

WOLF ATTACKS:

Punishing PA Families for Choosing Public Charter Schools

Gov. Tom Wolf and his anti-charter supporters continually attack Pennsylvania families who exercise their right to a public charter school education. The governor wants to strip funding from public charter school students and limit the educational opportunities for Pennsylvania students. But families are fighting back! The facts:

PA's public charter schools are accountable to their local communities and to the state.

- By law, all charter schools in Pennsylvania are public, nonprofit entities and must adhere to all the same accountability and transparency standards as school districts.
- Public charter schools must: conduct annual independent fiscal audits; comply with PA auditor general audits; administer standardized testing; and adhere to the same federal requirements as districts.
- In addition, public charter schools have to submit a comprehensive annual report to their authorizer and seek renewal every five years.
- Most important, unlike school districts, charter schools stay open only if there is parent and student demand.

Tax dollars belong to the students and families who pay them, not school district bureaucrats.

- School districts have amassed over \$4.5 billion in unreserved fund balances.
- School districts have received more than \$6.1 billion in extra funding over the last 12 months from the federal government.

Cyber charter school families deserve full funding, not flat rates.

- A flat rate is inequitable to families who pay property taxes and expect that these dollars flow to the public schools they have chosen for their children.
- There is a vast difference between district-run virtual programs and a comprehensive cyber charter education.

The most vulnerable children and families deserve support, not attacks.

- PA's public charter schools educate a higher percentage of disadvantaged and vulnerable students than school districts.
 - About 70% of the students in public charter schools are low-income.
 - More than 68% of charter students are minority.
 - About 16% of charter school students require special education services.
- Wolf's charter proposal discriminates against charter students receiving special education services by slashing their funding by \$99 million each year.
 - Statewide, this proposal would mean a 30% cut in special education funding for public charter school students. In Philadelphia — where the largest number of students who attend charter schools reside — it would mean a 50% cut in special education funding for each student.

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