



ED, CharterRegs

From: Laurel Zydney <ljz12@scasd.org>
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2021 5:05 PM
To: ED, CharterRegs
Subject: [External] Proposed Regulation – Charter Schools and Cyber Charter Schools - #6-349

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Dear House and Senate Education Committees and IRRC:

I support this proposed regulation relating to charter and cyber charter schools.

In 1998, I was one of five parent founders of the Newark Charter School, Delaware. My specific responsibility in writing the application was to develop the curriculum documents for grades 5-8. I also participated in budget and other discussions and decisions necessary to complete a successful application. I know first hand how much information we had to provide in our application. In addition, during approval hearings, I was asked detailed questions to determine whether the founders fully understood and were prepared to provide an education for up to 600 students in grades 5-8 that satisfied and even exceeded Delaware standards.

Newark Charter School received a charter from the DE Board of Education in 2000. NCS opened on September 11, 2001, and has since expanded to be a K-12 school. It became a national demonstration site for the Core Knowledge curriculum and was a Blue Ribbon school. It has consistently ranked as one of the top Delaware charter schools.

I am now a school director in the State College Area School District. From that dual vantage point, I have been surprised that PA charter schools are not required to be as accountable nor are charter Boards of Trustees held to the standards for transparency as I was in Delaware or as I am as a SCASD director.

As a citizen, parent, and taxpayer, I believe it is critically important that children attending charter schools as well as their employees are treated comparably to those in traditional public schools. Directors of all schools that receive public education funding should be required to demonstrate that they are not benefiting financially from public funds at the expense of school children. Further, during this pandemic, the importance of employee health care coverage to overall community health has become very obvious. Continuing to allow charter schools to provide inferior health coverage creates an unequal hiring situation and also means parents may not be aware that their children are possibly at greater risk due to employees coming to school sick.

I heartily encourage adoption of this proposal as a step toward greater equity between traditional school districts and schools and Pennsylvania's cyber and bricks-and-mortar charter schools.

Sincerely yours,

Laurel Zydney
SCASD School Director

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