

Don't lift cap until impact is fully understood

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IF THE successes of charter schools, as described in your March 13 editorial ("[Ed reform has done wonders; it's time for the next round](#)"), existed in a vacuum, insulated from their effects on municipal school systems, then maybe it would be time to consider lifting the cap on more charter schools.

The consequences of charters are very real, however. These consequences are financial and practical, as traditional public schools face losses of funding, instability and inequity in enrollment, and lingering responsibilities for services that the districts must still provide to charter students.

Even the Legislature has recognized the consequences to municipal districts, and wisely promises reimbursement for financial losses due to charter schools. It's too bad that these reimbursements aren't fully funded, however, with only 63 percent of reimbursements made this year, leading to a \$28 million shortfall across the state, and a \$10 million shortfall in Boston.

Though I'd never fault a family who, given few quality choices, chooses a charter school, I would question the judgment of policy makers who support a second system of education, one that is eroding the abilities of our primary system to educate all our students. Until we more fully understand the consequences of charter schools, the response to the call for more must be: Not now.

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