



ED, CharterRegs

From: Dawn Becan <mattdawn1031@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 8:57 PM
To: ED, CharterRegs
Subject: [External] RE: Regulation #6-349: Charter Schools and Cyber Charter Schools

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[DATE]

To: The Pennsylvania Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market St, 14th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17101
RA-EDCharterRegs@pa.gov

RE: Regulation #6-349: Charter Schools and Cyber Charter Schools

I oppose Regulation #6-349: Charter Schools and Cyber Charter Schools, and I want to make my feelings known.

I understand what the regulation seeks to do on the surface. It wants to make sure that teachers and employees at charter schools can receive quality healthcare benefits. And I appreciate that.

Yet, I also know that charter schools simply won't ever receive the type of group insurance rates that the big schools and school districts provide. I find that this regulation does not create a fair playing field between authorizers and charter school operators trying to give parents another choice in K-12 education.

As written, the regulation creates a minimum standard that all authorizers must meet, but it does not restrict the ability of the authorizing party to create "over the top" and burdensome requirements during the application process. As written, authorizers can drown charter school administrators in red tape whenever they try to keep their schools open with a renewed charter or expand their schools because parents are happy with the results. The regulation leaves too much open for school districts to include requirements that end up being anti-charter, leaving room to be grounds for denial of new charters, renewals of charters, and expansion of charters.

How is this helping Pennsylvania families that continue to look for options even while public school districts lose enrollment? These regulations are not offered to help Pennsylvania parents. They seem to be proposed to help the authorizers, not the charter schools and the parents that keep enrolling their kids there.

Charter schools succeed even though they get roughly 25% less on average than of peer public schools in school districts across the state. Many of them outperform their local school districts despite this disparity. Charter schools should be embraced and nurtured, not beaten down. We need to find a way to allow these schools, the families that support them and teachers and staff who work there to continue to thrive and innovate public education. We should be looking for ways to support them. This proposal does nothing but create colossal obstacles that will do nothing but risk forcing them to close their doors, eliminating jobs and abandoning the students and the families that depend on them.

These regulations are not balanced and, therefore, should not be put into law. It is my hope that you rescind this process and work with elected lawmakers to create policies that make sense for all schools. Creating laws through unelected bureaucracy is not what democracy is all about.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew and Dawn Becan
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