



MN Association of
Charter Schools

2025-2026 PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

FAIR AND EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Increase the general revenue formula beyond inflation to match rising costs.
- Simplify special education funding by having the state cover all special education costs not reimbursed by the federal government, thus eliminating the cross-subsidy and tuition bill back systems.
- Provide adequate and stable funding for Pre-K programs.
- Provide all public schools with adequate funding to meet student transportation costs.
- Provide all public schools with adequate and ongoing funding for schools to provide mental health screenings and mental health services for students.
- Provide adequate and ongoing funding for the recruitment and education of school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and other physical and mental health professionals and support personnel.
- Provide adequate and ongoing funding for alternative teacher preparation and licensing programs.
- Provide sustainable and ongoing funding to support the recruitment, education, and retention of Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers.
- Provide sustainable and ongoing funding for Grow Your Own Programs and Mentoring Programs for new teachers, especially in academic and geographic areas of need.
- Provide adequate funding for the training and support of the teacher workforce with the knowledge and skills to improve literacy rates.
- Provide additional funding and resources for high school remediation efforts and reading interventions connected with the READ ACT.
- Provide additional funding and READ ACT policy adjustments to address the needs of bilingual schools.
- Provide full and equal Extended Time Revenue for students attending chartered public schools.
- Provide charter schools serving significant populations of graduation incentives students to be eligible for Alternative Learning Program (ALP) funding.
- Provide chartered public schools with Small School Revenue based on the same percentage as traditional school districts that qualify.
- Provide equitable per-pupil School Safety Aid for chartered public schools.
- Provide adequate Q-Comp funding to allow for all schools that wish to participate in the program.

- Provide chartered public-school students with equal per-pupil funding raised through traditional school board-adopted local operating levies (e.g., health & safety, career & tech education, etc.).
- Provide chartered public-school students equal per-pupil funding raised through local optional revenue (LOR) and referendum local excess operating levies.
- Provide chartered public-school students with state funding for the difference when the state shifts program funding from state revenue sources to local property taxes (e.g., for ongoing funding solutions on Earned Sick and Safe Time, Unemployment Insurance expansions, etc.).
- Provide chartered public schools with equalized Long-term Maintenance Revenue of \$380 per pupil to match the funding amount that traditional districts receive.

A RATIONAL & EQUITABLE CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITIES POLICY

- Repeal the ban on the use of public funds to purchase charter school facilities.
- Allow direct ownership of facilities by charter schools that meet appropriate criteria, including a record of effective governance, sound financial management, effective business practices, and a plan for a sustainable future.
- Establish a Minnesota Charter School Facilities Authority empowered to issue bonds for qualifying charter schools to purchase, purchase and renovate, or construct facilities directly owned by the school.
- Allow the transfer of ownership of school facilities owned by the school's non-profit Affiliated Building Company (ABC) to the school corporation upon refinancing or payoff of bonds or mortgages by the ABC.
- Revamp 'Lease Aid' to 'Facilities Aid' to allow facility-related health and safety requirements as allowable expenses, and create 'Facility Preservation Aid' for schools that own buildings but have no mortgage or facilities debt.
- Limit the amount a school district or other public entity may charge for leasing a facility to a charter school to the "Facility Asset Preservation Aid" revenue rate if the public facility is without debt.
- Provide leverage to charter schools in negotiating leases with landlords by allowing schools that negotiate a lower cost per student than the maximum amount of 'Lease Aid' to keep half the difference for other school uses, with the other half retained by the state treasury.
- Exempt property a charter school leases from a property owner from real estate taxes on the portion of the property the school leases, in the same manner as property leased by a traditional district is exempt.
- Increase Lease Aid to meet current prices and link increases in Lease Aid to increases in the general formula.
- Provide Lease Aid for PSEO students.

BALANCING ACCOUNTABILITY VS AUTONOMY

PURPOSE & GOALS

- Fund grant for the MN Association of Charter Schools and MN Association of Charter School Authorizers to work together to document and dissemination charter school innovation

APPLICABLE LAW

- Address the requirement that charter schools carry an additional \$3 million in liability coverage for potential release of hazardous substances.
- Clarify that charter schools must comply with state laws and policies regarding investment of public funds.
- Revise open meeting law to account for modern technology and allow virtual board meetings.

AUTHORIZING

- Provide start-up funding for new authorizers.
- Enhance authorizer accountability in the new school formation process.
- Develop alternative tools or pathways for authorizers to address severe governance or financial issues in schools at risk of closure, with strict safeguards to protect school autonomy.

BOARD GOVERNANCE

- Require the board to adopt and enforce a code of ethics for school administrators.
- Raise the \$25,000 threshold for the competitive bidding process in procurement policies to better reflect the practical financial realities of charter schools.

COLLABORATION

- Amend MN Statutes to allow charter schools “joint powers” agreements with traditional districts and/or between charters to provide for special education services

EMPLOYMENT

- Eliminate the requirement that group health insurance must be rebid at least every two years

CHARTER CONTRACTS

- Require a multiple measure accountability system for charter school contracts with authorizers, recognized by the state, that includes student achievement, career and

college readiness, and student engagement, and is differentiated to match the school mission and the students the school serves.

- Require a charter school board to request a renewal of its charter before the end of the contract and allow charter schools in good standing with their authorizer to transfer to another authorizer at the end of a contract without the approval of the current authorizer.
- Revamp the mutual non-renewal process to reflect that the role of MDE is “review and comment” of the affidavit.

EXPANSIONS, MERGERS AND CLOSURES

- Redefine the role and responsibilities of MDE in grade, site, and pre-school expansions to “review and comment,” with final decisions left with the authorizer.
- Revise the school merger language to clarify the role and responsibilities of MDE and authorizers and the criteria for the merger of schools.
- Require that authorizers annually verify that schools demonstrate they have the financial resources to pay their creditors in the event of potential non-renewal or closure.
- Establish a school closure process that includes the appointment of a trustee to oversee the school closure, a closure fund dedicated for that purpose, and oversight by a joint MACS, MACSA, and MDE committee.

ENROLLMENT

- Allow charter schools to update their rosters by unenrolling students after an extended period of consistent non-attendance (6 months+)

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

- Ensure that enrolling schools provide parents and students with complete and accurate information about online opportunities, both supplemental and comprehensive, within and outside of school, and about their right to choose an online opportunity.
- Clarify that it is the obligation of a resident district to provide early childhood health and development screening for all children in the district because they receive funding for that purpose.
- Allow a charter school student to participate in a High School League activity in their resident district if the charter school does not offer the activity or does not have a cooperative agreement with other school(s) for that activity.
- Allow a charter school that serves a significant population of eligible “graduation incentive” students to be designated as an alternative learning program.
- Expand and support Career and Technical Education opportunities for students.
- Eliminate the current prohibition on advertisements or recruitment of secondary students to enroll in courses under PSEO.
- Provide state funding for PSEO student service fees and subsidize replacement meal payments for eligible PSEO students.
- Allow access to PSEO for students enrolling during summer sessions.

STUDENT RECORDS

- Require the Department of Education to establish a digital backpack system for centralized student record-keeping, ensuring student records seamlessly transfer between schools or in the event of a charter school closure.
- Require authorizers to include in charter contracts a mandate for schools to digitize and securely store all student records, with full state funding provided to support and maintain this process.

EDUCATION WORKFORCE

- Expand funding and policy initiatives at the state level to strengthen the workforce in critical areas, including special education staffing and other hard-to-fill essential school positions.
- Require teacher preparation programs to equip prospective teachers with online teaching competencies.
- Revise the Tiered License system to eliminate annual renewal of licenses for Cross-Curricular Delivery Permissions.
- Revamp and modernize the teacher re-licensure system.
- Revamp and modernize the licensure by portfolio process and procedures.

NOTES:

1. The 2025-2027 Public Policy Positions were ratified by the Association's member schools in December 2024.
2. The MACS Board of Directors may at any time adopt additional policy positions to address other issues.

**Minnesota Association of Charter Schools – www.mncharterschools.org –
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