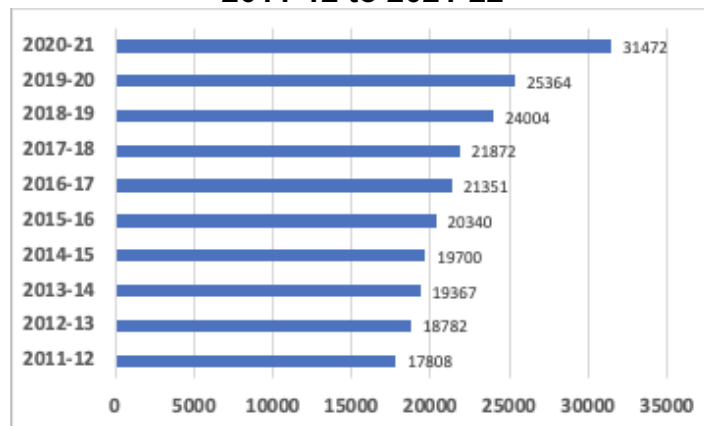


Idaho’s Challenging Charter Facilities Financing Landscape

Idaho is perennially one of America’s fastest growing states on a per capita basis. Our state has seen 17.3% growth in population over the last decade, and only Utah has seen more growth with 18.4% population growth since 2010. Census officials reported in April 2021 that Idaho added 271,449 residents in the last decade — 52,041 of them in the last year alone — bringing the state’s total population to 1,839,106. Idaho’s growth rate for the last decade dwarfed the national average of 7.4%. This rapid growth has strained the ability of Idaho’s public schools to keep up with new seat demand. The Meridian Southern Rim Coalition, an ad hoc group that advocates for thoughtfully managed planning and development in Meridian (one of America’s fastest growing communities) simply states, “Our schools are overcrowded.” This was a challenge pre-COVID-19, but it has become a danger since then. Space matters.

Public charter schools in Idaho over the last decade, but especially over the last five years, have played a critical role in serving as a “safety valve” for the creation of new school seats in overcrowded school districts (see Graph 1).

**Graph 1: Idaho’s Growing Charter School Sector by Student Enrollment
2011-12 to 2021-22**



Data come from Idaho State Department of Education - <https://www.sde.idaho.gov/finance/#attendance>

