



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Commonsense Cyber Charter School Funding Reform Would Eliminate Wasteful Spending and Save \$250 Million in Taxpayer Money

Charter schools are primarily funded by local tax dollars paid to them as tuition by school districts.

Charter school tuition rates are not based on what it costs a charter school to educate its students, but on the per student expenditure of the school district from which the students come. Charter school tuition for regular (non-special) education ranges from about \$7,300 per student to upwards of \$18,000 per student. Charter school tuition for special education ranges from about \$14,900 to well over \$40,000 per student.

In cyber charter schools – where the costs are less than \$5,000 per student, far less than the cost in traditional public schools or brick and mortar charter schools – this wastes over \$250 million in tax money each year, statewide.

When a student and his or her tuition go to a cyber charter school, not all the student's cost leaves the public school. This has an adverse fiscal impact on school districts, often causing them to cut services and/or to raise tax rates.

Both problems – wasteful spending and adverse impact on remaining students – are being exacerbated by the rapid growth of cyber charter schools.

This wasteful spending could be curbed by setting a single, statewide tuition for both regular and special education students in cyber charter schools that is tied to the actual costs of cyber education.

By adopting this common sense funding reform, Pennsylvania school districts (and thus Pennsylvania taxpayers) can save more than \$250 million each year.

To read the full report and learn how much each school district would save if the PA legislature implemented this plan, visit www.EducationVotersPA.org. Please contact edvoters@educationvoterspa.org with questions.

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