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Charter School Research

Finding Out the Facts

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Agenda

- School districts as authorizers
- Charter school effectiveness
- Impact of charter school policies
- Charter school resources
- NSBA position on charter schools
- Advantages to school board-sponsored charters
- Policy challenges

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Background

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What are charter schools?

- Public Schools
- The Charter
- Authorizing Agencies
- Management Organizations

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What are charter schools?

- In general, charter schools do not 'skim'
- Charter school are no more segregated

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School Districts as Authorizers

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Who is allowed to authorize charter schools?

Local school board alone	IL, MD, OR, PA, TN, VA, WY
State board of education alone	CT, MA, NJ
Local school board and State board of education	AR, DE, LA, NH, NM, RI, TX
First Local school board then State board of education	AK, IA, KS
State charter school review board	D.C., HI
Local school board and State charter school commission	GA, ID, SC, UT
Combination (in some cases including higher education and not-for-profit)	AZ, CA, CO, FL, IN, MI, MN, MO, NV, NY, NC, OH, OK, WI

Source: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, State Charter Law Rankings Database, 2010*Mississippi's charter law expired at the end of 2009, bringing the total to eleven states without charter school legislation: AL, KY, ME, MS, MT, NE ND, SD, VT, WA, WV

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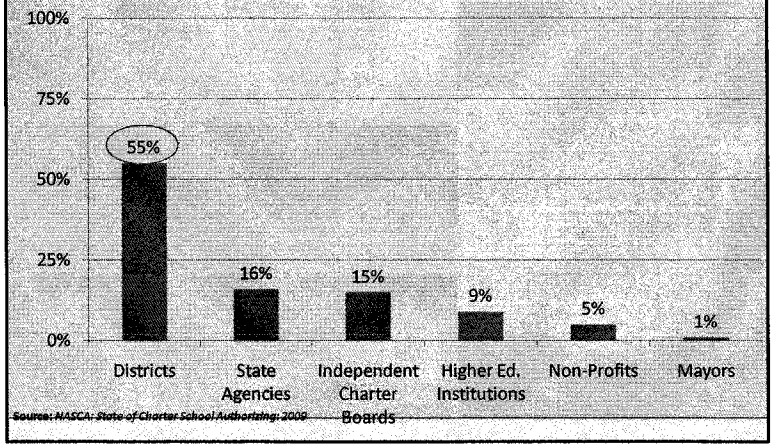
Percent of Charter Schools by Authorizer



Source: NASCA: State of Charter School Authorizing: 2009

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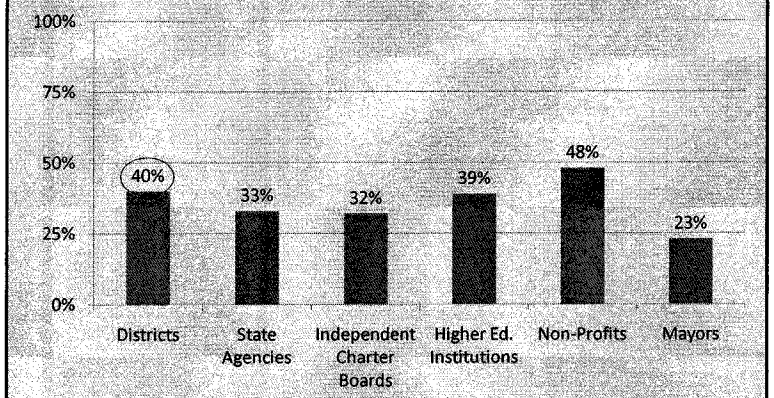
Application Approval Rate, 2008-09



Source: NASCA: State of Charter School Authorizing: 2009

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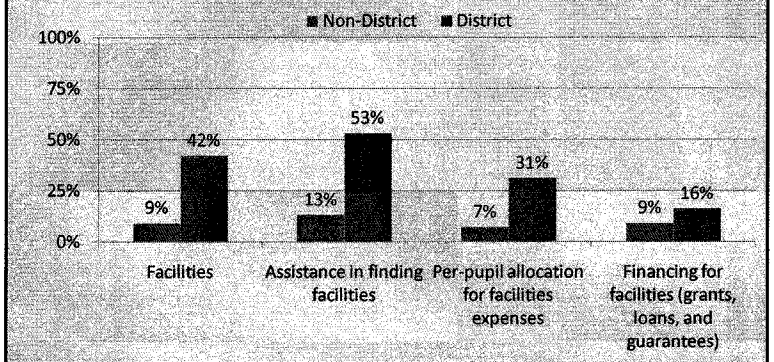
Facilities Assistance Provided to Schools



Source: NASCA: State of Charter School Authorizing: 2009

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School districts as authorizers

- School districts are the most common charter school authorizer
- School boards are more likely to assist their charter schools in obtaining facilities

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Charter School Effectiveness

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Majority of charter schools perform no better than traditional public schools

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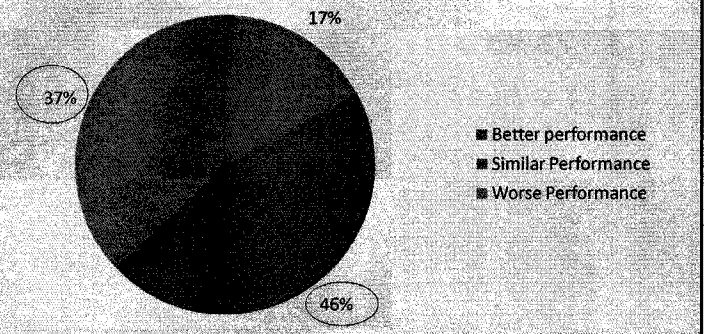
Charter School Performance Compared to Traditional Public Schools



Source: Center for Research on Education Outcomes, 2009

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Charter school effectiveness varies by state

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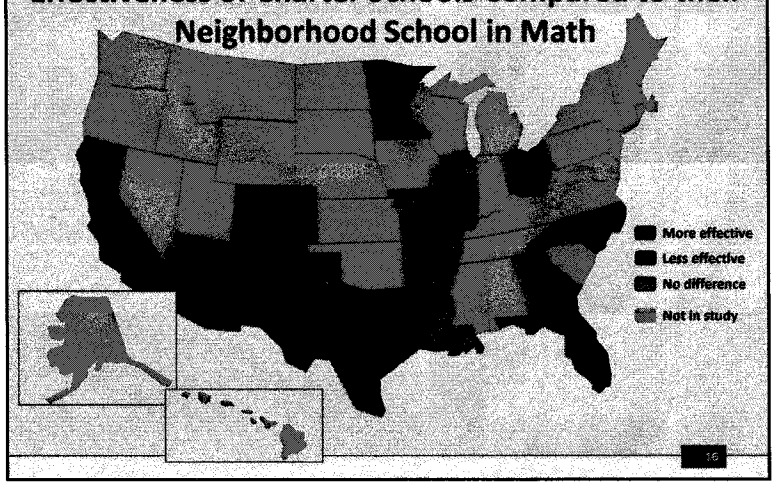
Effectiveness of Charter Schools Compared to their Neighborhood School in Math



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Charter School Effectiveness by State

	Reading	Math
Arizona	Lower	Lower
Arkansas	Higher	Higher
Colorado	Higher	Higher
California	Higher	Lower
DC	No Difference	No Difference
Florida	Lower	Lower
Georgia	No Difference	Lower
Illinois	No Difference	Higher
Louisiana	Higher	Higher
Minnesota	Lower	Lower
Missouri	Higher	Higher
North Carolina	Higher	Lower
New Mexico	Lower	Lower
Ohio	No Difference	Lower
Texas	Lower	Lower

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Impact on different student groups

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Student Groups

- **Minority students**
  - **Mixed results**
- **Low-income students**
  - **Positive impact**
- **English Language Learners**
  - **Positive impact**
- **Special Education**
  - **Similar results**

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Charter high schools

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Charter high schools

- State test scores
- College entrance exams
- College going rates

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What is working in effective charter schools?

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What is working?

- Smaller schools
- Smaller classes
- More quality instructional time

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Charter School Effectiveness

- Most charter schools are no more effective than traditional public schools.
- Impact on different student groups is mixed.
- Charter high schools may have a positive impact on college going results.

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Impact of State Policies

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Multiple Authorizers

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Allow Appeals

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Cap on Number of Charters

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Impact of Policies

- Multiple Authorizers
  - Negative Impact
- Allow Appeals
  - Positive Impact
- State Cap
  - Negative Impact

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Impact of Policies

- State policies do impact charter school effectiveness
- The impact of state policies vary by state

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Teachers

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Teachers

- More diverse
- Less experienced
- Paid less

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Funding

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Funding

???

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Research Conclusion

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Research Conclusion

- School boards authorize the majority of charter schools
- The impact of charter schools on student outcomes are mixed
- State polices impact the effectiveness of charter schools.

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Research Conclusion

Learn from what is working in charter schools

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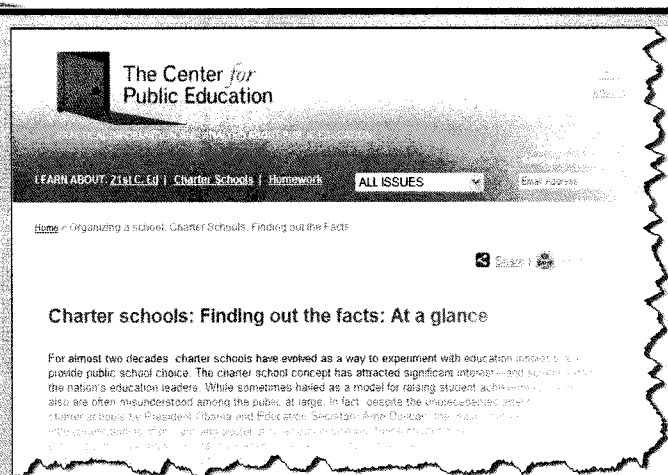

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NSBA's Position on Charters

NSBA has had a longstanding position in support of charter schools. We simply believe they should be established by school boards in the communities where they are located.

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Advantages to School Board-Sponsored Charters

- They work in cooperation with the local school district, not in competition with it.
- The charter school and the school district may in turn learn creative approaches and problem solving from one another in a collaborative fashion.

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More Advantages...

- Financing will be fair and balanced and follow general accounting principles.
- The public trust over public dollars will be maintained, and there will be accountability to the public.

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Why Are We Talking about Charter Schools?

At the federal level, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is an enthusiastic supporter of charter schools based on his Chicago Public Schools' experience as the CEO. They have received an inordinate amount of media attention, too.

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Secretary Duncan...

- Created 75 in Chicago to replace low-performing schools.
- Like most secretaries in recent memory, he wants to recreate what he has most recently accomplished and knows best.
- BUT the results are mixed, and the ones that were successful quite often were better because of small class size and other factors that traditional public schools could also adopt if given the opportunity or funding

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More Duncan....

- In the Race to the Top competition, Secretary Duncan extended a preference to states with more charters. Other states, without charters when they applied, promised to pass laws or enhance policies to encourage the start up or ease the restrictions on charters.

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Research and Experience Have Shown

That charters clearly are an option, but not the universal cure-all that many media outlets and enthusiastic reformers suggest.

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NSBA state affiliates have concerns about the growth of charters because of course their members do.

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What Are the Public Policy Challenges with Charters?

- Charters pose a financial threat to traditional school districts in some states.
- Charters are far from universally-successful, and their lack of productivity unfortunately reflects on public schools, even though there is not always a comparable accountability.

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More Public Policy Challenges

- Charters lead the general public to believe they have comparable governance, but they typically remove themselves from the vibrant, representative government role and in reality are in a passive business model.
- Their lack of public meetings and governance give them a pass on media attention, public traction, and therefore public accountability.

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