

A Resolution of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association

Whereas, a Taskforce of Pinellas Citizens including representatives of PCTA, recommended guidelines for the final transition to unitary status that includes principles of achievement, proximity and predictability, and

Whereas, the ironic similarity of parental opposition to the end of choice compared to the start of choice confirms our belief that our children are getting a quality education regardless of what school they are assigned or choose, and

Whereas, ethnic, economic and educational diversity of students and staff provides a proven benefit in the social development of students and that this diversity must be encouraged through the use of magnets, attractors and zoning, and

Whereas, early results of choice, without the court-prohibited racial quotas indicates that schools will soon be racially identifiable even with the current choice plan, and

Whereas, the ability to reasonably predict where students will move from school to school greatly enhances articulation from elementary to middle to high, and

Whereas, the transportation costs of choice are the equivalent of the salaries of over 400 teachers, teachers who could be helping struggling students, and

Whereas, the transportation requirements of choice have created the educational and socially unacceptable opening times of 7:05 am for high schools and 9:45 am for middle schools, and now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association endorses the movement away from uncontrolled choice to a system of proximity schools with the following recommendations:

1. Move to the new plan as soon as systems are in place to support changing student populations. History has proven that students are tremendously resilient and adaptable, but resources must be in place to handle significant demographic changes.
2. Closely monitor the effects of concentration of economically and educationally disadvantaged students and respond with significant reallocation of resources. These might include:
 - a. Intensive reading programs, like early success.
 - b. Enhanced staffing models to provide additional teachers and support professionals.

- c. Salary enhancements for those willing to provide additional assistance to struggling students.
 - d. Other encouragements to ensure the highest quality instruction to the most needy students.
 - e. In scheduling schools, care must be taken to recognize the research on sleep and nutritional needs of all children as it relates to achievement.
3. Continue to use magnets and other options that strive toward achieving ethnic, economic and educational equity within each zone.
4. Create a funding formula that recognizes the special needs of schools with high concentrations of struggling students, and fund that formula with the savings from transportation.
5. Provide for an independent commission to analyze facility utilization needs and make recommendations concerning the closing, consolidation and/or changed use of facilities. Criteria should include:
- a. State construction code (C-3)
 - b. Cost of operations
 - c. Cost of property insurance
 - d. Number of students in proximity
 - e. Contribution to diversity

Finally, be it further resolved that the Board centers its short and long-term policy decisions solely on providing a high quality education for every child in a cost efficient manner.