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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Colorado League of Charter Schools. Don't forget to add srader@coloradoleague.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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Charting the Capitol Legislative Updates - March 4, 2014

Student Success Act Takes Center Stage

Last week, House Bill 14-1292, also known as the Student Success Act, was introduced at the Capitol. With a price tag of \$263 million split between one-time and recurring investments, this promises to be one of the bigger pieces of education legislation this session - with a number of favorable provisions for charters. Read on for further details on this and other legislative news of note, and as always, please don't hesitate to reach out should you have any questions or concerns.

HB 14-1292: What It Means for You

House Bill 14-1292 contains lots of positive news for charters, but perhaps the most significant piece is an increase in the annual funding earmarked for charter facilities from \$7 million to \$25 million. If successful, this would be a huge win for charters across the state, more than tripling the level of the state's commitment to charter facilities and enabling you all to keep more of your precious operating dollars in the classroom where they belong. The League has been pushing hard for this bill already, and you can count on us to continue to do so in the days and weeks ahead as it makes its way through the legislature.

In addition to much-needed facilities funding, HB 14-1292 would:

- Require districts to start reporting on the basis for the per-pupil special education charges imposed against their charters
- Call on CDE to develop an annual report highlighting how much mill levy revenue each district brings in and how much of that then gets shared with their charters
- Increase the base amount of annual school funding by \$100 million, adding to the level of per-pupil revenue each charter school receives
- Support successful implementation of existing state policies with a \$40 million per-pupil investment during the 2014-15 school year
- Invest an additional \$35 million annually in English Language Learners (ELLs)

And there's more! For a complete rundown of the bill's provisions, [click here](#) for the full text of the legislation, [click here](#) for a summary created by the sponsors, and [click here](#) for a summary created by the League.

The proposal promises to have a long journey at the Capitol, so we'll be sure to keep you posted on its progress. In the meantime, please keep an eye out for [Action Alerts](#) from the League requesting your help in contacting legislators about the bill. And if you're not currently signed up to receive these

Action Alerts, visit www.coloradoleague.org/take-action to join the Colorado Charter Advocacy Network (Colorado CAN) today.

Testing Panel Takes Shape

House Bill 14-1202, which started out as a proposal to allow school districts to opt out of certain state testing morphed last week into the creation of a 15-member testing task force that would spend the latter half of 2014 looking closely at issues of state testing and accountability. The task force concept met with unanimous approval in the House Education Committee, and if it encounters similar success with the rest of the legislature, it would begin meeting this summer and would be tasked with examining some of the following topics prior to next year's legislative session:

- Assessment costs and time
- The impact of state tests on district- and school-level assessments
- Feasibility and effects of allowing districts -- and parents -- to opt out

The League successfully advocated for the inclusion of two charter representatives on the panel to ensure your interests are represented. Additionally, as part of the work of both this panel as well as a CDE testing analysis already under way, focus groups will be assembled to gather school-level input on the effects of the current testing system. If you are interested in possibly participating on one of these focus groups, please contact Dan Schaller at dschaller@coloradoleague.org.

[Click here](#) to read an article from our friends at *Chalkbeat Colorado* with more information on the panel.

Online Task Force Meets Today

The work of the seven-member K-12 Online Education Task Force continues today at 10am with a public feedback session at 1560 Broadway, Suite 1175, Aspen Room. The session will also be webcast live at <http://connect.enetcolorado.org/online/>. Be sure to tune in if you're interested in tracking this important topic, and [click here](#) for additional background information on the task force and its work.

We Need You to Testify!

As more and more bills come up for hearings, we're always on the lookout for people willing to come down to the Capitol and testify in support of charter issues. If this is you or another member of your staff (teachers are great for this!), please contact me at dschaller@coloradoleague.org to have your name added to our testimony bank.

League Legislative Tracker

Be sure to check out our [Legislative Tracker](#) for up-to-the-minute details on all current education bills. Questions or concerns about how any of these might impact you? Contact us and let us know.

Save the Date: Colorado Charter Schools Rally, April 17

Come show your school spirit and celebrate charter schools at the annual [Colorado Charter Schools Rally](#) at noon on April 17th at the Capitol. Join hundreds of students, parents, teachers, principals, and other advocates in voicing our collective support for charters. Hear from state legislators who support choice and innovation in education. Hear from charter school leaders and students, enjoy student performances and cheer for the winners of the Charter School Art Contest (details about the art contest coming soon).

If you have any questions about developments in the legislative session or about content in this newsletter, please contact me at dschaller@coloradoleague.org or Jessica Johnson at jmjohnson@coloradoleague.org.

Sincerely,

Dan Schaller, Director of Advocacy

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