

Lisa Cataldi

From: Alejandra Lindstrom Peralta <alindstromperalta@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 9:11 AM
To: House Education Committee
Subject: H7726

Dear Chairperson McNamara and the House Committee on Education,

I am writing to you today to encourage you to support H 7726, which will establish a process public school districts must follow before closing a school.

I attended Providence Public Schools from kindergarten to grade 12. I became a teacher specifically to teach in PPSD. For the past six years, I have been fortunate to teach at 360 High School, and have found a family and a home, something that based on my experiences as a PPSD student, I didn't think existed.

We have a principal and assistant principal who **live** for our students and go above and beyond to do what is best for them. Our teachers and staff are dedicated and truly caring. 360 is not a place where teachers show up just to collect a paycheck or to count down their days to retirement.

Of course this is the way a school should be, but sadly it too often is not.

I went to the so-called best schools in PPSD- Martin Luther King, Nathaniel Greene gifted program, Classical HS, and I can tell you that the sense of belonging and community, relationships, and respect that are central to 360 were not something I experienced as a student.

As with any other PPSD school, many of our students live through unimaginable difficulties and trauma, or are new to this country, or are simply going through the pains of being a teenager. Feeling cared for and safe are crucial to learning during this major time of brain development.

For many of our students this is their only safe place. Now what? They will be thrown into a school with over twice as many students? Without the positive culture and relationships that have been intentionally cultivated at 360? What will happen to our kids? If you are a parent, imagine if this was happening to your child. If you are not a parent, remember yourself as a teenager and what this sort of destabilization and loss would do to you.

Please, please do what you can to help us keep 360 and other public schools open.
Thank you.

Sincerely,
Alejandra Lindstrom Peralta

--
alejandralindstromperalta.com