

PURE FACT SHEET

Problems with Illinois charter schools

2009 Stanford report, “Multiple Choice: Charter School Performance in 16 States,”
from the *Illinois* state report:

- Illinois Blacks enrolled in charter schools do **significantly worse in reading** compared to their counterparts in traditional public schools. Black students receive **no significant benefit or loss** as a result of charter school attendance compared to their counterparts in traditional public schools in math.
- Hispanics enrolled in charter schools do **significantly worse in reading and math** compared to their counterparts in traditional public schools.
- Special education students and English-language learners in Illinois receive **no significant benefit** from charter school attendance compared with their counterparts in traditional public schools in reading or math.
- Charter schools are **not creating significantly different results** for students compared to their virtual peers from traditional public schools **in reading**.
- New charter school students have **an initial loss of learning in reading and math** compared with their counterparts in traditional schools. In subsequent years, charter school students **continue to incur a loss of learning in reading** from charter school attendance while the impact on math becomes insignificant. By the third year of attendance, there is **no significant impact** from charter school attendance on either reading or math.

The Illinois data does show some benefit for charter school students across the board in math, and for low-income charter students in reading and math.

What the public also needs to know:

- Charter schools were established in law to be better than traditional public schools, not on a par with them, and certainly not **worse places for students**.
- Arne Duncan's claim that Chicago's charters are dramatically better than neighborhood schools is **not supported** by any non-CPS study, including the new Stanford report.
- Chicago's charters serve **fewer low-income, special education, and limited English proficient speaking students**. They select their students in other ways, too, as detailed by Marcia Williams, a teacher who posted the following on June 17, 2009, on the Catalyst magazine “Catalyst Notebook” blog site: *“One of the advantages that charter schools have over public schools is that any student who is enrolled in a charter school, that charter school can drop a student if the school feels that student is not an ‘asset’ to the school. They can transfer a student out of their school anytime of the school year and that happen before testing occurs. Believe me, this happens more than the press is aware of. Several students who sat in my classroom and were new to the school were dropped from the charter school they attended for a variety of reasons. But two of the main reasons were for academic or behavioral issues. So now these students enroll in the good old public schools. Public schools can’t just decide to drop a students because of behavioral or academic problems.”*

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