Conclusion

To start, based on the Top Five DataFrame I created, it is clear to see that Charter schools produce higher overall test results. Every school in the top 5 is a charter school and every school in the bottom five is a district school. There are many explanations to this, an obvious one being total student population. Charter schools make up most of the small and medium size student bodies, meaning they have less than 2000 students. A smaller student body leads to smaller class sizes. This creates a smaller teacher to student ratio, giving each student more attention and one on one time with their teacher. For many students, just feeling seen and heard by their teacher can encourage them to work hard and excel on test scores. Teachers also can pay more attention to students who are struggling and can create a plan to improve their learning.

On the other hand, it was surprising to see that schools with much higher per capita budgets, were the schools with the lowest overall passing rates. Charter schools are tuition-free; however, they often do not provide transportation. For many low-income students, sometimes with two working parents, it would be much harder for them to provide their own transportation to school. Most district schools provide busses and if not, they are in walking distance from the student’s home. Charter schools end up attracting higher-income students, who are set up better for success, through more time from parents and even access to outside resources like expensive tutors. Higher-income students generally perform better in school due to a handful of outside factors, which is why the Charter schools are seeing much higher overall passing rates. Therefore, the correlation between low per capita budget and higher passing rates has less to do with money and more to do with the type of students that Charter schools attract. In addition, we see much higher budgets in district schools. We are missing a lot of information in this analysis about what exactly the money is being used for. In district schools, a lot of the budget would be going towards paying for school busses and providing free lunches to those who need them. The per capita budget does not mean that that 100% of the money is going towards bettering students learning in the classroom. Therefore, the budget is not necessarily a good indicator of success.