

Charter District Petition Community Engagement Session

Lakeside HS – 08/27/2014

Community Member #1

- *(Comment)* Schools that are centers for Special Education have students attending schools from outside of their neighborhoods.
 - *(Comment)* Funds are not being released to Tapestry Charter.
 - Would schools that do not get the funding be able to refuse students that are attending the Special Education Center schools that do not reside in the attendance zone?

Community Member #2

- How will this affect the school choice programs and sibling preference?

Community Member #3

- Will becoming a Charter System affect how the clusters are currently set up (i.e. attendance lines)?

Community Member #4

- What is the implementation timeline if the petition is approved?

Community Member #5

- Can individual charters be created after the district becomes a Charter System?

Community Member #6

- Can you elaborate on what innovative things can be done to get the petition approved (the petition has to include items that the district can't currently do)?
 - Can you give examples of waivers the district might include in the petition?
 - Do charter schools get blanket waivers like the Charter System schools?

Community Member #7

- To what extent would this proposal allow the Druid Hills charter petition to proceed?

- Would this allow the local schools to run their schools independent of the district office?
- *(Comment)* I believe in small community schools. I am knowledgeable about what happens in our community. We would be more successful if we weren't under the control of the district.

Community Member #8

- Would the local schools have to go to the district or state once they decide on the waivers or innovative ideas they would like to implement?

Community Member #9

- What is the expected impact on smaller schools? Would they possibly close?

Community Member #10

- What happens if one or more of the schools are struggling to meet the goals? Does that impact the entire district?

Community Member #11

- What is the reality of creating all of the governance boards successfully?
 - Are you considering all 137 schools rolling out in one year or over the course of five years?
 - If this happens, and a school wants to implement an innovative idea or concept and the district says no, what happens?

Community Member #12

- Where does the funding come from to implement this initiative?

Community Member #13

- What is meant by governance teams focusing on governance not administrative concerns?

Community Member #14

- In communities where implementing the governance boards can be challenging, etc...what would happen?

Community Member #15

- Currently, there are Special Education students that are being allowed to attend schools that house certain Special Education programs from across the district. Will they be directed to attend their home schools, or the schools that they are currently attending?

Community Member #16

- What is the definition of a local governance board (individual, cluster, pairings, etc...)?

Community Member #17

- *(Comment)* There is a voice that has been left out of this process?
 - *(Comment)* The State Board has said that we could still request waivers under the Status Quo option.
 - *(Comment)* We are going to have the “haves” and “have nots”
 - *(Comment)* Blanket waivers will further be a disadvantage for our students.

Community Member #18

- How does the autonomy fit into the Board maintaining their current role?
 - Will the local school governance boards still have to gain approval through the district office?
 - What is the School Board’s role with local school governance teams?
 - *(Comment)* There is a concern with the fact that in the past the district has had major problems managing the flexibility and waivers they have had, why would we give them less restriction (that’s not good)?

Community Member #19

- What will the school’s relationships be with each other?
 - What’s on the list of non-negotiables?
 - Do schools have to innovate under this model?

Community Member #20

- Once the petition is drafted, will there be additional public meetings on the petition?

Community Member #21

- What will be the specifics on what a “loose” control is versus a “tight” control?

Community Member #22

- Is it still the Board's decision if after we become a Charter System if there are schools that would still like to pursue conversion charter status?

Community Member #23

- *(Comment)* Charter schools are not good or bad.
 - *(Comment)* It takes parental involvement and good teachers to make a successful school system.
 - *(Comment)* We should proceed cautiously into this; there is not enough research on how this impacts student achievement.

Community Member #24

- Does the local governance team still go through the district office for special requests or waivers that require funding?

Community Member #25

- What is the Superintendent and Board's motivation to move to a Charter System?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a Charter System?
 - Are there particular goals in mind with this decision?

Community Member #26

- What happens if the petition is not approved?
 - *(Comment)* The district has to be able to show that they are willing to give local autonomy.
 - *(Comment)* By the Board not approving the Druid Hills charter petition, the district is proving it is not willing and ready to give that autonomy.

Community Member #27

- What is a realistic expectation of when the petition will be ready for public viewing?

Community Member #28

- When the petition is presented, will there be a budget for the overhead of the implementation? Is there a timeframe for when we will see that?

Community Member #29

- Does the district have a model of what they would like to see (i.e. clusters, individual schools, or the entire district)?

Community Member #30

- Would magnet schools be able to be a part of the Charter System?

Community Member #31

- Who appoints or selects the central office staff that will be approving/denying local governance team's requests?

Community Member #32

- *(Comment)* Trust is an issue. What are some of the innovative ideas that principals, teachers, etc... have?
 - Are they realistic?
 - Are there funding issues or involvement issues?

Community Member #33

- What is the rush? Do we have more time to consider the options?

Community Member #34

- *(Comment)* There is a concern that teachers are being left out of the process?
 - *(Comment)* The teachers are being asked to embrace a lot of different initiatives this school year all at one time (i.e. Infinite Campus, common core, new website, etc...)

Community Member #35

- Why did the Board not approve the Druid Hills charter petition if we are putting all of this energy and efforts into the Charter District petition?
 - *(Comment)* No one knows the petition, innovative ideas associated with the petition. That's a major problem!

Community Member #36

- How do we know that a change in principals may not lead to a change in the innovative ideas?

Community Member #37

- What lessons have been learned from the Fulton County School District?

Community Member #38

- *(Comment)* The district should take notes from the Druid Hills charter petition on what their waiver requests are and what their innovative ideas are?

Community Member #39

- *(Comment)* I do not want the district to have blanket waivers, as this may increase class size. That is something the public does not want.

Community Member #40

- Can you clarify what administrative duties are versus local school governance team duties are?
 - Do the local governance teams have to look alike from school to school? If so, why?

Community Member #41

- *(Comment)* I don't see how a well-crafted petition can be created in this time frame.
 - *(Comment)* What goes in the petition should be a commitment from the central office to approve waiver requests that do not break the law.

Community Member #42

- How much specificity is there on what the local governance teams will look like? Different schools and communities have different needs.
 - If an individual school wanted to implement something that required a cost, who would approve that?
 - Could the cluster schools agree on a waiver or innovative idea? If so, would they be allowed to implement it?

Community Member #43

- How is the district going to manage hiring a new Superintendent and manage this process at the same time?
 - Is the Board of Education including this in the search for a new Superintendent?

Community Member #44

- If the State denies the petition, do we go back to being a Status Quo district?
 - Will our class size go lower under the Status Quo option?

Community Member #45

- *(Comment)* I'm struggling with the lack of definition of what the local school governance team is and what they will look like?
 - Will principals and the governance teams be given a budget?
 - How much autonomy are we talking about?
 - What if a school wanted to hire a contracted custodial service? Would that be allowable?

Community Member #46

- Are we shifting from one name to another: "School Council" versus "Local School Governance Team"?

Community Member #47

- *(Comment)* The current TSA lawsuit will have a huge impact on the budget? How would this impact the local school budgets?
 - *(Comment)* All of this hinges on the central office which has been less than favorable to the community. I don't know if the lack of trust in the district can be changed.

Community Member #48

- Why is the central office so reluctant to approve charters?
 - Is the central office involved in making executive decisions or just administrative decisions?
 - *(Comment)* There needs to be a sweeping out of the central office.

Community Member #49

- Is there a Charter System outside of the State that we could take a look at to model?
 - *(Comment)* The size of the central office needs to be decreased.
 - *****Could committees be setup under the local school governance councils to incorporate the different needs at each school?***

Community Member #50

- Would local school partnerships be impacted?

Community Member #51

- *(Comment)* There is a lack of confidence in the administration of the DeKalb County School District.
- *(Comment)* The denial of the Druid Hills charter petition speaks volumes to the level of trust we have in the district.
- *(Comment)* The School Board needs to have serious discussions (debates) on what level of autonomy they are willing to give schools.

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