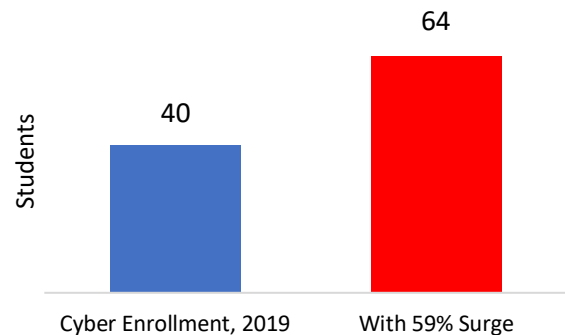


Upper Merion Area School District

Cyber charter costs up an estimated \$1,618,000 in Upper Merion Area School District intensifying pressure on property taxes

Cyber charter costs are growing rapidly.

Before the pandemic, 40 students living in the Upper Merion Area School District were enrolled in cyber charters. Last year cyber enrollment surged by 59% statewide, which translates to a projected 64 District students in cyber charter schools.



Because of sharply higher cyber enrollment,

cyber tuition costs in Upper Merion Area jumped by an estimated \$1,618,000 since 2020, a shocking 155% increase paid for by taxpayers in the district.

Rising cyber enrollment inevitably intensifies pressure on local property taxes.

The \$1,618,000 hike in cyber tuition payments is the equivalent of a 2.0% increase in property taxes in the Upper Merion Area School District.

The current system of setting charter school tuition rates is broken. Upper Merion Area currently pays cybers \$37,126 for every special education student and \$17,457 for other students. That is significantly more than the actual costs of providing an online education and is a boon to cyber charter operators.

HB 272 and SB 27 will save local taxpayers \$583,340 by bringing charter school tuition more in line with actual costs. The bill standardizes cyber charter tuition at \$9,500 and requires charter schools to use the same criteria as every other public school to calculate special education tuition.

HB272/SB 27 Reforms	Savings
Standardize cyber tuition at \$9,500	\$583,334
Special Education Tuition Reform	\$6
Total Savings	\$583,340

Sources: Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (for cyber tuition expense increases and property tax estimates) and PDE (for enrollment, tuition rates, and savings estimates)