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Website Says Charter School Kids Fail 3rd Grade Reading Test At 2X Rate Of Public Schools

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BY OHIO PUBLIC RADIO



A progressive-leaning think tank and the state's largest teachers' union have released data they say shows mixed grades last year for Ohio's students who need to pass a key elementary school test.

The state says that data may not tell the whole story. Ohio Public Radio's Karen Kasler reports.

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Listening...

2:46

Students in charter schools failed the state's Third Grade Reading Guarantee test at twice the rate of kids in traditional public schools. That's according to KnowYourCharter.com, a site set up by Innovation Ohio and the Ohio Education Association. Dale Butland with Innovation Ohio says the worst-performing traditional public school had a 61% reading passage rate. The worst performing charter school in this set of data had a passage rate of a little over 18%. Butland says passage rates in the worst traditional ten public schools were around the mid 60% range, but in the charter schools, passage rates were in the low 20% to upper 30% range.

“Clearly, these results show what largely these results on all the performance measurements show, and that is that while a few charter schools do very well, the vast majority underperform the traditional public schools.”

But this data may be misleading, says John Charlton with the state Department of Education. He says final figures from last year’s Third Grade Reading Guarantee tests aren’t ready yet. “The results for the number of students that passed the Third Grade Reading Guarantee standard from last year of 392 have not been released yet. We’re still waiting to get that data and take a look at that.”

Charlton says that data should be available in December. Butland says he thinks the data that’s already been posted is an indicator of what’s to come, and waiting for more data may not yield much change.

“Many times what the real objection from the charter school advocates is many times is that they don’t like the results. They don’t like the scores that these charter schools are showing in terms of their performance. I think that’s largely the problem. Facts are facts. It’s not some liberal plot or some teachers’ union plot. The facts are what they are.”

But regardless of what these numbers or the final numbers show, Charlton says one thing is not in dispute – 3rd graders have to pass the Third Grade Reading Guarantee test, or they will not be fully promoted to fourth grade.

“These are public schools, the charter schools or we’ve called them community schools here in Ohio are public schools and they have to follow, for the most part, the same requirements that the traditional public schools have to follow.”

Butland says the KnowYourCharter website was set up to give parents data and information about charter schools in a much easier way than what’s available on the ODE’s website. But Charlton says the KnowYourCharter website only picks certain data from the state’s website, which he says stores far more information about charter and traditional public schools.

Original audio: <http://wcbe.org/post/website-says-charter-school-kids-fail-3rd-grade-reading-test-2x-rate-public-schools>