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# Cyber and Home School Charter Schools

## Defining New Forms of Public Schooling

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**Luis A. Huerta**  
**Teachers College, Columbia University**

**Maria-Fernanda González**  
**University of California, Berkeley**

**Chad d'Entremont**  
**Teachers College, Columbia University**

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# The Basics (CER, 2003)

## ❑ Charter Schools

- ❑ 2,700 schools in 40 states and D.C.
- ❑ 684,000 charter school students

## ❑ Cyber Charters

- ❑ Est. 60 cyber charters in 15 states
- ❑ Est. 16,000 cyber charter students

## ❑ Home School Charters

- ❑ Est. 52,000 enrolled students in CA and AK
- ❑ In CA, 119 home school charters, serving 50,000 students (30% of state charter population)

Non-classroom charters account for 10% of national charter school student population

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# Stories: The Good

## □ Pennsylvania

- Western Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School proves able to operate with lower per-pupil expenditures than what is traditionally provided to public schools
  - Returns approximately \$2,000 dollars for each student enrolled to the student's district of residence.
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# Stories: The Bad

## ❑ California

- ❑ Collapse of CA Charter Academy left 6,000 students attending 60 separate schools without seats right before start of 2004-05 school year.
- ❑ State educators seeking criminal charges after an audit found that the school misused \$25.6 million.
- ❑ HomeSmartKids charged a 37.5% management fee, leading to a profit of \$517,892

## ❑ Pennsylvania

- ❑ TEACH-Einstein Charter Academy, largest cyber charter in the state, sued by over 100 local districts and became target of parent complaints for failure to deliver instruction and materials.
  - ❑ School later closed.
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# Stories: The Ugly

- ❑ Pennsylvania
  - ❑ 105 local districts refused to provide Western Pennsylvania Cyber schools with per-pupil funding totaling \$900,000
  - ❑ 70% budget shortfall
  - ❑ State withheld \$850,000 dollars in state aid from 60 districts for failure to comply with funding guidelines
  - ❑ PA School Board Assoc and 4 districts sue the state, claim cyber charters are home-schools
  - ❑ Protracted legal battle
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# New Forms of Schooling

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There is substantial debate over the definition of non-classroom charters

	Home school Charters	Cyber Charters	Traditional Schools
Teaching and Learning	<p><i>Primary Source</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents</li> </ul> <p><i>Supplemental Sources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource centers</li> <li>• Third party curriculum</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals</li> <li>• Computer software</li> <li>• Support groups</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Tutors</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary Sources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer software</li> <li>• Third party curriculum</li> <li>• External teacher (synchronously or asynchronously)</li> </ul> <p><i>Supplemental Sources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Resource centers</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Tutors</li> </ul>	<p><i>Primary Sources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Directed classroom instruction</li> </ul> <p><i>Supplemental sources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After-school programs</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Tutors</li> <li>• Field trips</li> <li>• Extracurricular activities</li> </ul>
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home-based setting</li> <li>• Parent-directed instruction</li> <li>• Individualized curriculum</li> <li>• Varied pedagogy</li> <li>• Parental oversight</li> <li>• Peer Involvement (voluntary)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varied educational setting (Minimal site-based learning)</li> <li>• Computer-based instruction</li> <li>• Tailored mass curriculum</li> <li>• Information/dissemination based pedagogy</li> <li>• Parent/Teacher oversight</li> <li>• Peer Involvement (varied)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defined classroom-based educational setting</li> <li>• Classroom directed instruction</li> <li>• Mass curriculum</li> <li>• Group/cooperative-based pedagogy</li> <li>• Teacher and administrative oversight</li> <li>• Peer involvement mandatory</li> </ul>
Governance	<p><i>Immediate Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents</li> </ul> <p><i>Ultimate Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charter school board</li> <li>• Charter granting agency</li> <li>• State regulatory agency</li> </ul>	<p><i>Immediate Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyber School</li> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Third-party curriculum provider</li> </ul> <p><i>Ultimate Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charter school board</li> <li>• Charter granting agency</li> <li>• State regulatory agency</li> </ul>	<p><i>Immediate Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers</li> <li>• Administrators</li> </ul> <p><i>Ultimate Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superintendent/district</li> <li>• Board of Education</li> <li>• State regulatory agency</li> </ul>
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal</li> <li>• Charter granting agency</li> <li>• Achievement testing (if required)</li> <li>• Market driven parental choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fiscal</li> <li>• Charter granting agency</li> <li>• Achievement testing (if required)</li> <li>• Market driven parental choice</li> <li>• Third-party curriculum providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulatory/Rule-based</li> <li>• Fiscal</li> <li>• Student attendance</li> <li>• Achievement testing</li> <li>• District oversight</li> </ul>

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# Policy Issues

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How should the state be involved?

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- ❑ Accounting for an influx of traditional home-schoolers into public education
  - ❑ Public Oversight and accountability
    - ❑ Measures of student performance
    - ❑ Measures of program quality
    - ❑ Time value versus “seat time”
  - ❑ Enrollment boundaries and responsibilities
    - ❑ A state not a local institution
  - ❑ Per-pupil funding for non-classroom learning
    - ❑ Lower costs for teachers and facilities
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# SB 740: Recommended Funding Levels

## 2002-2003

<b>Recommended Funding Level</b>	<b>70 Percent</b>	<b>80 Percent</b>	<b>Full Funding</b>
<b>Percent of “total public revenues” expended on certified staff salaries and benefits</b>	<35 Percent, or	35 to 50 Percent	>/= 50 Percent
<b>Percent of “total revenues” expended on instruction and related services</b>	<55 Percent	>/= 55 Percent	

\* Pursuant to California Administrative Code of Regulations, Title V, §11963.4

Source: Charter Schools Development Center (2002)

## 2003-2004

<b>Recommended Funding Level</b>	<b>70 Percent</b>	<b>80 Percent</b>	<b>Full Funding</b>
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# Questions of State Governance

- ❑ Policy solutions seem to be pointing towards central state agencies playing a larger role in the oversight and regulation of nonclassroom charter schools.
  - ❑ But, how will this affect expected autonomy?
  - ❑ Will state involvement legitimize nonclassroom learning?
  - ❑ Or, will state involvement limit is potential and appeal?
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