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Charter Schools Doing Remarkably Well According to New Policy Brief from TXSmartSchools.org

AUSTIN, November 9, 2016 – Donald Trump’s education plan proposes to redirect \$20 billion in federal education spending towards school choice. The grants will favor states that have private school choice, magnet schools and charter schools. Which raises the obvious question: how are existing choice programs doing? According to a new report from The Texas Smart Schools Initiative, many charter schools in Texas are doing remarkably well.

The new report is the first issue of *Smart Steps*, a policy brief series that uses the data from the TXSmartSchools.org website to identify smart practices that help make Texas schools both effective and efficient. The issue entitled “Charter Schools Well Represented Among Five-Star Schools” highlights the impressive performance of Texas’ open enrollment charter schools in two dimensions: academic progress and cost-effectiveness. The report revealed that 41% of the districts identified as top performers in 2016 by TXSmartSchools.org were open enrollment charter schools, even though traditional public schools outnumber open enrollment charter schools by more than five to one. The issue also explores the ways open enrollment charter schools differ from traditional public schools and the reasons so many charter schools might have better scores than their traditional counterparts.

TXSmartSchools.org uses academic, financial, and demographic data to identify school districts and campuses that produce high academic achievement while also maintaining cost-effective operations to better advise educators, administrators, and legislators on best practices in public education. It is built on the foundational work of the Financial Allocation Study for Texas (FAST) launched by Susan Combs during her tenure as Texas Comptroller, and is now housed at Texans for Positive Economic Policy and administered by Texas A&M University in College Station.

Susan Combs said that she is “very pleased that TXSmartSchools.org is helping to identify the schools and practices that are best serving our Texas schoolchildren and to draw attention to some of the great things that are happening in Texas education.” To read the article go to <http://txsmartschools.org/highlights/smart-practices/index.php>.

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