

A coalition of leaders representing Charter Management Organizations released the following statement in response to the draft platform recommendation from the Biden-Sanders Unity Task Force:

As leaders of charter school networks, we find the task force's recommendations for public education, especially as they relate to charter schools, to be disappointing, harmful, and misleading.

To begin, charter schools should have been included in the list of "multiple public school pathways to access the opportunities students deserve." We have first-hand knowledge of the impact of charter schools – which are always public schools, never charge tuition and do not have selective admission processes. We earned our place on the list, and certainly have proven that charter schools in our network are some of the most reliable and consistent pathways to opportunities for students, especially those who have been historically underserved.

Charter schools were omitted from a list that included career and technical education, magnet schools for science and the arts, International Baccalaureate programs, and early college high schools. However, charter schools are an important component of a vibrant public education ecosystem. It is especially egregious to omit charter schools from this list when polling consistently shows Black and Latino parents and voters strongly support charter schools.

Charter schools serve 3.3 million students in America, and there are five million more who would attend a charter school if space were available. These unique, innovative public schools disproportionately serve Black and Latino students, and students from low-income families. And they do it very well. Data has consistently shown charter schools actually do a better job than their district school counterparts at educating students who have traditionally been poorly served in schools operated by school districts. It is therefore puzzling that policy that proposes to represent the Democratic Party would suggest denying resources in the very schools that deliver exceptional outcomes for black and brown students and those from low-income families.

The recommendation that federal funding for charter schools be contingent upon approval by a school district is absurd. The potential for conflict of interest abounds. Many school districts view charter schools as their competitors and they simply don't want them to operate. Further, the very notion that the charter should have to prove to a district that it would not "systemically underserve the neediest students" belies the inconvenient truth that many districts have been systematically underserving these students for generations. There are many in school districts who would rather deny charter schools funding than ensure all children are well educated.

In addition, as suggested in the recommendations, increased federal regulation of charter schools would override local control by charter school authorizers, even though states already hold charter schools accountable to higher standards of transparency than district schools.

These tactics are to be expected of charter school opponents who will stop at nothing to maintain the status quo, kill innovation and deny educational opportunities to the students who need them most. But Mr. Biden knows better. We strongly urge him to reconsider these recommendations that are harmful to charter schools.

Achievement First
Achievement Prep Public Charter Schools
Alpha Public Schools
Amethod Public Schools
AppleTree Institute
Ascend Learning Center
Aspire Public Schools
BASIS Charter Schools
Breakthrough Schools
BRICK EDUCATION NETWORK
Brooke Charter Schools
Camino Nuevo Charter Academy
Carmen Schools of Science and Technology
Classical Charter Schools
DC Prep
DSST Public Schools
Eagle Academy PCS
Ednovate, Inc.
Excellence Community Schools
Fortune School of Education
Freire Schools
Gestalt Community Schools
Great Oaks Charter Schools
Grimmway Schools
Harmony Public Schools
HEBREW PUBLIC - Charter Schools for Global Citizens
Henderson Collegiate
IDEA Public Schools
Imagine Schools
InspireNOLA
KIPP Charter Schools
Mastery Schools
Noble Network of Charter Schools
Oakmont Education
Prospect Schools
ReGeneration Schools
RePublic Schools
Responsive Education Solutions
Richard Milburn Academy Schools
Rocketship Public Schools
Rocky Mountain Prep
Scholarship Prep Public Schools

STEM Preparatory Schools
Success Academy Charter Schools
Summit Public Schools
Uncommon Schools
University Prep Schools
Uplift Education
Valor Collegiate Academies
YES Prep Public Schools
Zeta Charter Schools