

Charter Schools

Public character:	Common-school principles Not selective as to students Integrated re: race and class Accountable publicly
Legally:	A private entity: partnership or co-op or corporation (for-profit or non-profit)
Formed by:	Teachers, principals or other educators or others able to secure a charter (see below) Existing school or district
Chartered by:	Some public entity: School district; the state; an ECSU; an intermediate district; an 'education district'; a public post-secondary institution
Located in:	Central cities
Serving:	Students of mixed abilities and races Students previously enrolled in either central city or suburb
Housed in:	Space owned or leased; in school buildings or other public buildings or in private buildings
Financed:	As a school district eligible under 1988 Enrollment Options legislation
Accountable:	To the state, as a district is now (for program and finances) To its chartering sponsor, under terms of its contract To its own board of directors To its students/families, who are free to return or not
Size:	Defined by the school Probably smaller than now
Different:	Accountable for results Site-managed: given FTE, money time, learning objectives etc. with authority to decide use.

Issues

How much money would move?

All of the 'education revenue'. About \$2800/PU/year. SDE would deduct this amount from the default district of residence, and transfer it to the school in which the student enrolls.

What about the districts 'off the formula'?

If a student is coming in to a district that gets no aid, the state should pay the \$2800 if the student is of color or eligible under HSGI.

If a student leaves a district that gets no aid the state should pay the \$2800 if the student is white and not eligible under HSGI.

How avoid fly-by-night operators?

We trust the chartering agencies not to sponsor any such.

What proportion of people of color?

State Board will set a number. Obviously, it will be somewhere between the racial balance in the ~~city~~ and the racial balance in the suburbs at present.

"This isn't a 'level playing field'!"

Of course not. There are going to be two playing fields; not one. Each will be level. One has all the traditional rules; the other has few rules.

An existing school, now on the old playing field, can come down and play on the new field at any time.

Families preferring a school operating under the traditional rules will be free of course to select that option.

"Only school districts should be able to charter new schools!"

No. Districts will be able to charter new schools. But they they will not have an 'exclusive'. If they do not, somebody else will be able to.

Some of the 'chartering' entities are geographic; some are not. Could one of the former set up a school outside its boundaries?

Would a charter school be unionized?

Yes. Minneapolis could run a school in a suburb. A district in the suburbs could set up (or contract for the establishment of) a school in the city.

Maybe; maybe not. It wouldn't have to be. And the question might not arise. The school might be formed by a group of teachers working together, but not 'for' anybody. Like people in the trades who from time to time work for themselves, they could hold a card and continue in certain benefits of membership. But they would not be employees of anybody.