

BATH COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

AGENDA ITEM: INFORMATION { } ACTION { X } CLOSED MEETING { }

SUBJECT: **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT - ACTION**

Charter School Constitutional Amendment

BACKGROUND: **On December 21, 2015 we received a VSBA Action Alert regarding support needed to oppose the Charter School Constitutional Amendment. Enclosed is a draft letter to be sent on behalf of the Bath County School Board.**

RECOMMENDATION: **Recommend approval to oppose the Charter School Constitutional Amendment.**



VSBA

Virginia School Boards Association

Government Relations



Keep Local Education Resources within Local Control

VSBA opposes the Charter School Constitutional Amendment.

This resolution seeks a constitutional amendment to divest local school boards of the sole authority to approve charter schools by vesting authority with a gubernatorial appointed board.

- Local school boards are best equipped to assess the needs of their students and the locality.
- Local school boards are responsible for the outcomes of all schools within the school system, including charter schools, so they should be solely responsible for the authorization of any new school.
- Research has shown that charter school outcomes are mixed and depend upon ensuring quality and accountability.
- A rigorous study by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) found “a significant negative impact on student academic growth” for charters in states that allow multiple agencies to authorize these schools. In effect, CREDO said, the presence of multiple authorizers allows charter organizers to “shop” for the most advantageous route to approval.
- CREDO also examined the overall performance of charter schools across multiple subject areas. They found that while some charter schools do better than the traditional public schools that fed them; the majority of schools do the same or worse.
 - A large group of charters (37 percent) performed significantly worse than the traditional public schools in terms of reading and math. 46 percent did not do significantly better or worse.
 - Only one-fifth of charters (17 percent) performed significantly better (at the 95 percent confidence level) than the traditional public school.

Join VSBA and your school board colleagues across the Commonwealth by signing the petition to tell your legislators to vote NO on the charter school constitutional amendment. You can virtually sign the petition by visiting: <https://www.change.org/p/help-our-schools-keep-local-education-resources-within-local-control> or scanning the QR code in the top right corner.

More information about the CREDO study can be found by visiting: <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Organizing-a-school/Charter-schools-Finding-out-the-facts-At-a-glance>.

Sue Hirsh

From: Emily Webb <vsba@eboardsolutions.com>
Sent: Monday, December 21, 2015 9:30 AM
To: Sue Hirsh
Subject: VSBA ACTION ALERT: We Need Your Help NOW!
Attachments: VSBA Talking Points on Charter School Constitutional Amendment.pdf

Good morning VSBA Board Members and Superintendents,

The start of the 2016 General Assembly is fast approaching and it's going to be another challenging year for public education. We will be working diligently to secure additional funding for public schools and we expect to be fighting several pieces of school choice legislation. Before the legislators get to Richmond we want to bring one piece of legislation to your attention, the charter school constitutional amendment. The proposed constitutional amendment would divest local school boards of the sole authority to approve charter schools by vesting authority with the Virginia Board of Education, a gubernatorial appointed board. We believe that local school boards are best equipped to assess the needs of their students and the locality, including the creation of charter schools.

After passing through the General Assembly last year, we know that many lawmakers will be making a push to pass the constitutional amendment again this year so that it will appear on the ballot in November 2016. We expect the vote on this legislation to be very close and contentious so we need your help NOW! **Before your legislators leave for Richmond, we encourage you to share your opposition to the charter school constitutional amendment and ask them to OPPOSE the legislation.** Don't forget to utilize the VSBA talking points (*attached*) and share with your legislators that VSBA does support high-quality charter schools, as defined by local school boards. Again, we believe that local boards are best equipped to assess the needs of their students and communities, including the potential need for charter schools.

Thank you for your continued support of VSBA and our legislative and advocacy initiatives. Please remember to join VSBA and educators across the Commonwealth by signing the petition to tell your legislators to vote NO on the charter school constitutional amendment. You can virtually sign the petition by visiting: <https://www.change.org/p/help-our-schools-keep-local-education-resources-within-local-control>. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at emily@vsba.org or (434) 295-8722 if you have any questions. Your voice makes a difference in Richmond as legislators make decisions that impact your school division.

Happy Holidays,
Emily

Emily V. Webb
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Virginia School Boards Association
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Bath County Public Schools

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DRAFT

January 6, 2016

Dear _____:

Local school boards are best equipped to assess the needs of their students and the locality. Please vote NO on the charter school constitutional amendment which would divest local school boards of the sole authority to approve charter schools. Local school boards are responsible for the outcomes of all schools within school divisions, including charter schools, so they should be solely responsible for the authorization of any new school. Furthermore, a defeat of the constitutional amendment will allow local control of local education resources.

Again, on behalf of the Bath County School Board, we request that you oppose the charter school constitutional amendment.

Sincerely,

Chairman, Bath County School Board

Division Superintendent