



A Victory For Educational Choice

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By: Audrey Spalding

Though Missouri legislators may not accomplish much on tax credit reform, and are pushing forward [misguided land bank legislation](#), there is some good news coming out of the Missouri Capitol: On Tuesday, the legislature passed [a bill that would expand the use of charter schools throughout the state of Missouri](#). This is great news for Missouri students. [It is perhaps the best news for students and educators since this](#).

Previously, charter schools were limited to Kansas City and the City of Saint Louis. If Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon signs the bill into law, charter schools can be opened anywhere in Missouri if the state has designated the area district as unaccredited.

This could certainly help students in the failing Riverview Gardens School District, which has been unaccredited since 2007. Though the district is unaccredited, its students do not have the option of attending a free charter school in their district because it is outside the boundary of Saint Louis City.

In fact, there is cause for optimism that the charter school expansion bill could result in quick, positive change. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reports that [a graduate of the district \(class of 1977\) has been waiting to open a charter school in Riverview Gardens to help students there gain better access to a quality education](#).

Some opponents of the charter school expansion bill have pointed out that charter schools can fail. That is true. In fact, that is the whole point of the charter school model: When a charter school fails, it should be shut down, instead of being allowed to continue to provide students with a poor education.

I have argued here before that [it is very important to shut down failing charter schools, like the Imagine Schools that will be closed this year](#) . The hope is that by closing down poor schools and directing more students and resources toward successful charter schools, we can quickly identify and replicate successful schools.

If only we held our traditional public schools as accountable.

About the Author



Audrey Spalding

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- [5] http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/mo-lawmakers-approve-expansion-of-charter-schools/article_2399c3c2-2a20-5511-a057-6eafa271f0d5.html
- [6] <https://showmeinstitute.org/2011/11/we-need-to-shut-down-failing-schools.html>

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