



MN ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Charter School Advocate

Friday, February 20, 2015

Good Morning,

Today is a noteworthy day in American history. 223 years ago (1792), the U.S. Post Office was established, and 53 years ago (1962), John Glenn became the first American to orbit the earth.

On the face of it one might wonder if these events have anything in common. I believe they do. They both signaled the beginning of a new era for our country and society.

It may be hard for us today, with electronic mail and instant messaging to understand how important the establishment of a systematic way of delivering correspondence, publications and packages has been to foster knowledge, understanding and relationships among people, connecting people near and far, and building a nation.

It may be equally hard for us today, with how pervasive technology is in our offices, homes, cars and on our person, to realize or remember (*some of us do remember*) what an exciting accomplishment it was (*given technology of the time*) when Glenn successfully orbited the earth, reaching the final frontier of space. It was something that until that moment was science fiction.

Today, I encourage you to take a moment to note how much these two events signaled new eras of connecting space and time, people and places, and how they have had enormous impact on how we think, act, work and live our lives. It is truly incredible and noteworthy when you do think about it.

EP

HEADLINES - WEEK OF FEBRUARY 16 - 20, 2015

- Assessment System for Charters - Senate Hearing
- Proposed Desegregation and Integration Rule - Charter School Meetings
- Governor's Education Budget Proposals - House Hearing

- Age of Homeless Youth Bill Advances
- Small School Revenue - Update
- 8th Annual Charter School Day @ The Capitol - March 5, 2015
- The Charter Current

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM for CHARTERS – SENATE HEARING

On Wednesday morning, the Senate Education Committee heard **S.F. 164** authored by **Senators Johnson, Wiger, and Nelson** that would establish an alternative assessment system for charter schools serving significant populations of graduation incentives eligible students. *[The legislation is based on the Work Group MACS created to develop a legislative proposal]*. An Overview of the S.F. 164 can be found [Here](#).

We want to thank **Darius Husain**, *Executive Director, Face to Face Academy, St. Paul* and **David Greenberg**, *Director of Charter School Authorizing for Audubon Center of the North Woods* for joining with me in testifying at the hearing. Darius and David did a tremendous job of laying out the need for the proposed assessment system from the perspective of a school and authorizer.

[MACS TESTIMONY](#)

The legislation was favorably received and a couple of Senators suggested that this assessment system should be adopted for all public schools that serve significant populations of graduation incentives eligible students.

PROPOSED DESEGREGATION AND INTEGRATION RULE – CHARTER SCHOOL MEETINGS

In last week's ADVOCATE we announced that the Association would be scheduling some meetings to examine the proposed Desegregation and Integration Rule and potential impacts on charter schools.

Meeting Dates:

Monday, March 16th, St. Paul - 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Thursday, March 19th, Brooklyn Center – 1:30 – 3:30 PM

As public schools of choice, **charter schools have been exempt** from the state's Desegregation and Integration Rule since the Rule was written.

The **new proposed rule would affect nearly every charter school** as it would apply to all charter schools that have an enrollment composed of **20% or more** of students who are "protected students". It would also affect every charter school that has either 20% more or 20% less of protected students compared to the nearest public school **site** serving the same, but not necessarily all grades of the charter.

"Protected students" in the proposed rule are: *American Indian/Alaskan Natives; Asian/Pacific Islander; Hispanic; and Black.*

An initial review of the proposed rule and its underlying law raises a number of questions, concerns, and implications for charter schools that would have long-term effects.

Watch for more information and the agenda on the March 16th and March 19th meetings in a special email next week.

GOVERNOR'S EDUCATION BUDGET PROPOSALS – HOUSE HEARING

On Wednesday afternoon, the House Education Finance Committee heard the Governor's Education Budget Recommendations for Education contained in **H.F. 844**.

Highlights:

- A small reduction in Q-Comp beginning in FY18 to \$251 per pupil and in FY19 to \$241 per pupil. Current law is \$260 per pupil
- Increase in Basic General Revenue in FY 16 to \$5,889 and in FY 17 to \$5,948
- Creates a pupil weight of (.5) for pre-kindergarten students effective in FY17
- Defines the characteristics for pre-kindergarten programs and sets a minimum number of hours of contact during the school year and for summer programs
- Expands the definition of ELL students to pre-kindergarten and increases the number of years of ELL revenue to 7 years

AGE OF HOMELESS YOUTH BILL ADVANCES

Earlier this week legislation (**H.F. 581 and S.F. 598**) to raise the age of “**Homeless Youth**” and “**Youth at risk of homelessness**” to **age 24** from the current age of 21 advanced in both the House and Senate. The result of this change would be that these youth would be able to continue to get state services for homeless youth. Both the House and Senate bills have bi-partisan authors and support.

SMALL SCHOOL REVENUE – UPDATE

First, we want to thank those who took time out of their schedules on Wednesday to participate in the Small School Revenue Legislation Update Teleconference.

As a follow-up to the teleconference – **all of the 70 or so charter schools** that would qualify for small school revenue are being sent a copy of the legislation and a list of how much each of those schools could receive if the legislation is enacted. Schools are also being asked to take action in informing their stakeholders and then ask them to contact their legislators.

8th ANNUAL CHARTER SCHOOL DAY @ THE CAPITOL – March 5, 2015

One last reminder that **March 5, 2015** is our 8th Annual Charter School Day @ the Capitol. If you have not signed up to participate and plan to please contact Dan DeBruyn, Associate Director @ 651.789.3090 Ext. 11 or dan@mncharterschools.org.

THE CHARTER CURRENT

We invite you to subscribe to [THE CHARTER CURRENT](#) for information on legislation, school and association news, as well as events and other issues about charter schools in Minnesota and the nation.