

January 11, 2015

Dear Secretary,

I am the mother of four gifted and talented children. All of my children have been educated at Family Foundations Academy. We came to the school five years ago from private education and discovered that the curriculum was and still is, equally challenging. Last year my oldest son graduated from the middle school and is currently attending Conrad School of Science, where he is thriving and doing well. Part of his success is because of his earlier foundation and the education he received at Family Foundations Academy. Most of the teachers are very engaged with the students and are certified and qualified to teach. The teachers are concerned about the success of the children and some have shown support for them outside of the classroom.

I am asking that you renew the charter for Family Foundations Academy. Please allow my children and other students to continue to excel educationally at this school. Please do not allow prior mismanagement to close the school. Over the past month I have been in contact with the leadership and I believe that Family Foundations Academy can and will continue to be a positive force in the community.

Sincerely,
Vanessa Gillis

January 11, 2015

Dear Mr. Murphy. I wanted to send to you my brief letter of support to allow Family Foundations Academy to remain open. I have had 3 children at the school for about 5 years (my oldest son being there the longest). I truly appreciate all the sacrifice and support all the teachers have given over the years. Family Foundations has a strong group of individuals that really care and take the time to educate our children. Family Foundations is really a family. Many of our children's friends at the school attend our church, and I myself have become friends with many parents at the school as well. Mr. Murphy, it would be a terrible decision to make if the school should close. Even though the past Directors have made some terrible mistakes, I believe the interim Administration will move this school forward with our children's best interest at heart.

Thank you,
Cynthia Smith

January 9, 2015

Hello Mr. Murphy,

My son, Christian Taylor who is in the 6th Grade, attends Family Foundation Charter School.

I am writing to you as a concern parent regarding the renewal of the charter for FFA. I understand due to the mismanagement of funds by several individuals that the school charter is at risk for renewal.

I can not imagine that the Department of Education would penalize the students, faculty and parents for the fault of others. This is a great school that cares about inner city students receiving a quality education.

Those who mishandled school funds for their benefits should be held accountable and charges need to be filed. They should not ever be able to be placed in an education setting handling school funds and they certainly should not receive a slap on the hand and be able to return back to FFA.

We teach our children about taking accountability for their actions, so therefore as adults we must lead by example. Hold those responsible for this situation accountable and not our children.

There should not be any doubt in your mind about renewing the charter and removing those that hinder the success of these children future and it starts at the head.

I look forward to hearing your decision and pray that you make the right decision that reinforces our belief that justice shall prevail.

Thank you for your time and handling of this matter.

Best Regards,

Christina D. Taylor
302-494-8116

CHRISTOPHER A. BULLOCK
PRESIDENT
NEW CASTLE COUNTY COUNCIL
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January 8, 2015

Dear Secretary Murphy,

I had the pleasure of touring Family Foundations Academy when it first opened and I was immediately impressed with what I saw. Their commitment to address the individual learning styles of students was refreshing.

Over the years I have recommended Family Foundations Academy to various members of the community and acquaintances and the feedback from these parents has been glowing. In addition to the academic growth, students are exposed to numerous extracurricular activities and develop a civic-mindedness that is severely needed today. I have witnessed firsthand the quality of education provided by FFA and I wholeheartedly recommend that their charter be renewed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Bullock', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Dr. Christopher A. Bullock
President, New Castle County Council

From: [Tamara Nardo](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Family Foundations Academy - 2014-15 Renewal Public Comment
Date: Sunday, January 11, 2015 6:47:45 PM

Full Name: Tamara Nardo

Email Address: tamarajoy555@yahoo.com

Charter School: Family Foundations Academy

Comment: As a former teacher at FFA, I have seen first hand the dedication Dr. Brewington and Mr. Moore have for creating a school that not only provides rigorous academics, but also provides a positive atmosphere for students and staff members. FFA is an asset to the community and has my support in the renewal of their charter.

From: [anonymous anonymous](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Family Foundations Academy - 2014-15 Renewal Public Comment
Date: Sunday, January 11, 2015 6:54:42 PM

Full Name: anonymous anonymous

Email Address: noemail@noemail.com

Charter School: Family Foundations Academy

Comment: To whom it may concern,

I am a former staff member of Family Foundations Academy Charter School. I have chosen not to share my name or former position. While there are many issues that will need to be dealt with, I fully support the renewal of this school's charter. The staff and students of this school work so incredibly hard, regardless of the circumstances before them. I love those kids the staff loves those kids, and they love that school and their teachers. I know that nonrenewal would be an amazing disservice to the students and families. Please consider the amazing impact the closure of this school would do to the over 800 students, 100 staff members, families and neighboring districts who would have to contend with this as well. FFA is a diamond in the rough that just needs some stone removed and some polishing and buffing. Please give them the chance to show you what they can do. I believe in them, and you should too.

Thank you,
Former Staff Member

From: [Kevin Ohlandt](#)
To: [infocso](#); [Murphy Mark](#); [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
Subject: Family Foundations Academy Public Comment
Date: Sunday, January 11, 2015 7:49:33 PM

Dear Secretary of Education Mark Murphy,

Since the news broke in the media about Family Foundations Academy on December 12th on Kilroy's Delaware, I have investigated this charter school extensively. I have found many of the same financial inconsistencies the auditor Auphsite Consulting found, and perhaps some more. We shall see when Delaware State Auditor Tom Wagner's office finishes their audit. The vast amount of state money being spent by the two heads of school is disgusting and abhorrent. Schools are not administration's personal ATM machine. For this reason alone, I find it impossible to understand how the board of this school did not know this was happening for all these years.

The fact that so much of the Board was made up of fraternity brothers from the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity shows such a vile conflict of interest that is beyond insane. I have heard from many people via email or comments on my blog and they have shared stories with me. Many of them I have not printed because they are the worst stories that can be told about children. Some of the stories I have shared have included the following: cheating on DCAS testing, many relationships happening among professionals at the school, teachers not receiving state raises, administration asking teachers to donate part of their pay, and much more.

The one article I wrote which bothered me the most was the child with a 504 plan who was discussed during an open public board meeting. The minutes for it can be found here:

<http://www.familyfoundationsacademy.org/ourpages/auto/2014/10/16/35343210/2014-12-02%20-%20Board%20Meeting%20Minutes.pdf>

During this meeting the exact action of the student with the 504 was discussed. While the minutes state the child was never mentioned by name, written records in your complaints indicate the child was named and a commenter on my blog indicated this as well. This is a complete violation of everything special education is supposed to be. This child has rights, and something like this should have been handled in the board's executive session, not in an open forum. It is not only a violation of the child's Section 504 rights under The Office Of Civil Rights, it is also a FERPA violation to discuss a child's disability during a public meeting like this. Even if the child was not identified, the traits that were discussed in the board minutes make this poor child easily identifiable.

I have also heard from a few teachers that a special education student that received a 4 on both the Math and English/Language Arts DCAS test during the 2013-2014 school year recently transferred to their local public school district from Family Foundations Academy. This district is dumbfounded as to how this child could have done so remarkably well on DCAS when the child cannot read. So how do we truly know if this school did as well with the academic performance framework? We don't.

I have read all the public comments the parents have submitted, and while I appreciate them, it seems there is a rot in the foundation of this school. I don't know if it can be removed, but how many children have been victims of the games this school has played? How many children are years behind and parents are oblivious to this fact because they are simply going by DCAS scores to determine the educational proficiency of their child?

I am not sure what your decision will be on this Secretary Murphy, but I know these children deserve better. The deceptiveness that has occurred at this school is beyond measure. I sincerely hope all of the past misdeeds of this school will come out so parents know exactly what has happened there. While I have no child there, and I don't even live in the county where this school resides, it reflects poorly on the reputation of Delaware schools that events of this magnitude could occur for years with no one the wiser.

While many parents are calling for the reinstatement of Dr. Tennell Brewington, I do not feel this would be a wise decision on the school's part. She was half of the main problems there, and she needs to carry half the responsibility for the problems that happened under her watch.

No matter what happens, this shows a need for recording of all school board meetings in the state of Delaware so the public can have a chance to hear what exactly goes on at these meetings. As well, a greater oversight of the financial transactions of all schools in Delaware, especially charter schools, needs to happen now. While other decisions on priority schools are being weighed at this time as well, it might be prudent to take a look at the whole nature of judging schools by standardized test scores. If a school can cheat on these tests, it can throw the entire state off in terms of proficiency. Until it can be proven that NO school has done this, these test scores should not be used for anything. I have to believe that most educators would never stoop so low as to allow this to happen, but if there is even a very small shadow of a doubt, we owe our students more than this.

Thank you,

Kevin Ohlandt

From: [Cynthia Smith](#)
To: [Murphy Mark](#)
Cc: [Kathleen Connor](#); [Amy Novosel](#); [Patricia Brooks](#); [infocso](#); afwohlstetter@zarwin.com
Subject: Family Foundations Academy
Date: Sunday, January 11, 2015 7:35:29 PM

Dear Mr. Murphy. I wanted to send to you my brief letter of support to allow Family Foundations Academy to remain open. I have had 3 children at the school for about 5 years (my oldest son being there the longest). I truly appreciate all the sacrifice and support all the teachers have given over the years. Family Foundations has a strong group of individuals that really care and take the time to educate our children. Family Foundations is really a family. Many of our children's friends at the school attend our church, and I myself have become friends with many parents at the school as well. Mr. Murphy, it would be a terrible decision to make if the school should close. Even though the past Directors have made some terrible mistakes, I believe the interim Administration will move this school forward with our children's best interest at heart.

Thank you,
Cynthia Smith