



State Board of Education

Ben Gibson, *Chair*
Ryan Petty, *Vice Chair*
Members
Monesia Brown
Esther Byrd
Grazie Pozo Christie
Kelly Garcia
MaryLynn Magar

Manny Diaz, Jr.
Commissioner of Education

JLAC Received
6-29-23

June 29, 2023

Melinda Miguel
Chief Inspector General
Office of the Chief Inspector General
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Ms. Miguel:

In accordance with Section 20.055(6)(h), Florida Statutes, attached is the six month status of corrective actions taken in response to the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability Report #22-11, Charter School Funding.

If you have any concerns regarding this status report, please contact Mike Blackburn by phone at 850-245-9418 or by email at mike.blackburn@fldoe.org.

Sincerely,



Manny Diaz, Jr.

Attachment

cc: Mike Blackburn, Inspector General
Suzanne Pridgeon, Deputy Commissioner, Finance and Operations
Adam Emerson, Executive Director, Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice
Paul Burns, Chancellor, Division of Public Schools
Legislative Auditing Committee

**Department of Education
Office of the Inspector General – Internal Audit
Six-Month Status Report on: OPPAGA Charter School Funding
Report #22-11 Issued: December 29, 2022
Status as of June 29, 2023**

Recommendation: To ensure that the most pressing construction, renovation, repair, and maintenance needs are addressed regardless of the type of public school a student attends, OPPAGA recommends distributing capital outlay funding to charter schools based on demonstrated need.

Response as of June 29, 2023:

As we noted in our response for the final report, this recommendation is not appropriate and fails to recognize the basic tension between most school districts and public charter schools. There is a high degree of probability that such a recommendation, if enacted into law, would create further inequities between what charter schools and districts receive. Functionally, the Department also has concerns that the recommendation, as written, may result in districts prioritizing improvements to district schools over charter schools because the building is owned by the district.

Anticipated Completion Date & Contact:

While the Department expressed concerns over this recommendation, as written, it should be noted that the Florida Legislature in its 2023 session passed, and Governor DeSantis signed into law, House Bill 1259. This new law mandated that districts are required to share the local capital outlay revenue from the discretionary 1.5 millage levy authorized in Section 1011.71(2), F.S., with charter schools.

Finding: OPPAGA's review found that although school districts reported allocating federal funds to eligible charter schools, on average, 50% of charter school principals were unsure how federal program funds are allocated to charter schools.

Recommendation: To address the lack of understanding on how federal funds are distributed revealed via survey responses, OPPAGA recommends that the FDOE work with school districts to provide additional training and information to charter schools regarding requirements for eligibility and distribution of federal program funds for the federal programs reviewed by OPPAGA.

Response as of June 29, 2023:

The Department's Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice (IEPC) will work with the Bureau of Federal Programs to provide greater technical assistance and information with school districts regarding the allocation of federal funds to charter schools. IEPC also will host a breakout session specific to this topic at the upcoming Florida Charter School Conference.

Anticipated Completion Date & Contact:

Training and technical assistance is ongoing and will continue as needed, particularly at the Florida Charter School Conference in October 2023 in Orlando.