



Vote YES on SB-187 and SB-188 (Reps. Williams & Sias/Sen. Hill)

Measures Affecting Charter Schools

(Versions passed by the Senate)

Overview

Charter school students are public school students. In many districts in Colorado, only a portion of the money that funds non-charter students follows kids going to charter schools. The average Colorado charter student receives 20 percent less funding than his or her peer in a non-charter school. Charters face other obstacles related to equal access to school facilities as well. These are fundamental issues of equity that SB-187 and SB-188 seek to address.

What the Bills Do

- SB-187 puts in place several commonsense measures that would enhance overall charter school operations and enable charter schools to focus more time and energy on students.
 - **Streamlines the Unified Improvement Plan process.** Individual charter schools that earn the state's highest accountability rating (Performance) can submit a UIP every other year instead of annually as required by current law; if at any point a school drops below Performance, it would need to return to annual reporting.
 - **Allows for a single charter school network financial audit.** Networks with multiple charter campuses would be able to complete one financial audit each year for the entire network. No transparency would be lost as networks would still need to complete component unit audits for each individual campus, but unnecessary cost and time requirements would be eliminated.
 - **Enhanced authorizer standards.** Currently, the grounds under which a district can lose its exclusive chartering authority (ECA) are inconsistent with the grounds for acquiring ECA in the first place; SB-187 aligns the two.
- SB-188 remedies inequities related to funding and facilities that charter public school students continue to confront.
 - **Equitable mill sharing.** Unless a local mill levy override was passed for a specific program and/or grade level that a district-authorized charter school does not offer, the revenue generated by that mill should be distributed on an equitable, pro-rata basis to children attending charter schools in that district.
 - **Greater access to district land and facilities.** Districts shall notify charter schools on an annual basis of any vacant or underutilized buildings or land in their possession; charters shall be allowed to submit proposals for those buildings or land, and districts shall notify their charters in writing and at a public meeting if they choose not to accept the proposal.
 - **Leveling the BEST playing field.** Eliminates the requirement that charters must be chartered for five years before they can apply for BEST funds; Eliminates the requirement that a charter submit a prior letter of intent to apply to the BEST program (instead, authorizer notification would happen concurrent with application)
 - **Adds "maintenance" to the list of allowable charter capital construction expenses.**



What the Bills Do Not Do (Provisions Removed from Introduced Versions)

- Require districts to provide, at a charter's request, an itemized list of personnel positions provided to schools in accounting
- Make CSI school boards consistent with all other school boards in the state by having three members qualify for open meetings as opposed to two
- Shift ECA reinstatement for districts to a once-annual consideration period
- Amend statute to allow any school transferring between authorizers to hold funding constant (now a stand-alone bill, SB-208)
- Set up a statutory framework for equalized state funding for Charter School Institute schools

Support Equity and Enhanced Operations for Charter Public School Students

- SB-187 enhances charter school operations to allow charter schools to better serve their students.
- No public school should be systematically underfunded because of the type of public school they attend. SB-188 helps remedy the financial inequities faced by our state's charter school students.

Charter school students are public school students, and they deserve access to the same public resources as students in other public schools.

Please vote YES on SB-187 and SB-188.

Contact: Jennifer Corrigan, jennifer@coloradokids.org or 720-243-9511