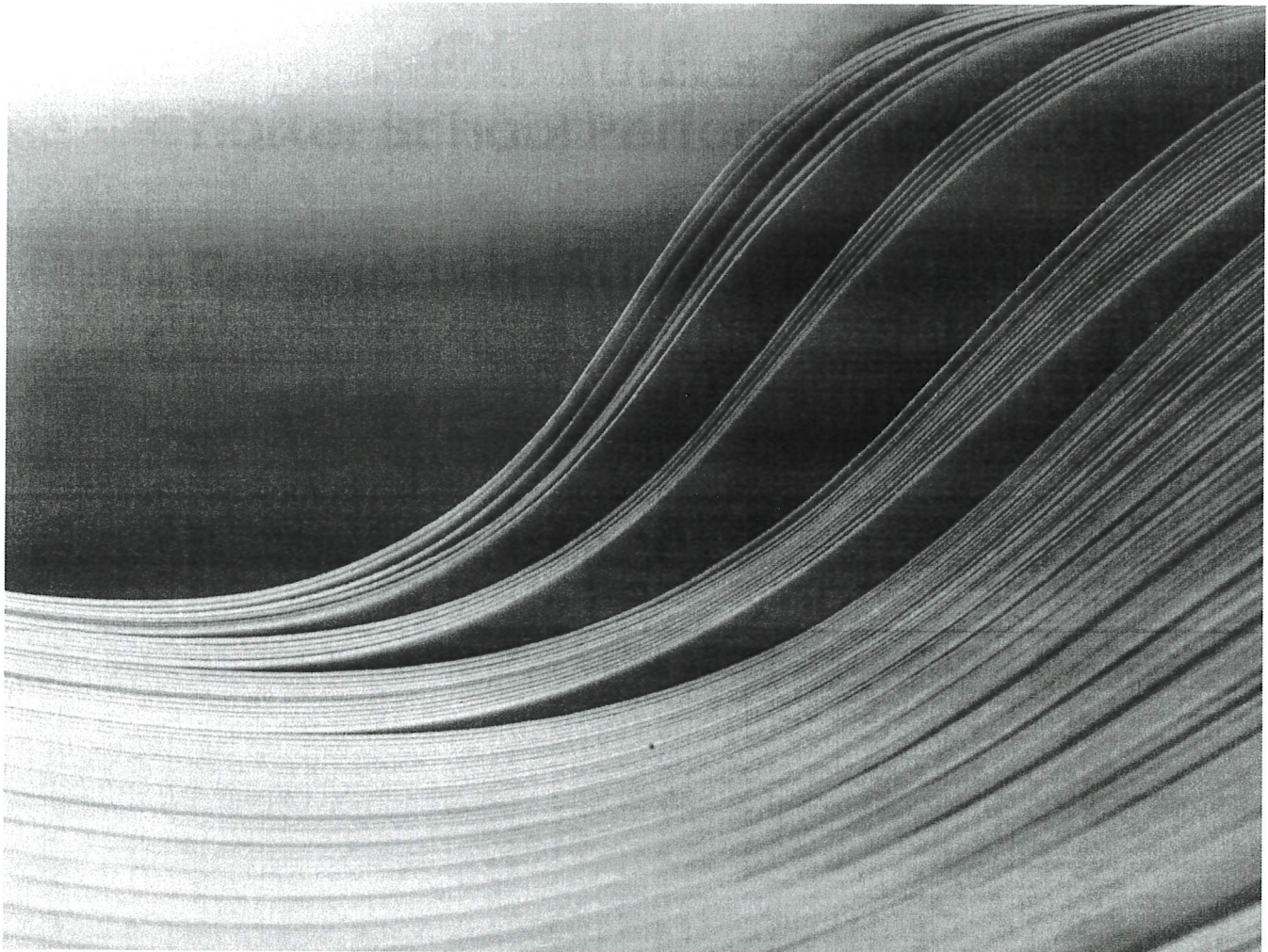




VISIT MEMBER PORTAL

PSBA Responds to Auditor General's Cyber Charter School Performance Audit



📅 February 20, 2025

Today, Auditor General Timothy DeFoor released [a performance audit](#) that identifies and analyzes revenue sources, expenditures and the financial position of five Pennsylvania cyber charter schools. PSBA is appreciative of the auditor general's

efforts, as this audit highlights the need for cyber charter reform in the commonwealth. Many of the concerns and recommendations in the report echo the reforms PSBA has been championing for decades.

The Charter School Law (CSL) funding formula requires tuition rates to be calculated based on the expenses of the student's home school district from the prior year. This means that a cyber charter school could receive vastly different tuition payments from students in different school districts despite providing those students with the same education.

The auditor general's report found that the tuition rate for regular education students had a range of \$18,175 from \$6,975 to \$25,150 per student and that special education students had a range of \$41,837 from \$18,329 to \$60,166 per student.

The report points out what PSBA's members have known, that disparities in tuition rates "are not based on differences in services or outcomes, and ultimately result in systemic issues that unintentionally impact all stakeholders." The report considers the formula flawed because "it lacks a logical connection to the actual cost of providing a cyber charter education."

PSBA respects the rights of parents and guardians to choose the educational path for their children. However, it is essential that cyber charter schools maintain the same standards of accountability and transparency as public schools. Additionally, the tuition for cyber charter schools should accurately reflect the true cost of educating a student.

As the report makes note of, "the issues identified in this report are largely a result of the CSL's flawed funding formula" and not necessarily an indication of "wrongdoing or noncompliance" on behalf of cyber charter schools. This audit and recommendations highlight that public education should not be a profit-making enterprise.

Prior to this report, the previous two auditor generals – both from different sides of the aisle – issued three separate reports recommending changes to the tuition formula in the CSL. The effective and efficient use of limited resources for public education is a bipartisan issue.

PSBA maintains the position that to enact substantial reforms, like those called for in this audit, all sides to this issue must come together without resorting to the rhetoric that has plagued past reform efforts to find sensible solutions for the students, families and taxpayers of the commonwealth.

About PSBA

As the first school board association, PSBA has provided services, advocacy and counsel to inform and engage the local lay leadership of the commonwealth's public schools for 130 years. PSBA represents over 4,500 school directors, with voluntary membership encompassing nearly 100% of school entities statewide. Leading the charge with the unified voice of members, advocates and partners, PSBA is dedicated to promoting exceptional public education for Pennsylvania's students.

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