

Remarks SRC for May 21, 2015

Waiting Lists

Good evening. My name is Barbara McDowell Dowdall. I am a Philadelphia public school graduate, retired School District of Philadelphia teacher and department head, several years' Yale National Initiative and Teachers Institute of Philadelphia* (TIP) Fellow and member of the Alliance for Philadelphia Public Schools (APPS).

In the course of a recent interview with mayoral candidate and State Senator Anthony Hardy Williams, WHYY's Radio Times host Marty Moss-Coane stated in passing that "Everyone knows that charter schools have long waiting lists." Putting aside the possibility of applications at multiple schools from any one family multiplying that metric and names of students who have gone elsewhere lingering and propping up the numbers, I was moved to ponder the existence of other, equally compelling "waiting lists."

Just add up the number of students summarily evacuated from the 23 district-run schools closed in 2013. Students, parents and guardians and community members in and around those neighborhood anchors, many of whom lobbied, demonstrated and outright pleaded for their salvation – numbering in the thousands – could be said to be on waiting lists for their restoration. http://www.blueoregon.com/2005/03/in_defense_of_n/

If we secured the total of kindergarten students, including my god daughter, shoveled into classes of 30 or more with a single teacher and no aide

-- along with their parents and guardians – another whole set of waiting lists. You can look at statistics, but a better place to look is into your own heart.

What would you wish, what would you do for your own child?

<https://www.minnpost.com/community-voices/2009/08/class-size-matters-especially-kindergarten>

Compound those lists with lists of staff and students waiting for restoration of school libraries with certified teacher librarians (assuming our goal is not to match our schools with the poorest of schools in other cities): more waiting lists! http://www.huffingtonpost.com/maureen-sullivan/state-of-americas-school-_b_3063055.html

We seem to be on the verge of creating another waiting list: a list of students waiting for the return of their reliable, fulltime, fully qualified and certified, consistently present and caring school nurse. To be replaced by some ill-defined but corporately profitable mishmash of confusion. Have your own children and grandchildren served as guinea pigs in like manner? My own children have not and I hope my grands will not.

http://articles.philly.com/2012-01-04/news/30589318_1_school-nursing-full-time-nurse-sick-children

<http://www.penncharter.com/page.cfm?p=2758>

<http://www.lmsd.org/departments/health/index.aspx>

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