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MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND VALUES:
INSTRUMENTAL VALUES AND THE FORMATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY

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BRADLEY ROBERT CARL

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**MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND VALUES:
INSTRUMENTAL VALUES AND THE FORMATION
OF CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY**

By

Bradley Robert Carl

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
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ABSTRACT

MICHIGAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND VALUES: INSTRUMENTAL VALUES AND THE FORMATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY

By

Bradley Robert Carl

In response to growing concern over the past several decades regarding the quality of public education, particularly in the troubled schools of major cities, numerous reform efforts have been launched. Among the most notable is the public charter school movement, which currently enrolls more than a half-million students nationwide. Michigan has been a national pioneer in the charter movement, having passed one of the nation's first laws. The comparatively "charter-friendly" provisions of this law have resulted in high numbers of both schools and students, particularly in Detroit and other urban areas of the state.

Charter schools, as is true for other educational initiatives, can be understood as a result of certain values that predominate over others within policy arenas, particularly at the state level where most educational policymaking has traditionally occurred. Four "instrumental values" - Quality, Efficiency, Equity, and Choice - have been identified as particularly important in the formation of education policy, with each having held substantial influence at various times. Research has also identified a set of key stakeholder groups and "policy elites" - including state legislators, school administrators, and leaders of education-related interest groups - that consider these values as they formulate educational

policy. The process by which policy elites allocate these values in the formation of educational policy has been the topic of some research in the past, although considerably less is known about how values are employed in state-specific situations at a given time, nor how the values and attitudes of policy elites impact their behavior regarding specific policy issues such as charter schools.

This dissertation uses the specific context of charter school policy in Michigan to re-test and expand upon the important work of Gam (2000) and Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) regarding the distribution of instrumental values among selected policy elites. Specifically, my work examines how elites' views of the four instrumental values impact their values and behavior relative to charter school legislation, and explores variables associated with elites' background and experience that may influence the values they bring to the policy process. While the passage of charter legislation and the rapid expansion of the movement suggests support on the part of policy elites for certain values, such as Choice and Efficiency, at the expense of other values, my work suggests that value preferences are instead unevenly distributed across elites by factors such as political affiliation. Using an exploratory, qualitative and quantitative case study methodology involving surveys and interviews of educational policy elites in Michigan complemented by secondary document analysis, the primary objective of this research is to investigate which instrumental values have been assigned comparatively high or low priority, and various factors associated with elites' backgrounds help explain their value preferences.

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Chapter 1: Statement of Problem and Review of Literature

Within the past two decades, concern over the quality of public education in the U.S. has emerged as perhaps our nation's most pressing domestic issue.

Unease regarding stagnant or declining academic performance, high dropout rates, and students who are viewed as unprepared for meaningful contributions to society in the form of work and/or postsecondary education highlight a long list of woes that have characterized American public schools since the 1980s. It has become rare, in fact, to open a newspaper or magazine, or to view television news, without some proclamation of the desperate situation in public education.

In response to these concerns, a host of reform efforts have been launched over the past half century, with many concentrated in the past two decades. Among the most notable reform initiatives has been the publicly-funded charter school movement, which has expanded rapidly following the passage of the nation's first charter school law (in 1991) and the establishment of the first charter school (in 1992), both in Minnesota (Finn, Manno, & Bierlein, 1996; Gill *et al*, 2001). At the time of this writing in early 2003, more than 684,000 students are enrolled in one of almost 2700 charter schools nationwide, with 39 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico having passed charter legislation¹ (Center for Education Reform, 2003). In Michigan, which has been among the pioneers of the charter movement, more than 180 schools are in existence, enrolling more

¹ Among the 39 states (and the District of Columbia) that have passed charter legislation as of this writing, all but three (New Hampshire, Tennessee, and Iowa) have at least one actual charter school in operation.

than 60,000 students (Carrasco & Summers-Coty, 2000; Michigan Department of Education, 2003a). Charters have been particularly prominent as a strategy for the troubled schools of major urban areas, which are commonly viewed as a prime example of the decline of public education. A large percentage of charters nationwide are located in urbanized areas, and the movement has become particularly prominent in urban centers such as Detroit, where 55 charters were in operation within the city at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year (Michigan Department of Education, 2003b).

Charter schools, as is true for other efforts to enact and reform educational policy, can be understood as a distinct result of certain values (and combinations of these values) that predominate over others within the policy arena (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989; Garn, 2000; Garms, Guthrie, & Pierce, 1978; Wirt & Kirst, 1982, 1997; Labaree, 1997). Specifically, policy researchers have argued that four “instrumental values” compete for influence in educational policy:

- *Quality*: the pursuit of the “best” educational outcomes, typically defined and pursued by (a) setting standards for school and teacher characteristics and measurable student achievement, and/or (b) allocating funding in pursuit of these standards
- *Efficiency*: a value with (a) an *economic* dimension that seeks to minimize costs while maximizing gains, and (b) an *accountability* dimension that seeks to oversee and control the exercise of power and responsibility

- *Equity*: the use and (if necessary) redistribution of public resources to satisfy disparities in human needs
- *Choice*: the presence of a range of options for action, as well as the ability to select a preferred option

Policy researchers have also identified a set of key stakeholder groups and “policy elites” that use these values in the process of influencing educational policy at the state level, which has historically been the most important jurisdiction for education-related policy. These elites include elected state legislators and their staff, members of state boards of education, state school superintendents (also known as chief state school officers), governors and their policy advisors, administrators within state departments of education, and leaders of education-related interest groups such as teachers’ unions and associations of school administrators. These groups of elites, who participate in a broad range of education-related policy issues, are joined on the charter school issue by another set of stakeholders that includes the public entities authorized to issue and oversee charters and the private sector organizations that are frequently contracted to operate them. Also participating in the educational policy process in increasingly significant ways are business interests and trade associations, which advocate for their members’ interests in calling for improved educational results, containment of education-related expenditures, and greater accountability for school performance (Hertz & Imber, 1995; Kingdon, 1995; Moyser & Wagstaffe, 1987; Scott, 1990; Wirt, Mitchell, & Marshall, 1985).

This dissertation uses the concept of instrumental values within educational policy, along with the views of key educational stakeholders and policy elites relative to these values, to understand how the charter school movement in Michigan has emerged and expanded. While the passage of charter legislation and the expansion of the movement suggests support on the part of stakeholders and policy elites for certain values, such as Choice and Efficiency, research has suggested that across the spectrum of these participants in the policy process there is likely to be uneven distribution of, and preference, for these values (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989; Garn, 2000). Using an exploratory, qualitative case study methodology involving surveys of educational policy elites in Michigan and secondary document analysis, this research investigates which instrumental values have been assigned comparatively high or low priority, and how value preferences on the part of selected policy elites appear to influence the formation of Michigan's charter school policy. Key research questions that guide this investigation include the following:

1. Which of the instrumental values, either individually or in combination with others, are valued the most (and the least) by Michigan policy elites who have played an active role in shaping the state's education agenda and charter school policy?
2. How, if at all, do policy elites' relative preferences for certain instrumental values, or combinations thereof, appear to be correlated with key status

variables such as political party affiliation and demographic characteristics (race/ethnicity, geography, etc.) of elites and/or their constituents?

3. What relationships, if any, appear to exist between policy elites' preferences in terms of the four instrumental values on the one hand and their views regarding Michigan's charter school experiment on the other?
4. How are value preferences evident in Michigan's charter school legislation, as well as a selected set of attempts to modify this legislation over the past decade?
5. What do the value preferences of Michigan policy elites suggest about possible future directions for the state's charter school movement?

Review of Literature

The Role of Values in American Society

The existence of values within American society, as well as their influence upon policy-related processes, have long been topics of interest to social scientists and commentators. Jary & Jary (1991:543) define values as "ethical ideals and beliefs" and "the central beliefs and purposes of an individual or society." Values are held on both an individual and a societal level, and include both variable beliefs that are subject to change and those of a fixed nature (Schaefer & Lamm, 1997). The study of how values help shape American society dates back as far as the observations of Tocqueville (in Wirt & Kirst, 1989:79-80, and Garn, 2000), who noted a series of "curious contradictions" between American values and

policy. Within the sociological literature, the study of values and their role in society has occupied a prominent place in the work of Parsons (1951), among others, who believed that values played an integral role in addressing “the problem of social order.” Other noted thinkers who have examined the nature and role of values in American society include the anthropologist Margaret Mead (in Devine, 1972) and the sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset (1990).

The Relationship between Values and Policy

How, specifically, do values influence the policymaking process in American society? The work of Easton (1953), Wildavsky (1987), Elazar (1984), and Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989), among others, has attempted to answer this question by studying the extent to which policy represents the manifestation of cultural values. Emerging from the work of these scholars is a paradigm with two central propositions: first, that culture shapes institutions and traditions, and second, that culture is reflected in written and unwritten codes of behavior. The political process, using input from state legislatures and other apparatuses of state government (governorships, executive agencies, etc.) and institutions that influence policy formation (labor unions, etc.), represents a cultural “stage” which has been built by previous generations, and reflects understandings of cultural values held by policy actors. Legislators are authorized and empowered (through statutes and the electoral process) to reflect societal goals in making policy, but are also influenced by the values held by other actors (including

interest groups), and are constrained by the rules of the political subculture within which they operate.

The values embraced by a particular culture exert a strong influence upon the policy process by providing legislators with a measure of how important proposed policies are to their constituents in terms of costs, probable impacts, and consequences (Easton, 1953). The ongoing activity of the policymaker is to transform cultural values into policy through the allocation of values into legislation (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). Statutes, budgets, and other matters debated by legislators represent the “concrete outcomes” of cultural values. Easton (1953:130) adds that policymaking is the “authoritative allocation of values and resources for a society;” a policy represents a “web of decisions and actions that allocates values.” A policy is thus a set of values expressed in words, issued with authority, and reinforced with power in order to induce a shift toward designated values. Policies reflect the values of people, transformed into a set of statements about the way things must be done, and the policymaking process can thus be thought of as the way in which cultural values are authorized and confirmed. The allocation of values by government is a two-way process, in that government both *receives and reflects* values from the public (in the form of elected representatives whose views must reasonably match those of their constituents) and *influences* the values held by the public (in the form of elected policymakers campaigning on various issue platforms and urging constituents to support them based upon these views) (Wirt & Kirst, 1997).

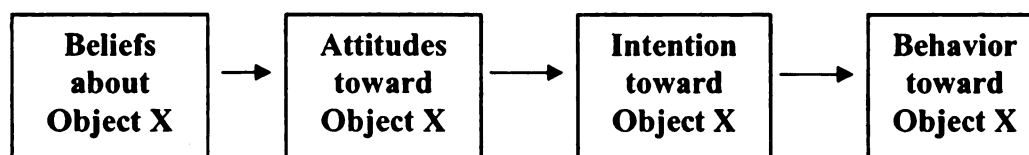
Attitudes and Values as Determinants of Behavior

Relationships between attitudes and behavior have long been a topic of interest in the social sciences, and particularly to social psychologists. Perhaps the best-known research in this area has been contributed by the work of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980; see also Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) through their theory of “reasoned action.” The general premise of the theory is that human behavior is governed primarily by the rational and systematic use of information and reflects an intention to perform that particular behavioral action. Intentions, in turn, are influenced by both personal and social influences, and reflect a person’s judgment as to whether a potential behavior both fits within their own system of beliefs and is likely to be viewed as acceptable by those important to the actor. In contrast to behavioral analyses that focus on the role of external variables (including personality characteristics, social roles, and demographic factors such as age, sex, and race) as predictors of behavior, Ajzen and Fishbein contend (p.9) that these external variables influence behavior “only to the extent that they influence the determinants of that behavior.” External variables may influence behavior, in other words, but do so indirectly, by impacting the personal and social influences that form of intentions and thus guide behavior.

Rokeach (1973) also contributes to the understanding of how attitudes, and the values that underlie them, are related to behavior. He argues (p.122) that values underlie many, if not all, social attitudes; that a given value determines several or

many attitudes; and that a given attitude is determined by several or many values.” Also of interest to Rokeach is the matter of relationships between values and behaviors; he argues (p.122) that “...a person’s values should enable us to predict how he will behave in various experimental and real-life situations.” He confirms this hypothesis through his research, demonstrating that not only are attitudes shaped by values, but that “values are significantly related to all kinds of behavior” (p.158). He concludes that socioeconomic, political, and religious values are especially powerful predictors of behavior (as well as attitudes). Rokeach cautions, however (p.162), that there is no reason to think that (a) “...all values must serve equally as standards to guide attitudes and actions,” and (b) that “...any one value or attitude should predict behavior perfectly.”

Schuman (in Cook, Fine, & House, 1995:70) also examines relationships among attitudes, values (which he characterizes as a “conceptual cousin” of attitudes), and behavior. He summarizes the earlier work of Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) and Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) in this area as follows:



Borrowing terminology developed by Ajzen & Fishbein (1980), Schuman notes that through a theory of “reasoned action, “...a person’s beliefs about an object leads to their overall tendency toward a positive or negative evaluation; their overall evaluative attitude shapes their intentions to behave in positive or

negative ways toward the object; and, finally, these intentions – unless checked – ordinarily lead to behaviors that are, on the whole, positive or negative toward the object” (p.70).

Eagly & Chaiken (1993) review the history of the relationship between attitudes and behaviors within the social sciences and social psychology in particular by noting that for much of the past several decades, there were substantial doubts as to the efficacy of this relationship. While not directly refuting the validity of this body of research, Eagly & Chaiken attempt to specify the conditions under which attitudes do appear to serve as reasonably effective predictors of behavior. They acknowledge that while the attitude-behavior correlation is indeed lower in some cases, particularly when attitudes are correlated to a single behavioral incident, it is much higher in other instances (such as voting behavior), particularly when attitudes are correlated to an appropriate “aggregative index” of behaviors. They conclude (p.158) that “...the size of correlations between attitudes and behaviors is to a great extent under the investigator’s own control,” as “the magnitude of these correlations varies systematically with the characteristics of the measuring instruments used to assess attitudes and behaviors.” They also caution that ascertaining a correlation between attitudes and behaviors is far different from claiming that attitudes cause behavior. Any single behavioral incident directed toward a person or object, for example, is likely determined at least in part by a host of factors apart from attitudes toward the person or object, meaning that any incidence of behavior should thus be considered “a somewhat unreliable

indicator of the attitude.” Far more telling, Eagly & Chaiken argue, are composite indices and aggregations of behavior across time, typically measured using a combination of questionnaires and observations, that can generally be correlated to attitudes much more readily than a single incidence of behavior.

Eagly & Chaiken (1993) also devote attention to factors and considerations that influence, or mediate, relationships between attitudes and behavior, and in some cases increase their intensity. They note (p.194), for example, that experience serves as one such mediating influence, with the attitudes of those who have had direct experience with an attitude object correlating at least moderately with “attitude-relevant” behaviors, while the attitudes of those who lack such direct experience correlate weakly, if at all. Among other explanations, they note that this is because “...attitudes based upon direct experience are more easily retrieved from memory than those not based on direct experience” (see also Fazio & Zanna, 1981; Crano, 1995). Similarly, correlations between policy elites' attitudes and behaviors are thought to be increased by prior knowledge about attitude objects. Attitude-behavior correlations for policy elites can also be affected by the presence of constituencies which may demand behavior that is compatible with their own (the constituencies') values, in the event that the values of the elites that represent them are not congruent with their own. As a final example, Crano (1995) has observed that vested interests, such as a financial stake in a given matter or the involvement of a close friend or family

member, can lead to the formation of comparatively strong attitudes that are more predictive of behavior than in instances where no vested interest exists.

The Role of Values in Shaping Educational Policy

Policies within education, as is true of other institutions in U.S. society, can be understood as a representation of distinct values held by the society (Tozer, Violas, & Senese, 1993; Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989; Ballantine, 1983).

While there has been near-unanimous agreement for more than 150 years that investment in public education is a worthwhile policy goal, the history of educational policymaking in the U.S., as is true of other institutions in American society, has been characterized by conflict (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989; Sarason, 1997; Tyack, 1974). Educators, ordinary citizens, and policymakers alike have held very different ideas about what schools ought to be doing and how they should be doing it; disagreement has characterized issues as broad as what schools should teach reading and as narrow as how many hours of instructional time are required (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989; Berliner & Biddle, 1985; Bennett, 1988; Hirsch, 1987, 1996). Repeated instances of conflict within education, while consistent with those in other public institutions that allocate limited resources across competing demands, illustrate, as Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) argue, the collision of value preferences on the part of policymakers and their constituents occurring within the “arena” of the political process.

Four Instrumental Values in Educational Policy

Borrowing from Kaufman (1956) and Garms, Guthrie, & Pierce (1978), and building upon the contributions of Wildavsky (1987), Easton (1953), Wirt & Kirst (1997), and Kingdon (1995), among others, Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989), Sergiovanni *et al* (1999), and Garn (2000) have identified four “instrumental values” that represent key cultural priorities within education that have been used to influence educational policy. Individual citizens and various interest groups develop (and sometimes modify) values in response to the basic question of which give them the best chance of maximizing their own educational interests (which may be financial, political, social, or some combination of these), and make demands upon their elected representatives accordingly (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). Because each value represents a distinct view of what is deemed important, policy actions taken to advance one of the values often come at the expense of one or more of the others.

The four instrumental values, each of which is rooted in a unique political ideology or philosophy, include the following:

- **Quality:** This value, also known as Excellence, describes “the use of public resources to match professionally-determined standards of excellence, proficiency, or ability.” It is based upon the view, best expressed by Rousseau’s social contract theory (in Marshall, Mitchell, &

Wirt, 1989), that citizens join together in collective action, or the formation of government, to achieve goals they would be incapable of reaching through private actions. One such goal is the establishment of free and compulsory public education. For about a century and a half, Americans have believed that the overall quality of life in this country is substantially improved through free, compulsory public education, and have created a system of public schools, guided at the state and local levels, to achieve this end. Citizens may disagree on the greatest good that is to be accomplished through public education – for some, it is greater economic productivity (resulting from educated workers), for others it is civic (appreciation for American history and the cultivation of responsible citizens), and for others it may be private (increased appreciation for culture, language, or literature) – but there is a general consensus that education improves the overall quality of life, and that government therefore has both a responsibility and an interest in providing it.

In addition to the establishment of free and compulsory schools, other policy actions that illustrate Quality include the movement to establish and raise standards for student achievement, increased allocations of money to schools, the establishment of minimum requirements for teacher certification, and increased numbers of required courses in the school curriculum as examples.

- **Efficiency:** This value is primarily concerned with minimizing educational costs while simultaneously maximizing outcomes. It represents a response to the need of Americans to feel that their institutions operate in an orderly, predictable, and controlled manner; without government to perform these functions, argued Hobbes, the life of man would become "...solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). Wirt & Kirst (1997) note that the Efficiency value contains both an *economic perspective* that seeks to minimize costs while maximizing gains (examples: policies pertaining to class size and pupil-teacher ratios) and an *accountability perspective*, through which superiors oversee and control subordinates' use of power (example: publicizing the stages of the budgetary process). It emphasizes the accountability of schools, both to students and to taxpayers who fund them, and was first embraced on a large scale in the 1950s when theories of "scientific management" gained widespread acclaim. Since that time, it has continued to be a major force influencing policymakers' decisions, due in large part to the escalating costs of education and some level of doubt over the outcomes (or lack thereof) that have resulted from these expenditures. A vocal faction of researchers, in fact, has railed against ever-increasing levels of funding devoted to educational purposes at a time when performance has remained stagnant or declined, and has argued that educational outputs (in the form of student performance) are at best only marginally related to financial inputs (see Garms, Guthrie, & Pierce, 1978).

Examples of policies which illustrate the Efficiency model include state-mandated caps on property taxes as a means of funding schools and elimination of teachers' right to strike for improved salaries (as is currently the case in Michigan). Efficiency is also a major driving force behind the accountability and testing movements that dominate educational policy today, as states develop standardized tests to measure student performance as well as sanctions for schools that fail to demonstrate progress (Wirt & Kirst, 1997).

- **Equity:** This value, also known as Equality, refers to the redistribution of resources to meet morally or societally-defined needs within schools. Operationalized in the “self-evident belief that all men are created equal” principle set forth in the U.S. Constitution, and drawing upon Marxist and Jeffersonian thinking, the Equity value places emphasis on the pursuit of equalized educational opportunities for all students, regardless of social, economic, and other barriers (poverty, race/ethnicity, disability status, etc.) known to work against this goal. It does this mainly by creating programs that work to provide more equalized access as well as improved outcomes on the part of marginalized students. Examples of policies that represent an Equity perspective include school desegregation, compensatory education programs such as Title I, and initiatives (such as IDEA) intended to ensure access and improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Concerns over equity were the dominant force driving

educational policymaking from roughly the 1960s to the 1980s, but have come under increasing attack from a policy standpoint because they are a matter of *redress* rather than *address* (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989).

Policymakers cannot decree social equity, so they are relegated to creating laws and social programs that operate within settings such as schools, and are intended to relieve the effects of inequity after it is identified. The need for governmental action cannot be justified until some identifiable inequity (such as segregated schools) has been shown to exist, and by the time a policy intervention is planned, proposed, debated, modified, and implemented, the inequity may be so strongly entrenched that it is difficult, if not impossible, to uproot solely by working through schools.

- **Choice:** Few, if any, values are more basic to the American experience than the right of individual consumers to choose products and services (Smith, 1976; Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). Indeed, it was the “passionate belief” of classical liberalism (best personified by John Locke and John Stuart Mill), as well as the authors of the Constitution, that good government was to be defined by its ability to preserve freedom of choice and a range of options for its citizens; as Thomas Jefferson stated, “That government governs best which governs least.” As such, it is hardly surprising that Choice represents a key value that drives educational decision-making. Within a context of educational policy, Choice consists

of legislated options for parents and guardians with respect to the schools their children attend. Examples include inter- and intra-district choice programs, magnet schools, charter schools, and voucher programs. The key principle behind the choice value is the power of individual consumers to act in the interests of their children by selecting schools that best fit their educational needs, however defined (Bast & Wittman, 1991; Chubb & Moe, 1990; Boyd & Wahlberg, 1990; Cookson, 1994; Coons & Sugarman, 1978; Fuller & Elmore, 1996; Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995).

Historically, the goals of American education have changed in response to shifts in values, with each of the four instrumental values (either by itself or in combination with others) acting as the dominant influence at various points (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). Quality, along with child labor laws, was the driving force behind the establishment of compulsory public education in the 19th century, as societal realization of the importance of an educated citizenry was the dominant influence on the policy process. This remained the dominant influence until the early part of the 20th century, when Efficiency became a primary concern within the context of financial difficulties associated with the Great Depression, as well as emerging concern regarding the allocation of public dollars for returns that were increasingly unclear and difficult to measure. Support for Efficiency, as Marshall *et al* 1989) note, tends to increase during difficult financial times, when the demands of schools must be balanced against declining revenues, and when

the relationship between school inputs (in the form of tax revenues and spending) and outputs (student performance) becomes unclear.

Beginning around the 1960s, Equity became a dominant influence on the policy process as a result of concern over the increasingly unequal outcomes produced by public schools. Landmark studies such as the famed Coleman Report (Coleman, 1966), which documented the vastly differing educational outcomes that existed across lines of race and social class, led to the creation of large categorical programs at both the federal and state levels. These included compensatory education (Title I), bilingual and special education, and school desegregation efforts, that were increasingly rolled back over the past decade (see Orfield, 1996; Orfield & Yun, 1999).

By the 1980s, however, concern had shifted from Equity back to a combination of Quality and Efficiency, as policymakers became increasingly concerned about the poor performance and rising costs associated with public education. A re-emphasis on Quality was stimulated by moments of perceived national crisis such as the Sputnik launch by the Soviet Union in 1957 and the subsequent Cold War, the *Nation at Risk* report in 1983, and the emerging concern over dismal educational outcomes in urban areas in the 1980s and 1990s (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989). Efficiency re-emerged as a preferred value for a variety of reasons, including increased attention to issues involving school funding.

Around the late 1980s, the Choice value became a significant influence upon educational policy. In a historical sense, Choice is perhaps the oldest of all the values, as expressed in the principles of the Constitution and operationalized through private schools that existed even before the first publicly-funded schools in the 1870s. Stimulated by concern over educational performance as well as increased privatization in other sectors of government, Choice became a competing value to the Quality/Efficiency combination in education, with increased opportunities - highlighted by the charter movement - for parents to select schools becoming a significant component of the educational landscape (Harmer, 1994; Henig, 1994; Kuttner, 1997; McGroarty, 1996; Peterson & Hassel, 1998; Rasell & Rothstein, 1993; Smrekar & Goldring, 1999).

Policy Elites and Their Role in the Educational Policymaking Process

Within education, as is true for other policy arenas, a selected set of individuals known as “policy elites” influence and make decisions about which values are reflected in policy (Hertz & Imber, 1995; Kingdon, 1995; Moyser & Wagstaffe, 1987; Scott, 1990; Wirt, Mitchell, & Marshall, 1985). These are “the primary participants in the policy process” (Kingdon, 1995), or, as Lasswell (cited in Hunter [1995]) succinctly puts it, “those who have more of whatever scarce values there are in a society.” Elites are actors who, through various combinations of their political power, words, actions, and contribution of

resources (including time and money), advocate for and in some cases vote on particular policies or combinations of policies.

The Significance of Policy Elites at the State Level

In contrast to other areas of policymaking, in which the nexus of power lies either at the federal or the local level, the most significant jurisdiction for the formation of educational policies is the state. As Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989:2) succinctly note, "...we study the states because that is where education is anchored and thrives." This arrangement is a product of the U.S. Constitution, whose authors sought to avoid the establishment of a European-style centralized monarchy that ruled with absolute power and blended religious functions with those of government (Lowi & Ginsberg, 1992; Skidmore & Tripp, 1985).

The fact that the Constitution delegates primary responsibility for educational policy to the states does not mean that the federal and local levels are insignificant, for each plays a key role, albeit in different ways. Regarding the federal role, involvement from Washington has become increasingly significant, in the form of programs and mandates developed by the President, Congress, and the U.S. Department of Education and its predecessors (Hill. 2000).² The

² Hill (2000) notes that the involvement of the federal government in education was minimal until the middle part of the 20th century, with no cabinet-level Department of Education in existence until 1979 and elected officials in Washington largely content to let states and local school districts govern their own affairs. An Office of Education at the federal level had existed since 1867, but its originally-intended function of collecting basic statistics – without any substantial role in terms of leadership and setting educational policy priorities – changed little until the 1950s. The Office of Education, in fact, had a number of oddly-situated "homes" within the federal bureaucracy following its formation in 1867; it was originally

most recent manifestation of the expanding federal role in education, following more than a half century of initiatives that included desegregation, Title I funding for disadvantaged schools and students, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, is President George W. Bush's "No Child Left Behind" legislation, which mandates increased student testing and involves a series of sanctions for low-performing schools (Paige, 2002; Robelen, 2002).

At a local level, elected boards of education in the nearly 15,000 local school districts nationwide, including 554 in Michigan, also play a key role in shaping educational policy. On the one hand, control over public schools has become much more consolidated at the state and federal levels over the past half-century, as witnessed by a steady decline in the number of local school districts from nearly 120,000 in 1937 to fewer than 15,000 today (Public Purpose, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). On the other hand, the notion of local control has a long and cherished history within American education, and the local school district is the entity through which this principle has been operationalized since the establishment of public schools (Katznelson & Weir, 1985; Tyack, 1974; Tyack & Cuban, 1988). States typically delegate much of their constitutionally-granted power to run schools down to the local level, with specific functions entrusted to local boards of education including the choosing of a

housed within the Department of the Interior, was transferred to the Federal Security Agency in 1939, and then to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1953 (Campbell et al, 1985). The U.S. Department of Education was established in 1979 and has existed as such since that time, although Ronald Reagan sought to abolish it shortly after taking office in 1980 and various other politicians have also proposed its elimination.

superintendent (who in turn chooses building-level administrators), determining a budget, and overseeing the curriculum (Campbell *et al*, 1985).

Policy Elite “Clusters”

Returning to the state level, a large number of policy elites are involved in influencing and formulating educational policy. Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) have researched the varying levels of involvement on the part of these various actors extensively in six states, measuring the relative influence that each individual and group exerts upon the educational policy process. They divide state-level policy elites into five groupings, or “clusters,” in accordance with the amount of influence they wield (see Appendix A). The most influential group of state-level policy elites within education, or the “insiders,” according to Marshall and colleagues, includes individual members of the legislature and legislatures as a whole. Legislators, both individually and collectively, wield the greatest influence due to their exclusive voting power over education-related legislation and state budgets, with members of education-related committees standing out as particularly influential. In their role as the branch of government primarily responsible for making laws, legislators act as “gatekeepers” for policy initiatives, deciding on an individual and collective basis whether any particular legislative proposal passes into law or dies beforehand (Kingdon, 1995). Rosenthal (in Van Horn, 1989:69), somewhat more colorfully, describes legislatures as “...probably the principal political institutions in the states – the guts of democracy.” Lowi &

Ginsberg (1992) argue that most of the functions that occupy the greatest importance in the day-to-day lives of the average citizen, including education, are determined at the state level, and Dvorin & Misner (1971) add that comparatively speaking, state legislatures exerts far more power over the counties and municipalities that comprise its constituency than the U.S. Congress does over the fifty states that represent its membership.

Ranking just behind the “Insiders” in terms of influence is a cluster known as the “Near Circle.” It includes the Chief State School Officer (CSSO), who is known in Michigan and many states as the superintendent. The duties of this position are threefold: to serve as the executive officer of the state board of education, to serve as the administrative head of the state department of education, and to act as the chief administrative officer for the state in executing the laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to educational policy in accordance with the state constitution and laws (Council of the Chief State School Officers, 1983).

Education interest groups (combined) comprise a second group located within the “Near Circle.” Marshall and colleagues found teachers’ organizations, and teachers’ unions in particular, to be extremely influential within this second tier. In Michigan, the dominant teachers’ organization is the Michigan Education Association (MEA), which is the state-level affiliate of the National Education Association (NEA). Of particular significance for this research on relationships between the values of policy elites and their views on charter schools is that

teachers' organizations have, as a general rule, been very skeptical about, if not outright hostile to, the charter experiment.

The governor and his/her executive staff comprise another subcategory within the "Near Circle." Through their power to introduce, advocate for and against, and veto legislation, as well as formulating state budgets, the influence of the governor and top advisors is substantial. Marshall and colleagues rank governors below other actors such as legislators, however, because budget constraints and pressure from interest groups have forced governors into a largely reactive, rather than proactive, role in terms of formulating educational policy. The twelve-year reign of former Michigan Gov. John Engler, which concluded in 2002, offers an excellent example of both the influence that a governor can wield over educational and charter school policy as well as the limitations they face. Engler's tenure witnessed sweeping changes to Michigan's system for financing schools, including a provision that essentially enabled the charter movement by making school funding "portable," not to mention the passage of charter legislation and dramatic expansion of the movement. At the same time, growth in the state's charter schools was essentially frozen for the last three years of Engler's tenure, and he was unable to engineer an increase despite numerous attempts. Engler was an avid supporter of charters, but his Democratic successor, Jennifer Granholm, has thus far been more measured and cautious in her support.

The “Far Circle” and “Sometimes Players” are the final two stakeholder groups. The state board of education, which in Michigan is comprised of eight members elected statewide, is the lone entity situated in the “Far Circle” of influence. The Michigan state board oversees important educational functions in addition to K-12 schools, including the formation of charter school policy. It has no direct capacity as an elected body to pass legislation or authorize money for educational purposes, as these remain the exclusive responsibility of the state legislature and the governor (Council of the Chief State School Officers, 1983). The “Sometimes Players” group includes associations of leaders and professionals within education, including those that represent school board members and administrators. As is the case for the state board of education, the ability of “Sometimes Players” to directly impact policy may not match that of state legislators or the governor, but their influence is significant nonetheless in that they represent key constituencies who respond to, and in some cases create, charter schools.

An interesting omission from the cluster schematic developed by Marshall and colleagues is business interests. Presumably, this is because their study concluded that business and trade associations exerted comparatively little influence upon educational policy at the time of their work in the mid-1980s. A convincing argument can be made that this situation no longer holds true, and that business interests have become significant players within educational policy.

This work reflects such a viewpoint, as a variety of business-related associations are included in the sample of Michigan policy elites.

Research on Values in Education: Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989)

Instrumental values, and the extent to which they influence policy elites, have been the topic of several notable studies. To investigate the ways in which cultural values become manifested within the arena of educational policymaking, and more specifically to test the question of “which values prevail?” in the policy process, Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) surveyed and later interviewed 140 key policymakers from six different states (Arizona, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wisconsin) in the mid-1980s. Elites included legislators, chief state school officers, education advisors to governors, and high-ranking officials within educational interest groups such as teachers’ unions and school administrators’ associations. The researchers’ objective was to measure the extent to which each of the four values acted as an influence upon policymakers’ positions on three common topics, or “policy domains,” within education:

- *Finance*: control over how educational funds are distributed to schools
- *Program definition*: specifying what schools teach and how long they must do so
- *Organization/governance*: decisions regarding authority and responsibility

In the analyses performed by Marshall and colleagues, policy elites completed an 18-item survey instrument that used forced-choice, paired comparisons (see Appendix D). Each of the four instrumental values was represented by different statements (one for each “policy domain” listed above) signifying ways in which the value might be operationalized through policy actions (e.g., the Equity value is represented by the following three statements: “greater equalization of resources” for the Finance domain, “broader participation in decision-making” for the Organization/Governance domain, and “giving more attention to children with special needs” for the Program Definition domain). Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the four values, using the three statements that represented each value, in a paired comparison format with statements representing one of the other instrumental values. Each statement, as Marshall *et al.* note (p.92), “was phrased in such a way as to reflect the application of one of the core values to a particular school program or policy issue.” It is important to note, however, that respondents in the Marshall study were not made aware that the statements they were asked to compare were being used to represent the four instrumental values and the three domains, and were not given an opportunity to suggest statements that they felt more accurately represented the values and domains.

At a broad level, the most significant finding emerging from the Marshall study was that variations in the policymaking preferences and actions of policy elites were correlated with their divergent views on the four instrumental values. More

specifically, Marshall and colleagues found that the Quality value was ranked the highest across all three domains (Finance, Program Definition, and Organization/Governance), using Mean Item Scores,³ as shown in the “Sum of Mean Scores” statistic shown in Table 1 below. The authors conclude that “...this value [Quality] was widely held and was generally recognized as a critical concern in current educational policy debates” (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989:93). They also note that “...Quality is the dominant concern of state policy leaders in the 1980s,” and there exists “a clear cultural norm...[that identifies] Quality as the dominant value perspective” (p.95). Findings were equally clear in terms of the *lowest* value priorities for policy elites as a group, as the rank order of the four instrumental values was identical within the finance and organization/governance domains: Choice ranked “a distant last.” Within the program definition domain, Choice ranked third, ahead of only Efficiency.

³ Higher numerical scores (as shown in the “Sum of Mean Scores” and “Average of Mean Scores” columns in Table 1) indicate greater influence of an instrumental value upon policymakers’ views; lower scores indicate less influence. Mean item scores were calculated by assigning values to each pair of value choices, with responses scored as +1 when the respondent’s choice was closest to the center of the six-point scale, +2 when the choice was one space further out from the center, and +3 when furthest out (see Appendix D). Thus, the highest possible score for any value in a single paired comparison used by Marshall and colleagues was +3 (and the lowest score is –3). Since each value is represented by three different statements, each of which could receive a score as high as +3 from the paired comparison questions, the highest possible score any value could receive from a single respondent is +9, if the value were to be ranked by that respondent as “much more important” than each of the other three values. Conversely, a value could receive a score as low as –9 from a single respondent, if each value statement opposing it in the paired comparison questions were chosen as “much more important.” Additional discussion of how mean item scores are calculated and used appears in the Sources of Data/Methodology section below.

Table 1: Value Preferences of Policy Elites

	Policy Domain and Mean Score for All Respondents, by Value and Domain:			Sum of Mean Scores
	Program	Finance	Organization/ Governance	
Value:				
Efficiency	Making programs more cost-effective (-2.01)	Improving the use of education tax dollars (0.82)	More efficient school management (0.91)	-0.28
Equity	Giving more attention to children with special needs (0.36)	Greater equalization of resources (0.08)	Broader participation in decision-making (-1.12)	-0.68
Quality	Setting higher academic standards (2.71)	Increasing the level of funding for schools (2.63)	Developing quality-conscious leadership (3.51)	8.85
Choice	Increasing program flexibility (-1.07)	Reducing restrictions on local expenditures (-3.53)	Providing more choices for families and children (-3.29)	-7.89

Source: Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989:93-95).

In assessing the low priority given to the Choice value by policymakers, the authors note (p.94) that "...It was surprising to find so little priority given to approaches that would enhance the Choice value...We found *consistently negative scores for all three Choice items.*" In interviews that followed the written survey, state policy elites did not actually oppose the expansion of the Choice perspective, but rather gave clear priority to the other three values when asked to make choices between competing values or to rank-order their preferences. An

emphasis on the Quality value, in particular, appeared to come at the expense of Choice; the authors interpreted this (p.94) to “expanded choice [being seen] as competing with such direct approaches to quality improvement as setting higher academic standards, increasing school funding, and developing quality-conscious leadership.” In essence, Choice and Quality were viewed as mutually exclusive values, and when given a choice between the two, policy elites expressed a clear preference for pursuing Quality in the legislation and policy actions they advocated for.

Significantly, however, Marshall and colleagues did find some state-by-state variation with respect to policy elites' preferences for the four instrumental values in the six states they studied. Among the most significant was that while the Choice value was “...rejected in all states...the rejection in Arizona and California was much less pronounced” than in other states within the sample. They interpret this state-by-state variation as a product of differences in “state political culture” (Elazar, 1984). Interestingly, the level of charter school activity in Arizona and California is among the highest in the nation, with Arizona having by far the largest number of charters as of this writing. Arizona is also the setting for research by Garn (2000; see discussion below), who found Choice (along with Efficiency) to be the preferred value among that state's educational policy elites.

The Charter School Movement

In the span just over a decade, the public charter movement has emerged as perhaps the most significant attempt to reform public education since desegregation. Emerging from a long history of free market principles within American society such as deregulation (see, for example, Smith, 1976; Friedman, 1962; Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hirschman, 1971; Witte, 2001), the charter movement has become a particularly salient issue in and around major urban areas, where a disproportionate number of charters have located, and in certain states (including Michigan) where a series of policy decisions influenced by policy elites has resulted in high levels of charter school activity.

Key Characteristics and Intended Outcomes of Charter Schools

Charter schools are publicly-funded educational institutions that operate autonomously from the traditional public school districts in which they are located (Budde, 1989; Nathan, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Finn, Manno, & Vanourek, 2000; Wells, 1998; Kolderie, 1990, 1998; Bulkley & Fisler, 2002). While “charter schools” is the general name for this new type of public school, they go by various other names in some states; in Michigan, they are officially known as “public school academies” (Arsen, Plank, & Sykes, 1999). Charter schools can be established by a variety of persons and organizations, depending on the legislation in the state in which they are located, including individuals, groups of teachers, and in some cases school districts and universities. Their “charter,”

which is a contract for operation that states the school's intended purpose, mission, and desired outcomes, is issued (again, depending on the specific provisions of state legislation) by state boards of education, universities, school districts, and other public entities (Bulkley, 2001; Center for Education Reform, 2003; Moe, 1980, 2001; Peterson & Campbell, 2001; Vergari & Mintrom, 1996).

Charter legislation in many states is specifically intended to free these new schools from many of the policies and regulations that apply to traditional public schools, perhaps most notably those that pertain to specified attendance zones for students, a specified curriculum, and having teachers who are employed by local school districts (Bomotti, Ginsberg, & Cobb, 1999; Peterson & Hassel, 1998). Among the features of the charter movement that have resulted from these policies include schools that are small in size and often have a specific academic and/or cultural focus such as performing arts, science and technology, or a racial/cultural focus such as Afrocentrism (Horn & Miron, 1999; RPP International, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001).

Charters are issued for schools to operate any combination of grades K-12 for a predetermined period of time (a maximum of 10 years in Michigan, for example), with the chartering agency responsible for monitoring the school's progress toward the goals set forth in its charter a minimum of every seven years (Center for Education Reform, 2003). Funding for charters generally flows from the state to the school in accordance with per-pupil levels established by the state,

although in some cases funds must first pass through the local school districts in which charters are located. Charter schools are largely responsible for their own facilities and teachers, with states generally providing limited, if any, start-up funding, although some start-up assistance is made available from the federal government (see, for example, U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

Teachers in charter schools may or may not be members of unions, depending upon state-specific policies. Perhaps most importantly, parents must apply for their child to attend charter schools, with basic nondiscrimination policies (pertaining to race/ethnicity, religion, disability status, and academic ability) governing the selection of students, and parents are ostensibly free to move their children to other schools if dissatisfied. Charter schools fall into one of two categories: *new* and *conversion*. New charters are those that have not existed previously as another school, while conversions are those that were formerly private or traditional public schools (SRI International, 1997, 2000).

Advocates of the charter concept envisioned at least six major outcomes from these new schools (Bulkley & Fidler, 2002):

- **Availability of New Choices in Public K-12 Education:** Perhaps the most important goal of the charter movement is to provide parents and students with a publicly-funded and non-selective alternative to traditional public schools; this was proclaimed to be of particular importance to

educational consumers for whom options were largely closed off by economic constraints (e.g., the inability to afford private schools or move to more desirable public schools).

- **Increased Autonomy:** Founders of charter ostensibly receive the freedom to design and run schools as they see fit (within certain guidelines), ideally experimenting with different forms of curriculum, instruction, and governance. This vision differs substantially from traditional public schools, which are more constrained by policies and regulations at the federal, state, and local levels.
- **Innovation:** Charters were envisioned as “laboratories of experimentation” in which innovation in the areas of curriculum and instruction, school governance, and policies related to teachers would constantly be tested.
- **Greater Accountability:** With no charter school guaranteed a “captive” student population, charter advocates proclaimed that these new schools would be unable to take their student populations for granted, and would instead be forced to continually improve their “product” in order to retain their base of consumers.
- **Improved Student Achievement and Consumer Satisfaction:** The result of autonomy, innovation, and accountability is to be higher levels of student achievement, greater satisfaction on the part of students, parents, and teachers.

- **Systemic Improvement:** Charters were envisioned as disseminating information on new and promising practices, as well as forcing traditional public schools to improve by making them compete for students.

A Historical Context for the Rise of Charters and Choice

Given the fact that the intellectual origins of the charter and choice concept have existed for many years, how can the sudden emergence of the charter movement in the early 1990s be explained? Four events and patterns seem particularly salient in retrospect:

- The publication, beginning with the famed Coleman Report (see Coleman, 1966) and continuing through the 1980s and 90s, of a series of reports that drew attention to the woes of public education, thereby creating a “problem” that charters and choice were a “solution” to; perhaps the most famous of these was the “rising tide of mediocrity” forewarned in the landmark *A Nation at Risk* report (U.S. Department of Education, 1983; see also Bloom, 1987; Bunzel, 1985; Berliner & Biddle, 1995);
- The rise of conservative leadership at the federal and state levels that was unabashedly receptive to the solution of market-based forces and the charter concept (see Ballatti, 2001; House, 1998; Winerip, 1998; Ascher, Fruchter, & Berne, 1996; Molnar, 1994, 1996);

- Increasingly negative and cynical views of nearly a half-century's worth of government-initiated attempts to reform public education (see Ravitch, 2001; Anthony & Jacobson, 1992; Finn & Rebarber, 1992; Fullan, 1991; Hodgson, 1973; Jencks, 1972);
- A changing politics of race associated with school reform efforts, in which minority advocacy groups, along with urban policymakers and many of their constituents, became more willing to set aside traditional political differences with conservatives in embracing charters and choice (Olson, 2002; Schnaiberg, 2000; Wilgoren, 2000; Shokraii, 1996; Lacayo, 1996).

The Growth and Present Status of the Charter Movement

Since the opening of the nation's first charter school, the City Academy, in St. Paul, MN, in 1992, the charter movement has expanded rapidly. California passed the nation's second charter school law in 1992, followed by Michigan⁴ and five other states in 1993, and a host of additional states in subsequent years (Center for Education Reform, 2003). As of this writing, 39 states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation authorizing charters, with schools actually in operation in 36 states in addition to Washington, D.C. An estimated 2,700 charters were in operation at the beginning of the (2002-03) academic year, enrolling more than 575,000 students nationwide. Arizona had chartered the

⁴ Michigan's original charter school law, in late 1993, was replaced in early 1994 by legislation that was declared unconstitutional. In December of 1994, the state legislature passed a replacement bill that withstood legal challenges by giving the state a greater oversight role (Vergari & Mintrom, 1996). Several modifications to the original legislation have been passed in the years since.

most schools as of the fall of 2002, with an estimated⁵ 468, followed by California with 452, Texas with 228, Florida with 232, and Michigan with 191.⁶ California's charters enrolled an estimated 129,163 students in 2001-02, followed by Arizona's 78,517 and Michigan's 55,526 (Center for Education Reform, 2003).

In Michigan, the expansion of charters has proceeded at a pace matched by few states. Aided by legislation and legislators considered "charter-friendly," the number of charters in Michigan grew rapidly (Mintrom, 2000; Michigan Association of Public School Academies, 2000, 2001; Michigan Center for Charter Schools, 1994). The state's 55,000+ charter students⁷ were more than 3.1% of the state's total K-12 school enrollment in 2000-01, a share exceeded only by the District of Columbia and Arizona (Center for Education Reform, 2003).

The Significance of Charter Schools as an Urban Reform Strategy

Above and beyond their significance as a school reform strategy, my interest in the charter movement is rooted in their distinctly urban flavor and the extent to

⁵ The Center for Education Reform, which is the most up-to-date source of information on the charter movement, notes on its website that estimates of the number of charters actually in operation and students enrolled in these schools may vary by as much as 10%, given the fluid nature of charter openings and student movement.

⁶ Michigan had 200 charters authorized to be in operation for the fall of 2001 (Michigan Department of Education, 2001a; Michigan Education Association, 2001), although only 191 were verified as actually in operation; several have closed, while others experienced delays opening their doors due to logistical difficulties.

⁷ As is true for records that show numbers of charter schools in existence at any given time, counts of charter school *students* vary by source. While the Center for Education Reform lists 55,526 as the number

which they have been proclaimed as an answer to the persistent problem of urban education. For more than three decades, the poor performance of students in urban schools – who have come to be increasingly poor and non-white – has been the subject of considerable angst and competing “solutions” (Brown, 1997; Jencks & Peterson, 1991). Charter schools, and the market forces they are based upon, represent the latest in a series of efforts to reform urban schools that has, at various times, emphasized each of the four instrumental values in educational policy: Equity during the 1960s, Efficiency during the 1980s, and Quality and Choice during the 1990s and into the present.

Data from the National Study of Charter Schools confirm the decidedly urban nature of the charter movement. They show that non-white students comprised more than half (52%) of the total charter school enrollment in the 27 states with charters in operation in 1997-98, compared to 41% non-white enrollment for all public schools in these same states (RPP International, 2000). In states such as Michigan with large numbers of charters, furthermore, minority students are substantially overrepresented in comparison with their enrollment in all public schools. In contrast to early fears that charters would seek to emulate some private (and selective public) institutions by catering to an affluent, high-achieving, and predominantly white clientele, then, charters have in many cases done just the opposite in attracting their greatest support from disadvantaged and non-white constituencies concentrated in urban areas.

Of charter students in Michigan, the Michigan Education Association (2001) counts a somewhat higher figure of 57,436.

Research on Values within a Charter School Context: Garn (2000)

The work of Garn (2000) re-tests the findings of Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt within a specific context of charter school policy in Arizona, thus providing an ideal framework and point of comparison for this study. His findings both confirm the importance of the four instrumental values as influences upon educational policy elites and develop a set of new conclusions related to the role of these values in shaping the policy process. Using interviews with Arizona policy elites (including board members and administrators from the two Arizona agencies that sponsor charter schools, individuals from the Arizona Department of Education, and legislators from both houses of the legislature), Garn attempted to answer the following key questions:

- What values were allocated⁸ during the development of charter school legislation?
- How were these values reflected in statute and through the working program?

Three major findings from Garn's work are particularly salient for this study. The first is that in contrast to Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt's findings, in which Quality ranked first and Choice ranked last among the instrumental values in the minds of policy elites, Garn found Choice to be one of two "favored values" in Arizona

that help explain the passage of that state's charter law and the expansion of the movement since that time. He found "surprising uniformity" among policy elites in Arizona with respect to value preferences, with the Choice and Efficiency values ranking most highly. The Choice value permeated the legislative proceedings and public relations campaign that led up to the passage of Arizona's charter law in 1994, and is "explicitly expressed" in the language of the statute itself by providing parents with an expanded range of options within the public school system that had not existed previously. Policy elites from all subgroups that Garn investigated – including the state board of education, department of education, and state legislature alike - expressed clear and unconditional support for the Choice value, and used this support to advocate for passage of the charter law itself as well as the subsequent expansion of the movement.

Concurrently, Garn found that the Efficiency value was reflected explicitly in the proceedings and results of the charter school legislative process. This was illustrated by policy elites' perceptions that vast amounts of money were spent on public schools with little or nothing to show for it (reflecting the *economic* dimension of the Efficiency value), as well as the belief that charter schools represented the best means of restoring accountability that had been lost to large and unresponsive public school bureaucracies (reflecting the *accountability* dimension of Efficiency). Policy elites from all subgroups that Garn investigated

⁸ This term is one used by Garn (2000) rather than being my own interpretation of his work. My understanding of how he uses this term is to refer to the ways in which different values were used and

were clear in their support for Efficiency, as they wrote into law specific provisions that reflected both its economic and accountability dimensions.

Quality and Equity, in contrast, were characterized by Garn as “forgotten values” in terms of influence on Arizona policy elites and the state’s charter policies.

Despite proclamations proponents that charters were created to create opportunities for educational excellence, Garn notes that this purported support for the Quality value is clearly usurped by Choice and Efficiency, in that no minimum standards for this “excellence” are spelled out by Arizona law. Instead, parents with children enrolled in charters, and not government, are empowered with the authority to judge whether Quality and Equity are being upheld.

Garn attributes the differences between his own findings and those of Marshall and colleagues on which values are held in the highest regard by policy elites to several factors. The most important, he notes, is the relatively stable political culture that characterized the single state in his analysis (Arizona), which stands in contrast to the varying levels of political stability that were present across the six-state sample used by Marshall *et al.* Arizona during the time of Garn’s analysis was dominated by a strongly conservative and traditionalistic policymaking context, with Republican dominance of the legislature and governor’s office for the better part of three decades (Elazar, 1984). This is significant, he argues, in that a conservative and traditionalistic philosophy is more likely to support Choice and Efficiency (both of which advocate less

distributed across Arizona policy elites with respect to political affiliation, etc.

governmental involvement) than Quality and Equity (which typically involve a greater role for government in the form of more programs, redirection of resources, and monitoring). Garn also attributes differences between his own findings and those of the Marshall study to timing, in that an increasingly conservative political environment characterized much of the U.S. during his own work in the 1990s, as opposed to a more balanced political situation during the Marshall study across a six-state sample during the 1980s.

A second major finding of importance from Garn's work is that previous assumptions regarding the relationships among the four instrumental values may be incorrect. More specifically, he challenges the contention of Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989), as well as the related work of Guthrie, Garms, & Pierce (1988), that certain values either *reinforce* or are fundamentally *in opposition to* one another as influences upon policy elites' views within the educational policy process. Marshall and colleagues argued, for example, that the Choice and Efficiency values are opposed to one another, and in fact make the case that Choice is opposed to all three of the other values. Efficiency, by contrast, reinforces both Quality and Equity (but opposes Choice), while Equity reinforces Efficiency (but is opposed to both Quality and Choice).

Garn's findings, however, challenge at least part of this interpretation in that he found Arizona policy elites to be supportive of both Choice and Efficiency *at the same time*. He attributes this to the two-dimensional nature of Efficiency: while

Choice is indeed opposed to the *accountability* dimension of Efficiency (in the sense that the state establishing a “one best system” set of regulations would leave little room for the exercise of choice), it is not at all opposed to the *economic* dimension of Efficiency (in that providing parents with choices among public schools will, at least in theory, require the schools to become more cost-effective). Arizona policy elites that Garn interviewed did not view Choice and Efficiency as mutually exclusive at all; to the contrary, they asserted (often by citing the U.S. automobile industry) that Choice *stimulates* Efficiency by forcing producers of goods and services to offer a better product.

A third major finding from Garn’s work was that differences among policy elites with respect to favored values in general, and charter school policy in particular, were closely related to political party affiliation, with Democrats (who were a numerical minority in Arizona) advocating for Equity and Quality while opposing charter policy, and Republicans pushing a mostly pro-Choice and pro-Efficiency agenda highlighted by charters. Democrats, Garn notes, made repeated attempts to inject Equity and Quality-driven provisions into Arizona’s charter school legislative process, which were quickly denounced by Republicans as attempts to defeat the intent of the legislation. Democratic efforts to make this type of modification failed, and Garn concludes that the law retained a strong reflection of the Choice and Efficiency values.

Specific Hypotheses Tested

Five hypotheses this research was intended to test included the following:

1. *The Choice value will have the highest mean score of all the four instrumental values in the minds of policy elites, followed (in order) by Efficiency, Quality, and Equity, with this pattern being largely consistent across each of the three domains (Program, Finance, and Organization/Governance).* This will hold true for each of the three different ways that elites' preferences will be measured:
 - a. Paired statements representing the four values, as used by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (Question 7 on the survey instrument; see Appendix B). For example, the total score for the Choice value as calculated by the nine statements representing this value (three each in Program, Finance, and Organization/Governance, as shown in Appendix F) will be higher than for the nine statements representing the other three instrumental values;
 - b. Preferences for each value against all others (Question 8); in other words, Choice will be chosen more often than the other three values in the forced-choice format used in Question 8;

- c. Rank-ordering of the four values as a group (Question 9); in other words, Choice will have the lowest rank-ordering value, signifying that it is the most preferred of the four instrumental values.

To the extent these hypotheses were supported by the data, they would more closely resemble those of Garn than those of Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, in that the Choice value has become so powerful, and so fundamental to other sectors of American life, that it enjoys widespread support among Michigan policy elites and has become difficult to refute. In this schematic, Quality and Equity are likely to emerge as the least important, or largely forgotten, values, although some policy elites are likely to continue advocating for them.

2. *At least some differences with respect to preferred values are likely to emerge both across and within the different “clusters” of policy elites postulated by Marshall et al and the five subgroups of respondents in this research.* For example, the “Near Circle” of elites was expected to be less supportive of the Choice value than the “Insiders” cluster of legislators, since the “Near Circle” includes teachers’ organizations such as the Michigan Education Association and should show the lowest level of support for Choice. To the extent that those within the “Near Circle” expressed support for Choice, furthermore, it was expected to be conditional, spelling out specific circumstances under which Choice could

be supported that were highly objectionable to the most devoted supporters of charter schools and school choice.⁹ It was also expected, however, that within each cluster would appear at least some variation; among the eight-member State Board of Education within the “Far Circle” cluster, for example, differences of opinion were predicted to emerge, perhaps along partisan lines.

3. *The value preferences of policy elites, both individually and as a group, are likely to show that some value pairs – in particular, Choice and Efficiency - reinforce each other in that they are supported simultaneously (e.g., I should find positive correlations emerging from policy elites’ ratings of these values), while other pairs – such as Choice and Equity – oppose one another (e.g., I should find negative correlations).* Marshall and colleagues, for example, argued that Choice and Efficiency oppose one another, while Garn’s work in Arizona found that these two values reinforce each other. The expectation was that Michigan elites would (among other possible value pairings) support Choice and Efficiency simultaneously, with Choice and Equity emerging as an opposing pair.

⁹ I expected that these conditions and caveats would best be measured by open-ended questions such as #6 and #17 on the survey instrument (see Appendix B). What I predicted would emerge from these questions is that policy elites from “educational establishment” organizations such as the Michigan Education Association and the Michigan Association of School Boards would indicate general support for school choice and charter schools, but would couch this support around a set of conditions they deem necessary. The MEA, for example, has developed a list of nine criteria (see <http://www.mea.org/design.cfm?p=505>) it believes are necessary “...to provide a high quality education while meeting the diverse needs of students.” Supporters of charter schools have argued that these criteria are the equivalent of the oversight and regulation that the charter movement was designed to offer an alternative to.

4. *The overall construct validity of using three distinct measures of value preference will be verified by statistical analyses showing that respondents who prefer certain values over others along one measure of preference (for example, the paired statements format used in Question 7) will prefer these same values using other measures of preference (the direct comparison format in Question 8 and the rank-ordering format in Question 9).* This research builds upon the work of Marshall and colleagues and Garn in that it measures the value preferences of Michigan policy elites using three different methods rather than just one. If the overall construct of using these three measures is valid, the value preferences of policy elites should not show substantial variation across measures.
5. *Preferences for values on the part of policy elites will be unevenly distributed in accordance with variables such as political party affiliation and the race/ethnicity and geography of elites.* Legislators and members of the State Board of Education, for example, were seen as likely to be split along partisan lines, with Republicans tending to favor Choice and perhaps Efficiency and Democrats more inclined than Republicans to support Equity. I also predicted, however, that Choice has become sufficiently entrenched as an affirming cultural value that those who identify as Democrats – and particularly Democrats from urban areas of the state such as Detroit - were unlikely to reject it completely. In a similar

manner, non-white policy elites were predicted to show greater support for Equity, although again not at the complete expense of Choice.

Sources of Data and Methodology

The primary source of data for this study is a survey of key informants, or “policy elites” (Hertz & Imber, 1995; Kingdon, 1995; Moyser & Wagstaffe, 1987; Scott, 1990; Wirt, Mitchell, & Marshall, 1985) who have participated in the formation of charter school policy in Michigan. A copy of the survey instrument appears as Appendix B. Policy elites from six groups (described below) comprise the target population because they represent the major and relevant “clusters” of elites identified by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) as having the greatest influence within educational policy. This is the same population utilized in studies by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) and Garn (2000), although the target population of Michigan policy elites involved in this study is larger. Whereas Marshall and colleagues and Garn both used samples of 20-25 respondents in the states they selected,¹⁰ the sample in this study consists of approximately 175 policy elites in Michigan.

Justification for a sample of this size is that it expands the Marshall and Garn studies by involving key policy elites that were not included in the previous studies. These include a broader range of interest groups (such as those

¹⁰ Marshall et al used a sample of approximately 140 respondents spread across the six states they studied, for an average of some 23 respondents per state.

representing business interests) that have had substantial involvement and input into educational policy, as well as new groups of actors not studied by Marshall and colleagues, such as Michigan charter school authorizers. This larger sample size is also based upon logistical considerations related to data collection methods. Whereas Marshall *et al* and Garn had both the time and resources to conduct in-depth, face-to-face interviews to complement their surveys of policy elites, the survey data for this study were collected by email or regular mail, complemented by telephone interviews with selected policy elites. In this way, a valuable contribution to the knowledge base is made by including a larger and more diverse sample of informants than has been used in prior research.

The sample of informants comes from six primary groups of policy elites identified by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) and Garn (2000) as important players in policy processes related to education in general and charter schools:

- 1) Current and former elected legislators from the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives: specific legislators of interests include formal leadership positions in both chambers, members of the Legislative Black Caucus, and legislators who introduced or cast key votes on charter-related bills from the 2003 legislative session.
- 2) Education-related subgroups within state government: also of interest are other agencies and units of state government having key input into, and oversight of, educational and charter school matters. Included here are

actors such as the Lieutenant Governor, the Michigan State Board of Education, and key administrators from the state Department of Education who oversee programs related to charter schools and school choice.

- 3) Education-related interest groups and professional associations: leaders from educational interest groups that have participated in the charter process are another group of respondents. These organizations represent constituencies that include associations of charter and private schools, school administrators (principals, school boards, business officers, etc.), teachers, higher education, and students with disabilities; also included are private, for-profit companies known as educational management organizations (EMOs) that manage many charter schools in Michigan.
- 4) Business, advocacy, and civic organizations: these actors, who have taken on an increasingly important role in formulating and influencing educational policy, are also of interest to this work. One subset consists of organizations representing business interests or organized labor; a second includes civic associations and coalitions of governmental entities; and a third consists of advocacy organizations that have been actively involved in school-related policymaking.
- 5) Charter school authorizers: administrators from the four types of public agencies authorized to issue and oversee charter schools in Michigan (public universities, community colleges, intermediate school districts, and local school districts).

- 6) Urban and minority advocacy organizations: state-level and/or local affiliate chapters of the NAACP and the National Urban League represent two of the many organizations that advocate specifically for the interests of urban areas and/or minority residents. Unfortunately, no responses were received from any of these organizations, leaving the sample with five groupings from which completed surveys were actually received.

A second source used to examine instrumental values within the policy process associated with charter schools consists of secondary documents. These include two key bills from the 2003 legislative session, along with the voting records of Michigan legislators and news coverage of these bills. Also included among secondary sources of data are public records from the Commission on Charter Schools, a group appointed by former Gov. John Engler and the Legislature in 2002 to study charters and develop recommendations for their improvement. Secondary sources serve a variety of research-related purposes, the most notable of which include identifying the presence of instrumental values embedded in policy proposals and linking the behavior of policy elites to their expressed attitudes regarding charters. Secondary documents also serve the purpose, as Garn (2000) notes, of providing background and contextual information, as well as a “check” on information obtained from elite surveys.

Contributions of the Dissertation

This study makes five principal contributions to the existing base of research.

The first is that it provides a re-testing of the important work begun by Marshall, Mitchell, and Wirt (1989) and later taken up by Garn (2000) regarding policy elites' views of the four instrumental values in educational policy. Examining policy elites' preferences for instrumental values (and combinations thereof) relative to others is a worthwhile research objective, as Marshall *et al* and Garn have shown, in that such preferences help explain the considerations that drive policy elites to advocate for certain policy options - and can be similarly helpful in predicting the future behavior of constantly-changing policymaking bodies such as the Michigan legislature. Additionally, this study expands upon that of Marshall and colleagues by performing significance tests of the differences between the mean scores assigned to the four values by Michigan policy elites.

A second contribution of this study involves its specific focus on Michigan, which was not included in the Marshall and Garn studies, and to my knowledge has not been targeted in any other similar research. Michigan, and more specifically the development of its charter school legislation and movement, offers an intriguing context for re-testing this work for several key reasons. A first is that Michigan has been one of the national "pioneers" in the school choice and charter school movements, having passed one of the nation's first charter laws (in 1993) that has resulted in the fifth highest number of schools in existence and the third

highest number of students enrolled in charters (Center for Education Reform, 2003).

Additional justification for studying the value preferences of policy elites in Michigan, both in a general sense and in relation to charter schools, is a political history and context that offers both similarities to and differences from those described by Garn in Arizona and Marshall and colleagues in their six-state sample. As was true of Arizona during the time frame that Garn studied, and several states (most notably Arizona and West Virginia) included in the Marshall study, the “critical mass” of support for charter school legislation in Michigan took place during a lengthy period of Republican dominance of state government. Elected in a political upset in 1990 and reelected by landslide margins in 1994 and 1998, former Republican Gov. John Engler was a vocal supporter of charters, and was supported in his efforts to pass charter-friendly legislation by Republican dominance of both houses of the Michigan legislature throughout much of his tenure. Engler was also aided by substantial support for charters on the elected state board of education (which, although technically a nonpartisan board, is highly political in that the two major parties nominate and fund candidates), as well as by his own appointees on boards of most of the state’s public universities (which have been active chartering agencies) and within the state Department of Education.

Unlike Arizona during the time of Garn's analysis, however, and in contrast to Arizona and West Virginia during Marshall *et al's* research, Michigan has recently witnessed somewhat of a political shift, in that a Democratic governor (Jennifer Granholm, the state's former attorney general) defeated Engler's longtime Lieutenant Governor (former Republican Rep. Dick Posthumus) in the gubernatorial election of November, 2002. The implications of this change in leadership at the highest level of state government in terms of charter school policy are still playing out, as the new governor and legislature have been primarily concerned with addressing unprecedented budget deficits. The point here, however, is that the presence of a Democratic governor, along with Republican control of both houses of the Michigan legislature and substantial legislative turnover, presents a political context that differs from that found in previous research on instrumental values. Precisely how this political context will ultimately impact the charter school movement in Michigan is unknown, but the presence of large budget deficits seems likely to become a factor, as Granholm and legislators spar over spending cuts to public schools, among other areas of the state budget. One possibility is that financial crises will cause legislators to be less supportive of certain values viewed as more costly (such as Quality and Equity) in favor of those that promote a climate of greater fiscal accountability (Efficiency and to a lesser extent Choice).

A third contribution of this study is that it investigates the value preferences of policy elites from both the public and private sectors. In this respect, it differs

from Garn, who looked exclusively at value preferences among public sector policy elites. It is similar to the approach used by Marshall and colleagues, who studied both public and private sector elites, but differs from the Marshall study in its explicit focus on Michigan. Using the single state approach obviously limits the cross-state comparison used by Marshall and colleagues permitted, but does provide an opportunity to compare Garn's recent findings in Arizona with the situation in Michigan, as well as a chance to make comparisons between different groups of Michigan stakeholders and policy elites.

A fourth contribution involves the focus of this study on values in educational policy within a specific context of charter schools. More specifically, it enhances the research base by examining relationships between Michigan policy elites' preferences in terms of instrumental values and their views on the state's charter school experiment. Charters as an educational phenomenon are clearly worthy of additional study due both to their numerical magnitude (e.g., the number of schools and students involved) and their prominent position within educational policy debates. The charter movement clearly represents a major experiment in educational reform, and one that is particularly significant for troubled urban school systems. Charters, and the values that fueled their establishment, are also significant in that they are viewed by some (both advocates and opponents) as merely one stop on the way to a more expansive system of public school choice led by vouchers and/or tuition tax credits for private schools. Vouchers have, in fact, been voted on in Michigan twice in the recent past, and while such

efforts have thus far been unsuccessful,¹¹ there will undoubtedly be others.

Research on Michigan policy elites' views of the Choice value and the charter movement thus can be considered a key predictor of future activity related to choice-based initiatives such as vouchers.

The fifth major contribution of this research involves testing the construct validity of using multiple methods to measure the value preferences of policy elites.

Whereas the research conducted by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) and Garn (2002) involved a single measure of value preference (a survey question which measure preference using paired statements representing the four instrumental values across three domains), the survey instrument employed for this dissertation involves three measures of preference: paired statements as described above in Question 7, a direct and forced-choice format in Question 8, and a rank-ordering format used in Question 9. Through the use of Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix (MTMM) correlations, the overall validity of using these three measures is tested.

Organization of Findings and Discussion

Following the preceding introduction to instrumental values in educational policy, charter schools, and the key questions and hypotheses that guide this research, the pages that follow present findings in two major sections. The first is an

¹¹ Michigan's two voucher initiatives in recent history, in 1978 and 2000, were defeated by large margins (74% to 26% in 1978 and 71% to 29% in 2000) (Wisconsin Education Association Council, 2001).

analysis of instrumental values as contained in four key public records and legislative proposals pertaining to charter schools: Michigan's original charter school law from 1993, the 2002 report of the Michigan Commission on Charter Schools, and two bills from the 2003 legislative session. The second major section, beginning with Chapter 3, presents findings from surveys and interviews of Michigan policy elites investigating their perceptions of charter schools and the values that have shaped their views on this important policy topic. Findings are discussed both for individual survey questions as well as in the form of noteworthy relationships between attitudes toward charters and key independent variables such as the political affiliation of policy elites and characteristics of their district/constituency. Analyses culminate with a review of findings in relation to key research hypotheses, and then conclude with considerations for future research in the area of instrumental values in educational policy and charter schools.

Chapter 2: Instrumental Values in Michigan Charter School Policy: Legislation and Reports

The following section uses four secondary sources related to charter school policy in Michigan – including three legislative acts and a state-commissioned report – to illustrate how instrumental values have influenced the formation of the state’s charter school policy. The first is the state’s charter law, originally passed in 1993 and amended to meet constitutional challenges in 1994. The second is a report issued by the Commission on Charter Schools in April 2002; the Commission was an eight-member group appointed by the Legislature and former Gov. John Engler to study charter schools and develop recommendations for their improvement. The final two sources are bills introduced during the 2003 session of the Michigan Legislature – House Bill 4148 and Senate Bill 393 - that proposed significant changes to the state’s existing charter law.

These four sources have been chosen because they illustrate how each of the instrumental values, both individually and in combination with others, has influenced the thinking of policymakers in formulating charter-related legislation and policies. In addition to examining specific ways in which the instrumental values are reflected in the four secondary sources, a brief history of each source is helpful in understanding their impact on the state’s charter school policies.

Michigan's 1993 Charter School Law

Michigan's original charter school law was passed in 1993 as one of the nation's first charter laws. The most basic elements of the law clearly promote the Choice value, whose primary objective is to make available - both to schools and to consumers of education - a wider array of options, as well as the ability to select one of these options. Michigan's charter law clearly works in support of this goal, as it provides both schools and parents with new autonomy. Schools are able, with certain restrictions, to operate largely as independent entities in choosing their own mission, curriculum, staff, and size; parents having access to and interest in these new schools are provided with an alternative to the "default" of their neighborhood school in the ability to select the best match for their child. The Choice value is also personified in Michigan's charter law in that a comparatively wide array of entities (including public universities, community colleges, and intermediate and local school districts) are allowed to authorize charters; in other states, a much narrower set of entities is permitted to authorize charters [Michigan Center for Charter Schools, 1994; Vergari & Mintrom, 1996].

In addition to its obvious promotion of the Choice value, Michigan's charter school law can also be understood as upholding Quality. This value is primarily concerned with realizing the best educational outcomes, typically through setting standards for student achievement and the allocation of public resources in pursuit of this goal. An obvious way in which Michigan's charter law upholds

Quality, as noted, is through its stated intention of improving the quality of public schools, both by establishing high-quality charters themselves as well as by improving traditional public schools forced to compete with charters. A second feature of the law which upholds Quality is the “charter” that prospective schools establish with their authorizing agency. In this document, the school spells out the standards it expects students to meet, the curricular means by which it will do so, and the measures (such as the Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests) that will be used as benchmarks. A third way in which Quality is upheld by Michigan’s charter law is through provisions requiring that charter school teachers be certified in the same manner as are their colleagues in traditional public schools (Arsen, Plank, & Sykes, 1999; Vergari & Mintrom, 1996).

Efficiency is also reflected quite clearly in Michigan’s charter law. This value has an *economic* dimension that seeks to minimize education-related costs while maximizing gains, as well as an *accountability* dimension that seeks to influence the exercise of decision-making authority in educational policy. The economic aspect of Efficiency is reflected in the funding mechanism of the 1993 charter law: for each student it attracted, a charter would receive *the lesser* of the per pupil funding level of the district in which the school was located or an amount roughly equal to the statewide average for per pupil funding (approximately \$5700 in 1993). Charter proponents emphasized that per pupil funding levels in most charters would be far less than in traditional public schools within districts such as Detroit, where most charters were predicted (correctly) to locate. In

addition to touting the quality that charters would provide, then, the charter law was pledging that these new schools would deliver a higher quality of education at a lower cost (Vergari & Mintrom, 1996; Carrasco & Summers-Coty, 2000; Arsen, Plank, & Sykes, 1999).

The accountability dimension of Efficiency is reflected perhaps even more strongly in Michigan's charter law than is the economic dimension. Indeed, accountability – most notably of schools and chartering agencies to students and parents – is arguably the foundation of the movement. The purpose of having prospective charters apply to a charter-granting entity, to begin, was to make the school's planners accountable for developing a mission, curriculum, and indicators for measuring progress, and also to make the authorizing agency responsible for ensuring that the school lives up to its promises. The state board of education also has an accountability role, as the charter law directs it to suspend the ability of authorizing agencies to issue more charters if it finds that they are not engaging in appropriate oversight of schools they have chartered. The law further stipulates that meetings of a charter school's governing board are subject to the state's Open Meeting and Freedom of Information provisions, both intended to ensure public access and accountability. As noted in the preceding discussion of the Quality value at work in Michigan's charter law, the law stipulates that the MEAP test or an alternative state-approved assessment must be used to measure the progress of students, and that this information must be made publicly available in the same manner as it would for a traditional public

school. Finally and perhaps most importantly, the law promotes accountability by empowering parents to choose schools for their children and to remove them if dissatisfied (Summers-Coty, 2003; Vergari & Mintrom, 1996).

Evidence of the fourth instrumental value, Equity, is also present in Michigan's charter law. This value involves the use of public resources to address perceived inequities in human needs, academic opportunity, or performance. Notable examples of how the law promotes this value include provisions that charters may not charge tuition nor discriminate in admissions decisions on the basis of race, economic status, disability, or academic performance. The Michigan Center for Charter Schools (1994) notes that these stipulations were written into the law in large part to quell suspicion that charters were intended to "cream off" affluent, white, and high-achieving students from traditional public schools. The law also requires that a charter school must abide by a court-ordered desegregation plan should such a plan exist in the school district within which the charter school is located. Desegregation, of course, is perhaps the best example of the Equity value in action, as it attempts to rectify inequality of educational opportunity and outcome that occurs along racial/ethnic lines by working toward a more even distribution of students (Arsen, Plank, & Sykes, 1999; Vergari & Mintrom, 1996).

The Commission on Charter Schools

In October 2001, the Michigan Legislature established a special commission charged with conducting a complete and objective review of charter schools in Michigan. This group, known as the Commission on Charter Schools (hereafter referred to as “the Commission”), was chaired by Michigan State University President M. Peter McPherson. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Watkins and six additional members appointed by key political leaders at the time also served on the Commission:

- Michael Addonizio, Associate Professor of Educational Policy, Wayne State University; appointed by then-Senate Majority Leader Dan DeGrow, R-Port Huron
- Lu Battaglieri, President, Michigan Education Association; appointed by then-Senate Minority Leader (and current Lieutenant Governor) John Cherry, D-Flint
- Sheri Thompson, charter school parent from Reed City; appointed by Speaker of the House of Representatives Rick Johnson, R-LeRoy
- Carmen N'Namdi, Principal of Nataki Talibah Schoolhouse (a Detroit charter school); appointed by then-House Minority Leader (and current Detroit mayor) Kwame Kilpatrick, D-Detroit
- Louann Bierlein Palmer, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, Western Michigan University; appointed by then-Gov. John Engler

- Richard McLellan, attorney for the Lansing law firm Dykema Gossett, P.L.L.C.; appointed by then-Gov. John Engler (Commission on Charter Schools, 2002).

Among the initial activities conducted by the Commission were two public hearings intended to provide a forum for testimony related to charters. The first was held in Detroit on December 11, 2002, and the second in Grand Rapids a night later. A complete transcript of each hearing is available from the Commission's website (Commission on Charter Schools, 2003a; 2003b); a sampling of the comments aired at these meetings provides a rich source of information regarding the competing values that have influenced the policy process related to charter schools. The analysis below provides a summary of selected remarks organized by each of the four instrumental values in educational policy.

The majority of those testifying, and by all appearances the majority of the audience at both sessions – and particularly the first one, held in Detroit - consisted of charter school founders, leaders, and parents. The dominant theme expressed in the comments of this group, which were frequently interrupted by applause from the audience, was unabashed support for the Choice value. A charter school principal noted (p.5) that among the “compelling reasons for creating charters” was “to give parents a broad range of choices within the public sector,” while another stated (p.8) that “...I am defending the belief that parents

should have the freedom to choose the public school that they want their child to attend” (Commission on Charter Schools, 2003a).

Subsequent comments from the Grand Rapids forum included the belief that “...The community should have the opportunity to make, and I believe that parents can make, informed [and] intelligent decisions about what is in the best interest of their children, and that’s why charter schools exist.” A charter school parent pleaded with the Commission to “...don’t put a stop to charter schools. Take the cap away, whatever we’ve got to do...I implore you not to stop it” (Commission on Charter Schools, 2003b:18).

In some cases, testimony in support of charters and the Choice value was fused with pro-Equity viewpoints. A Detroit charter school principal declared (p.9) that “...the civil rights movement of the 21st century is educational choice for our families, for our parents, for our children...,” and described his school (p.10) as “...getting children who are falling through the cracks...and changing their lives.” A Detroit charter school parent stated (p.34) that “...People with money have choices...what do you do if you haven’t got the funds? I think choice is the solution” (Commission on Charter Schools, 2003a).

Others testifying wrapped their support for Choice around the Quality value, making the case that having the former promotes the latter. A former state board of education member noted at the Detroit hearing (p.17) that “...we need

competition to promote quality,” while a current state board member commented that charter schools are “...a catalyst for change and innovation.” An administrator from Ferris State University noted (p.26-27) that his institution (which has authorized 16 charters) supports “...a lifting of the cap, but...within a system that assures quality, so that the public can be assured...a quality institution that provides a quality education.” An official from the Michigan Association of Intermediate School District Administrators stated at the Grand Rapids hearing (p.5) that ISDs “...do support quality charter schools,” but that “...if schools are going to be chartered in the future, it’s about quality. It’s not about quantity” (Commission on Charter Schools, 2003a; 2003b).

In addition to those whose testimony clearly advanced the Choice value, another subset of Grand Rapids forum attendees spoke *against* the accountability dimension of the Efficiency value, criticizing attempts to impose additional oversight and regulations on charter schools. A board member from the Michigan Association of Public School Academies, or MAPSA (the statewide association of charter schools) stated (p.7) that “...The call for more regulation and more control in Lansing, a gradual glacial movement forward, I see as an insidious effort to preempt our movement and assimilate us [into the system of traditional public schools] before the charter movement gets too well grounded.” Another administrator from MAPSA declared (p.11) that “...You cannot regulate public schools to success and improvement...[we must] reduce the regulatory burden on charter public schools” (Commission on Charter Schools, 2003b).

Among the few comments made by those who questioned or opposed the charter movement, the dominant themes were calls for increased accountability and performance on the part of charters, reflecting the Efficiency and Quality values. A traditional public school administrator urged the Commission (p. 3) "...not to lift the cap [on university-sponsored charters] until issues of accountability have been resolved...despite demand, quality must be the prevailing consideration." An official from the Michigan Federation of Teachers noted (p.4-5) several studies that found low levels of achievement among charter school students, and used them to raise the question of "are charter schools as a whole doing a better job educating our children? I think in most cases the answer is no." The Equity value was also raised by skeptics of the charter movement, as evidenced by accusations that charters do not adequately seek to serve certain students, such as those with disabilities. An administrator from the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals noted at the Grand Rapids hearing, for example (p.5), that "...What is most troubling [about the charter movement] is that [targeted enrollment efforts] can be done by not offering services needed by certain groups. It seems especially true in the area of special education..." (Commission on Charter Schools, 2003a; 2003b).

After months of research, deliberation, and testimony received via mail, email, and at the two public hearings, the Commission issued its report in April 2002. Following a brief history of charter schools in Michigan and a summary of the

state's charter law, the bulk of the Commission's report is organized around a series of recommendations that are grouped into five major areas:

- Academic standards
- Operation, governance, and accountability
- Special education
- The "cap" on the number of university-sponsored charters
- Research

It is perhaps most useful to analyze the recommendations of the Commission in accordance with the instrumental value or values they reflect. The Choice value, to begin, is clearly advanced by the recommendation that the "cap" on university-sponsored charters be raised, although other values (namely Equity) are also reflected in this recommendation. To review briefly, Michigan's original 1993 charter law established no limit on the number of schools that could be authorized. In response to concern over the disproportionate share of schools that were being authorized by public universities, however, the Legislature in 1996 amended the law to limit the total number of charters authorized by universities to 150, with no single university allowed to authorize more than half (or 75) of the total number of university-sponsored charters. The 150-school limit was reached in 1999, and given the relative lack of chartering activity among the other three types of entities eligible to issue charters (community colleges, intermediate school districts, and local school districts), growth in the state's

charter movement virtually halted after 1999. Raising the cap on university-sponsored charters quickly became a hot political topic, with numerous proposals over the past several years to do just that (see for example, Durbin, 2002; Harmon, 2000; Christoff, 1999), but no real progress in this direction had occurred by the time the Commission was meeting in late 2001 and early 2002.

Responding to pressure to raise the cap, the Commission upheld the Choice value by recommending that the number of “conventional charters” (e.g., those which did not plan to serve predominantly or exclusively at-risk students) which could be authorized by “institutions of higher education with statewide jurisdiction” would be raised by 5 in 2002 and by 10 in each year from 2003 to 2007, for a total of 55 potential new schools (p.22-24). The “institutions of higher education with statewide jurisdiction” language was intended to distinguish public universities from community colleges, which would continue to be restricted to authorizing charters only in their geographic district. This terminology was also significant in terms of how it applied to Bay Mills Community College, a tribally-controlled institution in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula that had created controversy by using a perceived “loophole” to authorize charters in Bay City and Pontiac, outside of its district.¹² The Choice value is also represented in the

¹² Michigan’s charter school law places no limit on the number of charters that can be issued by community colleges, other than stipulating that these institutions cannot authorize charters outside their own geographic boundaries. However, Bay Mills Community College, one of 29 American Indian institutions of higher learning in the nation, differs from the other 26 community colleges in Michigan in that it is authorized and charged by statute with serving Native American students across the state. Bay Mills leadership used this authority to issue, starting in 1999, charters for several schools outside its geographic district in the Upper Peninsula, including sites in Bay City and Pontiac, and argued that it could continue to do so anywhere in the state with the exception of Detroit (Bell, 2003; Christoff, 2003). Following an

recommendation that two or more charter schools be allowed to form a joint high school for their students.

The Commission's use of the term "conventional charter" in its recommendation for more charter schools is also significant. This is because it advances the Equity value by differentiating for the first time between "conventional" and "special purpose" charter schools, with the latter intended to serve disadvantaged student populations. The Commission recommended that in addition to the 55 potentially new "conventional charters," up to 15 special purpose schools per year could be established over the five-year period from 2003-07. A special purpose charter would be defined as one whose enrollment consisted of at least 50% students who: were abused or neglected; were below grade level in reading or math; were pregnant; were eligible for free or reduced price school lunches; had "atypical behavior or attendance patterns;" had a family history of school failure, incarceration, or substance abuse; had MEAP test scores not at the satisfactory level; or qualified for special education services. The Commission further recommended that beginning in 2008 and continuing for ten years, any charters issued by institutions of higher education with statewide jurisdiction could only be for special purpose charter schools (Commission on Charter Schools, 2002:22-23).

opinion issued by Michigan Attorney General Jennifer Granholm in September 2001, the ability of Bay Mills to issue charters statewide was generally upheld (Commission on Charter Schools, 2002).

The Equity value also emerges in the Commission's recommendations regarding special education services in Michigan charter schools. Specifically, the report states the Commission's belief that "it is essential that students with disabilities are encouraged and welcomed to enroll and be educated in all charter schools" (p.17), and calls for intermediate school districts (ISDs) to be required to assist charters in providing special education services in the same manner that ISDs do for traditional public school districts. It is also recommended that ISDs, working in conjunction with charter-authorizing agencies, be required to ensure that charter school personnel, including board members, are adequately educated regarding federal and state requirements for special education (p.17-18).

The Commission's report also reflects the Equity value in a third key way, in the form of several recommendations governing the admissions process for charter school students. Responding to concerns that some charters may not be advertising themselves in a manner that ensures a fair admission process for all students – particularly those with disabilities – the Commission recommended that charter schools be required to demonstrate to their authorizing agency that they have made "reasonable effort" to market themselves in "the expected area from which students might primarily be drawn," and "make special efforts" in marketing themselves to students with disabilities (p.14). The report also calls for additional research on charter schools, with one area of interest being how disadvantaged and special education students are being served in charters.

The Quality and Efficiency values also emerge from recommendations contained in the Commission's report. In the section on academic standards, for example, the report notes that the group "strongly supports the concept of uniform academic standards and uniform systems for measurement for all public schools... (p.7)." This provision reflects the dimension of the Quality value that emphasizes the establishment of standards and the use of indicators to measure progress toward such standards. A commitment to Quality is also evidenced by the Commission's call for annual testing for all charter school students in reading and math in grades 3-8 (p.7). The Quality value also appears in the report's call for additional research regarding Michigan's charter schools, with particular attention devoted to student performance (p.25-26).

The Commission's call for additional testing and reporting of test results also reflects the accountability dimension of the Efficiency value, as the purpose of this recommendation is for test results to be used as a way of holding schools accountable for their performance. The Commission also called for additional authority to be granted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction with respect to monitoring charter schools; specifically, the report recommends that the Superintendent be given the authority to establish a certification process for authorizing agencies and to revoke the chartering authority of any agency that fails to conduct adequate oversight (p.9-11). Authorizing agencies, in turn, were to develop a process for holding the governing boards of the schools they charter accountable for student performance, finances, and management (p.11-12). The

accountability aspect of the Efficiency value was also evident in the Commission recommendation that charter school boards must adequately disclose any potential conflict of interest related to management companies with which they contract, the release of public information such as finances, personnel information, and open meetings laws (p.12-13).

Similar to the two public hearings and the recommendations contained in the report itself, the aftermath of the report's actual release in April 2002 illustrated the intense competition between the instrumental values as influences upon charter school policy. Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Watkins, one of the Commission's eight members, refused to sign the report, stating his belief that the proposed increases in the number of new charters was "too much, too soon," and that the state needed to learn more about how well charters work before allowing new ones (Terlep, 2002). Watkins' prerogative, in other words, was that the accountability dimension of Efficiency had been overshadowed by an emphasis on the Choice value, in the form of the Commission's recommendation to raise the cap on university-sponsored charters.

A second illustration of the conflicting values contained in the Commission's report came in an exchange of press releases issued by interest groups with competing views of charter schools. The Michigan Education Association, whose president, Lu Battaglieri, was a member of the Commission, praised the report, and was particularly supportive of the recommendations that emphasized the

accountability aspect of the Efficiency value. Battaglieri noted that “We believe the package [of recommendations] in its entirety is good public education policy...it puts quality, accountability, and the best interests of Michigan students first. We hope the Legislature does the same.” In clear deference to the accountability dimension of the Efficiency value, Battaglieri also noted that “...If the Legislature accepts all of the Commission’s recommendations, charter school growth will be limited and monitored...we will have all the checks and balances necessary to ensure that charter schools follow the rules and exist first and foremost to educate students – not to make money for authorizers or private management companies” (Michigan Education Association, 2002).

A very different view of the Commission’s report was put forth by the pro-charter school group The Center for Education Reform (CER), based in Washington, D.C. In brief, this organization rejected the Commission’s recommendations that advanced the accountability dimension of the Efficiency value, arguing that these provisions already exist in Michigan charter schools, and that the sole recommendation of value in the report was the Choice-driven provision for more charter schools. In a press release, the organization termed the Commission a “politically-appointed body” that made “misleading and inconsistent conclusions.” The press release noted that the Commission included MEA President Battaglieri and Addonizio from Wayne State University, “...which while authorized to do so has only chartered one school” (p.1). CER President Jeanne Allen decried the Commission’s recommendation for enhanced accountability provisions,

particularly the vesting of greater power in the state superintendent, noting that "...if control at the state level were the solution to public school accountability, all of Michigan's public schools would be thriving" (p.2). In its conclusion, the CER press release dismissed the Commission as being "...politically motivated by special interests for whom charter schools create pressure, and [motivated] against parents whose demands for better education has resulted in 61,000 children attending charter schools in Michigan...The Commission report should be dismissed..." (p.4) (Center for Education Reform, 2002).

The report of the Commission on Charter Schools is significant in a number of ways, most notably the fact that it provides rich evidence of the competing instrumental values that influenced the important work of this group. The recommendations contained in the Commission's report, as well as the public hearings and reactions that accompanied it, provide illustrative examples of how the four values – both individually and at times in combination with one another – compete for influence upon the policymaking process associated with Michigan's charter school experiment. The report of the Commission is also significant, as will be discussed below, in that the recommendations it made proved to be very influential in terms of two key charter school-related bills introduced after the report's release, during the 2003 session of the Michigan Legislature.

Key Charter Bills from the 2003 Legislature: HB 4148 and SB 393

Beginning soon after the passage of Michigan's charter school law in 1993, numerous attempts to change this important legislation have been introduced, debated, and in some cases voted on during sessions of the Michigan Legislature. The following section analyzes two parallel charter school-related bills introduced during the 2003 session of the Michigan legislature – House Bill 4148 and Senate Bill 393 – for evidence of the four instrumental values and how they have influenced the policy process involving charter schools. The language contained within these two bills, as well as votes cast by individual legislators, provides an illustrative source of information regarding the values that have shaped the policy debate.

An overview of HB 4148 and SB 393, featuring a summary of their intent, a brief history of proposed amendments and votes, and analysis that focuses on the instrumental value or values that they promote, appears below. It should be noted that while numerous bills related to Michigan's charter law have been introduced in previous sessions of the Michigan legislature, the focus in this research will remain on these two key bills from the 2003 session. This is due to the fact that legislators who introduced and voted on charter-related bills from sessions prior to 2003 are in many cases no longer in office due to term limit restrictions and other forms of attrition. It should also be noted that while at least three other bills specifically related to charter schools were introduced during the

2003 legislative session, they did not advance beyond the Education committee in their respective legislative chamber.¹³

House Bill 4148

House Bill 4148 was introduced on February 5, 2003 by Rep. Brian Palmer, Republican from the 36th District in Macomb County and Chair of the House Education Committee. The key provision of this bill in its original form, which reflects and even eclipses one of the major recommendations made in the Commission on Charter Schools report, advances the Choice instrumental value by *eliminating altogether* the “cap” on the number of charters that may be authorized by public universities. The Choice value is also epitomized in three additional provisions of HB 4148, the first two of which reflect recommendations made in the Commission report (Hunault, 2003; Bailey, 2003):

- *Establishment and clarification of a new chartering entity:* HB 4148 proposed that an “institution of higher education with statewide jurisdiction” which is recognized under the “federal Tribally Controlled Community College Assistance Act” be officially allowed to issue charters on a statewide basis, as it had been doing under a perceived “loophole” in the state’s charter law described previously. This entity was understood to be Bay Mills Community

¹³ A large number of bills pertaining to public education in general –including those related to school funding - are typically introduced during each legislative session, and many of these have direct and obvious implications for charter schools. My own analyses, however, will focus on proposed legislation that specifically and directly targets charters.

College, the tribally-controlled institution located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (Hunault, 2003; Hunault & Martens, 2003).

- *Creation of joint high schools:* HB 4148 proposed to permit two or more charter schools to operate a joint high school without the issuance of a new contract - and, significantly, without counting against the cap on university-sponsored charter schools already in existence (Hunault, 2003).
- *Allowing community colleges to authorize charters in Detroit:* Michigan law forbade community colleges from issuing charters for operation in a school district of the "first class" (or one with 100,000 or more students, the only one of which is Detroit); HB 4148 advanced the Choice value in proposing to eliminate this provision (Hunault, 2003; Hunault & Martens, 2003).

HB 4148 also contained provisions which promoted instrumental values other than Choice, however. The Efficiency value, and its accountability dimension in particular, were advanced by the following two proposals:

- *Oversight responsibilities for chartering agencies:* One of the major criticisms of Michigan's existing charter law, as identified in several evaluations (see, for example, Horn & Miron, 1999; Arsen, Plank, & Sykes, 1999; Khouri *et al*, 1999) and addressed in recommendations contained in the Commission report, is that it did not adequately define the oversight responsibilities of charter-granting agencies, nor did the state provide any subsequent guidelines or resources for this purpose. HB 4148 attempted to address this

perceived shortcoming by stipulating that authorizing agencies must provide oversight that is sufficient to (a) ensure compliance with the school's charter itself as well as all applicable state laws; (b) hold the charter school board accountable for meeting performance standards specified in its contract; (c) conduct its admission process in a fair and open manner; and (d) ensure that the school maintained and released all appropriate data (Hunault, 2003).

- *Due diligence and reporting requirements for educational management companies (EMOs):* A substantial majority of Michigan's charter schools (estimated to be at least 70%) have entered into contracts with educational management organizations, or EMOs, of a for-profit or non-profit nature to manage some or all aspects of their operations. This practice has been both praised as a means of introducing greater efficiency into school operations and criticized for reducing public accountability, especially as pertains to finances. HB 4148 proposed to address these concerns by requiring that all charters entering into new contracts with EMOs must (a) conduct sufficient due diligence into the EMO's educational expertise and management experience; (b) obtain independent legal counsel in all negotiations with the EMO; and (c) provide the school's board with all financial and other information pertaining to state reporting requirements (Hunault, 2003).

The Equity value, finally, was upheld in the following provision of HB 4148:

- *Encouragement of more schools for dropouts:* HB 4148 encouraged authorizing agencies to issue more charters for schools targeted at students who had dropped out of school (Hunault, 2003).

Following its formal introduction in February 2003, HB 4148 was referred to the House Education Committee for consideration. The committee made one significant revision to the bill: rather than eliminating the cap on university-sponsored charters altogether, the cap would rise by 50 schools a year for seven years, up to a maximum of 500 charters. This change reflects a more restrained promotion of the Choice value than the original version contained, and was likely made in order to counter anticipated criticism that the original bill was slanted toward the promotion of unrestrained Choice. On March 20, when HB 4148 was introduced to and debated by the full House, eight additional amendments for which information regarding sub-amendments and voting records are available were offered and voted upon. An analysis of each amendment in accordance with the main value or values it promotes – or in some cases opposes - appears below. As is true of the language in the original bill, these proposed changes to the bill provide illustrative examples of the competing values promoted by their backers, as well as the manner in which political party affiliation was generally – but not always – correlated with certain values (Hunault, 2003).

The first amendment, introduced by Rep. Doug Spade (Democrat from the 57th district in and around Adrian in southeastern Michigan), sought a nearly complete

transformation of the original intent of HB 4148. Spade's proposal would have restrained the Choice-laden expansion of the charter movement by removing entirely the language pertaining to the increase in the number of university-sponsored charters. Reflecting an Equity perspective, Spade's amendment would also have required charter schools to accept all students living in the school district in which they are located, just as traditional public schools must do, rather than holding a lottery if the number of applicants exceeded the school's desired size. This amendment failed on a 60-44 vote, with five representatives not voting. All 42 Democrats who voted supported the bill, along with two Republicans (Rep. Mike Pumford from the 100th district in Newaygo County near Big Rapids and Rep. John Stewart from the 20th district in the northwest suburbs of Wayne County); the remaining 60 Republicans all voted against Spade's amendment (Michigan Votes, 2003a).

A second amendment, offered by Republican representative (and Education Chair) Palmer, offered a somewhat reduced – yet still vigorous – promotion of Choice in establishing the proposed new cap on university-sponsored charters at 30 new schools per year for 10 years, for a total of 300 new schools in addition to the current 150 university-sponsored charters. Rep. Aldo Vagnozzi (Democrat from the 37th district representing Farmington and Farmington Hills in suburban Detroit) countered Palmer's proposal with a series of stipulations advancing the accountability dimension of Efficiency by requiring more rules for charter-granting agencies. When this amendment, with its contrasting support of Choice

provisions offered by Palmer and Efficiency provisions advanced by Vagnozzi, was called to a vote by the full House, it failed on a 59-48 vote. All 45 voting Democrats were joined by three Republicans (Pumford, Stewart, and Rep. Doug Hart of the 73rd district in northern Kent County near Grand Rapids) in voting yes while the 59 remaining Republicans voted no (Michigan Votes, 2003b).

Rep. Andy Meisner, Democrat from the 27th district in Oakland County in suburban Detroit, introduced a third amendment to HB 4148 that would have eliminated provisions in the original bill allowing charter schools to borrow and bond. Meisner's proposal can be interpreted as advocating restraint for the Choice value in that it would have limited the ability of charters to act like traditional public schools by raising funding for construction and operations. The amendment failed on a 61-45 vote, with all 44 voting Democrats joined by Republican Pumford with yes votes and all 61 remaining Republicans voting no (Michigan Votes, 2003c).

The fourth amendment, offered by Rep. Hoon-Yung Hopgood (Democrat from the 22nd district representing Taylor and Romulus in suburban Detroit), opposed the Choice values clearly reflected in the original version of HB 4148 by eliminating the provision allowing the establishment of joint high schools by two or more existing charters. This amendment failed on a 61-46 vote, with all 45 voting Democrats joined again by Pumford in voting yes and the remaining 61 Republicans voting no (Michigan Votes, 2003d).

Pumford himself then introduced two amendments to HB 4148. The first ostensibly supported the Choice value in that it proposed to eliminate the cap on university-sponsored charters altogether, as had Palmer's original version of the bill, but added an important and very much anti-Choice caveat: that the electors in a school district must vote to approve any new charters within their district. It stands to reason that Pumford was well aware that such public votes on charter school establishment would be unlikely to succeed in many, if not most, circumstances due to divided public opinion on charters as well as opposition that would almost certainly be mobilized by local school districts and teachers' union locals. This amendment failed on a 58-48 vote, with all 45 voting Democrats plus Republicans Pumford, Stewart, and Rep. Charles LaSata (from the 79th district in and around Benton Harbor and St. Joseph) voting yes and the remaining 58 Republicans voting no (Michigan Votes, 2003e).

Pumford's second amendment, which also had the effect of opposing the Choice-driven provisions contained in HB 4148, proposed a more restrictive funding mechanism for charter schools that would have reduced the state aid received by most charters. This vote failed on a very close 53-51 vote, with 44 Democrats plus nine Republicans - Pumford, Stewart, LaSata, and Hart, in addition to Clark Bisbee (from the 64th district in Jackson County), Sandy Caul (from the 99th district in and around Mount Pleasant), Larry Julian (from the 85th district in Shiawassee County between Lansing and Flint), Jerry Kooiman (from the 75th district in Grand Rapids), and Scott Shackleton (from the 107th district in and

around Sault Ste. Marie) – voting yes. A total of 52 Republicans voted no, and were joined by a lone Democrat, Joseph Rivet of the 97th district representing Clare, Gladwin, and a portion of Bay counties (Michigan Votes, 2003f).

The eighth and final amendment to HB 4148 before the final vote was taken was offered by Republican Rep. LaSata. It promoted the accountability dimension of the Efficiency value by proposing to prohibit for-profit educational management organizations (EMOs) from operating charter schools, instead restricting the involvement of EMOs to nonprofits. LaSata's amendment failed on a 59-48 vote, with all 45 voting Democrats plus Pumford, Stewart, and LaSata casting yes votes and all 59 remaining Republicans voting no (Michigan Votes, 2003g).

Following the votes on the eight proposed amendments, the final House vote on HB 4148 was called on March 20. Reflecting Rep. Palmer's approved amendment, the language in the bill promoted the Choice value in raising the cap on university-sponsored charters by 30 per year for ten years, to a maximum of 450. Charters authorized by Bay Mills and any other community college would be included in this cap, but community colleges would be allowed to authorize charters in Detroit. With these decidedly pro-Choice provisions, the bill passed by a 56-51 vote, with all 56 yes votes coming from Republicans. All 45 voting Democrats cast "no" votes, and were joined by six Republicans, including three (Pumford, LaSata, and Stewart) who had consistently voted with Democrats in opposing the Choice-driven values contained in the eight proposed amendments

to the bill. Three additional Republicans – Lauren Hager from the 81st district in and around Port Huron, Bruce Caswell from the 58th district in Hillsdale County, and Gary Woronchak from the 15th district in Dearborn – also voted no. The bill was then sent to the Senate, where it was officially received on March 25 and referred to that chamber's Education Committee. Upon arrival in the Senate, HB 4148 essentially died, as key Senate leaders were in the process of formulating their own charter bill – SB 393 – as discussed below (Michigan Votes, 2003h).

A number of interesting observations regarding instrumental values can be made from looking at voting records related to HB 4148 and the legislators who introduced amendments to this bill. Regarding the votes themselves, perhaps the most obvious, although hardly surprising, finding, is the near-unanimity along party lines, as only a smattering of Republicans – and not a single Democrat – broke party ranks on any of the seven amendments for which voting data are available, nor for the bill's final vote. Of particular interest was the fact that no Democrats from Detroit or any of the state's other urban areas voted for any of the "charter-friendly" provisions that advance the Choice value. This is intriguing in light of the fact that support for charters and Choice has been shown to be highest among urban and minority residents,¹⁴ in addition to the fact that several key mayors – including current Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick – have supported the establishment and expansion of charters in their cities. This apparent

¹⁴ Recent commentary on charter schools and school choice has investigated the extent of support these new forms of education enjoy from various subgroups within the general population. A general trend emerging from this body of work (see, for example, Olson, 2002; Shokraii, 1996; Lacayo, 1996) is that

discrepancy between the votes of urban legislators at the state level and the wishes of a substantial portion of their constituents would appear to be an excellent example of the power of party unity in modern-day politics, a phenomenon which Kingdon (1995) and others have argued may be especially true among parties (such as Democrats in both houses of the 2003 Michigan Legislature) that are in the minority and seeking to hand their majority counterparts a political defeat.

Democratic unity on HB 4148 can also be viewed through the observation that the Michigan Education Association - not to mention four other non-education unions, three local school districts, seven intermediate school districts, and four interest groups representing traditional public schools - all testified in opposition to the bill.¹⁵ All of these organizations, of course, are strong supporters of traditional public schools and generally skeptical of charters, and have in some cases been prolific donors to Democratic politics. The MEA, for example, was listed by the Michigan Campaign Finance Network (2002) as the third largest political action committee in Michigan in terms of 2002 giving, trailing only the House and Senate Republican Campaign Committees, respectively, with virtually all MEA donations going to Democrats. The MEA's opposition to charters as

support for charters and choice is typically at least 10 percentage points higher among African Americans than whites.

¹⁵ In addition to the Detroit chapter of BAEU, other organizations listed by the House Legislative Analysis Section as testifying in favor of HB 4148 included the Michigan chapter of the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the Michigan Manufacturers Association, the Michigan Association of Public School Academies, and five charter schools from around the state (Hunault & Martens, 2003).

they currently exist¹⁶ and as proposed in HB 4148 is well-documented, and it stands to reason that the organization conducted a substantial amount of lobbying to secure Democratic unity in advance of the votes on HB 4148.

The four Democratic representatives who offered amendments to HB 4148 – Spade, Hopgood, Meisner, and Vagnozzi - are also an interesting lot. While all are from southeastern Michigan, including three from Detroit-area suburbs, none represents any portion of Detroit itself – despite the fact that the major provisions of the bill are intended, either directly or indirectly, to impact Detroit more so than any other school district in the state. Also of interest is the fact that three of the four Democrats (Hopgood, Meisner, and Vagnozzi) are legislative newcomers, having been elected to the Legislature for the first time in November, 2002.

Several observations can also be made regarding Republicans who broke party ranks in joining Democrats to oppose the Choice-driven provisions of HB 4148 and its amendments. A total of 12 GOP representatives broke party ranks in voting with Democrats on at least one of the amendments and/or the final vote on HB 4148. Among these 12 legislators, Pumford was the most obvious Republican maverick, voting with Democrats on all eight occasions; on two of

¹⁶ The official position of the MEA with respect to charter schools has evolved over time, reflecting an ongoing compromise between the organization's desire to safeguard the interests of its public school constituencies and the political reality that charters are likely here to stay. In the earliest stages of the charter debate, as legislation was being proposed back in 1993, the MEA's outright opposition to the concept was clear. Following passage of the law and the subsequent growth of the charter movement, however, the organization has gradually changed its tactics from outright opposition to "opposition by condition," in which it proclaims general support for charters, but only under a series of conditions – most of which are bitterly opposed by charter advocates, who claim that any charters operating under all of these conditions would have few, if any, differences from traditional public schools.

these votes, in fact, he was the only Republican to side with Democrats.

Pumford was followed, in decreasing order of GOP defections, by Stewart (6), LaSata (4), and Hart (2), and then by Bisbee, Caul, Caswell, Hager, Julian, Kooiman, Shackleton, and Woronchak (one GOP defection each). Republicans who voted in opposition to at least one of the Choice-driven amendments to HB 4148 or the final bill itself are spread around the state, including districts that are primarily rural in nature (Julian, Pumford) as well as those that include urban and suburban areas (Bisbee, Kooiman), and have legislative tenure ranging from less than a year in office (Caswell, elected in 2002) to three-term legislators (Pumford, Bisbee, Caul, Hager, Hart, Julian, LaSata, Shackleton, and Woronchak) who will be term-limited out of office in 2004.

Perhaps the most interesting observation regarding the 12 Republican representatives who opposed the most obvious manifestations of the Choice value contained in HB 4148, however, is that five of them list a close connection to public education (not counting being graduates of public schools or having children enrolled in them) as part of their "bio" that appears on the Michigan House of Representatives website. Pumford's bio notes, for example, that he has 27 years experience as a high school teacher, counselor and basketball coach at Newaygo High School (having taught high school government for 22 years), and is a member of the School Improvement Committee and the Basketball Coaches Association of Michigan (Michigan House of Representatives, 2004a). Caswell lists employment with North-Adams Jerome

High School, Onstead Community Schools, and Pittsford Area Schools on his bio, as well as memberships in various athletic booster clubs and coaches' associations (Michigan House of Representatives, 2004b). Hager had a 35-year career as a special education teacher before entering the Legislature (Michigan House of Representatives, 2004c).¹⁷ Hart's bio indicates that he was a middle school teacher before working in his family's business (Michigan House of Representatives, 2004d). LaSata, finally, has a wife who is an elementary school teacher (Michigan House of Representatives, 2004e).

The fact that these five legislators all have a close connection to public education may in itself not be meaningful, as it is too small a number to draw any conclusions from. It may also be the case that some Republican representatives who did not vote with Democrats in opposing Choice-driven provisions of HB 4148 also have close personal connections to public education. However, given Crano's (1995) observation that vested interests can lead to the formation of comparatively strong attitudes that are in turn more predictive of behavior than instances in which no such vested interest exists, the involvement of these five Republicans in public education, along with their opposition to at some of the Choice-driven provisions contained in HB 4148 or its proposed amendments, is at a minimum an interesting fact.

¹⁷ In addition to his opposition to charter-friendly amendments to HB 4148, it is worth noting that Hager, as a member of the House Education Committee, was the only Republican member of that committee to vote against SB 393 after it had been passed by the Senate and sent to the House; the bill passed the committee by a 12-8 vote.

Senate Bill 393

Shortly after HB 4148 had been passed and sent to the Senate, a parallel bill containing a number of similar provisions (and reflecting several key recommendations of the Commission on Charter Schools) was introduced in the Senate. SB 393, introduced on April 23, 2003, was given the title of the “Charter School Oversight and Accountability Act” by its primary sponsor,¹⁸ Sen. Wayne Kuipers, Republican from the 30th district comprising Ottawa and a portion of Kent counties near Grand Rapids in western Michigan and Chair of the Senate Education Committee. In the process of being introduced, amended, and voted on, this bill would prove to be among the most contentious legislative proposals of the 2003 session, and led to an intriguing power struggle involving the newly-elected Democratic governor, the mayor of Detroit, legislative Republican leaders, and heavyweight educational interest groups such as the Michigan Education Association (Michigan Legislature, 2003).

The most significant provisions of SB 393 are those that support the Choice value. Specifically, the bill directly advanced Choice through the following stipulations (Summers-Coty, 2003):

- Increasing from 150 to 450 the total number of charter schools that can be authorized by public universities (this figure was later reduced by a substitute

¹⁸ Eleven of Michigan’s 22 Republican senators from the 2003 legislative session are also listed as co-sponsors of SB 393 (Michigan Legislature, 2003).

amendment to 350, with the cap rising by 20 schools each year beginning in 2003 to a total of 350 in 2012)

- Allowing community colleges to authorize charter schools in Detroit (although charters authorized by Bay Mills Community College would be counted toward the limit on university-sponsored charters, rather than as schools authorized by community colleges)
- Permitting public universities to authorize up to five new charters at the high school level each year for the next five years (up to a total of 25) that would not count toward the cap on university-sponsored charters
- Allowing two or more existing charter schools to form a joint high school that would not count against the proposed five-school limit on new charters at the high school level
- Allowing two or more existing charters to form a joint high school that, if the schools seeking to form the joint high school were chartered by a public university, did not count against the cap on university-sponsored charters.

In addition to direct manifestations of Choice that pertain to establishing more charters, SB 393 also advanced the Choice value through two stipulations related to the financing of charter schools (Summers-Coty, 2003):

- Allowing charters to count in their membership (and thus receive state funding for) a limited number of students (up to 5% of total enrollment) who were enrolled in a distance learning format; these students (pursuant to pending

HB 4719) must meet certain criteria such as being physically unable to attend a school due to health reasons or having been expelled

- Permitting charters to issue bonds: the primary significance of this provision is that while charters would still not have taxing authority, they would very likely gain decreased capital costs through increased borrowing flexibility (Summers-Coty, 2003).

Yet another provision in the bill advanced Choice in conjunction with Equity (Summers-Coty, 2003):

- Permitting, in addition to the 25 new university-sponsored charter high schools and the joint high schools described above, the creation of up to 15 “urban high schools academies,” also authorized by universities, that would be operated within the boundaries of the Detroit school district; language in the substitute amendment made clear that these schools would be financed by wealthy Detroit-area businessman and philanthropist Robert Thompson.¹⁹

Completing the range of values incorporated by SB 393, two provisions of the bill also promote the accountability dimension of Efficiency (Summers-Coty, 2003):

¹⁹ The specific language stipulates that in order to be chartered by a public university, an urban high school academy would need to demonstrate a financial commitment to construct or renovate the facilities that the school was to occupy (Summers-Coty, 2003). Prior to this time, retired road construction executive Robert Thompson had pledged to donate \$200 million for the establishment of new high schools in Detroit that would reduce dropout rates (Heinlein & Hornbeck, 2003; Christoff, 2003).

- A requirement that authorizing bodies hold a charter school's board of directors accountable for the school's academic performance
- A requirement that a charter school's board of directors make available to the public information regarding its membership, operation and management, financial standing, teacher salaries and certification, and health and safety.

After receiving Kuipers' version of SB 393, the Senate Education Committee made two amendments to the bill: the proposed cap on university-sponsored charters was reduced from 450 to 350, and the ability of Bay Mills Community College to authorize charters statewide was effectively removed by proposing to count charters issued by this institution as part of the university-sponsored total. On June 19, 2003, the full Senate passed this version of the bill by a 21-16 vote that fell strictly along partisan lines, with all 21 voting Republicans casting "yes" votes²⁰ and all 16 Democrats voting no (Michigan Votes, 2003i).

Following its passage in the Senate, SB 393 was sent on June 19 to the House, which in March had passed its own charter bill (HB 4148) that essentially died as the Senate took up 393. The House Education Committee reported SB 393 back to the full House without amendment. Following a series of negotiations and compromises, the provision allowing for 25 new charter high schools was removed, but the stipulation for the 15 new high schools in Detroit (which had

²⁰ One Republican senator, Ron Jelinek (R-Three Oaks in Berrien County), was excused from voting on SB 393 on June 19 (Michigan Votes, 2003i). Although the reason for Jelinek's absence is not known, it is interesting to note that his biography describes 30 years as a teacher in the River Valley School District (Michigan Senate, 2003)

become known as the “Robert Thompson schools” remained. The full House passed the bill by a 57-50 vote on July 17, 2003; all 47 voting Democrats, as well as three Republicans (Pumford, Stewart, and Woronchak) cast “no” votes, while 57 Republicans voted yes (Michigan Votes, 2003j).

After passage in the House, SB 393 was sent back to the Senate, as the removal of the 25 new high schools constituted a different version than had been passed by the Senate in its June 19 passage of the bill. The Senate unanimously rejected, by a 29-0 vote, the House-passed version of the bill, sending it to a joint House-Senate conference committee to work out differences. This committee, appointed by Senate Majority Leader Sikkema, consisted of himself, Republican Sen. Kuipers (the sponsor of the original bill), and Democratic Sen. Bob Emerson of Flint. The conference committee made no changes to the House-passed version of the bill, however, and referred it back to the full Senate for a vote – still containing the provision for the 15 new high schools in Detroit – on August 13, the last day before the Legislature’s summer recess. Along straight party lines, the bill passed by a 22-16 vote; all Republicans were in favor and all Democrats were opposed (Michigan Votes, 2003k).

Public comments following the August 13 Senate vote on SB 393 provide a rich and illustrative source of information regarding the instrumental values that motivated legislators’ votes on this bill. One theme voiced by African American senators from Detroit invoked the accountability dimension of the Efficiency value

in calling for local control over school-related decision-making in Detroit, free of outside (read: white) influence. Comments to this effect equated SB 393 with the 1999 takeover of the Detroit school system led by then-governor John Engler and Republican legislators; in this action, the elected Detroit school board was replaced by a seven-member board appointed by the mayor of Detroit and the governor. The takeover was bitterly opposed by Detroit's legislative delegation and many in the city, who viewed it as an unwarranted intrusion by the Legislature into the affairs of the predominantly black Detroit school system (Christoff, 2003). A related theme from comments on SB 393 also questioned whether the expansion of the charter school movement was the best way to promote Quality. In explaining his "no" vote on SB 393, African American Detroit Sen. Samuel "Buzz" Thomas had this to say:

"...I don't understand why this legislative chamber can't respect the wishes of the folks who are elected to serve and represent that community in question [Detroit]...We are telling you there is not the appropriate local accountability to make this work... Simply imposing another mandate on Detroit is not going to...make the dream [of high-quality education] a reality for all of Detroit kids... so let's not delude ourselves into believing that this is the savior of education...I support charter schools...I want to be able to support charter schools, however...in a way that allows my community and people from my community with kids in those schools to participate, and this simply is not the answer" (Michigan Votes, 2003).

Another African American senator from Detroit, Brenda Scott, echoed Thomas's comments, and did so in a manner that questioned philanthropist Thompson's motives in donating the funding for construction of the 15 new charter high schools. Scott declared that

"...I am really concerned that this Mr. Thompson is so concerned about our children in the Detroit area. If he wants charter schools, why doesn't he open

them up to all the cities in this state? Detroit can take care of its own. We don't need a Mr. Thompson coming in...Charter schools have not done all that they should do...I have asked that we be given back...our right to vote...[but] we are ready to reconsider this and to tell Detroit what they have to do." (Michigan Votes, 2003m).

A third African American senator from Detroit, Irma Clark-Coleman, stated that

"...When I look at this bill, it reminds me of...when the so-called [Detroit school board-related] reform efforts were jammed down the throats of the people of the city of Detroit. I don't see this [SB 393] as being any different...This Legislature - I should say a certain group of legislators - decided what was best for Detroit ...Don't sit there and vote for something for our district when you don't know what we want. We don't do that to your districts, so why should you do it to ours? Mr. Thompson should...see what the community wants...Don't sit there... and [then] say 'this is what's best for you.' How would you feel if someone did that to your community? (Michigan Votes, 2003n).

Clark-Coleman also attacked what she viewed as the lack of appropriate accountability provisions in SB 393:

"...this bill does nothing to address accountability for our current charter schools...[it] does not follow the recommendations of the McPherson [Commission on Charter Schools] report...[which stated] that additional oversight is needed if the Legislature increases the number of charter schools. So what is this about?" (Michigan Votes, 2003n).

On the other side of the political aisle, key Republican legislators voiced support for competing values in seeking to frame SB 393, as they had with previous attempts to create and expand charter schools, as a decision between a failed status quo (Detroit's traditional public schools) and a new alternative (more charters) that promised all four of the instrumental values. Passage of SB 393 would promote Quality and Equity by creating additional opportunities for Choice in Detroit, proclaimed Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Grandville):

“...I have heard today...what we are against. It is time to say what we are for, and we are for opportunity. This is an opportunity of a lifetime...for good schools in the city of Detroit...One of the great criticisms that I have heard [of charter schools] for many years...is that there are so few high schools. This initiative...proposes to locate 15 high schools in the city of Detroit where the emphasis of those high schools is on graduation and higher education. How can we possibly be opposed to that? [The Granholm administration has] basically challenged this body and the Legislature to produce a good charter bill that gives opportunity to children. We are doing that today for the children of Detroit...” (Michigan Votes, 2003o).

Sikkema also sought to blunt Democratic criticism regarding SB 393 that it would further undermine the accountability dimension of the Efficiency value in Detroit by creating even more schools whose governing boards weren't popularly elected. To make this point, he reminded his colleagues that parents, and not elected officials or state bureaucrats, would have ultimate oversight responsibilities in deciding whether the new schools were doing their job. In effect, Sikkema attempted to use anticipated demand on the part of Detroit parents for new charters to discredit the claims of Thomas, Scott, and Clark-Coleman that Detroiters were more interested in restoring local control than in having high quality choices in education. He stated that

“...I just heard that this legislation is opposed by everyone from the city of Detroit. Well, if that is true, then no one will enroll in any of these...schools. I suspect, though, that the truth is different...I suspect this is opposed by the political establishment in...Detroit for their own, largely political reason. Time will prove to us that it is not opposed by [Detroit] parents...I am willing to wait and see the truth of that matter...I will remind you again that no one in Detroit will be forced to send their children to these schools; that will be up to them. I have heard that there is no oversight. That isn't true. This legislation puts these high schools, like any charter school under, the authority and the oversight of an authorizing body in this state” (Michigan Votes, 2003o).

Sen. Nancy Cassis, Republican from the 15th district in western Oakland County, added this:

“...With all due respect, before us today are two options: to continue to support a failing status quo, or to welcome a new day of hope for parental and student choice in a city resurrecting itself. For me, the choice is choice” (Michigan Votes, 2003p).

The aftermath of the passage of SB 393 in August quickly became one of the top political stories of 2003, with a series of events over the course of some two months illustrating the complexity of the issue and the values and politics that influence it. Prior to the bill's approval, Democratic Gov. Granholm had sent somewhat mixed signals regarding her views of its provisions. She had indicated support for charters (and the Choice value) in general, but initially pledged to veto SB 393 on the grounds that it did not include sufficient accountability measures (Efficiency) to oversee the new charters it proposed to create (Higgins; 2003; Christoff, 2003). Granholm's spokesperson also indicated that the bill's support for Choice went too far in its failure to limit the statewide chartering authority of Bay Mills Community College (Heinlien & Hornbeck, 2003).

Philanthropist Thompson's support for Choice was clear, but he also sounded the Efficiency (accountability) value by rejecting the idea that his new charters be overseen by the Detroit school system; Thompson also let it be known that he was considering walking away from the deal in order should he be contacted by other Midwestern cities (Bell, 2003). Detroit teachers, predictably, lobbied intensely against Choice and the Thompson deal, charging that it would compromise Quality in their city by hurting existing schools and offering false

hope only to a select few students (Pratt & Christoff, 2003). In mid-September, as negotiations between the governor and legislative Republicans continued to avert a Granholm veto, news stories indicated that Thompson had given nearly \$900,000 to Republican candidates in elections of 2001 and 2002, making him the largest independent political contributor in the state (Christoff, 2003).

In the midst of an increasingly acrimonious process, a deal was announced on September 16 following meetings between Senate Majority Leader Sikkema, House Speaker Rick Johnson, and Granholm. The gist of the compromise was that 125 new university-sponsored charters would be allowed (upholding Choice), in addition to the 15 Thompson-funded high schools in Detroit (Equity); schools authorized by Bay Mills would be subject to the cap on university-sponsored charters (restraining Choice to some extent), and enhanced accountability measures for charters would be enacted (Efficiency). Additional provisions promoting Efficiency and Equity while restraining Choice somewhat were that the Detroit school board would return to being an elected body; all new charter schools would be required to have at least one board member from the community in which it was established; schools authorized by community colleges (including Bay Mills) would count against the university-sponsored cap; and the state would provide some reimbursement to school districts that lost students (and funding) to charters (Christoff, 2003).

Just a few days later, however, the deal was off. Detroit Mayor (and former Representative) Kwame Kilpatrick, Detroit Public Schools CEO Kenneth Burnley, and members of Detroit's legislative delegation protested that they had shut out of negotiations between Granholm and legislative Republicans, and stated that the city's Lansing delegation should decline Thompson's money unless the new charters were authorized by the Detroit district. Granholm then called off the deal, sending the bill back to the Legislature. Kilpatrick proclaimed that "...The debate over school reform [in Detroit] has been hijacked..." While Granholm declared that Sikkema and Johnson had attempted to revise the deal they had made by inserting language that would allow for more charters than had been agreed upon (a charge dismissed by Sikkema), the Republican leadership blasted Granholm for letting Kilpatrick determine charter policy. Detroit had to cancel classes for a day when nearly half of the district's teachers went to Lansing for a rally to protest SB 393 (Elrick & Bell, 2003; Christoff, 2003; Bailey, 2003; Pratt, 2003; Hoffman, 2003).

As Granholm and legislative Republicans traded accusations in the press, the issue abruptly became moot when Thompson withdrew his \$200 million that was to have financed the 15 new charter high schools in Detroit. In a released statement, Thompson noted that he had become "...disappointed and saddened by the anger and hostility that has greeted our proposal." Detroit Mayor Kilpatrick proclaimed to not be saddened "because I know there is another day," and mimicked a goodbye wave during a televised town hall meeting in response to

his own rhetorical question of what Thompson should do if "...he can't abide by the rules." Senate Majority Leader Sikkema lamented that while Thompson had merely wanted "...to make a contribution...to help the City of Detroit...people kept throwing roadblocks in front of him." Detroit Sen. Irma Clark-Coleman stated that "...Detroiters are distrustful of any legislation that comes down from Lansing that is only meant for Detroit," and said she felt "disrespected" when Sikkema and Johnson left Detroit legislators out of negotiations. A *Detroit Free Press* editorial lamented the "bumblers" whose actions led to the disintegration of the deal, including Kilpatrick's "dismissive posture" and "politicization in Lansing" between Granholm and Republican leaders (Pratt, 2003; Christoff & Pratt, 2003; *Detroit Free Press*, 2003).

Summary

Each of the four public records and legislative acts discussed in this section provides an illustrative source of information regarding the competing values that have influenced the policy process associated with Michigan's charter schools. The state's original charter law, passed in 1993, introduced Choice as a large scale guiding principle in public education for the first time, but also promoted aspects of the other three values. The 2002 report of the Commission on Charter Schools was significant largely through the recommendations it made, particularly those that advanced Choice by calling for additional charters to be authorized by public universities. This recommendation became perhaps the key

component of HB 4148 and SB 393, which were among the most publicized and contentious bills of the 2003 legislative session. In the end, no legislative changes were made during the 2003 session, but the charter issue is one that almost certainly will reemerge in upcoming sessions due to pent-up demand for additional charters and disagreement over which values should be upheld most strongly by charter legislation.

Chapter 3: Data Collection Process and Response Rates

This chapter describes the process used to select the sample of respondents for the research involved in this study, the different subgroups of respondents that were contacted, and the response rates of results of the subgroups in terms of completed surveys received.

Selection of Sample and Data Collection Process

The following subsection of discussion describes the process used to select and contact the sample of respondents who received and completed the survey on instrumental values and Michigan charter school policy.

Description of Sample Selection Process

A sample of more than 200 potential respondents for the survey was initially identified based upon their status and involvement as policy elites involved in education and charter schools. Respondents were identified in a variety of ways. Legislative leaders, including formal leadership positions and education committees in both legislative houses, were identified from State of Michigan websites, as were leaders of well-known education-related interest groups. The names of other prospective respondents came from newspaper or journal articles

related to charter schools or educational policy from daily monitoring of sources such as the *Detroit Free Press* and *Lansing State Journal*.

From the initial list of over 200 respondents, some were eliminated in order to obtain a reasonably balanced and representative sample. Approval of the list of respondents and the survey instrument was granted by the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) in October, 2003. The first actual contact with 171 potential respondents occurred in early October. Policy elites were sent an information form (a copy of which appears as Appendix C) describing the nature of the study and advising them that the survey itself would be sent shortly. Contact information for respondents, including email addresses and/or telephone numbers, was obtained in most cases from websites. The majority of respondents were contacted via email, while a much smaller group was contacted using regular mail due to lack of available email address. Several potential respondents, upon receiving the information form, identified another person within their office or organization that the survey should be sent to, while seven people indicated that they preferred not to complete the survey due either to time constraints or a lack of knowledge or interest regarding charter schools.

Approximately ten days after receiving the information form, the sample of 171 potential respondents received the survey itself. Those that did not return a completed survey within 10 days to two weeks were sent an initial "reminder" message, which was followed by a second reminder approximately 10 days to

two weeks after the first. A third and final reminder message was sent out about a week after the second, or around November 20. All three reminder messages contained another copy of the survey in the event the respondent had misplaced earlier versions. Each of the respondents who ultimately completed the survey received a brief thank-you message.

Description of Potential Sample

The sample of 171 potential respondents can be divided into six major groupings, as described below.

A. Current and Former Legislators

The largest numerical group of potential respondents was the 73 current legislators who were invited to participate in the survey. They include the five members of the Senate and 19 members of the House Education Committees, the 11 formal leadership positions in the House and 20 formal leadership positions in the Senate, the 20 members of the Legislative Black Caucus (who come from both legislative houses), and 13 legislators who either introduced or proposed amendments to two key bills related to charter schools taken up during the 2003 legislative session (Senate Bill 393 and House Bill 4148; see discussion in “Legislative Summary” section). Several legislators belonged to more than one of these subgroups (e.g., a senator could be on the Education Committee

and also be the Majority Floor Leader and/or a member of the Legislative Black Caucus); thus the totals of the individual subgroups described above add up to more than 73. Instructions to legislators indicated that a knowledgeable member of their staff was welcome to fill out the survey on their behalf, but there is no indication based upon names voluntarily provided on most of the completed surveys that this actually happened.

In addition to current legislators included in the sample, records from the 2002 legislative session identified several legislators who had introduced or been prominently involved in charter-related bills during the 2002 legislative session, but were no longer in office for the 2003 session for reasons that included term limits and retirement. Reliable contact information for five former legislators was found, and after contacting each of them by telephone and/or email, three surveys were sent.

The perspective of a few key former legislators was of interest for several reasons. First and foremost, these were legislators who, prior to not running for office or being term-limited out of office between 1998 and 2002, had participated in the debate over passage of Michigan's original charter school law in 1993 and 1994, as well as numerous proposed and actual changes to the law. As such, they had a unique and valuable perspective that was of interest for this study. An additional reason for contacting ex-legislators was a recommendation from a current legislator who made a comment to the effect of "you should talk to former

Senator X, who really played a key role in developing that legislation.” As it turned out, an additional (if somewhat unplanned) benefit of seeking out former legislators was that they proved much more willing to provide their thoughts, and to do so in a candid manner, than did current legislators, for possible reasons discussed in more detail below.

B. Education-related subgroups within state government

A second major grouping of 15 prospective respondents consisted of agencies, departments, and individuals within state government that have been involved in the formation of educational policy and/or charter schools. One sub-category within this group was the office of the Lieutenant Governor, who was contacted with the (ultimately incorrect) thought that this office would be more likely to respond than the Governor’s office. A second sub-category was the Michigan Department of Education, in the form of the State Superintendent, and staff from the department that oversee charter schools and other school choice programs. A third sub-category was the State Board of Education, with its eight elected members. The fourth and final sub-category includes five of the eight members of the Commission on Charter Schools, a working group appointed jointly by then-governor John Engler and the Legislature in October 2001 to study charter schools and develop policy recommendations for their improvement.

C. Education-related interest groups and professional associations

A third group of prospective respondents included 25 leaders of interest groups and professional associations that are directly involved in education and/or charter schools. These organizations represent a diverse range of constituencies within education, including associations of charter and private schools, school administrators (principals, school boards, business officers, etc.), teachers, higher education, and students with disabilities. Also included in this group were two private, for-profit companies known as educational management organizations (EMOs) that have received contracts to manage many charter schools in Michigan and other states.

D. Business, advocacy, and civic organizations

A set of 22 organizations under a broad category of business, advocacy, and civic organizations is the fourth major group of prospective respondents. Included in this group are organizations whose interests are not exclusively in education, but have significant interest and involvement in education-related issues such as school reform and charter schools. One subset of this group consists of organizations that represent business interests or organized labor, a second includes civic associations and coalitions of governmental entities, and a third consists of advocacy organizations that have been actively involved in school-related policymaking, research, and charter schools.

E. Charter School Authorizers

A fifth and final grouping of prospective respondents consisted of representatives from the four types of public entities that authorize and oversee charter schools in Michigan: public universities, community colleges, intermediate school districts (ISDs), and local school districts. The Michigan Department of Education has published a list of 26 entities, including eight public universities, three community colleges, 11 ISDs, and four local school districts that had authorized at least one charter school as of June 2003, and 25 of these were contacted. I was unable to locate an appropriate contact person for the 26th authorizer, a district in the Detroit metropolitan area that was known to be experiencing significant difficulty due to financial issues and a potential state takeover. The eight public universities had authorized by far the highest number of charter schools listed as being in operation in June 2003, with 148 (or nearly 75% of the state total of 200). The 11 ISDs had authorized a total of 28 schools (14% of the state total), while the three community colleges and the four local school districts had each authorized 12 schools, or 6% of the state total (Michigan Department of Education, 2003).

F. Urban and Minority Advocacy Organizations

The sixth grouping of prospective respondents was to have included state-level and/or local affiliate chapters of the NAACP and the National Urban League,

which are two organizations that advocate specifically for the interests of urban areas and/or minority residents. Four local chapters of the NAACP and three local NUL affiliates were in fact contacted, as was the state-level leadership of the NAACP, for a total of eight prospective respondents. Unfortunately, no responses were received from any of these organizations, leaving the sample with five groupings from which completed surveys were actually received.

Throughout the process of selecting potential respondents and monitoring their rates of survey completion, one methodological issue that arose was whether a minimum number of responses were required in order to accurately reflect the views of the larger population of that subgroup (all legislators or charter school authorizers, for example). This was a particularly salient issue for current legislators given the small response rate among this group, discussed and shown below in Table 2. A related question was whether views expressed by any subgroup of respondents – with legislators again serving as a good example – were meaningful given that survey and opinion research has found that some respondents, particularly those who are elected and/or have multiple constituencies to which they are accountable, often find it difficult to give honest and candid views on controversial topics (see, for example, Tetlock, Peterson, & Lerner, 1996; Babbie, 1995).

Upon further consideration of these two issues, several decisions were made. Regarding response rates and a possible minimum number of completed surveys

from any one subgroup, it was decided that no such minimum threshold should apply, and that all responses – including those of current legislators, who had the lowest response rate – would be included in the reporting of findings. Part of the rationale for this decision is that all completed surveys add something to the overall analysis in terms of providing larger numbers of countable responses as well as diversity of opinion, as no two respondents viewed issues regarding charters and the instrumental values in the exact same way.

Additionally, preliminary analysis of several key variables showed that excluding the nine legislators who completed the survey (six current and three former, not counting a 10th legislator who answered only portions of the survey) made little difference in terms of shifting most major findings in any discernable direction. Among the nine legislators who completed surveys, five were Democrats and four Republicans. In terms of concerns regarding and support for charter schools (Questions 1,3, and 5 on the survey; see Appendix B), the nine were fairly evenly divided in their opinions, and also were not appreciably different from the overall sample of respondents in terms of rank-ordering of the four instrumental values (Question 9). As such, removing legislators from the analyses made little, if any, difference with respect to many of the most significant variables in the analysis. A possible exception here is Question 7; differences between legislators and other respondent subgroups on this question are discussed in Chapter 4. The fact that legislators were somewhat different from other subgroups on this question, however, only validates the decision to keep legislators in the analysis,

because uncovering these kinds of differences would be impossible if legislators or other subgroups were excluded. As it turned out, the *number* of completed surveys received from the five respondent subgroups (see Table 2) turned out to be distributed fairly evenly, even if their *response rates* differed.

Regarding the extent to which the responses of any subgroup can be generalized to the larger population they represent, and the potential problem of respondents not being able to give honest answers due to wanting to please multiple constituencies, this is acknowledged as a possibility. It does not, however, appear to be an issue that is unique to any specific subgroup; rather, it could potentially affect most, if not all, subgroups within this study, as well as survey research in general. Legislators may indeed have been reluctant to provide honest answers in an attempt to satisfy their multiple constituencies (voters, interest groups, their colleagues, etc.), but this same argument applies, for example, to charter school authorizers, who are accountable (at a minimum) to the schools they have chartered (which are free to approach other chartering entities), to the State Board of Education (for paperwork and compliance with regulations), and to legislators and the governor (who make the laws that authorizers must follow). As such, potential difficulties in terms of respondents not being able or willing to provide honest responses is acknowledged as a limitation of this research, but not one that warrants the exclusion of any subgroup of respondents more so than others.

Completed Surveys and Response Rates

A total of 51 completed surveys were received from the 171 respondents who were sent a copy of the survey, for an overall response rate of 29.8%. The response rate improves substantially, however, to almost 50% if current legislators – who proved not nearly as likely as other subgroups to respond to the survey, for reasons discussed below – are excluded. In addition to the 51 completed surveys, two other respondents declined to complete the survey itself, but did provide a number of insightful comments regarding charter schools that are included in Chapter 6.

Approximately half of the 51 surveys received came via email, with just less than half received by regular mail and the remainder by fax. Among those received via regular mail were four in which the respondent declined to identify himself/herself and the postmark does not permit positive identification of the sender.²¹ Telephone conversations were also held with six current and former legislators in which open-ended survey questions and other topics of interest related to charter schools were administered. An analysis of key findings from these telephone interviews appears in the “Telephone Interviews with Current and Former Legislators” section.

²¹ In addition to the four surveys returned via regular mail in which the respondent declined to self-identify, a number of respondents who returned their surveys by email also declined to identify themselves. In the email cases, however, I had the benefit of knowing who the respondent was by using their email address; accordingly, I have included responses from these “unknown” email surveys in the analysis of survey data.

Embedded within the overall response rate are substantially different rates among the five major groups of policy elites, as shown in Table 2. Current legislators comprised the largest numerical group of potential respondents who were sent surveys (73), but had the lowest overall response rate (with seven completed surveys, for a response rate of 9.6%). Several explanations for the low rate of response among current legislators are known. One is that several legislators or their staff members explicitly stated that their office has a standing policy against completing surveys. Time constraints are undoubtedly another explanation, as legislators clearly have many demands upon their time. The timing of the survey may have been particularly unfavorable in retrospect, as it came prior to the holiday season during prolonged deliberations over Michigan's budget shortfall and other important end-of-session business. Aside from explanations related to time, many legislators may seek to avoid taking a public stand on complex and divisive issues such as charter schools beyond what is required by the casting of votes. Methodological issues related to the survey, such as perceptions that it oversimplified the charter school issue and forced respondents into false choices (see Babbie, 1995; Allan & Skinner, 1991; Rossi *et al*, 1983), might also explain the reluctance of current legislators to respond.

Regardless of reason, response rates for current legislators were clearly low in comparison with other subgroups. However, when current legislators are subtracted both from the number of potential respondents (171 - 73) and from the number of responses received (51 - 6 + the four "unknown" surveys + the two

respondents who did not complete the survey itself but did provide comments on charter schools), the overall response rate rises to 48.0% (see “Total C” in Table 2). The growing body of recent research on email surveys and response rates seems to indicate that this is a good rate of return; a meta-analysis of 49 email surveys conducted by Cook, Heath, & Thompson (2000), for example, revealed an average response rate of 39.6% (see also Shannon & Bradshaw, 2002).

Table 2: Response Rates among Respondent Subgroups

Respondent Subgroup:	Potential Respondents (survey sent)	Responses Received	Response Rate
Other Government:			
State Board of Education	8	4 ¹	50.0% ¹
Commission on Charter School	5	2 ²	40.0% ²
Other	2	1	50.0%
<i>Subgroup total</i>	15	7	46.6%
Interest Groups	25	11	44.0%
Charter School Authorizers:			
Public Universities	8	3 ³	37.5% ³
Community Colleges	3	2 ⁴	66.7% ⁴
Intermediate School Districts	11	5	45.4%
Local School Districts	3	1	33.3%
<i>Subgroup total</i>	25	11	44.0%
Business/Advocacy/Civic	22	9	40.9%
Legislators:			
Current	73	7	9.6%
Former	3	3	100.0%
<i>Subgroup total</i>	76	10	13.2%
Urban/Minority Advocacy Groups	8	0	0.0%
Total A (not counting 4 “unknown” surveys)	171	47	27.5%
Total B (counting 4 “unknown” surveys)	171	51	29.8%
Total C (excluding current legislators, including 4 “unknown” surveys and 2 “general”)⁵	98	47	48.0%

¹ Four members of the State Board of Education completed the survey in its entirety, of whom three chose to identify themselves and one (who was one of the four “unknown” respondents) preferred not to. Additionally, a fifth board member did not complete the survey due to time constraints, but did provide insightful comments of a general nature on charter schools.

² Two Commission members completed the survey and identified themselves. Additionally, it appears from the way in which survey questions were answered that the second of the four “unknown” respondents who completed the survey but elected not to identify himself/herself may have been a Commission member. This possible respondent is not counted as a third response received within this subcategory.

³ Three public universities submitted completed surveys, and it appears that a fourth (which was not counted here) was the third of the four “unknown” surveys.

⁴ Two community colleges returned completed surveys, and it appears that the third (which was not counted here) was the fourth and final “unknown” respondent.

⁵ The two “general” respondents are those that did not complete the survey itself, but provided general comments regarding Michigan educational policy and charter schools.

Regarding response rates among former legislators, all three ex-legislators who were sent a copy of the survey returned it, for a response rate of 100% among this very small subgroup. While it is difficult to compare response rates among current and former legislators due to the very small number of the latter, one explanation for the apparent willingness of former legislators to share their thoughts on charters is that no longer being in office (and thus directly accountable to various voting constituencies) makes these former public figures less reluctant to share views on controversial issues. A telephone conversation was held with one of the remaining two former legislators, who was very cordial but indicated despite being listed as a sponsor or co-sponsor of several key bills related to charter schools, he actually didn't know much about the topic and thus preferred not to complete the survey.

Among the subgroup of 15 respondents who were either employed by or associated with agencies of state government other than the Legislature, seven returned completed surveys, for a response rate of 46.6%. Responses were received from the Michigan Department of Education, elected members of the State Board of Education, and the Commission on Charter Schools.²²

²² Commission chairman Peter McPherson was not contacted, and a survey was completed by other personnel from the Michigan Department of Education on behalf of Commission member Tom Watkins, State Superintendent for Public Instruction. The eighth member of the Commission, Michigan Education Association President Lu Battaglieri, was contacted as a representative of an education-related interest group.

Officials from eleven of the 25 organizations representing education-related interests and professionals responded to the survey, for a response rate of 44.0%. It was somewhat surprising and disappointing that one of the interest groups that did *not* respond was the Michigan Education Association, given its intense involvement and interest in charter school policy, but a completed survey was received from an educational management organization (EMO) that operates several charters across the state.

Among the 22 organizations that represent Michigan business interests, civic associations, and advocacy/research groups, nine leaders returned completed surveys, for a response rate of 40.9%. Of interest is that many responding organizations within this subgroup are headquartered and involved in southeastern Michigan (and Detroit specifically); given the importance of the Detroit metropolitan area in the economy of Michigan and the concentration of charter schools in and around Detroit, these represent ideal organizations from which to seek input on charters.

The overall response rate among charter school authorizing agencies was 44.0%, although there were notable differences between the four types of authorizers. Response rates were highest among community colleges, followed in order by ISDs, public universities, and local school districts.

Summary

From an initial sample of more than 200 potential respondents, 171 Michigan policy elites were contacted and sent surveys for this research. The sample consisted of five distinct groups of respondents: current and former legislators; education-related subgroups within state government, including the State Board of Education and Commission on Charter Schools; interest groups involved in educational policy; business, advocacy, and civic organizations; and charter school authorizers. A sixth subgroup, urban and minority advocacy groups, was also sent surveys, but none were returned.

The overall response rate was 29.8%, although it is nearly 50% if current legislators (who were the largest numerical group of respondents, at 73, but had the lowest response rate, at 9.6%) are excluded. Four of the five groups of respondents had response rates of at least 40%, and the number of completed surveys received each group was fairly equal, including 11 each from interest groups and charter school authorizers, ten from current (7) and former (3) legislators, nine from business/advocacy/civic groups, and seven from governmental agencies, for a total sample of 51 completed surveys. In addition, two respondents who declined to complete the survey provided comments related to charter schools, and six respondents who completed surveys were also interviewed by telephone to elaborate upon issues of values within educational policy and charter schools.

Chapter 4: Summary of Major Findings

This chapter, which presents major findings from completed surveys, is divided into four main sections. The first presents a “profile” of respondents in accordance with several key variables. These include the political affiliation of respondents as well as key characteristics of their districts or constituencies in terms of geography, political tendencies, and race/ethnicity. The second section investigates the extent of respondents’ involvement, or “personal stake,” in education-related activities and organizations. Together, the first two sections establish a basis for subsequent analyses by providing key independent variables for examining attitudes toward charter schools and instrumental values.

The third section explores the core research objective of this study by examining respondents’ comparative preferences for, and definitions of, the four instrumental values in educational policy. This analysis uses three distinct measures to assess Michigan policy elites’ preferences for the four values in direct comparison with one another. It then examines the extent to which respondents’ own definitions of the four values agree with ways in which they have been defined and operationalized in previous research. Independent variables from the first two sections are used to help explain differences in respondents’ preferences for the four instrumental values, as well as ways in which findings differ from those of Marshall *et al* and Garn.

The fourth section describes respondents' views of several key issues K-12 education that are significant in the debate over charter schools, as well as their assessment of charters themselves. This section begins by investigating Michigan policy elites' views of an appropriate role for state government in establishing educational policy, and then turns to respondents' assessment of the effectiveness of key educational policymaking agencies such as the Michigan Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and their local school district. Discussed next are perceptions regarding the performance of different types of K-12 schools in Michigan, including public, private, and charter schools. Attention then turns to respondents' views of charter schools and other forms of school choice, including how successful charters have been in providing intended outcomes, level of concern with key issues related to charters, the level of support for various forms of school choice other than charter schools, and whether charters are serving as a "stepping stone" to other forms of choice.

The primary format for reporting of survey findings within these four sections is frequency distributions for items on the survey instrument. Additional analysis is also provided for several survey questions which solicited respondent comments in an open-ended format.

Profile of Respondents: Key Non-Education Characteristics

It is useful to begin by describing several key characteristics of respondents that are not specifically related to education or charter schools. Specifically, Questions 22-25 on the survey instrument (see Appendix B) investigated four key variables: the geographic nature, political tendencies, and racial/ethnic composition of policy elites' district or principal constituency; and their own self-identified political affiliation.

Characteristics of Respondents' Home Districts/Constituencies: Geography, Political Tendencies, and Race/Ethnicity

A series of three questions (22-24 on the survey instrument) asked respondents to describe key characteristics of their political district (in the case of legislators) or their primary constituency, organization, interest group, or department (for all other respondents). These questions are obviously of varying relevance to respondents, depending upon the nature of their role as policy elites; legislators, for example, have a clearly-defined district and constituency, while other respondents such as the State Board of Education, Department of Education, and most interest groups represent the entire state rather than a specific geographic district. Separate questions might have been asked of respondents based upon the nature of their district or constituency (for example, questions only for legislators asking them to describe their district, but it was ultimately decided that having a common set of questions answered by all respondents was

desirable in order to compare across subgroups. It is also true that even respondents without a specific geographic district were able and/or willing in a majority of cases to characterize their primary constituency or organization. As such, the directions for these questions 22-24 indicated that they should be completed by “state legislators/staff and all others, as applicable.”

More than six in ten respondents (60.8%) elected to identify what they perceived as the geographic nature of their district or constituency. An interesting and varied distribution emerged, with the modal response category being “urban/suburban mix,” followed by “all or mostly urban” (see Table 3). In retrospect, after reviewing written comments provided by several respondents, two other response categories should have been added to this question, including “urban, suburban, and rural mix” and “statewide.” It might also be possible, although seemingly unlikely, for a district or constituency to have an urban/rural mix without a suburban component.

Table 3: Geographic Nature of Respondents’ District/Constituency

	Percentage of Respondents, by Geographic Category
Geographic Category:	
Urban/suburban mix	32.3%
All or mostly urban	25.8%
All or mostly suburban	19.4%
All or mostly rural	12.9%
Suburban/rural mix	9.7%
Total	100.0% (n=31)

Regarding perceived political leanings of respondents' districts/constituencies, a somewhat conservative trend emerged (see Table 4). More than half of respondents (55.8%) indicated that their district/constituency was on the conservative side of the political spectrum, compared to only 26.4% on the liberal side. Just less than 18% of respondents identified no discernable political leaning for their district/constituency.

Table 4: Political Tendencies of Respondents' District/Constituency

	Percentage of Respondents, by Political Tendency Category
Political Tendency Category:	
Very Conservative	2.9%
Somewhat Conservative	23.5%
Lean Conservative	29.4%
Neither/Middle	17.7%
Lean Liberal	14.7%
Somewhat Liberal	8.8%
Very Liberal	2.9%
Total	100.0% (n=50)

A third demographic question asked respondents to characterize the racial/ethnic composition of their district/constituency in accordance with its percentage of white and non-white members. Four response categories were provided: "All or predominantly white" was defined on the survey as being approximately 90% or more white, "Significantly white" was defined as approximately 70-89% white, "Majority white" was defined as 51-69% white, and "Majority non-white" was defined as 50% or less white. Among the respondents who answered this question (see Table 5), identical shares indicated that their district/constituency

was “all or predominantly white” or “significantly white” (30.3% each), while 21.2% selected “majority white” and 18.2% “majority non-white.”

Table 5: Race/Ethnicity of Respondents’ District/Constituency

	Percentage of Respondents, by Racial/Ethnic Category
Racial/Ethnic Category:	
All or predominantly white (90% or more)	30.3%
Significantly white (70-89%)	30.3%
Majority white (51-69%)	21.2%
Majority non-white (50% or less)	18.2%
Total	100.0% (n=34)

Self-Reported Political Affiliation

A large majority of respondents who completed the survey was willing to characterize their own political affiliation, and a fairly even distribution emerged (see Table 6). The largest share of respondents (21.6%) self-identified as “neither Republican nor Democrat,” while 39.3% identified on the Democratic side of the spectrum (either “strong Democrat,” “Democrat,” or “lean Democrat”) and 29.4% placed themselves on the Republican side. Just under 10% of respondents declined to self-identify their political affiliation at all, while a single respondent described himself as a “small ‘I’ libertarian...There are more of them in the GOP, but most GOP are “statists” too. It is interesting to note that in comparison with how they described the political tendencies of their

district/constituency, elites' own political inclinations were more centrist and left of center.

Table 6: Self-Reported Political Affiliation of Survey Respondents

	Percentage of Respondents, by Political Affiliation
Political Affiliation:	
Strong Republican	3.9%
Republican	13.7%
Lean Republican	11.8%
Neither Republican nor Democrat	21.6%
Lean Democrat	11.8%
Democrat	15.7%
Strong Democrat	11.8%
Other/No Response	9.8%
Total	100.0% (n=51)

Involvement in Education and Charter Schools

Questions 15 and 17-19 on the survey instrument asked respondents to describe the *amount* and the *nature* of their involvement in activities related to K-12 education and charter schools. The primary purpose of these questions was to provide a means for testing the hypothesis that a “personal stake” in education - such as being a member of, having worked for, and having a child attend, various types of K-12 schools - might impact respondents' attitudes toward charter schools and/or the four instrumental values in educational policy involvement in some demonstrable way.

Question 15 asked if respondents are a member of, or represent, any group or organization that has a direct involvement with traditional public schools, private schools, or charter schools. Table 7 shows that nearly two-thirds of respondents (64.7%) are in fact a member of, or represent, a group or organization involved with traditional public schools. More than half (52.9%) are involved with charter schools in this capacity, while just over one-fourth (25.5%) are involved with private schools.

Table 7: Survey Respondents' Involvement in K-12 Education

	Percentage of Respondents Reporting Involvement, by Type of School:		
	Traditional Public	Private	Charter
Type of Involvement:			
Respondent is member of or represents	64.7% (n=33)	25.5% (n=13)	52.9% (n=27)
Respondent or family has worked in or been member of organization supporting	70.6% (n=36)	17.6% (n=9)	31.4% (n=15)
Respondent's children have attended	66.7% (n=34)	17.6% (n=9)	3.9% (n=2)

Several respondents, such as those from the State Board of Education and intermediate school districts, indicated membership/representation involving two or more types of schools (usually traditional public and charter), while a few others (such as leaders of education-related interest groups) indicated that they are involved in all three types.

Interestingly, however, only 7.7% of respondents who indicated involvement with private schools was not also involved in either (or both) of the other two types of schools (e.g., only 7.7% were “private-only” policy elites). By contrast, 35.1% of those reporting involvement in traditional public schools were “traditional public school only” elites, and 18.5% of those involved in charter schools were “charter-only” elites. In some cases, involvement in only one type of school makes perfect sense (e.g., a charter school authorizing official from a public university whose job duties involve only charter schools).

On the other hand, the fact that 64.9% of elites involved in traditional public schools are *not* otherwise involved in K-12 education (in either private or charter schools) may be evidence that some degree of “balkanization” has occurred as a result of charters and competition, with the traditional public school establishment distrustful and resentful of competition and its employees perhaps less likely to be involved in private (and especially charter) schools. To test this hypothesis, one would need involvement data for policy elites in private schools prior to the emergence of charters, which is not available to my knowledge.

Returning to Table 7, a second question (#17 on the survey instrument) asked whether respondents or any member of their immediate family had worked in a traditional public, private, or charter school, or had been a member of an organization that supports one or more of these types of schools, within the past 10 years. More than two-thirds (70.6%) of respondents indicated that they or an

immediate family member had in fact worked in a traditional public school or an organization that supports this type of school within the past decade. This was higher than the combined involvement in charter schools (31.4%) and private schools (17.6%). Nearly one-fourth (23.5%) of respondents reported no involvement on the part of themselves or family members in any of the three types of schools during the past decade.

Having had a child in attendance at any of the three types of K-12 schools (Question 18) was a third measure of a “personal stake” in education.

Specifically, this question asked whether any child in the respondent’s household had attended a traditional public, private, or charter school within the past 10 years. Not surprisingly, traditional public schools were by far the most common type of school attended by the children of policy elites, as 66.7% of respondents indicated at least one child having attended such a school in the past decade. Far fewer (17.6%) reported a child having attended a private school, while only 3.9% have had a child attend a charter school. Just over one-fourth (25.5%) reported no child having attended any of the three types of schools.

A fourth and final measure of “personal stake” in education (Question 19) was whether respondents have engaged in six different forms of involvement for, or on behalf of, any of the three types of K-12 schools. As shown in Table 8, respondents were more likely, by wide margins, to report having participated in each of the six involvement roles on behalf of traditional public schools than on

behalf of private or charter schools. In comparing involvement in charter vs. private schools, respondents were more likely to have donated money to private than to charter schools, but more likely to have engaged in each of the other five forms of involvement on behalf of charters as opposed to private schools. Contacting legislators, interestingly, was nearly as popular with respect to charters as it was to traditional public schools, perhaps indicating the contentious nature of the topic.

Table 8: K-12 Support/Advocacy Activities of Survey Respondents

	Percentage of Respondents Reporting Selected Support/Advocacy Involvement, by Type of School:		
	Traditional Public	Private	Charter
Type of Support/Advocacy:			
Contacted legislator regarding	72.9% (n=35)	10.4% (n=5)	56.2% (n=27)
Volunteered	65.3% (n=32)	16.3% (n=8)	16.3% (n=8)
Served on decision-making body	61.2% (n=30)	18.4% (n=9)	44.9% (n=22)
Donated money to	59.2% (n=29)	32.7% (n=16)	10.2% (n=5)
Voting member of	49.0% (n=24)	10.2% (n=5)	28.6% (n=14)
Wrote letter to media regarding	43.4% (n=20)	8.5% (n=4)	23.4% (n=11)

The most common form of involvement on behalf of traditional public schools was contacting a legislator (with 72.9% of respondents reporting having done so), followed in order by volunteering (65.3%), serving on a decision-making body (61.2%), and donating money (59.2%). Among those involved with private

schools, by contrast, the most common form of involvement (with 32.7% of respondents reporting having done so) was donating money, while involvement regarding charter schools resembled traditional public schools in that the most common form of activity was contacting a legislator (56.2%). It would have been interesting, in retrospect, to have had a much larger sample of legislators to serve as a “check” on these findings by asking how often they heard from constituents regarding the different types of schools, and how education-related comments compared to other issues in terms of volume of constituent comments.

Contrasting Measures of Value Preference among Policy Elites

The third section of findings below summarizes and discusses respondents' comparative preferences for, and definitions of, the four instrumental values in education policy as used in research conducted by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) and Garn (2000). These preferences and definitions were measured in four distinct ways on the survey instrument: paired statements representing each of the four values within three “policy domains” (Question 7), direct comparison of preference for each of the four values against the other three (Question 8), rank-ordering of preference for the four values (Question 9), and level of agreement or disagreement with two different definitions for each value (Question 10).

Comparison of Paired Statements Representing Instrumental Values

The first measure of Michigan policy elites' preferences for the four instrumental values (appearing in Question 7) attempted to replicate the research conducted by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989), who had policy elites in their six-state study from the mid-1980s assign preferences to 18 pairs of value statements in a forced choice format. One statement appeared on the left on each line and the other on the right, separated by six dashes designed to measure strength of preference for one value in comparison with the other (see Appendix D for the instrument utilized by Marshall and colleagues).

The 18 pairs involved combinations of 12 unique statements, each of which was intended by Marshall and colleagues to represent one of the four instrumental values (Quality, Efficiency, Equity, or Choice) within one of three "domains," or major policy areas, within education (Program, Finance, or Organization/Governance; see Table 9). The Program domain was defined as control of "program planning and accreditation, or...what schools must teach and how long they must teach it." Finance involved "how education funds are distributed and how human and fiscal resources are allocated to the schools," and Organization/Governance involved "the assignment of authority and responsibility to various groups and individuals" (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989: 60-1). It is important to note again that while Marshall and colleagues defined the four values and three domains as described above, respondents in their study were not made aware that the statements they were being asked to choose

between were intended to represent any values or domains; indeed, neither of these terms appeared on the survey instrument used in the Marshall study.

Table 9: Statements Representing Values and Policy Domains

	Program Statement	Finance Statement	Organization/Governance Statement
Value:			
Quality	Setting higher academic standards	Increasing the level of funding for schools	Developing quality-conscious leadership
Efficiency	Making programs more cost-effective	Improving the use of education tax dollars	More efficient school management
Equity	Giving more attention to children with special needs	Greater equalization of resources	Broader participation in decision-making
Choice	Increasing program flexibility	Reducing restrictions on local expenditures	Providing more choices for families and children

Source: Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1989:93.

Marshall and colleagues offer little description of how they developed the statements used to represent the four instrumental values within the three domains. As such, it is not clear whether the face validity of the statements had been validated in previous research, or what type of vetting process (if any) was used if the statements were developed by Marshall and colleagues for the purposes of their own work. As noted, respondents were also not made aware that the statements they were choosing between in Question 7 were intended to represent the four values, and were given no opportunity to agree or disagree

with the statements in accordance with their own beliefs or to offer alternatives. These issues clearly represent methodological limitations of the Marshall study.

The lack of explanatory information provided by Marshall and colleagues in terms of how they chose statements to represent the four values also provides ample opportunity to wonder how results might have differed had different statements been used, or how contextual differences such as the time period involved might affect results. The Equity statement within the Program domain, for example, is “Giving more attention to children with special needs.” How, if at all, would elites’ preferences for this value have differed if a statement such as “using busing to integrate schools” had been used instead? It seems plausible, given the contentious nature of busing, that overall preference for Equity would be lower in this hypothetical case than if “greater attention to children with special needs” was used, as Marshall *et al* did. It is difficult to know for sure, however, and some elites would likely be *more* likely, rather than less, to value Equity using the busing example. Similarly, would the use of a statement such as “allowing schools (including parent representatives) greater autonomy in choosing teachers and staff” to represent Choice within the Program domain have changed results? It is again difficult to know, although this research offers some perspective by presenting (in Question 10) two distinct definitions for each of the four values to investigate how policy elites may operationalize them differently.

By developing statements to represent the four values within each of the three domains, the Marshall study could then indirectly measure policy elites' preferences for each of the four instrumental values *within*, but not *across*, the three domains. In other words, the statement representing Quality within the Program domain ("setting higher academic standards") was paired against both the Efficiency statement ("making programs more cost-effective") and the Equity statement ("giving more attention to children with special needs") in that same domain – but not against the other three statements within the Program domain. The statements representing Quality within both the Finance and Organization/Governance domains, similarly, were paired against the statements in those same domains that represented Efficiency, Equity, and Choice.

For purposes of measurement and scoring, Marshall and colleagues directed respondents to place an X on one of the six dashes for each pair of statements, which was to correspond with their preference for one statement or the other. An X closest to the statement on the left represented strong preference for that statement, an X on the second dash in from the left represented somewhat less preference, and an X on the third dash in from the left represented slight preference. The Marshall study assigned a ranking of +1, +2, or +3 to the value statement in each pair that was chosen by the respondent as being more important. A score of +1 was assigned if the statement was chosen as "slightly more important," a +2 score was assigned if it was "somewhat more important," and a +3 score was assigned if the chosen statement was "much more

important.” Corresponding negative scores (-1, -2, or -3) were assigned to the statement in each pair that was *not* preferred by the respondent. Thus, a total score for each respondent can be calculated, as can total scores for each of the four values and the three policy domains.

The 18 pairs of value statements used in this study, in terms of wording and the order in which the pairs of statements appeared on the survey, were identical to that used by Marshall and colleagues. In order to provide more clarity for respondents, however, the physical appearance of the statements and the directions that accompanied the question were modified slightly. Question 7 was placed into a chart format, and the six dashes used in the Marshall study were replaced by boxes that described more precisely what each represented: the box closest to the value statement on the left was labeled to indicate that the statement on the left was “much more important” than the one on the right, etc. Appendix E shows the same information in Question 7 as it appeared on the survey, but adds (in italics and bold type) the instrumental value (Q=Quality, EFF=Efficiency, EQ=Equity, C=Choice) and the domain (P=Program, F=Finance, OG=Organization/Governance) represented by each statement in order to facilitate interpretation and comparison of results.

The primary finding emerging from the work of Marshall and colleagues with respect to policy elites’ preferences for value statements was that the Quality value was by far the most important of the four values (with a mean score, across

all three domains, of 8.85), followed, in order, by Efficiency (-0.28), Equity (-0.68), and Choice (-7.89).²³ They note that Quality items were ranked first in all three domains, and conclude that "...educational Quality is the dominant concern of state policy leaders in the 1980s." The Marshall study also notes that there were "consistently negative scores for all three Choice items" (p.94-5).

At the outset of this study, it was hypothesized that the rapid growth of charter schools in Michigan and the support for the Choice value that this growth seemingly represented would predict that Michigan policy elites would express a stronger preference for Choice than did those in the six-state sample (Arizona, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wisconsin) studied by Marshall and colleagues. It was expected, in fact, that Choice would have the highest score among the four instrumental values in the minds of policy elites, followed (in order) by Efficiency, Quality, and Equity, with this same pattern holding true across each of the domains (Program, Finance, and Organization/Governance).

Actual survey results, however, differed substantially from this hypothesis.

Among the 51 completed surveys that were received, 92.2%, or 47, included appropriate responses to Question 7; one respondent left this question blank and

²³ It is not clear, from the brief description of methodology provided by Marshall and colleagues, how overall scores for the four values that were not even numbers could have resulted. For each pair of statements, a score of 1, 2, or 3 was assigned to the "preferred" statement and a corresponding score of -1, -2, or -3 was assigned to the statement not preferred. They obviously divided total scores for each value by something to arrive at sums of mean scores that were non-even numbers (8.85 for Quality, -0.28 for Efficiency, etc.), but it is not clear what this divisor was. Presumably the divisor was the total number of respondents (n=140) in their study, but this is not specified in their brief discussion of methodology.

three others completed it incorrectly (by placing an X in more than one box on each line). Additionally, the total number of responses within each value pair varies from 47 (the maximum possible) to 42, as some respondents did not rank all 18 pairs (as noted by the term “missing” in cells shown in Appendix F).

Table 10 summarizes the overall results from Question 7, while Appendix F shows the preferences and corresponding scores for each individual respondent. The “total score” shown in Table 10 is the overall score for each of the four values as assigned by all respondents. Since each of the four values appeared in 9 different pairs, and the maximum score that could be assigned was +3, the highest possible score a value could have received was 1269, which would have occurred if all 47 respondents answering Question 7 had given that value a +3 in each of the nine value pairings in which it appeared. This would mean that every respondent perceived that value as “much more important” than the value it was contrasted against in each of the nine value pairs in which it appeared in Question 7. The corresponding lowest possible score, which would have occurred if a value was given a -3 rating each time it appeared, was -1269.

The “mean responses” statistic in Table 10 and Appendix F is the average number of respondents who provided rankings for each value. It serves as a way of correcting for the fact that not all 47 respondents made selections for all 18 value pairs in Question 7. It is calculated as follows: the total score for each value was divided by the mean number of respondents who provided rankings of

the value. Each value appeared in nine different value pairs, with a maximum of 47 potential responses for each value. Since some respondents didn't rank certain value pairs, however (as shown in cells labeled "missing" in Appendix F), the actual number of responses is sometimes less than 47. The mean responses are thus the total number of responses for each value divided by 9; as shown in Table 10 and Appendix F, the figures are 46.33 for Quality, 46.11 for Efficiency, 45.00 for Equity, and 45.44 for Choice. The mean score, which is the key statistic in the table and in this analysis, is simply the total score divided by the mean responses.

The data show quite clearly that Quality, with a mean score of 6.32, was the most important value in the minds of Michigan policy elites, just as it had been in the work of Marshall and colleagues. Quality was also the only value that had a positive overall score in addition to positive values in each of the three domains, both of which again mirrored what the Marshall study found in the 1980s. The overall order of the remaining three variables in this study also matched the findings of Marshall *et al*: Efficiency ranked second (albeit still with a negative score of -1.28), Equity a close third (-1.40), and Choice a distant fourth (-3.76).

Table 10: Value Preferences of Michigan Policy Elites by Domain

	Scores by Value and Domain:			Total Score	Mean Responses	Mean Score
	Program	Finance	Organization/ Governance			
Value:						
Quality	Setting higher academic standards (151)	Increasing the level of funding for schools (5)	Developing quality-conscious leadership (137)	293	46.33	6.32
Efficiency	Making programs more cost-effective (-104)	Improving the use of education tax dollars (80)	More efficient school management (-35)	-59	46.11	-1.28
Equity	Giving more attention to children with special needs (7)	Greater equalization of resources (20)	Broader participation in decision-making (-90)	-63	45.00	-1.40
Choice	Increasing program flexibility (-54)	Reducing restrictions on local expenditures (-105)	Providing more choices for families and children (-12)	-171	45.44	-3.76

Findings related to the value preferences of Michigan policy elites did differ, however, in several ways from those of Marshall and colleagues – perhaps most importantly with respect to the distribution of value preferences across the three domains of Program, Finance, and Organization/Governance. In addition to calculating total and mean scores for each of the four values, as shown in Table 10, it is possible to look at respondents' preferences within each of the three domains. Since each statement representing Quality appeared three times (against Efficiency, Equity, and Choice) within the Program domain, for example, a score for Quality within the Program domain (or a "Quality/Program" score) can be obtained by adding the three Quality/Program scores and then comparing it with the totals for the other three values within this domain.

In looking at results from the Program domain, for example, the Quality statement (“Setting higher academic standards”) had an overall score of 151 (see Appendix F; 67 from pair 4 against Efficiency + 27 from pair 9 against Equity + 57 from pair 12 against Choice). This was much higher than the Efficiency/Program statement (“Making programs more cost-effective”), which had an overall score of –104. The Equity/Program statement (“Giving more attention to children with special needs”) did somewhat better against Quality/Program, with a score of 7, while the Choice/Program statement (“Increasing program flexibility”) fell in between Efficiency/Program and Equity/Program with a score of –54.

Table 11: Value Preference Scores of Michigan Policy Elites, by Domain

	Domain:			
	Program	Finance	Organization/ Governance	Total Score
Value:				
Quality	151	5	137	293
Efficiency	-104	80	-35	-59
Equity	7	20	-90	-63
Choice	-54	-105	-12	-171

It is also notable, as seen in Table 11, that Quality was not the highest-ranked value in all three domains, as it had been in the Marshall study. Quality ranked highest in both Program (with a score of 151) and Organization/Governance (137), but ranked only third within the Finance domain (with a score of 5) behind Efficiency (80) and Equity (20). The Marshall study also found that the same rank order held true in both the Finance and Organization/Governance domains: “...Quality was given top priority, followed by Efficiency and Equity, with Choice

ranked a distant last" (p.93; review from Table 1). Among Michigan policy elites, by contrast, Quality was *third* within the Finance domain (with a score of 5, trailing Efficiency and Equity, with Choice indeed a "distant last"); and while Quality was first in the Organization/ Governance domain (137), Choice was not at all a distant last, but second (albeit still with a negative score of -12).

Within the Finance domain, the Quality statement ("Increasing the level of funding for schools") was much less popular among Michigan policy elites, with an overall score of 5. It fared particularly poorly against the Efficiency statement ("Improving the use of education tax dollars"), which had a score of 80, and the Equity statement ("Greater equalization of resources"), with a score of 20. The Quality statement was much preferred within Finance, however, to the Choice statement ("Reducing restrictions on local expenditures"), with a score of -105.

Within the Organization/Governance domain, the Quality statement ("Developing quality-conscious leadership") was again the preferred value, with a score of 137. The strength of preference against the other three values differed once again, however, as the Choice statement ("Providing more choices for families and children") had an overall score of -12, ahead of both the Efficiency statement ("More efficient school management"), with a score of -35, and the Equity statement ("Broader participation in decision-making"), with a score of -90.

Also of interest is that the four values were perceived somewhat differently by the five subgroups of respondents. To measure this, the scores of all respondents within a subgroup within each of the four values were added to get a total score for that subgroup. I then divided by the number of respondents in each subgroup who completed surveys and answered Question 7 correctly and completely (to correct for the fact that different subgroups had different numbers of respondents).

Using legislators as an example, nine respondents from this subgroup completed surveys containing full data for Question 7. Each of these nine respondents had an individual total score, calculated by adding their nine scores for each of the four values. Quality, for example, appeared in nine different value pairs, and an individual legislator might have had a total Quality score of 6, for example. This score of 6 was added to the Quality scores of the other eight legislators to arrive at an overall total score for legislators on the Quality value of 60. This was then divided by nine (the number of legislators) for a mean score of 6.67 for legislators on the Quality value. Likewise, the overall total score for legislators on the Efficiency value was -11, divided by nine for a mean score of -1.22, etc.

Using these data, it is possible to make some comparison across respondent subgroups with respect to value preferences, as shown in Table 12. Each of the five subgroups rated Quality as the most important value, although business/advocacy/civic groups had it tied with Efficiency (perhaps illustrating the

cost-conscious manner in which business organizations view public education) and had far lower preference ratings for Quality than the other four subgroups. Equally interesting was that business/advocacy/civic respondents were the only subgroup to assign a positive overall rating (1.25) to Choice. It might have been predicted that charter school authorizers would also rate Choice highly; the fact that they did not – but rated Quality and Equity quite highly – may indicate that these respondents view charters as a means of producing Quality and Equity rather than existing solely to further Choice. Legislators as a group expressed a notable distaste for Choice (-8.22) relative to the other values and to the other four subgroups, but were comparatively more inclined to favor Equity (-1.22).

Table 12: Value Preferences by Respondent Subgroup

	Mean Scores, by Value:			
	Quality	Efficiency	Equity	Choice
Respondent subgroup and number of surveys with correct and complete response to Question 7:				
Legislators (n=9)	6.67	-1.22	2.78	-8.22
Other Government (n=7)	7.43	-1.71	-3.29	-2.43
Interest Groups (n=11)	6.09	0.36	-3.36	-3.09
Charter Authorizers (n=12)	7.42	-5.42	2.67	-4.67
Business/Advocacy/Civic (n=8)	3.13	3.13	-7.50	1.25

A final comparison that can be made using data from Question 7 is to look at *individual respondents* in an attempt to ascertain the range of preference across the four values and how many respondents had negative overall impressions of each value. To provide a measure of this, each individual respondent's scores

for Question 7 (using data which appeared previously as Appendix F) were added them within each value to get a total score for each respondent by value. For example, Respondent #1 had sums of mean scores totaling 15 for Quality, -15 for Efficiency, 13 for Equity, and -13 for Choice (note that four of the 51 respondents – 12, 43, 43, and 43 - answered Question 7 incorrectly, leaving a total of 47 respondents for whom appropriate data are available). Each respondent has nine individual scores within each value; thus, Respondent #1's score for Quality was calculated as follows (using data as they appeared previously from Appendix F): 3 from value pairing 4 (VP4) + (-1) from VP7 + (-1) from VP9 + 3 from VP10 + 3 from VP11 + 2 from VP12 + 2 from VP15 + 2 from VP17 + 2 from VP18 = 15.

Viewing the data in this manner, as shown in Appendix H, reveals a number of interesting findings. With respect to the range within each of the four values, Quality had a range of 35 (from a high score of 20 for Respondent 43 to a low of -15 for Respondent 17). Only six respondents assigned overall negative scores to Quality. Efficiency had a range of 29 (from a high of 12 to a low of -17), with 24 negative scores. Equity had a range of 31 (high of 13 and low of -18), with 26 negative scores. Choice had the largest range of 41 (high of 16 and low of -25), and also the largest number of negative scores with 32. The overall pattern from these data is consistent with previous findings in that Quality is the preferred value (as illustrated by the fewest negative scores) and Choice ranks far behind with a much higher number of negative scores.

Returning to the overall hypothesis regarding the value preferences of Michigan policy elites – that Choice would be a stronger value in the minds of Michigan policy elites than it had been in the work of Marshall *et al*, and the most preferred value overall – there are several explanations for why this turned out not to be supported by the data. One possibility involves sampling error, in that the sample of Michigan policy elites is simply not large enough and/or representative of the state in general. It is conceivable, for example, that among all Michigan policy elites involved in education, most would self-identify as conservatives – in contrast to this study, in which conservatives were a slight minority. This might make a difference in that previous research, including public opinion polling in Michigan, has shown at least somewhat higher support for charter schools among conservatives than among liberals. The State of the State Survey conducted by the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research at MSU, for example, found in its Summer 2002 and Spring 2001 surveys that while 72.1% of all Michigan residents polled indicated support for charter schools, support was somewhat higher among self-identified conservatives (76.7%) than among liberals (67.0%) (Institute for Public Policy and Social Research, 2001, 2002).

To test the significance of differences between the mean scores for each value shown previously in Table 10 (6.32 for Quality, -1.28 for Efficiency, -1.40 for Equity, and -3.76 for Choice), paired samples T-tests were performed for each of six possible pairs of values. The objective was to determine the likelihood that the observed differences in sample means would have resulted in a population

where no differences in fact exist (e.g., a population in which all policymakers prefer all four values equally). The null hypothesis being tested for each value pairing is as follows:

$$\text{Mean of Value 1 (e.g., Quality)} - \text{Mean of Value 2 (e.g., Efficiency)} = 0$$

The alternative hypothesis is that

$$\text{Mean of Value 1} - \text{Mean of Value 2} \neq 0.$$

Results shown in Table 13 indicate that four of the six value pairs are in fact statistically significant at the .05 level. Quality, which had the highest mean score in Table 10, is significantly different from each of the other three values, and Choice is significantly different from two of the other three values at the .05 level. The only pairing that does not approach statistical significance, in fact, is Efficiency-Equity, which are the middle two values that are clustered closely together in terms of mean scores.

Table 13: T-Tests of Significance between Mean Scores of Values

Pair Number:	Values:	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Quality-Efficiency	407	.000
Pair 2	Quality-Equity	399	.000
Pair 3	Quality-Choice	400	.000
Pair 4	Efficiency-Equity	396	.934
Pair 5	Efficiency-Choice	398	.038
Pair 6	Equity-Choice	390	.056

Correlations between the means of the four instrumental values also produce some interesting results in relation to Marshall and colleagues' assertion (see research hypothesis 2 in Chapter 1) that some pairs of values reinforce one another (e.g., are supported simultaneously by policy elites, and positive correlations exist) while others oppose one another (e.g., negative correlations exist). In particular, the Marshall study found that Choice and Efficiency opposed one another, whereas it was hypothesized in this study (in support of Gam's findings in Arizona) that these two values would reinforce each other and that Choice and Equity would oppose one another.

Results in Table 14 show correlations that are relatively weak overall, but interesting nonetheless. The expected positive correlation between Choice and Efficiency did not emerge at all from the data, while the expected negative correlation between Choice and Equity was nearly significant at the .05 level, but still relatively weak at $-.099$. The only correlation that was significant at the .05 level was a negative relationship between Efficiency and Equity, which may make sense in retrospect in that policy elites concerned with cost-benefit aspects of education (the economic dimension of Efficiency) would perhaps not be predicted to be concerned with issues of Equity.

Table 14: Paired Samples Correlations

Pair Number:	Values:	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Quality-Efficiency	408	-.078	.116
Pair 2	Quality-Equity	400	.065	.192
Pair 3	Quality-Choice	401	-.083	.096
Pair 4	Efficiency-Equity	397	-.220	.000
Pair 5	Efficiency-Choice	399	.055	.272
Pair 6	Equity-Choice	391	-.099	.052

Returning to possible explanations for differences between the findings in this study and those of Marshall and colleagues, it also seems plausible that the wording of the statements used in the Marshall study to represent the four instrumental values influenced the choices made by respondents. In essence, some statements might be more strongly or favorably worded than others that they are being compared to, and/or strike a favorable chord in terms of the political pressures, policy initiatives, and budgetary context of any given point in time. This might also help explain some of the variation across domains (e.g., why Quality was the most popular overall value, but was much less popular within the Finance domain than it was in the Program domain).

In looking at the three statements that Marshall and colleagues used to represent the Quality value, for example, one might argue that at the present time, the wording of the statement in the Program domain ("setting higher academic standards") is much stronger (e.g., more difficult for policy elites to not agree with) than is the statement representing Organization/Governance ("developing quality-conscious leadership"). One would imagine that present-day policy elites hear quite often, in fact, that we need to set higher academic standards, but are

less likely to hear someone say, at least directly, that what we need to do to improve education is to develop quality-conscious leadership. Developing quality leadership ranked ahead of setting higher academic standards in the findings of Marshall and colleagues during the 1980s, but just the opposite appears to be true from this research, with standards clearly an important policy topic.

Similarly, the Organization/Governance statement in Choice (“Providing more choices for families and children”) is inherently somewhat stronger, at least at the present time, than the Choice statement in Finance (“Reducing restrictions on local expenditures”), and much stronger than the Choice statement in Program (“Increasing program flexibility”). Those who are inclined to support Choice, in other words, would be more likely to do so in the form of a statement that provided Choice to *families and children* rather than to *schools*. This hypothesis appears to be supported by data from Questions 10g and 10h (see discussion below), which showed that the sample of Michigan policy elites was much more inclined to define Choice in terms of the ability of *parents and students* to choose schools than the ability of *schools* to choose a mission, curriculum, and staff. While the original hypothesis that Choice would be the most important value among Michigan policy elites was not correct, then, neither is it the case that Choice is altogether *unimportant*. It may be notably less important overall than the other values, and Quality in particular, but enjoys comparatively high support when provided to parents and students – which is perhaps the single most important theoretical construct underlying the charter school movement.

Other than noting that each statement "...was phrased in such a way as to reflect the application of one of the core values to a particular school program or policy issue," (p.92), Marshall and colleagues provide little description of how they chose the value statements that they did. Personal preferences for any statement over another are certainly subjective and influenced by time-specific factor, but the wording of statements seems a likely, albeit not readily measurable, explanation for differences in the value preferences of elites. It also makes sense that differences between this study's findings and those of Marshall and colleagues illustrate very real shifts in policy priorities within education – not to mention the budgetary contexts within which educational decision-making occurs.

The ranking of the Quality statement within the Finance domain ("Increasing the level of funding for schools") would appear to provide an instructive example here. While Marshall and colleagues' respondents found this statement preferable by a wide margin over the other three values within that domain, the current findings among Michigan policy elites were considerably different, in that this statement was preferred only to the Choice statement. One reading of this difference is that few policymakers in Michigan, at least at the moment, subscribe to the theory that schools simply need more money in order to improve. Michigan policymakers were instead more inclined to support the view that the use of education tax dollars be improved (the Efficiency statement within the Finance domain) or equalized (Equity) rather than increased across the board, as

the Quality statement advocates. The financial difficulties being experienced by state government in Michigan at the time of this writing cannot be overstated, given the massive shortfalls being faced by legislators and the competing demands for shrinking state resources that have resulted.

Direct Preferences for Instrumental Values

Further examination of respondent preferences for the four instrumental values using a different type of forced-choice format took place in Question 8. This question, which was not used by Marshall and colleagues nor by Garn, used six paired arrangements of the four values to contrast respondent preferences for each value against the three others, without the use of policy statements to represent the four values as in Question 7. Results summarized below show which values appeared in each pairing and how many of the 51 respondents who completed the survey preferred each value:

- Pairing 1: Quality (46) or Efficiency (1); 4 blank/no response
- Pairing 2: Quality (35) or Equity (10); 6 blank/no response
- Pairing 3: Quality (41) or Choice (5); 5 blank/no response
- Pairing 4: Efficiency (15) or Equity (32); 4 blank/no response
- Pairing 5: Efficiency (23) or Choice (22); 6 blank/no response
- Pairing 6: Equity (31) or Choice (14); 6 blank/no response

The total number of times each of the four responses was selected, which provides another way of looking at value preferences, is as follows:

- Quality 122
- Equity 73
- Choice 41
- Efficiency 39

Data from Question 8 confirm a major finding from Question 7, in that Quality is the preferred value by a wide margin in direct comparisons with the three others. Interestingly, however, Equity is the value that fares best against Quality in the head-to-head format used in Question 8, followed by Choice and then Efficiency; this differs from Question 7, where the overall order of preference after Quality was Efficiency followed by Equity and Choice.

The limitation, or perhaps the strength, of the format and presentation utilized in Question 8 is that it does not attempt to represent the four values with statements reflecting potential policy actions or to break down each value into the three policy domains, both of which are used in Question 7; Question 8 instead contrasts the four values directly against one another. It is difficult to say which format provides a more accurate measure of value preference. For those able and inclined to formulate their own definition of a value and react to it accordingly (e.g., without the use of statements that operationalize the value into specific

policy arenas, as in Question 7), the simple comparison format used in Question 8 was probably preferable. For those who needed or wanted a specific example of how a value can be applied within a policy context, Question 7 (and perhaps Question 10, discussed below) may provide a more accurate assessment of preferences. In the end, it may be the case that value preference has multiple aspects, with certain measures, such as the use of statements to represent the four values, serving as more accurate gauges of value preference for some respondents while other measures more accurately assess other respondents' preferences.

Rank-Ordering of Values

A third comparative measure of preferences for the four instrumental values in educational policy is provided by Question 9, which asked respondents simply and directly to rank-order the four values in order of priority (with 1 the most important and 4 the least important). Table 15 affirms once again the comparative popularity of Quality, as this was the lowest (e.g., best) rank-ordered value of the four. Quality's mean rank of 1.25 was half as large as that of Equity, the next lowest at 2.50. Additional evidence of the popularity of Quality was that nearly three-fourths of respondents ranked it first, and none ranked it lower than second. Equity, with a somewhat surprising mean rank of second, had the second-most rankings of 1, although these were counterbalanced by 11 rankings of 4. (One respondent registered the following unsolicited comment next to

Equity: “If you have the others for everyone, who cares about this one?”)

Efficiency, which ranked third overall, and Choice, ranked fourth, had very similar mean scores, although Efficiency received no rankings of 1. Choice was somewhat of a polarizing value, with five rankings of 1 but also the largest number of 4 rankings (22). One respondent ranked Quality first, and then provided no rankings for the other three values.

Table 15: Rank-Ordering of Values

	Number of Respondents Providing Ranking of:				Total Responses	Mean Rank
	1	2	3	4		
Value:						
Quality	38	13	0	0	51	1.25
Equity	8	20	11	11	50	2.50
Efficiency	0	12	22	16	50	3.08
Choice	5	5	17	23	50	3.16

Several summary measures of rank-ordering preference in Question 9 are also possible by calculating mean preferences for the five subgroups of respondents as well as for individuals, as done for Question 7 above. Looking first at rank-ordering preferences of the five subgroups, Table 16 illustrates how the subgroups differed with respect to preferences for the four values. Legislators, for example, ranked Choice (3.70) much lower as a priority than the other subgroups (lower scores reflect higher preference for each value), while other state government policy elites favored Quality (1.13) even more than other subgroups. Business/advocacy/civic groups, perhaps not surprisingly, ranked

Choice (2.56) more highly than the other subgroups, and were much less inclined to support Equity.

Table 16: Rank-Ordering Value Preferences of Subgroups, by Value

	Mean Rank-Ordering Preference, by Value:			
	Quality	Efficiency	Equity	Choice
Respondent Subgroup and Subgroup n for Question 9:				
Legislators (n=10)	1.20	2.90	2.20	3.70
Other Government (n=8)	1.13	3.13	2.50	3.25
Interest Groups (n=11)	1.27	3.09	2.45	3.18
Charter Authorizers (n=13)	1.23	3.08	2.15	2.85
Business/Advocacy/Civic (n=9)	1.44	2.89	3.11	2.56
<i>Overall Mean Rank</i>	<i>1.25</i>	<i>3.08</i>	<i>2.50</i>	<i>3.16</i>

Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix of Validity

To test the construct validity of using three different measures of value preference (paired statements representing the four instrumental values in Question 7; the forced-choice format in Question 8; and rank-ordering in Question 9), the Multitrait-Multimethod (MTMM) Matrix was used. This method, developed by Campbell & Fiske (1959) and described more recently by Sawilowsky (2002), provides a means of measuring the validity of different traits using different methods. In this study, there are four traits (the instrumental values of Quality, Efficiency, Equity, and Choice) and three methods (described above from Questions 7-9).

Two types of validity are provided by MTMM matrices: *convergent validity* between different methods involving the same trait (e.g., the three different methods in this study for assessing preferences for Quality) and *discriminant validity* between different methods and different traits. One would expect to find higher correlations between different measures of the same trait (convergent validity), as measures of the same trait should be in agreement even if they are gathered using different measures. Stated differently, policy elites who favored Quality in the paired statement format used in Question 7 would also be predicted to favor Quality in the forced-choice format from Question 8 and in the rank-ordering format from Question 9. Using different measures and different traits (discriminant validity), one would expect smaller, yet still positive, correlations to emerge.

To measure both types of validity, SPSS was used to run correlations between the different traits and methods. Results shown in Appendix I demonstrate the construct validity of using three different measures of value preference, as positive (and often statistically significant) correlations emerge from all twelve correlations of convergent, or same trait/different method, validity. Within the Quality trait, for example, the first method (represented by "Qual1," or the paired statement format from Question 7) has a correlation of .157 with the second method ("Qual2," the forced-choice format from Question 8) and .250 with the third method ("Qual3," the rank-ordering format from Question 9). Neither of these correlations is particularly strong, however, nor significant at the .01 or .05

levels. The correlation between Qual2 and Qual3 is somewhat stronger, at .344, and is significant at the .05 level. Convergent validity is notably higher, however, for the other three traits (Efficiency, Equity, and Choice) – and Equity in particular, with all three correlations involving this trait significant at the .01 level. The average of the 12 same trait/different method correlations (e.g, those of “Qual1” against both “Qual2” and “Qual3,” “Eff1” against both “Eff2” and “Eff3,” etc.) was .502.

It is also interesting to note that the highest correlations within all four traits were between the second and third methods of measuring value preference (Question 8 and Question 9). This is seen in the correlations between “Qual2 and Qual3” (.344, significant at the .05 level), between “Eff2” and “Eff3” (.773, significant at the .01 level), between “Eq2” and “Eq3” (.781, also significant at the .01 level), and between “Ch2” and “Ch3” (.917, also significant at the .01 level). One interpretation of this result is that correlations involving the first method (“Qual1,” “Eff1,” “Eq1,” and “Ch1”) against the second and third methods were weaker because the statements used in this method (Question 7) to represent the four values caused respondents to perceive the values differently than they did when the values appeared on their own (e.g., without the use of representative statements) in Questions 8 and 9.

Measures of divergent, or different trait/different method validity, were, as predicted, lower than the convergent validity correlations described above – and

many were negative. Appendix I shows that the average of the 36 correlations of this type was $-.169$, and 26 of the 36 were negative. This is contrary to conventional MTMM analyses, where negative correlations are typically few, and results from the nature of the methods used in this study. In each of the three methods (Questions 7-9), the rating or preference by an individual policy elite for one of the four traits (values) gave that trait a positive score, with the non-preferred trait receiving a corresponding negative score. This feature of the methods used, along with the fact that individual respondents varied in terms of the strength of their preference for the traits in the three different measures used, resulted in an unusually high number of negative correlations. The overall result emerging from the convergent validity (same trait/different method) correlations is unaffected, however, and confirms the overall construct validity of using three different methods to measure value preferences.

Contrasting Definitions of the Four Instrumental Values

Questions 7-9 provided survey respondents with three different formats for indicating their preference for each of the four instrumental values in relation to the others. In developing the survey instrument, however, a question arose that Marshall and colleagues apparently chose not to address in their design of Question 7: how would one know whether policy elites completing the survey were defining and operationalizing the four values in a similar manner, given their diverse professional backgrounds and involvement in education?

Further complicating this question is that working definitions that Marshall and colleagues developed, but did not explicitly attach to each of the four values, were in some instances very general, abstract, ambiguous, and/or multi-dimensional. Quality, for example, was defined rather vaguely as “the use of public resources to match professionally-determined standards of excellence, proficiency, or ability.” Efficiency was characterized as two-dimensional, with both economic and accountability components. Equity was defined perhaps a bit more clearly as “the redistribution of resources to meet morally or societally-defined needs within schools,” although the Marshall study noted that this value can take a number of different forms in terms of policy action, ranging from desegregation to requirements for educating students with disabilities. Choice, finally, is perhaps readily understood in a general sense, but its definition as provided by Marshall and colleagues is quite vague: “the presence of a range of options for action, as well as the ability to select a preferred option.” Does this refer to a range of options for *parents and children* in choosing schools, for *schools* in being able to choose their mission and curriculum, or something else entirely?

With these considerations in mind, it was thought desirable to develop some basis, however imprecise and incomplete, of determining how respondents were defining and operationalizing the four values. To this end, two definitions for each value were developed based upon the definitions and/or examples gleaned from Marshall *et al*; in some cases, these were re-wordings of the paired value

statements they had used that were re-tested in Question 7. Respondents were asked, in Question 10, to assess the extent to which each of the definitions developed for this research corresponded to their own understanding of the four values.

The two definitions of each value that were developed and presented to respondents were as follows:

- **Quality 1:** Quality means that the state defines standards for excellence, and develop methods (such as standardized tests) for measuring progress
- **Quality 2:** Quality means that the state, after establishing standards and methods for measuring progress, allocates public resources to achieve these goals
- **Efficiency 1:** Efficiency means that schools should attempt to minimize costs while maximizing gains in performance and outcomes.
- **Efficiency 2:** Efficiency means schools should be accountable for their performance and outcomes.
- **Equity 1:** Equity means fairness in the allocation and use of resources for all K-12 education.
- **Equity 2:** Equity means providing additional resources and support to overcome identified disadvantages and deficiencies among K-12 schools
- **Choice 1:** Choice means the ability of students and parents to choose schools in accordance with their personal goals and interests

- **Choice 2:** Choice means the ability of a school to choose its own mission, curriculum, textbooks, and staff

Table 17 illustrates respondents' reactions to these contrasting definitions for each of the four values. In the case of Quality, the data show that respondents did not identify particularly strongly with either definition, although there was a slight preference for Quality 2, which spelled out that the state would allocate public resources to achieve the goals and standards it had established. Some of the difference in reaction to the two definitions of Quality may be attributable to respondents having a visceral and negative reaction to the "standardized test" example that appeared in the definition of Quality 1.

Table 17: Respondents' Agreement with Definitions of Values

	Percentage of Respondents Agreeing "Rather Closely" or "Very Closely," by Value and Definition:	Total Responses
Value and Definition:		
Quality 1	41.2%	51
Quality 2	49.0%	51
Efficiency 1	88.2%	51
Efficiency 2	55.0%	51
Equity 1	84.3%	51
Equity 2	62.8%	51
Choice 1	92.2%	51
Choice 2	39.2%	51

Respondents expressed a clear preference, however, for the first definition of Efficiency, which corresponds to the economic dimension of this value identified

by Marshall and colleagues. A very high share of respondents (88.2%) indicated that their understanding of Efficiency matched the first definition either “rather closely” or “very closely,” and Efficiency 1 was close behind Equity 1 as the definition with the highest share of respondents selecting “very closely” as their level of understanding. Maximizing performance and minimizing costs (Efficiency 1) is clearly an important policy goal for Michigan elites, even though the accountability dimension (Efficiency 2) is not unimportant, and may become even more significant due to the emphasis on accountability at the federal level through the recent No Child Left Behind act.

A discernable pattern of preference also emerged with respect to the contrasting definitions of Equity, as 84.3% respondents were in agreement (either “rather closely” or “very closely”) with Equity 1 compared to only 62.8% for Equity 2. I would theorize that the primary difference in reaction to the two definitions is that Equity 1 suggests a more equitable and fair distribution of *existing resources* without raising the notion of *additional resources* that appears in Equity 2. Data from Question 7 showed that the Quality statement within the Finance domain (“Increasing the level of funding for schools”) was by far the least popular of the three statements representing Quality, and it makes sense that the present-day budget difficulties being faced by Michigan policy elites would make many at least somewhat reluctant to advocate for additional spending, even on popular and important programs such as K-12 education.

Perhaps the most interesting finding that emerged from contrasting definitions of the four values involved Choice. As shown above in Table 17, Choice 1 (“Choice means the ability of students and parents to choose schools in accordance with their personal goals and interests”) had a far higher share of respondents (92.2%) who identified with it either “rather closely” or “very closely,” compared to just 39.2% for Choice 2 (“Choice means the ability of a school to choose its own mission, curriculum, textbooks, and staff”). Choice 1, in fact, had the highest share of respondents in these two categories combined of any of the eight definitions. Michigan policy elites, in other words, were much more inclined to define Choice in terms of the ability of *parents and students* to choose schools than the ability of *schools* to choose a mission, curriculum, and staff. This finding is consistent with a principal conclusion from Question 7: despite the negative scores for all three forms of Choice, respondents were much more likely to support this value in its Organization/Governance form (“Providing more choices for families and children”) than in its Program and Finance forms. To the extent to that Choice is supported by Michigan policy elites, then, how it is defined appears to make a big difference, with support rising considerably when this value is defined in terms of providing choices to parents and students as opposed to schools.

Views of Education and Charter Schools

The fourth section of analysis in this chapter turns to Michigan policy elites' views regarding a number of key issues in K-12 education, including charter schools themselves. Examined first are three issues that help to establish a context for interpreting respondents' views toward charter schools and the four instrumental values in educational policy: how respondents view an appropriate role for the state in setting educational policy, the perceived effectiveness of educational policymaking agencies at the state and local level, and the performance of various types of K-12 schools, including traditional public, private, and charter schools. This is followed by an analysis of respondents' views of charter schools themselves, including perceptions of their successes and shortcomings as well as overall level of support for charters and other forms of school choice.

In addition to reporting frequency distributions, this section also reports information obtained from three open-ended questions that invited respondents to comment on several issues related to educational policy and charter schools. These include perceptions of the effectiveness of state educational agencies (Question 13 on the survey instrument), perceived benefits that charter schools are successfully providing (Question 2), and concerns related to charter schools (Question 3). The general format for reporting on these open-ended questions is that respondent comments are summarized within this section and then reproduced verbatim and in their entirety in Appendix G for reference.

Defining an Appropriate Role for the State in Educational Policy

One issue that is clearly of great importance in the debate over charter schools and school choice is the extent to which the state should be involved in public education. Historically, the state's role in this policy arena has been significant, as the U.S. Constitution delegates most authority for establishing and operating public schools to the states, yet advocates of charters and choice have become increasingly vocal in arguing for a reduced state role in favor of greater parental choice. How would this key question be viewed by Michigan policy elites?

To measure this issue, respondents were asked whether a *limited*, *moderate*, or *active* role reflected their view of the most appropriate role for state government in establishing educational policy. Table 18 shows that responses were almost evenly split between those preferring an active role (49.0%) and those preferring a moderate role (43.1%). It was somewhat surprising that only 7.8% of respondents selected a "limited" role for state government; this development is probably attributable to policy elites' comparatively low preference for the Choice value, which would tend to advocate a more limited state role.

Table 18: Views of an Appropriate State Role in Education

	Percentage of Respondents Preferring, by Type of State Role:
State Role:	
Active	49.0%
Moderate	43.1%
Limited	7.8%
Total	100.0%

Perceived Effectiveness of Educational Policymaking Agencies

Michigan policy elites' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of key agencies entrusted with formulating educational policy at the state and local level were another area of interest. Specifically, how did policy elites view the effectiveness of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the State Board of Education (SBE), and their local school board?

Table 19 shows that policy elites were generally quite skeptical about the effectiveness of educational policy agencies, particularly in the case of MDE and SBE. They assigned much higher ratings to their local school board than to MDE and SBE, although even the perceived effectiveness of local school boards was rather modest. Over half of all respondents (52.9%) judged their local board to be either "very effective" or "mostly effective," compared to just 21.6% assigning similar ratings to MDE and 15.7% to SBE. Local school boards, in fact, were the only educational agency that received any "very effective" ratings at all.

Table 19: Perceived Effectiveness of Educational Policymaking Agencies

	Percentage of Respondents Perceiving Policymaking Agency as “Mostly Effective” or “Very Effective,” by Agency:	Total Responses
Educational Agency:		
Local school board	52.9%	51
Michigan Department of Education	21.6%	51
State Board of Education	15.7%	51

An open-ended question (#13 on the survey instrument) allowed respondents to provide additional written comments regarding MDE, SBE, and their local school board. A summary of these comments follows below; a full listing in their entirety appears in Appendix G. It should be noted that several who provided written comments were members or employees of agencies being evaluated (MDE and SBE), so they are in essence commenting on (and in some cases defending) their own performance.

One theme clearly emerging from comments regarding the effectiveness of educational policymaking agencies was negative perceptions of MDE and especially SBE, which certainly matches that which was shown in the frequency distributions above. A sampling of respondent comments included the following:

- “[SBE] is a non-entity in educational policymaking...”
- “[SBE] appears isolated and seldom works within the legislative process...”
- “MDE and SBE are confusing and conflicting organizations...”
- “[SBE] is a flawed concept...”

- “[SBE] is largely irrelevant as a policymaking and oversight body...”
- “SBE is highly politicized...”

Several other comments were critical of the effectiveness of SBE and MDE, but cited lack of staff and resources, as well as administrative reorganization, as the primary reasons. Written comments were generally more complimentary of local school boards, with a number of respondents indicating that education-related issues are most effectively addressed on a local level. Two responses made suggestions or criticisms of the wording and/or intent of Question 12 and/or 13, with one indicating that “effectiveness” should have been spelled out more clearly (“effective at what?”), and another suggesting that the Legislature should have been included as an agency to be rated. One brief and cryptic response, finally, stated simply “Read the newspaper!” – leaving it unclear whether the intended message was (a) that members and employees of educational policymaking entities (and perhaps the researcher involved in this study) *don’t* read the newspaper (and are thus ignorant and uninformed), or (b) all one needs to do in order to judge the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of educational policymaking agencies is to read the newspaper.

Perceptions of K-12 School Performance

It was also desired to know how Michigan policy elites perceived the performance of various types of K-12 schools in Michigan. Specifically, policy elites were asked to assess the performance of the following types of schools:

- Public schools in general
- Public schools in urban areas
- Charter schools
- Private, religious schools
- Private, non-religious schools

Table 20 shows that the performance of public schools in general is perceived quite well by policy elites in the sample, with 82.3% of respondents selecting either “somewhat good performance” or “very good performance” (although only 9.8% were in the latter category). This compares favorably to elites’ assessment of the performance of private schools, both of a religious and non-religious nature, although private non-religious schools had by far the highest number of “very good performance” ratings. Urban public schools received the lowest performance evaluation, with only 29.5% of respondents selecting either “somewhat good performance” or “very good performance.” Assessment of charter school performance was divided much more evenly, with roughly equal numbers of respondents on each end of the performance spectrum.

Table 20: Perceptions of K-12 School Performance among Policy Elites

	Percentage of Respondents Perceiving School Performance as “Somewhat Good” or “Very Good,” by Type of School:	Total Responses
Type of School:		
Private, religious schools	90.2%	48
Public schools in general	82.3%	51
Private, non-religious schools	80.4%	45
Charter schools	45.0%	50
Public schools in urban areas	29.5%	50

Perceived Benefits/Successful Outcomes of Charter Schools

Turning to policy elites’ views of charter schools themselves, the first question on the survey instrument asked respondents to describe how successful Michigan’s charters have been in providing six intended outcomes that were used to argue for their legislative approval in Michigan and other states in the 1990s. Table 21 shows the frequency distribution of the six intended outcomes across the four different potential levels of agreement. Respondents were *most* likely to identify three outcomes as benefits that charters have successfully provided (as measured by the percentage of respondents who chose either “mostly successful” or “very successful”): stimulating high levels of parental involvement (45.1%), providing new educational opportunities to families who lacked such opportunities previously (43.2%), and providing smaller learning environments (43.2%). The latter two outcomes in particular had the highest share of respondents (21.6% in each case) who felt that charters had been “very

successful” in meeting this goal. Respondents were *least* likely, by contrast, to identify serving as laboratories of innovation (13.8%) and improving academic achievement (17.7%) as outcomes that charters have successfully delivered.

Table 21: Intended Benefits of Michigan Charter Schools

	Percentage of Respondents Perceiving Charter Schools as “Mostly Successful” or “Very Successful,” by Intended Benefit of Charters:	Total Responses
Intended Benefit:		
Stimulating high levels of parental involvement	45.1%	51
Providing new educational opportunities for families	43.2%	51
Providing smaller learning environments	43.2%	51
Providing opportunities to focus on the needs of a particular group of students	29.4%	48
Improving cost effectiveness of public education	23.5%	51
Improving academic achievement	17.7%	51
Serving as ‘laboratories of innovation’	13.8%	51

It is also useful to use data regarding respondents’ perceptions of the successes of charter schools to investigate how these perceptions are distributed across the five subgroups of respondents. Appendix J shows this distribution. Each of the 51 respondents received a total score for Question 1, based upon their perception of the success of charters in providing each of the seven intended

benefits. For each intended benefit, a respondent received a score of 1 if s/he felt that charters had been not at all successful in providing this intended benefit, 2 if charters had been somewhat successful, 3 for mostly successful, and 4 for very successful. As such, a higher total score indicates a higher degree of belief that charters have been successful overall in providing intended benefits.

Appendix J shows that respondents varied considerably in their perceptions of charter school success, from a high ranking of 27 provided by Respondents 38 and 50 (a business/advocacy/ civic representative and an “other government official,” respectively) to a low ranking of 9 (from Respondent 47, a state legislator). Among the top seven total scores (25 or higher), four of the five respondent subgroups are represented (all except legislators), although business/advocacy/ civic respondents comprise three of the seven top spots and “other government” officials another two spots. The highest total score provided by a legislator, by contrast, is only the 11th highest score among the 51, whereas two of the five lowest total scores were provided by legislators - indicating that the sample of Michigan legislators was as a group comparatively skeptical about intended benefits provided by charters.

Also shown in Appendix J is one measure of which intended benefits Michigan charter schools are perceived as being the most and the least successful in providing. This measure is simply the total score for each of the seven intended benefits, using the same scoring system (1=not at all successful, 2=somewhat

successful, etc.) described above. By this measure, Michigan charter schools have been most successful in providing smaller learning environments, stimulating parental involvement, and providing new educational opportunities. Charters have been *least* successful, by contrast, in serving as “laboratories of innovation,” improving academic achievement, and improving the cost effectiveness of public education.

Question 2 on the survey asked respondents for open-ended comments regarding perceived benefits that charter schools are successfully providing. Twenty-two respondents provided comments that are listed in Appendix G. The most common themes emerging from these comments are that charters are providing two key benefits: additional choices and opportunities for parents, and competition that spurs traditional public schools to improve and/or innovate. The virtues of having additional choices were described by respondents both in general terms (e.g., for all consumers of education) as well as for disadvantaged and urban populations in particular. Competition, similarly, was seen as a positive for improving public education in a broad sense and because it spurred specific improvements or innovations in traditional public schools such as all-day kindergarten, better communication with parents, and themed focus areas. Other benefits of charters cited by respondents included greater safety, the formation of a “nationally unique partnership” between public schools and a tribally-controlled community college (obviously referring to Bay Mills Community College; see discussion in “Legislative Summary” section), and the alleged “...uncovering of

evidence that many intermediate school districts (ISDs) serve only their member school districts rather than all students within the ISD.”

Several respondents also “jumped the gun” in using Question 2 for the purpose that Question 4 was intended to serve (see discussion below): identifying elements of concern and dissatisfaction related to charters. Specifically, Question 2 elicited a number of negative comments regarding charters, including perceptions that they have not been successful, that they “filter out unwanted elements” who are then left for traditional public schools to educate, and that they create community animosity and resentment. One respondent also indicated that one outcome of charters seen as a benefit to some – a “focus on a particular curricular interest or cultural specific curriculum” – is *not* in the best interest of students, and should therefore not be considered a benefit.

Concerns Regarding Charter Schools

Question 3 probed the extent of respondents’ concerns regarding eight areas of charter school operations identified in previous studies of charters (see Horn & Miron, 1999; Khouri *et al*, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002). Table 22 shows that the greatest areas of concern, as measured by the highest percentage of respondents indicating that they were either “concerned” or “very concerned” about an issue, were “providing services to students with disabilities” and “causing financial hardship for local school

districts.” Respondents were *least* likely, by contrast, to be concerned about charters “creaming off” high-achieving students” and “providing transportation to all students.”

Table 22: Perceived Concerns Regarding Michigan Charter Schools

	Percentage of Respondents “Concerned” or “Very Concerned” About Selected Issues Related to Charter Schools, by Issue	<i>Total Responses</i>
Charter-Related Issues:		
Providing services to students with disabilities	64.7%	50
Causing financial hardship for local school districts	56.9%	50
Disclosure of finances	52.9%	51
Oversight by authorizing agencies	52.9%	50
Training of teachers	51.0%	51
Teacher pay	45.1%	51
Providing transportation to all students	33.3%	50
“Creaming off” high-achieving students	27.5%	50

As was done for Question 1 dealing with intended benefits of charters, it is possible to show the distribution of respondent concerns regarding charter schools across the five subgroups of respondents. Appendix K offers one portrayal of this distribution. Each of the 51 respondents again received a total score, based upon their level of concern with each of the eight potential issues associated with charters identified in Question 3. A respondent received a score of 1 if s/he was not at all concerned about that issue, 2 for being somewhat

concerned, 3 for being concerned, and 4 for being very concerned. Thus, a higher total score indicates greater level of concern regarding these eight issues.

Appendix K shows that the 51 respondents again varied in their concerns related to charters, from total scores of 32 (indicating the highest overall amount of concern) to 8 (indicating the least overall concern). Legislators and other government officials each occupied two of the top five “most concerned” slots (with scores of at least 30), while at the other end of the spectrum the five lowest slots (with scores of less than 10) had two scores that were provided by business/advocacy/civic representatives. Using total scores for each of the eight concerns, the issues of the greatest concern to the sample as a whole included providing services to students with disabilities, causing financial hardship to local school districts, and oversight by authorizing agencies. The issue of the *least* concern by far was the creaming of students, followed by teacher pay and providing transportation to students.

As in the case of perceived benefits of charter schools, survey respondents were also given an open-ended opportunity (in Question 4) to provide comments on charter school-related concerns. A total of 28 respondents provided interesting and varied comments on this topic (see full listing in Appendix G).

One subset of comments sought to refute the intent of Question 4 by arguing that there were *no* concerns about charter schools, and/or that alleged concerns had

been blown out of proportion by charter opponents. One response argued that "...Any problems [with charters] lie in the continued 'anger' from traditional district personnel toward charter schools," while another decried "...the many untrue statements that have been used by the education establishment in their relentless attack on charter schools" and still another proclaimed that "charter schools have been given a bad rap." Another sidestepped the question in a sense by seeking to apply concerns regarding charters to traditional public schools as well; this respondent argued that "...Poor schools are poor schools whether they are PSAs [public school academies] or traditional." A final "concern" expressed by two respondents had nothing to do with the list of possible concerns provided in Question 4; these policy elites were instead concerned about *not having enough* charters.

Yet another respondent, in a comment that raises a valid point about potential bias in the survey instrument, described Question 4 as a "loaded question" whose (false) premise was that each of the possible concerns regarding charters was true. This respondent stated that the wording of the question "...assumes that the underlying premise of the question is true and that charter schools are 'not living up to expectations.' It asks how concerned we are; not whether the statement is true. For example, it assumes that there were expectations about teacher pay when the law was passed; that was never an issue in the debate." It is not clear, in retrospect, how Question 4 (as well as Question 3, which also

dealt with charter-related concerns) could have been worded to avoid this perception of bias, but the comments of this respondent do raise a valid point.

A larger subset of open-ended responses addressed charter-related concerns directly, agreeing with many of the listed concerns and adding others in several cases. A perceived lack of oversight on the part of authorizing agencies was a common theme, as were financial disclosure and the involvement of private and for-profit companies in the management and operation of charters. Several respondents expressed concern about allegations of religious involvement in charters, low performance by charter students on standardized tests, the hiring of uncertified teachers, and charters not serving appropriate numbers of special needs students. Others stated their concern that charters are engaged in sending children with disciplinary problems back to traditional public schools, while another made the interesting observation that charters "...are starting to offer the same excuses for failure as traditional public schools – 'we get all the kids who have problems' or 'we don't get the resources that traditional public schools get.'" A final respondent offered the interesting – and perhaps patronizing – argument that "Parents who send their children to charter schools may not be well-equipped to make educated decisions on whether or not a student should attend, and/or remain in a charter school."

General Support for Charters and Choice-Related Initiatives

Question 5 on the survey investigated respondents' overall level of support for charters and several other forms of school choice that either exist or have been proposed in Michigan and other states. Table 23 shows that the form of choice that respondents were most likely to be either "supportive" or "very supportive" of were allowing more inter-district transfers and development of more magnet schools. They were least likely to favor three forms of choice that do not exist in Michigan at the present time: a general statewide voucher system, a voucher system open to low-income students, and tax credits for private school tuition. Support for charters was mixed, with a small majority of respondents (53.1%) either "supportive" or "very supportive" of this type of school.

Table 23: Support for Charter Schools and School Choice

	Percentage of Respondents “Supportive” or “Very Supportive” of Charter Schools and Other Forms of School Choice, by Type of Choice:	Total Responses
Level of Support For:		
Development of more magnet schools by public school districts	85.9%	49
Allowing more inter-district transfers	81.6%	49
The charter school movement in Michigan	53.1%	49
Tax credits for private school tuition in Michigan	22.5%	50
A voucher system open only to low-income students in Michigan	20.4%	49
A general statewide voucher system open to all students in Michigan	18.4%	49

It is again useful to show some measure of the distribution of support for charter schools and other forms of school choice across the five subgroups of respondents as well as by individual respondent. A measure of this distribution can be obtained by calculating a total “choice support” score for each of the 51 respondents based upon their expressed level of support for each of the six forms of school choice appearing in Question 5 on the survey instrument. A respondent was assigned a score of 1 if s/he was very opposed to a particular form of choice, 2 for being opposed, 3 for being supportive, and 4 for being very supportive. As such, a higher total score indicates a higher overall level of support for these six forms of school choice.

As shown in Appendix L, there is considerable variance in respondents' support for charter schools and other forms of school choice. Individual total scores ranged from a high of 24 (indicating the highest level of support) to a low of 6 (indicating the lowest level of support). Among the five highest scores (21 or higher), two were provided by interest groups, while among the five lowest scores (four scores of 7 and a single 6), two were from business/advocacy/civic groups. Looking at total scores for each of the six forms of school choice, two distinct groupings are evident. One consists of three forms of school choice (magnet schools, inter-district transfers, and charter schools, in declining order of support) that received high support ratings. At the other end of the spectrum, a second group included the three remaining forms of school choice – a general (statewide) voucher program, a voucher program targeted toward low-income students, and tax credits for private school tuition, again in declining order of support - which were supported to a far lesser extent than the first group.

Although Question 5 did not solicit respondent comments, one person who strongly supported all forms of choice (with the curious exception of magnet schools) remarked that "Choice and competition are the key to improvement in every realm of human life.... Education is no exception."

Charter Schools as a “Stepping Stone” to More School Choice?

The survey instrument posed the following question (#6) to respondents: “Please describe your level of agreement with the following statement: ‘Charter schools in Michigan represent a ‘stepping stone’ on the path to other forms of school choice.’” This question was intended to test a popular hypothesis regarding charter schools, namely that they are not a final goal in and of themselves, but rather represent a “stepping stone” toward more advanced forms of school choice such as vouchers and/or tax credits for private school tuition. A clear majority of Michigan policy elites who completed the survey responded to this question, with most either agreeing (52.9%) or strongly agreeing (11.8%) with the statement. As was true for Question 5, one respondent provided an unsolicited comment for Question 6: “While that [charters serving as a “stepping stone”] may be true in other regions, I do not believe that is the case here [in Michigan].”

In retrospect, the pattern of responses on a few surveys made me wonder whether some respondents may have interpreted Question 6 in different, and unintended, ways. Specifically, the response patterns of some policy elites suggest that they perceived Question 6 as asking whether charters *were* serving as a stepping stone to other forms of school choice (the intended interpretation of the question), while a few others may have interpreted Question 6 as asking whether charters *should* serve such a role. To the extent such confusion actually

existed, the question could perhaps have been worded differently (to emphasize the intended interpretation), or even broken out into two separate questions.

A retrospective comment regarding questions related to charter perceptions is that it would have been useful to include one additional question that measured respondents' level of knowledge of, and familiarity with, charters. This is because the diversity of the sample of respondents, in terms of the *amount* and the *nature* of involvement and interest in education and charter schools, quickly became apparent in reading their responses and comments. Some are involved in charter policy on a regular basis, following the issue closely and debating its progress and problems, while others – despite an active involvement in education either in a general sense or in issues other than charter schools – were clearly much less knowledgeable and well-informed about charters. Having respondents describe their role in education (e.g., a legislator, leader of an interest group, member of the State Board of Education, etc.) provides some description of the amount and nature of respondents' involvement, but it was clear that both *within* and *across* these subgroups of elites there existed a wide range of involvement and interest in charters in terms of how closely the issue is monitored and thought about. A simple question asking respondents to characterize their level of knowledge regarding charters would have had obvious limitations, such as the possibility of trying to appear more knowledgeable than they actually are, but such a question might also have provided an additional variable for comparing attitudes toward charters and the four instrumental values.

Chapter 5: Key Relationships and Supplemental Information from Surveys and Telephone Interviews

The preceding discussion of major findings relied primarily on frequency distributions from survey questions and responses to open-ended questions in order to report the views of Michigan policy elites. The original intent of Chapter 5 was to move next to an analysis of expected relationships between key independent and dependent variables as examined through the use of crosstabulations. In particular, variables involving elites' views of charter schools and the four instrumental values in educational policy were expected to vary in accordance with independent or "predictor" variables such as an appropriate role for the state in setting educational policy (Question 11 from the survey), perceptions regarding the effectiveness of educational policymaking agencies such as the Michigan Department of Education and the State Board of Education (Question 12) and a "personal stake" in education and charter schools (Questions 15 and 17-19). The chapter would then summarize supplemental information emerging from the survey and from telephone interviews with current and former legislators.

Following an analysis of completed surveys, however, relatively few expected relationships between variables turned out to be of interest in terms of noteworthy differences between respondent subgroups. This appears due to several factors, including the relatively small overall sample size as well as small subgroup cell sizes within many of the crosstabs (as one example, only 7.8% of

the 51 total respondents selected “limited” as their preferred role for the state in education). In other cases, such as respondents reporting involvement in charter schools vs. traditional public schools, there was simply little variation among respondents with respect to issues such as perceived benefits that charter schools provide (Question 1) and charter-related concerns (Question 3).

Relationships Involving the Political Affiliation of Respondents

One of the few examples of noteworthy relationships between variables that emerged from the survey data involved the self-identified political affiliation of Michigan policy elites. As noted previously (see Table 6), 29.4% of respondents described their own political affiliation as Republican, 39.3% as Democrat, and 21.6% as neither Republican nor Democrat. Specific relational hypotheses between political affiliation and views of charter schools and the Choice value were not obvious at the start of this research, as those on both ends of the political spectrum have been shown to support these concepts – albeit for somewhat divergent reasons. Republicans have perhaps been the most ardent backers, stemming from their belief in limited government and the power of market forces and competition. Democrats, given their traditional base of support among organized labor - and teachers' unions in particular - have been somewhat more reluctant to embrace charters and Choice, although the dismal performance of urban public schools, coupled with the strong support Democrats have traditionally received from the urban and non-white constituencies whose

children attend low-performing urban schools, has placed many Democrats in an uncomfortable position on this issue.

To further explore these relationships, the political affiliation of Michigan policy elites was crosstabulated against three key dependent variables representing views on charters and Choice:

- The extent to which charters are delivering intended benefits (Question 1)
- Concerns related to charters (Question 3)
- Support for charters and other forms of school choice (Question 5)

With respect to perceived benefits of charter schools, Republican respondents appear more likely than Democrats or those with no political allegiance to believe that charters having been successful in delivering intended outcomes (see Table 24). With the exception of “charters serving as laboratories of innovation,” in fact, Republicans were substantially more likely than Democrats to perceive charters as successful in providing each of the seven intended benefits. Discrepancies between Republicans and Democrats were particularly notable in the case of “charters bring new educational opportunities” (with a difference of 35.1 percentage points between the two groups) and “charters provide smaller learning environments” (with a difference of 33.6 percentage points). There was no clear pattern among those identifying as neither Republican nor Democrat; this group was closer to Republicans on some intended benefits (such as

“charters improve academic achievement”), closer to Democrats on others (such as “charters stimulate parental involvement”), and more likely than either Republicans or Democrats to view some intended benefits (such as “charters serve as laboratories of innovation”) as having been provided.

Table 24: Intended Benefits of Charter Schools by Political Affiliation

	Political Affiliation:		
	Republican	Democrat	Neither Republican nor Democrat
Percent of Respondents Perceiving Charters as “Mostly Successful” or “Very Successful,” by Intended Benefit:			
Charters bring new educational opportunities	66.7% (n=15)	31.6% (n=19)	36.4% (n=11)
Charters serve as laboratories of innovation	6.7% (n=15)	5.3% (n=19)	27.3% (n=11)
Charters improve academic achievement	26.7% (n=15)	0.0% (n=19)	18.2% (n=11)
Charters focus on needs of student groups	40.0% (n=15)	10.5% (n=19)	36.4% (n=11)
Charters stimulate parental involvement	53.3% (n=15)	36.8% (n=19)	45.5% (n=11)
Charters improve cost effectiveness	26.7% (n=15)	0.0% (n=19)	36.4% (n=11)
Charters provide smaller learning environments	60.0% (n=15)	26.4% (n=19)	45.5% (n=11)

Regarding concerns associated with charter schools (see Table 25), the predicted relationship would be that Republicans were less likely than Democrats to be concerned about each of the eight issues associated with charters. The data support this hypothesis, as large differences emerged between Republicans and Democrats along each of the eight issues; particularly large discrepancies

were seen in “services to students with disabilities” (difference of 54.7 percentage points between the two groups) and “disclosure of finances” (difference of 52.2 percentage points). Respondents with no political preference fell between Republicans and Democrats on each of the eight issues, and were closer to Republicans on some (“oversight by authorizer,” for example) and closer to Democrats on others (“teacher training,” for example).

Table 25: Concerns Involving Charter Schools by Political Affiliation

	Political Affiliation:		
	Republican	Democrat	Neither Republican nor Democrat
Percent of Respondents “Concerned” or “Very Concerned,” by Potential Issue:			
Disclosure of finances	26.7% (n=15)	78.9% (n=19)	45.5% (n=11)
Oversight by authorizer	40.0% (n=15)	73.7% (n=19)	45.5% (n=11)
Teacher training	33.3% (n=15)	63.2% (n=19)	54.5% (n=11)
Teacher pay	13.3% (n=15)	68.4% (n=19)	45.5% (n=11)
Financial hardship to existing public schools	33.3% (n=15)	78.9% (n=19)	63.6% (n=11)
Providing transportation to students	6.7% (n=15)	47.4% (n=19)	45.5% (n=11)
Services for students with disabilities	40.0% (n=15)	94.7% (n=19)	54.5% (n=11)
“Creaming” of students	13.3% (n=15)	36.8% (n=19)	27.3% (n=11)

The predicted relationship between political affiliation and support for charters and other forms of school choice would find Republicans more likely than

Democrats to support all four forms of school choice. This pattern did in fact emerge from the data shown in Table 26, although it is also true that majorities of Republicans joined Democrats in opposition to both forms of vouchers as well as to tuition tax credits. Those with no political affiliation fell between Republicans and Democrats on three of the four forms of school choice, although they were more likely to support statewide vouchers.

Table 26: Support for Charters and Choice by Political Affiliation

	Political Affiliation:		
	Republican	Democrat	Neither Republican nor Democrat
Percent of Respondents “Supportive” or “Very Supportive,” by Type of School Choice:			
Charter Schools	66.7% (n=15)	36.8% (n=19)	45.5% (n=11)
Statewide Vouchers	20.0% (n=15)	0.0% (n=19)	27.3% (n=11)
Low-Income Vouchers	33.3% (n=15)	0.0% (n=19)	18.2% (n=11)
Tuition Tax Credits	40.0% (n=15)	0.0% (n=19)	18.2% (n=11)

Why Charter Legislation was Passed and Official Positions on Charters

Survey questions 20 and 21 asked respondents to provide additional information regarding charter schools and instrumental values by describing, in an open-ended format, (a) their understanding of why Michigan’s charter school legislation was passed, and (b) their organization’s position on charters, if one exists.

Almost all of the 51 completed surveys contained comments to one or both of these questions; a summary of comments appears below, with a complete listing in Appendix G.

Regarding respondents' understanding of why charter school legislation was passed in Michigan (Question 20), the most common perception by far was that charters were created to promote the Choice instrumental value by providing parents with additional options in public education. Many within this group listed Choice by itself as the main reason for charter legislation, while others described Choice within a context of additional benefits that this value would provide, such as encouraging traditional public schools to innovate and/or improve, making choices available specifically to low-income parents, or reducing bureaucracy within K-12 education.

A smaller subgroup of respondents, however, perceived very different reasons for the passage of charter legislation in Michigan. Several stated that the true intent of charters was to siphon public money to private interests and schools. One noted that while promoting Choice was the *stated* reason for the law, it was really "...a thinly veiled attempted [sic] to provide support (dollars and/or vouchers) for private schools..." Another stated that some backers "...saw a way to get public funds into traditional private schools without having to go to vouchers...For others it was a way to make money..." Others perceived charters as an attack on the traditional public school establishment, and teachers' unions

in particular; one declared that the purpose of charters was “to bring demise to the MEA,” while another noted that “Governor Engler was not happy with the teachers’ union...”

The vast majority of respondents who described their organization’s position on charters (Question 21) characterized it as supportive of the movement. Some expressions of support were unconditional and unequivocal, and in several instances voiced their support for the recent issue of raising (or eliminating) the cap on university-sponsored charters. One respondent noted that his/her organization favors charters “...as a step on the road to full school choice” (presumably in the form of vouchers and/or tuition tax credits for private schools). Other respondents took a more conditional position on charters. While only one flatly stated that his/her organization is opposed to the concept, others couched their support with conditions that included opposition to increasing the cap (or continuing to have a limited number of charters), a desire for “sufficient oversight and financial disclosure” (implying that such conditions do not currently exist), and encouraging local school boards and ISDs to do the chartering as opposed to universities and community colleges.

Telephone Interviews

To gain additional insight into values that have influenced the policy process related to Michigan charter schools, telephone conversations were held with

three current and three former legislators between late December 2003 and early February 2004. The three current legislators were among a group of 13 who agreed to talk with me regarding their involvement in Senate Bill 393 or House Bill 4148, the two major charter school-related bills from the 2003 legislative session. The three former legislators had proposed or co-sponsored key amendments related to charter schools during legislative sessions prior to 2003. The interviews ranged in duration from approximately 15 minutes to more than one hour.

Since it was not practical in terms of interviewees' time to administer the entire survey by telephone, given the need for respondents to actually be looking at what information questions were asking for and how they should respond (placing an X in the appropriate box, etc.), the general format of the telephone interviews was to begin by asking for thoughts on three open-ended questions from the survey instrument (20, 2, and 4, usually in that order). Question 20 generally provided a good starting point, as it asked interviewees to describe their sense of what kinds of values were being promoted by the passage of Michigan's charter school law and who was doing the promoting. Questions 2 and 4 were a logical next step, as they were readily fashioned into queries about what has gone well and not so well in the charter school experiment. Depending on the time availability of the respondent and their level of interest in charters, discussion moved next into any number of topics related to charter schools and

public school performance. Only two of the six interviewees agreed to and actually did complete the survey instrument itself, however.

Four of the six interviews could be characterized as very informative, with interviewees providing insightful commentary regarding their own views of charter schools and the values that have influenced the policy process in this area. Among the two that proved to be less informative, one former legislator shared a few general thoughts about charters (all of a positive nature), but only after beginning with the acknowledgement that “I wasn’t really all that involved in the process...my name was just listed as a sponsor” of charter-related legislation. In the case of the second less informative interview, it is not clear why this particular legislator agreed to be interviewed in the first place, as he was very brief and curt in his responses and provided few additional details even when prodded.

In terms of specific findings from the more informative interviews, respondents identified several key reasons for the passage of charter school legislation in Michigan. One line of thinking can be thought of as “global” in nature, in that decisions to support or oppose charters are based upon the extent to which one believes in providing additional choices to parents and students within publicly-funded K-12 education. One interviewee continually referred to education as “the most fundamental decision that parents make on behalf of their children,” while another described charters as “providing new opportunities to parents to make

decisions for their children's education." This second respondent, as had several in the open-ended questions from the survey, drew analogies between education and other consumer products; he noted that "we have a choice between shopping at Wal-Mart and going to Meijer, so why shouldn't we be able to choose schools for our children?"

For two other interviewees, however, decisions regarding charter school legislation are made almost entirely in terms of local impact within their district. One described his opposition to charter-related legislation as being motivated in large part by political pressure received from the largest school district in his political district, which he described as having lost substantial amounts of money to charters. This particular legislator was also annoyed by the fact that the authorizing agency for several schools in his district was located far away, thus infringing upon the notion of local control.

A second legislator, who stated that he was "proud to be a moderate" within his party, described his opposition to charters as stemming largely from local concerns. "I vote my district," he declared, and described beginning consideration of charter-related legislation with the question of "how does this help my district?" He rattled off numerous statistics about the high test scores and graduation rates of traditional public schools within his district, described high levels of interest and involvement in school board politics, and noted that it was considered "a sin" for parents to miss parent-teacher conferences. On the

financial side, he declared that “the K-12 school budget is a pie,” and that the charters located in his district “don’t give one penny back” to the local schools; he also asked rhetorically why he would ever vote “to send money to management companies located across the state or the country?” Perhaps not coincidentally, this legislator also noted that immediate family members were current or retired public school teachers, and described “a very close relationship” with institutions of higher education around the state, having had relatives who enjoyed long careers as administrators. This particular legislator acknowledged that his stance on charters have made him somewhat unpopular within his party, but unapologetically stated that he had no interest in being “Mr. Good Guy” to others in his party if it meant slighting local school districts.

Another thoughtful response to the question of why charter legislation was enacted was provided by an interviewee who commented that “charters meant different things to different people” and that there were “lots of different agendas” at work. For some, it was the promotion of choice, while for others (whom he described as “enemies of public education”) it was an opportunity to experiment with moving public education into the private sector.

As far as perceived successes and problems associated with Michigan’s charter school experiment, telephone interviewees expressed a range of opinion. Several indicated that they had few, if any, concerns related to charters; one characterized the negative publicity received by some charters as “completely

overblown,” and wondered why greater attention wasn’t devoted to traditional public schools “where failure has been tolerated for years.” Some charters have done well and others haven’t, remarked another interviewee, but the beauty of the charter movement is that parents are free to remove their children at any time from schools that don’t meet their expectations. “Charters must be doing something right,” he stated, pointing out that most charters have waiting lists and that “nobody is forcing parents to send their kids there.”

Other interviewees were more cautious in their praise of charters. One indicated that “charters serve a niche,” particularly in urban areas for students who have fared poorly in traditional public school settings, but “I still don’t think we know enough about how they’re doing in terms of academics.” This former legislator acknowledged some “nice success stories” among charters, but also pointed to “dreadful failures” within the experiment, and was particularly concerned about charters not serving – and not even *attempting* to serve – students with disabilities. Another indicated his view that “there’s a need for charters for some students,” particularly those in need of alternative education, but that “we ought to concentrate our efforts on educating all students” rather than the small number enrolled in charters. Still another described his concerns about accountability and oversight on the part of authorizing agencies, and was especially cautious about having private sector management companies involved.

A final insight from one telephone interview was perhaps noteworthy more for its commentary on the political process than anything specific to charter school policy. This particular interviewee stated that his vote on a charter school bill was a “trade” with another legislator for his vote on another bill unrelated to charters. “This business is all about relationships,” the legislator stated, and went on to describe geographic differences in the Legislature, declaring that the delegation from urban areas (and Detroit in particular) as “very, very weak” in terms of introducing legislation and getting it passed. This particular legislator defined success in terms of numbers of bills introduced and passed, and quoted numerous statistics in this regard. These comments illustrate yet another perspective on legislators’ stances toward charters: for some, the issue is “global” but still rooted in education; for others, the issues are very much local; and for others, political considerations and relationships not necessarily related to education take precedence.

Information from Incomplete Surveys

As indicated in Chapter 1, two respondents that were contacted and invited to complete the survey declined to do so (citing time constraints), but were willing to provide some general commentary regarding their thoughts on charters. These comments were generally similar in nature to those made during telephone interviews, and thus are included here.

One such respondent indicated that he is “generally pro-charter,” but then described a series of conditions for his support similar to those identified by several telephone interviewees above. These included having charters developed locally (by school boards and other authorizing agencies located in the community) and only by non-profit entities. This respondent noted that “Michigan and other states with free booting charter regimes” (presumably referring to authorizing agencies that issue charters far from their headquarters and then experience difficulty overseeing them) have “seen the spread of good charters, bad charters, and indifferent charters...”

The second respondent - a legislator who has voted against charter expansion - provides a nice contrast to the first. His primary motivation, similar to several of the telephone interviewees, is local and financial interest. He stated “...My votes against charter...expansion are based on...the fact that my local (traditional) public school district has grave concerns about charters drawing students (and revenue) from them. If we lose two kids per classroom, we still have to have a teacher in that classroom, lights, heat, custodial service, etc. I have a strong relationship with my school district and administrators and teachers, and my votes are in part a reflection of that support.” This respondent also questioned whether charters are in fact offering a viable alternative to traditional public schools in terms of student achievement: “...I also remain unconvinced that charter schools have demonstrated that they are a better alternative to traditional public schools. As soon as it's proven to me that charters provide consistently

better education, I'll be more open to expansion. It seems irresponsible to just open the door to many more charter schools and risk damaging the traditional public schools without strong evidence that it's better for education."

Chapter 6: Discussion and Review of Hypotheses

The principal research objective of this work has been to learn more about the value preferences of selected Michigan policy elites with respect to charter schools and the instrumental values that influence educational policy. In this respect, perhaps the most significant findings emerging from this work inform the first major hypothesis, involving the relative preferences of Michigan policy elites for the four instrumental values in educational policy. Specifically, this hypothesis predicted that in contrast to the findings of Marshall and colleagues – and consistent with the findings of Garn - the Choice value would emerge as the most important in Michigan, followed in order by Efficiency, Quality, and Equity.

What emerged, however, largely confirms, rather than contradicting, the central thesis of the Marshall study, in that the importance of Quality relative to the other three values was verified. In each of the three measures used on this survey instrument to compare preference for one value against the others (paired statements in Question 7, direct preference in the paired comparison format of Question 8, and the rank-ordering format of Question 9), Quality was the clear preference of policy elites in Michigan. In Question 7, Quality was the only value to receive positive scores across each of the three “domains” in educational policy, and was the favored value for all five subgroups of respondents by wide margins. The overall “order of finish” among the four values in Question 7 was identical to the order of the Marshall study as well: Quality a clear favorite,

followed by Efficiency and Equity grouped closely in second and third place, with Choice a distant fourth. Statistically significant differences at the .05 level were also found between Quality and each of the other three values using paired samples T-tests, as well as between Efficiency and Choice (Table 13).

At the same time, however, it is by no means the case that this study's findings in terms of value preferences are identical those of Marshall and colleagues. Most notably, the order in which the instrumental values were preferred by Michigan policy elites behind Quality varied considerably in accordance with the type of measure used. Using the comparison of paired statements format (Question 7), which was the only measure employed by Marshall and colleagues, the order of preference in this work was, as noted, identical to the Marshall study. In the second and third measures of preference from this study that were not used by Marshall and colleagues, however, the order of preference looks somewhat different. In the second format, with values contrasted against one another without the use of policy statements (Question 8), Equity is the value that fares best in head-to-head competition with Quality, followed by Choice and then Efficiency a distant last. In the third format, using rank-ordering of the four values (Question 9), Equity again finishes in second place behind Quality, with Efficiency third - slightly ahead of Choice (see Table 15).

Another notable contrast of this work to the Marshall study was that Quality was *not* the highest-ranked value for Michigan policy elites across all three policy

domains in Question 7. While Quality was highest in both Program and Organization/Governance in these findings, it ranked *third* in Finance, behind Efficiency and Equity. While Marshall and colleagues found Choice ranked “a distant last” in Finance, this value ranked second (albeit still with a negative score) within this domain in this work (see Tables 10 and 11).

Similarly, while Quality was the preferred value among all five subgroups of respondents, notable differences in value preference among the groups emerged from Question 7 (Table 12). For example, Business/Advocacy/Civic respondents had Quality tied with Efficiency as its most favored value, and this same group rated Choice more highly than the other four subgroups while decisively rejecting Equity. Legislators as a group were much more inclined to reject Choice, while charter school authorizers soundly rejected Efficiency and somewhat surprisingly did not embrace Choice. In Question 9, which asked respondents to rank-order the four values in accordance with their preferences (see overall results in Table 15), differences again emerged among the five subgroups, as Business/Advocacy/Civic respondents again ranked Choice (along with Efficiency) comparatively highly, while Equity was relatively popular among charter school authorizers (Table 16).

In terms of what can be inferred from findings involving these three distinct measures of value preference, it should be reemphasized that the overall construct validity of using three different measures of value preference (jumping

momentarily ahead to the fourth major hypothesis) was validated by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix (MTMM) correlations discussed in Chapter 4. As noted, the 12 correlations of convergent validity, involving different measures (Questions 7, 8, and 10) of the same “trait” (each of the four instrumental values) produced an average correlation of .502. This was the expected result, since it was predicted that elites who preferred the Quality value in one measure would do likewise for the other measures. Particularly high correlations were found within all four traits between the second and third measures of value preference, Question 8 and Question 9 – perhaps because the use of statements to represent the four values in Question 7 caused respondents to evaluate the values differently than when the values appeared on their own in Questions 8 and 9.

In explaining differences in findings between this research and the Marshall study specific to Question 7, it seems likely that the wording of the statements chosen to represent the four values, combined with the political, fiscal, and educational contexts of their work and this research, is a key factor. Simply put, it is logical that the statements chosen to represent the four values, combined with contextual factors such as political climate and the fiscal status of government and school districts, is responsible for at least some of the differences in how the values were perceived in the Marshall study from the mid-1980s and this research in Michigan in late 2003. It is quite plausible, for example, that a statement which calls for “increasing the level of funding for schools” (the Quality

statement within the Finance domain) would be received more favorably by policy elites at the time of the Marshall study than by their counterparts today, with states facing multi-billion dollar budget shortfalls.

Regarding differences in this research that emerged with respect to the order in which the values finished (behind Quality) across the three measures, several potential explanations appear to have some merit. The “strength of wording” issue discussed above, when considered in conjunction with contextual factors such as time, political climate, and fiscal environment, is one possibility, as certain values may have benefited from having statements that defined and operationalized them while others suffered from this format. It is possible, in other words, that statements used to represent the four values in Question 7 might have made some values (notably Efficiency) preferable in a way that disappeared when the values appeared on their own, without statements to represent them as in Question 8. This might help explain why Efficiency finished second in Question 7, but fourth in Question 8 and third in Question 9.

Another possible explanation for differences across the three measures of value preference involves their “directness.” More specifically, while policy elites did not explicitly know that the statements they were comparing and choosing between in Question 7 were intended to represent the four instrumental values, since the statements were not labeled as such on the survey instrument, they *did* know in the other two questions that they were making “direct” choices between

the values, either in a paired format (Question 8) or in a rank-ordering format (Question 9). In other words, a respondent might not immediately identify the statement “increasing the level of funding for schools” with the Quality value (if they had thought at all about what this value meant in terms of policy initiatives), but would have little choice but to compare Quality directly with the other three values in Questions 8 and 9. As such, Question 7 might be considered a somewhat “indirect” measure of value preference in contrast to the more direct measures employed in the other two questions, with this difference accounting for an unknown portion of the apparent discrepancy in findings.

It may well be the case, then, that Question 7 was substantially different from Questions 8 and 9 in terms of how value preference was measured, and that the real question in explaining differences in findings is why the order of preference behind Quality was different in Questions 8 and 9. There is no obvious answer to this apparent discrepancy, other than to note that numerical differences in the order of finish between the two questions are quite small and perhaps attributable to measurement error. In Question 8, the relative size of the gap between Quality (using the 122 score discussed on page 157) and Equity (73) is roughly proportional to the gap between these two values in Question 9 (a mean rank of 1.25 for Quality and 2.50 for Equity) from Table 15. Choice and Efficiency, similarly, are grouped closely enough together (a score of 41 for Choice vs. 39 for Efficiency from Question 8, and 3.08 for Efficiency vs. 3.16 for

Choice in Question 9 shown in Table 15) to be considered virtually indistinguishable, even though their order flip-flops across the two measures. Question 10, which measured respondents' level of agreement with two contrasting definitions for each of the four values, provides additional insight into how the values were defined and preferred by Michigan policy elites. There was little difference in preference for the definitions of Quality (see Table 17), with fewer than half of respondents agreeing with either of these definitions – both of which emphasize an active role for the state in education (for Quality 1, in defining and measuring standards through the use of tests, and for Quality 2, in allocating resources in pursuit of these goals). Regarding Efficiency, there was a somewhat surprising preference for the Efficiency 1 definition (advocating a minimizing of costs and maximizing of educational gains) over Efficiency 2 (which called for holding schools accountable for performance and outcomes). This finding perhaps illustrates the depth of the budgetary difficulties being confronted by policymakers in Michigan at the time of this writing in 2003-04. An even larger discrepancy existed between policy elites' preference for Choice 1 (emphasizing the ability of students and parents to choose schools) over Choice 2 (emphasizing the ability of schools to choose their own mission, curriculum, textbooks, and staff).

Several themes emerge from Question 10. A first is that Michigan policy elites rejected value definitions (associated with Quality) that promoted or emphasized an active role for the state in education. In the two instances in which resource

allocation was a key element of the contrasting definitions, they took a decidedly cost-conscious approach, preferring Efficiency 1 (with its cost-benefit emphasis) over Efficiency 2 (which promotes accountability in a general sense) and Equity 1 (advocating for fairness in resource allocation) over Equity 2 (which calls explicitly for additional resources provided to schools). Perhaps most notably, they associate the Choice value much more strongly with educational choices provided to students and parents than to schools in the ability to select their own mission, curriculum, and staff.

In the end, findings with respect to the value preferences of Michigan policy elites are somewhat ambiguous, yet also quite informative. Marshall and colleagues concluded that each of the four instrumental values had been emphasized at various points in the history of educational policymaking, and that Quality was the primary value driving the policy process in their six-state sample in the mid-1980s. The current study of Michigan policy elites in late 2003 and early 2004 largely confirms that central conclusion, although the findings simultaneously suggest that the other three values – including Choice – are also very much present within the policy process in Michigan. The fact that the state has nearly 200 charter schools, many of which have waiting lists, in addition to other active forms of school choice at the state and local levels, hardly suggests that Choice is an unimportant or forgotten value, even if it does not emerge as such on a survey using direct, forced-choice comparisons with Quality and the other values.

A second major hypothesis identified prior to beginning this research was that notable differences would emerge with respect to the value preferences of policy elites, particularly across the different “clusters” of elites used in the Marshall study. In the Marshall schematic (see Appendix A), policy elites were divided into five distinct groupings based upon the amount of influence they wielded within the educational policy process. The focus in this research was on the first four clusters (the “insiders,” “near circle,” “far circle,” and “sometimes players”), with the primary hypothesis being that the “insiders” cluster (consisting of legislators) would be more supportive of Choice than the “near circle” (which included education-related interest groups such as teachers’ unions). It was also speculated that appreciable differences in value preferences would emerge *within* clusters, however, that would perhaps be attributable to other variables such as political party affiliation.

In considering the cluster schematic and the results of the Michigan policy elite survey further, however, it became evident that the idea of comparing value preferences across clusters was of limited use, and that the notion of clusters as used in the Marshall study is somewhat flawed. The limited utility of the cluster schematic stems largely from the fact that this study had fewer than half the respondents than did Marshall and colleagues, and that the number of informants within some clusters was too limited to permit any substantive analysis. Within the “insider” cluster, for example – which consisted of Michigan legislators and was found by Marshall and colleagues to be the most influential in educational

policy – only seven completed surveys were received. The “far circle” was even more limited, as it consisted exclusively of the State Board of Education (from whom completed surveys were received from four of the eight members).

Perhaps even more problematic than limited numbers of respondents within some clusters, however, was that the entire cluster schematic used in the Marshall study did not seem to apply particularly well to the sample of Michigan policy elites. In part this was because nearly half of the respondents did not fit intuitively into the groupings and clusters used by Marshall and colleagues.

While a clear match between the two studies existed for some respondents, such as legislators, teacher organizations, and the state board of education, it was not clear where to place respondents such as charter school authorizers, civic associations, business interests, organized labor groups not directly involved in education, educational management organizations that operate charter schools, and advocacy/research organizations involved not just in education, but other policy areas as well. All of these were either policy elites that the Marshall study did not include at all (which seems inappropriate for study in present-day Michigan, given the influence wielded by these groups in educational policy), or were included in the cluster schematic, but were effectively lost within one or more groupings (such as “non-education groups”) whose name did not adequately describe its membership. As such, charter school authorizers and other respondents could have been removed from the study altogether, or a “best guess” made about where to situate them within the cluster framework of the

Marshall study - but either of these actions seemed speculative and may have jeopardized the comparability of findings between the two studies.

A related issue involving the cluster schematic and the second research hypothesis was that the order of importance rankings developed by Marshall and colleagues for the different clusters did not seem to match particularly well with the situation in Michigan at the time of this research. Having individual legislators and the Legislature as a whole comprise the “insiders” cluster, representing the most important policy elites, seems sensible, but ranking the Chief State School Officer third overall and placing teacher organizations within the “near circle” of influence are more questionable – as was the placement of the state board of education into the “far circle” and the vaguely-worded “non-education groups” into the distant “often forgotten players” cluster. Findings from this research pertaining to the perceived effectiveness of the Michigan Department of Education and State Board of Education (in Questions 12 and 13) suggest, in contrast, that the Chief State School Officer and the State Board are ranked *too highly* by the Marshall schematic, in that these policy elites are not nearly as influential in Michigan in 2003 as the Marshall study found in the mid-1980s.

Conversely, business interests and their influence in educational policy also appear misplaced – or perhaps ignored entirely - in the Marshall schematic. Marshall and colleagues did not list this group in their chart at all; they presumably judged the influence of this group of policy elites as limited, and may

have intended to lump them into the generic-sounding “non-education groups” category which was placed within the “often forgotten players” cluster. In either case, it seems clear that not having a category for business interests - or placing it in the “often forgotten players” cluster, if that was what Marshall and colleagues did in fact intend to do – represents a substantial flaw in the cluster schematic. It seems clear, from present-day educational policy debates in Michigan and other states, that the influence of business interests such as Michigan Manufacturers and Commerce in educational policy matters is significant. Business interests, it could be argued, should constitute their own grouping within the cluster schematic, and they should rank much higher than the “often forgotten players” cluster – arguably as highly as the “near circle,” just below legislators. When policy changes ranging from school funding and curriculum to the availability of choice-based options are proposed, business interests such are tremendously influential players – arguably more so than the Michigan Department of Education and even the State Board, which many respondents in this research judged to be largely ineffective and non-influential.

A final issue with the cluster schematic used in the Marshall study was that the distinction between “education interest groups (combined)” and “teacher organizations” within the “near circle” cluster, and between “school boards association” and “administrators’ associations” groupings in the “sometimes players” cluster, were not clear. Specifically, it was not clear which groups of policy elites *other than* associations of teachers, school boards, and

administrators were included in “education interest groups (combined),” and why Marshall and colleagues listed these three types of policy elites separately. It might also be argued, although this research in Michigan did not explicitly measure this, that the influence of these groupings of educational professionals (and teachers’ unions in particular) is substantially lower in Michigan circa 2003 than at the time of the Marshall study. This argument has been made by a number of recent studies (see, for example, Boyd, Plank, & Sykes, 1998), and to the extent it is true, the influence of these educational professionals may be overstated in the cluster schematic used in the Marshall study.

More interesting than the differences in value preferences found by Marshall and colleagues between clusters of policy elites are differences between the five subgroups of Michigan elites: legislators, interest groups, charter school authorizers, business/advocacy/civic associations, and other education-related professionals within state government. While only one of these five subgroups corresponds neatly to the cluster schematic developed by Marshall and colleagues (with all legislators located within the “insiders” cluster), a number of interesting differences between the five subgroups appeared in terms of value preferences. Quality, for example, was the preferred value among all subgroups (as shown in Table 11), but received much higher scores from other governmental officials and charter authorizers than from business/advocacy/civic groups, who were comparatively more inclined to favor Efficiency and Choice while rejecting Equity in a resounding manner. This same pattern showed up in

Question 9 (as displayed in Table 15), with Quality rank-ordered comparatively highly by other governmental officials, Efficiency by business/advocacy/civic groups and legislators, Equity by charter authorizers, and Choice by business/advocacy/civic groups and charter authorizers. Despite the fact that the cluster schematic from the Marshall study proved to be of limited use, then, differences with respect to value preferences among the five subgroups of respondents in this research produced several interesting findings.

The third major hypothesis involved the issue of “value pairs.” This was an issue examined by Marshall and colleagues, as well as by Garn (2000), who theorized that none of the four values by itself was strong enough to drive school reform, but that *pairs* of values could serve this purpose. Certain values, they argued, were more likely to reinforce one another (e.g., to be supported simultaneously by policy elites) while others opposed one another (e.g., elites favored one while rejecting the other). In particular, the Marshall study found that Choice and Efficiency oppose one another, while Garn’s work in Arizona reached just the opposite conclusion in finding that policy elites in that state favored both Choice and Efficiency. The hypothesized relationship among Michigan policy elites was that results would resemble Garn’s findings in that Choice and Efficiency are mutually reinforcing goals that are supported simultaneously.

Data emerging from correlations between the four values, however (see Table 14) appear to refute the hypothesis that Choice and Efficiency reinforce one

another. The correlation between these two variables is indeed positive, but is weak (.055) and not statistically significant. An expected negative (opposing) relationship between Choice and Equity that had been hypothesized for Michigan policy elites was confirmed by the data to some extent, but this relationship was again rather weak (-.099). The only statistically significant relationship, in fact, was of a negative nature between Efficiency and Equity, which may make sense in retrospect in that policy elites concerned with inputs and outputs (the Economic dimension of Efficiency) and with accountability might not be as concerned with issues of Equity.

In considering the implications of findings related to value pairs within a context of charter schools and the Choice value, one interpretation that seems quite plausible is that the whole “value pairs” idea at best presents only part of the real story. The data in both this research and the Marshall study suggest, on the one hand, that those who support charters and the Choice value view these new schools as a way of achieving Quality first and foremost. This makes sense, and is in fact supported by many of the arguments made by those who advocate for these schools (e.g., by providing Choice, we will provide better schools, higher levels of achievement, and greater prosperity on both an individual and societal level).

It also seems plausible, however, that the notion of value pairs is incomplete to the extent that it portrays the four values as mutually exclusive combatants within

a zero-sum policy arena, where some values “win” and others “lose.” One thing that is known about charters – both from previous research as well as from this research in Michigan – is that they are supported for a wide variety of reasons, some of which can correctly be viewed as pursuing Quality while others can just as legitimately be interpreted as working toward Efficiency and/or Equity. The fact that charters are located disproportionately in urban areas and serve large numbers of poor and non-white students, for example, strongly suggests that these schools are serving as a means of promoting Equity. They can with equal justification be viewed as promoting Efficiency since parents are free to remove their children if their needs are not being met (the Accountability dimension of this value) and by the fact that charters typically have lower per-pupil expenditures than the traditional public schools they compete most directly against (the Economic dimension of Efficiency). One can argue that any of these are the wrong reasons to support charters, or that no defensible reason for supporting them exists, but the point here is that the value pairs hypothesis may well be incomplete to the extent that it presumes each of the four values must oppose at least one of the other three. The case of charter schools and the many reasons people support them, it would seem, shows that a policy initiative can be a way of pursuing all four values, even if its supporters perceive the relative importance of the values differently.

The fifth major hypothesis was that the value preferences of Michigan policy elites would be distributed unevenly across variables such as political affiliation

and the racial/ethnic and geographic characteristics of elites' districts or constituencies. In the end, this hypothesis was perhaps the least interesting and least testable, due to not having enough data (for variables such as the race/ethnicity of respondents' districts/constituencies) and a lack of noteworthy relationships in cases where data were available.

The one variable where noteworthy relationships did emerge was across the self-identified political affiliation of respondents. As reviewed from Table 6, the sample of Michigan policy elites was 39.3% Democrat, 29.4% Republican, and 21.6% favoring neither political party. Republicans were more likely to view charters as successful in providing intended benefits of their existence (Table 24), with particularly large discrepancies between Republicans and Democrats in the case of two intended benefits: "charters bring new educational opportunities" and "charters provide smaller learning environments." As predicted and consistent with findings from Table 24, Republicans were also less likely than Democrats to be concerned with key charter-related issues (Table 25), particularly in the case of "providing services to students with disabilities" and "disclosure of finances." Republicans, finally, confirmed the expected relationship in favoring all four forms of school choice (charters, low-income vouchers, statewide vouchers, and private school tuition tax credits) more so than did Democrats, although fewer than half of Republicans favored both forms of vouchers and tuition tax credits. Respondents with no political preference fell between Republicans and Democrats on most of these issues, as predicted.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Future Research

The value preferences of policy elites and the ways in which these preferences impact the educational policymaking process represent an important and relatively new area of study. Similar to the findings in a pioneering study conducted by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989) – and in partial contrast to what I had expected to find - Michigan policy elites expressed a clear, although not exclusive, preference for the Quality instrumental value in relation to the other three values in educational policy, including Choice. Quality was the preferred value in each of three distinct formats: forced choice pairings of values using statements to represent and operationalize the four values across three “policy domains,” forced choice pairings without the use of statements, and rank-ordering of the four values.

It was also the case, however, that the order of preference of the four values varied somewhat in accordance with the format used. In the forced choice pairings using statements employed by the Marshall study, results mirrored theirs: Quality, followed in order by Efficiency, Equity, and Choice. In the forced choice pairing format without the use of statements, Quality was followed by Equity, Choice, and Efficiency. In the rank-ordering format, finally, Quality was followed by Equity, Efficiency, and Choice. Although differences in the order of finish were slight in some instances, variation in the order of finish suggests that value preferences may be sensitive to the method of measurement as well as to

differences in contextual factors such as time, geography, political climate, and financial conditions.

A number of areas in which additional research would be helpful in identifying the value preferences of policy elites, both in Michigan and on a broader level, are suggested in this work. One such area would be additional (and perhaps larger) studies that use all three of the measures of value preference utilized in this work, as opposed to the single measure employed in the Marshall study.

Particularly useful would be research that was more successful in gaining the participation of larger numbers of legislators, who are of unquestioned importance in educational policy but proved reluctant to share their thoughts with me for reasons that included time constraints and (presumably) reluctance to divulge information on a sensitive topic such as charter schools. It would also be instructive to research distinctive periods in the history of a state with respect to political and financial climate (e.g., during periods of both Republican and Democratic dominance in state government, and during times of relative financial prosperity as well as more austere circumstances), in order to see if (and how) the value preferences of policy elites varied accordingly.

These same questions could be revisited by re-examining the six states involved in the Marshall study, or any other combination of new and old states, at some point other than the mid-1980s. One of the more interesting aspects of the work of Marshall and colleagues was uncovering state-by-state variation with respect

to the value preferences of policy elites, and determining which factors within the political, cultural, and economic context of each state were most responsible for these preferences. As noted, the assumption would be that some states in a multi-state study such as the Marshall work would remain largely the same over time, proving largely oblivious to contextual influences, while others would prove more susceptible to factors such as budgetary conditions (shortfalls vs. surplus) and political context.

The interesting characteristic that ties all of these actual and potential findings together, and could be informed even further with additional research, is that decisions regarding educational policy are the result of a competition of values that often have little, if anything, to do with education itself. In education, as in other policy arenas, Marshall and colleagues observed that whichever initiatives prevail at any given point in time within the policy process are largely a function of the values that elites, who formulate policy either directly or indirectly, bring with them. In some instances, the value preferences of policy elites are pervasive enough to resist the influence of contextual factors, while other circumstances illustrate that a host of factors such as political and economic climate can and do influence values.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Influence Rankings of Policy Actors in Education

Policy Elite or Group	6-State Ranking,* in Order of Importance	Cluster
Individual members of legislature	1	Insiders
State legislature as a whole	2	
Chief State School Officer	3	
Education interest groups (combined)	4	Near Circle
Teacher organizations	5	
Governor and executive staff	6	
Legislative staff	7	
State board of education	8	Far Circle
School boards' association	9	Sometimes Players
Administrators' associations (principals, etc.)	10	
Courts	11	Often Forgotten Players
Federal policy mandates	12	
Non-education groups	13	
Lay groups	14	
Education researcher organizations	15	
Referenda	16	
Production of educational materials	17	

Source: Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt (1989:23)

**The six-state sample included Arizona, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.*

Appendix B: Survey Instrument

Michigan Educational Policy and Values: Instrumental Values and the Formation of Charter School Policy

This survey instrument is intended to explore some of your views regarding (a) the values that influence educational policy in Michigan, and (b) the state's charter school experiment.

I. Views Regarding Charter Schools and School Choice:

1. How successful do you think charter schools in Michigan have been in providing each of the following intended benefits?

	Not at all Successful	Somewhat Successful	Mostly Successful	Very Successful
Providing new educational opportunities to families who lacked such opportunities previously				
Serving as 'laboratories of innovation' for new instructional approaches				
Improving academic achievement				
Providing opportunities to focus on the needs of a particular group of students				
Stimulating high levels of parental involvement				
Improving the cost effectiveness of public education				
Providing smaller learning environments				

2. Please describe any other benefits not mentioned above that you feel charter schools are providing (use additional space if necessary):

3. How concerned are you that charter schools in Michigan are experiencing problems, or not living up to expectations, in the following areas?

	Not at all Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Concerned	Very Concerned
Disclosure of finances				
Oversight by authorizing agencies				
Training of teachers				
Teacher pay				
Causing financial hardship for local school districts				
Providing transportation to all students				
Providing services to students with disabilities				
"Creaming off" high-achieving students				

4. Please describe any other concerns you have related to Michigan charter schools (use additional space if necessary):

5. How would you describe your level of support for the following education-related initiatives or goals? (Very Opposed, Opposed, Supportive, or Very Supportive)

	Very Opposed	Opposed	Supportive	Very Supportive
The charter school movement in Michigan				
A general statewide voucher system open to all students in Michigan				
A voucher system open only to low-income students in Michigan				
Tax credits for private school tuition in Michigan				
Allowing more inter-district transfers				
Development of more magnet schools by public school districts				

6. Please describe your level of agreement with the following statement: "Charter schools in Michigan represent a 'stepping stone' on the path to other forms of school choice."

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

II. Individual Value Systems and Education Policymaking

7. Below are pairs of educational policy goals that are used in discussions of educational reform. Please indicate which of the two policy goals in each pair is more important to you personally by placing an "x" in one of the six boxes for each paired comparison of educational goals. Mark the box furthest to the left if the goal on the left is much more important to you than that on the right; mark the second box in from the left if the goal on the left is somewhat more important; etc.

	Goal on Left is:			Goal on Right is:			
	Much more important	Somewhat more important	Slightly more important	Slightly more important	Somewhat more important	Much more important	
Increasing program flexibility							Making programs more cost-effective
Improving the use of education tax dollars							Greater equalization of resources
More efficient school management							Providing more choices for families & children
Making programs more cost-effective							Setting higher academic standards
Reducing restrictions on local expenditures							Improving the use of education tax dollars
Increasing program flexibility							Giving more attention to children with special needs
Increasing the level of funding for schools							Greater equalization of resources
Broader participation in decisionmaking							More efficient school management
Giving more attention to children with special needs							Setting higher academic standards
Reducing restrictions on local expenditures							Increasing the level of funding for schools
Developing quality-conscious leadership							Providing more choices for families & children
Setting higher academic standards							Increasing program flexibility
Greater equalization of resources							Reducing restrictions on local expenditures
Providing more choices for families & children							Broader participation in decisionmaking
More efficient school management							Developing quality-conscious leadership
Giving more attention to children with special needs							Making programs more cost-effective
Improving the use of education tax dollars							Increasing the level of funding for schools
Developing quality-conscious leadership							Broader participation in decisionmaking

8. Below are four values that are used in discussions of educational reform: Choice, Efficiency, Equity, and Quality. Please indicate which of the two values in each pair is more important to you personally:

Choice	or	Efficiency
Efficiency	or	Equity
Quality	or	Efficiency
Equity	or	Quality
Choice	or	Quality
Equity	or	Choice

9. Of the four educational policy values below, please indicate that which you give the highest priority to (1), that which is your second highest priority (2), that which is your third highest priority (3), and that which is your fourth highest priority (4):

Quality _____

Efficiency_____

Equity _____

Choice_____

10. Here are various definitions of the terms used in questions 2 and 3 that you have just rated and ranked. Please indicate how closely each definition fits your understanding of the terms (Not at all; Not very closely; Rather closely; Very closely):

(a) Quality means that the state will define certain standards for excellence, and develop methods (such as standardized tests) for measuring progress

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

(b) Quality means that the state, after establishing standards and methods for measuring progress, allocates public resources to achieve these goals

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

(c) **Efficiency** means that schools should attempt to minimize costs while maximizing gains in performance and outcomes.

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

(d) **Efficiency** means schools should be accountable for their performance and outcomes.

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

(e) **Equity** means fairness in the allocation and use of resources for all K-12 education.

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

(f) **Equity** means providing additional resources and support to overcome identified disadvantages and deficiencies among K-12 schools

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

(g) **Choice** means the ability of students and parents to choose schools in accordance with their personal goals and interests

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

(h) **Choice** means the ability of a school to choose its own mission, curriculum, textbooks, and staff

Not at all	Not very closely	Rather Closely	Very Closely
_____	_____	_____	_____

III. Views Regarding Educational Roles and Performance

11. Which of the following statements reflects your view of the most appropriate role for state government in establishing educational policy?

___ A limited role	___ A moderate role	___ An active role
--------------------	---------------------	--------------------

12. How effective do you feel the following Michigan educational policymaking agencies are? (Not at all Effective, Somewhat Effective, Mostly Effective, or Very Effective)

	Not at all Effective	Somewhat Effective	Mostly Effective	Very Effective
Michigan Department of Education				
State Board of Education				
Your local school board				

13. Please discuss reasons for this view (use additional space if necessary):

14. How would you rate the performance of the following educational entities in Michigan?

	Very Poor Performance	Somewhat Poor Performance	Somewhat Good Performance	Very Good Performance
Public schools in general				
Public schools in urban areas				
Charter schools				
Private, religious schools				
Private, non-religious schools				

IV. Your Participation in School-Related Activities

15. Are you a member of, or do you represent, any group or organization that has direct involvement with the following kinds of K-12 schools? (please mark either yes or no for each type of school)

	Yes	No
Traditional public schools		
Private schools		
Charter schools		

16. If you marked "yes" for any of the three types of schools in question 15 above, please list all groups or organizations of which you are a member or which you represent that have direct involvement with that type of school:

Traditional public schools: _____

Private schools: _____

Charter schools: _____

17. In the past ten (10) years, have **you, your spouse/significant other, or any other immediate family member** worked for any of the following types of K-12 schools or been a member of an organization (such as a union, professional group, or lobbying/interest group) that supports one or more of these types of schools (please mark either yes or no for each type of school)?

	Yes	No
Traditional public schools		
Private schools		
Charter schools		

18. In the past ten (10) years, has any child in your household attended any of the following types of K-12 schools (please mark either yes or no for each type of school)?

	Yes	No
Traditional public schools		
Private schools		
Charter schools		

19. Over the past ten (10) years, have you engaged in any of the following types of activities (please mark either yes or no for each type of activity)?

	A Traditional Public School	A Private School	A Charter School
Donated money to			
Participated as a volunteer at			
Wrote a letter to the media expressing support for or criticism of			
Contacted a legislator expressing support for or criticism of			
Served on any type of decision- making body regarding			
Voted as a member of a decision-making body regarding			

V. Open-Ended Questions:

20. What is your interpretation or recollection of why charter school legislation was passed in Michigan? (e.g., what were the primary arguments made in favor of this legislation, and who was making them? Use additional space if necessary)

21. *(For respondents who represent education-related interest groups):* Does your organization have an official position on charter schools? If so, what is it?

VI. Demographic Information

22. *(For state legislators/staff and all others, as applicable):* Which of the following most accurately describes the geographic nature of your home political district/interest group/constituency/department/company:

- ___ All or mostly urban
- ___ All or mostly suburban
- ___ All or mostly rural
- ___ Urban/suburban mix
- ___ Suburban/rural mix

23. (For state legislators/staff and all others, as applicable): Which of the following most accurately describes the political tendencies of your home political district/interest group/constituency/department/company:

- ☐ Very conservative
- ☐ Somewhat conservative
- ☐ Lean conservative
- ☐ Neither/Middle
- ☐ Lean liberal
- ☐ Somewhat liberal
- ☐ Very liberal
- ☐ Do not know
- ☐ Refused

24. (For state legislators/staff and all others, as applicable): Which of the following most accurately describes the racial/ethnic composition of your home political district/interest group/constituency/department/company:

- ☐ All or predominantly white (approximately 90% or more white)
- ☐ Significantly white (approximately 70-89% white)
- ☐ Majority white (approximately 51%-69% white)
- ☐ Majority non-white (50% or less white)

25. Which of the following best describes your own political affiliation?

- ☐ Strongly Republican
- ☐ Republican
- ☐ Lean Republican
- ☐ Neither Republican nor Democrat
- ☐ Lean Democrat
- ☐ Democrat
- ☐ Strong Democrat

26. (For state legislators/staff): When were you first elected to the Legislature?

27a. (For state legislators/staff): To the best of your knowledge, how many charter schools are currently in operation in your home district?

27b. (For all non-legislative respondents): To the best of your knowledge, how many charter schools are currently in operation in the school district in which you reside?

28. Please indicate which of the following best describes your professional position:

- ☐ Member of the Michigan legislature or legislative staff
- ☐ Member or employee of state agency other than the Legislature (State Board of Education, Department of Education, Governor's office, etc.)
- ☐ Interest group directly involved with K-12 education
- ☐ Interest group representing businesses
- ☐ Advocacy group for urban and/or minority constituencies
- ☐ Charter school authorizing agency

Name of person completing survey (optional): _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Information Form Sent with Survey Instrument

Information Form

Michigan Educational Policy and Values: Instrumental Values and the Formation of Charter School Policy

By completing the enclosed survey, you have agreed to participate in a study by Michigan State University graduate student Bradley Carl investigating the role of key values in the formation of charter school policy. The objective of this research is to gain further understanding of the following questions of interest:

- Four “instrumental values” - Quality, Efficiency, Equity, and Choice – have been identified and studied in previous research. Which of these values, either individually or in combination with others - are valued the most (and the least) by Michigan policymakers who have played an active role in shaping the state’s education agenda and charter school policy?
- How, if at all, do policymakers’ relative preferences for certain instrumental values, or combinations thereof, appear to be correlated with key status variables such as their political party affiliation and demographic characteristics (race/ethnicity, geography, etc.) of themselves and/or their constituents?
- What relationships, if any, appear to exist between policymakers’ preferences in terms of the four instrumental values on the one hand and their views regarding Michigan’s charter school experiment on the other?
- How are value preferences evident in Michigan’s charter school legislation, as well as a selected set of attempts to modify this legislation over the past decade?
- What do the value preferences of Michigan policymakers suggest about possible future directions for the state’s charter school movement?

The survey, should you agree to complete it, should take approximately 30–40 minutes. Your participation is voluntary, and you may decline to answer any questions or discontinue your participation at any time. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. Your responses to questions on the survey will be confidential. While your name is requested and will be known to the researcher, no one else will be informed as to who agrees to participate in the study and who does not, and neither decision will have any consequences for your future employment or work in the policy area.

Any information about you, or an organization you are affiliated with, will come from publicly available information such as voting records, newspaper articles, and Web sites. However, no specific information will be attributed to you by name in the dissertation or any subsequent publications. Findings will be presented as follows: "...a legislative committee member who voted against House Bill 123 stated that he was completely opposed to charter schools..." or

"...63.8% of those who indicated that Choice was a high priority value voted for the legislation." All data will be kept on password-protected computer for no longer than three years following completion of the study.

Although the findings of this study may not benefit you directly, by participating in this study you will be contributing to a better understanding of the policy making process with regard to charter schools.

If you have any questions about this research, please contact Bradley R. Carl at (608) 310-9843, or by email at trahancarl@aol.com. My mailing address is: 13 Fraust Circle, Madison, WI 53711.

My dissertation chairperson is Dr. Harry Perlstadt, who can be reached through the Department of Sociology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1111; phone (517) 353-5089 and email perlstad@msu.edu.

In addition, you may contact Michigan State University's University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) with questions regarding your role and rights as a subject of research. This project has been reviewed and approved by the committee, which can be contacted as indicated below:

Ashir Kumar, M.D., Chair
University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects
202 Olds Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1046
(517) 355-2180
email: UCRIHS@msu.edu
website: <http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu>

Appendix D: Survey Instrument Used by Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt

Appendix Individual Value Systems and Education Policy-making. What do You Feel Are The Important Education Policy Problems In Your State?

Indicate your views by placing an 'x' on the line nearer to the phrase in each pair that you feel is more important. Mark the space closest to the end of the line if that item is *much* more important than the other; mark the next space if it is *somewhat* more important; and mark the space close to the center of the line if it is only a *little* more important.

INCREASING PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY	—: —: —: —: —: —	MAKING PROGRAMS MORE COST- EFFECTIVE
IMPROVING THE USE OF EDUCATION TAX DOLLARS	—: —: —: —: —: —	GREATER EQUALIZATION OF RESOURCES
MORE EFFICIENT SCHOOL MANAGEMENT	—: —: —: —: —: —	PROVIDING MORE CHOICES FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN
MAKING PROGRAMS MORE COST- EFFECTIVE	—: —: —: —: —: —	SETTING HIGHER ACADEMIC STANDARDS
REDUCING RESTRICTIONS ON LOCAL EXPENDITURES	—: —: —: —: —: —	IMPROVING THE USE OF EDUCATION TAX DOLLARS

INCREASING PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY	--	--	--	--	--	—	GIVING MORE ATTENTION TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
INCREASING THE LEVEL OF FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS	--	--	--	--	--	—	GREATER EQUALIZATION OF RESOURCES
BROADER PARTICIPATION IN DECISION- MAKING	--	--	--	--	--	—	MORE EFFICIENT SCHOOL MANAGEMENT
GIVING MORE ATTENTION TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	--	--	--	--	--	—	SETTING HIGHER ACADEMIC STANDARDS
REDUCING RESTRICTIONS ON LOCAL EXPENDITURES SCHOOLS	--	--	--	--	--	—	INCREASING THE LEVEL OF FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS
DEVELOPING QUALITY CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP	--	--	--	--	--	—	PROVIDING MORE CHOICES FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN
SETTING HIGHER ACADEMIC STANDARDS	--	--	--	--	--	—	INCREASING PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY
GREATER EQUALIZATION OF RESOURCES	--	--	--	--	--	—	REDUCING RESTRICTIONS ON LOCAL EXPENDITURES
PROVIDING MORE CHOICES	--	--	--	--	--	—	BROADER PARTICIPATION IN DECISION- MAKING

MORE EFFICIENT SCHOOL MANAGEMENT	--	--	--	--	--	--	DEVELOPING QUALITY CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP
GIVING MORE ATTENTION TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	--	--	--	--	--	--	MAKING PROGRAMS MORE COST- EFFECTIVE
IMPROVING THE USE OF EDUCATION TAX DOLLARS	--	--	--	--	--	--	INCREASING THE LEVEL OF FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS
DEVELOPING QUALITY CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP	--	--	--	--	--	--	BROADER PARTICIPATION IN DECISION- MAKING

Appendix E: Modified Version of Survey Used in Marshall Study

II. Individual Value Systems and Education Policymaking:

7. Below are pairs of educational policy goals that are used in discussions of educational reform. Please indicate which of the two policy goals in each pair is more important to you personally. Please indicate your views by placing an "X" in one of the six boxes for each paired comparison of educational goals. Mark the box furthest to the left if the goal on the left is much more important to you than that on the right; mark the second box in from the left if the goal on the left is somewhat more important; etc.

	Goal on Left is:	Goal on Right is:	
	Much more important	Slightly more important	Much more important
Increasing program flexibility (C, P)			Making programs more cost-effective (EFF, P)
Improving the use of education tax dollars (EFF, P)			Greater equalization of resources (EQ, F)
More efficient school management (EFF, OG)			Providing more choices for families & children (C, OG)
Making programs more cost-effective (EFF, P)			Setting higher academic standards (Q, P)
Reducing restrictions on local expenditures (C, P)			Improving the use of education tax dollars (EFF, F)
Increasing program flexibility (C, P)			Giving more attention to children with special needs (EQ, P)
Increasing the level of funding for schools (Q, F)			Greater equalization of resources (EQ, F)
Broader participation in decisionmaking (EQ, OG)			More efficient school management (EFF, OG)
Giving more attention to children with special needs (EQ, P)			Setting higher academic standards (Q, P)
Reducing restrictions on local expenditures (C, F)			Increasing the level of funding for schools (Q, F)
Developing quality-conscious leadership (Q, OG)			Providing more choices for families & children (C, OG)
Greater equalization of resources (EQ, F)			Increasing program flexibility (C, P)
Providing more choices for families & children (C, OG)			Reducing restrictions on local expenditures (C, F)
More efficient school management (EFF, OG)			Broader participation in decisionmaking (EQ, OG)
Giving more attention to children with special needs (EQ, P)			Developing quality-conscious leadership (Q, OG)
Improving the use of education tax dollars (EFF, F)			Making programs more cost-effective (EFF, P)
Developing quality-conscious leadership (Q, OG)			Increasing the level of funding for schools (Q, F)
			Broader participation in decisionmaking (EQ, OG)

Appendix F: Individual Responses to Survey Question 7

Respondent Number:	Pairings of Values:										5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
	CP	EFFP	EFF	EQF	EFFOG	COG	EFFP	QP	CF	EFF	CP	EQP
1	1	-1	-3	3	2	-2	-3	3	-2	2	-2	2
2	1	-1	-2	2	3	-3	1	-1	-1	1	1	-1
3	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1	-1	1	-1	missing	missing	missing
4	1	-1	missing	missing	-2	2	-2	2	missing	missing	1	-1
5	1	-1	-1	1	2	-2	-1	1	-2	2	-3	3
6	2	-2	-2	2	3	-3	-3	3	-1	1	-3	3
7	2	-2	-3	3	3	-3	2	-2	-1	1	-3	3
8	1	-1	2	-2	2	-2	-3	3	-2	2	-2	-2
9	-3	3	3	-3	3	-3	2	-2	-3	3	-3	3
10	-3	3	3	-3	3	-3	-3	3	-3	3	-2	2
11	-1	1	-1	1	2	-2	-1	1	1	-1	1	-1
12	n/a - done incorrectly (two rankings for each pair)											
13	2	-2	-1	1	-3	3	-2	2	1	-1	-2	2
14	2	-2	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1	-1	1
15	3	-3	1	-1	-1	1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
16	1	-1	2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2
17	-2	2	2	-2	-3	3	-1	1	-2	2	1	-1
18	2	-2	3	-3	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	1	-1
19	-3	3	-2	2	-3	3	-3	3	-3	3	3	-3
20	1	-1	-2	2	1	-1	-3	3	2	-2	2	2
21	1	-1	-2	2	2	-2	-1	1	-1	1	2	-2
22	-3	3	2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2
23	n/a - done incorrectly (two rankings for each pair)											
24	1	-1	1	-1	2	-2	1	-1	3	-3	2	-2
25	1	-1	1	-1	missing	missing	-2	2	-2	2	missing	missing
26	-2	2	2	-2	2	-2	-3	3	-2	2	2	-2
27	2	-2	2	2	2	-2	-1	1	-1	-2	-1	1
28	1	-1	-2	2	-1	1	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2
29	3	-3	2	-2	1	-1	2	-2	-1	1	-2	2
30	2	-2	1	-1	2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	-1	1
31	3	-3	2	-2	-2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2

32		2	-2	-3	3	3	-3	-3	3	-2	2	-2	2
33		-1	1	2	-2	-3	3	-2	2	-2	2	1	-1
34		-2	2	3	-3	-2	2	-2	2	-3	3	-2	2
35		-2	2	-3	3	3	-3	-1	1	-2	2	-1	1
36		2	-2	-2	2	2	2	-2	2	-2	-2	missing	missing
37		2	-2	-1	1	-2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2
38		-2	2	1	-1	-3	3	-1	1	-3	3	1	-1
39		2	-2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	-2	-1	1	2	-2
40		1	-1	2	-2	-1	1	-3	3	-2	2	1	-1
41		1	-1	1	-1	-1	1	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1
42		-2	2	3	-3	1	-1	1	-1	-2	2	-2	2
43		-3	3	1	-1	-1	1	-3	3	-3	3	-2	2
44		did not complete											
45		-2	2	-3	3	-2	2	-2	2	1	-1	3	-3
46		-1	1	-2	2	-1	1	-1	1	-2	2	-1	1
47		n/a - done incorrectly (two rankings for each pair)											
48		3	-3	-2	2	-1	1	-2	2	2	-2	-3	3
49		-2	2	2	-2	-3	3	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2
50		3	-3	3	-3	-3	3	-3	3	3	-3	3	-3
51		1	-1	2	-2	3	-3	-3	3	2	-2	2	-2
Score by Pair		14	-14	6	-6	-9	9	-67	67	-47	47	-11	11
# of Responses		47	47	46	46	46	46	47	47	46	46	45	45
Total Scores:			Total Responses:		Mean Responses:		Mean Scores:						
Quality		293	Quality	417	Quality	46.33	Quality	6.32					
Efficiency		-59	Efficiency	415	Efficiency	46.11	Efficiency	-1.28					
Equity		-63	Equity	405	Equity	45.00	Equity	-1.40					
Choice		-171	Choice	409	Choice	45.44	Choice	-3.76					

	7		8				9		10		11			
	Q F	EQ F	EQ OG	EQ OG	EQ OG	EQ F	Q P	Q P	CF	Q F	Q OG	CO G	Q P	CP
	-1	1	1	1	-1	-1	1	-1	-3	3	3	-3	2	-2
	-2	2	1	1	-1	1	2	-2	1	-1	1	-1	-1	1
	2	-2	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1	1	1	missing	missing	2	-2
	-2	2	missing	missing	missing	-2	2	2	-3	3	-1	1	3	-3
	3	-3	2	-2	-2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	2	-2	2	-2
	2	-2	2	-2	-2	-1	1	1	-1	1	-2	2	2	-2
	-3	3	-2	3	3	-3	-3	-3	-2	2	3	-3	3	-3
	2	-2	-3	3	3	-3	3	-3	-2	2	1	-1	2	-2
	-1	1	2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-2	-3	3	3	-3	3	-3
	3	-3	2	-2	3	-3	3	-3	3	-3	2	-3	2	-2
	2	-2	-1	1	1	-2	2	2	-1	1	2	-2	2	-2
	-2	2	-1	1	-1	1	-1	-1	-3	3	2	-2	-1	1
	3	-3	1	-1	1	-3	3	3	3	3	2	-2	-1	1
	-2	2	-1	1	1	-1	-1	2	-3	3	2	-2	3	-3
	3	-3	missing	missing	missing	-2	2	2	-3	3	2	-2	-1	1
	3	-3	1	-1	-1	-2	-2	-2	3	3	2	-2	-1	1
	-1	1	missing	missing	missing	-3	3	3	-3	-3	-3	3	3	-3
	-2	2	-1	1	1	-2	2	2	1	-1	2	-2	2	-2
	2	-2	1	-1	-1	1	-1	-1	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1
	2	-2	1	-1	1	-1	1	1	-2	2	1	-1	-2	2
	-1	1	-2	2	2	3	-3	-3	-2	2	2	-2	-1	1
	1	-1	-1	1	1	1	1	1	-1	1	missing	missing	1	-1
	missing	missing	2	-2	-2	-1	-1	-1	missing	missing	1	-1	-1	1

-3	3	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2	-1	1	3	-3
-2	2	-2	2	-3	3	2	-2	-3	3	3	-2
-3	3	-2	2	-2	2	1	-1	1	-1	2	-2
-1	1	1	-1	-1	-1	-3	3	2	-2	2	-2
-2	2	2	-2	1	-1	-2	2	2	-2	2	-2
-2	2	2	-2	-1	1	-2	2	2	-2	2	-2
-1	1	-3	3	-3	3	2	-2	-2	2	3	-3
1	1	-1	1	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	1	-1
-1	1	1	-1	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2	2	-2
2	-2	2	1	-1	-1	1	-1	-1	1	1	-1
3	-3	2	-2	-2	2	-3	3	3	-3	3	-3
2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2
1	-1	-2	2	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1
2	-2	2	1	-1	-1	1	-1	1	1	1	-1
2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	-3	3	3	-3	3	-3
2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2
1	-1	-2	2	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1
2	-2	1	3	-3	-3	-2	2	2	-2	2	-2
-3	3	-3	3	-3	3	3	-3	1	-1	2	-2
1	-1	-1	1	-1	-1	1	-1	3	-3	3	-3
2	-2	-9	9	-27	27	-30	30	38	-38	57	-57
46	46	44	44	47	47	46	46	45	45	47	47
Program Scores:											
Finance Scores:											
Q v EFF	151	-104				Q v EFF	5	80		Organizational	
Q v EQ	151	7				Q v EQ	5	20		Q v EQ	
Q v C	151	-54				Q v C	5	-105		Q v C	
EFF v EQ	-104	7				EFF v EQ	80	20		EFF v EQ	
EFF v C	-104	-54				EFF v C	80	-105		EFF v C	
EQ v C	7	-54				EQ v C	20	-105		EQ v C	

13		14		15		16		17		18	
EQ F	CF	COG	EQOG	EFFOG	QOG	EQP	EFFP	EFF	QF	QOG	EQOG
missing	missing	-2	2	-2	2	3	-3	-2	2	2	-2
-1	1	2	-2	-1	1	missing	missing	1	-1	1	-1
3	-3	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	1	-1	1	-1
2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2	1	-1	1	-1
3	-3	3	-3	-1	1	2	-2	1	-1	1	-1
3	-3	2	-2	-2	2	3	-3	1	-1	2	-2
1	-1	3	-3	2	-2	-2	2	2	-2	3	-3
2	-2	2	2	-2	2	3	-3	3	-3	1	-1
2	-2	2	-2	-2	2	2	2	2	-2	2	-2
2	-2	1	-1	1	-1	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1
2	-2	1	-1	-2	2	2	-2	-1	1	1	-1
-1	1	missing	missing	1	-1	1	-1	-2	2	-1	1
-1	1	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	1	-1	-1	1
1	-1	3	-3	3	-3	-1	1	3	-3	missing	missing
1	-1	2	-2	-2	2	2	1	3	-3	2	-2
missing	missing	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	3	-3	2	-2
2	-2	-2	2	-2	2	2	-1	-2	2	2	-2
2	-2	-1	1	1	-1	-2	2	-2	2	1	-1
-2	2	-3	3	2	-2	-3	3	2	-2	2	-2
-2	2	-2	2	1	-1	-2	2	-3	3	1	-1
-2	2	3	-3	1	-1	missing	missing	1	-1	missing	missing
1	-1	3	-3	-2	2	-1	1	3	-3	2	-2
-1	1	1	1	1	-1	-1	-1	1	-1	1	-1
-2	2	-1	1	-2	2	1	-1	-2	2	2	-2
1	-1	1	-1	-2	2	2	2	-2	-2	2	-2
-1	1	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	2	-2	1	-1
missing	missing	1	-1	-1	1	1	-1	2	-2	1	-1
		1	-1	-1	1	1	-1	3	-3	-1	1

3	-3	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	-2
-1	3	-3	-1	1	1	-1	2	-2	1	-1
2	-2	2	-2	-1	1	-1	3	-3	2	-2
3	-3	-2	2	-2	2	1	-1	1	2	-2
missing	2	1	-1	-2	2	1	-2	2	1	-1
2	-2	2	2	-2	2	1	-2	-2	2	-2
-1	1	3	-3	-2	2	-3	3	-3	3	-3
1	-1	missing	missing	1	-1	-1	1	-1	1	-1
missing	missing	-1	1	-1	1	-1	-1	1	1	-1
-1	1	1	-1	-1	1	1	-1	-1	1	-1
1	-1	-1	1	-1	1	1	-1	1	1	-1
3	-3	3	-3	-2	2	1	-1	-3	3	-2
-2	2	2	-2	1	2	-2	2	-2	2	-2
-1	1	2	-2	1	-1	-1	1	-1	2	-2
2	-2	-1	1	-2	2	-2	-2	2	2	-2
2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	-2	2	2	-2
-2	2	2	-2	-3	3	3	-3	3	3	-3
3	-3	3	-3	-3	3	1	-1	-2	2	3
28	-28	17	-17	-35	35	23	-23	27	64	-64
42	42	45	45	47	47	45	47	47	45	45
n/Governance Scores:										
137	-35									
137	-90									
137	-12									
-35	-90									
-35	-12									
-90	-12									

Appendix G: Open-Ended Responses to Questions 2, 4, 13, 20, and 21

Respondent Comments to Open-Ended Survey Questions

This appendix contains responses to five open-ended questions that appeared on the survey instrument. These questions were intended to allow and encourage respondents to provide additional thoughts regarding a range of topics such as the effectiveness of charter schools and concerns regarding their operations, the effectiveness of other (non-charter) educational policymaking entities in Michigan, interpretation of why charter school legislation was passed, and official positions on charters taken by respondents' organizations.

The number and wording of each of the five open-ended questions appears below, followed by verbatim versions of all respondent comments to that question as they appeared on the completed survey. No attempt has been made in this appendix to edit, correct, or interpret respondent comments, except as necessary to protect the identity of the respondent or understand his/her comments.

For reference, a copy of the original survey appears as Appendix B.

2. Please describe any other benefits not mentioned above that you feel charter schools are providing (use additional space if necessary):

Charter schools allow children in disadvantaged areas to attend a school that helps filter out unwanted elements from the school surrounding. The parents are already involved simply based on the fact that they made this decision. Cost effectiveness can't be determined until they have a teaching staff that has been employed for 20 to 30 years. Charter schools offer a safer environment for learning and more controlled than certain public schools can offer. Of course this then leaves what is left for the public school.

Providing real educational opportunities for kids in urban areas, as well as waking up some of the rural and suburban school districts.

The fact that charter schools offer an alternative to K-12 LEAs has spurred LEAs to initiate some of the same services as well. That has been very successful. Example—full day kindergarten program.

often safer

First, you make a mistake grouping all charter schools together. As a group they have been grossly unsuccessful. In most cases, a private firm is skimming as are the charter organizations before the money even gets to the school or classroom. Most of these look just like the school the child left because the

parents (who were already involved) moved the child. We have seen very little improvement in learning as most or many of the charters are receiving students that have failed in most other settings.

There are a few charter efforts that are providing students something they could not have gotten in their home schools. The most outstanding of these is the High School at the Henry Ford. They have worked to ensure that students represent the entire student population of Wayne County. But these different learning environments are few and far between.

provides an additional educational opportunity for families not satisfied with traditional neighborhood public schools

I believe they are providing a measure of competition which will drive improvement in traditional public schools.

Inducing non-charter public schools to communicate more with their communities. However, increased public relations isn't an absolute benefit.

I feel that the focus on particular curricular interest or cultural specific curriculum found in most charter schools are not in the best interests of students and therefore cannot list other "benefits".

When regular public schools feel the spur of competition, they do better.

- a. Forced K-12 school districts to treat their students and parents as customers rather than the property of the district.
- b. Provided opportunities for non-religious values to be taught in public schools.
- c. Experimented with ethnic-centered public schools as an option for parents who wanted the experience.
- d. Created a nationally unique partnership of a state public school system and an Indian tribally controlled community college.
- e. Helped uncover evidence that many Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) do not serve all the students in the ISD, but primarily exist to serve the school districts that are members.

Creating a competitive environment in public education which forces traditional public schools to get better.

Provides a choice for parents who believe their children have not been adequately served by the traditional system or that the needs of their children have been pushed aside to focus on the average achiever.

Related to item one is the fact that some parents and students now have found a reason to hope. Before they were limited to the school in their area. Good, bad or ugly, it was their only choice.

Public schools are responding to some extent to charter competition, at minimum through increased marketing. Some innovation in traditional public schools has also occurred, such as setting up themed academies, etc.

It must be understood that the benefits shown above relate to schools that are allowed and encouraged to provide those benefits. Requiring public school academies to adhere to all of the rules, regulations, and policies of the State of Michigan for K-12 sort of flies in the face of innovation, creativity, and development of new techniques.

Chartered academies provide parents more opportunity to control their children's education in their neighborhoods.

Charter public schools are providing educational choice for families of children who are in failing schools or who are in schools that are failing to meet their unique needs – choice that had been available prior to their inception only to those who could afford either to move or to enroll in private schools. Charter public schools have infused competition into an otherwise monopolistic educational system which has improved quality and parent involvement for all students, not just those who have exercised their right to choice.

Suppose to provide local control, innovation, and creativity.

Challenge traditional schools to evaluate themselves, and plan for improvement.

Provide choice

Additional incentive to traditional public schools to operate more creatively...competition for students. (Of course, there's negative aspects to that benefit too...creates community animosity and resentment, too).

4. Please describe any other concerns you have related to Michigan charter schools (use additional space if necessary):

The schools are doing fine (as a whole). So are the authorizers. Any problems lie in the continued "anger" from traditional district personnel toward charter schools. Also the law is flawed in that it gives no real reason for local districts to want to charter schools. Most other "real" charter laws provide freedom from some rules, etc., which make the law more attractive to local school boards.

Structural issues especially around board membership and understanding of their

Roles as well as a lack of standardization around management companies.

There is not sufficient oversight of the charter schools by their authorizers. The charters do not have to hire teachers with appropriate certification. They do not seem to have nearly as many “special needs” students as traditional public schools.

- lack of accountability- FOIA regulation
- diverting public funds for private profit of management companies
- possible religious entanglement

There are huge gaps in the law with regard to responsibility for closure of schools. The legislature has refused to provide the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) with authority to promulgate rules for development of formal procedures and clear delegation of responsibility for closure, wind-up and dissolution of schools. Also, the legislature has not provided authority to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or the MDE, to promulgate rules for suspension of an authorizer’s ability to authorize new PSAs. Failure of the legislature to allocate resources to the MDE sufficient to provide the oversight necessary to effectively monitor authorizing bodies is another clearly intentional lapse in legislative responsibility.

By their nature, providing an alternative public school, they advocate a failing public school system...that’s my greatest concern.

This is a loaded question. It assumes that the underlying premise of the question is true and that charter schools are “not living up to expectations.” It asks how concerned we are; not whether the statement is true. For example, it assumes that there were expectations about teacher pay when the law was passed; that was never an issue in the debate.

Charter academies in Michigan have a higher level of oversight than the traditional public schools. Also, traditional public school associations do not allow charter school participation. As a result, charter schools have created their own associations for administrators, boards, etc.

Parents who send their children to charter schools may not be well-equipped to make educated decisions on whether or not a student should attend, and/or remain in a charter school.

Creaming exists, regardless of claims otherwise. Locally, one charter is obviously connected to church – founder, board members, students. Special needs, handicapped students are told by charter that traditional public school can better meet their needs than charters. Charters send disciplinary problem students back to neighborhood with “three strikes” rules. Traditional public schools cannot do this!

There is anecdotal evidence (people have told me this but there is no official document that I know of) that many charter schools send a number of students (often those with special needs) back to their regular school after the count day and without pro-rated funding. This results in overcrowding and underfunding at the regular public school.

Acquiring facilities

Current limits on the number of charter schools that can be established deprive students in failing districts of choice and, possibly, of a successful future.

They have been sold to parents as an improvement in learning for children and parents have little to judge this on as charters are allowed to disappear in the process the state uses to support public information on public schools.

My concern is charter schools often produce students that perform lower on standardized test than students attending traditional public schools. Parents are led to believe charter schools are the answer to the academic challenges presented by low performing schools. Unfortunately, in most cases charters schools fall well short of the promised benefits.

There are not enough of them to make the experiment produce definitive results. The reason not to be concerned on accountability is that parents can vote with their feet. To the extent there are not enough charters, and those have waiting lists, this ability is reduced (only alternative is their dysfunctional public school).

What about the schools who are doing all that is asked in Question 4. How many traditional schools would receive low scores in the same areas? Poor schools are poor schools whether they are PSA's or traditional.

In our region, we charter one of the schools and have an opportunity to monitor and review what is taking place at the charter school. We also have another school chartered by an entity a distance from our region. We have no involvement in review of what is taking place. I am unaware if that school is being monitored or reviewed on a regular basis.

For-profit management of some charter schools creates some negative incentives.

Not always a level playing field. Should have to disclose financial information.

Feeding white flight in urban districts.

Charter schools are not bound by the same rules as public schools.

Questionable use of funds for benefit of students.

My greatest concern is found in the many untrue statements that have been used by the education establishment in their relentless attack on charter schools. It is truly a shame.

They are starting to offer the same excuses for failure as traditional public schools – “we get all the kids who have problems” or “we don’t get the resources that traditional public schools get”. The authorizers need to get much tougher with non performing schools. Also, I don’t have a problem with management companies per se, but I think the charter school agenda is being driven too much by a few low performing management companies.

I am concerned that private for profit companies are cashing in on the opportunity at the expense of the students.

Charter schools have been given a bad rap. They attract students who are typically underachieving. Critics and the press have expected charters to close that achievement gap in an unrealistic period of time.

All of the areas listed are of “concern” in that they are important but not because they are necessarily problems unique to or caused by charter public schools. Proper disclosure of finances and oversight is important. Training of teachers is important to all schools. “Creaming off” high-achieving students is not of concern because the lottery enrollment requirement prohibits it, just as it ensures that students with disabilities are provided for. Should we be concerned about financial hardship for local school districts as students exercise their right to choose to attend a charter public school? Our priority should be to provide educational options that will meet the needs of all children; to protect the rights of children not a “system”. Should one child’s needs or the needs of many children be dismissed by taking away their right to educational choice to ensure that the school that failed them can continue to fail other children with no incentive, financial or otherwise, to improve? If a school experiences dwindling enrollment, should that not be a signal that they need to reach out to parents and find out what changes they need to make to be able to retain the students they have and attract additional students to protect their financial viability? If we hold schools “harmless” by providing them with public dollars to offset the foundation grant that leaves with every child that goes to a charter public school (which has been proposed by charter school opponents), we would be giving them more dollars to educate fewer children, which I am sure they would like but which would create a huge disincentive for change.

13. Please discuss reasons for this view [followup question to #12, which asked for respondents' effectiveness ratings of the Michigan Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and their local school board:

As a citizen and parent, the State Board's role is not clear at all. I can better understand my local school board's impact on education in my community. The MDE is not adequately staffed and I'm not sure it fully understands all the issues facing urban communities.

While my local school board is quite effective in setting the policy direction for [our local] schools there are still some areas I would like to see strengthened such as inclusive education, individual education plans and transition plans for all students. The State Board of Education has not fully utilized its constitutional powers which remain to be operationalized despite the efforts of Gov. Engler to diminish the State Board's role through a series of executive orders transferring powers to the State Superintendent and to other state department directors through the distribution of tasks (e.g., adult education, Asian studies, MEAP) to their departments. The Michigan Dept. of Education is mostly effective in addressing the tasks which remain in its domain. It has had to do much, e.g., implementing requirements of the ESEA amendments of 2001 (No Child Left Behind) with few resources. Staff have worked diligently with State Board members to craft policies and meet federal requirements. Policy regarding charter schools is discussed and data gathered. As time and resources permit, I expect further action and oversight.

#12 is a poorly worded question – affective [sic] at what?

The Michigan Department of Education has been seriously disabled by the reduction of staff and resulting reduction in effective services to local school districts. While quality individuals do work there, they are challenged by the enormity of the work and the diminishing resources. The State Board of Education has been a non-entity in educational policy-making. Local school boards are hampered by political maneuvering, overstepping their appropriate roles, and lack of training on what constitutes an effective board member.

I believe each of the groups work very hard to be effective but there are other factors that get in their way. NCLB is admirable in its aims but many factors will make it almost impossible to do – we cannot change the society our children live in – (a) parents who do not parent, (b) poor economical climate – no one home when a youngster comes home – (c) not enough nutritious food, (d) transient population, (e) continual turnover of limited English speaking or non-English speaking students, etc. However, I do believe we in education must continue to work hard to try to meet NCLB's goals.

MDE has no standards for charter schools

Positive feelings coupled with belief that many improvements can still be made.

You left out the Legislature, which is even more ineffective. There are too many efforts to quick fix or now follow the misguided path of the federal government. Generally the local school board knows the community and this is always true when the schools are successful. Passing policy down from the state level just lowers the standard and moving to the federal level lowers the standard even further. We need to understand that each school is different as each exists in a different community. We need to set the standards high and support all to reach. This will mean that some students need more resources, especially state, than others.

State board appears isolated and seldom works with the legislative process. Its goals and objectives are not shared with the public.

The State is process rather than outcome oriented. As long as you file reports, provide proscribed programs etc., you can fail to educate kids and not have a problem with anyone in the State. On the other hand, if educate kids successfully but run afoul of the State, you can be hounded and relentlessly (I've seen this first hand from the Board of a charter school). It will be interesting to see if the States accreditation system or No child Left Behind changes this.

MDE and SBE are confusing and conflicting organizations.

The SDE doesn't have sufficient resources or staff to provide worthwhile services to local districts. The state board spends too much time talking philosophy and not enough setting policy.

Policymaking agencies closer to the problem or issues can move faster to bring about change.

The Michigan Department of Education and the State Board of Education were negatively impacted by the previous (Engler) administration. The most resent appointed school

Only local boards know the specific cultural and academic needs of their particular students.

Lack of school choice. IF everyone was forced to only go to their assigned grocery store, that store would be lousy, no matter what kind of management situation it had.

The State Board of Education is a flawed concept. It protects the education establishment. It is not subject directly to the political leadership of the Governor. It is an invisible agency to most of the public. It does not, and probably cannot,

provide “leadership and general supervision over all public education” as set forth in Art. VIII, Sec. 3 of the Michigan Constitution.

The current budgetary crisis stalls progress and will likely result in loss of state school aid funds for all K-12 education. Federal mandates dominate much of the energy and effort at the state and local level. Partisan politics at both the federal and state levels drives the agenda for much of what we do. Charter school issues are driven by Republican politics in both the House and Senate in Michigan, blocking reform that would result in real oversight of the authorizing bodies and the capacity of the MDE to provide technical assistance to the smaller authorizing bodies.

I believe all involved in education are sincerely interested in improving education. Current federal regulations are cumbersome and there is a struggle at all levels to incorporate accountability.

Able to decide on initiatives and implement them – example EDYes!

Dept of Ed does good job of implementing policies established by the Legislature and Governor. State Board of Education is largely irrelevant as a policymaking and oversight body. My local schools board seem rather weak and is not setting high enough expectations or demanding results and accountability.

MDE is not funded nor does it have enough “bodies” to check on school compliance. School Board wants to do a good job but is limited by the fact that the legislature controls schools through funding. Our local Board is selected by the school (PSA) and is very supportive of improving the educational program for all students.

The State DOE and Board have many agenda and constituencies. The local boards are better prepared to react to local needs.

Local school boards are rubber stamps and really do not know educational policy. The State Board gets caught up in politics and is really not effective in directing educational policy at any level; k-12, community college or 4 year institutions. MDE is understaffed, does not pay enough to attract competent people and is splintered ie, career and technical education is not even in the department.

Many responsibilities have been moved from the State Board to the State Supt. This move has, in my opinion, eroded their effectiveness

Elected boards represent a fundamental democratic policy. It is not infallible, but it's a partnership with our citizens.

Local board can be very effective, depending on those serving. Currently individuals on our local board are self-serving and out of touch...but that's not always the case. MDE & state board sometimes have same issues as local boards – our state supt. Does a fine job, but state level boards are political agencies, not educational ones!

SBE is highly politicized. Due to candidate selection process and election results linked to “top of ticket” wins – coupled with its control of the superintendent's position and eight year terms – its membership and actions are rarely reflective of the state's population, political.....[response cut off]

Read the newspapers!

20. What is your interpretation or recollection of why charter school legislation was passed in Michigan? (e.g., what were the primary arguments made in favor of this legislation, and who was making them? Use additional space if necessary)

The governor wanted to provide educational options.

To provide public school choice for those unable to afford it otherwise; to encourage school innovation in whatever form it might take, with local control.

Greater choice for parents – Gov. Engler

To provide parental choice

It was poorly thought out to allow for choice and equity for (mainly) urban students and (ideally) to raise standards in traditional public schools as well. It was urban generated, with little concern as to what presence of charters would mean in less populous areas.

Competition model to improve public schools; parental choice; improve educational opportunity; innovative teaching, curricular designs, parental choice (option).

I expected charter schools to: create and promote innovative educational methods, provide new professional opportunities for teachers, improve student achievement, and provide more parental choice.

Supposedly charter legislation was passed to provide “choice” for parents and students. Actually, it was a thinly veiled attempt to provide support (dollars and/or vouchers) for private schools. Most support came from right wing republicans on the West side of the state.

TO PUSH PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO GET BETTER AND TO GIVE PARENTS CHOICE.

Charter Public School legislation was enacted to provide parents with a choice in their child's education – especially for parents who did not feel that the public school their child was assigned to attend adequately met their needs but could not afford to send them to a private school. We had choice in our educational system before the Charter School legislation, but it was only available to those who could afford it. The legislation was enacted to give EVERY parent the right to choose the school that their child attended, regardless of their income, but the cap on the number of Charter Public Schools has prevented that goal from becoming a reality. MORE parents have choice, but as long as the cap exists, not EVERY parent will have choice.

Choice and flexibility

To create innovation, look at new methods, and to disseminate information to traditional public schools. The argument were made by educators interested in looking at new ways to educate students.

As a means to prohibit laboratories of innovation and to provide competition to traditional public schools. Persons and groups traditionally opposing public schools advocated for charter schools as a way to set up an alternative publicly-funded school system.

The steady decline of academic achievement and the lack of response by the traditional public system spurred the need for alternatives. Parents that lack the economic power to move to better schools were being denied access to opportunity. Choice and freedom, when ever it is allow to occur, always changes things for the better.

Competition in public educational choice. Returning power of education back to parents.

- To provide parental choice in public education
- To attempt to reduce the bureaucracy in and regulation in public education (it didn't work)
- To develop innovation in teaching and learning methods

With the Republican majority in the Michigan Legislature a conservative view took over and there was enough support for it – the belief was that competition would make public schools better.

Charter schools were created in Michigan to provide increased parental choice and to offer public school options with reduced regulation.

To improve public education by providing choice and innovation

- 1) ...the original charter school law....was part (actually a minor part at the time) of Gov. Engler's school choice initiative. The original proposal included cross-district choice which the K-12 establishment opposed even more than charter schools. The charter school bill had broad bi-partisan support on final passage. Charter schools were a fad in the early 1990s. Michigan's law was unique in that it allowed any school district, ISD, community college or university board to authorize charters. Most other states allowed very few charters.
- 2) The charter school bill was adopted at the same time as the per pupil funding approach which benefited many school districts. The education establishment was more focused on the increased funding for schools and did not focus as much on what they later argued was a "loss" of funding when parents have options other than the local school district.
- 3) There was some discussion that charter would lead to more creative approaches to public schooling and that they would have a positive impact on existing school districts.
- 4) There was strong interest in making sure the schools were public schools and language was included to prevent unconstitutional linkages with churches. Both the proponents of the bill wanted this (to assure its constitutionality) and liberal, public school interests wanted the restrictions because of their opposition to public funding of religious education. The MEA, ACLU at al still challenged the law claiming that charter schools were private schools. They made the preposterous argument that the only "public school" could be one in a district with an elected school board. They lost.
- 5) The charter school legislative debate never focused on charter school management companies, whether for profit or nonprofit. Since they did not exist in Michigan, little notice was paid to them and the bill had no provisions relating to oversight of management companies.

It was the best deal school choice advocates could get passed in a legislature overly influenced by the public school establishment.

More choice for parents and help for under achieving students that did not fit into traditional public schools.

Charters were established to provide parents with "choice" or an alternative to "failing public schools".

Choice

To provide choice for parents and independence for the schools to develop unique programs and curriculum.

To bring demise to the MEA.

Provide schools that provided higher academic achievement and distinct educational choices for families and competition to traditional public schools

Charter schools would provide choice to parents/students, and would provide for innovative practices in education.

Some who supported believed it would offer alternatives but had no research to support such beliefs. Others saw a way to get public funds into traditional private schools without having to go to vouchers. For others it was a way to make money, no much research here either.

Republicans wanted a bill, governor was not opposed. Mayor of Detroit wants to be associated with improving education and average citizens were not asked their opinions.

Drive reform in the traditional schools

To provide innovative programs, to increase parent choice

Governor Engler was not happy with the teachers' union and I believe he wanted to help students in underperforming schools have a choice of a school to attend. The Republicans worked together to push through the legislature to have charter schools.

To provide choice

To provide an alternative to failing traditional public schools

To give choice to parents; improve public education by providing competition

Attempting to improve the overall system.

Legislation was supported by Gov. Engler and Legislature which followed his lead. Central Michigan and Wayne State also supported it and realized financial benefit (especially CMU) as authorizers. Legislation [was] opposed by MEA/MFT/ACLU and many public education advocates. ACLU sued – results in additional clarifying legislation which propelled the movement. Many public education advocates see charter schools as the segue to vouchers. Disability advocates see them as discriminating unlawfully. Arguments in favor: flexibility, parental choice, smaller is better, competition is good. Arguments against: potential for discrimination against students with disabilities and severe reputations, less accountable to public & taxpayers, will drain the high performing students from traditional public schools, leaving those schools to do more with less (a reality since Proposal A passed in 1995).

Competition; choice by parent

They are an alternative to urban schools, in the hope that those that care can succeed.

Provide choice for parents

Competition - Choice

**21. (For respondents who represent education-related interest groups):
Does your organization have an official position on charter schools? If so,
what is it?**

Yes. [Our organization] supports the concept of charter schools as an alternative form of education as long as they are held to the same accountability criteria as public schools.

Yes / support educational opportunity for all children

Yes – support (limited)

Yes – opposed to increasing cap!

Yes. We support “innovation and creativity in the delivery of public education services to the children in the State of Michigan.” We support legislation that ascertains that educational mandates are adhered to appropriately and that provides for sufficient oversight and financial disclosure.

My ISD has sponsored...special interest charter public school academies

Support the charter movement

We support good and effective charter schools just as we support good and effective traditional schools

We strongly support the expansion of public school academies and believe the State of Michigan should lift the cap.

Yes – we are pro-charter.

Yes. The organization will grant charters to applicants who have a unique mission that cannot be easily done by the local district.

Support

Charter schools are an integral part of the system of public education in Michigan.

No [official position on charters]

Yes – we favor them as a step on the road to full school choice.

I am not associated with an organization at this time with an official or un official position on charter schools. The opinions given in this survey are mine.

No [official position on charters].

Supportive with encouragement for K-12 and ISD boards to do the chartering vs. universities and community colleges.

We support.

We favor limited expansion of charters. Basically, we would like to see quality authorizers/operators given the opportunity to expand and exclude those with poorly performing schools until they had improved them.

Support

Very supportive!

...Charter schools are public school academies and we support their concept.

Yes, we support lifting the cap on the expansion of charter schools.

I am unaware of a public position.

Support limited number that have equal requirements as public schools

[My organization is an] authorizer.

Opposed

Appendix H: Individual Scores for Survey Question 7

Respondent Number	Political Affiliation	Total Scores by Individual and Value:			
		Quality	Efficiency	Equity	Choice
1	7	15	-15	13	-13
2	4	-7	3	4	0
3	2	6	3	-8	-1
4	3	5	-3	3	-5
5	6	14	-4	6	-16
6	3	9	-13	4	0
7	4	4	-1	11	-14
8	4	11	7	-18	0
9	7	4	10	11	-25
10	2	8	3	-4	-7
11	2	11	2	-6	-7
12	5	n/a - done incorrectly (two rankings for each pair)			
13	5	10	-16	7	-1
14	7	-3	-3	5	1
15	4	3	-8	0	5
16	2	6	2	0	-8
17	1	-15	11	-6	10
18	3	1	1	-8	6
19	8	8	3	-6	-5
20	6	19	-13	5	-11
21	2	6	1	0	-7
22	3	13	12	-13	-12
23	5	n/a - done incorrectly (two rankings for each pair)			
24	4	11	1	-10	-2
25	8	-1	2	-8	7
26	1	7	8	-10	-5
27	4	4	-3	-1	0
28	4	10	-10	2	-2
29	6	4	-1	1	-4
30	6	6	2	-3	-5
31	3	0	-4	-2	6
32	6	4	-3	9	-10
33	2	1	2	-8	5
34	4	3	9	-5	-7
35	7	11	-2	11	-20
36	8	10	-13	6	-3
37	4	9	-8	9	-10
38	8	4	9	-17	4
39	6	2	3	-2	-3
40	6	15	-3	-6	-6
41	5	-1	-3	-3	7
42	5	6	8	-2	-12
43	2	20	-5	1	-16
44	4	did not complete			
45	6	7	-7	-6	6
46	4	4	4	-7	-1

47	7	n/a - done incorrectly (two rankings for each pair)			
48	7	9	-17	10	-2
49	3	-2	5	-2	-1
50	8	6	-9	-13	16
51	5	16	-6	-7	-3
TOTALS BY VALUE		293	-59	-63	-171
Political Affiliation Codes:					
1=STRONG REPUBLICAN					
2=REPUBLICAN					
3=LEAN REPUBLICAN					
4=NEITHER					
5=LEAN DEMOCRAT					
6=DEMOCRAT					
7=STRONG DEMOCRAT					
8= NO RESPONSE					

Appendix I: Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix (MTMM) Correlations

		Qual1	Qual2	Qual3	Eff1	Eff2	Eff3	Eq1	Eq2	Eq3	Ch1	Ch2	Ch3
Qual1	Pearson Corr.	1	.167	-.250	-.418(**)	-.074	.085	.106	.233	.013	-.521(**)	-.356(*)	-.168
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.296	.090	.003	.626	.576	.477	.119	.932	.000	.015	.210
	N	47	46	47	47	46	46	47	46	46	47	46	46
Qual2	Pearson Corr.	.157	1	.344(*)	-.119	.204	-.023	-.176	-.023	-.140	.156	.057	.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.296		.016	.430	.160	.876	.242	.875	.343	.302	.697	.940
	N	46	49	49	46	49	48	46	49	48	46	49	48
Qual3	Pearson Corr.	.250	.344(*)	1	.020	.362(*)	.365(**)	-.033	-.293(*)	-.340(*)	-.168	-.418(**)	-.381(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.090	.016		.896	.011	.009	.827	.041	.016	.205	.003	.006
	N	47	49	51	47	49	50	47	49	50	47	49	50
Eff1	Pearson Corr.	-.418(**)	-.119	.020	1	.379(**)	.475(**)	-.539(**)	-.513(**)	-.463(**)	-.074	.050	.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.430	.896		.009	.001	.000	.000	.001	.623	.744	.460
	N	47	46	47	47	46	46	47	46	46	47	46	46
Eff2	Pearson Corr.	-.074	.204	.362(*)	.379(**)	1	.773(**)	-.403(**)	-.144	-.324(*)	.090	-.431(**)	-.419(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.626	.160	.011	.009		.000	.005	.323	.025	.552	.002	.003
	N	46	49	49	46	49	48	46	49	48	46	49	48
Eff3	Pearson Corr.	.085	-.023	.365(**)	.475(**)	.773(**)	1	-.275	-.239	-.508(**)	-.244	-.449(**)	-.407(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.576	.876	.009	.001	.000		.064	.102	.000	.102	.001	.003
	N	46	48	50	46	48	50	46	48	50	46	48	50
Eq1	Pearson Corr.	.106	-.176	-.033	-.539(**)	-.403(**)	-.275	1	.536(**)	.534(**)	-.540(**)	-.304(*)	-.332(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.477	.242	.827	.000	.005	.064		.000	.000	.000	.040	.024
	N	47	46	47	47	46	46	47	46	46	47	46	46
Eq2	Pearson Corr.	.233	-.023	-.293(*)	-.513(**)	-.144	-.239	.536(**)	1	.781(**)	-.215	-.426(**)	-.482(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.119	.875	.041	.000	.323	.102	.000		.000	.152	.002	.001
	N	46	49	49	46	49	48	46	49	48	46	49	48
Eq3	Pearson Corr.	.013	-.140	-.340(*)	-.463(*)	-.324(*)	-.508(**)	.534(**)	.781(**)	1	-.091	-.384(**)	-.494(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.932	.343	.016	.001	.025	.000	.000	.000		.547	.007	.000
	N	46	48	50	46	48	50	46	48	50	46	48	50

		Qual1	Qual2	Qual3	Eff1	Eff2	Eff3	Eq1	Eq2	Eq3	Ch1	Ch2	Ch3
Ch1	Pearson Corr.	-.521(**)	.155	-.188	-.074	.090	-.244	-.540(**)	-.215	-.091	1	.516(**)	.363(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.302	.205	.623	.552	.102	.000	.152	.547	.	.000	.013
	N	47	46	47	47	46	46	47	46	46	47	46	46
Ch2	Pearson Corr.	-.356(**)	.057	-.418(**)	.050	-.431(**)	-.449(**)	-.304(*)	-.426(**)	-.384(**)	.516(**)	1	.917(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.697	.003	.744	.002	.001	.040	.002	.007	.000	.	.000
	N	46	49	49	49	49	48	46	49	48	46	49	48
Ch3	Pearson Corr.	-.188	.011	-.381(**)	.112	-.419(**)	-.407(**)	-.332(*)	-.482(**)	-.494(**)	.363(*)	.917(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.210	.940	.006	.460	.003	.003	.024	.001	.000	.013	.000	.
	N	46	48	50	46	48	50	46	48	50	46	48	50

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Notes:

MTMM analysis measures *convergent validity* between different methods involving the same trait (e.g., the three different methods in this study for assessing preferences for Quality) and *discriminant validity* between different methods and different traits. Traits, for the purpose of this research, are the four instrumental values in educational policy, as abbreviated in the table above: Qual = Quality; Eff = Efficiency; Eq = Equity; Ch = Choice. The numbers behind each trait (e.g., Ch1, Ch2, Ch3) represent the three different ways in which the value preferences of Michigan policy elites were measured in this research (the paired statements format from Question 7, the direct comparison format from Question 8, and the rank-ordering format from Question 9). One would expect to find higher correlations between different measures of the same trait (convergent validity), as measures of the same trait should be in agreement even if they are gathered using different measures. Stated differently, policy elites who favored Quality in the paired statement format used in Question 7 would also be predicted to favor Quality in the forced-choice format from Question 8 and in the rank-ordering format from Question 9.

The 12 correlations showing convergent validity (same trait, different method) are shaded in dark gray in the matrix above. The average of these correlations is .502. The 36 correlations showing discriminant validity (different trait, different method) are shaded in light gray and appear in italics in the table. The average of these correlations is -.169.

Appendix J: Question 1 Scores by Individual

Respondent No.	Group:	Intended Benefit of Charter Schools (from Survey Question 1):										Total Score
		New Opps.	Labs Innov.	Acad Ach.	Focus Nds.	Par. Inv.	Cost Eff.	Small Env.				
38	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	27	
50	Other Government	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	27	
14	Business/Advocacy/Civic	3	2	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	26	
34	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	26	
43	Charter Authorizer	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	26	
6	Other Government	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	25	
33	Interest Group	4	2	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	25	
8	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	21	
26	Other Government	4	2	2	4	4	4	1	4	4	21	
36	Charter Authorizer	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	21	
37	Charter Authorizer	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	21	
17	Legislator	3	2	2	2	4	3	3	4	4	20	
12	Charter Authorizer	4	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	19	
1	Charter Authorizer	4	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	18	
25	Business/Advocacy/Civic	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	5	5	18	
31	Charter Authorizer	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	4	18	
22	Interest Group	2	2	1	5	3	3	1	3	3	17	
49	Interest Group	4	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	17	
2	Legislator	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	16	
18	Business/Advocacy/Civic	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	16	
40	Charter Authorizer	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	3	16	
20	Legislator	2	2	1	5	2	2	1	2	2	15	
9	Legislator	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
10	Other Government	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	
13	Interest Group	3	2	1	2	3	3	1	2	2	14	
21	Interest Group	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	3	14	
28	Charter Authorizer	2	2	1	2	3	3	1	3	3	14	
41	Interest Group	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	3	14	
46	Other Government	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	14	
7	Charter Authorizer	2	2	1	3	1	1	1	3	3	13	
11	Legislator	2	1	1	2	3	3	1	3	3	13	
16	Legislator	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	13	

19	Charter Authorizer	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	13
23	Business/Advocacy/Civic	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	13
29	Other Government	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	13
30	Legislator	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	13
35	Legislator	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	3	13
39	Interest Group	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	13
45	Charter Authorizer	3	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	2	13
48	Charter Authorizer	2	2	2	1	1	3	2	2	2	13
3	Business/Advocacy/Civic	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	12
4	Interest Group	2	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	2	12
27	Business/Advocacy/Civic	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	12
42	Interest Group	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	12
5	Other Government	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	11
44	Other Government	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	11
15	Legislator	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	10
24	Interest Group	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	10
32	Charter Authorizer	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	10
51	Interest Group	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	10
47	Legislator	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	9
Total Score		132	93	95	126	133	98	139			
Codes:											
1=not at all successful											
2=somewhat successful											
3=mostly successful											
4=very successful											
5=missing/no answer											

Appendix K: Question 3 Scores by Individual

Respondent No.	Group:	Level of Concern, by Issue (see full wording Survey Question 3):								Total Score
		Finance	Oversight	Training	Tchr. Pay	Hardship	Transp.	Disabilities	Creaming	
5	Other Government	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32
9	Legislator	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32
24	Interest Group	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32
47	Legislator	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32
44	Other Government	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	30
4	Interest Group	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	2	28
30	Legislator	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	28
14	Business/Advocacy/Civic	3	3	4	3	4	5	3	2	27
19	Charter Authorizer	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	2	27
27	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	27
36	Charter Authorizer	4	2	4	3	5	2	3	4	27
10	Other Government	3	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	26
23	Business/Advocacy/Civic	3	3	3	2	4	3	3	5	26
42	Interest Group	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	2	26
45	Charter Authorizer	3	4	2	3	4	4	3	3	26
20	Legislator	3	2	3	3	4	2	4	4	25
21	Interest Group	3	4	3	2	4	2	4	3	25
28	Charter Authorizer	4	4	3	2	3	3	4	2	25
35	Legislator	3	3	2	3	4	4	3	3	25
51	Interest Group	4	4	4	3	4	2	3	1	25
15	Legislator	4	4	3	3	3	2	4	1	24
46	Other Government	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	24
39	Interest Group	3	4	3	2	2	3	4	2	23
16	Legislator	4	3	3	2	2	2	4	1	21
22	Interest Group	2	3	4	2	3	2	3	2	21
29	Other Government	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	21
11	Legislator	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	4	20
40	Charter Authorizer	3	3	3	2	1	3	3	2	20
1	Charter Authorizer	2	3	2	3	2	2	4	1	19
13	Interest Group	4	3	1	1	3	2	4	1	19
32	Charter Authorizer	2	2	3	3	3	1	4	1	19
41	Interest Group	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	19

7	Charter Authorizer	1	5	1	1	1	3	1	5	1	18
3	Business/Advocacy/Civic	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	16
48	Charter Authorizer	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	4	3	16
18	Business/Advocacy/Civic	2	4	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	15
2	Legislator	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	13
12	Charter Authorizer	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	13
17	Legislator	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	12
50	Other Government	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	12
43	Charter Authorizer	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	11
49	Interest Group	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	11
25	Business/Advocacy/Civic	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	10
26	Other Government	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	10
34	Business/Advocacy/Civic	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	10
37	Charter Authorizer	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	10
6	Other Government	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
8	Business/Advocacy/Civic	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
31	Charter Authorizer	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	9
33	Interest Group	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
38	Business/Advocacy/Civic	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Total Score		129	134	126	118	140	119	152	103		
Codes:											
1=not at all concerned											
2=somewhat concerned											
3=concerned											
4=very concerned											

Appendix L: Question 5 Scores by Individual

Respondent No.:	Group:	Level of Support, by Form of School Choice (Survey Question 5):							Total Score
		Charters	Vouchers	Low-Inc. Vouchers	Tax Credits	Inter-District	Magnets		
33	Interest Group	4	4	4	4	4	4	24	
26	Other Government	4	4	3	4	4	4	23	
49	Interest Group	4	4	4	3	4	4	23	
34	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	3	4	3	4	4	22	
48	Charter Authorizer	3	4	3	4	4	3	21	
8	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	4	3	2	3	4	20	
38	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	3	3	3	3	4	20	
17	Legislator	4	2	2	3	4	4	19	
1	Charter Authorizer	3	3	2	3	4	3	18	
18	Business/Advocacy/Civic	4	2	3	3	3	3	18	
25	Business/Advocacy/Civic	3	3	3	4	3	2	18	
6	Other Government	3	2	3	2	3	3	16	
22	Interest Group	2	2	1	3	3	4	15	
31	Charter Authorizer	4	2	2	2	3	2	15	
11	Legislator	3	1	2	1	3	4	14	
12	Charter Authorizer	3	2	1	1	3	4	14	
13	Interest Group	3	1	1	1	4	4	14	
27	Business/Advocacy/Civic	2	2	2	2	3	3	14	
32	Charter Authorizer	3	1	1	1	4	4	14	
39	Interest Group	2	2	2	2	3	3	14	
45	Charter Authorizer	2	2	2	2	3	3	14	
21	Interest Group	3	1	1	1	3	4	13	
28	Charter Authorizer	2	1	2	1	3	4	13	
36	Charter Authorizer	4	2	2	1	3	1	13	
37	Charter Authorizer	4	1	1	1	3	3	13	
40	Charter Authorizer	3	1	1	1	3	4	13	
46	Other Government	3	1	1	2	3	3	13	
9	Legislator	2	1	1	2	2	4	12	
14	Business/Advocacy/Civic	1	1	1	1	4	4	12	
16	Legislator	2	1	1	2	3	3	12	
19	Charter Authorizer	2	1	1	1	4	3	12	
29	Other Government	3	1	1	1	3	3	12	

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