This assignment is to reply to my classmate weekly post.

Please read this post and reply. Give your opinions of what you think concerning the (topic) content of this post; include at least 2 references in APA style as appropriate.

•     Replies to classmates should be at least 250 words.

•     Include properly cited references as appropriate.

[Are charter schools better than public schools?](https://edge.apus.edu/portal/tool/c69851df-5f44-4601-a449-7804e1fef9f6/discussionForum/message/dfViewThread)

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| In Chapter 3 of the textbook, “Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives”,  the Elite Theory is discussed in detail and this concept applies to the education reform debate. The Elite Theory says that public policy in determined by “elites” which include foundations, wealthy people, corporate executives, oil companies, Wall Street investment bankers, professionals (e.g. physicians or attorneys), celebrities, and elected officials (Kraft & Furlong, 2014). These groups are only looking out for their own interests and investment opportunities; that is why in the issue of education reform they are looking to privatize public schools either through vouchers or charter schools.  This theory also goes on to discuss socioeconomic conflicts (e.g. rich vs. poor, Wall Street vs. Main Street, or the 1% vs. the 99%). Socioeconomic conflicts are evident in the education system, especially over property taxes which are part of how schools get their money. This creates an unequal system where wealthy neighborhoods have more money to invest in schools than poor neighborhoods. Another theory that can be used to analyze education reform is the Group Theory which states that public policy is a continuous struggle between organized interests groups (Kraft & Furlong, 2014). This is evident in the education reform debate; groups include federal and state politicians, businesses, the teachers union, local school boards and parents.  My experience working in both a charter school and the public school system gives me good insight in this issue. I once worked for a charter school that practiced unethical, but legal actions. There was a period of about 2 weeks early in each semester known as the “FTE”. If a student shows up at least once during this time, the school will get paid even if that student doesn’t show up for the rest of the school year. Eventually the school district cancelled the contract and the school closed. Not long after, the administration simply changed the name of the school and moved to another Florida county, where they still operate.  Students are this school was short changed because most of the money went to the corporate office in another state. In a corporate mindset, profits will always be more important than student achievement.  Politicians like Florida Governor Rick Scott argue that charter schools are superior to public schools (McGrory & Veiga, 2015). A charter school is like a hybrid between a private school and a public school;  there are supposed to be innovative and tuition free (FLDOE, 2014). Charter schools are funded by taxpayers and are independent from the local school district (FLDOE, 2014). They have to maintain a passing grade overall in standardized tests or they will be closed by the local school district (FLDOE, 2014).  The problem with education reform is that it is impossible to create real changes; there are so many variables that affect a student’s performance that it can be impossible to overcome. Some of these variables include student motivation, poverty, parent involvement, psychological factors, emotional problems, cultural values, language barriers and financial factors. The Republican Party is trying to destroy the public education system by implementing unfair evaluations and standardized testing designed to punish schools. There is no solution to the public education problem, because someone would of solved it already especially with so much research and money spent on this topic.  **References:**  Florida’s Charter Schools. (2015, October 1). Retrieved July 13, 2015, from http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7696/urlt/fast\_facts\_charter\_schools.pdf  Kraft, M., & Furlong, S. (2014). Public policy: Politics, analysis, and alternatives (5th ed.). Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.  McGrory, K., & Veiga, C. (2015, January 15). Scott recommends $100 million for Florida charter schools. Retrieved July 13, 2015, from http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/education/article6710244.html |
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