

UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX MATERIAL

(Directions: The paper provided comes from a beginning writing course. The assignment was to write a 750-1000 word paper. Papers were required to have a thesis and clearly organized with an introduction, body and conclusion. Students were also instructed to use proper APA format for the assignment.)

GEN/I01

Mr.

July 23,

Charter Schools: Are They Good For Our Community?



In September a new school is scheduled to open in San Diego. It is called the Nubia Leadership Academy, which is known as a charter school. In 1992 California passed a charter schools act, and it became effective in September of 1993. The San Diego Unified School District currently has six charter schools with another scheduled to open by the fall of this year. It will open with 150 students ranging from Kindergarten to fourth grade, and will add a grade every year.



What is a charter school? It is a public school that receives state funds and must accept all applicants. It must be accountable for its curriculum, as well as meet clear academic standards. What makes it different is it has a contract that can be revoked if the school fails to make good on its commitments. Any public school can apply to become a charter school. A charter school has more freedom from state regulations and is operated by the community in which it is located.

Charter schools link parents, teachers, and children in a common goal and deliver what parents want most, a quality education for their children. It gives parents an opportunity to be involved in what their children learn. Charter schools are not governed by any school board; however, they may only be approved to open and operate by a school board, and must be reviewed periodically by that school board. Public schools are not accountable because there are no consequences for failure.


The charter school was born out of the struggle against the unequal treatment given to certain races by the bureaucratic school Systems. In 1968, a prototype was that of Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Brooklyn, New York. It created quite an uprising at the time and played a major role in the development of the charter school concept. Thirty years ago, so-called liberals attacked the bureaucracies for their distance from the schools and their inability to improve the achievements of minorities: The liberals also attacked the union for its narrow-minded leadership and felt that the union was more dedicated to the interest of teacher rather than students. Interestingly, today, conservatives support the charter school concept because they feel it will permit parents to start schools funded by the government that are free of local controls and operate more like private schools to improve the achievement of low income students.

Critics claim that charter schools will drain the regular public school systems of money, but as in higher education, shouldn't the money follow the student and not the school? Critics also complain that charter schools will take the best students and create elitism. A national study by the Hudson institute showed that nearly two-thirds of the students in charter schools are minorities or disabled children who had not been well served by the regular public school system. Certain fears are raised about charter schools that community control will mean possible corruption as public money is distributed to private groups and the possibility of strange school programs being funded by the taxpayers.. Michael Kelly, editor of The New Republic magazine in his article titled "Dangerous Minds" attacked charter schools suggesting that they are "committed to black nationalism" and would allow "teaching of.. conservative virtues and old fashioned education, discipline, and religious instruction".

Unions are suspicious of the autonomy of charter schools and feel their members may lose jobs as parents desert public schools.

One of the most successful charter schools is Vaughn Next Century Learning Center in Los Angeles, whose principal won the McGraw award for her leadership. The school has 1,200 primarily low-income students and has improved attendance and test scores while raising teacher salaries and parent involvement. Not all charter schools succeed. In San Diego two charter schools have had their charter revoked, but this demonstrates the insistence on accountability.

Interestingly, the concept of so-called free schools, i.e. freedom to have parents and teachers choose the curricula, is not a new one. In a book by Jonathon Kozol, "Alternative Schools, A Guide for Educators and Parents", a quote from George Dennison in 1969 reads, "One hears more frequently now of parents banding together, find teachers, and starting little schools... There are no signs that a movement exist, but there are many signs that one might...."

I feel that charter schools are an excellent idea but we should not abandon our public schools. There has to be a way of combining the concepts and rid the current system of its narrow-minded leadership and cumbersome bureaucracy. Parents and teachers must have an active voice in the education of their children, it can not be dictated by any school board. 

Well done by the usual standard of submissions.

Clearly you gave credit to the proper persons and organizations for certain facts and quotes and statistics you included in your article, BUT you did not give credit in the proper format. Read up on how to cite sources both within the text and at the end of the essay!!!

In EVERY sentence that follows a sentence in a paragraph, you failed to make TWO SPACES after the period/stop. Always make two blank spaces after a period or colon or semicolon.

Spelling errors should never happen.

Your content was well done. You met the range-in-words requirement, with a nice introduction, body and a strong conclusion.