

Charter District Petition Community Engagement Session

Stephenson HS – 09/03/2014

Community Member #1

- Does moving towards the Charter System affect the current State assessments and common core?
 - What prevents the curriculum from being adjusted so that teachers are not teaching to the test?
 - Does funding get impacted with the Charter System?
 - Does the district have a “checks and balance system” in place to ensure equity?
 - Will the magnet, theme and IB programs remain in place?

Community Member #2

- Does conversion charter mean an independent school?
 - *(Comment)* The centralization of the district appears to be the biggest problem with the district.
 - What part of the Charter System addresses the lack of autonomy and changes needed in the Central Office?
 - Has research been done on the effectiveness of Charter Systems?

Community Member #3

- What is the difference between governance and administration?
 - What does full autonomy mean with start-up charters or conversion charters?

Community Member #4

- What other districts has the staff researched to see whether Charter Systems are successful?
 - If so, are they similar to DeKalb in size, scope, economics and demographics?
 - What will being a Charter System allow the district to do now that we can't already do?

- What outcomes have some of the other Charter Districts seen that have had success?
- How do we get the success to trickle down to the lower grade levels? How does charter help with this?

Community Member #5

- How is seat time going to remain consistent across the district?
 - How does the district ensure that students are meeting the required seat time requirements without an attendance policy?

Community Member #6

- Where can we find the executive summary?
 - How long is the district measured, and what happens if we don't meet the goals as outlined in the petition?
 - What types of "checks and balances" will be in place for the accountability of the local governance teams?

Community Member #7

- *(Comment)* There is a lot of dissatisfaction with where we are in the process.
 - *(Comment)* Parents and other members on the local school governance boards should not have the same weighted vote and the principal.
 - Do all schools have to become a charter, or can they remain the same?

Community Member #8

- Why are we moving to a Charter System?
 - What research shows that charter schools are better at educating students?

Community Member #9

- How are the members of the local school governance teams selected?
 - What are the local school governance boards responsible for?
 - Does the principal still handle the hiring of staff at the school?
 - What waivers will help our schools get better?

Community Member #10

- *(Comment)* How are we going to manage 137 boards when the district has not been able to manage one?

Community Member #11

- How does this affect SACs accreditation?
 - Is there any consideration for school choice with this?

Community Member #12

- How do you support local governance in areas in which there is little to no parental involvement?

Community Member #13

- Will staff lose due process rights?
 - Can schools change their attendance lines?
 - What's the relationship between conversion charters and Charter System schools?
 - *(Comment)* We want to be informed on what is negotiable versus what's not.
 - When will we get a "do's and don'ts" brochure so that we are informed?
 - *(Comment)* We want as much information as we can get before October 6th.

Community Member #14

- What do we gain if this fails? Why would we embark on a five year commitment?
(Comment) That's a lot of time for failure and time lost.
 - If we can't be successful in what we have now, how are we going to manage that level of flexibility and innovation?
 - How is oversight going to be successful if they (Central Office) can't manage one entity? How are they going to manage different boards?

Community Member #15

- What will the impact of principal changes have on the governance of the school?
 - How often do the members of the local governance team change?
 - What would a new principal have to appropriately transition to know what the school needs?

Community Member #16

- Will the magnet schools still have requirements for entry?
 - Who sets the guidelines for the weighting of votes of the local governance teams?
 - Does the charter last for five years?
 - Do the waivers already have to be in the petition on the front end of the petition?
 - If the district approves a waiver that violates State regulations, does the State revoke the petition?

Community Member #17

- *(Comment)* If you don't want the central office to have control and you don't want local autonomy? What do you want?

Community Member #18

- Will there be more flexibility with handling discipline concerns under the Charter System?

Community Member #19

- Where is the 4.5 million dollars going?
 - How is the distribution of funds going to be equitable?

Community Member #20

- Who will determine the curriculum; will that be district or local control?

Community Member #21

- *(Comment)* I can see how becoming a Charter System can help.
 - *(Comment)* We need to look at other states for research on Charter Systems.
 - Does the percentage of money that goes to the school house versus the central office change?
 - What will the training look like?

Community Member #22

- Has there been enough information provided to move forward with the petition?
 - Will we have additional time for input?

Community Member #23

- Are the Board and Superintendent in alignment with pursuing Charter System status?
 - What is the problem we are trying to solve by moving to a Charter System?
 - Why are we going to Charter?
 - *****What will the process be for removing ineffective local governance team members?***

Community Member #24

- Is this a new effort to further divide our district (i.e. citihoods, charter clusters, etc...)?

Community Member #25

- Have there been any policies set to address for low parental involvement areas that may not be able to establish local governance teams?

Community Member #26

- How will the training be funded, and who will facilitate the training?

Community Member #27

- How does becoming a Charter System increase our graduation rate?

Community Member #28

- How would decentralization align with the budget?

*****Comments/questions that are in bold and italicized were highly emphasized***