CHARTER SCHOOLS
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Hope or Hype?

Jack Buckley and Mark Schneider
Whereas boosters and advocates, myself included, once supposed that charter schools would almost always turn out to be good schools, reality shows that some are fantastic, some are abysmal, and many are hard to distinguish from the district schools to which they’re meant to be alternatives. Merely hanging a “charter” sign over a schoolhouse door frees it to be different but doesn’t assure quality—or even differentness. Those running the school need to know what they’re doing—and be good at doing it. Too many well-meaning (or, sometimes, greedy) folks set out to create charter schools that they aren’t competent to run.

—Chester E. Finn, Jr., National Review, October 9, 2006