



Dear CSA District Community,

I would like to share with you some information about how the state of Michigan funds public charter schools.

- **Public charter schools in Michigan are funded from the state education budget.**
- **The amount each school receives is determined by the number of students enrolled at that school, based on the October student count.**
- **The per student amount of money that each school district receives is determined by how much money that school district was collecting 25 years ago, when Proposal A was passed.**
- **Proposal A was passed to equalize funding between schools. Prior to the passage of Proposal A, the amount of public tax paid to each school district ranged from \$2,500 to \$12,000 per enrolled student. Now most school districts receive about \$7700 per student. Some still get more and some still get less. Last year CSA District received \$7871 per student**
- **Charter schools receive the same amount of funding as the traditional public school district in which they are located unless that amount is higher than the state average. If that amount is higher than the state average, the charter school receives the state average and the traditional public school receives the higher amount.**
- **CSA District has about 1,000 students which means the District receives about \$7,600,000 from public taxes this year.**
- **CSA District has nice buildings but not as nice as those in Hartland or Brighton or Howell. Teachers in Hartland, Brighton and Howell get paid more than teachers in the CSA District.**

The nicer buildings and higher teacher pay are directly related to each other. How?

 - **Every year, CSA District makes payments on the money they borrowed to buy or build their buildings. This year that payment will be \$1,136,900. ALL of that debt payment comes out of the general fund, the per pupil allotment that CSA District receives from the state.**
 - **All of the traditional public schools in Livingston County use absolutely none of the money they receive from the state to pay for their buildings.**
 - **Traditional public schools can call special elections and pass taxes to pay for capital expenses like buildings and building renovations, computers and IT networks, buses, football fields,**

furniture and anything else that lasts more than a year. Public charter schools cannot. When a public charter school needs to spend money on capital expenses, they have to spend money that traditional public schools can spend on teacher salaries. Or they spend money donated by parents or interested parties.

Did you know that if you own a home in any of the local traditional public school districts, even if your children attend a public charter school, your tax dollars are paying for the buildings and equipment that traditional public schools are buying? You can see the exact amount on your tax bill. None of those building and equipment tax dollars follow your child to their public charter school.

It isn't fair.

There is much more to this story but I will add just one more thing here. Traditional public schools have a bankrupt defined-benefit pension system that has to be bailed out by you. Each year, billions of the state of Michigan's public school dollars are spent bailing out that pension system. Public charter schools that use more cost-effective 401k-type defined contribution pensions receive none of that bail out money. Yet your tax dollars pay for that bailout.

What can you do?

Don't vote for traditional school taxes for buildings and equipment! It's the voters, YOU, who vote on those traditional public schools millages and if they pass, it is you who will pay. Vote NO!

What else can you do?

- Talk to your State Representative, State Senator and the Governor. Tell them you won't vote yes on school taxes until public charter school students and families get their fair share.
- Write a letter to your local School Board and tell them you will no longer vote for taxes unless public charter school students get their fair share.
- Vote for politicians that support public charter schools and make sure they know you are mad that your children are being treated unequally. Many of those politicians don't know about this inequity or worse, want public charter schools to receive less money until parents send their children back to traditional public schools.
- Vote for legislators who support public charter schools. You can find out who they are [here](#).

And finally, help CSA keep their great teachers. Even though CSA District gets more than a million dollars less each year for the 1000 public school students the system serves, the District is managed carefully at a low cost.

For your donation of just \$250 per student, CSA District can bring their teachers' salaries a lot closer to the salaries of teachers in the traditional public school districts surrounding us. Won't you commit to one annual, tax-deductible payment of \$250 to the CSA Education Foundation? The money will go straight to teachers in grants to encourage them to stay and teach in the CSA District. Please support your teachers with the biggest donation you can make. Thank you.

In partnership with you,
Chuck Stockwell

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