black	D	40
Hispanic	D	53
Two or More Races	D	53
White	D	54
Economically Disadvantaged	D	44
English Learner	D	44
Students With Disabilities	F	29

Grade/Subject – NC Virtual Academy (21-22)

Subject	Not Proficient	Percent Level 3	Percent Level 4	Percent Level 5	Percent Level 3 and Above (GLP)	Percent Level 4 and Above (CCR)
Biology	48.6	15.4	27.6	8.4	51.4	36.0
English II	41.1	28.8	28.8	<5	58.9	30.1
Math Grade 3	61.0	19.1	19.1	<5	39.0	19.9
Math Grade 3-8	67.1	15.1	14.9	<5	32.9	17.9
Math Grade 4	66.2	16.0	13.1	<5	33.8	17.8
Math Grade 5	71.8	13.5	14.7	<5	28.2	14.7
Math Grade 6	67.8	15.9	13.2	<5	32.2	16.3
Math Grade 7	68.7	10.8	17.2	<5	31.3	20.5
Math Grade 8	66.4	15.5	12.6	5.4	33.6	18.1
NC Math 1 (9-12)	58.4	27.4	13.7	<5	41.6	14.2
NC Math 3 (9-12)	65.6	14.6	12.5	7.3	34.4	19.8

Grade/Subject – NC Virtual Academy (21-22)

Subject	Not Proficient	Percent Level 3	Percent Level 4	Percent Level 5	Percent Level 3 and Above (GLP)	Percent Level 4 and Above (CCR)
Reading Grade 3	56.4	23.2	13.3	7.1	43.6	20.3
Reading Grade 3-8	52.6	19.9	19.8	7.8	47.4	27.6
Reading Grade 4	48.8	16.0	23.0	12.2	51.2	35.2
Reading Grade 5	59.4	11.6	20.3	8.8	40.6	29.1
Reading Grade 6	53.4	24.0	17.9	<5	46.6	22.6
Reading Grade 7	49.4	19.3	20.8	10.4	50.6	31.2
Reading Grade 8	48.0	23.7	23.3	5.0	52.0	28.3
Science Grade 5	39.4	11.6	36.7	12.4	60.6	49.0
Science Grade 5&8	31.5	10.2	42.6	15.7	68.5	58.3
Science Grade 8	24.4	9.0	48.0	18.6	75.6	66.7

Comparative Data – NC Cyber Academy and State

	Grade Level Proficiency			College and Career Readiness		
	School	State	+/-	School	State	+/-
2021-2022	41.2	51.4	-10.2	24.1	34.0	-9.9
2018-2019	46.2	58.8	-12.6	33.0	44.5	-11.5
2017-2018	52.1	58.8	-6.7	41.4	49.2	-7.8
2016-2017	54.8	59.2	-4.4	44.9	49.2	-4.3
2015-2016	51.8	58.3	-6.5	41.6	48.8	-7.2

Comparative Data – NC Virtual Academy and State

	Grade Level Proficiency			College and Career Readiness		
	School	State	+/-	School	State	+/-
2021-2022	44.8	51.4	-6.6	27.5	34.0	-6.5
2018-2019	46.5	58.8	-12.3	33.5	44.5	-11.0
2017-2018	47.9	58.8	-10.9	38.7	49.2	-10.5
2016-2017	41.6	59.2	-17.6	32.0	49.2	-17.2
2015-2016	44.5	58.3	-13.8	35.0	48.8	-13.8

Virtual Academies

- 35 total virtual academies (acct data/LEA Code); includes the two virtual charters.

- 4 "I" – 12 "F" – 11 "D" – 8 "C"

- 6/35 academies qualified as Title I – both virtual charter schools are Title I.

- Of the "F" SPG academies – no correlation of grades served. Mix of PK/K-12, K-8, K-5, 6-12, 6-8.
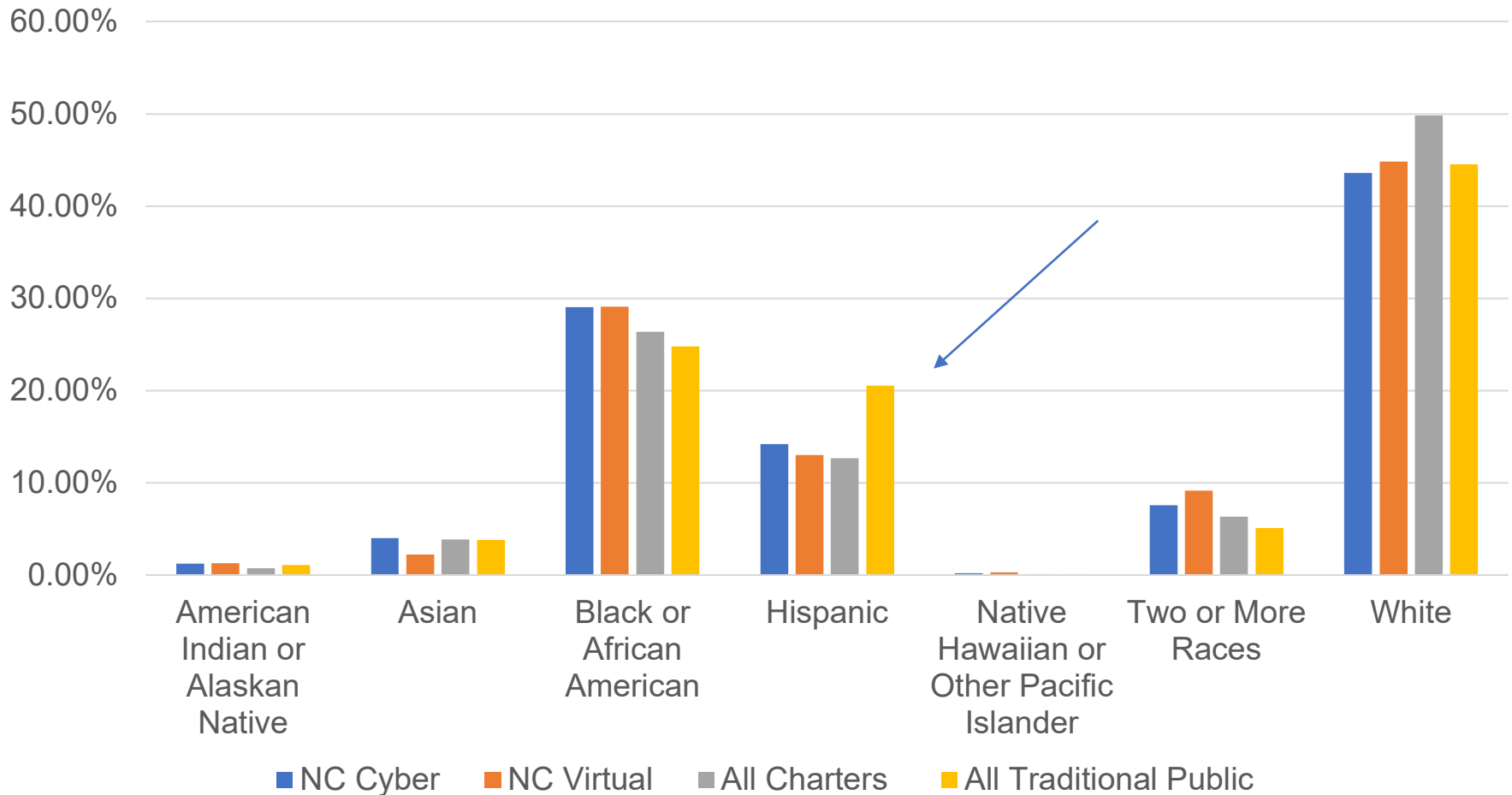
Graduation Rates

Four Year Graduation Rates

Legend: ■ North Carolina Cyber Academy ■ NC Virtual Academy ■ State of North Carolina

Year	North Carolina Cyber Academy	NC Virtual Academy	State of North Carolina
2018	5	60	86.3
2019	48.3	60.2	86.5
2020	51.1	71.5	87.6
2021	54.9	77.5	87
2022	35.1	81.5	86.2
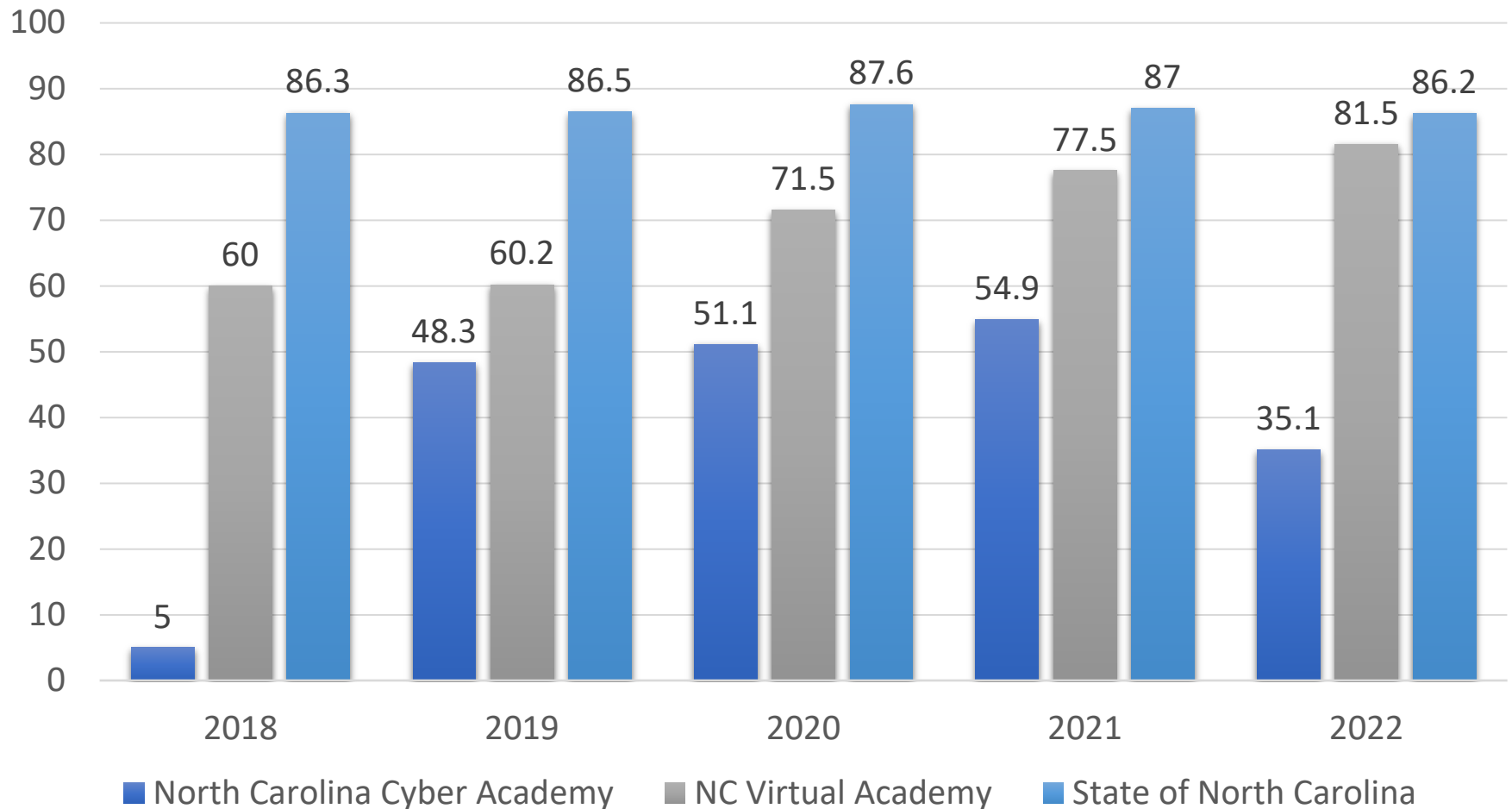
Student Demographics

Racial Demographics 2021

Student Demographics –EDS

Snapshot Date	NCCA	NCVA	All Charters	All Traditional Publics
12/1/2016	46.36%	66.65%	33.75%	50.32%
12/1/2017	17.65%	24.39%	23.17%	44.40%
12/1/2018	17.68%	26.97%	23.48%	46.68%
12/1/2019	13.01%	21.60%	20.75%	41.37%
12/1/2020	27.12%	7.28%	18.85%	38.03%
12/1/2021	52.53%	50.52%	25.29%	36.58%

Student Demographics- SWD

Snapshot Date	NCCA	NCVA	All Charters	All Traditional Publics
12/1/2016	9.99%	10.61%	9.79%	12.26%
12/1/2017	10.50%	13.63%	10.14%	12.29%
12/1/2018	11.88%	12.83%	10.24%	12.34%
12/1/2019	12.78%	13.34%	10.59%	12.41%
12/1/2020	13.93%	11.49%	10.20%	12.26%
12/1/2021	14.05%	11.00%	10.33%	12.27%

State Funding

FY15-16	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FY21-22	
7,650,416	9,809,373	12,179,237	15,341,079	14,381,277	15,622,906	20,313,499	NCCA
7,543,164	9,514,842	11,349,401	14,510,437	16,522,523	19,595,091	22,069,147	NCVA

Federal Funding

FY15-16	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FY21-22	
378,065	485,382	675,992	813,453	995,536	1,076,530	5,495,245	NCCA
462,808	463,349	824,089	1,658,632	1,635,398	3,001,055	4,889,430	NCVA

Recommendation

- 2020 recommendations
  - CSAB presentations
  - Surveys re student experience
  - Disaggregated data
- New recommendation
  - Virtual Charters become part of the standard charter school renewal process.
    - Timeline Transparency

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