



# Success

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Timely tips for OSBA student achievement liaisons

September 2006

## Why do they drop out?

While some students drop out of school because of academic challenges, most are students who believe they could have succeeded in school, according to *The Silent Epidemic, Perspectives of High School Dropouts*, a report by Civic Enterprises for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This survey of those who left high school without graduating suggests that, despite career aspirations that require education beyond high school and a majority having grades of C or better, circumstances in students' lives and an inadequate response from the schools led to dropping out. For an executive summary, visit [www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/TheSilentEpidemic-ExecSum.pdf](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/TheSilentEpidemic-ExecSum.pdf).

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## Back-to-school tidbits

This fall, 49 million prekindergarten through grade 12 students will be enrolled in public schools. Fun facts from an Associated Press story include: in 1964 only 10% of 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds were enrolled in school, while 40 years later, the number rose to 54%; in 2004, 18.8% of children ages 5 to 17 spoke a language other than English at home; and total spending on public schools topped \$450 billion in 2004 with 8.5% coming from the federal government, 48.7% from the states and 42.8% came from local sources. For more facts, go to [http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/national/1110AP\\_School\\_Statistics.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/national/1110AP_School_Statistics.html).

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## Really ready at 5?

Most students start school as 5-year-olds. Is this the optimum age? Nationwide, 90% of eligible children attend kindergarten, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, with 73% starting at age 5, 13% at 6 and 7% at 4. To read the *Chicago Sun-Times* story, go to <http://www.suntimes.com/output/education/cst-nws-kinder30.html>.

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## The debate continues ...

*Stanford Magazine* invited two experts to offer their views of the state of public education after the No Child Left Behind Act. **Terry Moe**, Stanford University's political science chair, and 1967 graduate **Gerald W. Bracey**, author of *Reading Educational Research: How to Avoid Getting Statistically Snookered*, present their cases at: [www.stanfordalumni.org/news/magazine/2006/julaug/features/nclb.html](http://www.stanfordalumni.org/news/magazine/2006/julaug/features/nclb.html).

# Student achievement research brief

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief to share with fellow board members. Use it to generate discussion with the board and staff.

## Ohio study reports public schools exceed charters on elementary and high school tests

Disadvantaged and African-American students enrolled in regular public schools perform better on state achievement tests than their counterparts who attend charter schools, according to an analysis by the Coalition for Public Education (CPE). The data refutes claims by charter school advocates that the privately operated schools provide better educational options for poor and minority students.

CPE's annual review of charter school performance shows that:

- 50% of charter schools are in academic emergency and academic watch, compared to just 9% of traditional public schools.
- 16% of charter schools were rated excellent or effective, while 74% of regular public schools earned such high marks.
- 24% of economically disadvantaged students in charter schools met the state standard for math proficiency, compared to 68% in traditional public schools.
- 15% of economically disadvantaged students in charter schools met the state standard for reading proficiency, compared to 49% in traditional public schools.
- 20% of African-American students enrolled in charter schools met the state standard for math proficiency, compared to 40% in traditional public schools.
- 11.5% of African-American students enrolled in charter schools met the state standard for reading proficiency, compared to 27.8% in traditional public schools.
- Overall, 29% of charter school students met the state standard for math proficiency compared to 86% of traditional public schools students.
- Overall, 21% of charter school students met the state standard for reading proficiency compared to 80% of traditional public schools students.
- 75% of charter schools failed to meet the federal requirement to make adequate yearly progress (AYP), while only 38% of regular public schools did not make AYP.

OSBA is a CPE member.

For more information on the CPE study, visit [www.osba-ohio.org/files/chartersreport.pdf](http://www.osba-ohio.org/files/chartersreport.pdf). Recent news reports confirm this trend nationally. For a copy of the National Assessment of Educational Progress' *Comparing Private Schools and Public Schools Using Hierarchical Linear Modeling* study, visit [www.aft.org/pubs-reports/downloads/teachers/NAEPCharterSchoolReport.pdf](http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/downloads/teachers/NAEPCharterSchoolReport.pdf).

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