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ncsrp working paper # 2007-1

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The National Charter School Research Project (NCSRP) brings rigor, evidence, and balance to the national charter school debate.

NCSRP seeks to facilitate the fair assessment of the value-added effects of U.S. charter schools and to provide the charter school and broader public education communities with research and information for ongoing improvement.

NCSRP:

- Identifies high-priority research questions.
- Conducts and commissions original research to fill gaps in current knowledge or to illuminate existing debates.
- Helps policymakers and the general public interpret charter school research.

The Project is an initiative of the Center on Reinventing Public Education.

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Introduction

A safe school environment is of paramount importance to everyone—parents, students, teachers, and staff. It is significant for the physical and emotional wellbeing of children; if problems are serious enough, they can easily affect students’ ability to achieve their learning potential. Theft, bullying, violence, assaults on teachers, or widespread disarray in a school or classroom disrupt the learning environment, distracting teachers and students from what they are doing, and potentially driving some teachers and students from the school.

Because it is possible that safety issues in schools differ by school control, the Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) has long been interested in whether charter schools exhibit more or fewer discipline and safety challenges than traditional public schools. When new data from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) became available in the fall of 2006, it was apparent that two sets of data, one from public school teachers, the other from principals, could be used to explore this question. These data sets provide reports from principals and teachers on their perceptions of school safety and discipline issues and their estimates of how frequently discipline problems arise. Charter schools are included in the public school data sets and can be analyzed separately. It is thus possible to identify differences between charter schools and regular public schools; however, it is not possible to say whether any differences are caused by schools’ charter status, their size, the students enrolled, teacher and family attitudes, or some other factors. An attempt to establish causality with respect to safety and discipline would face the same challenges as efforts to explain test score outcomes.¹

SASS is the nation’s most extensive sample survey of elementary and secondary schools and the teachers and administrators who staff them.² Sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), SASS has been conducted by the United States Census Bureau five times: in school years 1987-88, 1990-91, 1993-94, 1999-2000, and 2003-04. This report is based on data from the 2003-04 survey.³

1. See Charter School Achievement Consensus Panel, *Key Issues in Studying Charter Schools and Achievement: A Review and Suggestions for National Guidelines*, National Charter School Research Project White Paper Series, No. 2 (Seattle: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2006).

2. G.A. Strizek, J.L. Pittsonberger, K.E. Riordan, D.M. Lyter, and G.F. Orlofsky, *Characteristics of Schools, Districts, Teachers, Principals, and School Libraries in the United States: 2003-04 Schools and Staffing Survey*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006).

3. The 2003-04 SASS covered three school sectors: public, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and private. This paper considers only “public schools,” which include traditional public schools and charter schools. “Traditional public schools” are defined by SASS as institutions that provide educational services for at least one of grades 1-12 (or comparable ungraded levels), have one or more teachers who provide instruction, are located in one or more buildings, receive public funds as primary support, and are operated by an education agency. They include regular, special education, vocational/technical, and alternative schools. They also include schools in juvenile detention centers, and domestic schools located on military bases and operated by the Department of Defense. “Public charter schools” are public schools that, in accordance with an enabling state statute, have been granted a charter exempting them from selected state or local rules and regulations.

This paper discusses safety in urban charter schools relative to other urban public schools, using several indicators from SASS.⁴ The indicators measure the frequency of safety problems as reported by teachers and principals. This paper also examines the types of policies in place to promote safe school environments.

Key findings:

- Due to differences in charter and traditional school grade structures, direct comparisons between charter and traditional schools are complicated.
- Threats to person or property and troubling behavioral problems are evident in both charter and traditional public schools.
- However, teachers and principals in traditional public schools consistently report more frequent safety problems in their schools than do teachers and principals in charter schools.
- It is not clear what accounts for these differences. Apart from student dress code and uniform requirements, charters do not seem to consistently use dramatically different approaches to safety policy.

Characteristics of Charter and Traditional Public Schools

For some time it has been known that the structure of charter schools (in terms of grade spans) differs quite dramatically from the structure of traditional schools. In 2005, for example, CRPE reported that only 27 percent of charter schools are elementary schools, compared to about 47 percent of traditional public schools.⁵ According to the 2005 report, schools with a K-8 configuration are represented among charter schools at twice the rate of traditional schools (22 percent versus 11 percent), and 21 percent of charter schools are K-12 schools, compared to just 3 percent of traditional public schools.

If the 2005 CRPE estimates are correct, the responses from teachers and principals in the SASS study include many more teachers and administrators from primary schools than one would expect (see table 1). Nearly one half of the responses from both charter teachers and principals come from primary schools.

4. This analysis includes only schools in urban areas, defined as being within a large central city (population no less than 250,000) or mid-size central city (population less than 250,000), or within a Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) or Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of a large or mid-size city and identified as urban by the Census Bureau. All results reflect data weighted by the final weight variable in the SASS dataset. The 2003-04 SASS data have been weighted to create a nationally representative sample of traditional public schools and charter schools in the United States. All safety indicators discussed in this paper are statistically significant at the 0.01 level or better, using Pearson's chi-square test.

5. R. Lake and P. Hill, eds., *Hopes Fears and Reality: A Balanced Look at American Charter Schools in 2005* National Charter School Research Project (Seattle: Center on Reinventing Public Education, 2005), 15.

Table 1. School level of teachers and principals in SASS

		Primary	Middle	High	Other grade combinations
Teachers	Charter	49%	9%	12%	30%
	Traditional	51%	20%	27%	2%
Principals	Charter	46%	7%	21%	26%
	Traditional	62%	17%	18%	3%

Apart from the grade span differences, although the schools in this comparison have urban settings in common, there are many other ways in which they differ (see table 2). Table 2, based on teacher responses, indicates that:

- Charter schools tend to be much smaller. They enroll fewer students at the primary and middle school levels, and many fewer students, on average, at the high school level, where charters enroll an average of 447 students and traditional schools enroll 1,549.
- Contrary to conventional wisdom, charters overall enroll a greater proportion of minority students (61 percent in charter schools versus 50 percent in traditional schools). The general finding does not hold true in middle schools.
- Also contrary to conventional wisdom, charter school students tend to be poor. Nearly 90 percent of charter schools, and almost all traditional public schools, participate in the federal free/reduced-price lunch program, an indicator of family poverty. Among the schools that do participate, charters tend to have a somewhat greater proportion of students eligible for the program than traditional public schools.

Table 2. Characteristics of teachers' schools by grade configuration

Teachers		Average enrollment	Percentage of racial/ethnic minority students in school	Percentage of schools participating in federal free/reduced-price lunch program	Percentage of students at participating schools who are approved for federal free/reduced-price lunch program
Primary	Charter	508	68%	97%	51%
	Traditional	573	52%	99%	48%
Middle	Charter	718	45%	100%	39%
	Traditional	893	48%	99%	43%
High	Charter	447	56%	65%	35%
	Traditional	1549	46%	94%	31%
Other grade combinations	Charter	639	56%	81%	55%
	Traditional	756	52%	92%	53%
Overall	Charter	559	61%	89%	50%
	Traditional	904	50%	98%	43%

Grade configuration has clear implications for a number of the safety indicators discussed here. For instance, counting responses indicating gang activity in charter elementary schools against responses from traditional high schools would not be fair, assuming that gang activity is more common among teenagers than younger children. However, analyzing teachers' responses for each grade configuration separately does not greatly alter the overall findings (see figures A-1 to A-4 in the appendix). Teachers in traditional public schools, for example, are likely to report more occurrences of serious discipline and safety issues across the board, with the exception of theft, which was reported to be more common in charter middle schools.

Threats to Person and Property

It is probably safe to say that no school in the United States is free of challenges to discipline and safety. That is true of traditional public schools, charter schools and private schools, no matter how exclusive or prestigious. To analyze the SASS data, this paper divided the responses into threats to person or property, on one hand, and "behavioral problems" on the other. Undoubtedly there is some element of crossover in the two categories, but the intent was to assign serious actions that threatened people or property to one category and "acting out" behaviors to the other.

Under "threats to person or property" SASS data provided information on bullying, physical conflicts, robbery or theft, vandalism, gang activities, weapons possession and physical abuse of teachers. "Behavioral problems," by contrast, included disrespect and verbal abuse of teachers, widespread classroom disorder, use of illegal drugs and alcohol, and student racial tension.

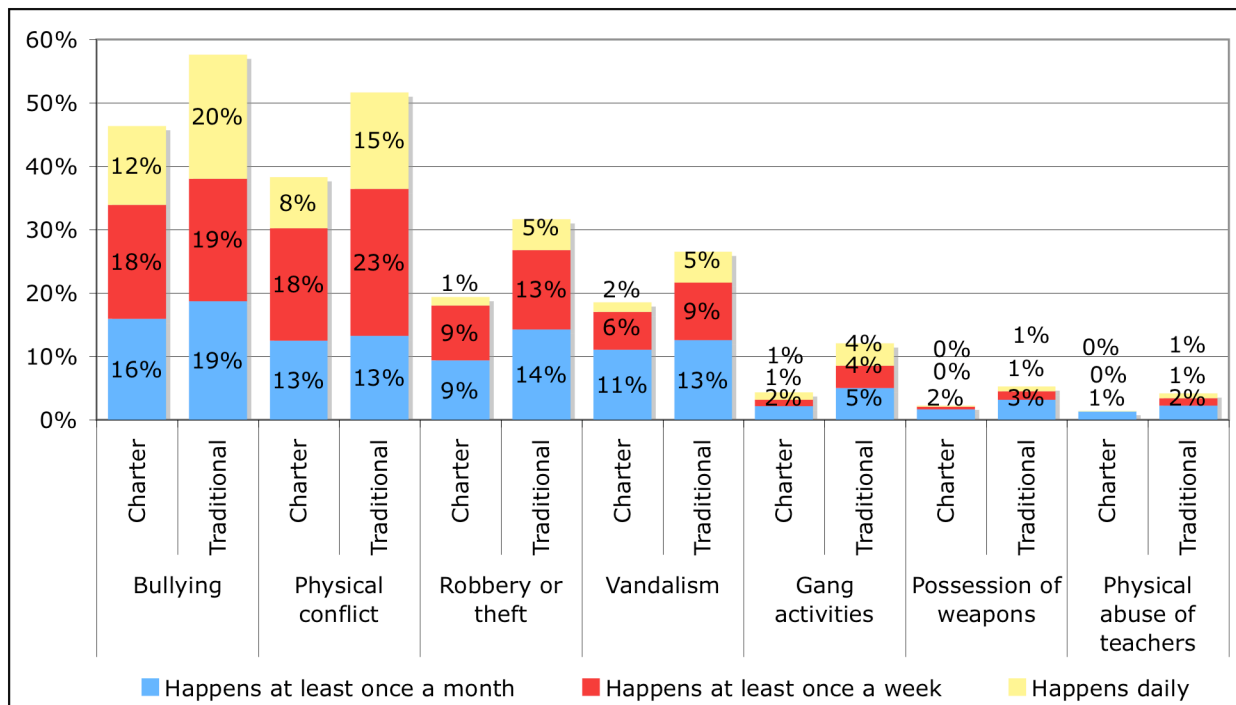
The body of this paper focuses on the teachers' responses. Responses from principals can be found in the appendix (see table A-5, and figures A-6 and A-7). Three things are striking about the responses, which are explored in greater detail in the section that follows:

- Teachers from both charter and traditional schools report quite high levels of serious threats to person and property. At least 20 percent of the teachers in both types of schools report that vandalism, robbery or theft, physical conflicts, and bullying occur once a month or more.
- Teachers from traditional public schools report safety and discipline issues at rates much higher than do teachers from charter schools.
- Although principals in both charter and traditional public schools are far less inclined to report such incidents, the general pattern is identical. Like their teachers, principals at traditional schools are more likely than charter principals to report safety and discipline problems.

The general points that need to be made about this are that safety concerns frequently revolve around very serious issues. These are not simply problems of horseplay among young people, but may involve fights, bullying, physical abuse of teachers, and possession of weapons. These issues, at least in terms of teacher reports and perceptions, affect all schools and are most serious in traditional public schools. Finally, teachers report a far higher incidence of these challenges than do principals, both in charter and traditional schools.

SASS asked teachers to characterize how frequently various types of student misbehavior occurred in their schools during the 2003-04 school year. The options ranged from “daily” to “never.” As described above, this paper broke out the responses into threats to person and property and student misbehavior. Figure 1 provides the data on teacher responses characterized by CRPE as threats to person and property.

Figure 1. Teacher reports of threats to person or property



It seems clear that vandalism, robbery or theft, physical conflict (fights) and bullying are the most frequently reported problems, in both charter and traditional public schools. Gang activities, possession of weapons, and physical abuse of teachers are reported much less frequently in both kinds of schools.

It is also clear that on every one of these dimensions, teachers in traditional public schools report considerably more frequent occurrences than charter teachers. For example, 58 percent of teachers in traditional public schools report bullying as something that happens once a month or more, compared to 46 percent of charter teachers. Less than 40 percent of charter teachers report fights once a month or more, but 52 percent of teachers in traditional public schools do so. Robbery or theft is at least a monthly occurrence in 19 percent of charter schools according to teachers, but nearly a third of traditional school teachers put the level that high.

Gang activities, weapons’ possession and assaults on teachers are reported at much lower levels of activity, but again traditional public school teachers are likely to report higher incidences. Among charter school teachers, 5 percent report gang activities once a month or more, figures that decline to 2 percent for weapons possession and 1 percent for physical abuse of teachers. The incidence levels reported by teachers from traditional public schools are considerably higher—12 percent, 5 percent, and 4 percent, respectively.

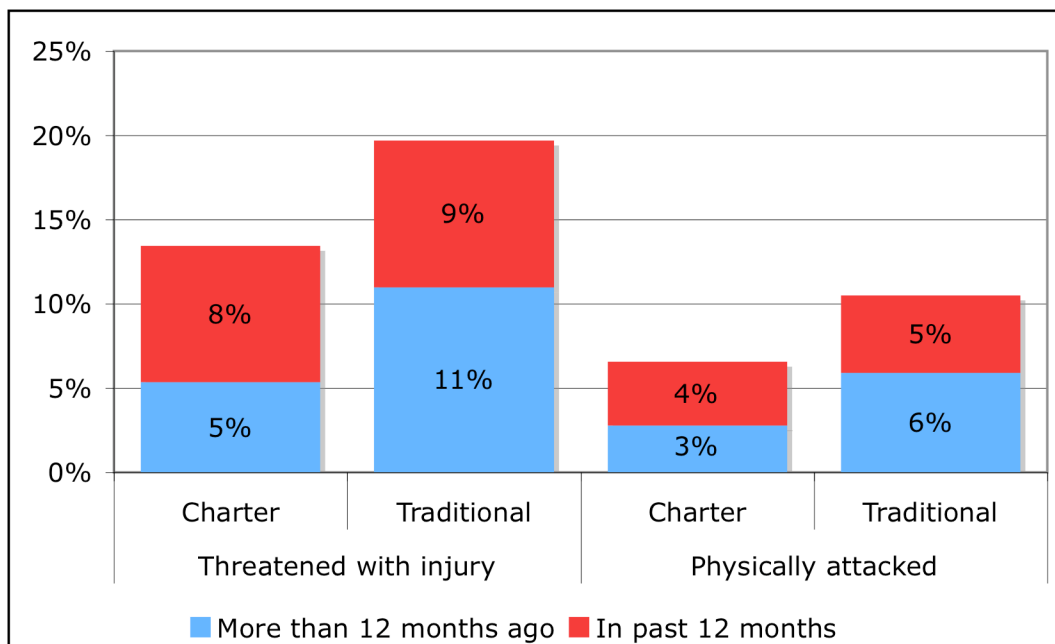
It needs to be noted that although the general nature of the problems reported by principals are similar (and similarly skewed toward higher reported incidents from traditional public schools), the frequency with which principals report these problems is dramatically lower. The teachers and principals describe a substantially different reality. The implications of this will be explored in the summary, but suffice it to say here that what the SASS data provide is a picture of the perceptions and opinions of the respondents, not a data-driven account of what is actually happening on each kind of campus.

Threats to, and attacks on, teachers. Another question (not reflected in figure 1) asked teachers if a student from their current school had ever threatened them with injury or physically attacked them. Because the implications of this issue are so troubling, these responses are presented separately (see figure 2).

While the vast majority of teachers reported never having been attacked by a student at their school, the proportion of teachers who report such attacks is surprising. Seven percent of charter teachers and 10 percent of teachers in traditional public schools report having been attacked by a student. About half in each group had been attacked in the previous 12 months.

Even more teachers report being threatened by students. In charter schools, 13 percent of teachers report ever being threatened at the current school, and 8 percent report being threatened within the 12 months preceding the survey. In traditional public schools, 20 percent of teachers report receiving threats, with 9 percent being threatened the past year. Similar patterns are seen in each grade configuration (see figure A-4 in the appendix).

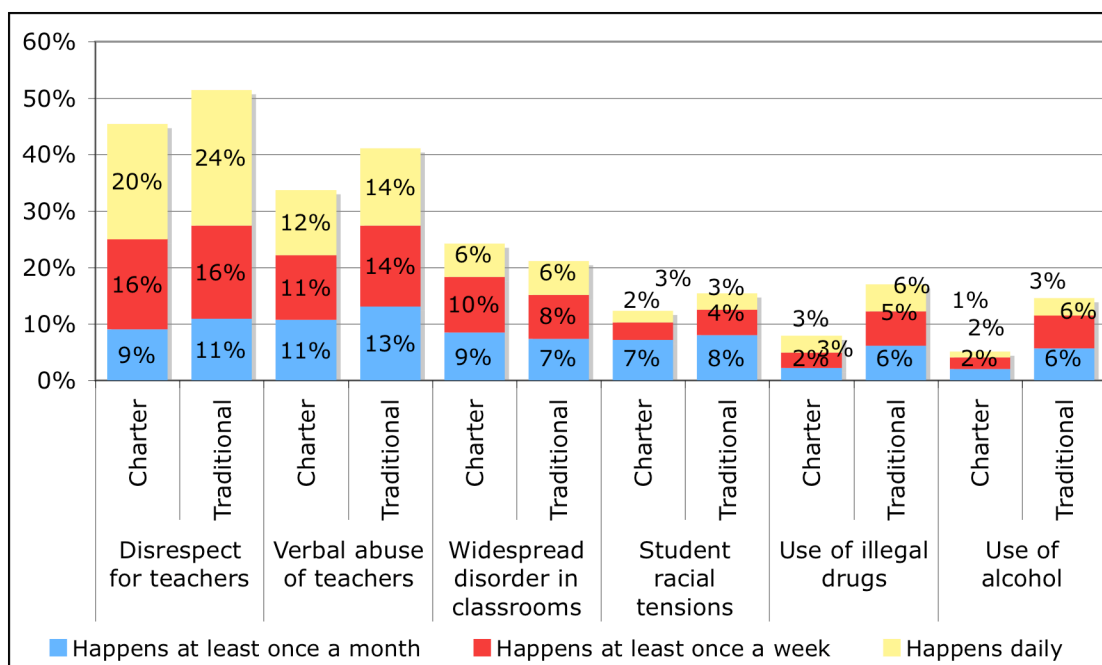
Figure 2. Teachers threatened or attacked by students at their current school



Serious Behavioral Problems

Apart from threats to person or property, what about other behavioral issues? Figure 3 provides the data on teacher responses to safety and discipline challenges characterized as behavioral problems. Some of these are very serious challenges also, but most do not rise to the level of direct threats to person or property.

Figure 3. Teacher reports of behavioral problems



Disrespect of teachers, verbal abuse of teachers, and widespread disorder in the classroom are the most frequently cited issues. With the exception of the disorder issue, the challenges seem greatest in traditional public schools. For example 51 percent of traditional teachers report disrespect for teachers once a month or more, compared to 45 percent of charter teachers. Similarly, 41 percent of traditional teachers report verbal abuse at least once a month, compared to 34 percent of charter teachers. On the other hand, 25 percent of charter teachers report widespread classroom disorder as a challenge at least once a month, compared to 21 percent of teachers in traditional schools.

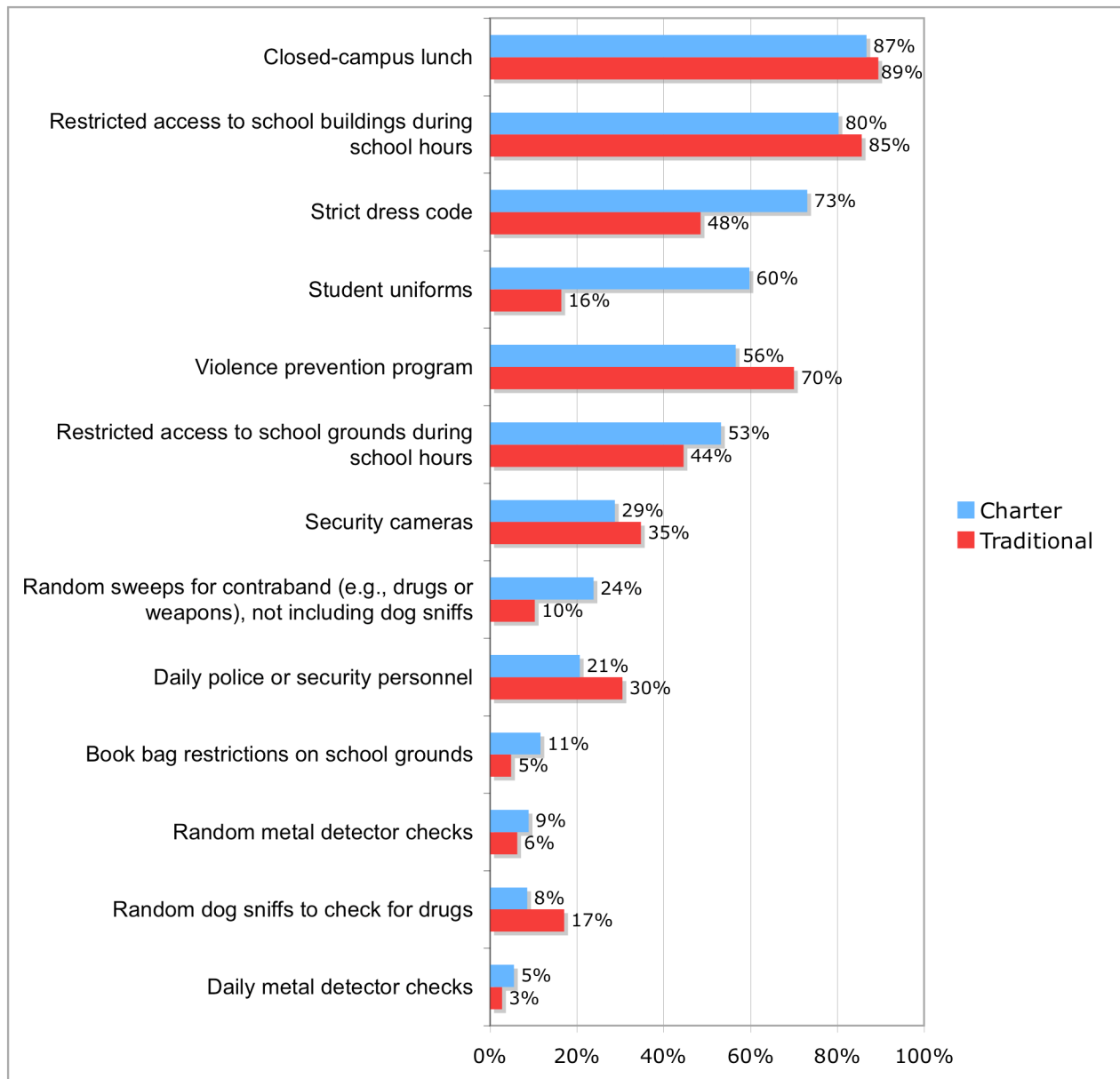
Student racial tension, and use of illegal drugs and alcohol are reported with less frequency by teachers in both kinds of schools, but teachers from traditional schools invariably report higher incidences in each of these areas. In sum, across the behavioral categories, teachers in traditional public schools report a higher incidence of challenges in five of the six categories.⁶

6. Principals' responses on this issue differed. Charter school principals reported widespread classroom disorder happening less frequently than principals in traditional schools. This may be an area in which teachers are closer to the classroom reality than principals.

Campus Security Policies

In the face of these challenges, what are schools doing to improve discipline and safety? SASS posed a series of questions to principals, asking them whether or not a variety of security practices were in place in their schools. Does the school use metal detectors, employ security personnel, institute drug sweeps, “close the campus” (i.e., require students to remain on campus during lunch) and the like? The responses are displayed in figure 4.

Figure 4. School security policies reported by principals

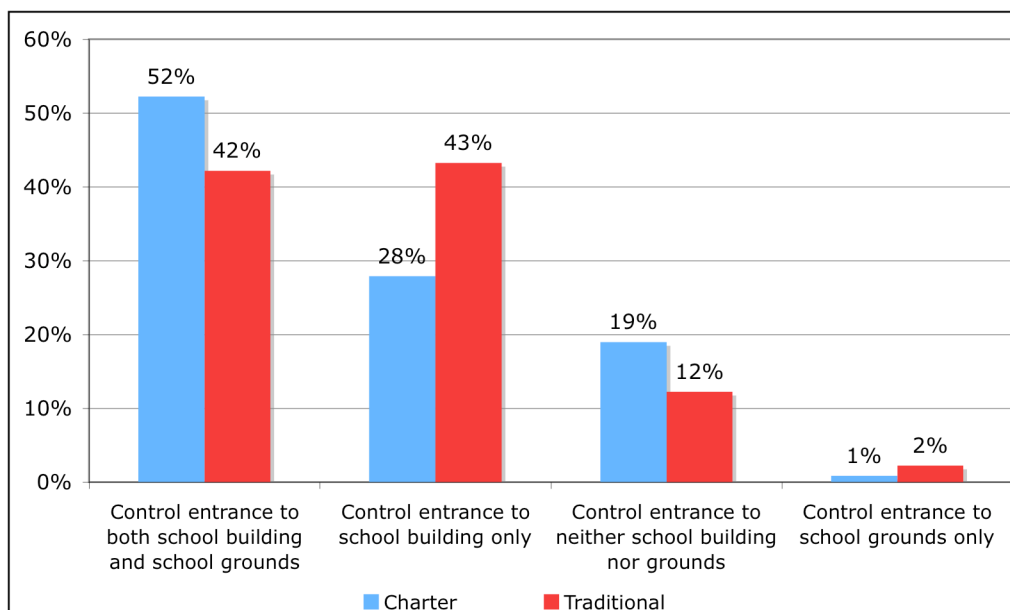


It is fairly clear that both kinds of schools employ similar measures, with a major exception involving dress codes and uniforms:

- Requiring students to stay on the campus during lunch and restricting access to the building during school hours are the most frequently employed strategies on both kinds of campuses.
- Random drug checks with dogs and daily metal detector checks are the least frequently employed.
- Traditional schools are somewhat more likely to feature violence prevention programs, security cameras, and police and security personnel than charter schools.
- Charter schools, on the other hand, are more likely than traditional schools to rely on restricting access to school grounds, random sweeps for contraband, and book bag restrictions.
- The greatest difference involves school uniforms and strict dress codes. Fully 60 percent of charter schools report requiring student uniforms, versus just 16 percent of traditional public schools. Meanwhile, nearly three-quarters of charter schools employ strict dress codes, compared to about half of traditional schools.

Closing campus and school. The issue of restricting access to the building or the building grounds is one that receives a lot of attention in school safety discussions (see figure 5). It would seem that locking the building or restricting access to the campus would be fairly obvious security measures. Many schools do both. More than half of charter schools and over 40 percent of traditional public schools control the entrance to both the building and school grounds. A surprising number close neither the building nor the grounds. Both the building and grounds are relatively accessible in about one in five charter schools and more than 10 percent of traditional schools.

Figure 5. Principals reporting restricted access to school buildings and grounds



Conclusions and Implications

It needs to be stressed that the SASS data provide just a snapshot of how teachers and principals regard several indicators of order and safety in their schools. What is most compelling about the data is the consistent tendency of teachers and principals in charter schools to report problems in their schools at lower levels of frequency.

This paper concentrates on the responses from teachers. Principal responses on parallel questions are provided in the appendix. One observation needs to be made. Although, in the main, the response patterns are similar among teachers and principals, the teachers (in both charter and traditional schools) report these challenges at much higher levels than principals. For example, 46 percent of charter teachers and 58 percent of traditional teachers report bullying to be a problem at least once a month, compared to just 24 percent of charter principals and 39 percent of traditional principals.

It is hard to account for these differences. It could be the case that teachers are closer to classroom reality and report everything they see, while principals report those infractions serious enough to reach their office. Conversely, teachers may be reporting faculty lounge gossip, while principals have a better sense of what is going on in the school as a whole. Although it is not possible to say which set of responses is a more accurate description of school reality, whether one considers teachers' responses or principals', it is evident that the incidence of reported problems is higher in traditional public schools than in charter schools.

Still, this is a rather simple comparison, which may not sufficiently account for important differences between charters and traditional public schools. This analysis allows one to say that among schools in urban areas, charters appear to be safer, according to teacher and principal reports. One could go further and say that among urban schools at various grade levels, charters appear to be safer (see figures A-1 through A-4 in the appendix).

It is impossible to say what accounts for these differences. Charter schools are much smaller than traditional public schools, on average. It may be that a smaller and more intimate school environment makes it easier to maintain a sense of order and discipline. Many charters like to involve parents in school functions. (That might account for the number of relatively open charter campuses and buildings.) Additional parents and guardians in the school may also encourage greater order in the school.

There is another possibility that should not be overlooked, the eternal question of the chicken and egg. Parents and guardians who make the conscious decision to choose a charter school may be more active in the life of their child than parents who do not exercise that option, for whatever reason. It might be the case that the students enrolled in charter schools arrive exhibiting fewer behavioral problems than the students they left behind.

There are additional unknown factors. Understanding more about parental involvement, student and staff turnover, instructional approaches, disciplinary practices, and how all of these issues play themselves out in schools with different grade configurations would be extremely helpful. Further research on each of these issues is warranted.

Appendix – Additional Tables and Figures

Table A-1. Teacher reports of problems in primary schools

		Happens daily	Happens at least once a week	Happens at least once a month	Happens on occasion	Never Happens
Bullying	Charter	10.6%	16.9%	18.0%	45.7%	8.7%
	Traditional	15.1%	18.2%	17.8%	43.8%	5.1%
Disrespect for teachers	Charter	11.9%	18.4%	8.5%	45.9%	15.4%
	Traditional	15.9%	14.1%	9.6%	48.7%	11.7%
Gang activities	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	89.7%
	Traditional	0.7%	0.9%	2.1%	16.3%	80.0%
Physical abuse of teachers	Charter	0.0%	0.1%	2.1%	22.2%	75.5%
	Traditional	0.2%	0.9%	2.0%	31.6%	65.3%
Physical conflict	Charter	9.2%	15.9%	11.7%	57.5%	5.6%
	Traditional	15.2%	21.2%	10.2%	48.1%	5.4%
Possession of weapons	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	19.0%	79.5%
	Traditional	0.2%	0.2%	1.1%	28.4%	70.1%
Robbery or theft	Charter	0.8%	7.7%	7.0%	62.9%	21.6%
	Traditional	2.4%	7.5%	10.5%	59.8%	19.9%
Student racial tensions	Charter	0.8%	2.6%	7.0%	34.3%	55.2%
	Traditional	0.8%	2.5%	4.9%	40.3%	51.4%
Use of alcohol	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	96.6%
	Traditional	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	7.9%	91.6%
Use of illegal drugs	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	94.3%
	Traditional	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%	9.5%	89.9%
Vandalism	Charter	1.3%	2.5%	8.2%	55.6%	32.5%
	Traditional	1.6%	4.0%	8.9%	58.7%	26.9%
Verbal abuse of teachers	Charter	7.3%	6.7%	9.1%	40.2%	36.7%
	Traditional	7.4%	10.2%	9.7%	45.3%	27.5%
Widespread disorder in classrooms	Charter	2.1%	8.1%	6.1%	40.5%	43.2%
	Traditional	3.6%	4.9%	5.7%	35.8%	50.0%

Table A-2. Teacher reports of problems in middle schools

		Happens daily	Happens at least once a week	Happens at least once a month	Happens on occasion	Never happens
Bullying	Charter	15.9%	38.9%	16.1%	25.3%	3.7%
	Traditional	32.1%	22.7%	21.3%	22.9%	0.9%
Disrespect for teachers	Charter	28.4%	18.0%	7.4%	46.2%	0.0%
	Traditional	34.2%	18.3%	13.5%	31.5%	2.5%
Gang activities	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	37.2%	60.0%
	Traditional	5.6%	5.2%	7.4%	38.7%	43.2%
Physical abuse of teachers	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	19.0%	80.2%
	Traditional	1.6%	0.9%	3.2%	37.3%	56.9%
Physical conflict	Charter	9.4%	16.9%	29.0%	41.2%	3.6%
	Traditional	20.1%	24.2%	17.5%	36.2%	2.0%
Possession of weapons	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	50.1%	47.1%
	Traditional	0.5%	1.0%	4.4%	56.1%	38.1%
Robbery or theft	Charter	7.5%	11.5%	23.4%	39.3%	18.3%
	Traditional	7.2%	16.8%	17.9%	53.5%	4.6%
Student racial tensions	Charter	3.6%	0.0%	8.2%	35.7%	52.5%
	Traditional	6.4%	6.2%	11.3%	52.2%	23.8%
Use of alcohol	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	20.7%	76.6%
	Traditional	0.9%	3.8%	7.2%	51.4%	36.7%
Use of illegal drugs	Charter	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	30.3%	66.2%
	Traditional	2.3%	4.6%	8.2%	60.0%	24.8%
Vandalism	Charter	3.3%	8.8%	16.8%	71.2%	0.0%
	Traditional	8.3%	12.5%	17.2%	56.8%	5.3%
Verbal abuse of teachers	Charter	10.0%	21.6%	22.5%	30.6%	15.3%
	Traditional	19.8%	19.1%	17.8%	36.5%	6.8%
Widespread disorder in classrooms	Charter	12.4%	12.3%	6.4%	29.2%	39.7%
	Traditional	9.9%	11.0%	8.3%	43.2%	27.7%

Table A-3. Teacher reports of problems in high schools

		Happens daily	Happens at least once a week	Happens at least once a month	Happens on occasion	Never happens
Bullying	Charter	5.6%	10.9%	9.1%	56.4%	18.0%
	Traditional	18.8%	19.3%	19.3%	39.3%	3.3%
Disrespect for teachers	Charter	15.4%	13.5%	10.6%	50.6%	9.9%
	Traditional	31.5%	19.6%	12.2%	33.5%	3.2%
Gang activities	Charter	4.5%	4.8%	3.1%	27.9%	59.7%
	Traditional	7.4%	7.1%	9.1%	40.7%	35.8%
Physical abuse of teachers	Charter	0.3%	0.0%	1.8%	13.3%	84.6%
	Traditional	0.6%	1.4%	1.8%	37.7%	58.5%
Physical conflict	Charter	2.1%	10.8%	9.0%	58.3%	19.9%
	Traditional	11.8%	26.4%	16.3%	42.1%	3.3%
Possession of weapons	Charter	0.9%	0.7%	3.8%	30.2%	64.5%
	Traditional	2.0%	3.7%	6.2%	55.7%	32.4%
Robbery or theft	Charter	2.4%	8.5%	7.3%	68.5%	13.3%
	Traditional	8.0%	19.1%	18.9%	50.3%	3.7%
Student racial tensions	Charter	2.1%	4.5%	8.3%	37.3%	47.8%
	Traditional	4.7%	6.8%	11.9%	55.7%	20.9%
Use of alcohol	Charter	5.2%	11.1%	8.1%	37.1%	38.5%
	Traditional	10.4%	17.8%	14.8%	46.8%	10.2%
Use of illegal drugs	Charter	11.6%	12.8%	6.8%	47.9%	20.9%
	Traditional	15.1%	18.4%	15.6%	44.8%	6.1%
Vandalism	Charter	2.4%	8.1%	11.5%	55.4%	22.6%
	Traditional	8.5%	16.5%	16.4%	54.3%	4.3%
Verbal abuse of teachers	Charter	7.5%	14.4%	12.9%	44.5%	20.7%
	Traditional	20.6%	18.5%	16.6%	38.5%	5.8%
Widespread disorder in classrooms	Charter	4.1%	9.4%	9.8%	31.2%	45.4%
	Traditional	7.7%	10.6%	10.2%	44.5%	27.0%

Table A-4. Teacher threatened or attacked by students, by grade configuration

		Ever threatened	Threatened in past 12 months	Ever attacked	Attacked in past 12 months
Primary	Charter	13.0%	6.6%	8.3%	4.8%
	Traditional	14.9%	6.5%	11.5%	5.0%
Middle	Charter	3.3%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%
	Traditional	25.6%	12.1%	11.6%	5.6%
High	Charter	12.5%	8.6%	3.5%	2.9%
	Traditional	23.4%	9.3%	6.2%	1.9%
Other grade combinations	Charter	17.6%	12.7%	5.9%	3.6%
	Traditional	34.0%	21.6%	29.3%	17.9%

Table A-5. Characteristics of principals' schools by grade configuration

Principals		Average enrollment	Percentage of racial/ethnic minority students in school	Percentage of schools participating in federal free/reduced-price lunch program	Percentage of students at participating schools who are approved for federal free/reduced-price lunch program
Primary	Charter	336	65%	94%	55%
	Traditional	497	50%	99%	47%
Middle	Charter	677	47%	100%	42%
	Traditional	792	47%	99%	43%
High	Charter	240	61%	61%	39%
	Traditional	1074	44%	88%	34%
Other grade combinations	Charter	360	55%	67%	60%
	Traditional	377	45%	85%	54%
Overall	Charter	347	60%	81%	52%
	Traditional	646	48%	97%	45%

Figure A-6. Principal reports of physical threats to person or property

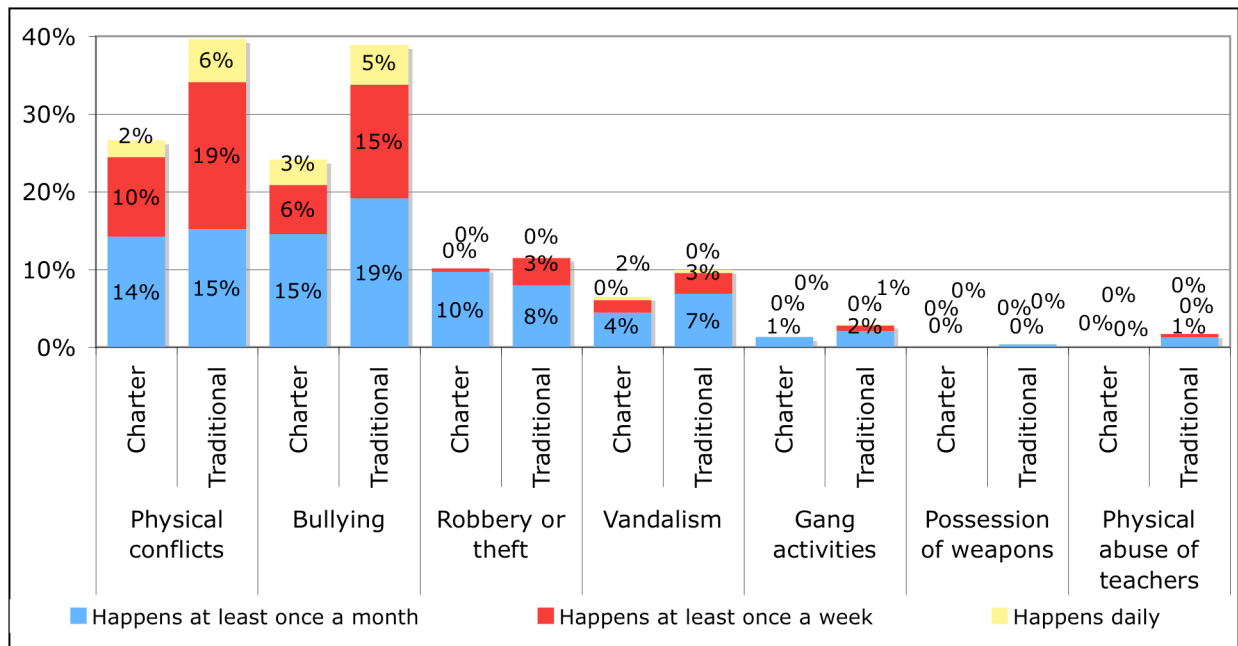


Figure A-7. Principal reports of behavioral problems

