



Dear Charter School Leaders,

In 2016, our three schools (Higher Ground, Friendship Academy of the Arts, and Paladin Career and Technical High School) became Defendant-Interveners on behalf of the Minnesota's chartered public schools. Our agreement to be Interveners was premised on the fact that the intent of the lawsuit was to eliminate parental choice, open enrollment, and charter schools. The Plaintiffs in the case argue that these state policies "cause segregation".

Our three schools initially invested \$35,000 to support the legal fees in the case. We then helped raise another \$100,000, some of which came from other charter schools at the rate of \$1 per student. These funds paid for the initial research and legal briefs, lawyer fees, and court hearings.

Since then (the case is now in its third full year) our attorneys (Jack Perry, Nekima Levy-Armstrong, and John Cairns) have done an enormous amount of pro bono (unpaid) work (over \$250,000) on our behalf. We are not asking for, and they do not expect to receive any reimbursement for that work.

Today, we are asking you to help fund the ongoing work involved in this case, which is now in the mediation process required by law before a court trial.

The **National Alliance for Public Charter Schools** has agreed to **match up to \$150,000** in local funding.

To Be Clear: *The conclusion of this case will have significant impact on the entire charter sector in Minnesota - not just in Minneapolis and St. Paul.* In the minds of leaders in the charter school sector around the country, this case poses the single most important legal challenge to chartered public schools that has yet appeared anywhere.

As Interveners, we have a seat at the mediation table and continue to make our voices heard on behalf of the entire charter school sector. However, to stay involved in the mediation process and prepare for a potential trial requires that we need to raise funds for that work. WE NEED AND ARE ASKING FOR YOUR HELP.

While we know everyone has budgetary constraints, we also know that the future of chartered public schools is at stake. **We are asking that your school make a contribution of \$3 for each of your students.**

The MN Association of Charter Schools has agreed to be the fiscal agent for collecting the local money. Your contribution should be made out to the: **MACS – MN Charter School Joint Acton Fund.** We have already been asked how to code the contribution in UFARS. We recommend **CODE 105** – General Administrative Support which includes: Government Relations – *Providing coordination and liaison with governmental agencies at all levels and with citizens' groups.*

Your contribution can be sent to:

MACS – MN Charter School Joint Action Fund
161 St. Anthony Ave. Suite 1000
St. Paul, MN 55103

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE – for two reasons: First, The National Alliance’s matching funds will only become available upon our being able to **document local funding by no later than October 31st**, and Second, mediation sessions are underway right now, as is the work in preparation for a court trial if there is no mediated settlement – so funding is needed now.

In addition to the school’s contribution, we also ask that you let individuals connected with your school know how they can help fight for the future of chartered public schools. All three of us would be happy to answer any questions you have about the case, and its potential impact on charter schools.

Sincerely,



Dr. B. Charvez Russell
Executive Director
Friendship Academy of the Arts



Dr. Samuel Yigzaw
Executive Director
Higher Ground Academy



Brandon Wait
Executive Director
Paladin Career & Technical High School