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**Edison Schools Perform Poorly Nationwide**

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My office has reviewed the major findings of the Edison critique of the School District of Philadelphia public schools. We decided to review these data and then subject every school managed by Edison for which data is available to the same method of review. The overwhelming majority of Edison schools perform poorly, and in many cases are fairing worst than some Philadelphia schools. In sum, the methods Edison uses to show the failure of Philadelphia schools, interestingly, reveals that Edison schools are also failing.

If the governor insists that Edison should be involved in educating the children of Philadelphia, then the governor has a responsibility to these children to make public information, proving that Edison is, in fact, capable of improving the educational performance of their students.

My office compiled student performance results on state assessment tests from 20 states and the District of Columbia in which Edison has a presence (data was not available for any of the Edison schools in Nevada or Wisconsin). We compared the percent of students in the state achieving below a certain level to the percent of Edison students in that state achieving below a certain level. The data reveals that in nearly 90 percent of Edison schools -- 61 out of 69 schools -- for which results are available, students perform substantially below standard levels set by the state compared to other students in the state. Results were publicly available for 69 schools (Table 1).

The length of time Edison has run schools does not improve the performance of students. It does not seem to matter how long Edison has been managing schools. Students in schools that Edison took over in the mid-90s continue to perform below the state standard on achievement tests. Some of these students in the lower grades have only been subject to an Edison education. These students perform no better than other students in the state nor do their achievement levels exceed those of students in schools more recently taken over by Edison.

Edison reports that the Philadelphia School District has had a combined average of more than 50 percent of its students scoring at the below basic level on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment in math and reading. But how do Edison schools compare under a similar measure? We analyzed data from 32 Edison schools in 7 states. We had data reflecting the percent of students performing below the state standard (using the state standard as a proxy for “basic level”) for these schools and for the state. We separated these categories to make them more comparable with data in the Edison report.

In 20 of 32 Edison schools in Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan and Texas, more than 50 percent of students failed to meet the relevant state standard in math and reading in at least one grade for which results were reported (Table 2).

In 25 of 32 Edison schools in Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan and Texas, the percentage of students failing to meet the state standard in either math or reading exceeded 50 percent in at least one grade for which results were reported (Table 2).

In Delaware and Illinois, more than 60 percent of Edison 3rd graders failed to meet state standards; likewise, in Georgia, more than 60 percent of Edison 4th graders failed to meet state standards.

More than 80 percent of Edison students in Maryland scored below satisfactory on the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program tests.

These results clearly disprove Edison’s claim of re-inventing public education. Using the same study criteria that Edison uses, there is no evidence to support that Edison is capable of managing and improving any school in the Philadelphia School District.

Edison also reports that from 1997 to 1999, 80 percent of the Philadelphia School District’s students scored less than Aproficient@ on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment exam. Again, it is useful to examine the record of performance by students in Edison schools. We examined 24 Edison schools in 10 states. For these schools and states, we had data reporting the percent of students performing “below proficiency” on the state assessment exams.

In 17 of 24 Edison schools in Colorado, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, more than 80 percent of students in at least one grade scored less than Aproficient@ in Math or Reading on the relevant state assessment examination (Table 3).

In 12 of 24 Edison schools in Colorado, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, more than 80 percent of students in at least one grade scored less than Aproficient@ in Math and Reading on the relevant state assessment examination (Table 3).

In Kansas, where Edison has been managing schools since 1995, more than 80 percent of Edison students in each grade for which results were reported (grades 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 11) scored below proficiency on the Kansas State Assessment exam.

Despite the fact that Edison has also had a presence in Massachusetts since 1995, more than 80 percent of Edison 4th grade students in that state score below proficiency in reading and math and more than 75 percent of Edison 8th grade students score below proficiency in math. Again, these results make clear that Edison cannot provide a world-class education to Philadelphia students.