



Celebrating Chartering @ 30 – MINNESOTA’S STORY

In the first installment of Celebrating Chartering @ 30 – Minnesota’s Story, we introduced the 1988 Citizen’s League report that provided the foundation for Minnesota’s charter school law. So how did that Report define **the vision for what chartered public schools would be?**

*“Chartered schools would be public schools in which educators provide innovative learning opportunities. **Chartered schools could be entirely new schools, redesigned departments or grade levels within an existing school, or completely restructured existing schools.** In this document, the term “chartered schools” means all these possibilities. A “school” does not necessarily refer to the “school building” in the traditional sense.*

*The committee’s vision for chartered public schools is that they must, like any public school, serve all children. **They will have to be integrated by ability and race.** They will not, like a private school, be able to select students based on ability.*

They will involve parents and will help parents learn how to help their children with their schoolwork. They will emphasize the human factors so essential to students’ success. They are especially needed for children at the earliest ages, as the first contact with schooling for children who come less prepared than most. They will provide options in learning arrangements for children who simply have different learning styles and requirements.

The chartered school will be evaluated in part by the parents, in part by the students, and in part by a neutral accrediting agency, after they have a reasonable chance to develop a track record.

*In this way, chartered public schools **will be accountable for meeting the needs of the children they serve**. They will be schools that parents and students will be free to leave. It is possible that not every such school will succeed.”*

[COMMENT: The adage “*once you’ve seen one charter school, you’ve seen one charter school*” reflects the vision that chartered public schools were to be innovative and focus on the human factors that come with meeting the specific needs of the students who they serve – and not be carbon copies of each other.]

In the next week’s installment of Celebrating Chartering @ 30 – Minnesota’s Story, learn about the specific criteria the Report laid out for chartered public schools.

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