

January 2022 United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report—GAO-22-104444: A Report Regarding Online Charter Schools That Should Give Federal and State Policy Makers a Pause.

The GAO report indicates that online charter school students had significantly lower proficiency rates on state tests. Math scores were 25 points lower than the rate for brick-and-mortar traditional public schools. Four states—Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and California—enroll over 50% of all online students in the U.S. Compared to brick-and-mortar charter and traditional public schools, online charters enroll a higher percentage of white students and a lower percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.

In Ohio, about 30,000 students are enrolled in online charters. The online charter operators are doing a major disservice to thousands of online students. State officials should put a moratorium on online charter expansion and initiate a major study on the current online charter operations.

Many, if not most, online charter students are at risk of inferior education opportunities and results. Ohio legislators and other state officials should be challenged to legislate a major study of not only the education opportunities or the lack thereof, and the education outcomes, but also the business operations of online charters.

<https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-22-104444>