



DALE KOOYENGA

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 14th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-9180
FAX: (608) 282-3614
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0014
Rep.Kooyenga@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

December 18, 2013

Assembly Committee on Education
Public Hearing
10:00 AM – 412 East

Chairman Kestell and Members of the Committee:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of AB 126 and Assembly Substitute Amendment 3. The amendment creates a new provision permitting the establishment of additional independent charter schools by certain persons who operate a charter school that has a proven track record of success during each of the two immediately preceding school years.

The amendment enlarges the scope of intent to operate a charter school. This is predicated by the date on which instruction will begin at each additional charter school and the general location of each additional charter school. Also there is a description of any potential facility that may be used by each additional charter school, including the approximate number of pupils that each facility may safely accommodate, and evidence demonstrating that the operator has a proven track record of success or each charter school that the person operates in this state.

The amendment specifies that an additional charter school authorized under this provision is not a satellite or subsidiary campus of the charter school for which the operator demonstrated a proven track record of success and is considered an individual school for funding purposes.

Finally, the amendment specifies that a charter school is under contract with a school board and that it is not an instrumentality of the school district and may use an equivalency process to evaluate educators. I am open to any questions the committee may have.

Thank you,


Dale P. Kooyenga



DATE: DECEMBER 18, 2013

TO: ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**FROM: STEVE BAAS, VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
METROPOLITAN MILWAUKEE ASSOCIATION OF COMMERCE**

RE: ASA3 TO AB 126

On behalf for the Metropolitan Milwaukee association of Commerce (MMAC) I would like to thank the committee for holding this hearing today and for the opportunity to speak in favor of the substitute amendment before you.

The MMAC represents over 1800 member businesses employing over 300,000 workers throughout the metropolitan Milwaukee region. As such, we have a firsthand awareness of the fact that to create a region that is globally competitive in an innovation economy we need a strong system of educational options that help develop a workforce capable of fueling that economy.

The MMAC is currently engaged in an effort to increase the number of available seats in high-performing schools in Milwaukee by 20,000 by 2020. One of the simplest and most effective strategies in this effort is to encourage expansion or replication of schools that are already performing at a high level in our community. Simply put, enabling growth in schools that have successfully “cracked the code” of urban education in Milwaukee is the most efficient and most certain way to expand access to educational excellence for our students.

ASA 3 recognizes this fact and simplifies the path to expansion or replication for charter schools that are the best of the best – delivering proficiency rates that are 10% or higher than those in their school district. Currently, if these schools would like to grow, they must go back to square one of the charter authorization process and jump through all the administrative hoops required of a new school with no track record. Quite frankly, given the magnitude of the challenge facing us in education - and particularly urban education – we should be begging these “star schools” to grow and doing everything we can to facilitate that expansion or replication. While the substitute amendment does not resort to begging, it does take a strong positive step by removing administrative barriers to growth that might serve as disincentives to these schools.

The performance standard set for presumptive replication in this bill is a high one. It will be difficult for even very good charter schools to meet. But for those that do, we owe it to our children and to our economy to recognize that high performance and do all we can to find ways to export that level of educational opportunity to more children.

Once again, on behalf of MMAC, thank you for your work on this bill. We are confident that this measure with the provisions in the substitute amendment will make our state charter school system an even stronger partner in our state’s effort to create a generation of lifelong learners prepared to fuel a growing Wisconsin economy.

The White House
Office of the Press Secretary
For Immediate Release
May 03, 2013

Presidential Proclamation – National Charter Schools Week, 2013

NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK, 2013

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION

America's success in the 21st century depends on what we do today to reignite the true engine of our economic growth: a thriving middle class. Achieving that vision means making sure our education system provides ladders of opportunity for our sons and daughters. We need to equip all our students with the education and skills that put them on the path to good jobs and a bright future -- no matter where they live or what school they attend.

Charter schools play an important role in meeting that obligation. These learning laboratories give educators the chance to try new models and methods that can encourage excellence in the classroom and prepare more of our children for college and careers. In return for this flexibility, we should expect high standards and accountability, and make tough decisions to close charter schools that are underperforming and not improving. But where charter schools demonstrate success and exceed expectations, we should share what they learn with other public schools and replicate those that produce dramatic results. Many charter schools choose to locate in communities with few high-quality educational options, making them an important partner in widening the circle of opportunity for students who need it most.

Our children are ready to write the next great chapter in the American story. As parents and teachers and citizens, it is up to all of us to provide them the tools they need to keep our country moving forward -- from a degree that leads to a good job to the critical thinking skills that make our democracy thrive. This week, we recognize charter schools that are advancing those goals, and we recommit to helping our Nation's children go as far as their talents will take them.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 5 through May 11, 2013, as National Charter Schools Week. I commend our Nation's charter schools, teachers, and administrators, and I call on States and communities to support charter schools and the students they serve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

December 18, 2013
Assembly Committee on Education

Department of Public Instruction
Testimony on 2013 Assembly Bill 126

I want to thank Chairman Kestell and members of the committee for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Jennifer Kammerud and I am the legislative liaison at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). I am here today on behalf of State Superintendent Tony Evers to testify in opposition to Assembly Substitute Amendment 3 (ASA 3) to Assembly Bill 126.

One of the major concerns the department had with the original bill is that it placed a mandate upon locally-elected school board officials and other authorized entities to amend their existing contract or enter into a new contract to create a school. Nowhere in state history had the legislature required a school board to create another school, charter or traditional, under its authority and stripped locally-elected officials of their ability to make such a decision on their own.

The amendment removes the school board related provisions and instead focuses solely on the requirement that charter schools with a proven track record of success, and authorized by the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, City of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee Area Technical College, be given automatic replication rights.

There are still, however, two significant questions that remain unanswered. One is the impact this change will have over time on funding for all the school districts in the state and the other is how the calculation of a track record of success will be done to meet the threshold established in the amendment.

For nearly 15 years, the state's method of paying for students enrolled in non-school board authorized charter schools has been to not only fund such charter schools by reducing nearly every school district's state general aid entitlement but to also not allow school districts (currently the Milwaukee and Racine school districts in which these students reside) to count these students for state general aid or revenue limit purposes.

Based on the 2013-15 biennial budget bill (Act 20), the state reduced nearly all school districts' 2013-14 state general aid by nearly 1.5 percent of their entitlement, which totaled over \$64 million to pay for the 8,100 students attending non-school district authorized charter schools in Milwaukee and Racine this year. School districts are allowed to replace this lost general aid with property taxes under their revenue limit. Ultimately, nearly all school boards choose to raise additional property taxes, instead of cutting their own existing school programs or laying off staff.

This \$64 million reduction in state general school aids this year and estimated increase in property tax levies represented approximately 1.4% of all gross school property taxes statewide this fall.

Turning to the question of how a proven track record of success is established, there are some significant questions surrounding the calculation and how the state is to treat it.

- The amendment requires a calculation comparing the charter school to the school district in which it is located. Who is doing this calculation? Is it DPI, the charter school applying for replication, or the school district? There is no language directing DPI to do the application.
- If there isn't one entity doing the calculation, how can the state be assured the calculation is being done consistently?
- The bill requires the school district comparison to include all schools operated by the school district. Does the legislature intend the school district number to include noninstrumentality charter schools authorized by the school district where the employees are not school district employees? What about instrumentality charters that are run by governing councils but the employees are school district employees?
- Are only students who are enrolled for the full academic year in school included for both the charter and the district?
- What about cell sizes? Is there a point at which the group is too small to compare and thus automatic replication doesn't apply?
- How is the state to treat replicated charters for purposes of accountability?

A high quality education for every child is our shared mutual goal. We need to confront how we are funding independent charter schools before we look at expanding them. On behalf of the state superintendent I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today and at this point I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.