

Submitter: Michelle Davies
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3444

I am writing in support of HB 3444, to address the revenue disparity between charter schools and other schools in their district. I am writing because the disparity makes it difficult for charter schools to provide the high quality innovative programs that are so valuable for students in our community.

The funding disparity means that

1. It is difficult to recruit and retain experienced highly qualified teachers.

The charter school where my grandson attends, pays significantly lower than other public schools in the area. They are asking teachers to provide innovative and creative programs, and it would be wonderful if they could retain the high quality teachers to implement these strategies.

2. Students do not have equal access to facilities and educational supplies.

The same charter school mentioned above has been fundraising for years, and is far from their financial goal to provide a covered outdoor play space. They do not have access to the technology resources of other schools in the district.

3. While other schools in the district provide transportation, the charter school requires that families provide their own transportation to and from school. This limits the access to these innovative programs to families who have the resources and family support to provide transportation.

Without equitable funding for charter schools, I fear that they will struggle to survive.

We chose the charter school option for our grandson because he is a child who needs a learning environment that is as unique as he is. He's a child full of energy and creativity. He loves the outdoors, and this is where he learns best. His charter school provides him the opportunity to learn in connection with nature. The project based/thematic instruction provides him with real connection and motivation to develop his understanding of concepts in meaningful and relevant ways. He is also a student who has a particular need for consistency and community that the small charter school provides. His teachers know him well, and appreciate his individualism. They encourage him to demonstrate his understanding in ways that are unique to his ways of personal expression.

Charter schools can be places of advancement and discovery in the field of education, and can provide models of alternate methods in a world that is constantly changing. If we value innovation and discovery, we should financially support our charter schools in a way that is fair.

Thank you.