**A4PEP opposes HB23-1188 – Individualized Learning Schools and Programs**

Advocates for Public Education Policy opposes House Bill 23-1188. A4PEP asks: Choice at what cost? This bill creates yet another school choice option, but there is no new money to pay for any Individualized Learning Entity (ILE). Furthermore, the bill does not have a well-thought-out plan for creating this whole new bureaucracy.

HB 1188 would result in the loss of vitally needed funds from district-run and charter schools when students leave to attend an ILE. The requirement that district administrative staff assist in the creation of contracts for ILEs and take on the responsibility for general supervision of the ILEs is a big workload increase, and thereby a likely increased cost. It also places a large burden on teachers to provide and implement individualized contracts.

In the option for an ILE to be authorized by a charter school, HB 1188 ignores the directive in the original charter school law that the proposed charter be economically sound for both the charter and the school district.

There is no substantive proof that the ILE model would be successful. The two schools cited as models for replication show mediocre results at best due to insufficient data and poor participation on CMAS.

The plan to create ILEs has many other drawbacks, because it:

* Lacks a robust process for application and approval, unlike charter schools.
* Proposes no public procedure for the decision about where an ILE will be located or how a site might be paid for.
* Doesn’t require that teachers be certified, potentially allowing students to be taught by unqualified people.
* Fails to acknowledge that blended “remote and in-person learning” during the pandemic, the supposed inspiration for the creation of ILEs, resulted in teacher burn-out and loss of learning for students.
* Creates a privatized entity with no public oversight by allowing the ILE to contract out for services, including to a for-profit education management provider (EMO).
* Doesn’t clarify how funding would be apportioned in this complex relationship between the ILE and the local public school.
* Lacks input from the local school board, teachers, parents, and the community about the desire for or interest in an ILE.
* Lacks attention to what the impact would be on neighborhood schools, especially in declining enrollment districts.

The bill does, however, make it clear that the proposed ILE can appeal to the State Board of Education if their proposal is delayed or denied by the local school board, potentially overriding local control.

With every new choice, we weaken the core of our public education system rather than strengthen it. This new bureaucracy is untested and unnecessary.