

February 16, 2015

To: House Committee on Education

From: Andrew Beach, Parent of 3 school aged children and Concerned Citizen

RE: HB 2186 Provides that core teaching standards apply to public charter schools. Takes effect July 1, 2016.

Dear Chair Doherty and Committee Members,

As a parent of school aged children and the recent on-the-scene implementation of common core in our public schools led me to search for educational options outside of our neighborhood school that we had come to love and appreciate. In the course of searching, we found that we could, if there was space, attend at the Sherwood Charter School. I was excited about their rankings and ability to keep class sizes small and to upgrade teachers that weren't accomplishing the goal of their school's charter.

The main reason I was looking at these options was the charter's ability to choose curriculum that was a better fit for the students than that of the CCSS and EngageNY texts that we were getting from the local schools. How is it that a public charter school in a highly rated district was getting even BETTER results than the geographic schools and had a waiting list? In my experience in having talked to numerous families about their charter school experience the results are the same: we appreciate the opportunity to CHOOSE educational options that best fit OUR CHILDREN, and specifically because these solutions do not use common core state standards that are hindering our geographic schools.

I would urge this committee which is considering bills to limit/eliminate standardized tests, bills to remove the burden of common core from districts, to please revise this bill to keep Charter Schools free to choose their content standards and curriculum and to promote their schools as NON-common core institutions. If you are truly against outcomes based education, you ought to preserve the ability of parents to select a program that promotes the best interest of their children.

I do not support the implementation of this bill and ask the committee to reject its passage, instead supporting the right of charter schools to implement their own standards and curriculum.

Respectfully yours,

Andrew Beach  
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