



“Explaining Charter School Effectiveness.”
(in English)

Professor Joshua D. Angrist
Ford Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, US

Abstract

Estimates using admissions lotteries suggest that urban charter schools boost student achievement, while charter schools in other settings do not. We explore student-level and school-level explanations for these differences using a large sample of Massachusetts charter schools. Our results show that urban charter schools boost achievement well beyond ambient non-charter levels (that is, the average achievement level for urban non-charter students), and beyond non-urban achievement in math.. Student demographics explain some of these gains since urban charters are most effective for non-whites and low-baseline achievers. At the same time, non-urban charter schools are uniformly ineffective. Our estimate also reveal important school-level heterogeneity in the urban charter sample. A non-lottery analysis suggest that urban schools with binding, well-documented admissions lotteries generate larger score gains than under-subscribed urban charter schools with poor lottery records. We link the magnitude of charter impacts to distinctive pedagogical features of urban charters such as the length of the school day and school philosophy. The relative effectiveness of urban lottery-sample charters is accounted for by over-subscribed urban schools' embrace of the No Excuses approach to education.

Date: 14 December 2011 (Wednesday)
Time: 11:30am – 12:30pm
Venue: GEG02, B.Y. Lam Building

Biography

Professor Joshua Angrist is the Ford Professor of Economics at MIT and a Research Associate in the NBER's programs on Children, Education, and Labor Studies. A dual U.S. and Israeli citizen, he taught at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem before coming to MIT. Professor Angrist received his B.A. from Oberlin College in 1982 and also spent time as an undergraduate studying at the London School of Economics and as a Masters student at Hebrew University. He completed his Ph.D. in Economics at Princeton in 1989. His first academic job was as an Assistant Professor at Harvard from 1989-91. Professor Angrist's research interests include the effects of school inputs and school organization on student achievement; the impact of education and social programs on the labor market; the effects of immigration, labor market regulation and institutions; and econometric methods for program and policy evaluation. Professor Angrist is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, The Econometric Society, and has served on many editorial boards and as a Co-editor of the Journal of Labor Economics. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of St Gallen (Switzerland) in 2007 and is the author (with Steve Pischke) of *Mostly Harmless Economics: An Empiricist's Companion* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

ALL ARE WELCOME

Enquiries: 26167164 (Wing)/26167047 (Kit)