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I. Letters

Charter school oversight means better education

I read with interest the Dec. 2 article, "Schools with a view," and of particular concern was the comment by Debra Snell of People for Legal and Nonsectarian Schools (PLANS) that California law immunizes charter schools from local and state oversight.

Apparently Ms. Snell is unaware of current California charter law that provides for extensive school-board oversight, paid for by charging the charter schools up to 1 percent of revenue. Authorizing districts and school boards clearly have the right to enforce the separation of church and state in charter schools.

In addition, recently signed California Senate Bill 1137 is designed to ensure charter public schools live up to their promise to provide better academic results. Charter schools are held more accountable than regular public schools.

As chair of the California Advisory Commission on Charter Schools that makes recommendations to the California Board of Education, I believe most charter-school advocates welcome the additional academic oversight because it helps students and it may protect charters from more regulation. Weak charters reflect poorly on all the high-quality charters around the state.

Mark Kushner

San Francisco

Founder and CEO of Leadership Public Schools