

Legislative ALERT!

Selective Enrollment Schools - House Bill 5923

Sponsor: Rep. Lisa Lyons, co-sponsor Rep. Joe Haveman

Description: The bill amends the Revised School Code by amending and adding several sections to allow for several new forms of charter and online schools. This is a bill that was drafted by Richard McClellan on behalf of Governor Snyder.

New Forms of Schools

According to the bill, a school with a special designation is a public school and must not be organized by a church or other religious organization. An authority may issue special designations for the following types of specialized schools:

- Single-gendered schools
- Online schools
- Globally competitive schools
- International cultural schools
- Residential public schools
- University schools
- Employer-supported schools
- Cultural institution-affiliated schools
- Municipal schools

To operate a special designation school, the eligible public school must apply to an authorizing body for a special designation agreement. In cases where the school is an achievement school, the special designation is issued by the achievement authority. If the school is a PSA or a university school, the special designation must be made by the PSA's authorizer or the governing board of the university school respectively. The bill does NOT allow traditional community public schools to use any of these innovations without having to charter a school.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill continues the additions of new schools without changing the size of the overall funding available, thus meaning resources are spread thinner. The bill does not address quality and accountability for funding and doesn't address effectiveness or efficiencies. This is contrary to the Governor's push for consolidation of services and districts.

TALKING POINTS:

- Selective enrollment admission policies lead to greater segregation in our public schools and provide for unequal access to quality programming.
- If these ideas are quality ideas, then they should be available to ALL public schools and not just charters and for-profit vendor schools run by corporations. This further tilts the uneven playing field to the unfair advantage of corporate run schools.
- MDE does not have the authority to revoke a failing school with a special designation. The ability to do this lies solely with the authorizing body.
- There is no cap or limit on the number of schools that could be designated as an online school under the bill. This contradicts current law capping the number of schools and students.

ANALYSIS & ACTION ITEMS:

Please contact your legislators to express opposition to the bills. Most importantly, it allows for discrimination against students based on academic achievement, which is directly linked to economics and poverty, thus further segregating our children.