

Resolution Supporting Statewide Cyber Charter School Funding Reform

By the Board of Directors of the Ringgold School District

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth is the sole authorizer of cyber charter schools, yet almost all of the costs for cyber charter schools are borne by school districts and local taxpayers; and the current funding formula for cyber charter schools is based on school district expenditures with no relationship to the actual instructional costs of the students attending the charter school; and

WHEREAS, the current cyber charter school funding formula for special education differs from the formula used to calculate school district special education subsidies and is not based on the actual costs of the cyber charter school to meet the needs of their students with disabilities; and the current flawed calculation requires school districts to pay charter schools regardless of the costs of services provided, resulting in the overpayment of district funds to charter schools for special education students; and

WHEREAS, in 2016-17, school districts spent more than \$463 million in mandatory cyber charter school tuition payments; and

WHEREAS, the average total cyber charter school tuition payment made by a district was \$926,000 with the average tuition rate for a non-special education student \$11,309; and

WHEREAS, the average tuition rate for special education students attending cyber charter schools was \$24,200 with a maximum rate of \$48,198 per student; and more than 390 school districts in Pennsylvania were forced to pay more than \$20,000 per student for special education students attending cyber charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the Ringgold School District's cyber charter school expenditures for the past five years reflect extraordinary costs that were borne by its taxpayers as follows:

Fiscal Year	Regular Ed Tuition Paid by the District to Cyber Schools	Special Ed Tuition Paid by the District to Cyber Schools	Total Tuition Paid by the District to Cyber Schools
2014-15	\$811,362.32	\$367,980.48	\$1,179,342.80
2015-16	\$874,200.00	\$326,646.54	\$1,200,846.54
2016-17	\$924,414.48	\$468,472.16	\$1,392,886.64
2017-18	\$1,176,527.52	\$504,508.48	\$1,681,036.00

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Ringgold School Board urges its elected officials to support legislation that corrects the tuition for regular and special education to cyber charter schools so that it is based on the actual costs of educating their students and relieves the financial burden on school districts and taxpayers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be submitted to the elected senators and representatives of the Ringgold School District in the General Assembly, and to the Governor of Pennsylvania.

Adopted this 15th day of May, 2019.

Signed,

School Board President

Board Secretary