



COLORADO LEAGUE *of*
CHARTER SCHOOLS

focus on achievement

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Colorado Charter Schools Shortchanged on Facility Funding

DENVER – State Senator Mike Kopp (R-Littleton) and State Representative Cory Gardner (R-Yuma) called on their fellow legislators to support funding for charter school facilities in response to a report identifying the significant difficulties charter schools face in financing suitable facilities.

The report, released today by the Colorado League of Charter Schools, includes a number of key findings that detail roadblocks charter schools face in financing their school buildings. These findings include:

- Charter schools are forced to spend operating funds on their facilities;
- Every year tens of thousands of Colorado students are denied a seat in a charter school because of a lack of available space;
- Most charter schools have limited capacity to serve lunch, meaning that they are unable to provide federally-subsidized meals for students from lower-income families;
- Charter school facilities are too small;
- Physical education and recreational options are limited for charter school students;
- State grant funding for public school facilities has provided little benefit for charters; and
- Local bond elections are not a reliable source of funding for charter school facilities.

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“These results demonstrate that what charter schools have been saying for years is true,” said Jim Griffin, Executive Director of the Colorado League of Charter Schools. “They are forced to spend operating funds for rent or to pay off debt on their buildings. The money that should be going to teacher salaries, text books and the electric bills is instead going to the landlord or the bank.”

The Colorado League of Charter Schools launched its *Facilities 2010 Initiative* in the summer of 2007 to develop a long-term blueprint for charter school facilities in the state.

The survey was developed by Wayne Eckerling, Allen Balczarek, and Paul Hutton of Hutton Architecture Studio as a part of the initiative. Survey results were collected from 64 different schools that reflect the large variety of charter schools across Colorado.

“As legislators, we have a responsibility to find ways to solve this problem,” said Rep. Gardner. “We have to bring charter schools up to the standards that we expect for all schools in our state.”

“As a parent of children who attend a charter school, I know that these schools are forced to make difficult decisions about how to pay for their buildings,” said Sen. Kopp. “Charter schools are at a significant disadvantage compared to district schools, and they are surviving in smaller facilities without resources like cafeterias and athletic fields that most schools take for granted.”

The full report is available on the Colorado League of Charter Schools website at www.coloradoleague.org.

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