



Public Dollars for Public Schools

Support HB278 (Welch), HB279 (Guzzardi),
HB890 (Welch) and HB334 (Harper)

Why are these bills important? Continuing to divert taxpayer dollars to a parallel system of privately-run, publicly funded schools undermines the public good, particularly in districts that are already under-resourced and facing declining enrollment.

RYHA does not oppose existing charters, but research shows that charters do not outperform traditional, district-run schools and at best are doing about the same, and the families served by charters need and deserve the same accountability and transparency that parents in district-run schools have.

And allowing an appointed state commission to force districts to operate charters with local dollars and no local oversight is particularly problematic.

- **HB278 No new for-profit management of charter schools:** By law, all charter schools in Illinois must be organized as non-profits, but for-profit companies get around this rule by creating a non-profit that hires a for-profit Charter Management Organization. For-profit CMOs spend less money per-pupil than neighborhood schools and pay teachers less than their non-charter counterparts because their funding is disproportionately spent on executive salaries and shareholder payouts.
- **HB279 No new charter schools in financially-distressed school districts:** Many districts in Illinois remain inadequately funded, and opening new schools in an under-resourced district hurts students at existing schools. Financially-distressed is defined as funding less than 90% of adequacy under the Evidence-based funding formula.
- **HB890 Respect local control on charter decisions:** The unelected State Charter Commission allows for the operation of charter schools over the wishes of local school boards. The Commission can override local decisions and approve charter schools that a local school board has rejected. Schools that are approved by the Commission get increased funding over local district amounts, and this comes from the local district's budget even though they have no say on how the charter school is run.
- **HB334 LSCs for all:** Local School Councils are the only elected bodies within CPS and are made up of voices from all parts of the school community—parents, teachers, community members, students, staff, and the principal. Charter schools are run by a private organization with public dollars; they do not have to follow all the policies of the local district that funds them. Charter families deserve the same control that families at district-run schools have via an LSC that has a say on budget, principal selection and retention and school improvement plans.