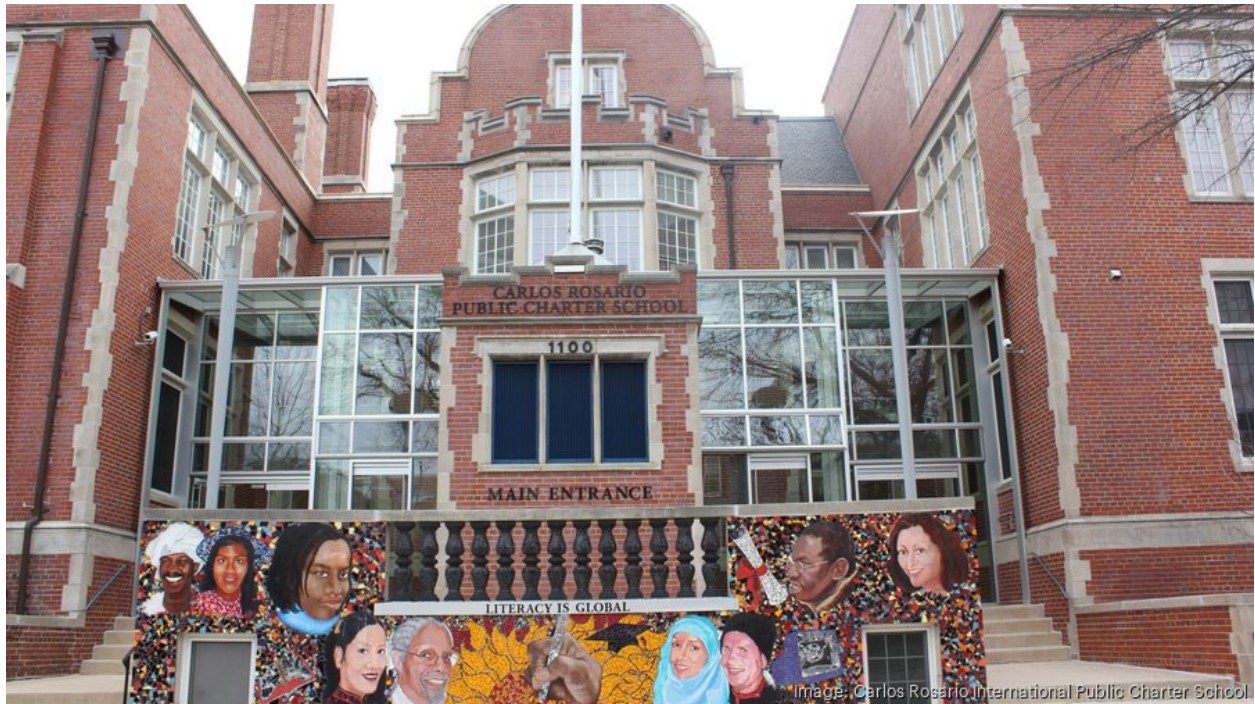


Education

# What's driving record enrollment in D.C. workforce development program



The Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School has two campuses, with its flagship one on Harvard Street NW in Columbia Heights.  
Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School



By [Ana Lucía Murillo](#) – Staff Reporter, Washington Business Journal  
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The school is considering adding new programs in such fields as pharmacy tech and cosmetology.

A record number of students signed up for the fall semester of adult education classes at D.C.'s Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School, driven by an influx of new immigrants seeking better opportunities in the U.S.

Enrollment across Carlos Rosario's programs was 2,151 for the 2024-2025 school year, a 2% increase from the previous year and 1% more than the last full, pre-pandemic school year.

While the increase is somewhat modest, CEO Allison Kokkoros said it reflects the nonprofit school's enhanced outreach efforts as well as the impact of the arrival of scores of migrants, such as those fleeing the economic crisis in Venezuela.

"Our enrollment has always reflected what's happening in the world," she said. For decades the school has focused on providing adult education to the District's immigrant community. That includes English classes, GED programs and a number of career training programs in nursing, technology, teaching, small business and entrepreneurship, culinary arts and more. Now, it's looking to enhance its program offerings to make sure it's connecting what will be thousands of students graduating with varied work skills with available jobs.

Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School has graduated roughly 80,000 students and employs 367 people across its main school in Columbia Heights and secondary campus in Eckington. More than 80 countries are represented in its student body, Kokkoros said, and the school's main source of funding is a per-pupil allotment from the District of Columbia, though it also seeks out other grants and donations. The District's immigrant population grew by about 7,000 in 2023, according to data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), an increase of roughly 150% from 2019, the last full year before the pandemic.

The uptick in enrollment could help stabilize the finances of Carlos Rosario, which is digging out from the financial [impact of the pandemic](#). Income and revenue have fluctuated over the past decade, swinging between narrow losses and slim profits, according to its recent form 990s. In the fiscal year ending in June 2023, Carlos Rosario reported revenue of \$33.1 million but with expenses of \$33.8 million, resulting in a \$700,000 loss.

Net assets were \$16.9 million at the end of June 2023. Kokkoros said the pandemic led to lower enrollment and thus revenue. "At the same time, we needed to dial up investments to address immediate student needs," she said, such as funding digital devices to support hybrid instruction.



Allison Kokkoros is CEO of D.C.'s Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School.  
Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School

Over the past year, she said increased enrollment helped it end fiscal year 2024 — for which its tax info is not yet available — in the green.

Now, with the help of the group's board, which includes [past CEO of Accenture Federal Services](#) John Goodman and [former Capital Hotels & Suites co-owner](#) Hector Torres, it's evaluating the region's evolving workforce needs to ensure that it's providing training programs for the most in-demand jobs. The evaluation is in "the early stages," Kokkoros said, but it's looking into potentially adding training programs in pharmacy tech and cosmetology, to name a few.

Software developers, health care practitioners, information security analysts, project management specialists and general and operations managers are among the high-growth occupations in Greater Washington that pay at least median wage in the region, according to the D.C. Policy Center. Overall, the number of job openings in D.C. was down slightly in July to 41,000 from 43,000 a year earlier, according to data from the Bureau of Labor statistics.

In adding any new programs, Kokkoros said it's crucial that the school select paths that are "not a dead-end job, but an opportunity to grow."

<https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2024/09/19/carlos-rosario-school-allison-kokkoros-workforce.html?ana=emailafriend>