



Reach Cyber Charter School

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reachcyber.org

Summary

K-12 education funding was increased by approximately \$1B overall and the total special ed increase was \$100m.

Funding

Funding for special ed for cyber charter schools was reduced as part of the 2024/2025 state budget. The reduction occurs through changes to the special ed tuition calculation. Under current law, the special education tuition rates for charter school students is determined by dividing the resident school district's special ed expenditures by 16% of the school district's average daily membership. Under the new law, the calculation will change to use each school district's actual special education average daily membership in place of the 16% figure.

The estimated reduction in special education funding for cyber's based on this change is approximately \$64m annually. While a reduction in funding is far from ideal, it's important to note that there were many forces inside the Capitol advocating for extreme funding reductions for cyber charter schools and students, including Gov. Shapiro, who proposed a \$262m funding reduction, and the House Democratic Caucus, who on two separate occasions passed legislation to reduce cyber charter funding by more than \$500m.

In addition, the General Assembly re-established the charter school reimbursement line item specifically for cyber charter schools, for school districts. This was funded at \$100m.

Other cyber charter school provisions

There are requirements for trustees of a charter school, which include:

- File statements of financial interest, take an oath of office, and be residents of the commonwealth.
- Charter school administrators are required to file a statement of financial interest, cannot earn compensation from another charter school entity, cannot serve as a voting member of the board, and must avoid conflicts of interest in selecting contracts.
- A charter school board must have at least five non related voting members. A charter school is required to complete a certified audit each year.

There are various new provisions pertaining to cyber charters, which include:

- Requires cyber charter schools conduct an enrollee wellness check, where they verify at least once a week that a student may be visibly seen and communicated with in real time by a teacher. The cyber charter must report any indication of abuse, neglect, or harm during the check. If a disability is observed, the cyber charter must initiate an evaluation of that disability.
- A paid media advertisement by a public school entity (a school district, charter school, intermediate unit or area career and technical school) or other entity (a charter school foundation, educational management service provider and multiple charter school organization) that refers to the cost of tuition, technology, transportation or other expense must indicate the cost is covered by taxpayer



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Reach your potential

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money. By August 1, 2025, each public school entity and other entity shall report to the Department of Education (PDE) the entity's total expenditures for paid media advertising and sponsorships of public events for the 2024-2025 school year. PDE shall post the expenditures on their website by December 1, 2025.

There is a new requirement that cyber charter schools are to be provided with reasonable access to facilities for standardized testing.