

Michigan Charter Schools

play a **vital role** in public education. But we need to do better. National, state, and local data all suggest that a minority of charter schools are fulfilling their promise to provide a better public education to Michigan students, and there are far too few of such schools. Instead, too often, charters actually are providing a **similar or worse public education** than even the nation's worst public school district – Detroit Public Schools.

Our kids deserve better.

Consider this:

- Michigan now ranks in the **bottom five states** for student learning progress in fourth-grade reading and math over the last decade.
- Fourth-grade students are learning at **lower levels today** than they did in 2003 in reading, an important predictor of future learning success.
- **Detroit** students **are near or among the worst in the nation** in all subjects and grade levels when compared to other large urban districts.
- **More than 70%** of Michigan charter school students are **low-income**, and more than 60% are African American or Latino.



The **vast majority** of charter schools in Michigan have lower student achievement than the state average.

The good:

Stanford University's 2013 and 2015 CREDO studies found that the majority of Michigan and Detroit **charter students** have greater learning gains in both math and reading than their traditional school counterparts.



The bad:

CREDO's 2013 study found the majority of charter schools in Michigan actually perform the same as traditional public schools in **reading + math**. The 2015 CREDO study found that 51% of Detroit charter schools perform better than their traditional public school counterparts in reading.



The truth:

Academic gains from charter schools aren't being shared by all students. Higher performing charter students are concentrated in fewer schools... while most charter schools are not producing strong results.

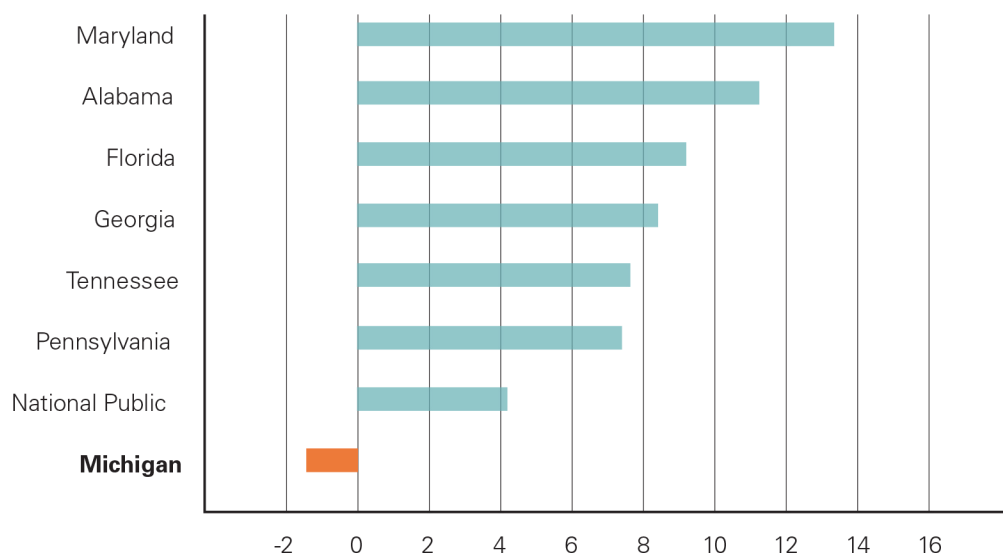
The bar of **"better than Detroit"** – the nation's lowest performing public school district - is not something to be applauded.



Take reading for example:

The rest of the country is gaining ground in 4th grade reading and Michigan is slipping further to the bottom.

Average Scale Score Change, NAEP Grade 4- Reading - All Students (2003-13)



Average 4th grade reading scores have dropped by almost 2 points in the past 10 years.

We can do better than that!

Some Michigan charter school **students** are outperforming their traditional public school peers. But at the **school** level the picture is not so rosy.



Charter school students get an average of **2 extra months** of reading and math instruction each year.

Yet...

In reading, only **35%** of charter schools perform better than traditional public schools, while **63%** perform no different and **2% perform worse.**

Source: Center for Research on Education Outcomes, "Charter School Performance in Michigan" (Stanford, CA: CREDO, 2013), <http://credo.stanford.edu/research-reports.html>.

Michigan is home to some incredible charter schools that deliver on their promise of giving our kids the best education possible. Those schools should be celebrated and expanded. We need to make sure ALL Michigan charters are held to the same high standard and keep low-performing schools from continuing to fail our kids.