

Charter school funding and the state budget

Charter schools will see a small increase in funding in up to three areas after the budget is signed sometime this summer. These will include a minor CPI adjustment to state adequacy aid, a new category of aid called fiscal disparity aid and the funding of charter school lease aid.

CPI Adjustment to State Adequacy Aid

All public schools (including charter schools), will receive a CPI adjustment to state adequacy aid (increase), at the beginning of the biennium. The CPI adjustment is meant to adjust the state adequacy aid calculation for the cost of inflation. This will result in a minor increase in funding in the range of \$25-\$30 per pupil.

Fiscal Disparity Aid

Fiscal disparity aid represents the state legislature's attempt to direct additional funding to the schools and districts that need it the most. Additional funding will be calculated using a school's population of students that are eligible to receive Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL). This important category of aid provides additional funding for all public schools.

1. All public schools (including charter schools), with a FRL eligible population of 12%-48% will receive an additional \$87.50 in state aid for each pupil meeting this criterion.
2. All public schools (including charter schools), with a FRL eligible population greater than 48% (examples include Compass, Ledyard, MC2, North Country, PACE) will receive an additional \$350 in state aid for each pupil meeting this criterion.

Charter School Lease Aid

For the first time in state charter history the Governor and state legislators have funded charter school lease aid in the state budget. This means that starting next fiscal year charter school lease aid will provide a reimbursement of *up to 30% of the annual cost for rent or lease capping at up to \$30,000 per charter school annually*. This additional funding will allow charter schools to direct more of their operating dollars to their students and programs.

Senate increase removed in Committee of Conference

Parents may remember that the Senate version of the state budget contained a provision which would have increased charter school funding by approximately \$300 per pupil. Unfortunately that provision and the accompanying funding was removed from the state budget by the House in the Committee of Conference (CoC). We know that this was incredibly disappointing but that funding is not expected to return in this budget.

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