



New Hampshire Senate News Release

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Senate Republicans on Fiscal Committee vote to accept record-setting federal charter school grant

Funding will increase educational choice and opportunities for Granite State students

CONCORD, NH – Senate Republicans on the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee today voted to accept the first \$10.1M of a record-setting \$46M federal grant to expand public charter schools in New Hampshire, a move that had been held up since it was first announced in August 2019.

Senate President Chuck Morse named Sen. Majority Leader Jeb Bradley (R-Wolfeboro) and Sen. Erin Hennessey (R-Littleton) to serve on this morning's Fiscal Committee meeting because of their long-standing advocacy for the charter school grant.

"After a year of needless delay in accepting the federal charter school grants that both Governors Lynch and Hassan have advocated for in prior grants, it is gratifying that the Fiscal Committee has today done the right thing for students and parents who need educational choice and opportunity. The Northeast Woodland Charter School in Conway just opened and its 145 students depended on the good will of benefactors because of the refusal to accept these federal funds. Charter schools, which are public schools, have a long track record in New Hampshire of providing an excellent educational opportunity especially for children of more modest financial circumstances," Bradley said.

The U.S. Department of Education awarded New Hampshire \$46 M last year, the largest grant of its kind in the nation, in order to allow the state to replicate the success of its public charter school system. Currently, more than 4,000 New Hampshire students attend 29 public charter schools across the state. The grant will allow existing charter schools to expand their programs, and provide start-up funds for new charter schools, which may be approved by local school boards or the State Board of Education.

"We know that every student learns differently. This has become even more apparent during this pandemic as some students struggle with remote learning. Public charter schools offer options for students who need them," Hennessey said. "Expanding public charter schools through this federal grant will help the North Country Charter Academy expand and others to open and meet the needs of many struggling students. This is a great first step as the Legislature takes up educational funding and how to meet the needs of all of our students."

“Public charter schools and traditional public schools work collaboratively. Charter schools actually lower costs for local property taxpayers and according to an analysis run by the Department of Education, expanding charter schools will save millions for state taxpayers over time while providing critical innovation in the delivery of education,” Bradley added.

The \$10.1M accepted today will be available this year. The remainder of the \$46M grant will be available over the next two years.

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