



Charter Schools USA
6245 N. Federal Hwy., 5th Floor
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33308
Phone: 954-202-3500
Fax: 954-202-3512
www.charterschoolsusa.com

To: Charter Schools USA Parent:
From: Jon Hage, President and CEO
Date: 4/24/2008
Re: **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE AND CALL TO ACTION**

The Florida Legislature is in the final 10 days of their 2008 Session and they are preparing to cut funding for public schools, along with other state services, due to lower tax revenues.

What does the decrease in revenue mean for charter schools?

This means that the House and Senate 2008-09 K-12 Education Budget Proposals will have to be reduced to accommodate the lower allocation amount. Legislative leadership is telling us to expect that K-12 education funding for 2008-2009 will be about 2% BELOW current funding levels – which is more than the initial 1.2% cut that had been proposed by the House or 1.63% cut that had been proposed by the Senate. This is in comparison to a 7% increase last year.

Are there any bright areas in this year's Legislative Session?

This Legislative Session has yielded (at least so far) a willingness to tackle class size. To implement classroom averages (what is called Level 3) for next year would not only be hugely expensive, but would be more restrictive and less flexible than the actual Constitutional mandate requires. Two boards of CSUSA managed schools have filed an Administrative Complaint with the Florida Department of Education to work through this issue and ensure that our schools are treated fairly and equitably. We will keep you informed of the results and are hopeful that charter schools will be given the flexibility we were founded to provide.

What can you do?

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE via phone and email to ask them to:

1. support efforts to take \$300 million from the state's "Rainy Day" reserves to help hold public schools harmless from further reductions
2. support flexibility for charter schools in meeting class size
3. provide equitable funding (2 mill funds) for charter schools
4. continue to fund merit pay for high performing teachers

It is important to contact your legislators now!

Where can you find the contact information for your local legislators?

You can find contact information at www.charterschoolsusa.com/legislation.html by entering your zipcode in the "Get Active" link.

Together we can make a difference in charter school funding. Please help your school by contacting your legislator today!