

From: Card, Rachel

To: Soura, Christian <ChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov>

Date: 9/11/2013 10:14:09 AM

Subject: FW: SC Charter Visit

Attachments: mclaurin.vcf

Christian- Don sent this additional input following the Governor's meeting with the Public Charter School District.

Rachel

-----Original Message-----

From: Don McLaurin [mailto:mclaurin@mindspring.com]

Sent: Monday, September 09, 2013 10:55 AM

To: Card, Rachel

Subject: SC Charter Visit

Ms. Card,

I wanted to take this opportunity express the appreciation of the board and staff of the SC Public Charter School District for the time Gov.

Haley and her staff took to meet with us. Hopefully we were able to pass along information and insights that will be helpful to the Governor as she formulates future educational policy.

If I can ever be of service to you in regard to providing a real-world view of the opportunities or problems involved with the state's charter schools please feel free to contact me at any time. There are some real problems with the legislation creating the district that would not be apparent to one (at least they were not to me) unless they had tried to work under the law. A major issue is the entire structure of the approval process. When one considers that our board is charged with making a decision on whether to grant a charter to a group that comes before us but as soon as the school is open, that group goes away and a new group, the school's board, takes over. We do not have the opportunity to meet and evaluate the actual group of people who will be overseeing the school. Nor do we or our staff know who will be principal. If one thinks of us as venture capitalists decided what groups to intrust the taxpayer's money to, we are actually doing that without the chance to evaluate the key players. No one would use this model if it were their money at stake.

There are other examples I could site, but I just want to give you a feel for how things could be done more effectively. I am aware that there are all sorts of considerations that go into policy decisions. I think though that there are many details about how our charter approval process that are counter productive and not appreciated by the policy makers. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these in some appropriate setting. I don't know much about the technical aspects of education, but I do understand how to organize an effort to maximize its chances of success. The District is doing the best it can under the circumstances; however, a more rational organizational model would vastly improve the probabilities that it can positively impact the children of South Carolina.

Thank you for your work on behalf of all South Carolinians.

Don McLaurin, Chairman
SCPCSD

Cell - 803-603-1441

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"If we were directed from Washington when to sow and when to reap, we would soon want for bread."

Thomas Jefferson