The Academic Evidence of School Choice

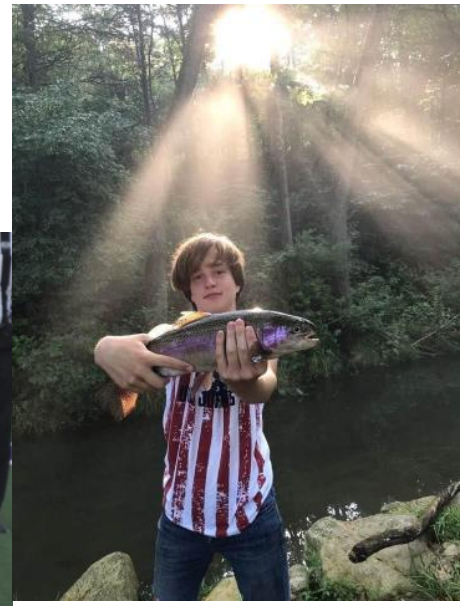
ANGELA WATSON, PHD

ASSISTANT RESEARCH PROFESSOR, JOHNS HOPKINS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW, INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION POLICY

About Me

- Research professor, JHU School of Education working in all sectors of K-12 education
- Hold 5 degrees, 4 in education, PhD Education Policy
- Attended traditional teacher prep, certified K-8 teacher
- School Choice work includes research publications on homeschool, micro-schools, learning pods



- Live in NW Arkansas
- Mom of two boys- 13 and 16 (both go to traditional public schools)
- Went back to school in my 30s specifically to address equity issues in education.

Contact: awatso43@jhu.edu

Follow: @AngelaRWatson on Twitter and LinkedIn

Presentation Outline

Purpose: Share research evidence on school choice.

But first…

What we measure and why.

How we measure it.

Because all research is NOT created equal.

*All views expressed in this presentation are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Johns Hopkins School of Education or the Institute for Education Policy.

What do we measure and why?

Goal: Truth about whether kids are learning, is the school "good?"

- test scores
- graduation rates
- school attendance/discipline

But we also care about others things like...

-untested subjects, more to life than math and reading

-authentic learning, knowledge, critical thinking skills

-later life outcomes like jobs, family life, college persistence

So why don't we measure these?

What we measure matters.

Result: Seeking truth where it is easy to observe = BIAS

Test scores = supreme measure but gameable, single point in time, fluctuate

Test score = knowledge

or at least Test Score = knowledge + ability

but really Test Score = knowledge + ability + teacher knowledge +

= other things like sleep, hunger, distraction

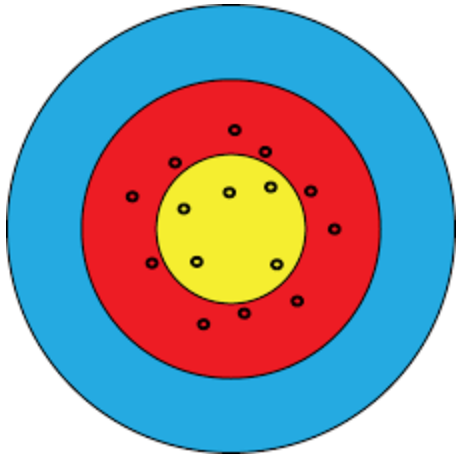
What we measure matters.

Result: Seeking truth where it is easy to observe = BIAS

Test scores = supreme measure but gameable, single point in time, fluctuate

Graduation rates (gameable, inflated)

College going rates (not persistence or graduation)



It is okay that these measures aren't perfect as long as we don't pretend they are perfect or comprehensive to what is important in education.

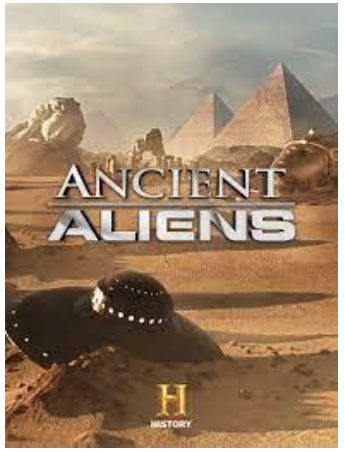
How do we measure? Quality matters.

Study says charter schools "don't measure up."

What is the problem here?

You can find a "study" with a little evidence to support about anything.

In Education Policy we look for a body of quality evidence- not one junk study.



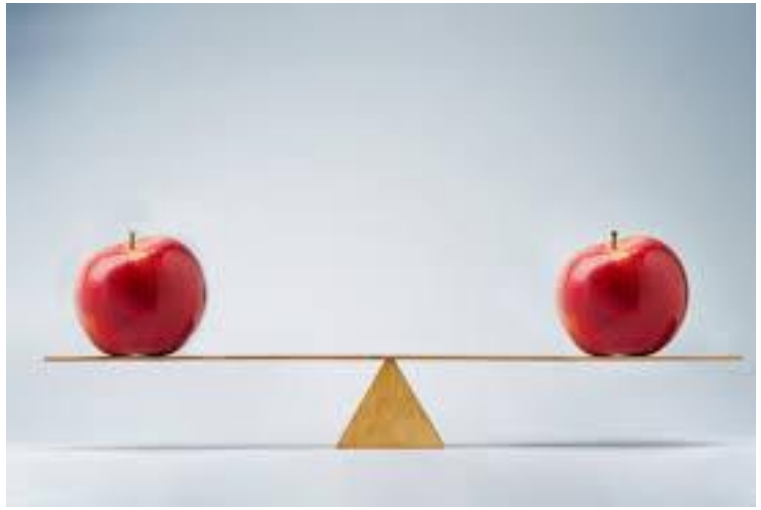
How do we measure? Quality matters.

Ideal: Compare Johnny in a Choice School to Johnny in Traditional Public School

But what is the problem here?

This is impossible! So now what?!

We try to create an apples to apples comparison.



Different “methods”= Different Quality

Random Control Trial (RCT)- **Experiments**- perfectly matches groups of students on average.

Quasi-Experimental Designs (QED)- **Matching** - matches students who are as similar as possible.

Controlled Comparisons- we know students are different but we try to control for as many differences as we can like race, FRL status, prior test scores, etc.

Uncontrolled Comparison- we compare different schools composed of different kids and try to draw conclusions.

The Evidence

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT = TEST SCORES

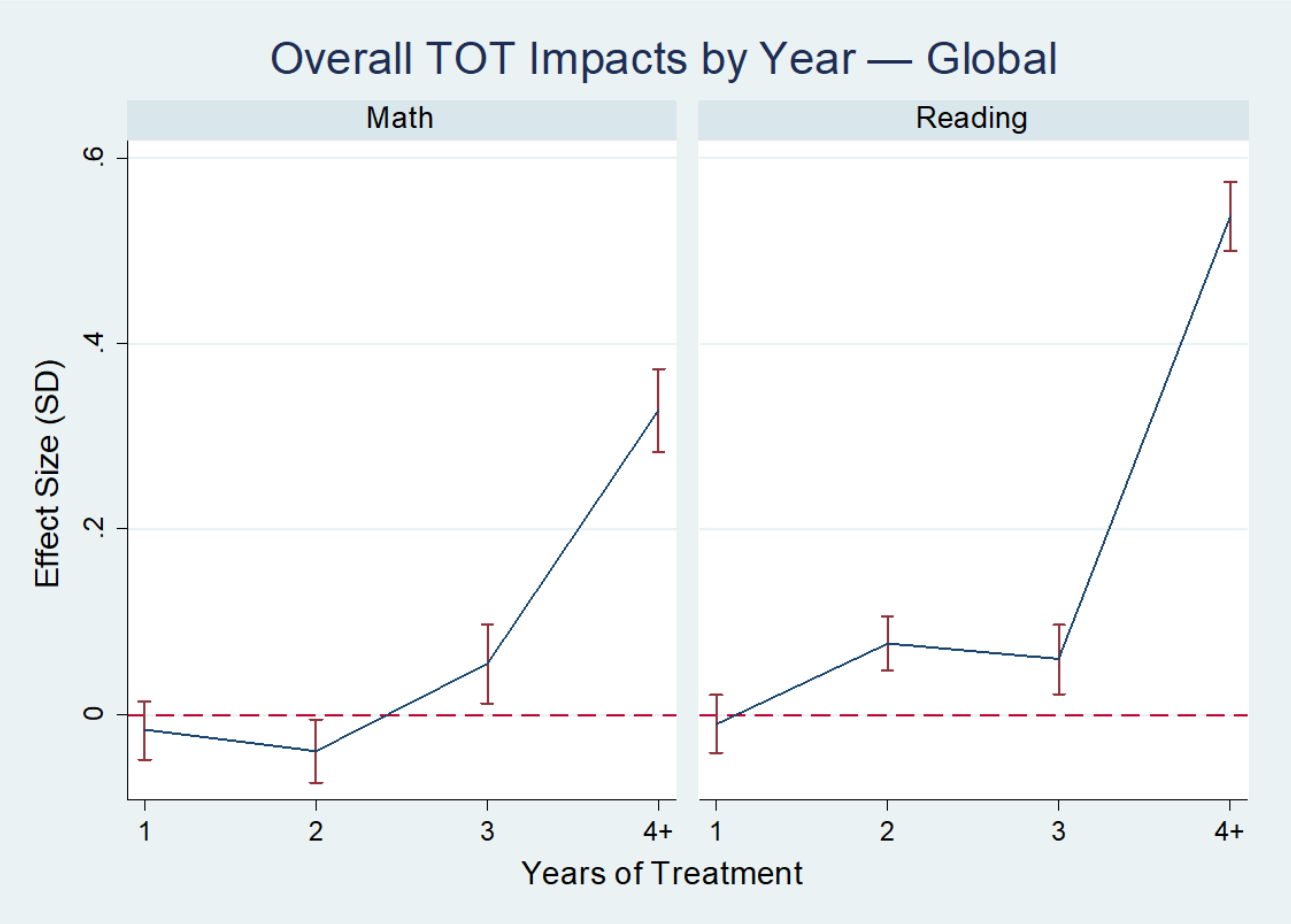
Academic Achievement

19 studies*

All Students (7)	Cowen (2008)	Charlotte	+8 pts reading, +7 pts math
	Greene (2001)	Charlotte	+ 6 pts combined reading/math test
	Greene et al (1999)	Milwaukee	+6 pts reading, +11 pts math
	Rouse (1998)	Milwaukee	no difference in reading, +8 pts math
	Howell et al (2002)	DC	+3 pts combined reading/math
	Wolf et al (2013)	DC	+4.8 pts reading
	Anderson & Wolf (2017)	DC	+8.7 pts reading
Some Students (4)	Barnard et al (2003)	New York	+5 pts in math for students leaving low-performing schools
	Jin et al (2010)	New York	+4 pts in math for students leaving low-performing schools
	Howell et al. (2002)	New York	+4 pts for African-American students on combined reading/math test
	Howell et al (2002)	Dayton	+6.5 pts for African-American students on combined reading/math test
No Effects (5)	Webber et al (2019)	DC	No difference in math or reading
	Krueger & Zhu (2004)	New York	No difference in math or reading
	Bitler et al (2013)	New York	No difference in math or reading by quartile
	Bettinger & Slonim (2006)	Toledo	No difference in math or reading
	Dynarski et al (2018)	DC	Negative for math in Y2 that turned into no difference by Y3
Negative (3)	Abdulkadiroglu et al (2015 and 2018)	Louisiana	-0.4 standard deviation 1-year effect on math
	Mills & Wolf (2019)	Louisiana	4-year effects on math, reading & science of -.21 to -.39 SD
	Waddington & Berends (2018)	Indianapolis	Negative outcome in math but not ELA, .10 SD annually in fearly years of program.

* Counted by study and site

Shakeel Meta- Global Private School Vouchers



The Evidence

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT = HS GRAD, COLLEGE, DEGREE

Educational Attainment

11 studies

5= 

3= 

3= 

Wolf et al. (2013)	DC	+21 percentage pts – HS Diploma
Erickson & Scafidi (2020)	Georgia	+17 percentage pts – HS Diploma
Cowen et al. (2013)	Milwaukee	+4-6 percentage pts – HS Diploma
Warren (2011)	Milwaukee	+12 percentage pts – HS Diploma
Austin & Pardo (2021)	Indiana	No difference – HS Diploma
Austin & Pardo (2021)	Indiana	+8 percentage pts – College Enrollment
Chingos, Monarrez & Kuehn (2019)	Florida	+6 percentage pts – College Enrollment
Erickson & Scafidi (2020)	Georgia	+19 percentage pts – College Enrollment
Wolf, Witte & Kisida (2019)	Milwaukee	+4-6 percentage pts – College Enrollment
Chingos & Peterson (2015)	New York City	+5 percentage pts, Black students–College Enrollment
Cheng & Peterson (2021)	New York City	+8 percentage pts for mod-dis. – College Enrollment
Erickson, Mills & Wolf (forthcoming)	Louisiana	+8 percentage pts for H.S. aps – College Enrollment
Chingos (2018)	DC	No difference – College Enrollment
Chingos, Monarrez & Kuehn (2019)	Florida	+1-2 percentage pts – Bachelor's Degree
Wolf, Witte & Kisida (2019)	Milwaukee	+3 percentage pts for elem. aps – Bachelor's Degree
Cheng & Peterson (2021)	New York City	+5-7 percentage pts for mod-dis. – Bachelor's Degree
Chingos & Peterson (2015)	New York City	+2 percentage pts, Black students – Bachelor's Degree

The Evidence

INTEGRATION = RACIAL AND ETHNIC SEGREGATION

Racial/Ethnic Integration

7 studies

Egalite, Mills & Wolfe (2017)	Louisiana	Sending school becomes more integrated
Greene (1999)	Cleveland	Choice schools more integrated than public schools
Greene & Winters (2007)	D.C.	Choice schools more integrated than public schools
Forster (2006)	Cleveland	Choice schools more integrated than public schools
Forster (2006)	Milwaukee	Choice schools more integrated than public schools
Fuller & Mitchell (2006)	Milwaukee	Choice schools more integrated than public schools
Greene, Mills & Buck (2010)	Milwaukee	Neutral

Swanson Meta-Racial and Ethnic Integration

	District Choice	Charters	**Vouchers**
Positive Impact	5	3	**7**
Neutral Impact	0	1	**1**
Negative Impact	3	2	**0**

The Evidence

COMPETITIVE EFFECTS = KIDS WHO REMAIN IN TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS

Competitive Effects

28 studies

Greene (2001)	Florida	Positive
Greene & Winters (2004)	Florida	Positive
West & Peterson (2005)	Florida	Positive
Figlio & Rouse (2006)	Florida	Positive
Rouse et al (2007)	Florida	Positive
Winters & Greene (2011)	Florida	Positive
Figlio & Hart (2011)	Florida	Positive
Chakrabarti (2013)	Florida	Positive
Figlio, Hart & Karbownik (2021)	Florida	Positive
Hammons (2002)	Maine	Positive
Hammons (2002)	Vermont	Positive
Jacob & Dougherty (2021)	Indiana	Positive
Egalite (2014)	Indiana	Positive
Forster (2008)	Indiana	Positive
Forster (2008)	Ohio	Positive
Carr (2011)	Ohio	Positive
Figlio & Karbownik (2016)	Ohio	Positive
Hoxby (2011)	Milwaukee	Positive
Greene & Forster (2002)	Milwaukee	Positive
Carnoy et al (2007)	Milwaukee	Positive
Chakrabarti (2008)	Milwaukee	Positive
Green & Marsh (2009)	Milwaukee	Positive
Mader (2010)	Milwaukee	Positive
Egalite (2014)	Louisiana	Positive
Greene & Forster (2002)	San Antonio	Positive
Gray, Merrifield & Adzima (2014)	San Antonio	Positive
Greene & Winters (2006)	Washington D.C.	None
Bowen & Trivitt (2014)	Florida	Negative

The Evidence

OTHER IMPORTANT OUTCOMES - CIVIC VALUES, PARENTAL SATISFACTION

Civic Values

9 Studies

Civic Outcome	Positive Effect	Neutral Effect	Negative Effect
Criminal Activity	1	0	0
Voting/Political Engagement	1 (parental) 1	3	0
Political Tolerance	2	2	0
SEL skills (grit, self-esteem, etc.)	0	1	0
Altruism	1	0	0

Parental Satisfaction

Systematic Review 2017

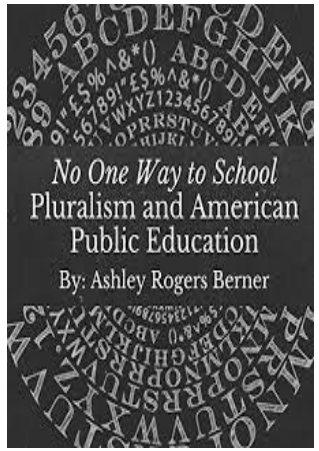
Arizona	Butcher & Bedrick (2013)	Parent surveys	positive
Charlotte, NC	Greene (2001)	RCT	positive
Cleveland, OH	Metcalf (1999)	Parent surveys	positive
Cleveland, OH	Peterson et al (1999)	Multivariate regression	positive
Dayton, OH	Howell & Peterson (2002)	RCT	positive
San Antonio, TX	Peterson et al (1999)	Parent surveys	positive
Florida	Greene & Forster (2003)	Parent surveys	positive
Georgia	Kelly & Scafidi (2013)	Parent surveys	positive
Indiana	Catt & Rhinesmith (2016)	Parent surveys	positive
Indiana	DiPerna (2014)	Parent surveys	positive
Indianapolis, IN	Weinschrott & Kilgore (1998)	Parent surveys	positive
Milwaukee, WI	Witte (2001)	Parent surveys	positive
Milwaukee, WI	Witte et al (2008)	Parent surveys	positive
Mississippi	Kittredge (2016)	Parent surveys	positive
New York, NY	Howell & Peterson (2002)	RCT	positive
USA	Howell & Peterson (2002)	RCT	positive
USA	Peterson & Campbell (2001)	RCT	positive
Washington, DC	Howell & Peterson (2002)	RCT	positive
Washington, DC	Kisida & Wolf (2015)	RCT	positive

International Comparison

Why is the United States a democratic outlier?

- **"Educational pluralism"** is a public system in which the government funds and regulates, but does not necessarily operate, a wide array of schools that may be pedagogically and philosophically distinctive from one another. Most democracies are plural.

- **"Educational uniformity"** is a system in which only the State delivers public education. The United States has a uniform system.



Questions?

Thank You! Please reach out if I can help.

Contact: awatso43@jhu.edu

@AngelaRWatson

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