

# **School Reform Commissioner Dworetzky: Joe, Where Did you Send your Kids to School?**

Recently, SRC Commissioner Joseph Dworetzky claimed that the public charter schools are central to the District's budget problems.

Commissioner Dworetzky, you have become the face of the status quo. You have chosen to attack the one area of public education in which parents are satisfied. Thousands of families sit hopelessly on "wait lists" to attend public charter schools, yet you vote not to allow even those public charter schools that are among the best schools in the city, to expand. Why do you expect the children in Philadelphia to wait patiently while the District continues to waste money on underutilized school buildings and poor-performing and often violent district schools? All of this happens every day in Philadelphia.

Here are some things you should know about what Commissioner Dworetzky comments ignored:

1. Commissioner Dworetzky points to the impact of charter school costs to the district, but he ignores the revenue associated with those schools. In fiscal year 2012, the School District of Philadelphia paid \$18,998 per district student and \$10,298 per public charter school student, for a savings of \$8,700 per charter school student. Yet Commissioner Dworetzky wants us to believe that the District is "losing" money on public charter school students.

2. Commissioner Dworetzky admits that the District has been unwilling or unable to reduce its costs to reflect the fact that they have lost over a third of its students. He writes, "it isn't easy to shed costs." Even if you believe that the District is incapable of prudent fiscal management, doesn't an \$8,700 cushion account for that?

3. The Commissioner believes that the only way to address the District's financial problems is to limit public charter school expansion. This is where he moves from short-sightedness to hypocrisy. Parents prefer public charters by better than a 2-1 margin and the waiting list for public charters is almost equal to the number of students currently enrolled in public charters. In the 2012 State testing, 25 of the top 30 schools that improved their scores were public charter schools. Parents chose public charters because they have seen results. When Joe Dworetzky, lived in Philadelphia, did he send his children to District schools or to private schools? If he chose a district or private school he had the opportunity to choose. Why does he want to limit the ability of families with modest incomes to do the same?



Black Alliance for Educational Options