



--News Advisory--

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New Report Challenges Charter School Civil Rights Policy

Los Angeles-November 12, 2009-A new civil rights report raises important issues about the Obama Administration's central emphasis on the rapid expansion of charter schools, pointing out that although there are outstanding and diverse charters, there is also a vacuum of civil rights policy shown in both previous research and current on-going studies. The Civil Rights Project report, *Equity Overlooked: Charter Schools and Civil Rights Policy*, by Erica Frankenberg and Genevieve Siegel-Hawley, provides a much-needed overview of the origins of charter school policy; examines the failure of the Bush Administration to provide civil rights policies as charters rapidly expanded with federal and state aid; outlines state civil rights provisions, and highlights the lack of basic data in federal charter school statistics. UCLA Professor and Civil Rights Project Co-director Gary Orfield commented, "Choice can be either a path toward real opportunity and equity or toward segregated and unequal education. If charters are to be a central element in educational reform, then basic civil rights policies must be an integral element of the Obama policy." The CRP, a non-partisan national research center based at UCLA, will issue, next month, an analysis of the educational effects of charters and the detailed patterns of diversity and segregation across the nation.

About The Civil Rights Project at UCLA

Founded in 1996 by former Harvard professors Gary Orfield and Christopher Edley Jr., the Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* is now co-directed by Orfield and Patricia Gándara, professors at UCLA. Its mission is to create a new generation of research in social science and law, on the critical issues of civil rights and equal opportunity for racial and ethnic groups in the United States. It has commissioned more than 400 studies, published 14 books and issued numerous reports from authors at universities and research centers across the

country. The Supreme Court, in its 2003 *Grutter v. Bollinger* decision upholding affirmative action, cited the Civil Rights Project's research.