

**ON TOP OF THE WORLD:  
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS AND  
INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING, 2013–14**

By Nora Kern



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## Introduction

In today's global economy, students are no longer competing against just local peers for positions in higher education and the workforce. They are competing with students across the globe. More than ever, it is critical that our K–12 public education system provide our students with an internationally rigorous education.

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools believes a key way to make our schools globally competitive is by allowing schools to adopt innovative practices that lead to higher achievement. One of the best ways to encourage innovation is by giving schools the flexibility and autonomy they need to explore new educational models. In 2013, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which administers the respected Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), published an analysis of PISA 2012 results that found a school's governance structure—namely, the autonomy to make school-level decisions about a wide range of operations, combined with accountability for those decisions—affects student achievement. Further, the OECD reported that educational systems that empowered school leaders to allocate resources and develop curricula to serve students' needs showed higher student performance on PISA 2012 than more bureaucratic school systems, regardless of differing income levels of the students in the systems.<sup>1</sup>

The school governance structure praised by the OECD is very similar to the public charter school model. Charter schools are tuition-free public schools that are uniquely autonomous and allowed the freedom to be innovative while being held accountable for advancing student achievement. Due to this freedom, they are delivering great academic results for students and are well positioned to lead educational reform efforts—both in the United States and abroad.



As the leading national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the quality, growth, and sustainability of public charter schools, the National Alliance received funding from the Kern Family Foundation to encourage charter schools to administer an internationally benchmarked exam. The National Alliance partnered with 10 public charter schools throughout the United States to administer the OECD Test for Schools during the 2013–14 school year. The OECD Test for Schools (based on PISA) gives school-level insights similar to the best practices found through administering PISA to nations and educational systems in other developed countries. This powerful diagnostic tool, which measures the critical-thinking skills of 15-year-olds, helps schools measure their performance against international standards.

This report will briefly look the OECD Test for Schools, public charter school performance on the 2013–14 OECD Test for Schools, and case studies of charter schools' instructional and leadership practices that contributed to positive student outcomes. The public charter schools that scored above the United States' mean performance on PISA 2009 shared structures and practices that align with those found in the educational systems that are most successful on PISA. Structural choices, such as small class sizes, combined with practices like an emphasis on data-driven decisionmaking, professional development, student empowerment, curricular equity, and integration of technology, are ways that top-performing public charter schools have harnessed the freedoms of the charter model to enhance student achievement. The autonomy given to public charter schools to create specialized programs that serve students' needs has created a diverse field of educational options—one in which educational models geared toward international competitiveness can thrive.

## OECD Test for Schools

The OECD is an international forum of 34 member countries that was established more than 50 years ago to promote policies intended to improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world.<sup>2</sup> One of the OECD's signature education initiatives is PISA, a test that measures reading, mathematics, and science literacy and can be used to evaluate the quality, equity, and efficiency of school systems.<sup>3</sup> Every three years, the PISA exam is administered to a nationally representative sample of 15-year-old students in more than 70 countries and educational systems, which comprise nine-tenths of the world economy.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the participation of the United States as a nation, three U.S. states—Connecticut, Florida, and Massachusetts—participated as educational systems in the PISA 2012 assessment.<sup>5</sup> Given the value of having a national and state snapshot of student performance compared to international peers, many education leaders wanted similar data at the individual school level. In response, the OECD developed the Test for Schools, based on PISA, to allow international comparisons at the school level.<sup>6</sup>

The OECD Test for Schools is designed to give insights on students' "applied knowledge and competencies in reading, mathematics and science as well as their attitudes toward learning and school."<sup>7</sup> The OECD Test for Schools was piloted during the 2012–13 school year and consists of approximately two hours of questions, as well as a 30-minute questionnaire for students about their academic attitudes and interests and their school's learning environment. Schools' results are presented as scaled scores in reading, mathematics, and science, which are then compared by socio-economic levels of the student body, relative performance to other countries on the PISA exam, and student proficiency levels. The test measures the performance of the school against international benchmarks and does not produce student-level scores.

## Public Charter Schools and the OECD Test for Schools

### OECD TEST FOR SCHOOLS PILOT, 2012–13

One hundred high schools throughout the United States administered the OECD Test for Schools during the 2012–13 pilot. Two public charter schools, BASIS Tucson North and North Star Academy, achieved particularly striking results that were chronicled by Thomas Friedman in *The New York Times*.<sup>8</sup> BASIS Tucson North, a public charter school in Arizona that serves a predominantly middle-class student population, outperformed the average scores of every country in the world. North Star Academy, located in Newark, N.J., serves primarily students from low-income backgrounds and scored among the top 10 nations in reading.

### OECD TEST FOR SCHOOLS, 2013–14

Following the pilot year, the number of U.S. schools that administered the OECD Test for Schools nearly tripled. The National Alliance recruited 10 public charter schools to take the exam. This cohort of charter schools had diversity of governance (independent, nonprofit, and for-profit management), student demographics, instructional



strategies (e.g., science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; arts; or project-based learning), and geographic location.

PISA and the OECD Test for Schools break out student performance into six proficiency levels: Level 1 and below are not considered proficient; Levels 2, 3, and 4 are proficient to intermediate; and Levels 5 and 6 are top proficiency. The highest scores of the National Alliance cohort were posted by Peak to Peak Charter School, located in the Boulder Valley School District in Colorado. This liberal arts and college preparatory K–12 school had higher scores in reading and science, and was on par in mathematics, with the top-performing PISA 2009 educational system, Shanghai-China.

Peak to Peak Charter School’s results showed more students at the highest proficiency levels in reading and fewer nonproficient students in all three subject areas than the highest-performing educational system in PISA 2009. The near total proficiency of all Peak to Peak students in every subject area shows not only that the vast majority of students are excelling at the highest level possible but also that no students are being left behind—a testament to the school’s rigorous standards-based curriculum.

## The Practices Behind Proficiency: Instructional and Leadership Qualities of the National Alliance Cohort Public Charter Schools

The National Alliance cohort public charter schools that performed above the U.S. average on PISA 2009 have some striking similarities. Peak to Peak Charter School (Lafayette, Colo.), NYOS Charter School (Austin, Texas), Sturgis Charter Public School (Hyannis, Mass.), and University Laboratory School (Honolulu, Hawaii) each have no more than 150 students per grade level and often substantially fewer. Data are used for decisionmaking and continual improvement at all of these public charter schools. Each school has been in operation for at least 14 years and focuses on creating a school environment that is safe and supportive. In addition to these common traits, each of these public charter schools has drawn on its location, student needs, and school mission to create a thriving school culture. This section will delve into a few distinctive practices that each school employs to produce world-class academic achievement.



READING	United States	Shanghai-China	Peak to Peak Charter School
Percentage of Students Performing at Top Proficiency Levels	10%	19%	29%
Percentage of Students Performing at Nonproficient Levels	18%	4%	0%

*Levels 5 and 6 are top proficiency; Level 1 and below are not proficient. United States and Shanghai-China scores are on PISA 2009.*



MATHEMATICS	United States	Shanghai-China	Peak to Peak Charter School
Percentage of Students Performing at Top Proficiency Levels	10%	50%	36%
Percentage of Students Performing at Nonproficient Levels	23%	5%	1%



SCIENCE	United States	Shanghai-China	Peak to Peak Charter School
Percentage of Students Performing at Top Proficiency Levels	9%	24%	22%
Percentage of Students Performing at Nonproficient Levels	18%	3%	0%

# Peak to Peak Charter School (Lafayette, Colorado)



Student Demographics at a Glance	
White	78%
Asian-Pacific Islander	11%
Hispanic	10%
Black	1%
Free and reduced-price lunch eligible	8%
<b>150 students in each high school grade level</b>	

## A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION STARTS WITH A TEACHER

Peak to Peak Charter School has a liberal arts curriculum with a focus on college acceptance. It has one campus with elementary, middle, and high school programs serving 1,440 students in grades K–12. Peak to Peak Charter School students' OECD Test for Schools scores were on par with the top educational system on PISA 2009.

In 2000, Peak to Peak Charter School established the goal of becoming one of the top 100 high schools in the United States and since 2008 has been consistently ranked among the top 50 on both *Newsweek's* and *U.S. News & World Report's* high school ranking lists. Given its national success, Peak to Peak Charter School regularly receives requests for advice, support, or resources from other schools and educational institutions. In 2010, Peak to Peak Charter School launched the Center for Professional Development (CPD), an office dedicated to creating collaborative educational partnerships designed to maximize student achievement, in response to this demand.<sup>9</sup>

The CPD's purpose is twofold. It provides professional development to Peak to Peak faculty and operational staff by creating opportunities to serve as consultants, mentors, workshop leaders, and instructional coaches. Additionally, it facilitates partnerships to provide collaborative, research-based professional development services to other schools and institutions (schools, districts, universities, etc.). As Megan Freeman, director of professional development at Peak to Peak Charter School, notes, "When the CPD brings education professionals together to improve organizations through authentic needs assessments and systematic implementation of best practices, schools get better and students get smarter. What's more, it's not just the partner school that sees improvement. As a





*“We’re data hungry here.”*

*—Kelly Reeser, Executive Director of Education*

result of the leadership and consulting opportunities provided by CPD external partnerships, Peak to Peak teachers and administrators become inspired by new insights and valuable experiences, which they then use as a lens through which to reflect upon and improve Peak to Peak’s own internal programs and practices.”<sup>10</sup> Peak to Peak Charter School’s autonomy to create programming for recruiting and developing great teachers is a practice that the OECD highlighted from Singapore, another top-performing educational system on PISA 2009.<sup>11</sup>

### WHY PEAK TO PEAK ADMINISTERED THE OECD TEST FOR SCHOOLS

Peak to Peak Charter School students performed significantly above the mean performance of U.S. students on PISA 2009 in all content areas. When talking about the motivation to administer the OECD Test for Schools, Kelly Reeser, executive director of education at Peak to Peak Charter School, noted that the content standards measured by state assessments do not always align to what is taught in the school’s classrooms. Peak to Peak Charter School uses ability grouping to challenge students, and due to accelerated pacing of some groups, students are sometimes as much as two years ahead of the grade-level standards assessed by statewide exams.

The OECD Test for Schools presented an opportunity for Peak to Peak Charter School to go beyond state metrics and globally benchmark students’ critical-thinking skills. Critical-thinking measures align with Peak to Peak Charter School’s approach of instruction around the thought process for a question, not just the answer.

In addition to the focus on in-house professional development and accelerated student pacing, there is also a focus on school culture. Kyle Mathews, the high school principal, underlined that a supportive school climate fosters strong academic achievement: “You can expect great things when you have a lot of respect for the students. The OECD Test for Schools student survey was a great affirmation of the correlation between [academic] results and the strong relationships between our teachers and students.”

Peak to Peak, like many public charter schools, has a mission statement. Peak to Peak’s mission includes the goals of creating “responsible citizens of an interdependent world” and respecting students. The OECD Test for Schools provides an opportunity to quantify aspects of school culture—measurements not found on many other assessments.

	READING		MATHEMATICS		SCIENCE	
	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.
<b>Peak to Peak</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>10.5</b>
Shanghai-China (PISA 2009)	556	2.4	600	2.8	575	2.3
United States (PISA 2009)	500	3.7	487	3.6	502	3.6

*S.E.: Standard errors are used to express the degree of uncertainty associated with sampling, measurement, and equating error. All standard errors in this report have been rounded to one decimal place. All average scores reported are different at the .05 level of statistical significance.*

# NYOS Charter School (Austin, Texas)



Student Demographics at a Glance	
White	43%
Hispanic	34%
Black	14%
Multirace	3%
Free and reduced-priced lunch eligible	42%
English learner	17%
Special education	8%
<b>32 students in each high school grade level</b>	

## EMPOWERING STUDENTS

The NYOS (Not Your Ordinary School) Charter School was opened in 1998 by a group of parents dedicated to educating the whole student through rigorous academics, innovative strategies, and expectations for civic engagement. This preK–12 school serves 890 students on two campuses and is focused on individualized, experiential learning. NYOS Charter School’s OECD Test for Schools scores were above the U.S. average on PISA 2009.

At NYOS Charter School, students have numerous opportunities to shape their school culture. Executive Director Kathleen Zimmerman explains that “student impact is always the top consideration for all decisions.” Students are always front and center at NYOS—from the Peer Assisted Learning (PALs) program that matches a high school student with a middle or elementary grade student for the year as a tutor; to having a student representative on the NYOS School Board to represent the youth perspective in major decisions; to the Navigators, a student-designed program of “school ambassadors” who lead tours for prospective families, support new students, and maintain school culture. Curtis Wilson, the upper school principal, explained how students are involved in the faculty hiring process: “We have teaching candidates present a demo lesson on hard-to-teach content to our students. The students give feedback on how effectively they learned the material. This gives the students as well as the administrators an opportunity to weigh in on hiring decisions.” The value NYOS places on student opinions builds relationships among teachers, administrators, and students that create an atmosphere of respect and engagement. PISA results have shown that a strong learning environment contributes to better academic outcomes.<sup>12</sup>





## WHY NYOS ADMINISTERED THE OECD TEST FOR SCHOOLS

NYOS students performed above the U.S. mean performance on PISA 2009.<sup>13</sup> Ms. Zimmerman spoke about NYOS’ desire to administer the OECD Test for Schools by commenting, “We were curious to see how NYOS compared to schools outside of Texas. We know we’re the top in the state, so the question then becomes, ‘what next?’ PISA is often referenced in the national education reform conversation, and we wanted to see where our school fits into that discussion.”

The public charter model gives schools the flexibility to serve students in various grade configurations. NYOS’ preK–12 structure makes the insights on its global competitiveness from the OECD Test for Schools results applicable to every grade, not just the high school students. Ms. Zimmerman observed, “We will use the data to make decisions for all our grades, not just the 15 year olds. Our elementary school principal is totally on board with the test. The high school success is driven by the early grades. We have a high student retention rate, so the results will speak to the vertical integration of our curriculum throughout the grades.”

*“PISA is often referenced in the national education reform conversation, and we wanted to see where our school fits into that discussion.”*

*—Kathleen Zimmerman, Executive Director*

	READING		MATHEMATICS		SCIENCE	
	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.
<b>NYOS</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>14.5</b>
Shanghai-China (PISA 2009)	556	2.4	600	2.8	575	2.3
United States (PISA 2009)	500	3.7	487	3.6	502	3.6

*S.E.: Standard errors are used to express the degree of uncertainty associated with sampling, measurement, and equating error. All standard errors in this report have been rounded to one decimal place. All average scores reported are different at the .05 level of statistical significance.*

# Sturgis Charter Public School (Hyannis, Massachusetts)



Student Demographics at a Glance	
White	87%
Multirace	6%
Hispanic	4%
Asian	3%
Special education	12%
Free and reduced-price lunch eligible	7%
<b>100 students in each high school grade level</b>	

## UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO A RIGOROUS CURRICULUM

Sturgis Charter Public School was founded in 1998. In 2004, the school became dedicated to “an ‘International Baccalaureate (IB) for All’ philosophy, preparing high school students for higher education in a supportive learning environment.” Sturgis now has two high school campuses, serving 400 students each. Sturgis’ OECD Test for Schools scores in all content areas were above those of Finland, another top-performing country on PISA 2009.

Sturgis was an early adopter of an unyielding belief that all students can achieve IB success and thus does not offer non-IB alternative courses. In many traditional public schools, IB courses are offered to students as a magnet program with enrollment qualifications. At Sturgis, every student, regardless of previous grades and English learner or special needs status, takes IB courses and passes IB exams. Given their success in accommodating all student needs within a globally rigorous curriculum, Sturgis faculty members have presented at local, state, national, and international conferences on their “IB for All” model. Curricular equity, such as Sturgis’ offering IB courses to all students, is a common practice among educational systems with top scores on PISA 2012.<sup>14</sup>

IB is a rigorous liberal arts curriculum, which also requires arts, service, and school participation components. The IB diploma program is a comprehensive curriculum for 11th and 12th grades that requires coursework across all academic disciplines. Ninth- and 10th-grade courses at Sturgis are IB prep. The courses culminate in IB subject area exams for all students during their junior and senior years. Completion of an IB diploma is recognized by the world’s top universities. The number of Sturgis students passing IB exams and completing the full IB diploma, which requires three extra higher-level courses and exams, as well as an extended essay, is





on the rise. In the 2011, 2012, and 2013 school years, every Sturgis junior and senior—including all students with special needs—passed at least one IB exam. The percentage of students pursuing the IB diploma has grown from 31 percent in 2007 to 69 percent in 2013. Executive Director Eric Hieser describes the school’s emphasis on access, not just attainment, as “more about the journey of developing the habits of mind.”

### WHY STURGIS ADMINISTERED THE OECD TEST FOR SCHOOLS

Sturgis Charter Public School students performed significantly above the mean performance of U.S. students on PISA 2009 in all content areas. Mr. Hieser discussed the importance of international benchmarking by commenting that “data is important. Things aren’t so just because we say they are. We wanted to know how we really stack up.” The OECD Test for Schools presented an opportunity to compare the performance of students instructed in the Sturgis “IB for All” approach to students’ performance at other U.S. schools and other educational systems around the world. Additionally, the OECD Test for Schools was an opportunity to see how “IB for All” instruction prepared students for standardized critical-thinking and problem-solving

*“The OECD Test for Schools results will enable us to answer ‘how do we really stack up?’”*

*—Eric Hieser, Executive Director*

assessments. As Massachusetts, along with many U.S. states, prepares to implement Common Core State Standards assessments—which are touted as having a greater focus on critical-thinking skills—the OECD Test for Schools gives a performance point that measures these skills and is internationally benchmarked.

Public charter schools with an internationally focused curriculum, like Sturgis’ IB curriculum, have the freedom to go beyond mandated state assessments and administer a benchmarking exam that aligns with the school’s global-mindedness. When entering the OECD Test for Schools exam room, some Sturgis students commented that they felt like they were competing in an academic Olympics and wanted their results to make the United States proud. Sturgis’ performance on the OECD Test for Schools was certainly medal-worthy.

	READING		MATHEMATICS		SCIENCE	
	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.
<b>Sturgis</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>10.4</b>
Shanghai-China (PISA 2009)	556	2.4	600	2.8	575	2.3
United States (PISA 2009)	500	3.7	487	3.6	502	3.6

*S.E.: Standard errors are used to express the degree of uncertainty associated with sampling, measurement, and equating error. All standard errors in this report have been rounded to one decimal place. All average scores reported are different at the .05 level of statistical significance.*

# University Laboratory School (Honolulu, Hawaii)



Student Demographics at a Glance	
Asian/Pacific Islander	65%
White	20%
Multirace	10%
Hispanic	3%
Black	2%
Free and reduced-price lunch eligible	13%
<b>56 students in each high school grade level</b>	

## NO SCHOOL IS AN ISLAND

The University Laboratory School (ULS) has been associated with the University of Hawaii since 1931, and ULS has been an independent public charter school since 2001. ULS has a partnership with University of Hawaii’s College of Education Curriculum Research & Development Group, which conducts curriculum research at ULS. This partnership requires that ULS enroll a cross-section of students who reflect the ethnicity, socio-economic status, and school achievement levels of Hawaii’s public school system so that when a particular instructional material or strategy yields results, ideally it can be implemented throughout the state. ULS’ OECD Test for Schools scores were above the U.S. average on PISA 2009.

Two other key components of the ULS program are to adopt cutting-edge technology like Google Apps for Education and to design successful training programs for teachers. ULS is an early adopter for Google products and apps for the education domain and has two certified Google trainers on the teaching staff. ULS Google trainers work with the Hawaii Department of Education to instruct other public school teachers on integrating technology into the classroom. ULS’ commitment to 21st century skills and digital citizenship means instructing its students to understand online behavior and identity management. For example, students in grades K–5 use Google Drive to store documents, students gain intraschool email privileges in grades 6–7, and students in grades 8–12 have full email access. Further, the use of Google Hangouts allows an orchestra trio to rehearse without being in the same room—redefining the traditional notion of in-school work. During ULS’ beta testing of Google Glass, students wore them on trips to the Honolulu Zoo, and neighboring students from the Big Island watched via Google Hangout. In exchange, the Google





*“We saw taking the OECD Test for Schools as a fulfillment of our school’s research mission.”*

*—Keoni Jeremiah, Principal*

Glass tool was shipped to the Big Island school so that ULS students could “join” for a field trip to Volcanoes National Park. The use of multiple Google technologies to help ULS students learn and coordinate with peers at their school and throughout the state builds hard and soft skills. This type of skill development is recommended by the OECD to build national long-term economic outcomes. A 2012 report states, “Fostering science, technology and innovation in education supplies certain skills to the economy that, in turn, could lead to innovation [and] job creation ... .”<sup>15</sup>

ULS has several distinctive features in addition to its partnerships for technology and conducting research. Its comprehensive academic program includes daily instruction throughout all grade levels in English language and literature, mathematics, natural and social sciences, and visual and performing arts, with technology integrated throughout the curriculum. Project- and inquiry-based learning is emphasized, and every student is taught the same curriculum as his or her grade-level peers. Brendan Brennan, a member of the Mathematics Department, describes the ULS model as “every class, every discipline, every day, for every student.”

## WHY ULS ADMINISTERED THE OECD TEST FOR SCHOOLS

ULS performed significantly above the U.S. mean performance in mathematics and science and above the U.S. mean score in reading.<sup>16</sup> ULS students showed the highest mean performance in the science content area, which is not surprising given the public charter school’s focus on technology integration as well as academic courses in science for all grade levels. ULS had almost no students perform at nonproficient levels in science (Level 1 or below) and more students at proficient levels (Levels 2, 3, and 4) than the U.S. average on PISA 2009. Further, the United States is among the few OECD countries that have a gender gap in science performance—with boys scoring higher on average than girls. However, the mean score for ULS girls was higher than their male ULS peers and above the U.S. mean score as well.

Given the school’s design as a curricular research center, Principal Keoni Jeremiah stated that “we saw taking the OECD Test for Schools as a fulfillment of our school’s research mission.” ULS was the only Hawaiian school that participated in the 2013–14 OECD Test for Schools.

	READING		MATHEMATICS		SCIENCE	
	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.	Mean performance score	S.E.
<b>ULS</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>11.9</b>
Shanghai-China (PISA 2009)	556	2.4	600	2.8	575	2.3
United States (PISA 2009)	500	3.7	487	3.6	502	3.6

*S.E.: Standard errors are used to express the degree of uncertainty associated with sampling, measurement, and equating error. All standard errors in this report have been rounded to one decimal place. All average scores reported are different at the .05 level of statistical significance.*

## Conclusion

The National Alliance is proud that public charter schools throughout the country are using the OECD Test for Schools to validate their school models against international standards and take performance to the next level. Because these public schools sign a charter to ensure academic achievement, assessments are an inherent part of the “charter bargain” of autonomy along with accountability. Regardless of their state’s standards and high school graduation expectations, participating in the OECD Test for Schools gives schools additional information about how well their students are prepared for college and career.

As noted in the case studies, top-performing public charter schools have used their autonomy to implement best practices that closely mirror those used in successful educational systems around the world. Whether they focus on professional development, building a supportive school culture, equitable access to a rigorous curriculum, or using technology to bring learning beyond the classroom, public charter schools are developing student skills that boost achievement. The OECD Test for Schools provides a valuable way to quantify the link between school practices and student outcomes.

We are pleased that the Kern Family Foundation has continued to offer funding for the OECD Test for Schools for the 2014–15 school year so that more public charter schools can administer this powerful diagnostic tool. We encourage more charter schools to join globally minded peer schools and administer the OECD Test for Schools to ensure that their students are ready to compete in today’s global economy.

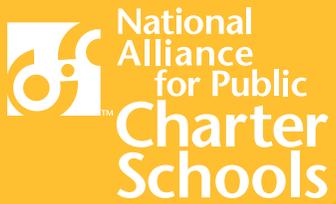
To learn more about the OECD Test for Schools or to sign up your school for the 2014–15 testing cycle, please visit the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools website: [www.publiccharters.org/oecd-test-schools](http://www.publiccharters.org/oecd-test-schools).

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16. Due to student sample size, the standard error around ULS’ scores is not above the U.S. mean performance reading scores by a statistically significant margin.

Photos for NYOS Charter School, Sturgis Charter Public School, and University Laboratory School were taken by Nora Kern





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