

WALLINGFORD  SWARTHMORE

SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Resolution by the Board of Directors of the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District Supporting Senate Bill 34 and House Bill 526 for School Districts That Provide Their Own Cyber Education Programs

WHEREAS, the a growing number of school districts across the state are responding to the need to successfully operate high-quality, full-time cyber education programs within their traditional district programs that provide flexibility and personalized options as a choice for students and families; and

WHEREAS, school district cyber education programs include rigorous curriculum aligned with the state academic standards and are taught by appropriately certified teachers and provide their cyber education students with regular and special education instruction and services, tutoring, career counseling and other supports as necessary; and

WHEREAS, school district cyber education programs provide their students with a smooth transition to and from the traditional school setting, opportunities to participate in District instructional courses and resources, extracurricular activities such as athletics, band, music, clubs and social activities such as homecoming and prom; and students may graduate in District ceremonies and receive a District diploma; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is the sole authorizer of cyber charter schools, yet the tuition costs for students attending these schools are borne solely by school districts and their local taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, the majority of non-District cyber charter schools have consistently placed in the bottom 5% for educational performance in PA; further, graduation rates of cyber charters are consistently and substantially below the state average; and

WHEREAS, the current funding formula for cyber charter schools is based on the school district per student cost with no relationship to the actual costs for regular and special education instruction and services of the students attending the cyber charter school; and non-District cyber charter schools tuitions have cost PA school districts and their taxpayers more than \$463 million in 2016-17; and

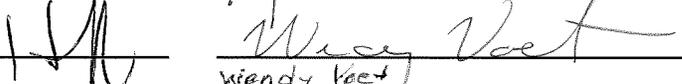
WHEREAS, school districts that operate their own high-performing cyber education programs can do so at significantly reduced costs, enabling them to retain critical funding in the District for the benefit of all students; and

WHEREAS, in 2016-2017, the average regular education cyber charter school tuition rate was \$11,309 and, per a 2018 Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators survey, the average cost for a full functioning cyber school option offered at the district level is \$5,000 for a regular education student, thus creating a variance of \$6,309 per regular education student from the current cyber charter school tuition method.

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 34 and House Bill 526 support school districts that provide their own cyber education programs by removing their financial responsibility when resident students enroll in non-District cyber charter schools instead of the Districts' programs;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wallingford-Swarthmore School Board supports Senate Bill 34 and House Bill 526 or other efforts to provide necessary financial relief to school districts that are operating their own cyber education programs rather than making tuition payments for their students to attend non-District cyber charter schools.

Adopted this 28th day of May, 2019.

Signed,  
Marilyn Huff
School Board President
Wendy Voet
Board Secretary, Asst

BoG 2019-05-28