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## **Public Charter School Funding Gap Persists in Florida**

*Charter School Students in Florida Receive close to 30% Less Than Traditional Public Schools in the State*

**FLORIDA** - The Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools applauds the new research on charter school funding inequity issued this week by Ball State University. According to the study, the nation's public charter schools received, on average, \$2,247 less per pupil funding than traditional public schools in the same state during the 2006-07 school year. **In Florida, on average, public charter school students received an estimated \$3,000 less than students attending traditional public schools.**

The report, which is based on the most recent year for which reliable data is available, is a follow-up to an earlier report issued in 2005 by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, and is aptly entitled "Charter School Funding: Inequity Persists." The full report can be found at <http://www.bsua.edu/teachers/ocsr/funding/>, and a special state-level analysis of Florida is available at <http://www.bsua.edu/teachers/media/pdf/florida.pdf>.

"All students deserve a quality education and schools within the public school system -- whether traditional public or public charter schools -- should be allocated equitable funding," says Robert Haag, President, Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools. "It is disheartening to see these national outcomes in the study, and the report shows that Florida is not exempt from this trend, especially at the district level."

Based on data from 24 states and Washington, D.C., the report is the most comprehensive and rigorous study ever undertaken of how public charter schools are funded, state by state, and how their revenues measure up to dollars. For a typical 250-student charter school, the disparity amounts to nearly \$562,000 annually. The gap was even larger across 40 "focus districts," most of which are located in major metropolitan areas. That includes Miami-Dade and Broward Counties with close to 30% funding gaps. Charter schools across Florida received 25.3 percent less funding than district schools: \$8,195 vs. \$10,966 per pupil, a difference of \$2,771.

The Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools urges policymakers at both the state and local level to provide fair and equitable funding for charter school students. "It is critically important to have all public funding follow a student, regardless of the type of public school he or she attends," said Haag.

Local funding accounts for the largest disparity, because many states' laws do not allow for allocation of local funding to charter schools. In Florida, only a couple of School Districts share 2mil dollars with charter schools.



This study was funded by the Walton Family Foundation. Several members of the 2005 survey research team, including Bryan Hassel, Larry Maloney and Meagan Batdorff, worked for two years collecting and analyzing data for the latest study.

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