



Ambridge Area School District

Central Administration Office • 901 Duss Ave. • Ambridge, PA 15003 • 724-266-2833 • 724-266-3981 fax

L. Douglas McCausland

Director of District Operations

Lee Myford, Ed.D.

Director of Pupil Personnel

L. Joan Welter, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools

Barry J. King

Director of Academic Affairs

March 14, 2019

The Honorable Elder Vogel Jr.
362 Main Capitol
Senate Box 203047
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3011

RE: Senate Bill 34 -- Cyber Charter School Payment

Dear Senator Vogel:

I am writing to express my support for proposed Senate Bill 34 (SB34), particularly as it relates to payments of cyber charter tuition. While there are many important legislative issues currently being considered in Harrisburg, I urge you to champion this much needed cyber charter reform.

Overall, I believe that SB34 is needed to ensure that the Ambridge Area School District taxpayers are not overpaying for cyber charter school services. In 2017-18, Ambridge Area School District paid a total of nearly **\$1.4 million** for tuition to outside cyber charter schools; these dollars were diverted to cyber charter schools despite the fact that Ambridge Area School District offers an in-house, comprehensive, high-quality cyber option for a fraction of the cost required by the PDE-363 tuition calculation. As a taxpayer, I find this incomprehensible and irresponsible that tax dollars are being spent in this manner.

Two mills of taxes garners the Ambridge Area School District approximately \$500,000. You can see that this does not keep up with the outflow to cyber charters. With the passage of SB34, every school district in the Commonwealth would realize an immediate reduction in its cyber charter school costs, addressing one of the financial hardships that public schools are facing. SB34 still affords families with a choice for an online education option apart from the bricks and mortar school.

I feel fortunate to have you representing the region in Harrisburg and greatly appreciate your continued advocacy for public schools.

Sincerely,