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# PASA POINTS

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators

## About PASA

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) is an organization that is instrumental in developing successful school leadership through advocacy, support, sustainment of high quality school administrators and a statewide collegial network.

Contact us at:  
2608 Market Place  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
[www.pasa-net.org](http://www.pasa-net.org)  
717-540-4448  
Email: [pasa@pasa-net.org](mailto:pasa@pasa-net.org)

Dr. Richard Fry  
PASA President

Dr. Jeffrey Fuller  
PASA President Elect

Dr. Emilie Lonardi  
PASA Past President

Dr. John Bell  
PASA Treasurer

Dr. Eric Eshbach  
Legislative Chair

Dr. Mark DiRocco  
Executive Director



**It's time to improve the charter school law in Pennsylvania.**

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## Cyber Charter Schools

PASA recognizes that cyber charter schools are public schools. Therefore, governance responsibilities must be equitable, and the funding formula must be revised to reflect the true cost of providing education in these settings.

Laws and regulations governing operations and funding of nontraditional public schools must ensure a balanced system of public education in Pennsylvania that does not create separate and unequal schools or school systems for our students.

Pennsylvania law concerning cyber charter school accountability and funding is inadequate. Although a small percentage of cyber charter schools provide evidence of academic success, most do not. Numerous cases of questionable business practices, personnel malfeasance, a lack of transparency and an inequitable funding mechanism that does not fairly reflect actual costs of instruction continue to be of great concern.

For that reason, state policymakers must make changes in the state's cyber charter school law and policies to provide assurance to taxpayers that limited public resources are being utilized in a transparent and cost effective manner and to ensure that the primary beneficiaries of cyber charter schools are the students they are intended to serve.

PASA supports House Bill 526 and Senate Bill 34 that eliminate cyber charter school tuition payments if a public school district offers its own full-time cyber learning option. Evidence shows that cyber learning programs operated by traditional public school districts or intermediate units cost much less per student than cyber charter schools charge for a similar cyber learning program. These bills will provide more equitable financial expenditures for public school districts, greater accountability for cyber learning expenses, and provide families with a choice option for their children to participate in a cyber learning program.

*"A leader is one who knows the way,  
shows the way, and goes the way."  
John C. Maxwell*



**Pennsylvania Association  
of School Administrators**

*Proud Leadership for Pennsylvania's Schools*

## PASA Principles

All partners in education must stand accountable for their contributions to public schools and the impact their role has on student learning. This includes:

The Commonwealth's commitment to public education and recognition of shared responsibility with local communities for providing resources adequate to comply with laws and regulations regarding public education and essential to support student learning in Pennsylvania's public schools

The teaching profession's obligation to utilize evidence-based and research-based instructional strategies

Administrators' obligation to ensure that high quality leadership is in place to lead efforts to improve student learning

Student and family commitment to pursue, promote and support the value of education and life-long learning

Higher education's commitment to preparing future teachers, offering dual-enrollment courses for students and partnering with school districts to ensure student readiness

Commitment from the profession, the public, the media and the wider community in acknowledging the high importance of public education and the teaching profession to ensure a strong democracy

The greater business community's commitment to workforce development and career and college readiness

## PASA supports a revision of Pennsylvania's charter school law and funding system that:

- provides adequate resources to those schools for actual, audited costs of instruction and services.
- changes charter school funding calculations that do not take into account differing programs and services offered by traditional public schools and charter/cyber charter schools.
- strengthens accountability for student achievement and use of taxpayer funds.
- requires full compliance with state requirements, including state ethics, transparency, conflict of interest and audit requirements.
- revises the current process for tuition payments and student accounting practices, to include utilization of PDE Form 363, including appropriate deductions.
- addresses over-identification of special needs upon entrance to a charter or cyber charter school.
- ensures that students who choose to attend a charter school are not denied enrollment due to student level of need. The enrollment and selection process must be transparent and free of any form of discrimination.
- opposes transferring local tax dollars raised for public education to for-profit management companies and organizations.
- requires equitable per-student tuition for charter schools based on how districts are funded, a statewide flat fee for cyber charter schools, and an exemption for districts from paying tuition for cyber schools when a school district offers a comprehensive cyber education to its students.
- supports a review of student achievement at all levels to gauge appropriateness of cyber instruction.
- requires educators of cyber charter schools to meet the same certification requirements as traditional public school educators.
- requires billing discrepancies between school districts and cyber charter schools be reconciled between the two agencies with no automatic withholding of subsidies based on the cyber charter school claim.
- ensures all members of the Charter Appeal Board (CAB) are impartial and objective in hearing charter appeal cases.