



## **Delaware PTA House Bill 165, charter reform bill position statement**

Delaware Parent Teachers Association strongly supports equitable access to a variety of high quality public schools for parents to make the best choice to meet their children's needs. Delaware PTA is working in many fronts to remove the systemic barriers that exist for many of our families to fully utilize school choice, while at the same time working to ensure that the opportunities available all represent a high quality education form our children.

Delaware PTA supports House Bill 165, the Charter School Reform bill, in its current form as a compromise agreement among many educational stakeholders within the broader framework of ongoing efforts to improve school choice opportunities for families. There are some areas within HB 165 that Delaware PTA would not propose or support as independent elements, but are acceptable as part of a broader compromise.

Some of the elements that were particularly important to Delaware PTA were:

- Access to National School Lunch program or equivalent for qualifying charter school children
- Ensuring equitable funding for maintaining all schools in safe and educationally conducive condition
- A formal approved charter contract clearly defining all parties' responsibilities
- Expanded and earlier opportunities for parental review and provide input on charter school applications
- Opportunity for consideration of impact of new or expanding charter schools on both the children they will serve and the schools and communities that will be impacted, within the application approval process.
- Improved timelines and process to help ensure high quality application the result of the process
- Board governance training
- A school closing plan in case this is needed to ensure disruption to children is minimized
- Improved charter renewal procedure including utilization of the performance framework under Reg 275

HB 165 along with HB90 (the Choice Bill), the school admissions taskforce and additional modifications to Reg 275 is part of a broader effort to eliminate potential discrimination and to support future initiatives that ensure equitable choice for families.

Delaware PTA does have concerns that although not part of HB 165, that the Joint Finance committee has chosen to provide major funding to the capital grant portion of this bill, ahead of reversing past cuts to education.