

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
EXAMINING CHARTER SCHOOLS IN AMERICA
THE A. ALFRED TAUBMAN FORUM ON PUBLIC POLICY

Washington, D.C.
Tuesday, April 26, 2016

Welcome and Introduction:

DARRELL WEST
Vice President and The Douglas Dillon Chair, Governance Studies
The Brookings Institution

Past, Present, and Future of Charter Schools:

MICHAEL HANSEN, Moderator
Senior Fellow and Deputy Director, Brown Center on Education Policy
The Brookings Institution

HOWARD L. FULLER
Distinguished Professor of Education and Director, Institute for the Transformation of Learning
Marquette University

JON VALANT
Postdoctoral Fellow, Education Research Alliance for New Orleans
Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Economics, Tulane University

NINA REES
President and Chief Executive Officer, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

The Research Evidence on Charter School Effects, Academic and Otherwise:

MICHAEL HANSEN, Moderator
Senior Fellow and Deputy Director, Brown Center on Education Policy
The Brookings Institution

ROBIN LAKE
Director, Center on Reinventing Public Education
Affiliate Faculty, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, University of Washington Bothell

DOUGLAS N. HARRIS
Professor of Economics and Schleider Foundation Chair in Public Education
Tulane University

RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG
Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation

The Role of Charters in Public Education and Communities:

WILLIAM GALSTON, Moderator
Senior Fellow and Ezra K. Zilkha Chair, Governance Studies
The Brookings Institution

ARNE DUNCAN
Former Secretary, U.S. Department of Education

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. WEST: Good morning. I am Darrell West, vice president of governance studies and director of the Center for Technology and Innovation here at the Brookings Institution. And I would like to welcome you to our Seventh Annual A. Alfred Taubman Forum on Public Policy. And we are webcasting this event live, so we would also like to welcome our viewers from around the country. And we will be archiving the video for this event, so any of you who would like to view this afterwards will have an opportunity to do so through the Brookings.edu website. We also welcome any comments or suggestions and questions that you have. We have set up a Twitter feed with #charterschools, that's #charterschools, so if you wish to post any comments during the forum, you are welcome to do so. And sometimes the online discussion as interesting as the discussion that will take place here today as well.

So last year, Mr. Taubman, the sponsor of this event, passed away at the age of 91 and we would like to thank his family for their generous support and we're very grateful for all that they have done and continue to do. And one of Mr. Taubman's top interests was education. He became very involved with the charter school movement in 1980 when he founded the Michigan Partnership for New Education. And the partnership's goal was to improve the way K to 12 teachers were being trained. He later supported Michigan's first charter school, which opened in 1994, and then in 1996, he cofounded the Leona Group, which is a charter school company. And today, that company operates 60 schools, 60 charter schools in Michigan, Arizona, Indiana, Ohio and Florida.

So we thought it was fitting, several decades later to see how charter schools are doing. What are they doing well and what are they doing poorly. What adjustments need to be made and what role should they play going forward in American education. So today, we are bringing together a diverse set of experts to discuss these topics. We have three panels that will cover various aspects of charter schools, so our first panel will discuss the past, present and future of charter schools. That will be followed by a discussion of the charter school effect on education, and then we will close with a conversation between Brookings senior fellow Bill Galston and former secretary of education Arne Duncan about charter schools.

And by the way, Secretary Duncan has just joined our Brown Center for Educational

Policy at Brookings as a non-resident senior fellow and he will be writing for us and participating in various events.

So to moderate the first session, I want to introduce my colleague, Mike Hansen. Mike is a senior fellow in governance studies at Brookings and also the deputy director of the Brown Center. He is a leading expert on school reform, teacher quality and education policy, so I will turn the discussion over to Mike.

MR. HANSEN: Thank you. Let's start with a brief history of charter schools. The first charter school law was enacted in Minnesota in 1991 and those doing the calculations will realize this marks the 25th anniversary of that enactment. So it's a good time to look retrospectively at what we have learned from that experience and what we can learn moving forward as we move forward into the future with charter schools. During this past 25 years, the concept of what a charter school is and how it serves the students has also evolved over time. So from early ideas of teacher led schools unfettered by bureaucratic burdens to today's manifestation of charters is being set up as college prep success academies for urban youth, this definition of charter schools has proved to be a fluid concept over time.

And consequently, a diverse range of people have endorsed the idea of charter schools over the years, and interestingly, because the, because charters are so different, some who have endorsed charters on one hand also are critics in other cases. And so this sets up an interesting conversation and we hope that during this debate we can perhaps see some of those different perspectives.

During the 25 years, laws have been passed enacting charter schools in a total of 43 states plus the District of Columbia, and now roughly two and a half million students are now enrolled in charter schools, about 6.5 percent of school aged children, including my three kids. So, and we have 64 in, currently we have 6,400 unique charter schools serving youth throughout the country. Under these enrollment figures though, there are new and emerging issues as charter schools become mature schools in some cities, or even begin to claim significant shares of students from the traditional public school sector.

Our first panel will discuss this history, where charters sit now, and future dilemmas that may shape charters and their oversight in the years ahead. And so on this panel, I am joined by first Jon

Valant, furthest away from me. Jon is a postdoctoral fellow in the Tulane University Department of Economics and he is also working at the Education Research Alliance for New Orleans, where he studies the city's school reforms after Hurricane Katrina. Next, I'm joined by Dr. Howard Fuller. Howard Fuller, he is a distinguished professor of education and the founder and director of the Institute for the Transformation of Learning at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Prior to his appointment at Marquette, Dr. Fuller served as the superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools from 1991 to 1995 and that which was in the early days of charter schools there in Wisconsin. And finally, to my immediate left, we have Nina Rees. Nina Rees is the president and chief executive officer of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, the leading non-profit education committed to advancing charter school movement.

Okay. So why don't we go ahead and hop into this conversation. First I'm going to turn to Jon. Jon, I know some of your recent work has an element where you have looked at the research and the expansion of charter schools over time. So I would like you to provide a little overview of what the charter school looks like, how it's grown to its current position and where you expect charters to go in the future.

MR. VALANT: Sure, so thank you, and thanks everyone for coming. So, as Mike said, we're 25 years in and after 25 years, we're at somewhere between two and a half and three million students now in charter schools in the U.S. which is about 67 percent of the country. And on one hand, that sounds like a lot of kids and it is a lot of kids. That's three million kids who are being educated in the charter schools. On the other hand, that's 94 percent of public school students who are in a traditional public school or a magnet school or not in a charter. And it's certainly not the case that that six percent is spread uniformly across the population across the country. So there are some states where that percentage is much, much higher. So in Arizona and Louisiana, we're seeing 10 percent or more. There are states in which it's zero, states that don't have charter laws. And so one thing to always keep in mind with charter schools is that the state is an important player and state policy matters a great deal.

But probably the most important divide, both with respect to the effects we're seeing from charters, and then also to where we're seeing them is urban versus non-urban charters. So when it comes to large cities, to keep throwing a few numbers at you, it's about 15 percent of public school

students, it's approaching 15 percent of public school students are currently in a charter, which compares to about two percent for rural areas. So we're seeing far more, a much greater presence in urban areas, and we're seeing more positive effects on test scores for students in urban areas.

Nina's organization, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, puts out a very nice report every year, so on these market shares, and sort of how many students are attending charters. And as you look across some of the biggest cities in the country, it's pretty striking some of these numbers. So for example, New York and New Orleans is an outlier, but in New Orleans, 93 percent of public school students are currently attending a charter. But then in other cities too, you have Detroit at 53 percent; D.C. is at 44 percent, Philadelphia at 33 percent, and Los Angeles, 23 percent.

And when you look at trends over time, both in these cities that have sort of a lot of charters and a lot of students who are in charters, and then just more generally at some of the biggest cities in the country, one feature that's striking about the growth is that it has been gradual and sort of linear, and has just sort of progressed over time. So you see this one to two percentage point march up year after year in a lot of these cities in charter enrollment. And actually, more generally in the country, the growth of charter schools and the number of kids educated in charter schools has been very linear.

And so I think that one of the implications of that is that we don't, I'm not sure we've hit sort of a clear equilibrium point in a lot of districts where charters are settling in to be a 10 percent player, a 20 percent player, where it's sort of they have their role and districts know what to make of them and what their enrollment will look like for a long time, we haven't really hit that point.

We also haven't really seen what a tipping point might look like where when charters are educating some number of students, some percentage of students, whether there are implications for a district where the district will sort of move in the direction of New Orleans. In New Orleans right now, has no residentially based school assignments, so all families request schools and they are assigned through a centralized enrollment system. And we're still sort of feeling out what that looks like and how you get to that point.

It's so it's the case that charters serve more, percentage wise, serve more black and Latino students than traditional public schools. They serve fewer students with special needs in general than traditional public schools. And then going forward, so it's difficult to tell. It may be that when, where

there's this linear growth where it looks like we're getting about 400 new charter schools every year, and maybe 100,000 to 200,000 more students every year who are in charter, there may be have been a bit of an uptick over the last couple of years. We might expect a little bit more growth coming soon. And some of that is structural. So we've had caps on charter enrollment, and some of those, there's been a lot of work on those taps in part in response to Race to the Top. So there's been some work on caps and lifting and eliminating caps. The other reason why there may be more room to grow now is because politics have shifted around charter schools a bit.

So early it was the support for charter is very much tracked to support for vouchers and that is no longer the case. So now, if you look at sort of surveys and polls and what people think about charter schools, you see about two-thirds support the idea of charters and about two-thirds oppose the idea of vouchers. So there may be more room to work in charters going forward.

MR. WEST: Great, thank you. Jon. I appreciate those comments. Now, let's move to Howard. Howard, can you tell us about your involvement with charter schools as superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools in the early 1990s. What did you see as the real innovation of charter schools when they were being established, and in your view, have charter schools lived up to expectations?

MR. FULLER: Yeah, I don't, so I was back there, back in the old days I guess you call it. And you know, as a superintendent, I supported charters because I wanted to try to figure out ways to be innovative in the district. And I saw charters as a way to bring in innovation, because to me the innovation of charters is not the schools themselves, it's the new way to create public schools. And so back then, I saw that as a way to try to create new types of public schools that bring in a change dynamic, because I never believed, and I don't believe now that districts change based on their own volition. I think there needs to be outside pressures. I think there needs to be ways to stir the pot inside the district.

And so, as a superintendent, I saw charter schools as a way to do that. There's a debate as to when the first national meeting was, and I don't know where I'll solve that debate. I mean I believe it was in Roy Rogers' mansion in Colorado. There was 37 of us there. And even back then, my argument was for the black people and that's still my argument. And because to me, it isn't just that schools are educational institutions which they are, they're also economic institutions. They're also institutions that help define a community.

And the one thing that concerns me about the charter movement, if it is a movement, you know, going forward is the fact that it's the only social movement that I'm aware of where the people who are being most impacted don't lead it. And that remains a significant problem for me. And so when you ask the question, have charters met, you know, whatever expectations I had back then, I would say, yes and no. I would say that what charters have done is to put to bed the lie that you cannot educate kids who are poor, that it's not possible to have academic excellence for poor children. And there's a generation of people sitting in this room who may not know that there ever was an argument that you couldn't do that. But there was an argument that you couldn't do that. And charters were real critical to try and to eliminate that lie in American society.

And so I'm forever grateful for people who have come forward, whether it's the CMOs like KIP or Aspire, or Achievement First or Friendship. But also just people who created one-off schools in communities and they weren't trying to be a CMO, they weren't trying to, to create a new forum. They just wanted to create a great school in their community to serve kids. And so I think that that has happened.

But I do think, and I'll stop at that, we still have a lot of work to do on the question of the empowerment of black and brown people and other people of color when it comes to who runs these schools and who's defining it like the role that these schools will play in their communities.

MR. WEST: Great, thank you, Howard for sharing your views. And now, Nina, I'm going to turn to you. Your organization represents a broad array of charter schools. Can you tell us a little bit about the diversity of what you're seeing across charter schools, what do parents want, what do educators want, what do policy makers want and do these various interests overlap, or are they at odds at time?

MS. REES: That's a catchall question at the end. So just to piggyback on what Howard said, roughly 60 percent of charter schools are operated by a single site operator. These are individuals who just want to run one school. They may want to open a high school if they started as an elementary school, but they're not interested in scaling their programs. Right now, about 20 percent of charter schools are run by charter management organizations. The largest charter management organization is KIP and it has roughly about 144 schools. So it's scaling, but it's not scaling as rapidly as anything in the private sector perhaps would scale at this point. And then 12 percent of the market is occupied by for-

profits. And a lot of these for profits also include online providers. I think we're going to talk a little bit about that at the end, and to the extent charter schools are meeting the needs of home school families, this is, they are also part of this family.

So, our organization is an alliance. We're actually not a membership organization, but we are constantly trying to kind of straddle the line between representing the interests of all these different factions and making sure that at the end of the day we're creating a climate in which high quality charter schools can actually take root.

We do that in three ways. We advocate for more funding at the federal level to create charter schools. The federal government has been one of charter schools' greatest friends so to speak, since the mid-90s, thanks to Bill Clinton. There was a program called the charter schools program which sends start up dollars to new startups to launch a school. \$3 billion has been pulled into this program since the mid-90s. And at the state level, we work with states to make sure that they're creating laws that allow for this funding to be leveraged.

And you mentioned laws. A lot of people forget that state legislatures and the regulatory climate in which charters operate is actually extremely important in attracting innovation and making sure that there is enough funding and an equitable way for charter schools. Charter schools currently only receive about .70 cents of every dollar that follows students to a traditional school and that number varies greatly depending on the state that you're in. In states like Ohio, it can be as low as .50 cents to the dollar, which, which is not good, if you're talking about scaling and sustainability.

And then the last piece of the puzzle for us is autonomy. This concept was rooted in the fact that you have to make sure you're giving educators a lot of freedom and autonomy to operate their schools in exchange for raising student achievement. And in some communities, we're not really honoring that the way we should be, and some of these rules are coming from states, others are coming from districts, but some of them quite frankly are coming from our authorizers who are trying to make sure that they're creating, safeguarding against bad charter schools from launching. And also, to the extent something bad happens, they're coming up with a lot of rules to avoid bad things from happening again.

So with that, I'll tell you really quickly about parents, educators, and policy makers. I would say for parents, the key thing they look for when they select a charter school is, is this going to be a

good fit for my child, right. And studies show that most of them are attracted to charter schools because of their size, because of safety issues, smaller class sizes, so the behavior is no different than those of us who are able to pick a public school of our choice or a private school would make a decision. We base it on the quality of the leadership of the school and these other factors.

For educators, it's been interesting, Michael Milkie, I'm going to use him as an example. He's with Noble Network of Charters in Chicago, which is a high performing high school network in Chicago. He left the traditional system to start a charter school, and a lot of individuals did just that. They wanted an opportunity to start a school, to come up with new ways of teaching, to have greater autonomy to hire high quality teachers, to expand the school day and school year, and experiment so to speak. So in that sense, for a lot of teachers and educators who are trapped within a space, it is about, you know, having the autonomy to run your own enterprise and the level of satisfaction varies, depending on the community that you're in, but that is a highly rewarding value proposition for us as a movement, to tell people you have an opportunity to start your own school, you have the autonomy to run that school. I don't know that a lot of these educators sometimes know even what a charter school is, there are a lot of things that we need to do a better job of as a movement, but I would say for educators, it is about autonomy and experimentation.

For policy makers, really I would say it's about impact more than anything else. And it depends on whether you're talking to a republican or a democrat. I mean they are all coming at this from very different points of views, but I think for us as an advocacy organization, it's very important to go in with stories, but also with data points to make sure that they understand the actual impact of charter schools on academic achievement, on equity, and on innovation, so I don't know. That last question, you know, we can talk about it a little bit more but, that's how it all comes together.

MR. WEST: Great, thank you, Nina. So I'm going to pose a couple of questions here and I'll direct them to individuals, but then of course, we can have open conversation afterwards. First I'm going to direct this one to you, Howard. Jon described charter schools as being most concentrated in urban centers and being disproportionately of service to black and Hispanic youth. And yet, you've also raised this criticism of not being represented. What are some solutions perhaps that you see moving forward to help reconcile these racial issues, these tensions within, within charter schools. Do you see

any way forward here?

MR. FULLER: I want to make sure I was really clear on what I was saying because the reason why you see the concentration the way it is, is because for those of us who started fighting for this, that's where we saw the greatest problems was in low income communities serving people of color. I mean as a superintendent, I was clear that my district was not serving the children of my city well, and that we needed to have new ideas and new ways of trying to serve those kids. So when people start talking about the fact that, you know, these schools are serving mostly low income children of color, that makes sense because it's low income children of color who are suffering the most in this country. That's not to say that there are not low income children in rural areas that have issues. It's different, and so the charter school movement immediately started serving those areas where there was like the greatest need.

What I'm talking about is that -- I heard what Nina said about the 60 percent of the people are in one-off schools. I chaired a board of a one-off school. Every day, you know, dealing with the reality of how do we serve these 280 low-income black children. And the reality of it is there are networks that have high network people serving on their board who have access to more dollars and more resources than a school like mine does. And people can talk to me, talk to me about the numbers but when I look at the differential in the power that exists between the new forms of organization, which I am not against and just the one-off schools, what we're facing in the charter movement in certain cities are tiers where you have the schools that have high network individuals are able to generate more money than just the money that comes from the state, so that they can better serve kids and then you have these schools who don't have those high network individuals, don't have people who can write big checks for them, and it is more difficult for us to serve the kids well because of the way that the funding mechanisms are set up in certain places for charter schools.

And therefore, you have the need for extramural dollars. But the third point I'm trying to make is that if you look at the advocacy organizations that serve our movement, if it is a movement, and you look at the largest CMOs that have the greatest impact, they're all run by white people. And I'm not, I'm just saying. They are. And I'm not, when I say that, people get all blah, blah, why you raising that? I'm raising it because we have to see it. And we have to see that as a problem. Because you don't

ultimately, what you don't want charter schools and networks of charter schools to become is the, is the district that we ran away from. And so the, so the issue is not only how do we make sure that kids get a great education, which is paramount, right. The second part of that is how do we make sure that the people whose children these are, are in a position to define what happens to those children.

And I'm not; I'm not saying that just to, you know, to make an argument. I'm saying it because I deeply believe that it is a moral issue that the charter effort has to face. And I'm never going to not say it because it has to be said. And ultimately, we have to do something about it. We can't just keep saying it. You know, people talk about diversity. Diversity is fantastic. The diversity without power is an illusion. We talk about engagement. We're engaged the community. Engagement is we decide to build a bridge in your community and then ask you what color would you like it to be. Power is deciding that you going to build the bridge. And what I'm trying to get at is there has to be more empowerment of people of color in this movement.

MR. WEST: Thank you, Howard. Nina, do you have a response? Not a direct response, but what do you think about, what are you seeing happening in your alliance in terms of, in terms of racial issues and oversight of different charter schools?

MS. REES: We actually just flew in a number of leaders of color in our community to meet with members of Congress recently. And one of the things that we've been trying to do is shine a light on those high performing networks or schools that are operated by minorities and try to have a discussion with them about what they need and how we can best help them. I'll go back to one of the things that we advocate for at the National Alliance which is fiscal equity. I think it's extremely important that we really focus on this issue because if the district has, is getting more funding and that they already have competitive advantages, they have economies of scale, they'll be able to attract more teachers, they'll be able to do a whole host of things to make it very hard for a charter school to operate.

I'll cite Houston as an example. Just a couple of years ago, when Terry Grier was the superintendent, this was supposedly a charter friendly superintendent. He ended up hosting one of his teacher recruitment sessions right before the beginning of the school year at a time when it was very difficult for charter schools to compete with the district and they, he ended up offering salaries that were much greater in his district than what charters could offer. And when you do things like that, your intent is

really to cut the charters at the knees so to speak. And he was able to recruit a lot of our teachers as a result. And that's just one example. So fighting for fiscal equity, making sure that our students are getting the same amount of money and more importantly that there are facilities funding sources available is very important and most per pupil allocation dollars don't include facilities finance. So we've been arguing for federal incentives to bake the facilities finance in the per pupil allocation and also working with states to make sure that they have some funding stream or something in place so that charter schools are not left to their own, on their own, to be able to go and access facilities. And to make up the gap through philanthropy. I think if the more we do that, the more we'll be able to level the playing field.

The other thing I would just mention is we have roughly about two million students who have now graduated from charter schools. Where they are, what they are doing is really important. One of the things we are trying to do is identify what's happened to them, and I agree with you that the movement needs to be comprised of the people that we're representing, but I think those who have benefited from charter schools perhaps have the greatest opportunity to come back, make the case and hopefully start charter schools and run them because they have actually benefited from these schools.

MR. WEST: Great, thank you, Nina. Jon, I'm going to turn to you. I'm going to ask you a question, how do parents make decisions about school quality? I know some of your research touches on these issues. And are the choices that parents make about sending their kids to schools, is that rational at times, or at times irrational? Are there policy fixes that might enable parents to make better choices here?

MR. VALANT: So, by and large, I think it's fair to say that most choices that parents make are rational. Now, that's different from saying that families are always requesting and preferring higher performing or higher rated schools. So I've heard in the past folks who work in enrollment offices express surprise and concern that more families aren't requesting the schools that they think are the very best schools. But that's not the decision that confronts families. If you're choosing a school, you're not just choosing, you're not just choosing on school quality necessarily, but there are a host of concerns and considerations.

So there's a relatively new book by Thomas Stewart and Patrick Wolfe that talks about how families choose schools in, choose private schools in Washington, D.C. and they have a nice frame

for this, which is thinking about it in terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and that families would choose safety first. So until you sort of secure your kids safety, nothing else matters. And then we know from other research that there are a lot of other considerations that come in. And so logistics and convenience matter, which is partly how easy is it to get to the school and also keeping kids together, keeping siblings together. Academic quality matters as do other types of quality, so we do see that when families rank schools and they submit requests, they tend to prefer schools that are higher rated and seem to be higher scoring. And then fit matters and programs matters and there are a lot of other things that matter.

Having said that, I do think there are places where irrational processes kind of creep in. So some of that arises through information shortcomings, whether that's having incorrect information or insufficient information and often I think the systems we have in place for informing families about their options don't speak to a lot of families who are choosing schools for their kids. So, for example, families with children who have special needs, it's often very difficult to get information that's relevant and really tells you anything about the options that are available to you from just the booklets and types of things that we put out.

Another blind spot I think in this is that there is sort of growing evidence that kids are very, very involved in choosing their own high schools and those are 12 and 13 year old kids who, I've done some work with parents and some work with kids, and parents sort of they talk in ways that I think we understand and they respond to information in ways that you would expect and 12 and 13 year olds don't because they're 12 and 13 year olds. So there's a bit of a blind spot there.

I think as far as policy fixes go, you know, I'd say there's sort of two buckets. So there's a bucket that has to do with access. So one way of thinking about the sort of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and all of that kind of thing, it would be nice to help parents, to put them in a place where they can choose on school quality and really make that what they prioritize. So charter school researchers have spent a lot of time talking about transportation, making sure that families have access to schools across the city, which is good, and being able to get your kid on a bus to the best schools around is a good thing. It's better than not having access.

But beyond that, having the best schools around in your neighborhood is sort of a step beyond that. So both working on sort of bus and transportation policy and in site locations, making sure

that there are schools that families want that are right in their neighborhoods, and then safety too, so whatever can be done to make sure that those schools are safe.

The second bucket is, to me information and I think that there's quite a bit more that we can do. So a lot of districts and states are I think taking more seriously the questions of what do we have to do to enable people to choose the schools that they want, to let them know about schools and that's a really good thing. It is difficult in any way that governments communicate with people to talk to every family. And so I think one potential move that I would like to see is we know families respond very much to what they hear from friends and parents with kids in school. And districts are in sort of a unique position where they can more rigorously collect information about what people think about schools. So we do a lot of parent surveys in this country, but not always taken seriously, and we don't always make the results very well known. And to the extent that sort of information sources can get some of this richer, more nuanced information that's more helpful to people and then also connect families with other families. And there are some non-profits that are doing some kind of interesting things in getting families an opportunity to speak with other parents who are sort of going through the same type of process.

MR. WEST: Great, thank you, Jon. Nina, I want to turn to you and ask you what are some innovative or experimental practices that you see in charter schools that we may suspect could end up in traditional district-run schools moving forward. You talked briefly about online and what's happening there. Why don't you tell us a little bit more?

MS. REES: That's a great question. I actually don't think we have done enough research and experimentation in our space to really answer this question the way I would like to answer it. I think we need to double down on the investments we make in research and evaluation at the federal level, at the state level, so we can actually tease out these best practices and share them with the other sector in a consistent way so that it's not just a bunch of case studies that we're sharing.

Having said that, the few things that kind of come to mind, one of them includes the work that a few individuals have done around teacher training, teacher recruitment and training, and Eva Moskowitz in New York comes to mind. Her Success Academy School spends a lot of hours training teachers. So not only does she bring really bright and devoted and driven teachers, but she also puts a lot of effort in professional development, both pre-service and in-service training. So whatever she's

doing deserves to be studied and it's something that certainly a lot of other schools can certainly use as well if they think that that model is one that they want to emulate. And mind you, the results that she's producing in New York are some of the best results in our movement.

The other area that I would mention and the things that's cited the most is our efforts around expanding the school day and the school year but technology has played a role in innovating in some of our schools. Summit Public Charter Schools in St. Louis, San Francisco Bay Area, and now in Washington State is one example of a school that's really been able to leverage technology to flip the classroom and to really bring learning into the setting by getting students to learn online and then learn and work with the teachers and their peers to take the learning to the next level.

So again, we have some examples, and some beacons of hope in schools like Summit and Carpe Diem and Rocketship (inaudible) and other places but I think we need to study them much more before we can say with confidence that we can take these models and bring them to scale.

MR. WEST: Mm-hmm. Thanks. What do you think, Howard? What are some interesting things happening in charter schools and where are they going to be moving in the future?

MR. FULLER: Well, I agree with Nina that you know, you look at some of the things that people have been able to do in some of the new schools that are being created. But the reality of it is man, you could do that in the traditional system if -- but, but what happens is when I was superintendent, people used to make the argument that these charters should be more like us. We should be making the opposite argument. We ought to be able to have the freedoms in the district that we were giving the charter schools, so that we can innovate, so that we can try different practices. Because you know, there's I mean I really marvel at some of the things that I've seen in the schools that I've gone into. I've been in, you know, inside of charters. I spent two years when I was at Brown with Ted Sizer, Dennis Littky and Debbie Meier. And all we did was go around and argue about choice, because they used to beat me up about choice.

But, and look at schools. And, and what I saw were really great things happening, not only in charters, but in traditional schools as well. So I agree with Nina that what we have to be able to do is to show how these best practices that charters have been able to implement actually serve kids well, because there are really many good ideas. But there are also some ideas in the traditional public school

system that charters can use. We're not the only people who have good thoughts about what can happen to kids.

And so for me, the issue is whether you're in a private school, a traditional public school or a charter school, what are the things that people are doing that really are educating kids well and how do we make that happen to scale, so that larger numbers of kids can in fact benefit by it. And, but the reality of it is the politics of this, we should never leave these discussions and not act like there's a political dimension to this, because there are people who get up every single day with the express purpose of trying to make sure that charters go out of existence.

And those of us who have been at this for a while recognize that that struggle has not abated. That, that the arguments that people are making who are anti-charter schools, in my view, they're getting more intense, not less, because the longer these efforts exists, the more you call into question that there's only a one best system. And for people, whose power is based on maintaining the one best system, they still are, they're never going to be, I love charter schools, and let's embrace this for the kids. So we're going to have to continue to fight those battles at least into the future. Now, maybe there's a generation coming that's going to have a totally different view. But I haven't seen it yet. But my hope is that that is in fact going to happen.

MR. WEST: Okay. Thank you, Howard. I'm going to ask one final question to each of you briefly before opening it up to audience Q&A. So according to the latest estimates, a little over three percent of school aged children in the U.S. are homeschooled. And as we mentioned at the top of the hour, charter school enrollment is a little over six and a half percent. So home school is about roughly half the size of the charter school share, so why do we have a lot of attention on charter schools, given the relatively small share, or perhaps why not more focus on home schoolers. So just maybe a quick response from each of you just to respond to that question. Jon, why don't you kick it off?

MR. VALANT: Sure, so I think part of it is that there's probably a much lower ceiling on the number of people who are willing to home school their kids. I mean I think often the distinction between charters and traditional public schools is to parents, it's a legal distinction, it's an administrative distinction, I don't think it much matters. And schools often look pretty similar, charters and traditional public schools. If you step into them, you're still seeing 20, 25 kids in a classroom being taught by a

teacher with kind of a standards based curriculum.

Homeschooling is kind of a different, it's a different world. And I think, and I also think to Howard's point just a second ago, on where there are folks who are very much opposed to charters, charters present more of a threat to the sort of existing structures. And so some of that is the districts because they present a direct threat to districts through enrollment and funding. Some of it is the teachers' unions, some of it is sort of parts of the public through housing values. So there's more attention now going to what happens when you open up public school choice and charters and suddenly where you live doesn't fit where your kids go to school and what does that mean for housing values. So I think charters affect a lot of people much more fundamentally, in part because parents are more willing to consider charters alongside traditional public schools than homeschooling alongside traditional public schools.

MR. WEST: Great, thanks. Howard, what do you think?

MR. FULLER: I have no idea, man.

MR. WEST: Nina?

MS. REES: I'll go back to my point earlier, which is that dollars are leaving the traditional system to come to the charter system in a way that when you're pulling your child out and homeschooling them, there's no direct impact on the space. But I will say a fair number of our schools are also catering to home school communities, so about 18,000 charter school students are being taught at home either by their parents, or they're in some part of covered program in high school, so that to some extent is an interesting phenomenon to watch, and I've often wondered why more home schoolers are not looking at the charter option because you're getting basically the same services and you don't have to pay for it.

MR. WEST: Okay. Well, thank you, Nina. And so let's go to audience questions and as standard, we prefer a question rather than a comment. So why don't I start in the back here. We have a couple of roaming mics and would you please stand and give us your name and affiliation, please.

MS. MCADAMS: Hi, my name is Camsie McAdams and right now I work with TNTP which is a non-profit that works on, and I work on academic strategy and on turnaround schools. And I'm really curious to hear your perspective on places where districts and charter existence in the same place has actually spurred the kind of innovation that maybe you've dreamt of, Dr. Fuller. Because in the

places where we work, the charters are sort of like over here, and the district is over here. And they might even be like in the same neighborhood; they might even be on the same block in New York City sometimes. And I don't know whether there are mechanisms for true collaboration, even at the, maybe not at the district level, but even at the teacher to teacher levels, because PD schedules are different and opportunities are different. So I just wonder whether you know of any places where that dream that may be some of us who are, have been watching this for a long time have been looking for where it's actually happening, and maybe if you could give it a specific, oh well, in my district, we saw this, so then we implemented this and, from the charters.

MR. FULLER: Yeah, I can talk about two places. One is actually in Milwaukee. There's an organization called Schools That Can Milwaukee that has adopted sort of a three separate strategy as it relates to professional development for teachers. And so up underneath all of the politics of it, Schools That Can Milwaukee has been able to bring educators together from both, from private schools, traditional public schools, and charter schools because in Milwaukee, you know, we have the voucher program along with independent charters and the traditional district. And that's been interesting to watch, and our school has been a part of that. So it's both the professional development for leaders, school leaders and for educators.

Yesterday, I was in Indiana and there is this new law that's been passed in Indiana that allows for innovative schools like within the district, and so I was in a visioning meeting between the district mind trust and the mayor's office because the mayor has the authorizing authority there. And there's an example of where they're trying to figure out how do we actually work together to try to really create quality schools for kids. So that's, those are two examples that I'm aware of.

MS. REES: I will just say that this is actually an opportunity for the two sectors to come together and those places that have succeeded at this are Denver, the Denver School District, Spring Branch, although the superintendent left recently, but it takes really often the superintendent of the traditional system to recognize and invite the charter community to the table because to the extent you just have a few charter schools in the mix, they by themselves don't have a leader who can then broker these meetings and come up with ways to collaborate. And most educators are not waking up everyday thinking how can I go collaborate with the school next door. They're just thinking about what am I going

to do in this classroom on this very day. So it takes someone in a central office to pull these things together and I wish more district superintendents would take a look at what Denver has done and replicate that.

MR. WEST: Great, thank you. Let's go to another question. Up here.

MR. NORTH: My name David North. I'm with the Center for Immigration Studies, which is a lesser think tank down the road. My question is how do, how does the panel react, just a phenomenon I'm about to mention in about 100 words, and that phenomenon is the Gulen Schools, that's G-u-l-e-n. They're named for Mohammed F. Gulen who was a cleric in exile, self imposed exile in Pennsylvania. And his schools tend to recruit overseas through the H1B program, foreign workers, bringing in, among other things, English teachers from Turkey to teach English in these schools which are dominated by the local Turkish American community. And this has obviously been hard on American, let's say permanent resident alien citizens, teachers who would like to have those jobs, but they're being displaced by people brought in sort of extraneously from Turkey. And I wondered if the panel has any comments on that.

MR. WEST: Nina, do you have any comments on that?

MS. REES: Well, I'm not aware of any Gulen schools in the U.S. There are a few chains, charter school chains that are led by Turkish Americans and to the extent they've succeeded at bringing trained teachers from other countries who have subject matter mastery in physics and chemistry, and are willing to work in the traditional system, or in the charter school system, I think that's a good thing. Some of these networks, especially Harmony in Texas boast huge academic achievement outcomes. If you walk into these schools, you'd be hard pressed to say that these schools are not serving the needs of the community. So all I know is what I've seen in some of these schools and I think they're doing a fine job. I don't know of any connections to Gulen and what we're talking about though.

MR. WEST: Okay. Let's go to the next question. Right there on the back here, yep.

MR. GLAZER: Thank you. I'm Josh Glazer from George Washington University. I have a question for Dr. Fuller. I'm happy to hear from the other panelists as well. I've heard you say in the past and appreciated your point that charter schools give choice to poor people who would otherwise not have that choice. And that was a powerful point. I'm wondering though, now that there's more

experience, and more research such as the events in New Orleans, where some 7,000 people, largely African American, lost their jobs, the events in Memphis where you have the state run accelerated school, achievement school district, where there's been a lot of community pushback, again, largely from almost predominantly from African American communities there, neighborhoods. And you have research that shows moderate to small effects that charters, and you have other research that suggests that charters increase segregation. And I know this sounds like an anti-charter statement, but I don't mean it that way. I'm just wondering, given your earlier statements and the importance of your voice here, on this stage, have these events and research given you pause or led you to rethink or recalibrate some of your earlier sort of more unequivocal support for charters?

MR. FULLER: Josh, do you follow me on Twitter now? I think you do. Okay, so let me be really clear. I am an unequivocal supporter of charter schools and the chartering process, right. But I have to be intellectually honest, you know, with myself about what some of the downsides of it. Like I've never seen a public policy that only has an upside. You know, I think every public policy has an upside, a downside. And at the point of history in which you live, you're trying to determine whether or not the upside outweighs the downside. In my view, the upside for charters outweigh the downside. But there are, there have been issues. It hasn't just been charters; it's the broader ed reform movement.

So, for example, if you read Michelle Foster's book, *Black Teachers Talk about Teaching*. And she interviews teachers; she calls them elders, veterans, novices. And the elders are like this one black woman who had been teaching in South Carolina for 60 years. And so what they talk about in this book is what happened when integration came. When integration came, black schools got closed, black teachers lost their jobs, black teachers' opinions were devalued. What happened with ed reform? Black schools got closed, black teachers lost their jobs, black teachers' ideas were devalued. That's real. The, so when you look at the New Orleans situation, 4,300 of those people were teachers, roughly, I would say. I think it's somewhere around there, right. And I would say about 90 percent of those people were black people, too high? 80? Two-thirds. What that meant was an impact on the middle class in New Orleans. So you, so if you think about what's happening in economic terms in the black community, some of what we've done, which do serve the interests of the kids, it also has a downside in terms of its impact on the economics of the community. We can't act like that isn't true. But what we have to do is

we have to say ultimately, were the kids better served by these decisions.

But we also need to ask ourselves could there have been a different decision made. And I would argue and people will push back on me that we could have made different decisions in New Orleans. The reason why we didn't make different decisions was who was in the room when the decisions were made. And, and that's what I'm trying to argue is that many times the people in the room who make these decisions are white people. And they don't stop and think well what is going to be the impact of this on the black community. That's my argument, Josh. And so, but that is not an argument against charters. That is not to act like a lot of kids are not better off in New Orleans because of what happened. They are. But a lot of kids are not. And then there the larger issues of what happened over and above just having to do with school. Those are the concerns that I have. But that should not be interpreted as I somehow have rethought my support for charters. Does that make sense? It's tough.

MR. WEST: Thank you. I've got a question up here, Jane?

SPEAKER: Charter schools are public schools that get taxpayers money and they serve children. Now those set of conditions seem to call for regulation and if you look across the states, there's tremendous variation in regulation and I'm just wondering what each of you think should be the policies surrounding regulation of charter schools.

MR. WEST: So, we're running out of time, so let's do a lightening response if you can.

MS. REES: That's a great question. One of the things that our movement has taken very seriously as of late certainly is the importance of closing poor performing schools. I believe 270 schools closed last year, for a variety of reasons, but quality is certainly one of them. This is kind of an ongoing question. I think we need to have a longer discussion and I don't know if I can answer very quickly, but we do a report up at The National Alliance that looks at the health of the charter school movement, looking at indicators of quality, innovation and scale. And Washington, D.C. is an example of a district that comes to the top every year. And I think looking at what D.C. has done, how they've done it and how they've walked the line between, you know, increasing the number of charters, serving the needs of the community and coming up with a frame that attracts leaders to start charter schools is the right place to start.

MR. WEST: Thank you. Howard, Jon, anything to add?

MR. VALANT: Similar thoughts on being thoughtful about when and how to close schools, and then just a little bit tangential, but I think there's also it is an interesting phenomenon of charters that there has been a lot of autonomy for the means for how schools operate, but we've been pretty clear on the ends in that it's state accountability systems and researchers, we all sort of talk about the same things as far as what the schools should be doing, and I think there's sort of a de facto regulation that happens there. And so there was some discussion about the variation in schools and school programs. And I think some of it actually gets constrained by the fact that we're pretty particular about what we ultimately hold schools accountable for that, although not regulation, I think in a way has some similar kinds of effects.

MR. FULLER: And I would say I've always been intrigued by the fact that a lot of the accountability soldiers for charter schools have never wanted to have that battle take place for the traditional school district. And so if we want to talk about accountability, let's talk about it. And then let's talk about it for everybody.

MR. WEST: Well, great. Thank you for this very stimulating conversation and please join me in thanking the panelists for their presentation. We're going to immediately switch to our second panel, and so we'll just take a very quick moment to switch but we will start right away in question for the next panel. Thank you.

MR. HANSEN: Okay, so why don't we go ahead and get this second panel underway. Next we are turning our attention to the research evidence on charter schools. Of course there's no way to cover the full extent of all the research that has been done on charter schools. A recent Google scholar search that I did yielded over 500,000 studies on this topic, so by no means are we going to be entirely representative of all of them; however the most basic question relating to charter schools, of course, is the proof of concept which is how do students actually perform on their academic outcomes compared with non-charter students, and now more recently we've begun to look at -- or begun to expand beyond that simple horse-race question, and now we're beginning to think in more nuanced ways about what practices are being done, what are the differences in terms of school finance, leadership, teacher staffing; those kinds of questions. And in this session what we are going to try to do is do our best to

examine charter schools through this lens of research and talk about what we do know, what we don't know, and what we should be knowing about how to move forward with charter schools in the future.

And so I am joined by three esteemed panelists here. I'm going to introduce them one at a time. First, on my far left is Doug Harris. Doug Harris is a professor of economics and Schleider Foundation chair in public education at Tulane University, and he is the director of the Education Research Alliance for New Orleans which is affiliated with Tulane as well. And prior to his position at Tulane he was at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and there he was the director of the Milwaukee College Access Project for Success.

Next, in the middle here, we have Robin Lake. Robin Lake is the director of the Center on Reinventing Public Education and an Affiliate Faculty at the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington Bothell, and full disclosure, I worked for Miss Lake at CRPE for four years while I was in grad school, so we have a long history.

And then finally here on my immediate left is Rick Kahlenberg. Rick Kahlenberg is a senior fellow at the Century Foundation and has been called "the intellectual father of the economic integration movement in K12 schooling" and arguably the nation's chief proponent of class-based affirmative action in higher-education admissions, and relevant to this panel, Rick has authored the book, "A Smarter Charter," which talks about charter schools and what we could do better there.

So, with those introductions, why don't we go ahead and jump into the conversation. First I'm going to turn to you, Doug. Doug, can you provide us a summary of what the research says about charter schools, how they impact student learning, what students are benefiting most from charter schools, where are they doing well versus not so well, and also any specifics and stories that you can bring in from New Orleans.

MR. HARRIS: Thanks, Mike, and thanks for having me. I think we can see from the first panel that charter schools are continuing to grow, and I think this is a really important session because I think it shows that charter schooling is not a passing fad the way a lot of education policies are. We see a lot of things bouncing around and coming and going over time, but charter schooling just had this steady climb, so I think it shows that this is going to stick with us, and so we really need to learn what we can about how well it works and how we can make it work better.

So, are students learning more? This is a question I get a lot. Sometimes it's just framed as are they working, and I think from the very beginning I think it's important to point out that our ability to measure that is somewhat limited, and so we only have test scores on high-stakes tests, and I think there's growing recognition that there are a lot of other things we'd like to be measuring here, not the least of which is longer-term outcomes, and so I think we're just beginning to get to the stage where we know something about the effects of charter schools and those longer-term outcomes, but what basically I'm going to confine myself to the 500,000 studies that have been published (laughter) on test scores. That's really where we, I think, know the most.

So, the first observation is just how much variation there is in charter performance on tests, so we see a much wider distribution than we see in traditional public schools. There are lots of schools that are worse performing than traditional public schools and even worse performing traditional public schools. There are also schools that are higher performing than even the highest performing traditional public schools, and I think that's not all that surprising when you think about how the system works, so the structures of school districts tend to constrain things. They prevent bad things from happening, and they also prevent good things from happening, and so when you take away restrictions, then you're naturally going to get more variation in performance, so that's not surprising.

Now, the interesting part here, and I think where we can really learn something is from the patterns in that variation, so they're not just all over the place; that they're -- some kinds of schools do better than others. So, we'll talk about those and then talk about how it fits in with the New Orleans story.

So, let me just tick through them; the five situations in which charter schools seem to work better and the evidence. So one is urban low-income populations as well as low-performing, so I'm going to count that all as one category because I think it's hard to separate them, so urban environments and they have lots of low-income kids who also are low scoring to start with, so it's very hard to say that it's one of those things over the other. That's important. That's number one.

Number two is they tend to work better with a supply of teachers, why quality of teachers is high, so looking nationally to cities like Boston where there are lots of great universities. New Orleans, for reasons that I'll talk about in a minute, have a high supply of quality teachers, and the charter schools seem to work better in those cities. Cities where there's more intense accountability and more regulations

came up in the first panel. Looks like there's some pattern there, too, that the effects are larger in those situations. The no-excuses model where you have more time on task, more strict structures in place, more strict discipline, longer school days, more tutoring; those are also more effective. And finally, the brick-and-mortar charters tend to be more effective than the online charters.

So I think those are the five key patterns that I would say are evident in the data. I don't think any of them are very surprising. In fact, I think if you look at most of those things you could say almost anything's going to work better in that situation, right. If you want to do small classes, that's going to work better if you have better teachers. And if you have low-scoring students, almost anything is going to help those students more probably than it's going to help students that who are higher performing. So I think those patterns are not that surprising. They're patterns that we see happening in other kinds of school reform.

So, let's just turn to New Orleans for a second. I think those patterns also fit the New Orleans story almost perfectly. The New Orleans schools are urban, low-income, were very, very low-performing to start with, were probably the second-lowest performing district in the country depending on how you measure those things.

After Katrina there was an influx of teachers of interest in school reform; people wanted to help rebuild the city, people who had moved away who had New Orleans roots wanted to come back and help rebuild their city. Then over time it became the center of school reform. Some people wanted to go to New Orleans because it was the center of school reform, and they really wanted to be a part of that.

So, New Orleans is a pretty small district. There are only about 70,000 or so students before and now we're at about 45- or 50,000 students; not very big. So, when you have that much national interest, you have a pretty ample supply of educators to build this new system. It's not just teachers; CMO leaders and people running the new non-profit organizations. There's an entirely different set of structures running the system in New Orleans. It's not just charter schools, but we don't have time to go into all that.

Lots of the schools are running off of a no-excuses model. Not all of them; there's actually much more variety in New Orleans than people usually talk about. But a lot of them are. Some of them are KIPP and some of them are cousins of KIPP, you might say. And they're all brick-and-mortar,

so you look at those type patterns nationally and you look at New Orleans. Here was a city ripe for charter reform, ripe for almost any kind of aggressive reform, so I think that largely explains the pattern. I think those patterns really fit well together and help us understand what's happening.

Now, the flip side of that is it means that this is not probably going to work everywhere, under all circumstances, so you look at other cities. Baton Rouge which is just an hour down the road; they're trying to do something similar there operating through the same recovery school district state agency that is governing most of the schools in New Orleans. They struggle mightily to get teachers, educators to go there. It's only an hour away, but it's Baton Rouge; a different situation than in New Orleans.

Detroit, another situation. They don't have a lot of universities in Detroit that are of the highest caliber, and there's just not as much interest in people going into Detroit I think as there are in New Orleans, so when you think about what's going on in other cities it's not going to work everywhere. It worked really well in New Orleans.

I didn't talk about the effects in New Orleans. The effects were really big; largest effects I've ever seen for anything before; 0.2 to 0.4 standard deviations, 8 to 15 percentile point gains of the whole system, so this isn't just a school that's doing really well. That's the whole system compared to the pre-Katrina situation. So, it worked really, really well there. I don't think other cities can expect to see the same kinds of results where -- not just cities, but if you're thinking about rural areas and suburban areas, probably not going to be the same.

Let me just conclude on this question of equity that started to come up in the last panel that I hope pervades the rest of the meeting because I think it's a really important topic. If you think about charter reform as market-based reform, markets are not designed for equity. They're designed for efficiency. That's what markets are good at. I think that's a big part of the reason why the accountability and the regulation becomes a really important factor in making the system work for everybody, and we, even in New Orleans where I think the accountability and regulation's pretty intense, I actually don't -- we see lots of signs of inequity, even operating there. So even though people of color and low-income students did improve -- the vast majority of the students are in those categories, so that almost has to be

the case since the district improved so much. We do see that higher-income students and white students benefited more in terms of test-score gains when we look at it that way.

When we look at mobility patterns we see students on average leaving low-performing schools, but the lower-performing students are less likely to move to higher performing schools, so then you start to see these patterns that make you wonder how the market's actually going to work for students who are most disadvantaged. So even though -- I want to be really clear that the New Orleans system did help disadvantaged students, clearly, when you look at the data, it is going to create just maybe pulling apart within the system that we have to be paying attention to.

MR. HANSEN: Great. Thank you, Doug. Next I'm going to go to Robin. Robin, your center is known for its work focusing on charter schools and on portfolio school management in school districts. What does the research say about the importance of oversight and governance in the charter space and what else do we need to know about how to improve the management of charter schools?

MS. LAKE: Right, well, thank you, Mike. Morning everybody and thanks to Brookings for pulling us all together to sort of take stock at 25 years. It's a great opportunity.

So, our center has always been interested in charter schools primarily on this question of oversight or what you call regulation on authorizing, et cetera, because what charter schooling does in addition to the choice aspects and the empowerment and the autonomy and innovation side is really set up a new role for government, to ask government to stop trying to run its schools directly, stop regulating for inputs and sort of bean counting kinds of modes and move into the mode of managing performance, managing performance agreements in a thoughtful and productive way. That's a huge challenge for districts and charter authorizers alike, so in some ways authorizing is really the defining feature in governance of charter schooling and separates it from vouchers and all those other pieces.

And I'll just say that when I think about regulation I maybe want to add one layer of nuance to the idea that regulation is about closing schools, or doing more regulating is necessarily going to lead to more quality. I think that the challenge for charter schooling has been on a set of really difficult tasks on selecting folks who are going to be effective at running schools. It's kind of hard to know who's going to be effective at that. Monitoring in a way that doesn't squash down the autonomies that can make schools really effective, and then making very, very tough decisions, live-or-die decisions about whether a

school should or shouldn't continue. It's horrible to point out again and again in a very political environment, so this is a really, really tough task.

I think for me when I look across the charter movement over the last 25 years, it's really great to see the evolution in how charter authorizers have evolved in this work. I remember one of the first studies I did in the late '90s on charter schools was a federal study on charter school accountability, and I went across the country and I talked to a lot of authorizers about how they saw their role, what they were looking for, how they were going to hold schools accountable, and honestly it was very depressing.

Most of the response that I got was well, as long as they stay out of the newspapers. Well, as long as they don't have a fiscal breakdown. Well, the parents will hold them accountable. There was almost no conception of performance management in what I heard.

Fast-forward 25 years; we've come a very, very long way. I think thanks to NACSA National Association of Charter Authorizers that's been developing professional standards for authorizing and some really stellar examples of folks who have set the bar very high in thoughtful authorizing points to Indianapolis, DC public schools, DC Public Charter School Board, so some great examples out there.

I think we're at the point now where it's a given from authorizers that it's not okay to just authorize a school for political reasons and let them grope toward (inaudible) ran in the dark toward some instructional strategy, so we've come a long way on that front and toward getting better at the political will to close down low-performing schools.

I think that those models offer a lot for charter schooling, but also for districts and states as they think about new roles under ESSA, and as all of us who grapple with what are the right ways to deal with turning around a low-performing school; when do you step in, when do you not? Among the great contributions from the charter movement are things like the Colorado Growth Model which takes pretty sophisticated approach to managing the question of how much growth versus how much proficiency, so a lot of good things.

And then as a consummate worrier, I'll just maybe end with the things that I worry about or that we should be looking to in the future around governance and accountability and oversight.

First, as much as I admire the professional judgments out there and the standards that folks like NACSA have set up, we don't have much of an empirical basis really in understanding what are

the actions in governance and oversight that really, really matter, and which ones could we do away with to make life easier for charter schooling.

I think there's been a huge amount of regulatory creep over the last 25 years, and a little bit of a tendency from authorizers to have what you might think of as a God complex. We can design this beautiful system by picking and choosing all the right folks, and so we need to grapple with that.

Much as there are some great examples of charter authorizers, there are also too many terrible ones. States like Ohio and Michigan have really struggled with how to hold their authorizers accountable for not stepping in, not closing down low-performing schools, not doing a good job, and so we've got a lot of work ahead of us.

And then finally I think getting back to the equity questions which we're all hoping to continue to harp on, I think the new frontier on charter schools governance is really grappling with the really tough questions around when charters go to scale in a city, 25 percent, 50 percent in many cities or 100 percent, how do you deal with these really tough questions around discipline policies and special education and backfill, whether charter schools are asked to take kids in the middle of the year or in different grade levels, and these are just really tough and require much more sophisticated and thoughtful work than we've done in the past.

MR. HANSEN: Great. Thank you, Robin. Now, I'm going to turn to Rick. Rick, you have written a book about charters and their practices. What do you feel about the strength of the research that's out there, and where should the research community focus more effort to learn about and from charter schools?

MR. KAHLENBERG: So, thank you for having me here and it's great to be with you all. I think the fundamental issue is that there's a lot of great research out there on charter schools, but it's been focused on the wrong question. Almost all the research, if you look at those 500,000 studies, almost all of it's on the horse race. Who's doing better, who's beating whom? Are charters doing better or traditional public schools doing better? When to my mind the much more important question is what can we learn from charter schools or from the traditional public school system, and as you mentioned I wrote a book on this topic. I happened to bring a copy, available on Amazon. I figured if Donald Trump can self-stake a presidential election, this is legitimate to hawk as well. (Laughter)

I was really struck when I was writing, with my colleague Halley Potter, "A Smarter Charter" book, that there was so little research on this bigger question of what we can learn, and that's problematic in my mind for two reasons. The first is that the leverage point that charters have is in this question of what lessons can be learned from the traditional public schools. Given that 6 percent of students are in charter schools and 94 percent of public school students are in traditional public schools, the big bang for the buck for charter schools is what lessons can be transferred, and there's so little research on that. There are some exceptions to this.

Roland Fryer has some important research looking at effective charter schools and whether some of the lessons can be used in traditional public schools. He has a study in Texas that looks at that, but the vast majority doesn't go to that topic, and that's really important because I wrote a biography of Al Shanker, the teacher-union leader who really popularized charter schools and got them going a little more than 25 years ago, and his whole point was here are laboratories where we can have teachers unleashed to try new things and come up with better ways of educating kids, and so it was a cooperative model. It was one where then these lessons would be shared, and we moved away from that very quickly, so folks like Chester Finn who's now President Emeritus at the Fordham Foundation was initially skeptical of Shanker's early charter school vision, and then the two flipped where Shanker became concerned about the charter school movement as we moved forward to a more competitive model and not a cooperative one.

The second big reason I'm concerned about the lack of research on what works in charter schools is that when there's a vacuum, bad ideas flow in; simplistic ideas, ideological ideas. And so you hear, for example, people looking at the success of schools like KIPP, the Knowledge is Power Program, and they look, on the surface, and they say, what's different about KIPP? Well, it's not unionized, and yet it seems to do really well with kids in a segregated environment. Like KIPP will talk about the fact that 95 percent of students are students of color and low-income students and as Howard Fuller mentioned earlier, one of the great things about KIPP and the charter school movement is it put the lie to the idea that poor kids can't learn, but it then propagated some of these myths.

So, Davis Guggenheim who was the director of *Waiting for Superman* -- you may remember from a few years ago -- looked at schools like KIPP and said we've cracked the code. We

have the answer. And his answer was segregation doesn't really matter that much, and teachers unions, if they're moved out of the way, we can do amazing things.

Well, that's a concern for me for a couple of reasons. I mean one is some of the KIPP schools are unionized. There are some in Baltimore that are unionized, and they're doing pretty well, so maybe that's not the key issue.

And also in terms of the question of segregation, when one looks closer we know that peers appear to matter a great deal in KIPP schools, so if you think about parents going to an KIPP open house and hearing about the program that's being offered, and the kids are there and they hear, well, you're going to have to work a lot harder in this school and you're going to have to work on Saturdays, and maybe that's not appealing to a lot of kids, and one set of parents will say, okay, we don't have to send you there. And then there might be another set of parents who say your education is the most important thing. You're going to this school whether you like it or not, and then you have in that school low-income students who are surrounded by peers who are also from those particularly-motivated families, and so maybe the lesson from KIPP is the opposite of -- that segregation is okay. Maybe it's that if you give low-income kids the right peer environment with supportive parents, then great things can happen.

So, that's my big concern, is that we have this horse-race research but very little understanding of why programs like KIPP are successful, and when we don't have good research in that area then the ideologues fill the space.

MR. HANSEN: Okay, great. Thank you. Thank you, Rick. Maybe just to piggyback on Rick's comments and maybe I'll direct them toward Doug and Robin. Rick is talking about charter schools as laboratories of education, but yet we're not necessarily seeing those lessons learned. What do the two of you feel like -- are charters actually more conducive to innovation and this continuous improvement? How successfully have these lessons been shared? Is there a way we can promote policies that promote this continuous improvement process?

MS. LAKE: Well, I mean, in some ways if you look at the charter movement, one might wonder why more innovation hasn't occurred. Just in terms of -- they look pretty traditional in a lot of ways, but I think what they have offered is fast and nimble uptake, and so we see with personalized

learning, for example, when schools are experimenting with new uses of technology you see kind of a cleaner experimentation going, I think, in charter schooling where they take on an idea, they dedicate things to them, they test them, they work on them. If they don't work -- something happens.

In district schools it just is harder because it's harder to get everybody on the same page. It's harder to work with all the different layers of signoff that you have to get from the school board or whomever, and so in some ways it's just a more challenging proposition to adopt a design per se or to turn around a school. It's just a messier process, but in terms of policies our center does a lot of work in looking at charter district collaboration. We've been following an initiative that the Gates Foundation has to promote collaboration through grants and agreements, and watching that it's clear that there's a lot more going on out there on comparing notes, looking at opportunities to innovate together than we're really talking about maybe, and the things that help move that along are first, as Nina mentioned, leadership, district leadership, and charter leadership, to come to the table and talk about where do we have common struggles when we need to find a new solution. In Denver that was around special education. Has to be kind of a clear problem everybody works on together, to innovate together.

And then state policies that encourage folks to share test scores if they're collaborating and finding new solutions to things or share facilities if that's a good opportunity to innovate and come together, so I think we're moving there. It's -- Howard would, if he were still in the room, would remind us let's not forget that this is war, that there is a war mentality, so overcoming that to get to the clean sort of what works, how can we do it better across district and charter sectors is just a challenging prospect.

MR. HARRIS: So I think there are probably three reasons why there hasn't been as much progress and Rick's concern. One is that there hasn't been as much actual innovation as maybe the original charter folks hoped and partly, I think John made the point in the first panel about this. He was right on that when you have intense test-based accountability it really restricts what you can do and to what degree you can innovate because you have to put so many of your resources towards the same end. There are only so many ways to make test scores go up, so I think that really restricts what they can do.

I do think that the innovation, to the extent that there has been, is really more at the operational level. That's really where things are different around -- especially kind of the human capital

strategies and personnel policies and evaluation and compensation and so on. They do operate differently in that respect, and I try to call it innovation because I think there you could find other kinds of schools doing the same things -- structural innovations, the distinction being that the instructionally operational side is important. Then, okay, that's all one thing.

So there's less innovation but there's some innovation. There's clearly some schools doing new things, but then in those situations you have two other problems. One is -- actually three. One is what Robin mentioned. That is the competitive environment, so they might learn themselves what's going on. It might be hard to extend that to others.

Second is they're often small schools or small networks where it's hard for them to really study. They don't have as much of the research and evaluation capacity as a large district might have, or the ability to work with Mathematica or some evaluation shop to do reverse evaluation.

And the third reason is related to this competitiveness aspect which is they tend to be more close to the vest about what they're doing and data sharing and so on, so it's hard to -- even if you're an evaluator who wants to go in and see and test something that's working it's hard to get in there because the natural reaction is to say well, we don't want any bad news, and we want to make sure -- we'll just keep this to -- keep it to ourselves. Maybe it's because of the competitors. Maybe it's because of -- some of the time the research side, the researchers are not always frankly the most helpful collaborators sometimes, too, because it can take years to get the study done, and then it's hard to understand the way we write things and all those kinds of reasons, too, so I think there are lots of reasons why we don't know as much as we ought to.

MS. LAKE: Can I say one more thing on that? I think that the tendency is in many cities to look at something that's happening in a charter or district school and focus on that one thing. So in Boston there was an initiative for charters and districts to collaborate around educating Black and Brown boys, and there had been some successes in charters that they wanted to work on and develop, and the difficulty in that is that the approach that the schools are taking is so organizationally intertwined where professional development feeds into the effort, how finances are arranged in the schools, perhaps salaries, the behavioral expectations for kids, the norms, the reinforcements. It's so hard to take one

piece out of what works and try to transfer that piece, and so that's always the challenge on imitation replication.

MR. KAHLENBERG: Can I get in here?

MR. HANSEN: Yes, go ahead.

MR. KAHLENBERG: The radically different labor management relations I think plays into the difficulty of transferring lessons as well. I mean, so 7 percent of charter schools provide collective bargaining rights for teachers, while whereas in the public -- traditional public sector -- you know, throughout most of the nation we have collective bargaining rights, and Steve Barr who's the -- founded the highly successful Green Dot charter schools specifically wanted them to be unionized because then it could be a source of what he -- research and development for the traditional public sector because otherwise people on both sides of this equation can write off the transferability of lessons and say, well, that won't work here because we have a different labor/management relationship. And so I think that's been an impediment, and again, it's a huge deviation from what Al Shanker originally envisioned. He wanted the charter schools not only to be unionized but be a place where teachers would have more voice, not less in the system.

MR. HANSEN: Great. And what does -- can you give me a brief summary of what you would characterize as what the research says about the fact that most charters are not unionized in explaining charter school efficacy?

MR. KAHLENBERG: My sense is that overall we've seen some positive results in charter schools probably closely connected with the idea that you have particularly motivated families who are participating, but they could do much, much better if they gave teachers real voice in the system. So, that was the original notion. Teachers have a lot of good ideas. They may not have the freedom completely to implement them in traditional schools and so you would allow charter schools that flexibility, but if teachers had more voice in the charter schools sector, in fact, then we'd see lower turnover rates. Right now the charter schools sector has a substantially higher rate of turnover among teachers.

I think you'd see the coincidence of good working conditions and good learning conditions. Leo Casey from the Albert Shanker Institute has argued that when you have teachers able to help shape what the school looks like, they want good working conditions which often -- not always, but

often translate into good learning conditions for students, so if teachers are fighting for reduced class size in early grades, that's something that is likely to be good for teachers. It makes their job easier, but also good for students. So to my mind the fact that charter schools often virulently resist efforts by teachers to unionize is something that's holding back that sector in having more success.

MR. HANSEN: Yes, great. Thank you, Rick. Let's switch topics a little bit. I want to ask a question of Doug here. Charters are supposed to break the link between a student's address and their schooling options, which in theory could lead to more integrated schools and communities. Can you provide any comment about the effect of school choice on integration both at the school level and also at the community level, and should we actually be paying more attention to this -- to what's happening there?

MR. HARRIS: We have a study, ongoing on this and I can give you sort of the basics of what we're finding. Basically the district was extremely segregated to start with on every dimension; racial, race, income, test score levels, special ed, you name it. It was pretty segregated to start with. So, it would have been hard to be worse, to become more segregated.

What we see in the evidence is that it basically seems to be about the same with the exception that on test-score levels -- so just looking at where students are, it does look like there's more separation; that you have lower-performing students, more concentrated in a small number of schools than before, so those are the main findings.

And I think overall if you look at the literature nationally on this, the best studies suggest that there's not much of an effect. I think it is the case that charter schooling; the way we're doing it now is not going to increase integration. It probably is going to be roughly neutral, may be harmful in some circumstances especially cases where you're also coming off of deseg orders and things like that that are also related to how these policies work.

MR. HANSEN: Thanks.

MR. KAHLENBERG: Which is a huge missed opportunity, right. So when Shanker proposed charter schools he was basing it on a visit to a school in Germany, in Cologne, where immigrant Turkish students were in the same school as native German students, and he saw the way in which that integration and interaction benefited all students, and so that was a huge plus potentially for charter

schools; that it could break the link between the fact that now we -- basically in the traditional public schools allocate opportunity based on what neighborhood you can afford to live in. And charter schools have the potential to free that up, and if you provide free transportation, then it could result in much higher levels of integration. For the most part, that hasn't happened -- I mean some of the studies by entire levels of segregation in charter schools.

But I want to end on a positive note on this. There are some great charter schools that are now taking advantage of the opportunity to integrate and so Hi-Tech High in California, the Denver School Science and Technology, the Community Roots Charter School in Brooklyn. These are places that are really innovative, and they're saying we can provide a much better education for all kids if the schools are integrated, and they're taking advantage of that original promise that Shanker had laid out there.

MR. HANSEN: I think Doug had a quick response, then I'm going to go to Robin.

MR. HARRIS: I think New Orleans is instructive here in a couple different ways. There are a few schools also like the ones Rick mentioned that are deliberately trying to be integrated. They do this mainly through their recruitment efforts.

They don't do it through admission because there's a centralized enrollment system in New Orleans. But that centralized enrollment system actually creates a big opportunity that they really haven't taken advantage of yet because the way it works is students, families with reforms, with their ranked preferences of schools, and then there's an algorithm that assigns them, but the algorithm is taking into account rules, so there are -- even though there are no tendon zones there's some schools, for example, that get some preference if you live within a certain vicinity of a school.

You could build in a mechanism for creating integration through that centralized enrollment system, so mechanically it's now very easy to integrate if you want to. Now there would certainly be legal challenges and so on, but if they wanted to try it, the system is set up so that housing segregation is no longer the main impediment in New Orleans.

The main impediment is actually private schools, so the segregation in the system is primarily between public and private, not across charter schools because almost all the white and higher-

income students are in private schools, and you got all the low-income and people of color in public schools.

MS. LAKE: Just a quick caution. I think it's easy to start loading a lot onto charter schools, and we have to be careful with what we want them to be and do. Right now, for example, there's a big push to have charter schools take on more neighborhood-boundary-type populations, so to do a turnaround and take all the kids in that neighborhood, it's a real mixed message to start saying we want you to be integrated. No, we want you to take on a neighborhood. We just need to be conscious of not asking them to do too much and not sending conflicting messages.

MR. HARRIS: Isn't the beauty of the charter schools movement that it allows an individual school to go and do that, right, so you don't have to expect all charter schools necessarily to do that, but if a charter school wanted to do that then that was going to be the big expectation.

MS. LAKE: That would be ideal. On the other hand, they're sort of a public purpose and authorizers to some degree have to make judgments about --

MR. HARRIS: But every school doesn't have to have the same purpose, right. That's part of the flexibility of the model.

MS. LAKE: Not everybody feels that way. (Laughter)

MR. KAHLENBERG: And the foundations have been very much in the past I think pushing towards one model; the no-excuses, high poverty, segregated model, and their argument was we figured out how to provide opportunities for disadvantaged kids, so why would we waste any of those slots on low-incomes -- on middle-class students, and I think what that ignored was a half century of research suggesting that one of the best things you can do for low-income students is give them a chance to go to socioeconomically-integrated schools, and now we're seeing more charter schools doing that.

I mean there's a new coalition of diverse charter schools that I think should be encouraged and is tapping into that research base. I agree with you, Robin. The idea that you're going to force charter schools to take neighborhood school kids -- I mean that -- another way of saying that is we want you to be at least as segregated as the traditional public schools, and this is something that I think has wide bipartisan support. I mean, Rick Hess of The American Enterprise Institute has criticized the traditional funding model which says in his words, "Let's make -- have the highest octane mix of low-

income and minority students brag about that fact that their schools are segregated and then expect great results." We ought to have at least some of the schools, some of the charter schools taking advantage of all the benefits of integration in order to promote achievement for those students, but also help create the society that most of us want.

MR. HANSEN: Okay, thank you. I'm going to ask one final question before turning to audience Q&A, and it's on a related topic which is this cream-skimming hypothesis which is that charter schools are either -- they're somehow selecting a different class of students into them because by being a school of choice and perhaps maybe this is a more benign selection or perhaps it's a more malignant selection. So, I just want to put this to the panel. How prevalent is cream-skimming in charter schools, and how is it manifest, and does this taint our view of the general evidence on charter schools effectiveness?

MR. HARRIS: Yes, so I think this is a big problem. I think it's a problem on several levels. I think one is I think it effects the perceptions of charter schools in negative ways. I think what happened with success academies in New York was really harmful to them and to the charter movement where this got-to-go list of secret list of students who the schools were trying to get rid of. I think that was -- that's sort of the extreme end of cream skimming that's I think really damaging to the movement because I think it misses the very basic level of what public education is. We can disagree on what that definition is, but you have to believe, you have to agree, I think, that every school should be welcoming to students, right, and the idea that you're deliberately and secretively pushing students out is just wrong.

But there are other forms -- so the less benign part of it, to use Mike's terminology, I think is there's some situations in which these schools are specializing. They're trying to do a particular thing that's not going to work for all students, and they may be genuinely trying to help students get to a school that is a better fit for them, but then it becomes a fine line between that and pushing out low-performing students, right, so then I think that line gets blurred and in some cases it amounts to the same thing; that the school might not be a good fit because the student's low-performing and they're just not set up for that, and then the students end up going somewhere else, and that in turn can make the school look better in the accountability system, so when you mix that with high stakes then there's the pressure to do well, the pressure to look good, and that has the side effect of schools being under pressure to push out

low-performing students, so I think it's a problem generally just for how charters are perceived and how they're looking at things. I think it's also a problem for the research; that I think probably what we're seeing does exaggerate the true effects.

Now, that's not true in New Orleans I don't think because when I say there's a huge effect with what happened in New Orleans I'm taking the whole system when I say that, not just looking at an individual set of charter schools since they're essentially all charter schools. We looked at the system as a whole, and so the system can't cream-skim. An individual school can cream-skim, so I don't think it affects our results, but I think when we look at other situations where the charter school's embedded with an environment of traditional public schools and that's the comparison they're making, I do think there's reason to be concerned about exaggerating the effects.

MR. HANSEN: Okay, thank you. Robin?

MS. LAKE: I just -- cream skimming, when I started doing this work was a whole different conversation and just, you know, it's good to remember that. People were afraid originally that charters would only take the best students, would only serve suburban areas or the most advantaged kids, and let's just be clear, that hasn't happened, right. The schools that have started, for the most part, have been the ones that wanted to serve the kids who weren't getting what they needed, so that's really good news, and I think it's important to be -- when we get to this question it's really -- these are important questions around discipline, policy, special education, backfill, et cetera. These are complicated questions. There's no easy answer here. These are schools that are trying to maintain mission coherency and approach, and they're struggling with how to work through -- how to do that in a fair way sometimes. And so, necessarily we need to approach it with that lens, I think.

We've done some work around special education; quite a bit of it, and seeing that when we look at places like New York City and Denver, what's going on there for the most part, the reason the special ed numbers are low is because parents aren't just opting into the charter schools in New York City at the same rate, so it explains about 80 percent of the gap, and why that's the case? It could be numerous reasons. It could include counseling out, but it also could very likely include parents are maybe happy with their choice somewhere else and don't see charter schooling as an option, so we need to kind of work through that fine-grain stuff and get good data and have thoughtful policies around it.

MR. HANSEN: Great. And Rick?

MR. KAHLENBERG: I'll just say quickly that I think any system of school choice involves cream skimming, and that includes -- I'm a big advocate of magnet schools. They cream-skim as well just be definition of the fact that the most motivated families are the ones who are -- know about the options and then exercise them. So, within every racial and ethnic and within every income group you have cream skimming.

I agree the most egregious form where if you had all white, all wealthy charter schools isn't -- hasn't happened for the most part, and that's a very good thing, but by definition charter schools are cream skimming, so when I mention this about KIPP, that they are taking the most motivated families, some people take that as my criticizing KIPP and saying it's a fraud, and that's not what I mean.

What I mean is, okay, if we give low-income students a chance to be around the most motivated peers and they do really well, well, what is the public-policy implication for that nationally? It could mean let's give more low-income students a chance to go to economically-mixed schools given all this research. There's research from Montgomery County, Maryland and elsewhere that suggests low-income students who are in economically-mixed schools are performing at 0.4 of the standard deviation better than low-income students in high-poverty schools, even when you have a random assignment, and this is something John King, our new Secretary of Education has really been championing. He's got a new program, \$100 million for socioeconomic integration, \$120 million nationally, so those are the kinds of lessons I think we should be learning from the charter schools sector and from KIPP that will affect the 94 percent of students in traditional public schools.

MR. HANSEN: Great. Thank you, Rick. Let's turn to audience questions. Right up here at front.

SPEAKER: Good morning. Leaving aside New Orleans which is sort of a unique catastrophic circumstance, and Dr. Fuller talked about the political power of people sitting at the table in terms of charter schools, I would like to ask you all to consider what difference does it make essentially who a superintendent works for politically, in terms of some work for county executives who were appointed or elected. Some work for schools boards who are appointed or elected. Some work for mayors in, say, Baltimore or whatever, so my question to you all is when you look at the charter

movement, which I think you all believe in to some extent, to what extent does the political context that they function within impact their success? Say in St. Paul, Minnesota, a Milwaukee, a Denver, I'm assuming they have different political constructs.

MR. HANSEN: Okay, great question, interesting question. I'm not sure if we know the answer, but go ahead.

MS. LAKE: Well, there's no magic bullet here. You can't remove politics ever from any situation whether it's an appointed or elected board or mayor or whatever, but local politics, locally elected boards, are just the most difficult place to try to do work that's focused, sustained, and in the best interest of kids because you're pulled in a million different directions. You're managing a variety of interest groups. Your board can swing one direction and then the other, so I mean this is just the reality.

We work with districts around the country that are trying to do what Mike mentioned; portfolio management and that's really to kind of bring the autonomies of charter schools into their districts and partner with districts where it makes sense, and there are some examples of folks being able to do that within an elected board context. Denver is our best example of that, but it's still a lot harder.

Now, on the down side for taking it out of an elected board, there's a serious reality. New Orleans is right in the middle of this right now. Control's given to the state to run a school system. As Howard mentioned, people don't take kindly to that over time. The racial politics are intense, so you've got to find a solution, I think, that balances that kind of focused, mission driven work with what's right for the community, and we play around with a lot of different ways where you could constrain local boards to be really portfolio managers and make sure their job is clear and they're held accountable for that role, but this is just going to be an ongoing struggle.

MR. HARRIS: One other observation I think is one of the key things going on in New Orleans and I think this is an important element elsewhere you know what's happening often -- is closing schools when they're low performing, so that's a big part of the accountability mechanism, and New Orleans has shut down a lot of schools, too, so they opened a lot of schools after that didn't work out and they shut them down and replaced them with new charter operators.

That's a lot less likely to happen in a -- when anything local is governing it; whether it's the mayor's office or a local school board. The pressure to not close schools -- and I'm not saying closing

is necessarily a good idea. I'm just saying it's going to be a lot less common in -- when there's local governance as opposed to, say, the state being involved because when the state's involved and you've got some sort of state board, so maybe at least in Louisiana there's one member who represents this gigantic region who's elected by that region, there's much less pressure about an individual school on that person. But at the local board level you might have your local elected board member just represents a few schools and they'd clearly be out of a job if they vote to close the schools. The dynamics are quite different, I think, on closure.

The second thing which is a variation on your question is I think it's not just who's governing it, but who the teachers and educators are employees of. So, if it's a district that they're an employee of, that affects the role of the unions a great deal, whereas if they're employees of a charter management organization, it's a local -- the charters are often local education authorities themselves and essentially operate like their own districts. It's harder for the charters to unionize those schools. I think it's not only about who's governing it but where the employment relationship is.

MR. KAHLENBERG: I'd like to say I agree. We can't remove politics from these decisions, and I don't want us to remove politics from these decisions. There are two purposes of public education. One is to train people to become employees in a competitive economy, and that's what we hear the president and everyone else talk about. But there's also a purpose of instilling democratic values, and so the idea of trying to move as far away as we can from democratic control of schools I find very troubling. I mean I want -- that Adam Arbansky says you can't teach what you don't model, and so if our public schools are doing everything they can to reduce democratic voice, what does that teach kids?

That was part of this original charter school idea was that kids would see teachers not taking orders from a principal, but actually involved in the democratic decision-making in a school, and that that would be a wonderful lesson for kids, so I want more democracy, not less. And I think, if I can be semi-partisan for a second here, let's just say the leading candidate on one side in this presidential election to me ought to be a real Sputnik moment for the role of teaching democracy and democratic values in our public education system, so Sputnik got us to invest a lot more money into math and science, appropriately so. But now we need to remember the role that public education plays in creating

citizens who are going to be informed in their decision-making and are not open to kind of more authoritarian appeals, so we got a little away from the charter schools research. (Laughter)

SPEAKER: Let me be clear. I wasn't -- I was trying to ask if there was a political construct that was (inaudible) to the working (inaudible) taking the democracy (inaudible).

MR. HANSEN: It depends on the goal of your charter movement. I see a lot of hands and thank you for your interest. Unfortunately we've run out of time on this panel, but it has been a very stimulating conversation. I encourage you if you have any follow-up questions you'd like to ask the participants, please circle back and follow up with them afterwards.

But please join me in thanking our participants for (applause) being with us today. And again, we will transition very quickly to the third and final session with Bill Galston and Arne Duncan.

MR. GALSTON: This is the third and final session of our morning-long event on charter schools, past, present and future. I have to say it's a real pleasure and privilege to welcome Secretary Duncan, not only to the stage but also to Brookings. We are really grateful that you've made time in your event portfolio of post retirement activities -- ha, ha, ha -- to affiliate yourself with Brookings. I think for the people in this room Secretary Duncan doesn't need much of an introduction, and therefore he won't get much of an introduction (laughter), but you should know that until his recent resignation he served as the ninth U.S. secretary of education. And by my calculation his roughly seven years in that post is second only to that of my friend and comrade in arms, Dick Riley, who led the Department from the beginning of the Clinton administration until he turned out the lights on the administration January 20 of 2001. Before becoming secretary of education Arne served as the chief executive officer of the Chicago Public Schools for more than seven years -- I'm detecting a pattern here -- an unusually long tenure in office for the head of an urban school system. His very ambitious reform agenda included not only opening more than 100 new schools but also closing down underperforming schools. And I suspect the current mayor of Chicago would like to know how he got away with that. Prior to heading the Chicago Public Schools he spent six years running the nonprofit Ariel Education Initiative, which helped fund college education for an entire class of inner city children. After leaving the Department of Education Arne is working on a wide range of things including programs to abate the upsurge of violence in the City of Chicago, and regrettably that sounds like a long-term gig to me.

You should also know that he graduated magna cum laude from Harvard in 1987 where he was co-captain of Harvard's basketball team and a first team academic All American. After graduation he spent four years playing professional basketball in Australia. Which leads me inexorably to my first question (laughter), do you ever go one-on-one with the president and if so what happens?

MR. DUNCAN: The truth is I don't think we ever played one-on-one. That's the honest truth. We played a lot together, usually on the same team. It was a lot of fun. It was interesting. I mean obviously for us it was stress relief and good camaraderie. The difficult thing for him I think it's one of the few places where he could just be a regular person and I think that was so helpful to his psyche. And as we got towards the end of the administration he played less basketball and more golf, and I don't play any golf. Never played golf in my life and don't plan on starting. But we had a lot of fun together.

MR. GALSTON: What were the strengths of his performance as a basketball player?
(Laughter) Notice how tactfully I asked that question.

MR. DUNCAN: Now we could go a whole hour on this stuff. I always say that -- I believe it -- how you play basketball reveals your character. You can't hide and so for me it was -- you know, I played with him for years before he became President. He comes across, and is, a very, very nice guy and warm, but he's an unbelievable competitor. And he plays to win. And there is no one more competitive than him. And he's not a happy guy if we're losing. (Laughter) And he plays very unselfishly. Frankly he's often not the star when we're playing. He just wants to win. He plays very, very smart, he plays great defense, he moves the ball, he's unselfish, and he helps us win. And I think early I was able to see just how competitive he was, how mentally tough he was, and doesn't come across -- because his personality is not something that comes obviously to the American public, but he's a great teammate. And I think that's part of why he's been a great president.

MR. GALSTON: Well, following on this these that basketball reveals character you've probably heard the story that Michelle's brother went one-on-one with him before certifying that he was an acceptable future husband for his sister.

MR. DUNCAN: So I got to know the president through Michelle's brother, Craig. He and I are very good friends and played together for years and years, and played on three on three tournaments all over the nation. So, yes, that was part of the test (laughter) and luckily for him, or for

Michelle -- probably more lucky for him, he passed.

MR. GALSTON: Well, you were a young man when you attained the "Secretaryship" of Education -- you're still a young man, mysteriously.

MR. DUNCAN: A lot older, a lot older.

MR. GALSTON: A lot older, but still young, which means that you were still capable of learning during those seven years. So what were your biggest surprises and most instructive experiences as secretary of education?

MR. DUNCAN: So I think I maybe surprisingly most of my surprises were very pleasant. And I came to D.C. with a fair amount of skepticism about what you could do at the federal level, particularly in the K-12 space because education is such a local issue. And I often tell a story when I was running Chicago Public Schools the Department of Education wasn't always my friend and actually had to come to Washington to sit, you know, at the conference room table and to argue with Secretary Spellings at that time because the U.S. Department of Education was telling me that I couldn't tutor 25,000 of my poor children after school in Chicago because of some Federal rule. Kids who are far behind, who needed more help, who wanted to work harder and somehow the U.S. Department of Education was saying I couldn't do it. And to Secretary Spellings' everlasting credit she listened to my logic and to our data and gave us the right. But that was my experience and sort of the craziness of that, they were actually standing in way of what we were trying to do rather than being supportive or helpful. It was something I never forgot.

But what we were able to get done, whether it was a huge increase in funding, the \$1 billion for early childhood education, whether it was pushing very, very hard for higher standards of K-12, and we can talk about the politics of that, but I'm quite happy to see across the nation many more states have college and career ready standards, we were able to get graduation rates to all time highs, historic highs. On the higher ed side, huge investment in community colleges with higher high school graduation rates and lower dropout rates. We had 1.1 million additional students of color go on to college. Big focus on putting more money behind evidence based work, investments in charter schools, among other things. And honestly, if you would have said you could only do one of those things I would have said sign me up. The fact that we were able to do so many of those things honestly exceeded my wildest hopes. So for all

the noise, I feel unbelievably good about what we were able to try and do to give kids a chance in life.

MR. GALSTON: Well, there's an old saying that the current Mayor of Chicago adapted for his own purposes that inside crisis is an opportunity and which was -- so this is sort of counterfactual history, but how different would it have been if you hadn't been equipped at the outset with a \$4 billion Race to The Top fund?

MR. DUNCAN: Everything would have been different. And it wasn't just that. So, yes, a lot of this was circumstance and not because our team was particularly smart or cared more than other teams. We did have an opportunity that others hadn't had. That start there, the money we got from the Recovery Act was \$100 billion and we put about \$96 into saving teacher jobs and we saved a couple hundred thousand teacher jobs. And that for me was just a huge deal. We were talking earlier; I was panicked about like an education catastrophe. Like if we were to just -- I just kept having this visual in my mind of teachers in the unemployment lines and losing homes and class sizes going to 60 or something crazy. So the fact that we were able to stabilize the situation to some extent -- now as a nation we still lost a couple hundred thousand teacher jobs, so we didn't do nearly as much as I would have liked, but that was a huge deal. And then just having, to your point on Race to the Top, just a little money -- and \$4 billion sounds like a lot, but that was \$4 billion over four years -- five years actually, so let's call it a billion a year, and on K-12 we spend \$650 billion each year. So it's like less than a third of one percent just to have a little bit of flexibility to award states that had some courage. And again, all carrots, no sticks, no penalties, just if you want to think differently about supporting teachers, if you want to think differently about turning around low performing schools. So that was a big one; that gets all the press so we can talk about it. That was \$4 billion. We had \$5 billion for School Improvement Grants, SIG, which was turning around the nation's lowest performing schools. We made huge investments there. As a nation we went from 2000 dropout factories, to we're now down to under 800. SO we cut that by more than half. And as a nation our goal should be eradicate dropout factories over the next four or five years. And then to have money to put behind evidence based work, whether it was Investing in Innovation Fund or the Promise Neighborhoods work, just where -- they weren't my ideas, the president's ideas, but just great local work in helping to take to scale what was making a difference in kids' lives. That was extraordinary. And it's the kind of thing that should not be political, should not be partisan, is not Democrat or

Republican. We should be doing a lot more of that going forward, just investing in what's working in communities and taking to scale.

So all of that were -- much of that were opportunities that my predecessors didn't have, and I know how lucky my team and I were to have that.

MR. GALSTON: Well, it's one thing to have an opportunity and a different thing to seize it. And I don't think anybody looking at the facts would say that you didn't take the ball and run with it.

But let me give you an opportunity to reflect on and if you want to rebut a charge that some have made about the management of Race To The Top, namely that built into the incentive structure for the competitive grants portion of, which is very substantial, were certain policy preferences that might not be universally shared. It is sometimes charged, for example, that the Fund was used to encourage states to adopt common core or something very much like it. So what about all of that controversy?

MR. DUNCAN: So I'll just sort of walk through the facts, and again there's plenty of room for debate and discussion. We've made more than our share of mistakes along the way and happy to have that conversation.

So first of all, obviously Race To The Top was simply an opportunity, it was not a mandate. No one had to participate; no one had to do anything. So let's start that. In the competition there was only one thing that we required. I learned a lot coming to D.C. One thing I had no idea is that we had states where it was against the law -- it was literally against the law to link teacher evaluation and student learning. It was against the law. That blew me away. And there is a lot of room for honest debate about the best way to do teacher evaluation and support teachers, but I just think great teachers make a huge difference in kids' lives. We need to identify them, we need to reward them, we need to learn from them, we need to make them master mentor teachers, we need to pay them a lot more money, we need to have them help the next generation. But when it's against the law to say student learning is tied to teachers I just think we demean the profession. So that was the only thing we actually required. And every state that had those laws, they went away. I think that was a good thing. We can have that debate. You know, other things that we incentivized in there was yes, the adoption of high standards.

And just to take one second on this, Massachusetts is our highest performing state. On

virtually every measure they're number one. In Massachusetts 30 percent of their high school graduates, not their dropouts, 30 percent of their high school graduates have to take remedial classes in 2 and 4 year universities. And if that's our number one state think about two through fifty. And when we dummy down standards -- and this was not the intent of No Child Left Behind -- but it was a perverse incentive. You had about 20 states actually reduce their standards to act like they were hitting our bar. And I just think that's one of the most insidious things that ever happened to education, and particularly for poor children and minority children and English language learners who are told they're on track to be successful and they're not even close. And it's just absolutely unfair. So we said states needed to have high standards. It did not have to be the common core. They could work together on other things. That was a possibility that was not a mandate by any stretch. And, to be clear, the definition of high standards was not us in Washington, but just have your local university -- in Texas the University of Texas -- certify its students are meeting these standards, they don't have to take remedial classes. And we talk a lot about the cost of college, it's a real issue, but we spend billions each year on remedial classes. Paying college tuition for high school level work that is not credit bearing. Nobody wins there. So that was one piece of it.

Second was looking at data and just sort of understanding where are we making progress, where are we not. Having transparency and the lack of clarity, the level to which so many state data systems are opaque and no sense of who's getting better and who's not is a big issue. And then another one was turning around low performing schools. And this was again a pretty radical idea, but candidly there are lots of folks around the country who I think in their heart don't quite believe that black and brown children can be successful, who don't quite believe that children who are born poor can be successful academically. And we tried to challenge that very, very hard, and did it imperfectly, and not every school turned around, but it's not a coincidence that we saw high school graduation rates go to all time highs, it's not a coincidence that over time Hispanic dropout rates have been cut in half from 20 to 14 percent, African American but by 45 percent. Now to be clear, none of these numbers are good enough, they're not where they need to be. We have a lot of work ahead of us, but we try to say, to your point, let's challenge the status quo, let's very intentionally -- when things aren't working well for kids, let's behave in some different ways, challenging dropout factories, challenging low expectations, saying great

teachers matter. We can talk about how we executed that, we can talk about implementation and challenges there, but in terms of principles of what's right for kids, I'll have that debate any day of the week.

MR. GALSTON: My last general question before we turn to charters specifically, after a very, very long delay No Child Left Behind was finally replaced. And what's your personal assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Every Student Succeeds Act, which bears a suspicious resemblance, at least verbally, to the bill that it replaced?

MR. DUNCAN: No bill is perfect. And had I written it myself I would have done some things differently, but I was thrilled to get that done. So let me just back up. So No Child Left Behind, obviously I lived on the other side of that for seven and a half years in the Chicago Public Schools, but I always give the authors of that bill credit for its putting achievement gaps on the table and not sweeping under the rug the mass disparities in outcomes, in opportunities between white children and black and Latino. And lots of folks talk about the achievement gap, I talk about the opportunity gap. And I am convinced if we close the opportunity gap the achievement gap will basically disappear. And frankly we lack the courage and we lack the sense of urgency across the nation to do what it takes to actually close the opportunity gaps. And I'm happy to talk about those specifics. So I'll give them credit for that.

But they also got lots also wrong. We talked about the perverse incentives to lower standards, which I know they had no -- that was not their plan, but that's what happened. But the biggest thing goes back to where I started, where I struggled, where I think the law was wrong or my theory of change is just fundamentally different, No Child Left Behind was very loose on goals. So 50 different states, 50 different standards, very unclear as to what it takes to be successful, and many of those standards got dummed down. It was very prescriptive; it was very tight on how you hit those goals. So yes, Arne, you can tutor your kids or no, you can't tutor your kids in Chicago, managing that from D.C. My fundamental theory of change is very different. I think as a nation we should be very tight on goals, which for me is very simple, college and career ready standards for every single child but give tremendous flexibility, be very bottom-up, not top-down. And to think that from D.C. here we can manage Montana and Wyoming and California and Alaska and inner city Chicago; that would be the height of arrogance. And so let's have a high bar hold people accountable, but give them a lot more flexibility to be

creative and to be innovative at the local level. And so we fundamentally tried to flip that on its head, that part felt very good.

We were also able to get early childhood education into the bill. And I would argue anywhere that's the best investment we can make as a nation. Learning doesn't start at kindergarten, it starts at birth. We pushed very, very hard. That for me honestly may have been a deal breaker. Had we not gotten that in I would have had a hard time recommending to the President that he sign it. Senator Patty Murray just was an absolute hero. This was a huge lift. She's a former early childhood educator, she was on the lead committee working on this, and I'm forever grateful that's now part of the conversation when that was divorced before.

So more good than bad. Not perfect. With more local flexibility you have two things. One, I think you're going to see some great innovation and great creativity, which is fantastic and we can learn from that. We will also see some places where you may seem backsliding where folks become less focused on achievement gaps and don't quite hold themselves as accountable. And I think that's a risk when you provide more local flexibility. I actually think it's a risk worth taking and I think it's incumbent upon all of us as citizens, as people who are passionate about this, as members of the media, where you see a state or district backsliding, well we need to call them on that, we need to make it uncomfortable. The thing that always killed me in No Child Left Behind, that when those 20 states reduced standards there was no noise, there was absolute silence. There were no media stories, there was no public outcry, no one said boo. And so again I blame politicians less and I blame us as citizens. And so it's incumbent upon us and the civil rights community to hold folks accountable for doing the right thing.

The final thing I'll say is that I hated the focus on just a test score being the definition of accountability. That always made no sense to me for a whole host of reasons. So test scores can be a piece of what we look at, but look at graduation rates, let's survey students, let's ask them how they feel and kids will tell you. Let's survey teachers, let's talk to parents, let's look not at test scores, let's look at graduation rates, let's look at AP participation, let's look at not just college going, which is important, but college going not needing remedial classes. Let's look at college completion, which is really the name of the game. And so there is a chance now -- again, it's not a guarantee -- but there's a real chance for much more robust, thoughtful, comprehensive accountability systems that look at a multitude of things, I

think gives a much more holistic picture of success or progress or not.

MR. GALSTON: Great. Now let's turn to the topic of the morning, namely charter schools. And let me begin at a point where many of us here at Brookings greatly admire what the Obama administration has done, namely a real turn towards evidence based public policy. As you know, one of my colleagues here was so impressed he actually -- Ron Haskins -- so impressed he actually sat down and wrote a whole book about the administration's efforts in that area.

So in that vein, what is your assessment of the state of research on charter schools? And since the Department of Education has some ability to catalyze research what did you do in that area?

MR. DUNCAN: Well, first let me start, again it was sort of a shocking thing that evidence based funding is a new idea.

MR. GALSTON: Don't get me started.

MR. DUNCAN: And it's just a push for one second because candidly we get pushed back both from the left and on the right on this. And historically the overwhelming majority of our funding in the Department of Education is formula based funding, so it's money for Title I, its money for Title II, its money for special education. Those are the big -- special ed and Title I are the big, big, big pots. And we give that out and there's next to no evidence or even concern of impact or not. Are we actually changing kids' lives, are we making a difference. But I get it, for every congressman and every senator they want to bring home their slice of the pie to their district or to their state. And yes, we need to fund Title I and yes, we need to fund Title II and yes, we need to fund IDA. We should fund them more than we do. But we also need to start to put money behind things that are actually working in scale. And the thing that kills me in education is that we move so slowly, that for every problem we have, be it inner city urban or rural or ELLs or Native American reservation, there are educators every day, amazing teachers, amazing principals, who are solving those problems, who are getting extraordinary results for the most at risk kids. What we don't do is we don't learn from them fast enough, we don't scale. And so whether it was the Investing in Innovation Fund, the i3 work, whether it was the Promise Neighborhood's work, whether it was work we did in technology, again putting money in. You know, it was a pretty simple idea. Jim Shelton did a great job with this. If you've got a lot of evidence, you get more money, you got medium

evidence, you get medium money, if you're sort of a startup you get a little less money but you want to get in the game. So sort of tiered evidence strategy. Let's put money again not behind my ideas, not behind the president's ideas, but behind things that can show high school graduation rates are up, dropouts are down, achievement gaps are closing, more kids are going on to college.

So that's a hard thing to sustain from both the left and the right. Having Brookings and others push I would argue we put some money in -- I think it's a tiny percent of what we should actually be putting in. There's a lot of work to do there and one that should be absolutely nonpolitical, nonpartisan.

To go to your question on the state of research, I think for me that I think there a couple of things that are emerging that are important. One is there's a huge interest in the past couple of years around not just academic results, but it's all these terrible names -- we need better names than non-cognitive issues, grit, resilience, tenacity. I think those things are just a huge deal and I can make an argument that they might be more important for kids' lives than their reading or math scores in third grade. I think I make a pretty compelling case there.

So our research is in its infancy there. And how you teach these things, how you assess them are very complicated. All the work I've done, you know, hands on with kids on the south side of Chicago in the inner city, growing up. We spent a huge amount of time focused on this, and to this day I honestly don't know whether we were any good at it or not and that haunts me. It was just so important because kids were trying to survive in just horrific situations and we had to try and equip them with the skills to not just survive and make it, but also concentrate and focus academically. So that's one emerging body that I think we as a Department can do more and should do more.

Two, for me the goal of any school -- again this is not charter versus traditional -- the goal is not just better test scores, the goal is not just high school graduation rate, it's really college completion rates. And across the nation, particularly in the black and Latino community, particularly for poor students, we are so far from where we need to be. And so really thinking about what are both the academic and the non-academic skills that young people need to have pre-K to 12 to not just graduate and not just go to college, but persist and complete, we have to get much better at that. And KIPP and others are I think doing a great job of self reflection, honesty, and looking at -- they're doing much, much better than the average to their great credit, but nowhere near as good as what they want to do. And I

think those are the kinds of things we have to look at, just to sort of step back. It's interesting how numbers tell different stories. So the good news is that over the past two decades black college graduation rates have doubled. The good news is that over the past two decades Latino college graduation rates have doubled. The bad news is that black graduation rates have doubled from like 13 to 23 percent and Latino from like 8 to 15 percent. So I think the question for all of us, are we going to sit here in 2035 or 2036 and say great, we're now at half of blacks in America have a college degree and we're not at a third of Latinos have a college degree? It's unacceptable. You know, we're not even in the game. So how do we accelerate the pace of change? Can we double those rates not in 20 years, but in 10? That's the kind of work, that's the kind of research, again charter/non charter, all of us need to be engaged in how do we get better faster, how do we accelerate the pace of change.

MR. GALSTON: Well, an outfit that I regard as pretty much the gold standard of policy evaluation in this area, Mathematica Policy Research, did a study in 2014 that came out with some very encouraging news about measures other than test scores. You probably remember, you know, a substantial impact on college attainment and persistence. And interestingly, a very significant impact, about 13 percent on average earnings, even for the charter school students who did not go on to post secondary education and training. So something is happening there that's worthy of attention and that must reflect something more than test scores.

MR. DUNCAN: I think the trends are very, very encouraging and positive. So I think the charter movement -- again we should not be self-satisfied, we should not be complacent, this is not mission accomplished -- I think the charter movement has made huge strides. And so, yes, the academic, the non-cognitive, the long-term earnings, the -- also a recent study was talking about how many more days of math and reading learning are happening for average kids in charters. These are big deals, these are not small effects; these are big effects again for the kids in communities who need the most help. And so I'm very, very encouraged where this is going. Just to be very clear, for me it's never about more charters, it's always about more good schools. And if they happen to be charters, fantastic, if they happen to be traditional, that's fantastic too. Over the past three or four years something like 700 charters -- 691 have been closed. And it's a little counterintuitive, but I think that's a great thing. And there's nothing about the charter brand itself that is good or bad. We should be absolutely agnostic. You

know, one common goal, academics success, one common enemy, academic failure. And I think we just have more charters that are making a real difference in kids' lives, however you define it. And that's a great thing. And we need to learn those lessons. I mean there's a scale and, you know, we're asking the Department of Education for a huge increase in funding to replicate high performers and help them serve more kids.

MR. GALSTON: Well, this is almost exactly the 25th anniversary of charter schools. I was present not quite at the creation, but two years after that, in 1993, and I remember when Ember Reichgott and others came to visit us, the line was that not that charters would ever replace public schools, but that the competition from a significant charter sector would lead public schools to up their game. How do you see that? Has that happened?

MR. DUNCAN: Not much. A little bit. So for me it's less about competition and it's more about choice. And it's really empowering parents to figure out what's the best learning environment for their child. And every child learns differently, every child has different strengths and weaknesses. If a parent has three or four kids the same school may not be the right school for all of their children. And historically in our nation, particularly in poor neighborhoods, particularly in black and Latino communities, there are often no good choices, zero. The reason I've devoted my life to education, because the neighborhood where my mother ran her after school program there were no good choices for kids -- elementary, middle, or high school. The local high school had a 67 percent dropout rate. That's the community where we grew up. And if we could have at a minimum one good choice for every child, and ideally two or three or four good choices, and let parents figure out what the right thing to do would be.

So is there some competition? That's okay. Can we learn from each other, can we all get better? And I think what people in this charter/non charter debate get wrong so often -- for me it's always a false debate -- it's actually not a limited size, defined size pie. If we do well the pie actually grows. So two quick examples, whether it's right here in D.C. or in Denver where you have a strong traditional school sector and a strong charter sector, both sectors are actually growing. There's not a limited number of children and families. And in fact more families are gaining confidence in public education more broadly. And so where we get into this us versus them mentality on either side, for me that just absolutely, one, missed the point and, two, loses focus on how do we change kids' lives, five,

and six, and seven year olds. And so where we can learn from each other, where we can share best practices, on both sides, where we can grow together, that's a good thing. And you see what's happening in Denver with their reopening schools due to increasing enrollment that they closed six or seven years ago, everybody wins there. Charters win, kids win, families win, teachers win, teachers' union win. No one loses there. You see other cities, including unfortunately my hometown of Chicago where there is so much animosity, where there is so much strife, and people are voting with their feet in moving out, and that's a death spiral where nobody wins, everybody loses. And so I think stepping back up, getting past the petty drama, the addled issues, focusing in can we serve every child well in a city, wherever it might be. And that's going to take multiple players doing different things, and really empower parents to choose what's right for their kids. That's a big deal.

MR. GALSTON: The reason I asked -- and this is a segue to my final question because there are a lot of people in the room who are I suspect burning to put their own questions to you -- I asked because if you go back to the intellectual foundations of the charter, you know, people like Chubb and Moe who were here at the time and wrote something like the Bible on school choice and competition, the theoretical argument was very much that the existence of an alternative would create incentives for the traditional public schools to up their game as well. And it's interesting to hear you say that you don't think that's happened very much and you're not entirely unhappy about that.

MR. DUNCAN: No, no. I am -- no, let me be clear, I am unhappy about it. It has happened some, but it has not happened nearly as much as I had hoped, 15 or 20 or 25 years ago. And I think if we gave our honest assessment today of where we're at has everyone really upped their game because of the existence of the charters? I think that's a hard case to make.

MR. GALSTON: Yes, I agree with you. Here's my final question, which I'll put in the form of a tendentious generalization, another theory of charters at the beginning was that they would be founts of educational pedagogical innovation. My summary observation of the ones that really succeeded is that they've done exactly the reverse; they've gone back to the basics and hit them hard. What's your view?

MR. DUNCAN: Again, these are all broad generalizations. There are some amazingly creative curricula, interesting things going on in some schools. But broadly speaking I would agree. For me, you know, it's more time. And you have kids who are not lucky enough to be born into a middle class

family, who don't have ballet and bassoon and French horn and dance after school. Six hours a day isn't enough, and many charters it's nine hours a day, it's Saturdays, it's eleven months out of the year. And most people who are successful in this room, they work pretty hard. And that's just to be successful. And if you're starting life behind, which is absolutely unfair, you need more help, more resources, more opportunity. So I think that focus has been hugely important. I think a focus on great teachers and great principals and that talent matters tremendously. Again, no one has done this perfectly. I think many charters have attracted extraordinary talent. Retaining that talent is a -- there are other challenges we can talk about -- has been a big deal. I do think there's been more focus probably ahead of some traditional schools on individualized instruction, really personalized learning and not just teaching to the class of 25 or 30 or 35, but to each kid. But in many ways it is things that appear to be common sense, but again don't happen often enough, particularly for the kids in communities who need them. I think that's a gap or a void that charters have stepped into.

And at the end of the day all that is hugely important. I also think there's just an optimism about what kids can do, there's a belief about what kids can do. And, yes, learning to read and learning math is really important, but kids need relationships, they need adults who see things in them that they don't see in themselves. And I think the most successful charters are building cultures where we don't care how much money you have or don't have or what your zip code is or what your skin color is, you know, you're this extraordinarily unique and special individual and we're going to help you achieve your dreams, whatever they might be. And I think having adults in kids' lives who passionately believe that and who live that out every single day, I would argue those relationships are as important as anything we do on the strictly academic side.

MR. GALSTON: With that the floor is open for questions and I have a couple of requests. First of all, identify yourself as you pose your question by name and, if you choose, by institutional affiliation. Second, no long harangues or statements. (Laughter) Terse questions for Secretary Duncan please.

Who wants to go first?

MR. DUNCAN: We've got to take this show on the road. I like this. (Laughter)

MR. GALSTON: Yes, that gentleman in the I believe bow tie.

MR. EASLEY: Hello, I'm Hutton Easley; affiliation would be the Tennessee Achievement School District where I'm a advisory board member. Question really is we've heard a lot of academics today and thinking about colleges that teach teachers, how are they doing in changing their mindset on what teachers need to be doing and bringing into the classroom for the next 20 years?

MR. DUNCAN: Generally they're doing a very poor job.

MR. EASLEY: (Inaudible) shining examples? (Laughter)

MR. DUNCAN: I wasn't quite sure where to go on that. Yes, there are shining examples. They are much fewer than we would like them to be. So I spent lots of time traveling the country talking to lots of great teachers, veteran teachers, young teachers. And whenever I'd meet with young teachers I'd ask them, you know, how many of you were prepared to enter the classroom, and usually it would be about a quarter of the room. And I always said if education was medicine, if a quarter of our nation's doctors were entering the hospital unprepared, we'd have a revolution in our nation. But somehow we don't value education as much as we value the medical profession. And so we allow young people to enter unprepared. These are idealistic, committed people who are giving their lives to help kids.

But two things, there are lots of issues, but two things I often heard from young teachers, one was a lack of just hands on teaching kids. And lots of history of education and philosophy of education, psychology of education, and not enough how do I teach 25-30 kids who may look very different from me, who may have very different backgrounds, who have very different needs. Teaching is not some theoretical profession; it is nitty-gritty, hands on, exhausting, tough, exhilarating work. And the lack thereof is a big issue. I'm a big fan of residency programs. It's not surprising, the medical model, and we're seeing some of that emerging. But that's a big deal. Spend a year with a master teacher learning every single day. I'll take that over classroom whatever any day of the week.

The second one is the lack of focus on technology and using technology again not to teach 30 kids in aggregate, or to the average of 30 kids, but to 30 individualized children and personalized instruction. And too many schools of education and professors have been out for too long and the data revolution has sort of passed them by.

And so those are the two overarching themes. Are there some universities that are doing this well and challenging themselves? Absolutely. Vanderbilt is very interesting to me, University of

Michigan, Deborah Ball is the dean there, is doing some good things. There are others. There's an emerging group that is starting to work together, but when you talk about 1700 schools of education, are we at critical mass? No. I'm a big fan of alternative certification programs and looking at different ways, and not that they're doing it perfectly, but let's sort of open this up a little bit. So that's one.

The other one, this is one I'm going to continue to do a little bit of work on, if you look at the rigor of what's taught in schools of ed versus schools of engineering or schools of architecture, schools of whatever, if you look at average GPAs of people who major in education in college versus others, they are wildly disparate. And the lack of seriousness of how important this is and lack of rigor and lack of challenging young people is something -- is a conversation I want to continue to have and sort of bring some of those facts to life.

MR. GALSTON: Other questions? Yes.

MR. BENDER: My name is Ted Bender; I'm currently substitute teaching in Montgomery County, but previously I had a psychologist career in D.C. schools. Very briefly -- it's hard to be brief -- but do you, Secretary Duncan, see a connection -- or how would you characterize the cleavage between or among ourselves as American citizens and the brokenness of education, i.e., if education is a proxy for our culture and our culture is broken, how would restoring our culture, including Yes We Can -- whatever happened to Yes We Can, whatever happened to the adult world of collaboration and mutual dignity and respect? Last question, when you get on an airplane the announcements are put the mask on yourself first and then put the mask on your child. I think that maybe --

MR. GALSTON: I think that the Secretary had got the point of the question.

MR. BENDER: Okay. Okay. I appreciate just if you could revisit or visit the connection between our cultural health in the adult world and what we want to instill in our children.

MR. GALSTON: Got it.

MR. DUNCAN: Got it. Airplane one I wasn't quite sure where you were going.

On the first one I think it's actually -- these are very complicated, interesting questions, but if we had a better educated America would we be behaving in different ways and would the political discourse be different. I think the question is absolutely. And I think we have to own that. And where you have large swaths of the American public who have been poorly educated, be that rural white or inner

city black or Latino -- I always give the example when I was growing up on the south side of Chicago if my friends dropped out of high school it wasn't great, but it wasn't the end of the world. They could work in the stock yards and steel mills, and did, and support a family and own a home and do okay. Today if you drop out of high school you're basically condemned to poverty and social failure. There are no good jobs out there. So the stakes for high quality education have gone up exponentially, but our pace of improvement has not kept pace. And so again, for me, this is not just about education, it's a fight to end poverty, it's a fight for social justice, it's a fight for upward mobility. And if we don't educate kids they have no chance to enter the middle class. And you talk about the rifts, the divides in society between the haves and the have nots, the only way I know how to solve that is through higher quality education for every kid. And that's why good charters for me are a huge part of the problem.

So I think we in education have to own this and have to look in the mirror and say candidly we haven't done enough and we haven't done it fast enough, and we haven't done it for the kids in communities that need the most help. And if we had the best educated workforce in the world there are no losers here, and we're not close. Other nations are just out innovating, out educating us. So that's one.

The second one, to get beyond just the academic outcomes, I do think participation in democracy, service learning, understanding how you can be a leader in helping out, financial literacy. There are so many things beyond the core academics that young people need and deserve and I would argue must have today. And while these things are sometimes seen as extras they're often sort of the norm in more elite schools. And so how we help all kids have access to chances to serve their community when they're young, to financial literacy, to a second language, to being part of democracy, and being engaged in these debates. That's what great schools, charters, traditional schools do. And those opportunities have to be the norm, not the exception.

MR. GALSTON: We live in interesting time when candidates pronounce that they "love the poorly educated", but I won't take that one any farther.

And now for a question I'm dying to hear from Nina Rees. You probably know her.

MR. DUNCAN: Know her well. Good to see you.

MS. REES: Mr. Secretary --

MR. DUNCAN: Arne, Arne -- no Mr. Secretary stuff.

MS. REES: Arne, yes. Given what you know in your seven and a half years as the secretary of education and what's the recent reauthorization of the ESEA has done to the powers of the secretary, who do you think would be on the short list, or should be on the short list for the next secretary of education if one of these candidates were to call you? Or what's the ideal archetype of the next candidate?

MR. DUNCAN: So I'll punt on the names just because I haven't gotten that far and don't really know. I just think -- well, let me back up. For me education should be the ultimate nonpartisan issue, nonpolitical, and so if you have anyone coming from either extreme, no one has monopoly on good ideas in education. And I would actually argue that kids are often poorly served because political leaders on both the left and the right get pushed to the extremes by their extremes. And what's right for kids is usually in the middle. And there are very few incentives for politicians to take on their base and move to the middle ground. And so in a perfect world you would have political leaders with courage, not just playing to their base but challenging their base around education and getting leaders who see this not just as an educational responsibility, but as really a moral imperative, and I go back to in a fight for social justice. It's a fight for civil rights.

And it's a huge deal in the -- just to go back to your other question -- the cost of failure today is so staggeringly high -- not to detour but, you know, what I'm looking at in Chicago with the levels of violence and the levels of murder, those aren't college educated folks who are shooting each other. That's not the reality. And so the cost to our society for not getting this right is a real problem. And what I've argued, and I'd say somewhat unsuccessfully, is I think as a nation we should unite behind a couple goals. I would love us to lead the world in access to high quality pre-K. We can debate that, but I think that should be a goal. I would love to get our high school graduation rates to 100 percent as fast as we can. We've gone from 2000 dropout factories to 800. I would love the next president to eradicate dropout factories, like we eradicated polio, over the next four years. I'd love to lead the world in college completion rates. Today we're 12th. Now, we can have lots of vigorous debate about the strategies for achieving those goals, but candidly I haven't seen any of the politicians talk about any of those goals. And again I don't blame them, I blame us. So it's maybe a roundabout. We need folks who are focused

on those goals around being ready to enter kindergarten, completing high school, ready to be successful in college, and then taking our college completion rates to record highs. Let's have lots of vigorous debate around the means to get there, but we need political leaders and we need future education secretaries that are laser-like focused on that and put the politics and ideology and silly stuff to the side.

MR. GALSTON: Well, speaking on behalf of the Brown Center for Education here at Brookings, I hope that the very first piece that you write for us will make the point about uniting around high order goals in education and then arguing about the best means. Because I think that point that you just made is extremely important and has broader application to our nation's politics. We are not spending a lot of time talking about the goals that we agree on, but we're spending a lot of time beating each other's brains out about the means that we disagree on.

Yes, the woman right there. Yes, you, ma'am.

MS. HARRISON-JONES: Yes, Mr. Secretary, or Arne, however you'd like to be addressed, you made reference to --

MR. GALSTON: And you are?

MS. HARRISON-JONES: I'm Lois Harrison-Jones, former superintendent in Boston, Massachusetts and professor emeritus of Howard University.

MR. GALSTON: Thank you.

MS. HARRISON-JONES: You spoke of schools of education not doing an effective job. I concur with you 100 percent. I would like, however, to ask if you would provide some suggestions, some advice as to how we might move beyond the traditional manner in which we tend to evaluate or assess the effectiveness of our schools of education, generally through accreditation agencies such as Incade and Cape and so on. How could the Department of Education be a little more forceful, if you will, in terms of holding those schools of education to a higher standard or, more importantly, making the connection between what is being taught and what is expected of them as teachers once they exit the programs?

MR. DUNCAN: Yes, so this is an area where we struggled and I'll give myself a pretty low grade there. Part of it is our levers are pretty weak and we're still working on stuff, so stay tuned. But we just don't have as much latitude here as I personally would like. That's just the reality. So it's not an excuse and we should have done more. And the team is still working very, very hard on it.

Let me just say, I almost go back to schools of education evaluation, teacher evaluation. I'd go back -- we should just survey graduates and ask them and they'll tell you. These are your customers, these are your clients. Ask them, were you prepared to be successful? Were you not? What were the gaps there? Let's get that feedback. What percent are working in high poverty schools, be that in inner city, urban, or rural. What percent are staying in those schools and making a commitment to the community, not for two years or three years, but for 20 years? And I just think getting feedback from the folks who are living this work is so important. Are the teachers who graduate from the schools of education, are their students are students actually learning, are they successful in math and reading. And we can look at that and look at different schools of education, how folks are doing.

One we haven't talked about, and I'll talk about both for schools of education and the charter school movement, because they're both applicable, the lack of diversity is crushing right now. And our students today are a majority minority. And I want great teachers in every classroom, I just want those great teachers to reflect the great diversity if our nation's kids. And I see very few schools of education focus on this at all. And it's interesting, there is lots of debate about Teach For America, and we can talk as a separate topic, but Teach For America today is wildly more diverse than the vast majority of schools of education. And they've made huge strides there. And so our teachers that look like our nation's kids, our charter school leaders have to look like our nation's kids, and we have to sort of cede that.

But I just think the truth is just in talking to the graduates, getting that feedback, and then does something change. So can we do things at the federal level? We can do some, but to be very clear, we're not the answer. For me there were answers really challenging governors, challenging college presidents, and challenging deans that you have to own this, you have to take responsibility. And if the rigor of your school of education is -- I'm just making this up -- is half that of your school of engineering, then you're not really serious about this work. And we know many schools of education are cash cows, they don't cost a lot and they generate lots of money. And if teaching wasn't so important I wouldn't care. You know, I can't think of a more important profession to build our nation and to help kids than training the future educators.

So we need to push better at the federal level. Hold us accountable there. But that can't

be the solution alone. Governors have to own this, but university boards and presidents have to say, you know, we want our school to be world class and we want 100 percent of our graduates to be prepared to be successful when they enter that classroom and do that critically important work. Because those kids don't have a second chance, those kids have one change with that teacher. And there's just not a seriousness of purpose or sense of mission there or sense of urgency. I don't feel it nationally, I really don't.

MR. GALSTON: A question right here in front.

MR. HARRIS: Doug Harris from Tulane and Education Research Alliance for New Orleans. So, first, just wanted to thank you for helping to reconcile the competing streams of debate. I think this idea that there's an establishment vie and that it's all about poverty versus improving the schools has been really damaging and I appreciate your focus on let's just focus on the students and the goals.

Part of the debate earlier today on charter schools is about the role of districts. So part of the logic is to get the districts out of the way, give more autonomy down to the school level. What do you see, having been a superintendent, but also having seen it from the federal level, what do you see as the future role of school districts?

MR. DUNCAN: To be clear, in authorizing charters or?

MR. HARRIS: Just in general.

MR. DUNCAN: The role of districts in general? (Laughter) That's a broad one. Well, let me just say for me the conditions for successful charters are always the golden combination of much greater autonomy, but much greater accountability. And one without the other doesn't work. And so I want to give charter operators maximum flexibility to innovate, to be creative, but hold them accountable for results. So where districts are authorizing or states or universities are authorizing, for me the goal is not let 1000 flowers bloom, the goal is take the best of the best, hold them absolutely accountable for results. Where they're doing well, replicate, let them serve more kids. Where they're doing poorly, close them down.

I don't think I answered your question.

MR. HARRIS: Do you think districts are capable of doing all those things? Holding them

accountable and giving them autonomy? There are not a lot of examples of districts doing that.

MR. DUNCAN: They're not. And again, for me the -- so who authorizes -- for me again I'm agnostic, whether it's districts or universities or states, you have different authorities. And again I'm pragmatic. I don't think any one of them is uniquely suited more than others. And there are examples of success in all of those sectors and there are examples of real failure in all of those. So I think -- this is actually -- on the research it would be I don't know the answer to the question, but if we looked at which charters are most successful and who is mostly doing the authorizing, is it a district or university or state. I honestly don't know the answer to that question. Some folks in the room might. I think that's an interesting one. But I think again for me it's less who's doing it, it's what principles are they picking winners, you know, how are they basing their decisions, how are they holding them accountable. Then what's there three to five years in, what's their growth replication or shut down strategy.

MR. GALSTON: I know you have a hard stop at 12:00. We have two minutes. So a terse question --

MR. DUNCAN: Two quick questions and I'll shorten my answers. Real quick.

MR. GALSTON: Okay. Well, then here and this gentleman with the gray hair over there.

MR. DUNCAN: I do have to race to the airport. I apologize, guys.

MR. KAHLBERG: Rick Kahlenberg with the Century Foundation. You gave what I thought was a very candid interview with the 74 where you were asked what did you wish you'd done more on. And one of the issues was school integration. And I'm wondering what sort of advice you would give to a future secretary on how the federal government can promote economic and racial integration in our schools.

MR. GALSTON: Let me put both of the questions together, then you can answer them both.

MR. DUNCAN: Okay, okay. Yes, good.

MR. FARMER: I'm Nick Farmer. Can you speak some about post-secondary non-college education apprentice programs, preparing students for jobs that don't necessarily require a college education?

MR. GALSTON: Thank you.

MR. DUNCAN: So quickly, on integration the good news is John King is laser like focused on this and I think will do as much as he can in a short amount of time. In retrospect I think what we did, we had some resources, particularly magnet school money to spend, I think we spread that too thinly and I would have made fewer, bigger bets. And again I don't blame the field, I blame -- we had lots of folks with good ideas and with good plans on paper. Candidly not enough of who we funded were able to deliver. And this stuff is really, really hard as you know, so I don't blame them. But I think had we been more discerning in who we picked, made bigger investments there -- obviously there are downsides to that, but I think we would have had more shining examples like a Hartford, Connecticut, and we don't have enough of those emerging. So that was strategically a choice in hindsight I would do differently.

On apprenticeships, vocational education, we haven't talked about that. I'm just a huge, huge, huge fan. What I'm trying to do to reduce the murder rate in Chicago is get a bunch of guys jobs. Welding is a big piece of that. There are lots of different ways to get a good job in the legal economy that doesn't require a four year degree. So I say all the time, is it the goal of every high school graduate has to be some form of learning beyond that, four year universities, two year community colleges, trade, technical, vocational training. Again, we should be agnostic. We should prepare young people for success in all of those and let them follow their passions. And so again, other countries, Germany, others -- the president was just there -- lots of places we can learn from, but the goal is to help people get good jobs and a four year degree might be the answer, or it might be a three month coding bootcamp. And the truth is all of us have to keep learning, keep growing the rest of our lives so it's not a one shot deal. But putting more resources behind those programs where real skills lead to real jobs and a good wage, we can't support that work enough.

MR. GALSTON: Well, ladies and gentlemen, I think the past hour has been all the evidence we needed that Brookings is incredibly fortunate to have the former secretary of education, Arne Duncan, as part of our education team. Thank you so much for sharing your insights with us.

Will the audience please remain seated until Secretary Duncan has a chance to exit the room and dash for the airport. And please join me in thanking him. (Applause)

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Carleton J. Anderson, III

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

Expires: November 30, 2016