

HB514 Impacts & Facts

What is HB514?

HB514 is legislation filed by NCGA Rep. Bill Brawley that will allow Matthews and Mint Hill to own and operate charter schools. If passed, the bill will also allow these towns to use local property taxes to pay for schools and give seating preference to their residents. The Town Boards of Cornelius and Huntersville voted to request to be added to HB514 on May 7th 2018.

Why is CMS opposed to HB514?

CMS is opposed to HB514 because it offers no clear path for higher academic achievement, could disrupt public education, drive taxes higher, and lead to more segregation and fewer educational choices for families not just in Mecklenburg County, but across North Carolina. CMS believes that families should be made aware of the possible impacts of HB514 so that they can make the best education decisions with their students.

What are the possible impacts of HB514 on my family and our students?

- **Impact 1 – Reassignments.** If passed, Huntersville and Cornelius will be able to build town-sponsored schools, leaving vacant seats in existing CMS schools. The fiduciary responsibilities of CMS would cause CMS to plan for departures and review attendance zones. In Huntersville and Cornelius, this could lead to a student assignment plan with Hough High serving only Cornelius & Davidson residents; and with Hopewell High and North Meck. High serving all Huntersville residents.
- **Impact 2 - Higher Taxes, No Guarantees.** If included in HB514, the bill gives Huntersville and Cornelius the ability to spend tax money to build and operate schools. Parents could pay more taxes for schools with no guarantee their students have seats. Town-sponsored school seats are assigned by lottery. CMS home school seats are guaranteed.
- **Impact 3 - Fewer Choices and Supports.** Students may not have access to offerings in CMS such as career preparation and certification programs, language academies, arts and music programs, exceptional needs supports, mental and emotional health access, athletic opportunities, transportation.
- **Impact 4 - Lost magnet school seats.** Huntersville and Cornelius students may lose access and seats in CMS magnet schools. CMS offers magnet school options to families and students through an annual lottery. Students must first be enrolled in CMS to participate in the magnet school lottery. A student enrolled in a school outside CMS cannot be seated in a CMS magnet school.
- **Impact 5 - More segregated schools.** HB514 will open the door to a more segregated community. The demographics of some of our neighborhoods and towns in Mecklenburg County reflect larger trends of re-segregation. Schools drawing students only from these areas would be inherently segregated, too.

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Myths and facts About HB514

- **Myth:** Implementation of HB 514 is unlikely to cause a tax increase. **Fact:** Town-run charter schools have to fund significant capital needs, pension liabilities, transportation systems, and food services. Provisions of HB514 allow towns to levy taxes for these and other costs.
- **Myth:** Charter schools can use pass-through State/County funds to build schools. **Fact:** State law (NCGS 115C-218.105 (b) prohibits use of state funds to buy land, build schools, or buy mobile classrooms. State funds account for 70% -75% of monies received by charters.
- **Myth:** The Town of Huntersville can treat any municipal charter school as a separate Enterprise Fund. **Fact:** HB 514 does not permit an Enterprise Fund for a municipal charter. Section 8 of the bill states town monies would come from town property tax revenues.
- **Myth:** HB 514 won't impact Huntersville or Cornelius's Triple AAA bond ratings. **Fact:** Moody's most recent analysis of Huntersville's Triple A bond rating states the Towns' ratings are due to low debt and small pension liability. HB 514 will significantly increase both.
- **Myth:** Huntersville and Cornelius students are being bussed too far every day to go to school. **Fact:** All students who live in Huntersville and Cornelius are assigned to schools in Huntersville, Cornelius or Davidson. Court-ordered bussing ended almost 20 years ago.
- **Myth:** HB 514 will give families in Huntersville and Cornelius and other towns more education choices. **Fact:** If HB 514 passes, CMS must make plans that assume HB514 will be acted on, causing CMS to adjust student assignment and other plans. As a result of HB514, families may lose seats in current CMS schools, magnet choices and other CMS programs.

A better way - instead of HB 514, we could focus on real needs

- **Passing HB 866** – this legislation could add \$151 million in new school construction funds.
- **Mecklenburg County COPS** – CMS and towns could ask the Mecklenburg County Commission to accelerate school construction from \$600 million in cash reserves.
- **Growth task force** – together, CMS and towns could study growth in Mecklenburg County and make recommendations to the NCGA and County on school overcrowding.

How to oppose HB514 and support a better way

Email North Carolina General Assembly members to oppose HB514 and ask for a better way

Sen. Jeff Tarte - jeff.tarte@ncleg.net

Rep. John Bradford –

john.bradford@ncleg.net

Rep. Chaz Beasley –

chaz.beasley@ncleg.net

Rep. Bill Brawley – bill.brawley@ncleg.net
(bill sponsor)

Sen. Michael Lee – michael.lee@ncleg.net

Sen. David Curtis – david.curtis@ncleg.net

Sen. Bill Rabon – bill.rabon@ncleg.net

Rep. David Lewis – david.lewis@ncleg.net