



Owen J. Roberts School District

Administration Building
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“Inspiring Each Student for Success Today and Greatness Tomorrow”

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR CHARTER SCHOOL LEGISLATION REFORM BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE OWEN J. ROBERTS SCHOOL DISTRICT

WHEREAS, charter schools are independent entities separate from public school districts, and yet our rural school of 5,330 students with a total budget of approximately \$113 million spent \$2.7 million in taxpayer money via mandatory payments to brick-and-mortar and cyber-charter schools in 2019-2020, and we are projected to spend approximately \$3.9 million in the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, the charter school tuition funding formula is fundamentally flawed because it mandates a double payment by including the charter school tuition costs in the total district expenses when calculating the per-student tuition rate; consequently, the tuition rate districts pay charter schools is actually higher than each district's per-student expenditures; and

WHEREAS, the mandated charter school tuition rate calculations are based on a school district's expenses, many of which are not incurred in charter schools, such as costs for career and technical education programs and student activities including athletics, intramurals, and fine arts, leading to inflated tuition payments; and

WHEREAS, charter schools' special education funding routinely fails to align with the services and programs they provide their students; further, charter schools' disproportionately identify students with special needs in certain areas; both issues unnecessarily increasing tuition payments for school districts; and

WHEREAS, charter schools are not governed by boards with members elected by the community, and elected public school district school boards have no oversight authority on how charter schools use public funding, meaning charters do not have to answer to the community and, in essence, become publicly-funded but privately-operated schools, leading to conflicts of interest; and

WHEREAS, all of our schools offer cyber learning options for students with local oversight at a significantly lower cost than cyber charter schools; and

WHEREAS, cyber charter schools have minimal facilities or grounds for student use, but receive the same per capita funding as their brick-and-mortar counterparts; and

WHEREAS, the need for significant charter school funding reform remains vital. For years, school districts have been challenged to keep up with escalating charter school costs while struggling to minimize tax increases but also maintain programs; and

WHEREAS, while up to 25 percent of charter school's faculty are uncertified, public school districts are required to employ 100 percent certified faculty, disadvantaging public schools when attracting individuals to the teaching profession is already challenged; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the respective board of directors for the Owen J. Roberts School District, in light of our concerns with the current charter school law, call upon local legislators to support the proposed charter school reform bill and address the following:

- Eliminate the inclusion of charter tuition costs within the tuition formula;
- Reform charter funding formula to eliminate costs for programming not offered - career and technical centers, athletics, intramurals, fine arts, and other extracurricular activities;
- Reform special education to align costs with services provided and ensure appropriate student identification;
- Enhance the power and authority of school boards in charter oversight, increasing transparency and taxpayer understanding;
- Enforce equal prohibitions on conflicts of interest;
- Require school district board representation on charter school boards;
- Eliminate tuition payments to cyber charter schools if a school district offers a cyber-option; and
- Provide school districts with the same teacher certification flexibility

In light of the critical need for reform, we are advocating for substantial change. Our district administration will inform and educate our community on the issues described in this resolution. We request that our community weighs in on this important matter and shares their thinking with our legislators.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be posted on our district's webpage and submitted to the elected state senators and representatives of our school district in the General Assembly, and to the Governor of Pennsylvania.

Adopted by the Owen J. Roberts Board of Education on March 15, 2021.

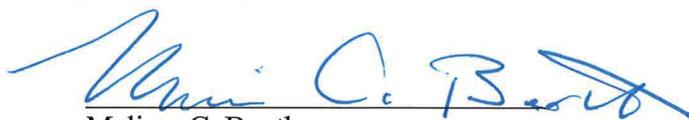
Signature Page



Leslie Proffitt
School Board President



John D. Diehl
School Board Vice President



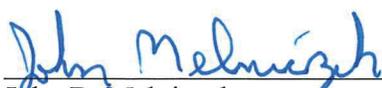
Melissa C. Booth
School Board Member



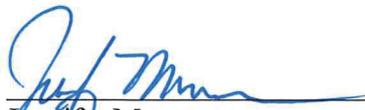
Kathleen L. DiMarino
School Board Member



Paul Friel
School Board Member



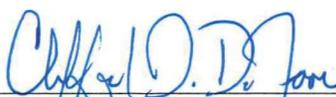
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School Board Member



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School Board Member