



15+ Years of Virtual  
Schooling Experience

Oregon Charter Academy (ORCA) is an online, tuition-free charter school serving grades K-12. ORCA students utilize 21st Century Skills of communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking to prepare for the rapidly changing economies of tomorrow.

Formerly, Oregon Connections Academy, Oregon Charter Academy went independent from the Pearson corporate managed school model in order to improve our learning platform, curriculum, and student technology, through the ability to make programmatic changes based on stakeholder needs.

### Why Oregon Charter Academy?

- ASCEND Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program
  - Career Pathways in Computer Science, Medical Science, Veterinary Science, Early Childhood Education, and Business Management
- AVID: Advancement via Individual Determination
  - AVID is a college readiness program designed to close achievement gaps and prepare all students for success after high school.
- College Now (dual credit) opportunities with Linn Benton Community College, Chemeketa Community College, and Willamette Promise
- Student Government for students in grades 5-12
- National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society
- Teen Parent Program
- Partnership with NASA and the ARISS Program
  - Oregon Charter Academy was one of 10 organizations (and the only virtual school) nationwide involved in the ARISS program where students were able to interview astronaut Shannon Walker aboard the International Space Station in December

### What the data shows:

- Oregon Charter Academy continues to improve their graduation rate and anticipates an increase of 5% over the previous school year, despite the challenges of COVID-19
  - Since 2009, the 4-year cohort graduation rate has improved almost 40%
- Prior to COVID-19, Oregon Charter Academy increased their regular attendee rate by 22.8%
- Over 700 students have earned college credit through our College Now partnerships
- On average, 90% of students who attend ORCA for their entire senior year will graduate, regardless of credit deficiency rate.

### Challenges for virtual schools:

- Students in mobility: Nearly 65% of students enroll in ORCA after their freshman year
- 82% of students in mobility started their senior year credit deficient
  - 39% were more than 4 credits deficient entering their senior year
- ODE's published graduation rate for students in mobility is 50%, whereas ORCA's graduation rate for students in mobility is nearly 59%

### Oregon Charter Academy is supporting at-risk and underserved students:

#### External Factors:

- 15% of ORCA high school students listed having a family stress factor at enrollment
- 20.9% of students enrolling have mental health concerns needing a virtual setting.
- 11% of enrolling students have physical health concerns needing an alternative setting.
- 40.7% of students enrolled due to needing a more flexible schedule than that offered in a traditional setting.

#### Previous School Factors:

- 32.9% of students stated they enrolled due to struggling academically in their previous setting
- 25% of students shared they were bullied in their previous school.

ORCA has been able to support students' success in graduating who were at-risk of not graduating (students with parents incarcerated, caring for grandparents or siblings, working full time jobs, severe health issues, etc.)