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REPORT: OAKLAND CHARTER SCHOOLS OUTPERFORM DISTRICT PEERS WITH POOR, MINORITY STUDENTS

Charter Schools in Oakland Outperform at Every Grade Level, with High-Poverty Students and with Minority Students

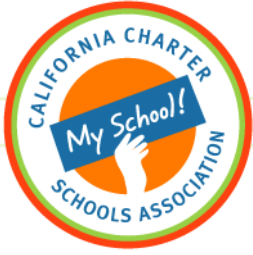
Oakland, CA — Charter public schools in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) are outperforming their district public school peers at all grade levels, with high-poverty students, with English Language Learner (ELL) students and with ethnic minority students with the exception of whites, according to a new report released today by the California Charter Schools Association. The report also found that these gains are most prominent at the middle and high school levels, and that these gains are increasing over time.

Entitled, “*A Longitudinal Analysis of Charter School Performance in Oakland Unified School District*,” the report analyzed results from California’s Academic Performance Index (API) Growth results and also assessed, in the most detailed analysis to date, charter schools’ performance compared to their most “similarly-matched” Oakland district public schools that students would otherwise likely attend.

The report found that nearly seven in 10 charter schools (69 percent) on average outperformed their three most “similarly-matched” district schools on 2008 API Growth results.

The report also found that charter schools significantly outperformed district public schools in middle (836 to 624) and high schools (688 to 528) and slightly outperformed district schools at the elementary school level (725 to 705). Of the top ten highest-performing public schools in Oakland, all secondary schools were charter schools.

Oakland’s charter schools outperformed Oakland’s district public schools on behalf of Asian, African-American and Latino students, as well as ELL and high-poverty students while they slightly trailed in the performance of white students. Of all subgroups, charter schools most significantly outperformed among African-American and socioeconomically disadvantaged students (a gap of 77 and 76 points, respectively).



“Charter schools in Oakland are shattering the myth which says that, if you are a poor or minority student, you will not do well in our public schools,” said Peter Thorp, Chief of Staff of the California Charter Schools Association. “Charter schools are making incredible strides at succeeding with students that have not historically done as well in traditional public schools. We urge administrators and educators to closely and openly analyze what these laboratories of innovation are doing right so that we can stimulate improvements in district public schools.”

The report also found that Oakland’s charter schools are serving a significantly higher percentage of Latino students, a higher average percentage of high-poverty (low socio-economic status) students, roughly an equal percentage of African-American students, and a lower percentage of Asian-American and white students.

Oakland Unified currently has 33 charter public schools serving nearly 8,000 students. Seventeen percent of the district’s public school students attend charter schools, meaning that Oakland Unified has one of the highest percentages of charter school enrollment in California.

The analysis used California’s API data collected from the California Department of Education during the 2005-06 through the 2007-08 academic school years to conduct a district-level longitudinal assessment of charter schools and district public schools, including elementary, middle and high school levels, as well as specified subgroup populations.

The analysis compared charters’ performance to their three most similar traditional public school peers within a five-mile radius. All but one charter school had three similar matches. Similar schools were selected based on the school’s enrollment, racial composition, average parent level of education, and free/reduced price lunch participation, methodology based on a foundation of national research. The report was authored by Stanford Ph.D. Aisha Toney, Senior Data Analyst for the California Charter Schools Association.

To download a copy of the full report and executive summary, visit: www.myschool.org

About the California Charter Schools Association

The California Charter Schools Association is the membership and professional organization serving 750 charter public schools that serve over a quarter million charter school students in the state of California. The Association’s mission is to improve student achievement by supporting and expanding California’s quality charter public school movement. www.myschool.org.

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