

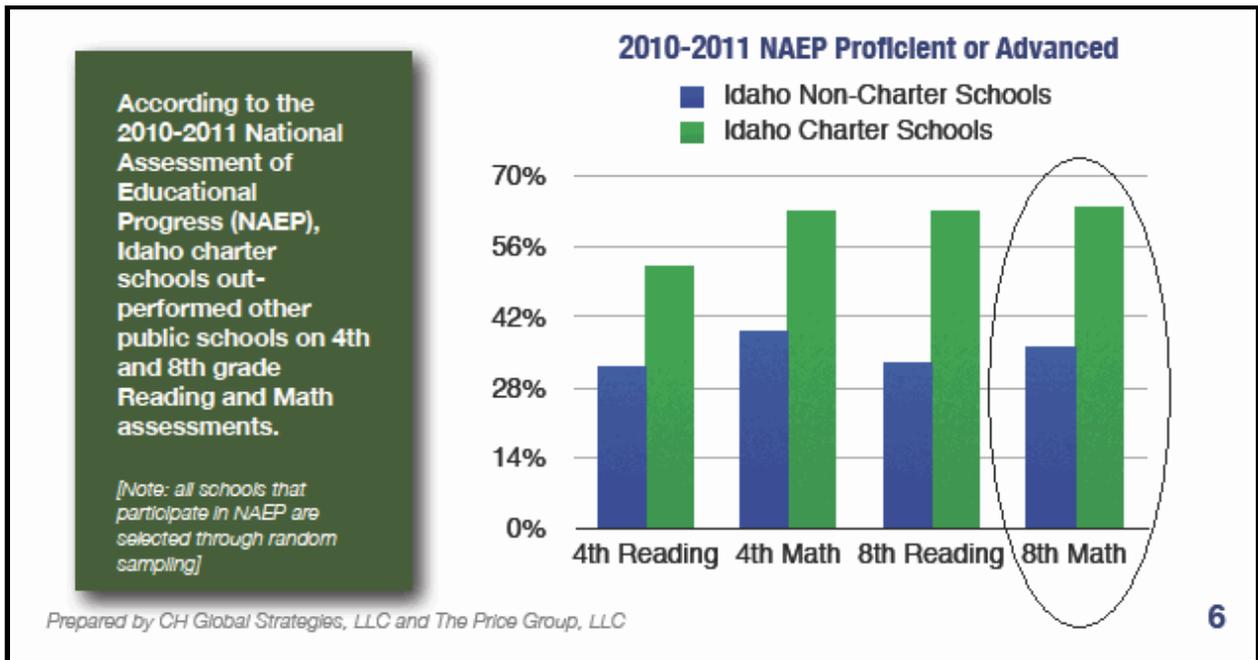
March 20, 2013
Revised April 18, 2013

J.A. & Kathryn Albertson Foundation
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Boise, Idaho 83706



Re: Data Error in 2013 Charter School Report Needs Correction

While surfing the internet today, I came across your report entitled *Idaho In Focus: The School Choice and Digital Learning Landscape* released in January 2013, at <http://www.jkaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/IDAHO-IN-FOCUS-report-.pdf> On page 6 the authors misinterpreted NAEP 2011 results, and provided readers with a false comparison of achievement in Idaho's public charter schools and other public schools.



My remarks are limited to NAEP 2011 eighth grade mathematics results.

NAEP does not show that Idaho charter schools outperformed other public schools on eighth grade mathematics. The narrative next to the bar chart, however, ensures readers will wrongly understand that the 64% for charter schools on the chart clearly represents much higher achievement level in eighth grade mathematics than the 36% for the not-charter schools.

I have retrieved the NAEP 2011 eighth grade mathematics results from the NAEP Data Explorer (an online tool that is available to the public for analyzing NAEP results). The analysis of these results follows on pages 2 through 4.

NAEP Data Explorer – Printout #1

The NAEP Data Explorer confirmed that the estimated percentage of students from Idaho charter schools who scored at or above NAEP *Proficient* was 64%, and that the corresponding percentage for Idaho students in not-charter schools was 36%.

The online tool also noted a rather large standard error (15.3) for the charter school estimate, which was much larger than the standard error (1.0) for the not-charter schools. As a rule of thumb, smaller sample sizes have larger standard errors.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Report from NAEP Data Explorer <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>

Percentages at or above each achievement level for mathematics, grade 8 by school is identified as charter (National public only) [CHRTRPT], year and jurisdiction: 2011

		Charter school		Not a charter school	
Year	Jurisdiction	at or above Proficient	Standard error	at or above Proficient	Standard error
2011	National public	31	(2.9)	34	(0.2)
	Idaho	64	(15.3)	36	(1.0)

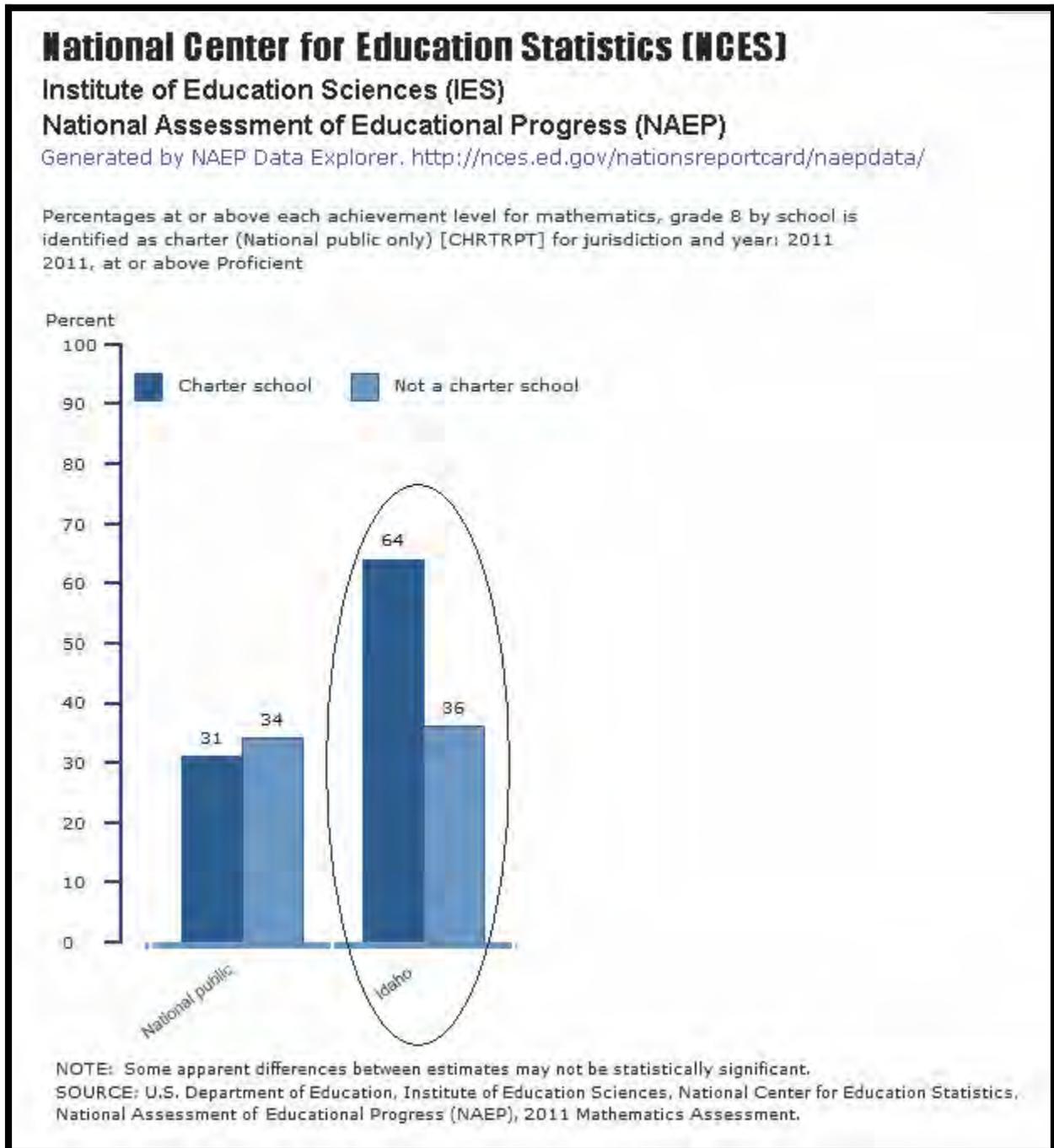
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Some apparent differences between estimates may not be statistically significant.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2011 Mathematics Assessment.



NAEP Data Explorer – Printout #2



The NAEP Data Explorer graph for eighth grade mathematics looks much like the graph in the report. Like the graph in the charter school report, this bar graph needs to be correctly interpreted for interested readers who are not conversant with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

NAEP Data Explorer – Printout #3

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Institute of Education Sciences (IES) National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Report from NAEP Data Explorer http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/		
Mathematics, grade 8 Difference in percent at or above Proficient between variables, for school is identified as charter (National public only) [CHRTRPT] Idaho, 2011		
	Charter school (64)	Not a charter school (36)
Charter school (64)		x Diff = 28 P-value = 0.1637
Not a charter school (36)	x Diff = -28 P-value = 0.1637	
LEGEND:		
<	Significantly lower.	
>	Significantly higher.	
x	No significant difference.	
NOTE: All comparisons are independent tests with an alpha level of 0.05 adjusted for multiple pairwise comparisons according to the False Discovery Rate procedure. For comparisons between two jurisdictions, a dependent test is performed for cases where one jurisdiction is contained in the other.		
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Some apparent differences between estimates may not be statistically significant.		
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2011 Mathematics Assessment.		

The NAEP Data Explorer conducted a statistical test that compared the charter schools' 64% of students at or above NAEP *Proficient* to the other schools' 36%. The test found ***NO statistically significant difference*** between the mathematics performance of eighth grade students in Idaho's ***charter schools*** and those in Idaho's ***not-charter schools***.

The **claim** in the Albertson Foundation charter school report (page 6) that NAEP shows charter schools outperform the not-charter schools **is false**.