



Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools

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Governor Segregates Charter Schools in Budget “Separate But Unequal?”

Columbus, OH – Governor Strickland released his budget plan with assurances that school funding would not be diminished, including an overall 4.4% increase in school funding.

But not for charter schools.

According to the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools (OAPCS), based on figures drawn from the Legislative Service Commission, Ohio Department of Education and the executive “Blue Book,” charter schools will experience an alarming reduction in state funding.

Under the proposed funding plan, charter schools would experience a reduction of well over \$100 million in state funding for the school year beginning in the fall of 2009 (the first year of the 2010-2011 biennium) as compared to the school year that began in the fall of 2007 (the first year of the current 2008-2009 biennial budget period).

Bill Sims, president and CEO of the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools, said “The governor expressed tacit support for charter schools in his state-of-the state address, but his budget plan reveals a darker view. A double-digit reduction in the funding of charter schools is crippling. It’s a separate but unequal strategy for starving charter schools and their students to a slow death. The funding disparity is grossly disproportional to charter schools that serve high proportions of disadvantaged students. Charter schools and their students must be funded by the same formula as other public schools and any variance with this basic principle is constitutionally unsound.”

“By putting charter school funding on a separate line item in the budget, the governor is positioning charter schools for line-item consequences at any time in the future, such as future budget cuts without affecting traditional districts.”

Sims concludes, “The governor’s budget and educational plans are a complex amalgam of provisions whose full implications will require time to sort out; but we believe the net effect is a ‘Killing Me Softly’ approach to extinguishing charter schools.”

The Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools is a non-profit, non-partisan, independent membership organization dedicated to the enhancement and sustainability of quality charter schools through standards, values, best practices, business and financing resources and technical assistance programs.