The public charter sector faces three daunting challenges that it must meet to achieve its potential — and cannot meet without more innovation.

Even though charters generally exceed average U.S. achievement in reading and math, the U.S. is not very good: middle of pack or worse.

While the charter sector has helped low-income, urban young people (most of them children of color) close the gap, many students remain significantly under-served.

Although the charter sector has grown, waiting lists are long...and getting longer.

School operators (new entrants and current schools), policymakers, city-based education organizations, and funders...

...need to rethink everything: how they deliver instruction; use people, space, time, and technology; create incentives and remove barriers; incubate new models; and strategically invest in innovation. Read more at www.themindtrust.org/raising-the-bar.

Sources: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
WHY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS MUST BECOME EVEN MORE INNOVATIVE

In their first 24 years, public charter schools have shown impressive growth and encouraging success

Since 1999, a 600%-plus increase in public charter school enrollment

2,513,634
2013-14

Now in 43 states and DC

CREDO: In many urban areas, public charter students outperform students in traditional schools

+28
additional days of learning in READING

+40
additional days of learning in MATH

But “better” is not good enough

The United States lags other economically developed countries in math and reading

17th
of 34 OECD countries (PIBS 2012)

27th

Especially when so many students are under-served

The most “disconnected” youth

1 million+
teenage moms each year

400,000+
children in foster care

60,000+
youths in prison

6 million-plus students with disabilities

4.4 million English language learners

1 in 3 students in rural areas and small towns

And 1 million students are on waiting lists, while millions still struggle to get a quality education

ABOUT 1 MILLION STUDENTS
are on public charter school wait lists nationally

Washington, DC
36,191
Charter schools
18,455
enrollment over capacity

Miami-Dade, FL
92,080
public charter school
38,590
enrollment over capacity

Philadelphia, PA
26,710
public charter school
11,500
enrollment over capacity

Southern CA, San Francisco
$180,000,000
For-profit charter school
$6,830
per pupil

Public charter schools can help, but only if they become much more innovative. Read how at www.theministrust.org/raising-the-bar.

Sources: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools; The Center on Reinventing Public Education; Center for Research on Education Outcomes; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; The Anne L. Casey Foundation; The National Center for Education Statistics; United States Census Bureau; Public Impact; Progressive Policy Institute.
INCREASING GAINS AREN'T ENOUGH. THE PUBLIC CHARTER SECTOR NEEDS A NEW WAVE OF INNOVATION.

Better_Broader_Bigger

The public charter sector faces three daunting challenges that it must meet to achieve the potential—and cannot meet without more innovation:

Even though charters grow at record rates, enrollments are still only about 7 to 8 percent of public school equity.

While the charter sector has helped prepare students for college or careers, many more students could benefit from options not currently offered.

School operators (new entrants and current schools), policymakers, city-based education organizations, and funders can help unleash charter schools’ innovative power and improve education for more students.

School operators could improve the current model

**SAME SPACE, PRICE AS MANY STUDENTS**

- OPEN MORE THAN ONE GRADE 1-8
- Open multiple projects. 1-8 grades
- 1-20 students per grade, $10,000 available

New building and staff, but everything else is new

- SAME BUILDING, SAME STUDENTS
- 600 students, $10,000 available
- Leadership team, teachers, materials, equipment, and staff

"BARRIERS" TO SERVE MORE STUDENTS

- New school, new building, new staff—can take 2,000 kids on a wait list—
- New school, new building, new staff—take 2,000 kids on a wait list—

What do you do next?

- Share your own story of urban school innovation
- Invest in more urban schools
- Deliberately authorize for innovation
- Enable more rapid innovation via “micro-charter”

Policymakers could redirect public investments

Invest public dollars in innovation-seeking entrepreneurs and schools

Deliberately authorize for innovation

Enable more rapid innovation via “micro-charter”

City-based education organizations could learn from other cities

- Chicago
- Boston
- Minneapolis
- Cleveland
- Denver
- Washington, DC
- Los Angeles
- San Francisco
- New York City

Funders could prioritize innovation

- To succeed, more philanthropists will need to take more risks and invest more creatively. Several strategies include:
- Invest in entirely new models
- Create an innovation division
- Engage in more intermediaries
- Conduct market research to playtest needs

Read more about the innovation imperative for public charter schools at www.themindtrust.org/raising-the-bar.