



March 27, 2014

Dallas Friends of Public Education Statement on the Home Rule School District Charter

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Dallas Friends of Public Education (DFPE) was formed to affect policies for the benefit of our children. We have worked since inception to advocate for policies that positively influence the education of the students of the Dallas Independent School District.

The Home Rule School District Charter (HRD) proposed by Support Our Public Schools (SOPS), does not offer any identifiable policy innovation that would benefit our children and raise student achievement. The intrusion of SOPS into the District has created a climate of mistrust and uncertainty which has divided the community and diverted attention from the mission of the Dallas Independent School District: "To educate all students for success." This intrusion is especially distasteful because of the involvement of founders and financial backers who are not residents of the District. SOPS was deliberately formed as a 501c (4) organization which permits their financial backers to remain anonymous. This is an affront to the call for transparency in public affairs, which is one of the founding principles in the DFPE Action Plan.

DFPE, as part of its Action Plan, insists on ethical behavior from our elected school board trustees. The involvement of a trustee in the Home Rule effort violates the trust which the position demands of the trustee, as the Home Rule effort seeks to destroy the organization which the trustee has sworn to uphold.

DFPE believes that the HRD presents a threat to the guiding principles of democracy: the right to elect the representatives entrusted with policy development and taxing authority; the rights of students, parents, and employees to due process; and the right to affect policy through a democratic process without unreasonable restrictions. An HRD, under current law, cannot be amended without unreasonable effort—a petition signed by 5% of the voters and majority approval in a general election with 20% voter participation. Abolishing the previously approved charter requires 25% voter participation.

DFPE believes that more effort should be made in Dallas ISD schools, together with the greater community in which they exist, to address each and every need presented by our diverse student population. DFPE believes that these efforts require a change in administrative and financial policies, not in governance and legal status. Recent legislation (HB 5 and SB 2) provides innovative opportunities which should be explored. DFPE believes current Education Code does not prohibit Dallas ISD from providing the education and support our children need to succeed.

Therefore, Dallas Friends of Public Education does not support the Home Rule School District Charter effort and calls for all citizens to join us in opposition.

Dallas Friends of Public Education. Printed in house.

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