

# WHY DOES THE GULEN MOVEMENT DENY ITS CONNECTION TO 140 PUBLICLY-FUNDED CHARTER SCHOOLS?

FOR THE SAME REASON TOBACCO COMPANIES DENIED THAT CIGARETTES  
CAUSE CANCER: TO KEEP THEM PROFITABLE.

**School administrators and founders deny any connection of these schools to controversial Turkish imam Fethullah Gulen. To believe this, you'd have to believe that all the following mainstream news outlets (and several others) made up the connection. Is that likely?**

**60 Minutes** May 13, 2012: "Over the past decade scores of charter schools have popped up all over the U.S...founded and largely run by immigrants from Turkey who are carrying out the teachings of a Turkish Islamic cleric: Fethullah Gulen....There are a total of about 130 charter schools like Harmony in 26 states."

**New York Times** April 24, 2012: "Gulen followers have been involved in starting one of the largest collections of charter schools in the United States."

**USA Today** Aug 17, 2010 "Objectives of charter schools with Turkish ties questioned"

**Philadelphia Inquirer** Apr 19, 2012 "Allegations raised over N. Phila. charter school run by followers of Turkish imam"

**The New Republic** Nov 10, 2010 "I asked to see a Gulen-affiliated charter school and was brought to the Harmony Science Academy, ...one of 33 charter schools operated across Texas by a group called the Cosmos Foundation. (...people told me they were nervous about having their schools labeled Gulen institutions.)"

**Albany Times-Union** June 19, 2012: "There are now more than 120 Hizmet-affiliated charter schools in the United States." (Hizmet is another name for the Gulen Movement.)

**Congressional Research Service** "Turkey: Background and U.S. Relations" by Jim Zanotti, Feb 2012 "Gulenist organizations also have reportedly founded and operate more than 120 public charter schools in over 25 U.S. states"

How do the schools benefit the Gulen Movement?

- **Lucrative no-bid contracts**, some in the tens of millions, to Gulen-associated businesses.
- **Visas** for Gulen's followers.
- **Hiring preference**, differential treatment for Gulen's followers.
- **Access to politicians** and community leaders.
- **Access to students** to produce sympathizers.

**" 'Gulen institutions do not publicize their Gulen affiliation anywhere they operate,' said Bill Park, a British expert on Turkish politics."**

— Ky Krauthamer, Transitions Online  
In Albania, Madrasas Even the Secular Love, Oct 2012

Joshua Hendrick, Professor of Sociology and Global Studies,  
Loyola University (Middle East Report 260, Fall 2011)

**"Similar allegations are beginning to emerge in the US, where the Gulen movement operates more than 100 publicly funded charter schools."**

## INFORMATION ASYMMETRY

Economists use this term when one party to a transaction is disadvantaged because the other is withholding information.

The Gulen Movement has exploited the charter school system for its own benefit because parents, taxpayers, teachers, contractors and public officials did not know the connection.

**WOULD PARENTS HAVE CHOSEN THESE SCHOOLS IF THEY HAD BEEN TOLD ABOUT GULEN UP FRONT?**

**WOULD PUBLIC OFFICIALS AUTHORIZE THESE SCHOOLS IF THE GULEN CONNECTION WERE OUT IN THE OPEN?**

**FACT: THE GULEN MOVEMENT RUNS 140 PUBLICLY-FUNDED  
CHARTER SCHOOLS WITH OVER 60,000 STUDENTS,  
ANNUAL REVENUE ~ HALF A BILLION DOLLARS.  
HERE'S WHY YOU SHOULD BE CONCERNED.**

**Fethullah Gulen on the Jewish people (from his book published in Turkey):**

***"This intelligent tribe has put forth many things throughout history in the name of science and thought. But these have always been offered in the form of poisoned honey... these people...will finally end up in the position of Nazis and will look for a place to hide in the four corners of the earth."*** - translated by renowned economist, author, professor Dani Rodrik

**Fethullah Gulen on America and the West (from his book published in Turkey):**

***"Of Christianity he writes that it has become perverted (sapıtmiş), of America that it is 'our merciless enemy' (aman bilmeyen düşman), and of Europe that it has a 'sadist mentality' that wants to crush Islam."*** - translated by renowned economist, author, professor Dani Rodrik

**Fethullah Gulen on women (from his book published in Turkey):**

***"But a woman must be excluded on certain days during the month. ...She cannot take part in different segments of the society all the time. She cannot travel without her husband, father or brother....The superiority of men compared to women cannot be denied."*** – translation by Berna Turam, Professor, Northeastern University, in "Between Islam and the State," 2007

**CONCERNS ABOUT THE CHARTER SCHOOLS:**

- Huge teacher turnover; revolving door with teachers, admins, founders arriving, then returning to Turkey
- Massive use of H-1B visas to bring teachers, staff, admins, mostly from Turkey, even to teach English
- High student attrition, esp. in high school
- Low enrollment of English language learners, special ed
- Safety concerns (no definite itinerary on Turkey trips; inexperienced Gulenist contractors for school buildings)
- Favoritism, e.g. 2009 Arizona State University doctoral dissertation documents preferential treatment for Turkish-speaking students
- SAT/ACT scores don't seem to match apparent high scores on standardized tests
- Poor academic performance in some schools
- Evidence from Ohio that entrance exams are used to select for higher achievers, even though this is illegal

**AUDITORS IN SOME STATES FOUND:**

- Grave problems with special education
- Numerous related-party deals
- Faulty record-keeping
- Immigration expenses paid by school, even for family members or people who never worked at the school

**RIGGED "INTERNATIONAL" COMPETITIONS**

- In 2011, major Dutch newspaper reported that 3/4 of contestants at Gulen-affiliated INESPO science olympiad were from Gulen schools.
- Minnesota news 2011: religion was a factor in judging at [Gulen-run] ISWEEEP Texas science competition.

➤ **GULEN MOVEMENT LINKED TO SOPHISTICATED CYBER ATTACK ON U.S. CITIZEN (*Wired*, 6/4/2013)**

- New Yorker 2012: "Gulen ...is reviled and feared by much of Turkey's population."
- 60 Minutes, May 2012, Journalist Andrew Finkel "The fact is many people who have criticized him [Gulen] are now in jail..."
- Prominent Gulen follower Adem Arici plead guilty to federal charges of tax evasion on \$56 million. Arici is linked to company that forgave \$167,114.81 loan to Fulton Science Academy.
- Gulen Movement promotes creationism; some overseas "secular" schools mix religion and science.
- Gulen, on his own website, says death is the correct penalty for apostasy.
- Most praise for Gulen is propaganda generated by the Gulen Movement itself.
- Propaganda Turkey junkets for 100's of U.S. politicians
- Gulen followers corrupt academia, e.g. with pro-Gulen doctoral dissertations at U.S. universities.
- A columnist wrote in Turkey's major newspaper Hurriyet: "the movement justifies any conduct to achieve its ends at any cost. For instance, if passing school entry test questions to the movement's pupils is a justifiable way to ride into any kind of school that is important to attend even it can be done for years, even if it means usurping the rights of other pupils. But again, others are just others."