



The Charter School
of Wilmington
Excellence Community Leadership



February 6, 2013

The Honorable Mark T. Murphy
Secretary of Education
Delaware Department of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite #2, Townsend Building
Dover DE 19901-3639

Dear Secretary Murphy,

Over the last two weeks I have met with several new members of the Pencader Business & Finance Charter High School Board of Directors, at their request, to discuss proper board training and to brainstorm management ideas if the school is allowed to move forward under review. I was not familiar with the current issues facing Pencader and could only draw from my experience in the development of a charter school as defined by Delaware law and DOE regulations. After performing an objective evaluation, I have two pressing concerns regarding Pencader's path forward with its charter: the need for a strong and well-trained Board of Directors and, more importantly, for the implementation of a strong, certified, experienced administrator to lead the school on a steady course (I am retired Navy). It is possible that the accountability committee has other concerns.

I was contacted by Frank McIntosh, Chief Operating Officer and Managing Director of the Jefferson Council, advising me of his appointment as Board Chair for Pencader, and requesting a conference. At our meeting I was informed that Pencader HS had hired a new head of school and the Pencader Board is actively pursuing Charter Board development training.

The Pencader Board's selection of Mr. Frank Hagen (side note: I really enjoyed working with and receiving guidance from Frank when he was at CSW!) as the principal is significant. He has been my mentor for many years and is one of the most respected educators in Delaware. Under his leadership, Newark HS was the flagship school of our state. I know you are new to Delaware so I want to offer an insider opinion. If Pencader is allowed to remain in operation, there is someone at the helm I believe will make it thrive. However, if the decision is to revoke the Charter, Frank Hagen is the man to provide the leadership for a smooth transition. The combination and strength of Mr. McIntosh as Chair and Mr. Hagen as Head of School is powerful and positive.

Training of the Board is critical as well and Mr. McIntosh has a solid plan in place for charter board development.



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I have been involved in the Delaware Charter movement since 2001. Our network has always advocated for a strong approval process for new charters and a demanding framework of benchmarks for existing schools. Those living up to their charters and improving education for Delaware students should be nourished; those falling short must be allowed to develop under strict guidelines and monitoring.

I believe in our Department of Education and trust any decision, either favorable or unfavorable as to the Pencader HS charter status, will be in the best interests of educating the children of the First State.

Very respectfully,

Charles W. Baldwin

President, The Charter School of Wilmington.

Dated: February 13, 2013

To: Whom it may Concern

Sub: Pencader Charter High School

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am equally saddened and upset with the school accountability committee's recommendation to close Pencader Charter High School. There are not a very high number of good and competent specialty high schools in the area and our school gives a very good learning environment – especially in the field of Business and Finance. Today in our modern world, the demand for professionals in the field of Economics and Finance are increasing day by day and I feel this institute provides a solid foundation to the students keen to learn this evolving skill.

Further to the above I strongly feel that this school is doing very good academically and definitely have very friendly and cooperative teachers and staff members who are working hard every day to impart the necessary knowledge and behavioral etiquettes to all the students to become future successful professionals in life. All Teachers and Staff are adequately qualified to add value to this Institution.

Being a Parent of a Child who migrated in this Country from India at his age of 5, he carried on with his Primary Education through Elementary and Middle Schools without any hindrance. He has all the way performed quite well academically and currently is pursuing the all-important High School Educational journey and enjoying his time in Pencader every single day. I strongly believe that this school will provide him the pathway that he wants to go in the future to be an Economist.

Being at the near end of Grade 11, I would certainly not appreciate any sudden change to his career now and am scared of thinking about looking for his admission to a different school at this juncture. This might create a negative impact on his mindset, focus and career goals and that for any reason he is not responsible for. As his parent and guardian I certainly cannot appreciate any change at this last year of his High-School career. I strongly believe he should focus on his College plans, SAT preparation and NOT worry about any uncertainties for High School study.

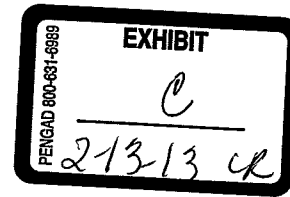
I hope that you would certainly take a look at this matter and reconsider the decision made by the accountability committee, and keep our hopes alive for future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours Faithfully,

Sudipto Dasgupta

(Parent & Guardian of Sayantan Dasgupta – Grade 11)



Untitled

My daughter had difficulties in school until she went to Pencader this year. She's made second honors twice at grade level. This is quite a feat for a person who has struggled in school most of her life. She wants to go school everyday. It's important to her. She doesn't even mind the uniforms, which like any teenage she initially didn't like. It invokes school spirit and togetherness. The staff and teachers are amazing.

Oliver Wendell Homes once said "The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving." Angie's now moving the the right direction. She's successful. She's happy. She's not afraid to ask for help, and she gets the help. When 2 of my other children were in our feeder school, William Penn, they asked for help, I asked for help. The teachers told us, "we have 15 minutes after school". How much help does a child receive in 15 minutes? How many children can be helped in 15 minutes. Pencader has two after school days with transportation and will stay late on

others when requested. Our children are not a number in Pencader. They are looked upon as our future, our leaders of tomorrow and they are their own successes.

There is a old saying "it takes a village to raise a child." Pencader is our village. My daughter needs Pencader, I need Pencader and our children need Pencader. They make a difference in our lives.

