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Higher Education Qualifying Examination
ELMP Doctoral Program

EXAM DATE: May 8, 2009

Directions

Attached please find the Qualifying Exam for the K-12 Doctoral Program. The exam is divided into five main parts (I - V below).

- Before you begin, create a header for each page with your student ID number (found on the label of this envelope), the name of the exam you are taking (i.e. Higher Education Qualifying) and today's date.

- For each response, please indicate the number and title of the question (i.e. Part II - Focused Policy Perspectives, etc.)

- When you complete a section, insert a page break before starting the next section.

- As you develop your responses, organize them in a logical and coherent way. You should apply and cite relevant and current research and literature in each response.

Part I
History
(Choose One Question)

Part II
Focused Policy Perspectives
(Choose One Question)

Part III
The Field of Higher Education
(Choose One Question)

Part IV
Research
(Answer All Questions)

Part V
Statistics
(Answer All Questions)

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Part I. History

Directions: Answer ONE Question:

**Question # 1. How Did We Get from Here to There?**

In his article, entitled “The International Comparative Study Of Higher Education”, Bruce Johnstone identifies what he argues are eight distinctive features of the American system vis-à-vis other national systems of higher education. These include the commitment to federalism (no Ministry of Education), control by lay corporate boards, diversification in revenue streams, an emphasis on responsiveness to the community and on expanding access, a bi-modally prestigious private sector, modularization of the curriculum and separation of undergraduate from graduate education. Using Johnstone's framework as a point of departure, write an essay on “The Historical Development of American Higher Education: How We Got Here from There,” in which you:

(a) Identify the essential features of the American system today (you may use any one or combination of Johnstone's features, or select others of your own with suitable justification, of course);

(b) Identify the essential features of higher education as it developed in the colonial period; and

(c) Explain in broad strokes how the system evolved from the former to the latter over the past 350 years, including (a) identification of the major forces internal and external that shaped the system; and (b) an explanation of how those forces shaped the system as it emerged.

You will need to focus your response on a few key features and a few key forces or influences to design a coherent essay.
QUESTION #2  Current Issues: Only Variations of Past Concerns

Some would argue that the most pressing issues in American higher education today are hardly “new,” but rather perennial issues that have been debated in one form or another since the founding of Harvard College in 1636. Identify 1-2 of the major current issues in higher education (institutional autonomy v. accountability, maintaining academic standards while expanding access, promoting equity and diversity, meeting the manpower needs of a changing economy, lack of a coherent federal higher education policy, etc.), justify your selection, provide some basic background on the contemporary expression of that issue, and then devote the major share of your analysis to an historical retrospective on how that issue has surfaced in the past. How have past debates on the issue been similar or different? What can we learn from past debates to illuminate the current one?

Question #3: Forces / Philosophies that have shaped American higher education

L. Veysey examines the influence of four forces that have shaped American higher education: discipline and piety, utility, research, and liberal culture. Based upon the knowledge of the development of American higher education you have gained through course readings and other relevant scholarship:

- Which of these four forces in your judgment had the most important influence upon contemporary American higher education and why? You must draw upon relevant literature to support your position.
- Which of these four forces in your judgment had the least influence upon contemporary American higher education and why? You must draw upon the relevant literature to support your position.
Part II. Focused Policy Perspectives

You must respond to any one of the questions listed below. There is no requirement to select a particular question based upon your program, K-12 or Higher Education.

Directions: Select one (1) of the six questions presented below and answer in a coherent essay. Be sure to draw on your knowledge of policy analysis and the current literature in higher education to frame your basic position, support the position with the best available evidence; and develop your response in clear and coherent prose.

**Question #1: Spiraling Cost in Higher Education: What's Going On?**
There is perhaps no more urgent issue than the rapidly escalating costs of higher education, especially in the independent sector. As a scholar of American higher education, you are asked to prepare a research-based article for a popular magazine that explains why costs are escalating so rapidly and what steps colleges and universities can take to contain costs. In your response, be sure to include:

a. An analysis of how organizational structure and culture affects expenditure patterns in colleges and universities;

b. An analysis of changes in revenue streams to colleges and universities over the past decade.

c. An analysis of the impact of changing state and federal policy on institutional cost structures; and

d. How in your judgment can higher education address the spiraling cost issue most effectively?
Question #2: Quality and Access
A classic debate regards access and financing of American higher education. Prepare an essay that develops your position with respect to these four questions:

1. Who goes to higher education?
2. Who pays for higher education?
3. Who benefits from higher education?
4. Who should pay?

In preparing your response, please consider such trends as current and historical participation rates in higher education, data and perspectives on individual and societal benefits of higher education participation, and current and historical methods for financing higher education. Be certain to address all four (4) of the questions.

Question #3: Financial Aid Policy
What programs does the financial aid policy in the U.S. include? How has this policy changed in recent years? What effects do the changes seem to have had?

Question #4: NCLB
What strategies does NCLB deploy to improve schooling for disadvantaged students? What effects has NCLB had?

Question #5: Demonstrate your understanding of policy analysis
Directions: you must answer parts A and B and either C or D or E

A. What is your “working definition” of policy? In preparing your definition please define and distinguish between “Policy Analysis” and “Policy Advocacy”.

B. Broadly speaking, education leaders should have a good understanding of policy that affects education. Briefly defend this assertion in 2 to 3 paragraphs.
Answer **one** of the following: either **part C** or **D** or **E**

C. Theorists often refer to various models for understanding the policy process. These models include: Institutionalism, Rationalism, Group Theory, Elite Theory and Incrementalism. Identify the characteristics of three of these models and explain your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of those models in understanding policy development and implementation. In preparing your response you may find it useful to prepare a table to structure your response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Analysis Model (prepare response for 3 of these models)</th>
<th>Identify / explain characteristics of model</th>
<th>Identify / explain strengths and weakness of model in helping education leader understand the development and implementation of education policy</th>
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**OR**

D. Some theorists speak of the “layered” concept of policy. What do you understand about this idea? Provide examples of at least 3 layers of policy and of some policy “instruments” that might be used by actors at that layer.

**OR**

E. Some theorists speak of the policy process or policy cycle. Chose one (1) (there are several) policy processes or cycles. State the steps and explain briefly each step, including why the step is important. (This could be arranged as a table).
Question #6: Charter Schools and Failing Urban Schools

In the attached (attachment #1) essay “Wave of the Future: why charter schools should replace failing urban schools”, A. Smarick presents a case for having charter schools replace failing urban schools. Drawing upon your familiarity with the policy analysis process, develop a cogent analysis that:

- Develops, defines and explains in clear terms what you see to be one (1) of the key policy questions contained in the Smarick article.
- Identifies and explain one or two policy alternatives to the policy question you singled out as central to the Smarick article
- Identifies two or three groups or organizations who would be the principal actors in this policy discussion e.g., parents, principals, politicians, unions, school boards etc. and explain why they would be key actors
- Identifies the evaluative criteria that the key actors you identified in this policy discussion might be inclined to use to assess the effectiveness of any policy changes with respect to the replacement of failing urban schools with charter schools. For example, what criteria might politicians or school boards use to assess the change proposed by Smarick? Because group interests generally influence the means by which they evaluate a policy the criteria will vary by group or organization.
Part II-Policy/Question #6

“WAVE OF THE FUTURE: WHY CHARTER SCHOOLS SHOULD REPLACE FAILING URBAN SCHOOLS”
Wave
of the FUTURE

Why charter schools should replace failing urban schools

BY ANDY SMARICK

In a decade and a half, the charter school movement has gone from a glimmer in the eyes of a few Minnesota reformers to a maturing sector of America's public education system. Now, like all 15-year-olds, chartering must find its own place in the world.

First, advocates must answer a fundamental question: What type of relationship should the nascent charter sector have with the incumbent district sector? The tension between the two is at the heart of a highly political, legally and philosophically tangle-drenched morass of movement.

This movement today lacks a consistent vision. This motley coalition includes libertarians, free market economists, career middle-class educators, and voucher proponents. Yet, I have a particular interest in the movement and its possibilities. Such differences are part of the movement's DNA.

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS) study found that the nation's charter laws cite at least 18 different goals, including spurring competition, increasing professional opportunities for teachers, and encouraging greater use of technology.

As a result of its uniqueness, chartering is unable to look to previous reform efforts for guidance. No K-12 system has to fundamentally question the basic assumptions—school assignments
based on residence, centralized administrative control, schools lasting in perpetuity—underlying the district model of public education. Even the sweeping standards and assessments movement of the last 20 years, culminating in No Child Left Behind, takes for granted and makes use of the district sector.

Though few charter advocates have openly wrestled with this issue, two camps have organically emerged. The first sees chartering as an education system operating alongside traditional districts. This camp contends that the movement can provide more options and improved opportunities, particularly to disadvantaged students, by simply continuing to grow and serve more families.

The second group sees chartering as a tool to help the traditional sector improve. Chartering, the argument goes, can spur district improvement through a blend of gentle competitive nudging and neighborly information sharing.

Both camps are deeply mistaken. For numerous policy and political reasons, without a radical change in tactics the movement won’t be able to sustain even its current growth rate. And neither decades of sharing best practices nor the introduction of charter competition has caused districts to markedly improve their performance.

Both camps have accepted an exceptionally limited view of what this sector might accomplish. Chartering’s potential extends far beyond the role of stepchild or assistant to districts. The only course that is sustainable, for both chartering and urban education, embraces a third, more expansive view of the movement’s future: replace the district-based system in America’s large cities with fluid, self-improving systems of charter schools.

A Parallel System
Charter advocates are rightfully proud of their achievements. As of spring 2007, 4,046 charter schools were serving more than 1.1 million children across 40 states and the District of Columbia. In a number of cities, charters educate a significant proportion of public school students (see Figure 1). But when compared to the expanse of the traditional district-based system and the educational needs of low-income families, the movement’s accomplishments are modest.

Nationwide, only 2 percent of public school students attend charters. Over the last five years, an average of 335 new charters started annually. At this rate, it would take until 2020 for chartering to corner just 5 percent of the national market. Even these humble figures inflate the movement’s true national standing. In 2007 nearly two-thirds of charter schools were in only seven states. Today, 24 states have less than 1 percent of their students in charter schools. Though strong expansion continues in places like California and Florida, the 2006–07 school year saw 26 states open five or fewer new schools, while 5 states—because of closures—began the school year with fewer charters than they had the year before.

None of this, however, should be taken as an assault on charters’ popularity or effectiveness. In New York, 12,000 students are on charter wait lists; in Massachusetts 19,000; in Pennsylvania 27,000. Students on all of the nation’s charter wait lists would fill an estimated 1,121 new charter schools.

Research on student achievement in charters is encouraging. A recent analysis of the charter school studies since 2001 that measured student or school performance over time—the ideal way to measure a school’s “value added”—reported that 29 of 33 studies found charters performing as well as or better than traditional public schools. The New York Times Magazine spotlighted charter networks KIPP, Uncommon Schools, and...
Achievement First in a major feature on how to close the achievement gap. Yet despite these successes, chartering’s current status and growth trajectory won’t enable it to become a parallel system large enough to serve the millions of needy students across the country within the foreseeable future.

Some might respond, “Then just accelerate growth.” But the forces that have held chartering back over the last 15 years aren’t going away. Worse, even today’s growth levels may be in danger.

Twenty-five states have imposed some type of cap on charter expansion, and in eight states those limits currently constrain growth. The battle against caps must be fought state by state by under-resourced, overextended charter advocates against entrenched opponents. In New York, an expensive and sophisticated multiyear effort by charter advocates that was supported by the governor and New York City’s mayor and schools chancellor finally resulted in legislation that raised the cap, but only by 100 schools. The new limit will be reached in just a few years.

Unequal financing is another obstacle. A Fordham Institute study found that on average charters receive $1,800 less per student than traditional public schools, despite serving more disadvantaged students. This discourages educators from starting new charters and traditional schools from converting. It also inhibits existing charters from growing enrollment or expanding to new campuses. Facilities are a major piece of this puzzle. While traditional public schools are provided a building, charters still must find, secure, and pay for a roof and walls. Only 13 states and Washington, D.C., provide some sort of facilities assistance.

The greatest impediment to growth is the wide array of political, legal, and administrative attacks. Institutional players—teachers unions, school boards, and state and district administrators—frequently petition state leaders for charter caps and reduced charter funding and vigorously oppose alternative authorizers and facilities aid. The nationwide Democratic landslide in the 2006 elections left many state governments less charter-friendly. For example, Ted Strickland, Ohio’s new Democratic governor, made a moratorium on new charters one of his top priorities.

In a number of states, most recently Ohio and Michigan, coalitions have attacked chartering through the courts. Though these challenges have been beaten back so far, even one loss could force the closure of hundreds of schools. A 2006 Florida Supreme Court decision was foreboding. Striking down the state’s voucher plan for contravening the state constitution’s requirement of a “uniform” public education system, the court opened the door to challenges to the state’s 350 charters, which, by definition, are not uniform.

Finally, chartering is held back by its administrative arrangements. Ninety percent of authorizers are local school districts, many of which view charters as an administrative inconvenience, competitive nuisance, or worse. In a NAPCS survey of charter school leaders, nearly two-thirds said working with the district was a problem. This summer, a high-performing KIPP charter school in Annapolis, Maryland, was forced to close because it couldn’t find a permanent facility, even though the school district, according to its own study, had 900 empty seats in a nearby, underserved neighborhood. Responding to the school’s pleas for help, the district’s superintendent told the local newspaper, “It’s not my responsibility. It’s not my school.”

The “parallel system” approach to chartering’s future rests on two mistaken assumptions: first, that by simply creating new schools and not purposefully antagonizing the traditional system, chartering wouldn’t attract the ire of defenders of the status quo; and second, that if chartering proved successful and popular, the sky was the limit on growth. As it turned out, district stakeholders have fought charters tooth and nail from the beginning, and they have erected policy obstacles that have severed the link between charter demand and supply.

The District Partner
The second camp envisions a vastly improved traditional school system, achieved through charter cooperation. This group believes that consistent collaboration between the two sectors would enable charters to experiment and then share lessons learned so all students, the vast majority of whom still attend traditional public schools, could benefit. “I believe that districts and charters will benefit by building more collaborative relationships,” says Tom Hutton, a staff attorney for the National School Boards Association and a former board member of the Thurgood Marshall Charter School in Washington, D.C.

Like Hutton, many in this camp are veterans of the traditional system who recognize the value of chartering. But they assume district immortality—districts have been the sole delivery system of public education for generations—and believe a collaborative relationship to be wise, pragmatic, and ultimately necessary. The late Appleton, Wisconsin, superintendent Tom Scullen supported charters within his district but cautioned, “Charter schooling will fail if it tries to become a second track of public education. There isn’t enough money to support two systems.” Deborah McGriff, executive vice president of Edison Schools and former Detroit superintendent, agrees: “Charters need to start thinking about how we move from suspicion and competition with districts to collaboration and cooperation.”

This collaborative relationship is becoming institutionalized. The federal Charter School Program, which provides charter start-up funds, requires that states disseminate charters’ best practices to districts. KIPP has an open-door policy for local teachers and principals; they are welcome to
visit and take away whatever lessons they can. Funders in particular are buying into this strategy. NewSchools Venture Fund, whose goal is to improve school districts, invests in charter entrepreneurs in the hope that they can "spark broader transformation in the public school system." One of the Boston Foundation's high priorities in its education giving is supporting the sharing of effective practices between chartered and traditional schools.

Though the move toward greater cooperation has emotional appeal, to embrace it you have to believe that districts, including major urban districts, are both willing and able to change and significantly improve student achievement at scale. Sadly, there is prima facie evidence that they are not. The achievement gap has been well documented for 40 years: in the Coleman Report, NAEP data, SAT scores, and state assessments. Given the threefold increase in per-pupil spending and countless policy changes, blue-ribbon panel recommendations, and foundation initiatives in the intervening years, it is undeniable that districts have already tried, or have been forced to try, to shape up.

Diane Ravitch recently reported in the Education Gadfly (June 7, 2007) on the disappointing achievement scores from New York City, whose much-heralded schools leader, Joel Klein, has implemented some of the nation's most aggressive reforms. Ravitch found that during Klein's five-year tenure academic gains have been smaller than during the previous five years and that the reading scores of cohorts of students are actually declining as they progress through the system. New York's inability to improve despite major interventions is far from unique. NAEP's Trial Urban District Assessment, which measured the performance of 11 large urban systems in 2005, provides compelling evidence of the futility of district-based reforms: even the highest-performing district studied (Charlotte) had only 29 percent of its 8th graders at or above proficient in reading.

It is unreasonable to believe that charter collaboration will significantly alter these stubbornly disappointing district results. High-performing low-income schools, though too rare, have been documented for decades, and yet their lessons have never been translated into comprehensive district improvement. This is despite major efforts to spread best practices widely, including the work of education schools and $15 billion spent annually on teacher professional development. All in all, the uncomfortable but unavoidable question for collaboration advocates becomes, why should chartering invest in a strategy—helping major urban districts solve the achievement gap—that has consistently failed for 40 years when pursued by others?

Many strong believers in school choice, myself included, were convinced that the competitive pressure exerted by charters would lead to a renaissance in the traditional system. The vast district improvements we expected never materialized. The clearest evidence comes from Dayton, Ohio, and Washington, D.C., two cities with significant charter sectors.

In the nation's capital, 26 percent of students attend one of the city's 71 charter schools. The city's charter sector is remarkably innovative and energetic, including such standouts as KIPP KEY Academy, the SEED School, and DC Prep. Nevertheless, the District's traditional system remains among the very worst in the nation. Of the 11 cities participating in the NAEP Trial Urban District Assessment in 2005, Washington, D.C., had the lowest scores in math and reading in both grades tested. Among its 8th-grade students, only 12 percent reached proficiency in reading and 7 percent in math. A Progressive Policy Institute study of D.C.'s charter experience summarized the situation perfectly: "There is no
clear evidence that charter schools have had a direct impact on student achievement in DCPS schools or otherwise driven systemic reform.”

Charters educate 28 percent of Dayton’s students. Last year, the district reached only one of 25 state indicators and failed to make AYP. Seventy and 56 percent of its 8th graders failed to reach proficiency in math and reading, respectively. Residents are understandably frustrated: a 2005 Fordham Foundation survey found that 69 percent of Dayton residents are in favor of either major change from the district or an entirely new education system.

Some studies, like those by Hoxby (see “Rising Tide,” research, Winter 2001) and by Holmes, Desimone, and Rupp (see “Friendly Competition,” research, Winter 2006) have found a small bump in a district’s achievement when it faces charter competition. Bifulco and Ladd (see “Results from the Tar Heel State,” research, Fall 2005) and Buddin and Zimmer, however, found none. There are legitimate disagreements about the influence of additional factors in these studies, such as competition, the policy environment, and the type of test data used. But when this research is considered alongside our other experience, the only fair conclusion is that competition hasn’t dramatically altered district performance for the better.

Charter competition has caused one unexpected and fascinating phenomenon. When facing a growing number of charters, districts turn to advertising. In January 2006, the Boston Teachers Union and the district were in negotiations to spend $100,000 to promote the virtues of traditional public schools to families choosing charters. Also in early 2006, the Cincinnati district sent letters and held information sessions designed to have charter families reenroll in traditional public schools. In May 2007, the St. Louis district awarded a no-bid contract to a marketing firm to “drive the message of the negative impact of charter schools.” Seemingly unable to improve results, districts rely on public relations to stem the migration of students to other schools.

Why is it that major urban school districts are unable to improve student learning at scale? A compelling argument, and a roadmap for charter schooling’s future, can be found in Ted Kolderie’s excellent and underappreciated book, Creating the Capacity for Change. Kolderie applies to K–12 education the lessons Harvard economist Clayton Christensen has drawn from the private sector. Christensen, studying how industries evolve and improve over time, found that critical advancements don’t come from old firms changing their ways. They come from new firms (or independent subsidiaries) entering the market, introducing new products and systems, and responding nimbly to the demands of consumers.

When an industry experiences a major change, existing firms find themselves unable to adjust to navigate the new world. Every aspect of its identity—culture, staffing practices, priorities—was geared toward succeeding in the old environment. When the environment changes, it’s impossible for the horse and carriage to transform into a steam locomotive.

The implications for public education are profound. For 150 years, public schooling has been a one-factory town: a board- and superintendent-led district manages, staffs, and oversees an area’s entire portfolio of public schools. But in this time, the world has become a radically different place and the expectations of schools have changed even more. As Kolderie points out, if private firms, which are built to respond to competition, are unable to make this kind of leap, we can’t expect gigantic, byzantine school systems, which are insulated from competition, shackled by union contracts, and constrained by a sticky web of regulations, to do so.

The system is the issue. The solution isn’t an improved traditional district; it’s an entirely different delivery system for public education: systems of chartered schools.
A Transformed System

Charter advocates should strive to have every urban public school be a charter. That is, each school should have significant control over its curriculum, methods, budget, staff, and calendar. Each school should have a contract that spells out its mission and measurable objectives, including guaranteeing that all students achieve proficiency in basic skills. Each school should be held accountable by an approved public body.

"Charter" will no longer be seen as an adjective, a way to describe a type of school, but as a verb, an orderly and sensible process for developing, replicating, operating, overseeing, and closing schools. The system would be fluid, self-improving, and driven by parents and public authority, ensuring the system uses the best of market and government forces. Schools that couldn't attract families would close, as would those that ran afool of authorizers for academic, financial, or management failures. School startups, both the number and their characteristics, would reflect the needs of communities and the interests of students, but would also be tightly regulated to generate a high probability of school success.

So, while the government's role would still be significant, it would no longer operate the city's entire portfolio of public schools. Instead, it would take on a role similar to the EAA's role in monitoring the airline industry or a health department's monitoring of restaurants. Today, we take airline safety for granted and make our choices based on service, connections, and so on. Similarly, we know all restaurants have fire exits and meet food safety standards, so we choose based on our tastes and schedules. A well-regulated charted school system could guarantee that all public schools were providing a safe, high-quality education and properly managing operations, thereby allowing families to choose a school based on other criteria.

The government's substantial oversight role in guaranteeing safety and quality would differentiate a charter system from a universal voucher program. To many, a voucher system would undeniably blur the lines between church and state, add the profit motive to schooling, remove the "public" from K-12 education, and leave too much to the vicissitudes of the market. By contrast, in a charted system, public schools would be nonreligious, managed by nonprofits, overseen by a public authority, and held to clear performance standards.

But a charted system would capitalize on market forces largely absent from district systems, such as constant innovation, competition, and replication. Replication is arguably the most valuable. Chartering has not only created some of America's finest schools, it has enabled their leaders to identify the characteristics that made those schools so remarkable and then develop systems for creating additional, equally successful schools. In addition to well-known charter management organizations like KIPP, Achievement First, and Uncommon Schools, new ones continue to emerge: Green Dot, High Tech High, Aspire, Noble Street, IDEA, and more. Major funders like the Charter School Growth Fund and NewSchools Venture Fund are helping other high-performing charters expand as well.

So how do we transform today's urban district systems into charted systems? Absent political realities, the shift could be quite simple. Any district could decide tomorrow to relinquish day-to-day control of its schools and develop performance contracts with each. Every school could develop its own governing board and acquire control of its budget, staffing, and curriculum. The district could then change from a central operator to an authorizer, monitoring schools, closing them when necessary, and allowing new ones to open. The "every school a charter school" idea is not new; others, most prominently Paul Hill of the Center on Reinventing Public Education, have been writing variations on this theme for some time.

Unfortunately, for reasons having more to do with power than student learning, this scenario is highly unlikely. Most districts assiduously avoid the loss of one school, let alone all schools. When one of Washington, D.C.'s highest-performing traditional public schools pursued plans to convert to a charter in 2006, the district agreed to several of its demands in exchange for the school's agreement to stop flouting with charter status. This spring, after faculty at Locke High School in Los Angeles signed petitions to convert into a Green Dot charter, district officials scrambled to put together a counterproposal and convinced some teachers to rescind their signatures.

No government entity likes to lose control of any of its components and the budget and prestige that go with them, especially when the loss suggests a failure by the organization. But shifting from an operator into an authorizer would mean cutting hundreds of central office jobs as well: since charters handle their own transportation, facilities, staffing, and more, district employees filling those responsibilities would become redundant. Such a shift, then, would be vigorously opposed by district staff and those who represent them. Countless powerful organizations, like unions, book publishers, and service providers, would also be adversely affected by a decentralized system of schools.

Clearly we can't expect the political process to swiftly bring about charter districts in all of America's big cities. However, if charter advocates carefully target specific systems with an exciting strategy, the current policy environment will allow them to create examples of a new, high-performing system of public education in urban America.

Here, in short, is one roadmap for chartering's way forward: First, commit to drastically increasing the charter market share in a few select communities until it is the
dominant system and the district is reduced to a secondary provider. The target should be 75 percent. Second, choose the target communities wisely. Each should begin with a solid charter base (at least 5 percent market share), a policy environment that will enable growth (fair funding, nondistrict authorizers, and no legislated caps), and a favorable political environment (friendly elected officials and editorial boards, a positive experience with charters to date, and unorganized opposition). For example, in New York a concerted effort could be made to site in Albany or Buffalo a large percentage of the 100 new charters allowed under the raised cap. Other potentially fertile districts include Denver, Detroit, Kansas City, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, Oakland, and Washington, D.C.

Third, secure proven operators to open new schools. To the greatest extent possible, growth should be driven by replicating successful local charters and recruiting high-performing operators from other areas (see Figure 2). Fourth, engage key allies like Teach For America, New Leaders for New Schools, and national and local foundations to ensure the effort has the human and financial capital needed. Last, commit to rigorously assessing charter performance in each community and working with authorizers to close the charters that fail to significantly improve student achievement.

In total, these strategies should lead to rapid, high-quality charter growth and the development of a public school marketplace marked by parental choice, the regular startup of new schools, the improvement of middling schools, the replication of high-performing schools, and the shuttering of low-performing schools.

As chartering increases its market share in a city, the district will come under growing financial pressure. The district, despite educating fewer and fewer students, will still require a large administrative staff to process payroll and benefits, administer federal programs, and oversee special education. With a lopsided adult-to-student ratio, the district's per-pupil costs will skyrocket.

At some point along the district's path from monopoly provider to financially unsustainable marginal player, the city's investors and stakeholders—taxpayers, foundations, business leaders, elected officials, and editorial boards—are likely to demand fundamental change. That is, eventually the financial crisis will become a political crisis. If the district has progressive leadership, one of two best-case scenarios may result. The district could voluntarily begin the shift to an authorizer, developing a new relationship with its schools and reworking its administrative structure to meet the new conditions. Or, believing the organization is unable to make this change, the district could gradually transfer its schools to an established authorizer.

A more probable district reaction to the mounting pressure would be an aggressive political response. Its leadership team might fight for a charter moratorium or seek protection from the courts. Failing that, they might lobby for additional funding so the district could maintain its administrative structure despite the vast loss of students. Reformers should expect and prepare for this phase of the transition process.

In many ways, replacing the district system seems inconceivable, almost heretical. Districts have existed for generations, and in many minds, the traditional system is synonymous with public education. However, the history of urban districts' inability to provide a high-quality education to their low-income students is nearly as long. It's clear that we need a new type of system for urban public education, one that is able to respond nimbly to great school success, chronic school failure, and everything in between. A charted system could do precisely that.

Andy Smarick is former congressional aide and charter school founder. Until recently, he served as chief operating officer of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools.

www.educationnext.org
Part III. The Field of Higher Education

Directions: Please choose ONE of the following two questions, and craft an analytical essay in response.

OPTION 1

The current economic situation has affected many facets of colleges and universities in the United States. Irrespective of geography, size, or public/private institutional type, many higher education institutions are now facing new and more difficult challenges. In light of the impact of financial downturns on higher education sectors identity three major concerns colleges and universities have and discuss alternative ways to alleviate such conditions.

OPTION 2

In his essay on college students, George Kuh asserts: “One of the few topics about which pundits, policy wonks, higher education scholars, and blue-ribbon panels agree is the subpar quality of undergraduate education.”

In a well-crafted essay, discuss the possible causes of this phenomenon. In addressing this question, consider the following:

- Over what period of time has the quality of undergraduate education been a subject of fierce critique?
- What is the exact nature of and evidence for the critiques of undergraduate education?
- What conditions have motivated the critiques?
- What would you propose as the appropriate action to take in response to these critiques?

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Part IV. Research

Directions: Answer All Questions

You have been asked to investigate an important component of the doctoral degree program offered by Seton Hall's ELMP Department: the Qualifying Exam. Over the past few administrations of the exam, there have been a number of students who have failed the research question while passing all of the other sections on the exam.

Describe, in detail, a research study that investigates the ELMP Qualifying Exam. As you explain the study, be sure to include each of the following:

- A statement of the "problem" you intend to investigate.
  The problem statement should define the scope (magnitude) and the precise nature of the problem (dilemma, phenomenon of interest), as well as the usefulness of framing the problem in this form.

- Research questions that derive logically from your problem statement.

- A coherent research plan and appropriate methods of data collection.
  Identify what data are required to answer the questions, the sources of those data, and how the data will be obtained. Justify the effectiveness of this design in addressing the research questions.

  As you explain the data you intend to collect and the methods for doing so, be sure to clarify your strategy for ensuring reliability and validity.

- Data Analysis Plan.
  Articulate your plan for organizing and analyzing the raw data; specify how your analytical approach will address your research questions.
PART V. Statistics

Directions:
Answer all of the following questions. Fully explain your rationale for interpreting the statistical information. The following background is provided as a context for all questions and analyses that follow. Any similarities to real programs and or data are purely coincidental and are not intended as factual.

Background:
In a recent article, author Billie Donegan (2008) claims *to truly improve the freshman year [of high school], we must turn the conventional wisdom about staff and culture on its head. The “failing” high school is attributed to many factors which are widely and passionately debated. One of the initiatives that increasingly has gained attention and popularity is the "9th grade academy." Similar to the interdisciplinary teams of the middle school movement in the 1960's, the 9th grade academy is designed to ease the academic and social transition for high school bound students. Researchers have identified 9th grade as the most critical point to intervene and prevent students from losing motivation, failing and dropping out of school.

The recent emphasis on the use of data to inform and guide decision making has caused many high school districts which embrace new initiatives to collect and analyze data at the local level. This analysis is being completed in an effort to gain a better understanding of the impact and influence of these new programs.

The following questions are presented as hypothetical situations within the context of the "9th grade academy" initiative that that was recently initiated in Happy Valley School District in Any town, New Jersey. A Likert style survey of student perceptions of school related issues was developed by a local high school principal in Happy Valley School District (HVSC). A score of 1 reflected strong agreement and a score of 4 reflected strong disagreement. This principal was interested in studying a variety of issues since this was the first year of the new Grade 9 Academy initiative.

References
Donegan, D. The Linchpin. *Educational Leadership*, May 2008,
Reents, J. Separate schools ease the academic and social transition for high school-bound students. *The School Administrator*, March 2002
Question #1

A Likert style survey of student perceptions of school related issues was developed by a local high school principal in Happy Valley School District (HVSC). A score of 1 reflected strong agreement and a score of 4 reflected strong disagreement. This principal was interested in studying a variety of issues since this was the first year of the new Grade 9 Academy initiative. Two of the questions on the survey involved students’ school satisfaction with their freshman year and their perceptions of consistent discipline. The principal asked her assistant to prepare an analysis of two items on a “perception” survey that was completed at the end of the first year. She wanted to know if students’ reported overall satisfaction was related to their perception of consistent enforcement. A total of 495 freshmen completed the survey. The principal and the assistant compiled and analyzed the data using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. The data is summarized below.

What does the following output reveal to you with respect to the correlation between student overall satisfaction and their perceptions of school consistent enforcement of behavior rules by teachers.

Complete a thorough review of the SPSS Correlation analysis below. Be certain to report and interpret the Pearson ‘r’, the sign of the correlation, the reported significance, and the shared variance. Provide concrete recommendations as appropriate based on their analysis of the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall Satisfaction</th>
<th>Consistency of Disciplinary Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of Disciplinary Decisions</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question #2

After reviewing the correlation analysis, the superintendent was interested to see how the principal's current (2008) ninth grade students' satisfaction mean score compared to the satisfaction mean score on the same survey completed the previous year (2007) with different students. Despite the different group membership, she felt it worthwhile to see if the mean satisfaction score was significantly different that the previous year's mean satisfaction score (2007 mean score = 1.95057) when the ninth grade was not organized as an academy. The following SPSS output with respect to how her students (N=495) performed on average in spring 2008 compared to the mean score of those ninth grade students in the spring 2007 (1.95057). The principal was hoping to find evidence that the 9th grade academy might be effective so she was careful to complete a statistical analysis rather than simply look at the mean difference. She solicited the assistance of her assistant principal who prepared the following chart. Complete a thorough analysis of this data being certain to include the research question, null and alternate hypotheses, decision rule, reported p values, decision, and interpretation. Also include a comment on what leadership, management and/or policy decisions could be made from this data. Provide concrete recommendations as appropriate based on their analysis of the data. Be mindful that a lower score represents stronger agreement that the overall satisfaction was high (1 strongly agree, 4 strongly disagree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Value = 1.95057</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Question #3

The Director of Guidance had been studying the issue of gender based classes and he wondered if there might be a difference in satisfaction perception based on gender in the new 9th grade academy. A copy of the SPSS analysis comparing the mean score of the 495 grade nine students based on gender (Male Group 1 with n=130 and Female Group 2 with n= 345) is listed below. Complete a thorough analysis of this data being certain to include the research question, null and alternate hypotheses, decision rule, reported p values, decision, and interpretation. Also include a comment on what leadership, management and/or policy decisions could be made from this data? What should the administration report to the director of guidance with respect to gender differences? Provide concrete recommendations as appropriate based on their analysis of the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender M(1), F(2)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction 1</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>1.6433</td>
<td>.85143</td>
<td>.06511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2008 2</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>1.4383</td>
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<td>.03628</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Satisfaction Equal variances assumed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One final request from the superintendent involved a comparison of the student perceptions of the consistency of discipline responses by teachers now that the Grade Nine Academy was in place. It was a concern that students would see different standards being applied to different groups within the academy. The "team structure" might be undermining the desired goal of improved transitions. The satisfaction survey had been administered at the beginning of the fall semester 2007 to establish a baseline. The same test was again administered in the spring of 2008. A total of 480 students were common to both test administrations. An SPSS data summary is listed below. Complete a thorough analysis of this data being certain to include the research question, null and alternate hypotheses, decision rule, reported p values, decision, and interpretation. Also include a comment on what leadership, management and/or policy decisions could be made from this data. Provide concrete recommendations as appropriate based on their analysis of the data.

### Samples Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Consistency of Disciplinary Decisions Fall 2007</th>
<th>Consistency of Disciplinary Decisions Spring 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1.5146</td>
<td>1.7708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.73943</td>
<td>.83852</td>
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<tr>
<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
<td>.03375</td>
<td>.03627</td>
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</table>

### Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1 Consistency of Disciplinary Decisions Fall 2007 - Consistency of Disciplinary Decisions Spring 2008</td>
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<td>.03474</td>
<td>-7.376</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>