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Former State Representative, attorney Stephen Dyer shines another light on the charter industry.

It is incredible that public officials at the federal and state levels continue to generously fund a documented, failed industry. So, how do Ohio public officials respond to this matter? They overfund charters and starve the constitutionally-required public common school system.

More than 1 in 4 "High Performing" Ohio Charter Schools are under investigation for cheating on the tests that made them "High Performing"
High Performing charter schools are in line for a share of $105 million federal grant announced last year. Does this explain why so many could be cheating?
Stephen Dyer
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You know, I'm glad Ohio seems intent on re-introducing the state's crappy charter school sector to all of us. For the last few years, Ohio's decision to unconstitutionally dump more than $1 billion on private school tuition subsidies for Ohio adults who were already sending their kids to private schools seemed to suck up most of the school choice juice.

But now that there's a potential cheating scandal roiling Ohio's Charter Schools — more than 1 in 10 Ohio Charter Schools are on the list of suspect schools — what's interesting is looking at the other lists upon which these suspected cheating Charter Schools appear.

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For example, let's look at the high-performing Charter School list. Why is there one of these? Because these schools go to the front of the line to buy school property and get a share of the $105 million federal grant announced last year by U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon.

So would there be potentially 105 million reasons for these schools to juice their numbers a little bit so they can meet the rather lax definition of "high-performing" in state law?

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Ohio's almost laughably weak "high-performing" standards. Do better than the lowest-performing school districts on performance index scores (which stunningly few Charters actually do), or earn at least a B on a recent report card on 1 of the state's 7 overall accountability measures. So get 1 point higher than Cleveland on the PI score, or get a B on one metric and Fs on all 6 other ones and you too could be "High-Performing". Incredible.

How else do I know that the state's "high-performing" criteria is lax

Because 4 of the state's "high-performing" Charter Schools are also on the state's lowest-performing school list — the so-called list of Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CIS)

Schools. These schools have been identified by the state to be so struggling that they need serious intervention — up to and including closing and reconstitution of the schools. More than 1/3 of all Ohio Charter Schools are on this list.

Of the 4 “high-performing” Charter Schools that also appear on the lowest-performing schools list, 3 have been on the lowest-performing list since 2018. The other has been on it since 2022.

So the state has known these schools have been struggling for … *8 years*!!

Yet as of now, they are in line to potentially collect a portion of $105 million in federal money meant to grow and develop high-quality Charter Schools.

What a chaotic, messy, disastrous situation.

Oh yeah. Almost forgot!

Back to the Charter School cheating scandal.

Of the 61 schools listed on the “high-performing” Charter School list, 16 also appear on the list of potential cheating schools. That’s 26 percent of the so-called “high-performing” Charter Schools. That’s also nearly 1/2 of all the Charter Schools on the list of potentially cheating schools.

Click here for graphic

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Can I prove that angling for a share of $105 million inspired these questionable testing practices in Ohio Charter Schools?

Not right now.

But boy, it’s suspicious, don’t you think?

Once again, Ohio lawmakers seem intent on shining a bright light on how Ohio's notorious, $1.6 billion Charter School sector remains a national humiliation.

Time to fix it. Like, yesterday.