

2295-S

Sponsor(s): House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall, Talcott, Rockefeller and Anderson)

Brief Description: Authorizing charter schools. Revised for 1st Substitute: Providing for charter schools.

HB 2295-S - DIGEST

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 2ND SUB)

Declares an intent to authorize the establishment of public charter schools within the general and uniform system of public schools for the primary purpose of providing more, high quality learning environments to assist educationally disadvantaged students and other students in meeting the state's academic standards.

Declares an intent for charter schools to function as an integral element of the public school system maintained at public expense, free from discrimination, and open to all students in the state, and to be subject to the same academic standards and performance outcomes as other public schools.

Intends to encourage school districts to consider using the chartering process as an optional tool for achieving state and federal accountability goals.

Finds that in addition to providing more, high quality public school choices for families, teachers, and students, public charter schools may be a tool for the improvement of schools in which significant numbers of students persistently fail to meet state standards.

Intends to authorize the use of the chartering process as a state intervention strategy, consistent with the provisions of the federal no child left behind act of 2001, to provide assistance to schools in which significant numbers of students persistently fail to meet state standards.

Provides that a charter school shall operate independently of any school district board, under a charter approved by a sponsor or an alternate sponsor under this act.

Provides that charter schools are exempt from all state statutes and rules applicable to school districts and school district boards of directors except those statutes and rules as provided for and made applicable to charter schools in accordance with this act and in the school's approved charter.

Provides that, to effectuate the primary purpose for which the legislature established charter schools, a charter school must be willing to enroll educationally disadvantaged students and may not limit admission on any basis other than age group and grade level. Consistent with the legislative intent of this act, a charter school shall conduct timely outreach and marketing efforts to educationally disadvantaged students in the school district in which the charter school will be located.

Designates a charter application--chartering process.

Establishes application requirements.

Designates approval criteria.

Provides for charter renewal and revocation.

Provides that, subject to funding, the Washington institute for public policy shall study the implementation and effectiveness of this act. The institute shall report to the legislature on the effectiveness of charter schools in raising student achievement and the impact of charter schools. The institute also shall examine and discuss whether and how charter schools have enhanced education reform efforts and recommend whether relaxing or eliminating certain regulatory requirements for other public schools could result in improved school performance at those schools. The institute shall recommend changes to this act including improvements that could be made to the application and approval process. A preliminary report of the study is due to the legislature by March 1, 2006, and a final report is due September 1, 2007.

Provides for the maximum number of charter schools.