

RESOLUTION 1319

CONCERNING SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 13-213

WHEREAS, 2013 is the 20th anniversary of the Charter Schools Act;

WHEREAS, in this 20 year period the number of charter school campuses has grown to 187 serving nearly 89,000 students (this represents just under 11% of total K-12 public school students in Colorado);

WHEREAS, the Charter School Institute (CSI) is now the 19th largest 'district' in the state with enrolling 11,756 students in 23 schools, and with 6 new schools to be added in 2013-2014;

WHEREAS, charter school students are funded at a lower level compared to other public school students for reasons that include the following:

1. School districts often do not share or share equally with charter schools revenue from mill levy override or district bond elections; and
2. Charter schools authorized by CSI are not eligible to access any district mill levy override funds or funds generated by district bond elections;

WHEREAS, the CSI Board of Directors (the Board) believes that similarly situated students should receive the same per pupil funding regardless of the type of school that they attend – charter, traditional, innovation, magnet, etc.;

WHEREAS, the Board believes that flexibility in determining student counts is needed to ensure accuracy in funding new charter schools and those that are adding grade levels;

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 13-213 (SB 213) introduced in the Colorado General Assembly, sets forth a restructuring of the school financing arrangements for Colorado public schools;

WHEREAS, SB 213 addresses some of the inequities in funding for charter school students;

WHEREAS, SB 213 contains other provisions that have the potential to improve student outcomes including increased funding for at-risk students and English language learners, full-day kindergarten funding, funding for all children who wish to participate in an early childhood education program, and assistance for school districts with a limited property tax base;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the CSI Board, that the Board supports the passage of SB 213 only if the following provisions that represent a significant step toward funding equity for charter schools remain in the bill:

1. Charter schools authorized by CSI receive the per pupil pro rata share of the current statewide average mill levy annually and that the statewide average be recalculated annually as provided in CRS 22-54.5-202, et seq.;

- 2. Charter schools authorized by districts receive a per pupil pro rata share of district mill levy override funds authorized after the passage of SB 213 (unless the charter school does not offer the program for which the override funds are designated) and that districts that do not share these funds lose exclusive chartering authority;
- 3. Districts that receive mill levy equalization payments be required to share such payments with the charter schools they authorize on a per pupil pro rata basis; and,
- 4. CSI and district charter schools are eligible to apply for grants from the Innovation Fund established by the bill.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that SB 213 would be a much stronger bill if amended to do the following:

- 1. Ensure mill levy equalization for all District Charter Schools;
- 2. Reduce funding for declining enrollment districts;
- 3. Provide facility funding for all charter school students at a level of at least 400 dollars per student in qualified facilities;
- 4. Mandate that all at risk dollars included in total program funding be allocated to schools or provide at risk funding balancing for all Colorado charter schools.
- 5. Ensure that District charter schools that are growing receive the same opportunity for enrollment growth contingency funding as districts with a funded membership of less than 2000, or provide total program funding based on current year ADM.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution of Support for SB 13-213 be transmitted to the sponsors of the bill with the required elements set forth above included.

Adopted this 19th day of March, 2013.

COLORADO CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE

By: Wendy King
Chair, Board of Directors

I certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 1319 was adopted by the CSI Board of Directors at a regular Board meeting upon notice as required by law on March 19, 2013 by [unanimous voice vote] [a roll-call vote of Aye 8, Nay 0, and Abstention 0.]

By: Patricia McEwen
Secretary, Board of Directors