



2023-2024 PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

FAIR AND EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Tie increases in the general revenue formula and categorical aids to the increase in the national Core Inflation Rate
- Simplify special education funding by having the state cover all special education costs not reimbursed by the federal government, thus eliminating the cross subsidy and tuition bill back systems
- Provide adequate and stable funding for Pre-K programs
- Provide all public schools with adequate funding to meet student transportation costs
- Provide all public schools with adequate and ongoing funding for schools to provide mental health screenings and mental health services for students
- Provide adequate and ongoing funding for the recruitment and education of school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and other physical and mental health professionals and support personnel
- Provide adequate and ongoing funding for alternative teacher preparation and licensing programs
- Provide sustainable and ongoing funding to support the recruitment, education, and retention of Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers
- Provide sustainable and ongoing funding for Grow Your Own Programs and Mentoring Programs for new teachers, especially in academic and geographic areas of need
- Provide adequate funding for the training and support of the teacher workforce with the knowledge and skills to improve literacy rates
- Provide full and equal Extended Time Revenue for students attending chartered public schools
- Provide charter schools serving significant populations of graduation incentives students to be eligible for Alternative Learning Program (ALP) funding
- Provide chartered public schools with Small School Revenue based on the same percentage of traditional school districts, which qualify
- Provide equitable per-pupil School Safety Aid for chartered public schools

- Provide adequate Q-Comp funding to allow for all schools who wish to participate in the program
- Provide chartered public-school students with equal per-pupil funding raised through traditional school board adopted local operating levies - (e.g. health & safety, career & tech education, etc.)
- Provide chartered public-school students equal per-pupil funding raised through referendum local excess operating levies
- Provide chartered public-school students with state funding for the difference, when the state shifts program funding from state revenue sources to local property taxes
- Provide chartered public schools with equalized Long-term Maintenance Revenue of \$380 per pupil to match the funding amount that traditional districts receive

A RATIONAL & EQUITABLE CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES POLICY

- Repeal the ban on the use of public funds to purchase charter school facilities
- Allow direct ownership of facilities by charter schools that meet appropriate criteria, including a record of effective governance, sound financial management, effective business practices, and a plan for a sustainable future
- Establish a Minnesota Charter School Facilities Authority empowered to issue bonds for qualifying charter schools to purchase, purchase and renovate, or construct facilities directly owned by the school
- Transfer ownership of school facilities owned by the school's non-profit Affiliated Building Company (ABC) to the school corporation upon refinancing, or payoff of bonds or mortgage, by the ABC
- Revamp 'Lease Aid' to 'Facilities Aid' to allow facility related health and safety facility requirements as allowable expenses, and create 'Facility Preservation Aid' for schools that own buildings but have no mortgage or facilities debt
- Limit the amount a school district, or other public entity, may charge for leasing a facility to a charter school to the "Facility Asset Preservation Aid" revenue rate if the public facility is without debt
- Provide leverage to charter schools in negotiating leases with landlords by allowing schools that negotiate a lower cost per student, than the maximum amount of 'Lease Aid,' to keep half of the difference for other school uses and the half kept by the state treasury
- Exempt property a charter school leases from a property owner from real estate taxes on the portion of the property the school leases, in the same manner as property leased by a traditional district is exempt
- Clarify that the Commissioner approves or disapproves the Lease Aid application, not the actual lease(s) of a school
- Link increases in Facilities Aid to increases in the general formula

BALANCING ACCOUNTABILITY VS AUTONOMY

PURPOSE & GOALS

- Focus the goal of charter schools to be more comprehensive than student achievement on state tests, and reinforce the language on the innovative purposes of chartered schools
- Fund grant for the MN Association of Charter Schools and MN Association of Charter School Authorizers to work together to document and dissemination charter school innovation

DEFINITIONS

- Revise the definition of “immediate family”; align “related party” & “immediate family” definitions
- Clarify definition of who qualifies as a “teacher” for serving on a charter school board
- Define Charter Management Organization (CMO)& Education Management Organization (EMO) for transparency and accountability

APPLICABLE LAW

- Address the requirement that charter schools carry an additional \$3 million in liability coverage for potential release of hazardous substances
- Clarify that charter schools must comply with state laws and policies regarding investment of public funds

AUTHORIZING

- Clarify the role and responsibilities of authorizers and the relationship between MDE, authorizers, and charter schools
- Require authorizers to document annual competency-based training provided to authorizer staff and consultants on the charter law and the authorizer’s role and responsibilities
- Clarify that an authorizer is an approved authorizer until it voluntarily withdraws or the approval is withdrawn by the Commissioner
- Provide start-up funding for new authorizers
- Clarify the scope and criteria the commissioner may use in the performance evaluation of authorizers (MAPES) to eliminate its bureaucratic focus

BOARD GOVERNANCE

- Clarify the definition of the basic board training required, and that ongoing training includes training on the board’s role and responsibilities regarding student performance, achievement, and progress
- Clarify that the vote by teachers and the vote by the board, in changing a board structure, are two distinct votes

- Establish that the regular term of office for charter school board members begin on July 1 and end on June 30 to coincide with the fiscal year
- Remove the chief financial officer as an ex-officio non-voting member of the board
- Require that charter corporation by-laws establish terms limits for members and officers
- Require the board to adopt and enforce a code of ethics for school administrators

COLLABORATION

- Amend MN Statutes to allow charter schools “joint powers” agreements with traditional districts and/or between charters to provide for special education services

EMPLOYMENT

- Clarify the provision that all administrative, supervisory, and instructional leadership personnel must have a professional development plan, and eliminate the requirement that those plans be documented in the school’s annual report
- Establish professional development requirements for non-licensed school administrators and those with academic management responsibilities
- Establish professional development requirements for licensed school administrators from traditional school districts on the charter law, board governance, and authorizer role and relationship
- Clarify the nepotism requirement is to prohibit the employment of immediate family members of a board member, current school employee, or a teacher who provides instruction under a contract with a teacher cooperative, without a clear process and board approval
- Eliminate the requirement that group health insurance must be rebid at least every two years

FORMING A SCHOOL

- Require “market research” that demonstrates the need and potential market for a school in the school developer application to an authorizer
- Require that school developers begin the board training for charter schools upon incorporation

CHARTER CONTRACTS

- Require a multiple measure accountability system for charter school contracts with authorizers that the state recognizes, that includes student achievement, career and college readiness, and student engagement, and that is differentiated to match the school mission and the students the school serves
- Require a charter school board to request a renewal of its charter before the end of the contract and allow charter schools in good standing with their authorizer to

transfer to another authorizer at the end of a contract without the approval of the current authorizer

- Require that the ‘informal hearing’ that is held regarding a contract non-renewal or termination be recorded, made available to all parties and the public, and be kept on record
- Revamp the mutual non-renewal process to reflect that the role of MDE is “review and comment” of the affidavit

EXPANSIONS, MERGERS AND CLOSURES

- Redefine the role and responsibilities of MDE in grade, site, and pre-school expansions by schools to that of “review and comment” with final decision left with the authorizer
- Revise the school merger language to clarify the role and responsibilities of MDE and authorizers, and the criteria for the merger of schools
- Require that authorizers annually verify that schools demonstrate they have the financial resources to pay their creditors in the event of potential non-renewal or potential closure
- Establish a school closure process that includes the appointment of a trustee to oversee the school closure, a closure fund that is dedicated for that purpose, and is overseen by a joint MACS, MACSA, and MDE

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

- Ensure that enrolling schools provide parents and students with complete and accurate information about online opportunities, supplemental and comprehensive, within and outside of school, and about their right to choose an online opportunity
- Clarify that it is the obligation of a resident district to provide early childhood health and development screening for all children in a resident district because they receive funding for that purpose
- Allow a charter school student to participate in a High School League activity in their resident district if the charter school does not offer the activity or does not have a cooperative agreement with other school(s) for that activity
- Allow a charter school that serves a significant population of eligible “graduation incentive” students to be designated as an alternative learning program
- Enhance state support for civics, citizenship education, and service-learning opportunities for students
- Expand the curriculum offerings of personal finance education in secondary schools
- Expand and provide support for Career and Technical Education opportunities for students
- Eliminate the current prohibition on advertisements or recruitment of secondary students to enroll in courses under PSEO

- Provide state funding for PSEO student service fees and subsidize replacement meal payments for eligible PSEO students
- Allow access to PSEO for students enrolling during summer sessions

TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Establish transparency and accountability measures to protect charter schools in contracts with a CMO or EMO, and require those organizations to report expenditures to schools using UFARS codes
- Clarify which management agreements need to be included with the school's annual audit

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- Clarify that the prohibition on distributing services or goods of value in exchange for enrollment includes gifts of money and includes agents of the school
- Clarify that school employees, parents, and board members of a charter school cannot be on the authorizing board of the authorizer of the school

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

- Clarify that charter schools document the efforts to disseminate information about charter school offerings to low-income families, students of color, and students at risk in the annual report

EDUCATION WORKFORCE

- Require teacher preparation programs to equip perspective teachers with online teaching competencies
- Revise the Tiered License system to eliminate annual renewal of license for innovative program permission or out of field permission
- Revamp and modernize the teacher re-licensure system
- Revamp and modernize the licensure by portfolio process and procedures

NOTES:

1. The 2023-2024 Public Policy Positions were ratified by the Association's member schools in December 2022.
2. The MACS Board of Directors may at any time adopt additional policy positions to address other issues.

Minnesota Association of Charter Schools – www.mncharterschools.org – 651.789.3090