

The Public-Private Partnership in California Charter Schools: Focusing on Career and Vocational Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the practices of vocational and career education in charter schools in California, emphasizing on “Public-Private Partnership (PPP).” This study focuses on how charter schools used the resources provided by the Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) and the Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs). Charter schools tend to operate in the regions that have socioeconomic instability and where students face low achievement or have inappropriate educational environment and they are unable to chart their career pathways. This study discusses the contribution of charter schools and issues faced by them based on the schools’ data and how CMOs and CTSOs influence students’ achievements or involvements in vocational and career education. The findings include: (a) in connection with CMOs and CTSOs, charter schools develop better vocational and career educational plans and promote professional skills by providing rich resources. CMOs and CTSOs are pivotal to training and development, particularly in low economic areas, (b) under a vast network created by CMOs and CTSOs, successful schools share their autonomous lessons or educational experience with other charter schools, (c) hierarchical relations or power structures exist between charter schools and CMOs which influence decision-making, personnel management, and school operations, and (d) although the charter school system was established due to the inefficiency of public school system, CMOs operating charter schools is seen as another school governing system. In conclusion, the relationship between CMOs and CTSOs is highly complicated. As a result, inefficient school operation systems might affect the success of public-private partnership in California charter schools.

Keywords: Charter schools, charter management organizations, career and technical student organizations, public-private partnership