

Dear Honorable Nikki Haley,

3/20/2015

My name is Tabatha Huntley. I am writing to you because I feel as a parent like myself that there are some things you should know about our school systems in our area. I am a mother of two little girls. My oldest Kassie is 13 and my youngest Jada is 10 years old. We live in Vance, South Carolina. We love living at the lake however; the school system here is in terrible need of some major attention. I withdrew my youngest child Jada from her school Vance Providence Elementary. I withdrew her after shadowing her one day at school and noticing she was singled out by the teacher for being the only white child in her class. She was the only child that the teacher would call by her last name. All the other students were called by their first name. I am now struggling to homeschool her. I am handling this situation to the best of my ability. My eldest daughter Kassie has been diagnosed with ADD, ADHD, ODD, and Bi-polar disorder. She currently attends Holly Hill Roberts Middle School. She is in a self-contained class and she is a special needs student. This is the only middle school that represents the Vance area. This school is the worst school I have ever seen. The appearance is wonderful from the outside. Inside of the school and what goes on is a different story. Since Kassie has been attending Holly Hill Roberts Middle School I have noticed terrible behavior issues. Kassie has been bullied on numerous occasions. She is constantly being picked at or humiliated for being a child with needs. I understand children will be children and bullying does happen as with every student. However; Kassie never has a free day from anyone picking at her. Just last week we spent the evening at Santee Urgent Care because Kassie had been assaulted by another student. My child is supposed to never be left unattended. As the teacher walked out the room to chat with another teacher this other child jumps up and beats Kassie down and then took a heavy duty book and beat her in the head with it. I had to go pick her up from the nurses office and take her to The Urgent Care Center. She suffered bruising to the head and neck. The following day I took her to her family doctor and she determined Kassie also had a severe sprained wrist. I have asked the school on numerous occasions what happens to the other student. All I am told is it is being handled. It wasn't handled last year when I was talking with the assistant principal about bullying and as Kassie went back to school after being out a week the child is there bullying again. This is a nonstop continuous thing. My child now has low self-esteem and begs for me to please let her stay home and not go to school. Even the bus driver gives Kassie a hard time. At this point I don't know what to do. I have called several schools to see if I can transfer her to another school. A lot of schools have told me they don't have special need classes. Others have told me that I would have to pay a high tuition that I definitely cannot afford in order for her to attend their school. Some has told me I can take her but they are over an hour away from home. I am not finding any help anywhere. I am going to keep trying as hard as I can to get her out of this school and into a welcoming school with a different environment. I'm not asking for any handouts or begging for anything. The only thing I want is for my daughter to have an education to where she feels safe and can have a day of peace and not having to steady watch over her shoulder. I feel as a mother I needed to make you aware of the school system in this area.

Thank you,

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