



The Charter School Advocate

Thursday, September 6, 2018

AGENDA TO FULFILL THE PROMISE

The Latitude for Innovation – Accountability vs Autonomy

Work continues on various aspects of this part of the proposed agenda – here is a quick update on how the various proposals in this section of the Agenda were developed or are being developed.

Authorizing – see the update on the MACS-MACSA Legislative Policy Meeting below. **Board Governance** - proposals about governance were developed by a Work Group composed of school directors, board chairs and authorizers two years ago. **Charter Contract Accountability** – the proposal was developed by charter schools and authorizers about five years ago.

Online Education – the proposals were developed through a consultation with the directors of online schools. **MDE Role with Charters** – the proposal was developed through the Government Affairs process five years ago. **Mental Health** - The Government Affairs Committee will be addressing proposals at their next meeting.

Public Reporting of CMO's etc. – the proposals were developed in conjunction with MDE two years ago. **Purposes of Charters** – the Government Affairs Committee has been working on this proposal this year. **School Closures** – the proposal was developed by a Work Group composed of school and authorizers representatives, MDE and the Business Partnership three years ago.

School and Student Safety – The Government Affairs Committee will be addressing proposals at their next meeting. **Special Education** – The Government Affairs Committee has and will continue to address proposals. **Teacher Licensing** – the Association has had a long standing positions (some for more than a decade) on a number of licensing issues.

Student Opportunities – the Association has had long standing positions on student access to extra-curricular activities (at least 15 years), school choice, etc. **Transportation** - the Association has a long standing position on funding and the need for cooperation between traditional districts and charters.

MACS – MACSA LEGISLATIVE POLICY MEETING

Last Thursday (8/30) representatives of the MACS Government Affairs and the MACSA Policy Committees met to continue work on potential joint legislative proposals for the 2019 session.

The focus of the meeting was on the proposal to **define the role and responsibilities of authorizers and define the relationship between MDE and authorizers**. There was agreement among the participants that we are close to an agreement on this proposal.

The group also agreed to schedule two meetings – one to focus on the **issue of school transfers of authorizers**, and one to focus on **issues related to the MN Authorizer Performance Evaluation System (MAPES)**. While there are very divergent opinions on the transfer of authorizers issue between MACS and MACSA, there is agreement that we need for the MAPES process to be reformed.

CRUZ-GUZMAN vs MINNESOTA

As you know, in late July the MN Supreme Court ruled that there is a **constitutional right** to an “adequate education” and that whether the state is providing students with an “adequate education” is a justiciable issue – meaning that the courts have jurisdiction to decide the issue.

The Association has been monitoring the lawsuit because of its implications for school choice and the fact that two charter schools – **Higher Ground Academy and Friendship Academy** – both MACS member schools are intervenors in the case.

Last week the Association’s Board of Directors held a special meeting to discuss the potential implications for Minnesota’s charter schools depending on how the Court defines the questions that will be heard in the trial, and the possible decisions of the Courts.

The Board unanimously adopted a resolution that from the charter school perspective **parental/student choice is the fundamental principle** that must be protected – which means that we would oppose any definition of an “adequate education” that would undermine or eliminate parental/student choice.

The Board also gave direction on what the Association should undertake to reinforce the understanding of the fundamental principle of parental/student education choice.

NOTES:

August 21, 2018 - New York Times had a front page article on the Gruz-Guzman Case and some related cases in other states.

August 21, 2018 - The74 – an education blog had an [opinion piece](#) following up on a New York Times Op-Ed about school choice and segregation

FEDERAL MENTAL HEALTH PROPOSAL

In August a Federal Mental Health Initiative was introduced by Senator Tina Smith that would provide \$200 million in federal funding to:

- Build partnerships between schools and community-based organizations that can help students get mental health services at school;
- Train teachers, families, and community members to recognize when a student is experiencing a mental health crisis; and make sure they get the help they need; and

- Recognize best practices for the delivery of mental health care in school-based settings and help promote partnerships between those who work to support the mental and emotional health of children and adolescents in school settings.

The ***Mental Health Services for Students Act*** was endorsed by over 50 national mental health groups on its introduction.

MACS ANNUAL MEETING & AWARDS CELEBRATION

We invite you to the **MACS Annual Meeting & Award on Thursday, September 27th at the Union Depot in St. Paul from 5:00 -7:00 p.m.** when we will recognize six individuals for their Pioneering work in the development of Minnesota's first in the nation charter school law, and the 2018 Charter School Champion.

To Register, Click [Here](#)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR LICENSING & STANDARDS BOARD

The MN Secretary of State has posted a vacancy of **teacher position** on the Professional Educator Licensing & Standards Board. Click [here](#) to view.

CHARTERING ACROSS AMERICA

CALIFORNIA – Last week the California Legislature passed Assembly Bill 406 which would **prohibit charter schools from being operated by, a for-profit corporation, a for-profit educational management organization, or a for-profit charter management corporation.** It defines what those entities are, and what “operated by” means. It also prohibits a charter school from entering into subcontracts with these entities for the services prohibited in the law. Governor Brown has until September 30th to decide whether to sign or veto the bill. ***The two charter school organizations in the state have taken opposite positions on the legislation.***

ILLINOIS – Last week the Governor vetoed HB 5175 which would have eliminated the Illinois State Charter School Commission's ability to hear appeals from applicants who are improperly denied by the district to start a charter public school..