

## Diane Payne SRC Testimony – March 19, 2015

I would like to speak today about Action Plan 3.0. After reading through this plan, it was very disturbing to see that the policy of punish and close our public schools will be continued. I recently read a description of the corporate agenda that identifies “ideological camouflage” in which one agenda can be disguised as something else. The language and intended purpose in Action Plan 3.0 seems to be just that. The continued closing and/or turning over of any more public schools to outside operators is simply the ideological camouflage of saying “high performing seats” when really meaning disinvestment in our public schools. We have asked, for the SRC to invest in sustainable community schools where our public schools are given both SIG grant \$ and modest district support to strengthen and sustain our neighborhood schools and instead we are handed school closings in ever more brightly wrapped packages. This is nothing more than an escalation of a two-tiered system of have and have nots and it is the public schools and their students that are the have-nots.

In addition, nowhere in this plan is mentioned the reinvestment in counselors, nurses, certified librarians, assistant principals, noon-time aides, nor classroom assistants. Instead...lofty language of 100% goals in four categories is simply thrown out there with more camouflage language to divert our attention away from real needs and real issues.

Lastly, as the chorus of voices around the country builds

against the insanity of high-stakes standardized testing (even supported by our own city council representatives), Action Plan 3.0 and this body continues to avoid the real and devastating consequences of the ever ramped up high stakes testing madness. You will find no mention of any thoughtful examination of this issue in Action Plan 3.0.

I am asking that Action Plan 3.0 be reworked to include the following: remove any public school closings from its language, include efforts to support sustainable community schools, increase the staffing of nurses, counselors, librarians, vice-principals, noon-time aides and SSAs, high-stakes testing be identified for what it is...harmful to students, schools and communities with no benefit to them and instead look for viable, worthwhile methods of assessing our students that benefit students and instruction and not penalize, and finally that the SRC negotiate fairly with the PFT and look for ways to begin to build trust and partnership with PFT members instead of continuing to use them as the punching bags of failed political policy.

Is there a mechanism to rework Action Plan 3.0?

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