

# Checklist for High Quality Charter School Legislation

HB97 is missing key components that ensure that Pennsylvania's charters give students greater access to high quality schools. Below, are amendments to HB97 should make to Pennsylvania's charter law to make it more effective for students:

## STEP 1: ONLY APPROVE HIGH QUALITY APPLICANTS

SMART CHARTER REFORM	MODEL LAW	HB97
1. Defines high quality (see our full report for list of essential elements that measure quality)	YES	NO
2. Bases decisions on the track record of prior performance of applicants from any state in which they've operated	YES	NO
3. Captures sufficient background check information to determine if the leadership is in good standing	YES	NO
4. Enables applicants to rely on a fair standard application form (see suggested standard charter application form requirements in Appendix C)	YES	YES
5. Allows ample time to review and verify application (minimum 100 days after first public hearing on the application)	YES	NO
6. Has clear criteria for approval	YES	NO
7. Gives new schools time to become high performers (3-5 year initial charters) and time for taxpayers to act if they don't	YES	NO

## STEP 2: LET HIGH QUALITY CHARTERS GROW

SMART CHARTER REFORM	MODEL LAW	HB97
8. Sets threshold for high quality as the top 10% of all schools within a district, where the charter is educating students who have a comparable demographic profile of the district and are fiscally solvent	YES	NO
9. Gives high flying schools in the top 10% more flexibility to expand	YES	NO
10. Allows schools enough time to become high performers (5 year renewals)	YES	NO
11. Assesses schools exhibiting poor performance for 3 consecutive years and implements mandatory oversight with clearly defined goals and performance expectations with a one year deadline for improvement	YES	NO
12. Provides clear guidelines for how & when high quality schools are identified	YES	NO
13. Spells out a clear process for renewals for charters that are performing moderately well, but do not meet the high quality criteria threshold	YES	NO

## STEP 3: PROTECT STUDENTS AND TAXPAYERS FROM FAILURE

SMART CHARTER REFORM	MODEL LAW	HB97
14. Sets the threshold for failing charters so the bottom 10% can be closed	YES	NO
15. Makes closure mandatory and non-appealable for chronically failing schools	YES	NO
16. Tells schools and families the procedure for closing so families can prepare	YES	NO
17. Expedites closure	YES	NO

## STEP 4: GIVE STUDENTS STABILITY

SMART CHARTER REFORM	MODEL LAW	HB97
18. Deems closed schools ineligible for reopening with EITC funds	YES	NO
19. Sets clear and limited guidelines for amendments associated with items that moderately adjust the charter but do not include substantial changes to grades or more students	YES	NO
20. Gives predictable criteria for review	YES	NO
21. Provides authorizers with reasonable timeline to complete review	YES	NO