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CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE

REPORT TO THE HOUSE AND SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEES

JANUARY, 2015

Report rationale:

Pursuant to legislation passed during the 2009 legislative session, the Charter School Institute (CSI) is required to make an annual report to the Education committees of both chambers on the findings of the annual meeting between the CSI school boards and the Institute Board of Directors. The statute requires this annual discussion to take place prior to December 1 annually and include the level of funding received by CSI to provide the administration and oversight for the schools chartered by the Institute.

CSI Background:

CSI was established in 2004 and awarded its first two charters in 2005. CSI's mission is to foster a portfolio of high performing school choices throughout the state of Colorado. Our vision is to be a national leader and model authorizer of charter schools practicing the principles of school autonomy and accountability. CSI is unique in that it serves as an authorizer and also as a district and local educational agency for certain purposes for its schools. Thus, CSI provide supports, guidance and compliance to its schools along a spectrum of functions and services.

During the 2014-15 school year CSI supports 34 schools throughout the state. These schools serve over 14,000 students in brick and mortar as well as online multi-district schools.

Under law CSI operates by retaining 3% of the state share funds that are allocated to the schools to provide authorizer oversight and administrative support for the schools.

Stakeholder meetings:

During 2014 the Institute Board and Executive Director visited the major areas of the state where the CSI schools are located in order to discuss the items required under statute. These meetings were conducted in Avon, Colorado Springs and at the CSI offices located in Denver. A majority of the schools were represented at these meetings.

The discussion with school leaders and school boards focused on CSI's progress towards its strategic objectives and identifying areas for improving services and efficiencies. Revenue and expenditure information for the 2014-15 fiscal year was disseminated and

discussed with input provided to the CSI Board of Directors. Discussions also included legislative matters and the importance of increased facility funding for all charter schools.

During the meetings, CSI staff also updated schools on a strategic review of software systems as well as the ongoing utilization of a robust annual review of schools' academic, financial and operational progress and compliance. CSI discussed areas for improvement in communications. CSI staff also discussed its strong internal financial position and increasingly efficient authorization and support operations. CSI also discussed its longer term goals and objectives focusing on ensuring that all schools meet state performance expectations for achievement and growth, ensuring fiscal sustainability, achieving model authorizer status and delivering high quality support services to all schools.

Respectfully submitted,



Ethan Hemming
Executive Director