

Charter School Task Force

Sent: Friday, September 27, 2013 11:10 AM
To: Williams, Kimberly (LegHall)

Dear Kim,

For what it's worth, here is the comment I posted on today's DelawareOnLine article about the charter school task force you co-chair. So far, it has gotten 5 'likes'.

Paul L. Parets · Works at Alexis I. du Pont High School - 1976 to 2012

This study is long overdue, but expect powerful political pressure from some in an effort to blunt or discredit the committee's findings. One need only look at the disturbingly small lower-socio-economic and minority enrollment (not to mention students with special needs) at some of the leading charters to find gross inequities which would never be permitted in regular public schools, and yet these bastions of privilege-by-selection are paid for by Delaware's public tax-dollars.

Reply · 5 · 2 hours ago

How does one get an opportunity to testify before, or address the taskforce?

I wish you well in this daunting task.

Paul L. Parets

Committee work

Sent: Friday, September 27, 2013 11:02 AM
To: Williams, Kimberly (LegHall); Poore, Nicole (LegHall)
Cc: Short, Daniel (LegHall); Pettyjohn, Brian (LegHall)

Good morning,

Thank you for leading the committee work that will be looking into the impact local schools have faced due to the enrollment practices of other "specialized" schools.

Here in Sussex County your focus should be centered on the practices of Sussex Tech – our local "vocational" school which has developed into a comprehensive high school and has stepped away from the mission and students it was created to serve.

I have spent 21 years as a Sussex County educator, eight as principal of a middle school in which our students were recruited for athletics against DIAA rules, and chosen for a vocational education only if their scores, grades, and discipline met "entrance requirements".

I look forward to your report and would be very willing to assist if needed.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Stephanie Smith, Ed.D



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Sent: Friday, September 27, 2013 5:04 PM
To: Williams, Kimberly (LegHall)

Kim,

Finally, someone is actually going to research charter schools in Delaware. I have felt for years that there is some unfairness in their choosing of students. If public funds are going into these schools, they need to be more inclusive on what students they choose. My daughter took the test years ago in 8th grade and scored on a 10th grade level. She still did not get accepted. I really want to know if they purposely do not accept lower income students. I hope any findings do not show this type of behavior but it is worth looking into.

Thank you for all the work your doing to improve our educational system.

Jessica Jenkot

The state has formed a Task Force to determine, "What impact do charter, vo-tech and magnet schools have on traditional schools in their areas?" and "Are students from low income families getting the same access to these schools as other kids."

I believe we need a Task Force to determine why in some districts far fewer poor children and special needs children drop out than in others. Should we not find out why the Red Clay School District has a far higher drop out rate of poor children and special needs children than Brandywine, Colonial and Indian River?

Chart below provides, number and percentage of low income and special needs children who entered the 9th grade but did not enter the 12th, the percentage of low income students in the districts, total choice students, a choice students from other districts and expenditure on EPER, supervisors and temporary employees.

Number & % Dropped Out	Number & % Dropped Out	Total % low income in district	Total Choice	Choice other districts	Expenditure & Per Student cost for —See Comment	
287/52.8	104/61.3	49.2	4,695	1,209	\$8,693,465/\$533.43	Red Clay
87/23.7	34/29.8	43.8	1,169	564	\$3,983,508/\$367.07	Brandywine
49/14.2	15/19.4	66.3	1,029	251	\$1,626,649/\$177.83	Indian River
77/24.5	40/43.9	61.3	66	54	\$3,526,184/\$354.71	Colonial

Comment. Expenditure represent the compensation cost in 2013 for EPER Extra Curricular Activities, EPER Miscellaneous, Supervisors and cost of temporary employees.

I am convinced the poor children and children with special needs are suffering because of the management of Choice and use of funding by the Red Clay School Board. Until we connect the

<https://owa.state.de.us/OWA/?ac=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAAAd0jAtXISCRiH9V7h...> 10/2/2013

School Choice Enrollment Reform

Sent: Tuesday, October 01, 2013 11:30 PM
To: Williams, Kimberly (LegHall)
Attachments: First Draft of Resolution ~1.pdf (15 KB)

Dear Mrs. Williams,

I am glad to hear that a task force has been assembled to look at school choice enrollment and hopefully reform will occur as soon as possible. It is very discouraging to see our schools becoming segregated once again by school choice. Seaford has been particularly abused by choice schools skimming the cream of the crop from our district. The choice schools in our area have been Sussex Tech and Sussex Academy. They claim to be doing a better job while I am convinced and the data will show they are doing the easier job because they are starting with the honor roll students. Of course their scores will be higher when you eliminate any challenges like high poverty rates, high minority rates, special needs and English Language Learners. Sussex Tech is close to 80% white and 30% poverty. Sussex Academy is 92% white and 7% poverty. How can these schools exist and be run with public funds is unbelievable to me. While our county demographic is nowhere close to these numbers. I am not just sending this email to point out the problems with school choice as I am sure you are quite aware of the same issues with schools in New Castle County. The Charter School of Wilmington, Delaware Military Academy and the Vo-Tech Schools all have very low percentages of poverty, minority, special needs and ELL students especially compared to the traditional public school districts.

I am a school board member in the Seaford School District and serve as our representative on the Delaware School Boards Association Legislative Committee. At our legislative committee meeting last week I proposed a solution and it was unanimously adopted as a legislative priority for the DSBA for the upcoming legislative session. There were 8 districts (Christina, Brandywine, Cape, Seaford, Laurel, Milford, Indian River and sorry I can't remember the last one) represented at this meeting and all in attendance were very supportive of the idea. Basically this proposal would require choice schools to match the demographics of the sending schools. For example if a school is accepting 50 choice students from Seaford which has a 70 percent minority and 75 percent poverty demographic, then the students accepted by the choice school would consist of this same demographic. This would apply to neighboring traditional districts as well.

I have spoken directly with Senator Venables, Representatives, Short and Dukes and I emailed Representative Schwartzkopf about this proposal. Senator Venables said this is the best idea he has heard yet to correct this issue he would take the proposal to the Senate lawyers to give me feedback. Representative Short agreed with the concept as well and suggested that our board draft and adopt a resolution with this proposal and send to other districts to adopt as well. I have attached the first draft of this resolution and would appreciate your input. We are going to review and discuss this resolution at our next board meeting October 7th. We hope to approve a final draft at our November meeting. Hopefully the other school districts in the state will review and pass quickly as well. The problems are obvious and I hope this solution will come to pass.

Thank you for your efforts on this matter and do not hesitate to call my cell if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Frank Parks
Seaford School Board Member
DSBA Legislative Committee Representative

<https://owa.state.de.us/OWA/?ae=Item&t=IPM.Note&id=RgAAAAAd0jAtXISCRiH9V7h...> 10/2/2013