

From: Kevin Ohlandt <infocso@doe.k12.de.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 12:02 PM
To: infocso
Subject: Delaware Met Formal Review Public Comment

Name: Kevin Ohlandt

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Public Comment: The Delaware Met. I have no child there, nor do I have any stake in the school. But I do believe the State Board of Education should render a vote of charter revocation as soon as possible.

I have been following and writing about the situation at Delaware Met since late September. I am the writer for Exceptional Delaware. I have heard the horror stories coming out of this school. I will attempt to list the many reasons why this school needs to close:

- 1) Some of the curriculum was set at a middle-school level, according to the last formal review meeting with CSAC. This is a high school. When I see public comments about students getting better grades at Delaware Met, I can understand why if they are repeating work they have already done or is not grade-level.
- 2) Special Education at Delaware Met is not what it is legally supposed to be. To have 59 IEPs out of compliance in late November is a travesty. Yes, an IEP is just words on a paper. But when those words are put into action, it is meant to help a student receive FAPE: a free appropriate public education. If an IEP is not developed, all the nice things said to students and being a hero for a student with disabilities doesn't really matter because they are not receiving their legally entitled accommodations as authorized by IDEA.
- 3) The school's administration has been chaotic at best. People coming, people leaving, and so forth. Most of the teachers have left, and even though I'm sure English Mentoring and Pritchett and Associates are trying to do the best in a difficult situation, it is not in the school's charter to have "fill-in" services in lieu of certified teachers. Innovative Schools has turned this situation into an even worse mess by not looking out for the best interests of the students at this school.
- 4) The violence, bullying and egregious acts at this school speak volumes about a lack of effective supports and capabilities of the staff to adequately provide a safe environment for these students. The fact that the school lied, yes lied, to the DOE about how many times the police have been to the school shows they are more interested in covering their own reputation than truly doing what is best for the students.
- 5) There are still matters with the board and conflicts of interest that have never been addressed, such as one board member allowing payments to a company where he is the chairman shows a complete lack of ethics. Perhaps he notified the board or recused himself from a vote on this, but we will never know because the board minutes, when they are posted, do not reflect this.

6) Without an up-to-date student count, this could be presumptuous, but based on their enrollment of 211 in their response to CSAC, and a projected 6 more students leaving shortly after, they are below their approved 80% student enrollment of 208 and they are therefore no longer financially viable.

I do not believe the DOE and the State Board of Education to be the villain in all of this. This school had two years to plan after it was approved. Two years. Let that hover in the air for a bit. Yes, the DOE receives information in a charter application and acts based on that information with a recommendation to the Secretary of Education and the State Board. Yes, they keep track of things while the school is planning their opening. But at the end of the day, it is contingent upon the actual school to make sure they are ready. In a state with a population of 13.9% of students on IEPs, and the school knew they were getting more at-risk kids than most schools, they made no attempt to update their budget to hire more special education teachers and paraprofessionals until it was too late. In my eyes, this was the school's largest failure.

I would ask a boon of the DOE to kindly help to prevent a situation like this from ever happening again. When a charter is approved by the State Board of Education, if the DOE Charter School Office could help these schools to open with the right resources and supports for their students.

Any school is too big to fail, but when it does, for all the reasons listed above, action needs to be taken. Thank you,

Kevin Ohlandt

From: Chandra Belle <infocso@doe.k12.de.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 1:43 PM
To: infocso
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Name: Chandra Belle

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Public Comment: I am saddened and it hurts my heart that this is happening. For once in my son's 9 years of education he seemed to be doing very well. He was treated like an individual and with respect and not just a test score or "problem" child and pushed aside and through the system. I am not understanding what went wrong but is there anything I can do as a concerned parent to help the school remain open. I feel like the school is not being given a fair chance. What will happen to our children "The Forgotten Kids" that no wants to teach. What will happen to the teachers jobs and the teachers being able to provide for their families. It is not just affecting our children but it will affect everyone. Students, teachers and our community. We really need a school like this in our neighborhood. A lot of us are lower income families and we cannot afford to send our children to private schools or college. The fact that your school was going to try and help the students to figure out which career path they should start with and place them in internships was a blessing in disguise. Yes a lot of the children have behavioral issues and emotional problems but this is precisely why we need this school. The only other school in our neighborhood that is even close to your model in trying to prepare the young people for careers or occupations was Howard High School for Technology but unfortunately "OUR" children didn't make the cut. Our children's grades did not score high enough to "accommodate" them.

I received my son's report card and I think he did very well despite that the fact that he has two behavioral disorders. The ADHD with Oppositional Defiant Disorder. In the past my son was failing and barely passing the classes. I am very proud of him. He only failed English and Fine Arts. I know with a little more time and help the English grade can be improved. I am thinking the Fine Arts class required more attention to detail and concentration than my son is able to handle. He actually passed College Algebra which is an accomplishment alone and a testament to positive effect the school is having on my son.

To sum it up I think you will do our children and our community a HUGE disservice by closing this school. I don't think the school was given enough time. It's not fair to our children that they have to be shipped to another school in the middle of a semester and start all over again. Our children are making bonds with the teachers and making friends and UNLIKE when they were in the public school system they are thriving and succeeding. Why do you think so many parents are pulling their children out of public schools. They are failing our children that's why. It's also why so many charter schools are coming to Delaware. There is a need for new and innovative ways to teach children and it seems that a lot of the charter schools are succeeding where the public schools failed. Instead of focusing on the negative how about trying to think of ways to seek out other resources and funding to keep this school open. I have a question has the Department of Education done all it can do to help this school? Have they reached out to the community? If there is anything I can do as a parent

in helping keeping this school open please let me know and I will do whatever I can. Please don't do this to the school. **OUR CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE OF DELAWARE!**

From: Monica Walker <infocso@doe.k12.de.us>
Sent: Tuesday, December 08, 2015 12:54 PM
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Public Comment: My main concern is that school is not following the IEP for the children. My son has one and I watched his grades go down hill. NO child should be bring home 4 F without a teacher or a IEP coordinator reaching out to the parent. Still aloud to play sports. What are you really teaching these kids? I don't want my child to fail high school. It is a very important time in all young children's life. No home work teachers allowed to cuss at the students the students allow to cuss at the teacher no structure no nothing. You made a school I feel that takes all the reject kids that no other school wants and there problem kids and trouble makers and kids that have learn disabilities and made a make shift Ferris.