

TOWN OF DOUGLAS

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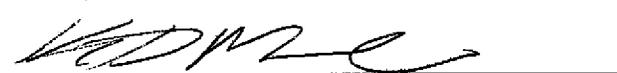
Resolution Opposing the Removal of the Charter School Cap

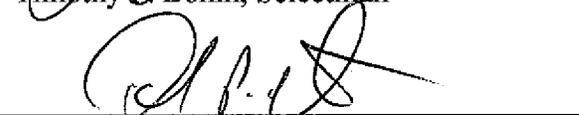
The Douglas Board of Selectmen joins the many School districts and Municipalities around the Commonwealth in asking our State elected officials maintain the current cap on approved Charter School applications. While the intent of the Charter Schools was to create competition with local school districts the funding formula is seriously and unfairly flawed. The idea that the money "follows the student" from a local district to a Charter appears to be a fair way to determine Charter tuition; however the formula fails to contemplate the effect of mandated Special Education and other costs. For example, the tuition rate paid to a Charter is deducted from the sending district's state reimbursement and given directly to the Charter. The tuition is determined by taking the state-calculated "per pupil expense" from the DESE prior year report. The per-pupil expense is a figure that is determined by dividing a school district's total budget by the number of enrolled students. The "average" per-pupil expenditures are heavily influenced by Special Education and out-of-district placement costs, where a single placement can cost \$250,000 or more for one student. In a district the size of Douglas, with 1600 pupils enrolled at an "average" cost of \$10,200 these inflated numbers nearly double the actual cost for tuition of "regular" students. Since Charters are never required to absorb out-of-district placement costs, this calculation is unfair to the students and the districts. We ask that the Governor and the legislature fix this inequity before allowing the financial hit to districts and students across the state erode the quality of a public education to our citizens.

March 22, 2016


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