

Right-to-Know requests reveal \$21.8 million in cyber charter advertising and gift card costs in 2022-2023

Cybers wasted school property tax dollars on attendance gift cards, minor league sports sponsorships, swag, TV and radio ads, SEO, and much more!

In 2022-2023, school districts sent **nearly \$1 billion** in tuition payments to cyber charter schools. Because there is no state reimbursement for these costs, cyber charter tuition payments are funded primarily by property taxes.

PA law mandates that the tuition rates school districts pay cyber charter schools far exceed the cost of educating students at home on a computer, leaving cyber charter schools awash in excess money that they waste. And the evidence of this waste is in plain sight.



What business are they in?

Education Voters of PA filed Right-to-Know requests with Pennsylvania's cyber charter schools seeking all invoices for advertising, marketing, and promotions, including invoices for communications firms and third-party vendors contracted to do this work for the 2022-2023 school year. We also asked for information about gift cards and cash payments.

We received responses from 11 cyber charters and logged over 1,853 pages of invoices and multiple spreadsheets and transactions. All information is posted in a public Google drive at <https://bit.ly/3Ugt1IY>

Cyber Charter School	Advertising & gift card expenses for 2022-23 reported from RTK requests
21st Century Cyber Charter School	\$716,597
Achievement House Cyber Charter School	\$578,946
Agora Cyber Charter School	\$832,410
Commonwealth Charter Academy	\$8,338,581
Central PA Digital Learning Foundation	\$24,522
Insight PA Cyber Charter School	\$5,137,006
PA Cyber Charter School	\$3,085,871
PA Distance Learning Charter School	\$681,861
PA Leadership Charter School	\$306,896
PA Virtual Charter School	\$720,164
REACH Cyber Charter School	\$1,446,386
TOTAL	\$21,869,240

Turn over for more!



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What business are they in?

In the 2022-2023 school year, the 11 Pennsylvania cyber charter schools that responded to our Right-to-Know requests spent **\$21,869,240** on advertising and gift cards. It leads to the question, what business are PA's cyber charter schools really in?

Gift Card Distributor

- \$99,750 in Target gift cards from REACH Cyber Charter School
- \$1.1 million in "Thank You Grocery" gift cards from REACH Cyber Charter School
- \$1,070 on Amazon and Starbucks gift cards from PA Leadership Charter School

Ad Agency Angel

- \$1,143,807 in agency fees paid by Commonwealth Charter Academy
- \$695,000 per month on advertising by Commonwealth Charter Academy
- \$42,000 monthly media buy by Achievement House Cyber Charter
- \$90,174 for an on-site marketing employee at PA Distance Learning Academy
- \$549,869 on advertising by PA Distance Learning Academy

SEO Santa

- \$220,000 on search engine optimization by Agora Cyber Charter School
- \$118,000 on search engine optimization by PA Leadership Charter School

SWAG Boutique

- \$163,000 on school branded swag, including backpack coolers, cardigans, fruit fusion bottles, jackets, sweatshirts, custom decals, and more by PA Cyber Charter

Minor League Sports Promoters

- \$5,000 Washington Frontier League Baseball sponsorship
- \$12,500 Erie Sea Wolves sponsorship
- \$15,000 Lehigh Valley Phantoms sponsorship
- \$5,400 Reading Fightin' Phils sponsorship

Museum Benefactors

- \$53,750 in Carnegie Museum sponsorships
- \$15,000 in Franklin Institute sponsorships

Lawn Sign Distributors

- \$24,242 on Commonwealth Charter Academy lawn signs and window stickers

Real Estate Developer

- \$88 million spent by Commonwealth Charter Academy on 35 properties that include school campuses, office buildings, miscellaneous commercial services, and parking lots

