



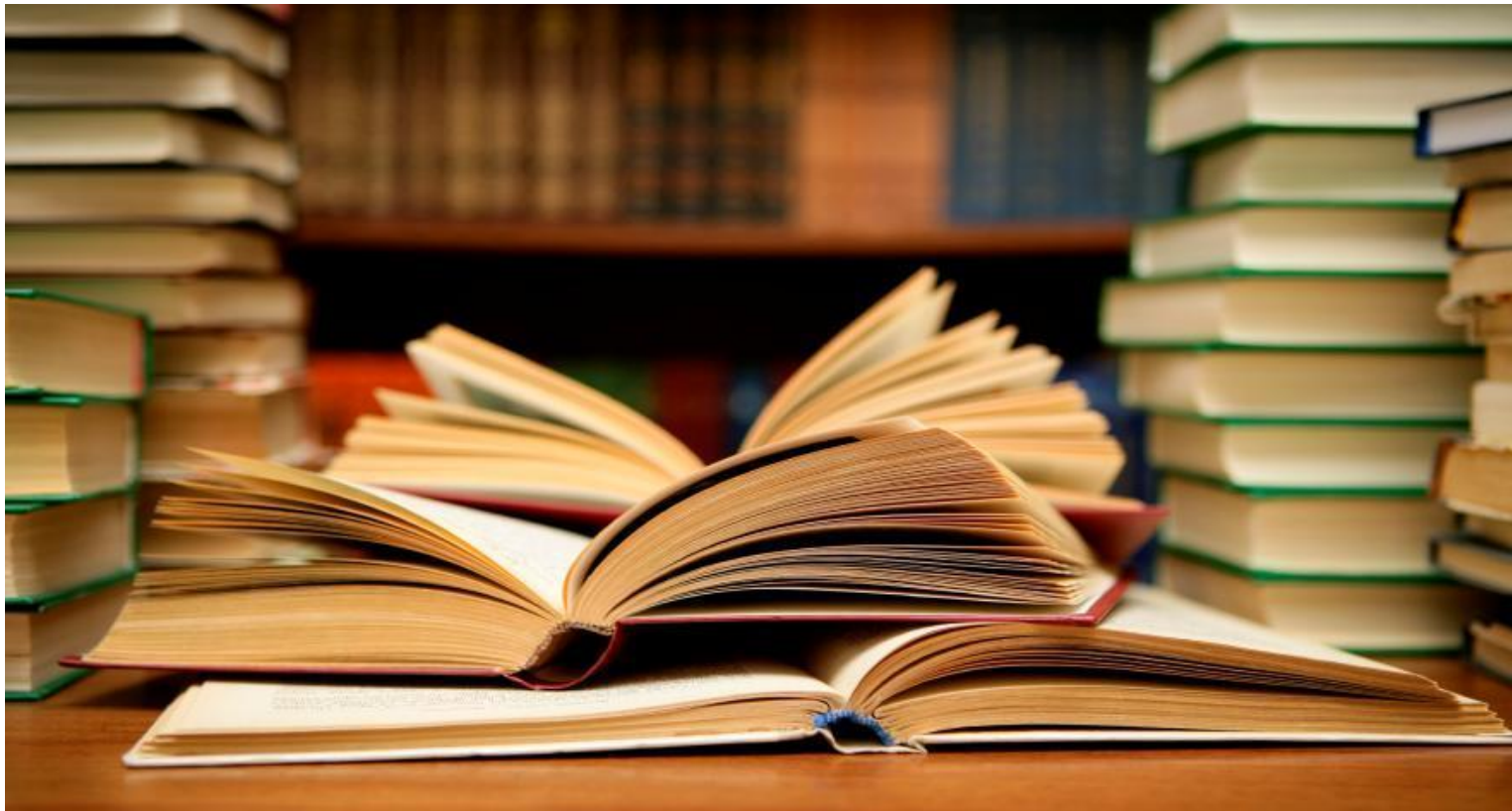
**Dr. Aisha Lowe,  
Deputy Director  
[alowe@standup.org](mailto:alowe@standup.org)**

# STAND UP CORE VALUES

Kids Come First  
Great Teachers Matter  
Parents Deserve Choices  
Invest in What Works  
Measure and Reward Results

[www.standup.org](http://www.standup.org)

# Chartering and Choice as an Achievement Gap-Closing Reform



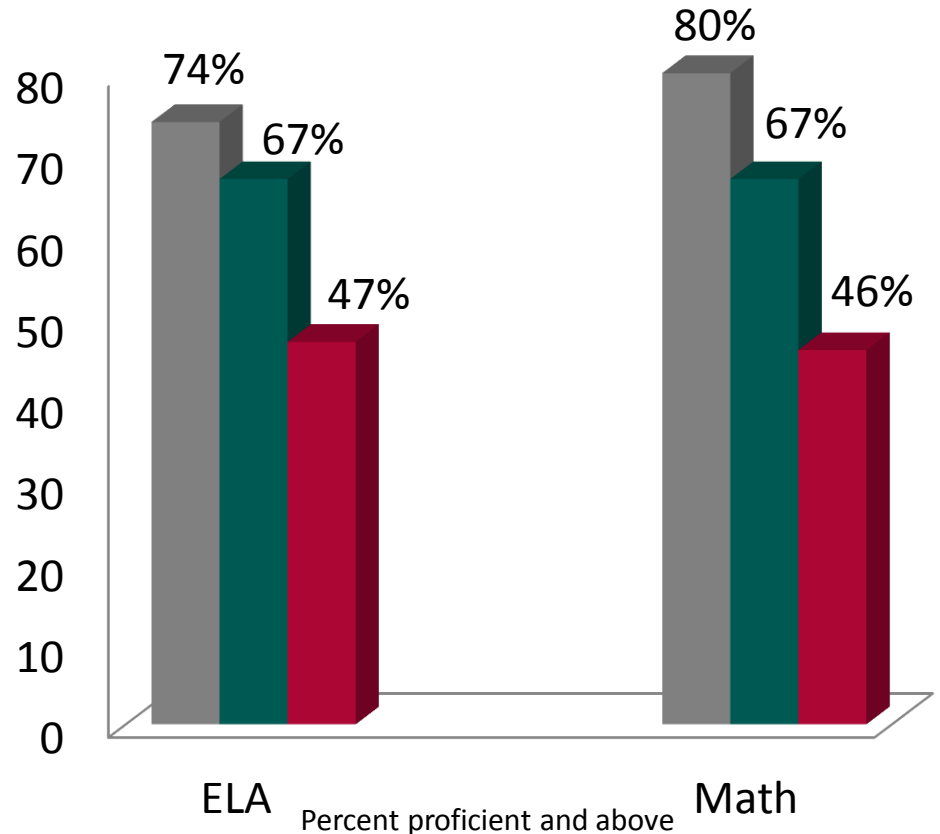
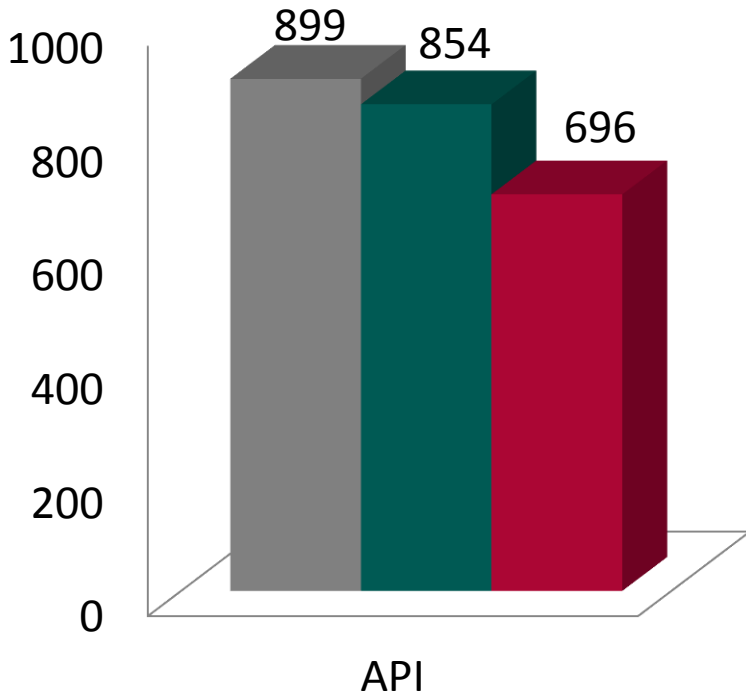
# Why does this matter?

Despite the successes of the Civil Rights movement, race-based achievement and opportunity gaps still exist for African American students. These gaps are seen across a host of educational outcomes and persist despite increased focus on eliminating them in recent years. Given the invaluable role education plays in life outcomes, these racial disparities are of significant importance to the lives of African American students and to the health of our nation.

# The Achievement Gap in the U.S.

- Nationally, African Americans trail behind Caucasians and Asians on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) performance, even when controlling for family income.
- Racial gaps also exist in dropout rates, Advance Placement (AP) exam rates, enrollment in honors and gifted classes, and admittance to college and graduate and professional programs (Ladson-Billings, 2006).
- African American students were also more likely to be suspended and held back a grade, as well as to report violence at their school, yet less likely to participate in academic clubs (Lewis et al., 2010).

# The Achievement Gap in California



■ Asian ■ White ■ African American

■ Asian ■ White ■ African American

# Why do these gaps persist?

**Whole group discussion:**  
**What do you think is the cause?**

# The Black Charter School Effect

Charter schools across the nation and in California are educating larger percentages of African American students than traditional public schools and, in many cases, better.

Almond (2011) calls this “The Black Charter School Effect”: the ability of charter schools to attract and, in many cases, educate African American students better.



# CA Charter Schools Promote African American Achievement

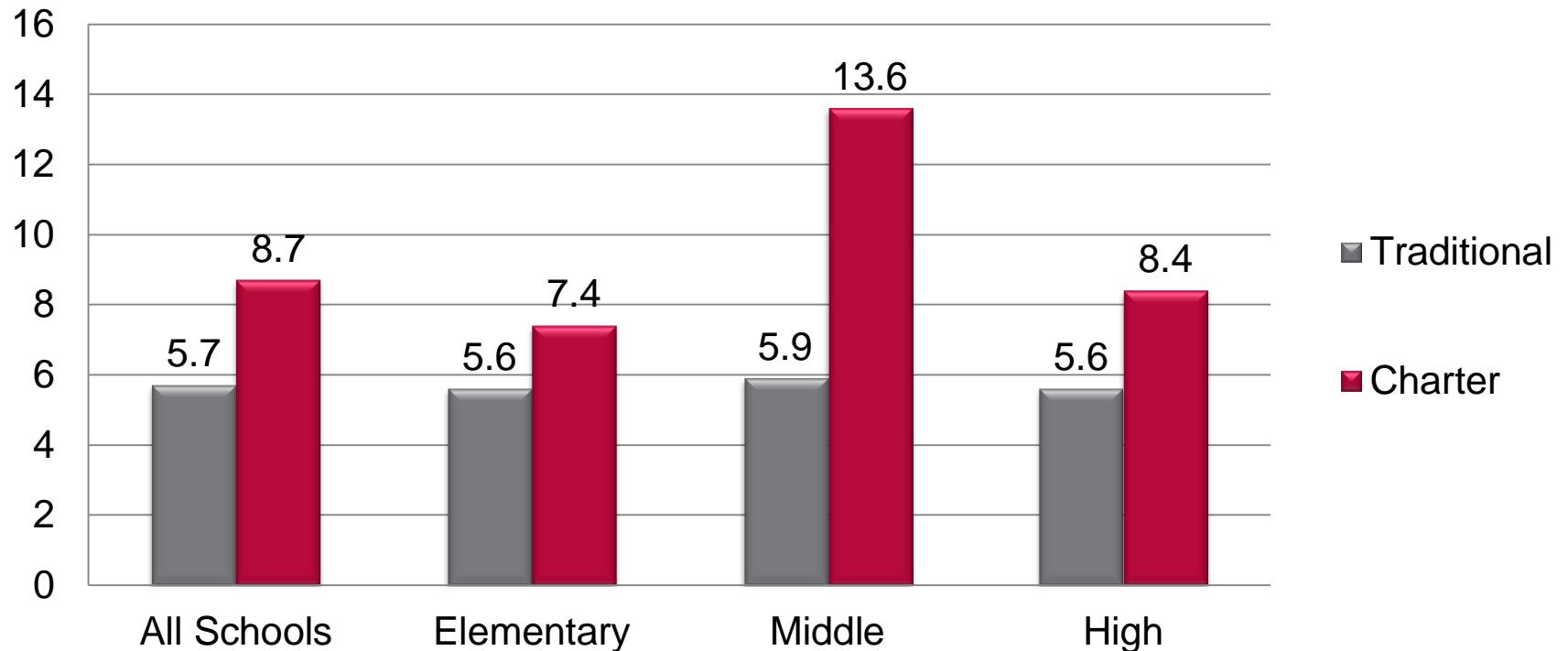
- California charter public schools strongly promote African American achievement and are helping to close the persistent racial achievement gaps between African American students and those of other races.
- African Americans in the state enroll in charter public schools at higher rates than in traditional public schools.
- African American charter students are outperforming their peers attending traditional schools on numerous state test score measures.

# Overview of the Project and Report

- Quantitative analysis of the performance of African American students in California, charter vs. traditional
  - African American enrollment, average API scores, percent proficient & advanced in ELA and math
  - 2006-07 to 2009-10
- Literature review of best practices for educating African American youth
- Qualitative case studies of three schools effectively serving African American youth
  - 65% + African American students
  - African American API of 800 +
  - African American proficiency of 65% +

# African Americans are more likely to enroll in a charter than a traditional school in CA

**Percent of African American Students by Grade Span, 2009-10**

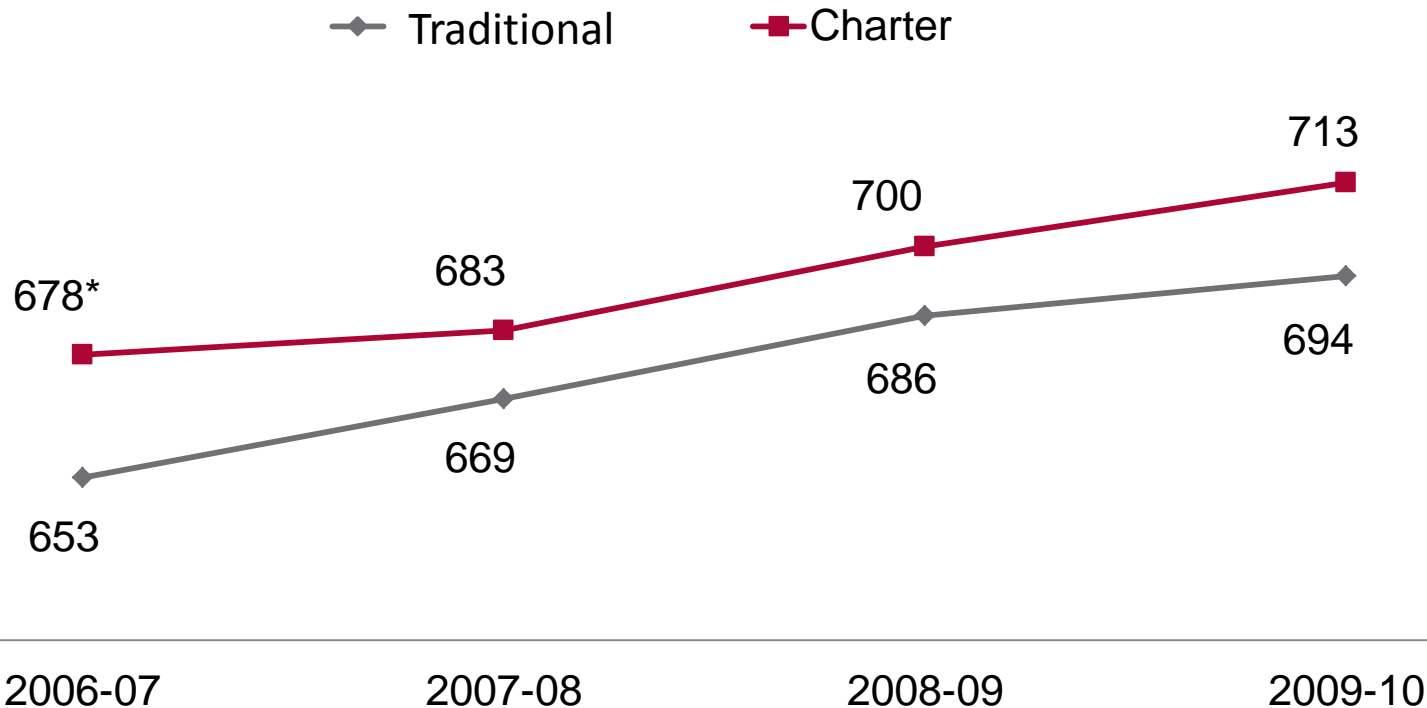


## Charters are reversing the trend of underperformance among African American students.

- The negative relationship between African American enrollment and school performance is three times weaker in charter public schools than in traditional public schools.
  - The percent of African American students in a school is nearly three times less predictive of school achievement in charter public schools (beta = -0.758) than in traditional public schools (beta = -2.06).

# African American students have higher API achievement in charter public schools than in traditional public schools statewide.

## Average African American API Scores by School Type, 2007-2010



# African Americans in charter public schools outperform their traditional public school counterparts in most large urban districts.

**Cumulative Change in African American API Scores by District from 2007 - 2010**

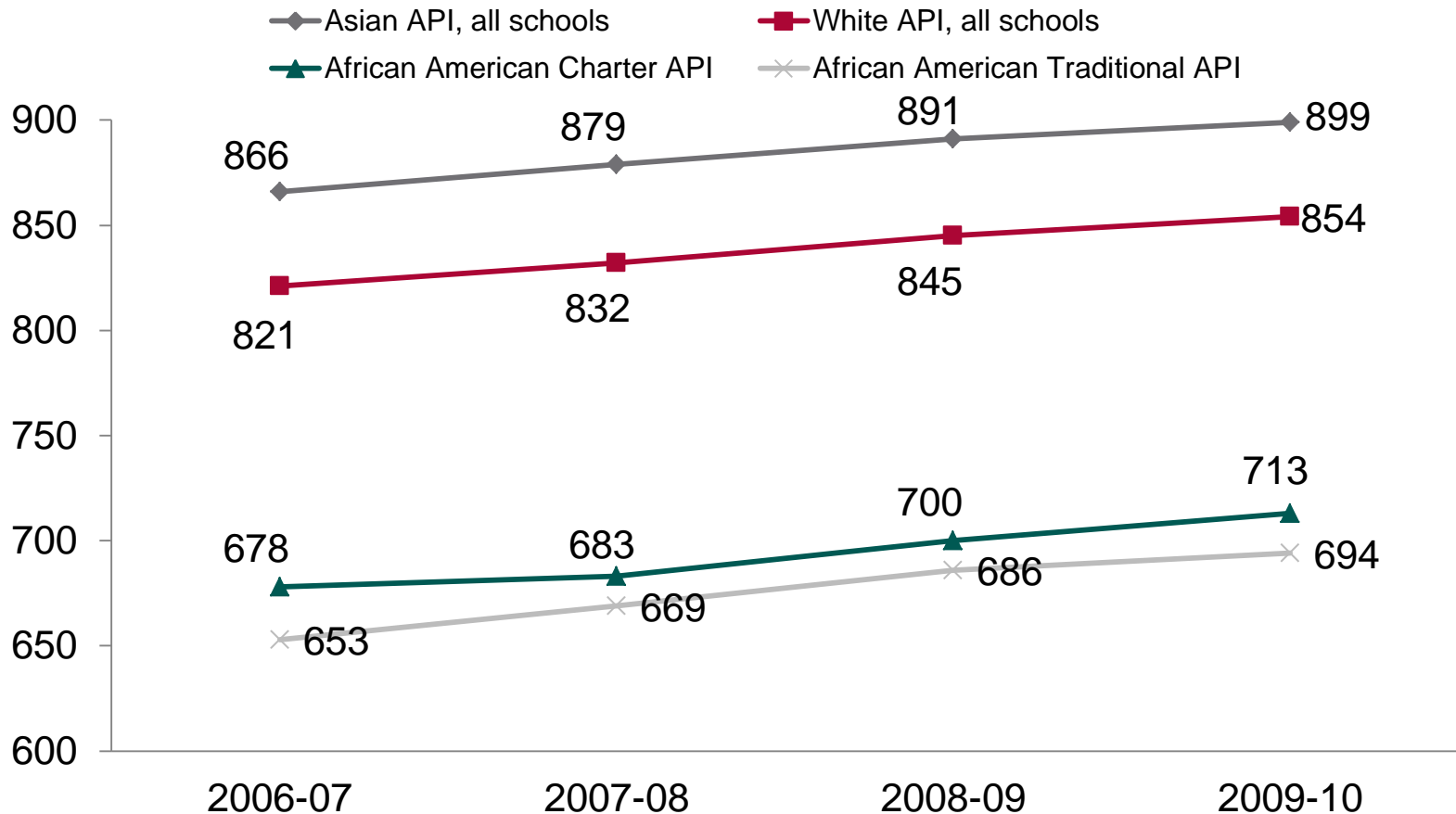
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	<i>Cumulative Change</i>
Los Angeles*					
Charter	703	707	715	717	+14
Traditional	644	658	664	688	+45
Oakland					
Charter	655	694	711	730	+75
Traditional	628	635	651	671	+43
Sacramento					
Charter	660	701	739	836	+176
Traditional	669	695	698	682	+13
San Francisco					
Charter	735	664	769	750	+15
Traditional	573	566	575	605	+32
San Diego					
Charter	677	667	685	712	+45
Traditional	658	677	710	726	+68

Yellow highlighting indicates higher API scores.

\*Excludes recent conversion

Charter public schools are having more success than traditional public schools at closing the achievement gap between African Americans and Whites and Asians, although big gaps persist across all school types.

## API Achievement Gap in CA, 2007-2010



# Given these mixed results, what does it mean to effectively educate African American students?

School	African American API 800+	African American ELA Proficiency 65%+	African American Math Proficiency 65%+	Meets All Three Criteria
<b>KIPP Bridge Charter*</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wisdom Academy for Young Scientists*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Open Charter Magnet	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
View Park Preparatory Accelerated Charter**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wilder's Preparatory Academy** Charter	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Watts Learning Center**</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>St. HOPE Public School 7 (PS7)**</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Bold indicates a case study school

\*School is 60%+ African American

\*\*School is 80%+ African American



# What might be the solution?

## Small group/pair activity

Brainstorm the most important strategies and policies for effectively educating African American students

5 minutes to brainstorm and 5 minutes to share thoughts

# Best Practices for Educating African American Students

These schools effectively educating African American youth exemplify a number of central best practices:

- A clear mission statement focused on academic achievement and developing students
- Knowing, understanding and catering to students' diverse needs
- A standards-based curriculum focused on critical thinking skills
- Explicitly teaching test taking strategies
- Results-focused instructional practices
- Curricular and instructional decisions are based on data

# Best Practices for Educating African American Students

Continued:

- School leader serves as instructional leader
- A strong school culture is explicitly built and re-enforced at the start of each school year
- Structures are intentionally put into place to help achieve the mission of the school
- Parents are included as full partners in students' education
- All members of the school are held accountable

# What we did not see

Among the many best practices we observed, there are debatable practices of schools that serve high need populations well that were not observed:

- Militaristic Discipline
  - These effective schools were not ones of militaristic, hard discipline or cultures of command and control.
- Teaching to the test
  - Teachers implemented a standards-based curriculum and students and parents were taught about what the CST is and why it is important. However, they did not “teach to the test” or engage in “drill & kill” teaching techniques.
- Superficial celebrations of culture
  - While these schools are implementing culturally relevant pedagogy and confirming research-based practices, they did not invest heavily in cultural celebrations or other external displays of culture.

# “That’s just good teaching!”

## Practice Suggestions:

- Create an environment of high expectations.
- Implement a direct-instruction, rigorous, standards-based curriculum.
- Practice data-driven decision-making.
- Institute time and processes for regular teacher collaboration.
- Practice culturally relevant pedagogy.
- Engage students through high levels of interaction, relevant course materials, and allowing student voice and autonomy.
- Implement a parent education and volunteer program.
- Hold all constituents accountable for fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure mission alignment: Schools should be mission driven and align all their practices and operational platforms to conform to that singular mission.

# “That’s just good teaching!”

## Policy Implications:

- Institute a longer school day and school year.
- Reduce class and school size.
- Hold teachers accountable for student progress and provide the right data culture and instruments to provide real time data feedback and reporting.
- Study and replicate successful schools to accelerate success.
- Instruct school leaders and teachers on best practices and provide the operational context for them to be able to implement fully.

# Review the full detail of the report

<http://www.calcharters.org/understanding/research/africanamericanreport/>



# Two more sessions to dig deeper

**2:00-3:15PM**

## **Common Challenges to Equitably Serving Underserved Students with Excellence**

**Panel:** Janis Bucknor, Esq. (Culture and Language Academy of Success, Herender Pegany (Fortune School), Rex Fortune (researcher/author), Hugh Vasquez (Senior Associate, National Equity Project), Kristen Coates (Principal of PS7)

**Moderator:** Brother Kokayi (MAAT Institute)

**Location:** Room 309

**3:45-5:00PM**

## **Culturally Responsive Instruction That Works: Successful Practices to Use**

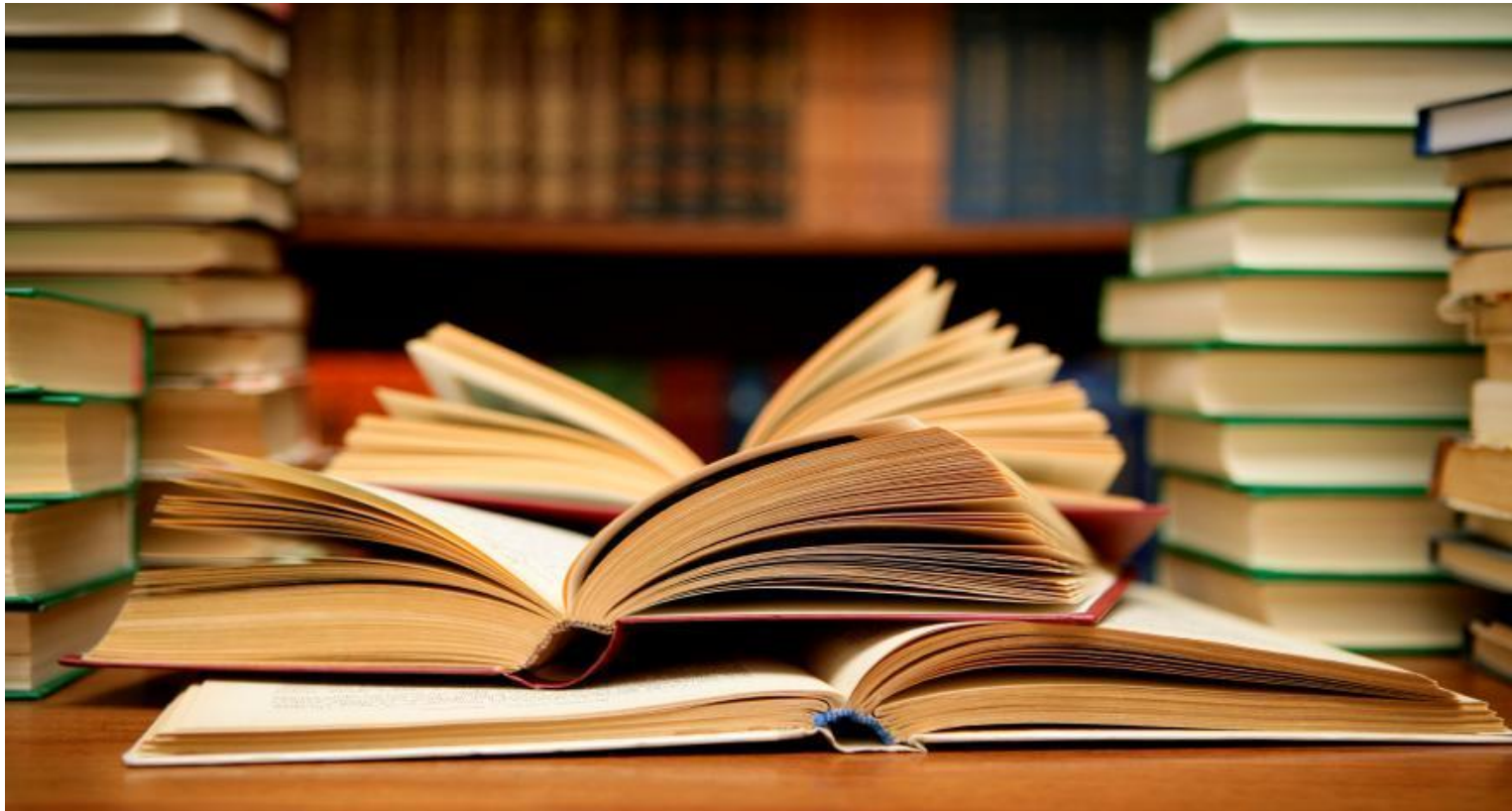
**Presenters:** Dr. Sharroky Hollie, Executive Director, Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning, Kelley Finch, Kim Hyun, and Jessica Mellen, teachers at the Culture and Language Academy of Success

**Location:** Exhibit Hall A, Presentation Area 1





# Thank You



# Appendix 1

- African American families in charter and traditional schools had similar demographics:
  - Average parent education levels are the same (high school graduates to some college)
  - Free/reduced-price lunch participation is similar (63% for charters and 67% for traditional public schools, on average).
    - (Both of the above are variables used to approximate students' socioeconomic status.)
  - Both charter and traditional schools serving African American students have similarly high annual retention rates (94% and 92%, respectively) (negating the argument that charters are dis-enrolling low performers).