

Karel Kilimnik SRC Testimony 3/19/15

Welcome to Sunshine Week in Pennsylvania. A resolution introduced by State Senator Pileggi is part of a national effort to empower citizens to play an active role in their government. Wouldn't this be a great time to settle the APPS lawsuit charging you, the SRC with violating the state Sunshine Act? I see that Resolution A-20 for \$3,750,000 is for outside legal representation. You could lower your legal fees by negotiating instead of dragging out legal maneuverings on our lawsuit.

I found the school district mission statement. The mission of the School District of Philadelphia is to provide a high-quality education that prepares, ensures, and empowers all students to achieve their full intellectual and social potential in order to become lifelong learners and productive members of society.” Schools are scrambling to find resources including books and struggling to “make do” with inadequate staffing, missing counselors, missing nurses, and missing school librarians. What a hollow mission statement. Where in Dr. Hite's new 3.0 plan does it talk about bringing back teachers, counselors, nurses, and school librarians? Do not bother looking because it's not there. His plan sticks with the doomsday budget of missing personnel. Personnel who made a crucial difference in the lives of our students. And now they are nowhere to be found. Instead he prefers to either ignore their roles or to simply outsource their function to private agencies.

Yesterday an Inquirer columnist wrote about thousands of books lying abandoned along with five pianos and other musical instruments in the shuttered Bok school. I distinctly remember a district official declaring fervently at a SPP meeting that when Bok closed all of its programs would be shifted to Southern High School, the receiving school for Bok students. Now I realize that maybe not all the musical instruments currently in Bok were part

of the Bok music program. Why are the Bok instruments not at Southern and lying around in the old school?

I taught for 7 years at the Walnut Center, an annex nestled across the street from the now-closed Drew School. We had a wonderful playground filled with developmentally appropriate equipment for young children. Where is it? Did all that playground equipment go to another school that received students from Drew School or did it wind up in a landfill somewhere?

I have more questions about the finances of shuttering 24 schools. I truly hope that the new SRC chair will have a policy of answering questions from the community.

How much did the transition actually cost?

How much has actually been saved?

Who is responsible for tracking all of this data?

Where are the computers from the schools that were closed?

Where is the furniture from the schools that were closed?