



Support for charters takes a dip

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In its annual report on public opinion on education issues, a respected education research journal reports a sharp drop in support for charter schools.

The "Education Next" report for 2017 shows that 52 percent of respondents to the survey said they approve of the "formation" of new charters. That's down from a peak of 73 percent in 2012. Neal McCluskey, director of Cato Institute's Center for Educational Reform, says he doubts the drop is a result in the rise of school choice options nationwide.

"I can't think of anything that's happened in the last year indicating a rise in support for school choice would damage charter schools," says McCluskey.

He says it's hard to pinpoint any one factor, but suggests today's political climate may have been a factor in the decrease.

"Maybe [it's] just because this has been probably the highest profile form of school choice – and the one that's gotten the most bipartisan support," McCluskey suggests. "General uneasiness with Trump or a bad perception of the country's direction may have hurt charters more than other types of school choice."

As long as the fundamentals of charter schooling remain the same, McCluskey expects the support to go back up but that it will likely never be overwhelming.