

# The School Reform Split

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**Jay P. Greene**

Distinguished Professor of  
Education Policy



[EDCHOICE.ORG](https://edchoice.org)

# Political Split: Increasing Intersectionality on Left

- Ed reform orgs increasingly populated by people on Left who think movement should be expanded to link with other previously tangential movements (Hess, Pondiscio, Petrilli, and Ahmari)
- TFA pipeline creating and reinforcing this shift
- Alienating conservative allies and Republicans who control 36 Governors, both chambers in 32 states, and one chamber in 3 more.

# Strategic Split: Bottom-Up vs. Top-Down

Top-Down Regulation Needed For  
Accountability:

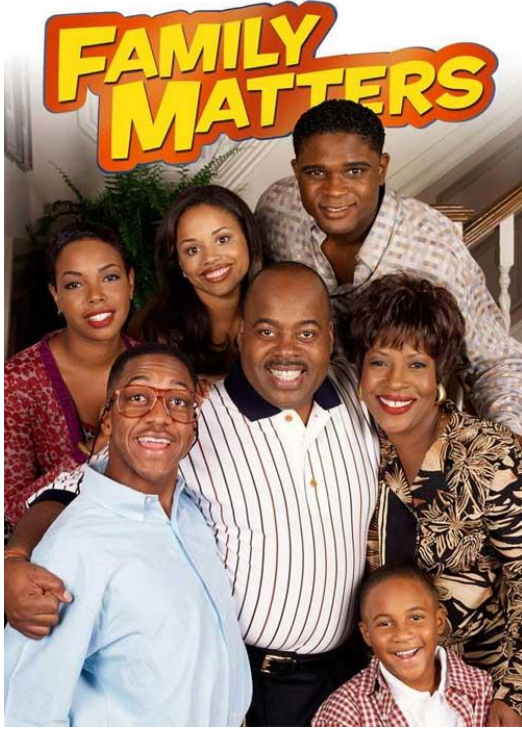
- Top-down regulation promotes quality of education
- Protecting quality provides political protection
- Top-down regulation necessary for protecting equity and civil rights

# What Is Accountability?

Accountability:

“the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies... the obligation to report, explain and be **answerable for resulting consequences.**” (Wikipedia)

# Regulatory Compliance ≠ Accountability



We're from the Government...  
And we're here to help...

**Real accountability means being directly accountable to those who bear the consequences of your performance.**

# Educational Harms of Mistaking Regulatory Compliance for Accountability

- Narrow focus on tested items in math and reading
- Focus on “bubble” kids, cheat, avoid challenging kids
- Drive out good schools (the unintended damage of LA voucher regulations)
- Early gains are fade as schools discover “double secret probation” bluff
- Can’t manage what you can’t predict

# The Test Score -- Later Life Outcome Disconnect

| Study   | Test Effects      | Later Life Outcomes                                   |
|---|-------------------|---|
| Boston Charters (Angrist, et al, 2014)          | Huge gains        | No increase in grad rate or post-secondary enrollment |
| Harlem Promise Academy (Dobbie and Fryer, 2014) | Huge gains        | No increase in grad rate or post-secondary enrollment |
| KIPP (Tuttle, et al, 2015)                      | Large gains       | No or small grad rate effect                          |
| High Tech High (Beauregard, 2015)               | Large gains       | No increase in college                                |
| SEED Boarding Charter (Unterman, et al, 2016)   | Huge gains        | No increase in grad rate or post-secondary enrollment |
| TX No Excuses Charters (Dobbie and Fryer, 2016) | Significant gains | Higher college enrollment but no increased earnings   |



# The Test Score -- Later Life Outcome Disconnect

| Study  | Test Effects       | Later Life Outcomes                                       |
|--|--------------------|---|
| Florida Charters (Booker, et al, 2014)         | No gains           | Large increase in grad rate, post-secondary, and earnings |
| DC vouchers (Wolf, et al, 2013)                | Little or no gains | Large increase in grad rate                               |
| Milwaukee vouchers (Cowen, et al, 2013)        | Same as DC         | Same as DC  |
| New York vouchers (Chingos and Peterson, 2013) | Modest gains       | Large increase in college enrollment                      |

# Political Harms of Mistaking Regulatory Compliance for Accountability

- Education politics is dominated by middle and upper-middle class parents – even more so than unions
- Regulations/accountability restrict suburban parent options and control. There has never been a rally for more testing.
- The winning political strategy is to offer middle and upper-middle class parents more options. Imitate Social Security not Food Stamps.

Thank you!