



Draper Notes

Communication to Superintendent Regarding Costs Associated with the Lake Suzy Leadership Academy

March 11, 2014 – April 29, 2014

April 29, 2014

To: Florida Auditor General

The School District of DeSoto is presently in the feasibility stage for the possible creation of a school of choice. Originally, this was going to be a charter school. This new school will potentially be named the Lake Suzy Leadership Academy. I have clear reason to believe that public money has been spent on the proposed privately owned facility for renovation costs before the school has been approved or a lease signed by the school board. Simply looking at the facility shows that renovations have occurred. It is also my understanding that the superintendent has started the purchasing of equipment, such as flight simulators, television, and other equipment for this proposed school of choice.

Attached are two of four communications with the superintendent and the school board attorney regarding this potential expenditure of funds. The superintendent indicates that she does not have to answer my questions.

I am referring this to your office for review. I believe that taxpayer money should not be spent in this manner prior to school board approval.

Dan Draper, PhD

Attachments:

From: dan draper
To: karyn.gary@desoto.k12.fl.us
CC: ewaldron@eewj.com;
Subject: FW: Public Records Request
Date: Tue, 1 Apr 2014 08:58:35 -0400

The brief response from Ms. Lewis dated March 31, 2014, to my public records' request dated March 11, 2014, did not address my first item.

I find it extremely difficult to believe that no start-up costs for the Lake Suzy Leadership Academy are available to the public. Since you are suppose to be in the feasibility stage of the development of this charter school, it defies any type of logic that costs have not been discussed since your primary student population is from those students presently attending the DeSoto School District. While you may benefit from some new FTE, the majority may very well come from your existing FTE resources. This means that you may very well be drawing resources from the district's existing schools to support the start-up and operation of a charter school. With all the public promotion coming from your office, it would be difficult at this stage to indicate to interested parents that the district cannot afford the costs of the new charter school. The only way you would know if you can afford the costs of start-up and operation is to have an estimate of the costs. This is what I am requesting.

Again, what are the projected costs for the start-up and operation of the Lake Suzy Leadership Academy? Another question that you are avoiding is how much taxpayer money has already been spent in the preparation of the actual facility, previously known as the Laurel Oaks Academy, for this new charter school? As you should know, you cannot spent public money on a private facility for use as a charter school that has not been approved by the school board. I have seen no such approval on the school board agenda.

D. Draper, PhD

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Dan Draper**

Date: Tue, Mar 11, 2014 at 7:56 AM

Subject: Public Records Request

To: karyn.gary@desoto.k12.fl.us

Cc: Bucky Waldron <ewaldron@eewj.com>

This is a public records request for the following:

1. The projected start-up budget for the Lake Suzy Leadership Academy. This includes facilities, equipment, technology, instructional materials and equipment, transportation costs, personnel (administrative, instructional, and support) and all other related costs. I am sure this is available since it is crucial for the opening of any new charter school.
2. The number of classroom substitutes, including interim substitutes, used during February, 2014. I am requesting this in the same format as previously provided by Human Resources.
3. The minutes of all 2013.2014 school board workshop meetings held for the purpose of reviewing, revising, or updating school board policies. Since the Government in the Sunshine manual, provided by the State Attorney General, indicates minutes of these meetings are required, I am requesting copies of the existing minutes since they are not available on the district website.

I am not requesting hard copies of these records. These are requested in electronic format since they should already exist. My email address is:

I will advise you of requests for additional public records.

A timely response is needed. I will know when this email is received by your email system.

D. Draper