



LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BALLFIELD ROAD
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<http://www.lincnet.org/schoolcommittee/index.html>

School Committee

Jennifer Glass
Chairperson
Tim Christenfeld
Vice Chairperson
Peter Borden
Jena Salon
Al Schmertzler

Resolution Against Lifting the Cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools

WHEREAS, free public schools available to all students regardless of income, ability, need or English language proficiency are foundational to our democracy; and

WHEREAS, all of our students deserve high-quality public schools that teach the whole child, providing enrichment and addressing social and emotional needs in addition to core academic subjects; and

WHEREAS, local accountability for our public schools is necessary to ensure that schools are responsive to the needs of their communities; and

WHEREAS, public school districts across the state are losing more than \$408 million this year alone — a loss of funds that is undermining the ability of districts to provide all students with the educational services to which they are entitled; and

WHEREAS, Commonwealth charter schools are often approved over the objections of a majority of community residents and their elected officials and are not accountable to local elected officials once they are approved; and

WHEREAS, Commonwealth charter schools often fail to serve the same proportion of special needs students, low-income students and English language learners as the districts from which they receive students and often use high suspension rates to drive out students they don't want to serve; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth charter school system is creating separate and unequal opportunities for success; and

WHEREAS, lifting the cap on charter schools would greatly worsen the problems listed above and lead to a costly and divisive two-track school system;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Lincoln School Committee opposes lifting the cap on Commonwealth charter schools.

Signed October 6, 2016

Jennifer Glass, Chairperson _____

Tim Christenfeld, Vice Chairperson _____

Peter Borden, Member _____

Jena Salon, Member _____

Al Schmertzler, Member _____

2

QUESTION 2: Law Proposed by Initiative Petition

Charter School Expansion

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives on or before May 3, 2016?

SUMMARY

As required by law, summaries are written by the State Attorney General.

This proposed law would allow the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to approve up to 12 new charter schools or enrollment expansions in existing charter schools each year. Approvals under this law could expand statewide charter school enrollment by up to 1% of the total statewide public school enrollment each year. New charters and enrollment expansions approved under this law would be exempt from existing limits on the number of charter schools, the number of students enrolled in them, and the amount of local school districts' spending allocated to them.

If the Board received more than 12 applications in a single year from qualified applicants, then the proposed law would require it to give priority to proposed charter schools or enrollment

expansions in districts where student performance on statewide assessments is in the bottom 25% of all districts in the previous two years and where demonstrated parent demand for additional public school options is greatest.

New charter schools and enrollment expansions approved under this proposed law would be subject to the same approval standards as other charter schools, and to recruitment, retention, and multilingual outreach requirements that currently apply to some charter schools. Schools authorized under this law would be subject to annual performance reviews according to standards established by the Board.

The proposed law would take effect on January 1, 2017.

WHAT YOUR VOTE WILL DO

As required by law, the statements describing the effect of a "yes" or "no" vote are written jointly by the State Attorney General and the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

A YES VOTE would allow for up to 12 approvals each year of either new charter schools or expanded enrollments in existing charter schools, but not to exceed 1% of the statewide public school enrollment.

A NO VOTE would make no change in current laws relative to charter schools.

STATEMENT OF FISCAL CONSEQUENCES

As required by law, statements of fiscal consequences are written by the Executive Office of Administration and Finance.

This proposed measure would make no changes to the current funding formula, which mandates that state and local per-pupil funding follow students who enroll in public charter schools.

School districts that experience annual increases in payments to public charter schools receive transitional state education aid.

ARGUMENTS

As provided by law, the 150-word arguments are written by proponents and opponents of each question, and reflect their opinions. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts does not endorse these arguments, and does not certify the truth or accuracy of any statement made in these arguments. The names of the individuals and organizations who wrote each argument, and any written comments by others about each argument, are on file in the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

IN FAVOR: A YES vote on Question 2 gives parents the right to choose the best public schools for their children.

Charter schools are PUBLIC schools open to all children. They offer longer school days and more individual attention, and have a proven record of closing the achievement gap for kids trapped in failing school districts.

Today, almost 33,000 children are stuck on waiting lists for public charter schools because of the legislature's arbitrary cap on enrollment. Voting YES would give more children the opportunity to attend these great public schools -- especially in the state's lowest-performing school districts.

AGAINST: Every time a new charter school opens or expands, it takes funding away from the public schools in that district. This year alone, charter schools will take more than \$400 million from already-underfunded Massachusetts public schools. And charter schools are not accountable to the local taxpayers who fund them.

Under this proposal, the number of charter schools in Massachusetts would nearly triple in just 10 years, costing local public school districts more than \$1 billion a year.

If some public schools are falling short, we should fix them, not take money away and give it to privately-run charters. We need to support schools that serve all children. That means

QUESTION 2: Law Proposed by Initiative Petition

ARGUMENTS ► Voting YES does not harm local school districts.

(continued) Cities and towns with new public charter schools will receive MORE state education aid if Question 2 passes. Charter growth would happen gradually; new public charter schools must be approved by the State Board of Education and are subject to rigorous and frequent performance reviews.

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investing in areas such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), arts and music, and Pre-K, not diverting even more resources to charters, which educate just four percent of students. Save Our Public Schools. Vote NO on 2.

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FULL TEXT OF QUESTION

Be it enacted by the People, and by their authority, as follows:

SECTION 1.

Subsection (i) of section 89 of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:—

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection (i) relative to the number of charter schools allowed to operate in the commonwealth or in any district, the board may approve up to 12 additional commonwealth charters, commonwealth charter amendments to increase authorized enrollment, or a combination thereof per year; provided that the total enrollment authorized by all such approvals in a single fiscal year shall not exceed 1% of the total statewide public school enrollment for such year as determined by the board; provided further, that in the event that the number of qualified applicants in any year exceeds 12, the board shall give priority among such qualified applicants to those seeking to establish or expand enrollment in commonwealth charter schools in districts where overall student performance on the statewide assessment system approved by the board is in the bottom 25% of all districts in the two years preceding the charter application and where the demonstrated parent demand for additional public school options is greatest; provided

further that the board shall apply to all such applicants review and approval standards as rigorous as those applied to all other commonwealth charter applicants; provided further that the recruitment and retention and multilingual outreach provisions of paragraph (3) shall apply to any commonwealth charter school authorized under this paragraph; and provided further that any new commonwealth charter schools authorized by this paragraph shall be subject to annual performance reviews according to standards established by the board.

Nothing in this paragraph shall affect the issuance of commonwealth charters under paragraph (3). The percentages of net school spending set forth in paragraphs (2) and (3) shall not apply to or otherwise operate to limit the board's authority to approve commonwealth charters or commonwealth charter amendments under this paragraph; provided, however, that such percentages shall continue to apply to commonwealth charters issued otherwise than under this paragraph. Except as provided in this paragraph, all otherwise applicable provisions of this section shall apply to commonwealth charters or amendments approved under this paragraph.

SECTION 2.

This act shall become effective January 1, 2017, and shall apply to commonwealth charter and commonwealth charter amendment applications pending as of that date.