FRAMING AN ACCOUNTABILITY BLUEPRINT FOR VIRTUAL SCHOOLS IN TEXAS

Luis A. Huerta
Teachers College, Columbia University
huerta@tc.columbia.edu

Organization of this presentation…

- Brief review of my research

- Policy Context…defining the policy problem linked to virtual schools

- Policy Recommendations...drawing a blueprint from empirical evidence and policy lessons

- Conclusions & Implications

Brief review of my research on virtual/cyber & homeschool charter schools

- Huerta, L. A., d'Entremont, C. & González, M. F. (2009). **Perspectives on cyber and homeschool charters**. In M. Berends, M. Springer, D. Ballou and H. Walberg (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on School Choice* (pp.533-550), National Center on School Choice, Vanderbilt University and Lawrence Erlbaum Associates (2009).

- Huerta, L. A., González, M. F. & d'Entremont, C. (2006). **Cyber and home school charter schools: Adopting policy to new forms of public schooling**. *Peabody Journal of Education,* 81(1), 103-139.

- Huerta, L. A., d'Entremont, C &. González, M. F. (2006). **Cyber charter schools: Can accountability keep pace with innovation?** *Phi Delta Kappan*, September, 23-30.

- Huerta, L. A. (2000). **The loss of public accountability? A home schooling charter school in rural California.** In B. Fuller (Ed.), *Inside charter schools: The paradox of radical decentralization.* (pp. 177-202), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Policy Context…defining the policy problem linked to virtual schools

- **Assessing growth of full-time virtual schools**…15 states/16,000 students in 2004 to 30 states/250,000 students in 2012

- **Are virtual schools more cost effective?**

- **Are virtual schools more efficient in meeting student performance targets?**

- **Could effective teachers be effective *virtual* school teachers?**

Policy Recommendations...drawing an accountability blueprint using empirical evidence and policy lessons

- *Formulate Per-Pupil Funding Levels That Reflect Real Costs of Virtual Schooling*

- *Define Accountability Mechanisms for Student Performance and Program Quality at the State and Local Levels*

- *Recruit, Support and Retain Effective Teachers to Engage Students Through Online Instruction*

Conclusions & Implications