

June 7, 2011

Speech--Keeping All Schools Good Green Schools

Superintendent Tata and Board Members...

Many of us have time and again cited data on high poverty schools to this Board. You have received piles of data showing that schools with high concentrations of low performing students struggle. Those schools have trouble retaining quality teachers and quality principals. For example, many Teach for America teachers quickly burn out at such schools.

Both research and common sense confirms the need to avoid low performing schools.

Having schools with concentrations of low performing students is expensive, because those schools need extra resources. Where would those resources come from?

It should be the goal of every citizen to value educating the next generation of workers, workers we need to drive our local economy. Every taxpayer should want a strong economy for the future, and having low performing schools undermines that future.

As described, the Green plan does a better job at avoiding the creation of low proficiency schools than Blue. The Blue plan could achieve the same goal if student achievement becomes its top value, not proximity. In fact, across the country, the most successful Controlled Choice programs are those that put achievement first. Proximity can't trump achievement if we really care about student outcomes.

Our TOP priority must be to preserve the academic quality of all our schools as a whole because it fosters student achievement and keeps our taxes lower.

I ask YOU...Are we in the business of proximity for parents or academic excellence for our children???

Thank you.