

October 9, 2017

Durham Council of PTAs supports strong public education for all students. Consequently, we vigorously oppose the Innovative School District.

Our schools and districts are entitled to partner with the state. Forcing districts to concede control of their schools undermines this core value. We must all cooperate to make every school as good as it can possibly be.

We earnestly encourage the State to forego the Innovative School District in favor of a collaborative, stable, and accountable approach that respects all stakeholders. We oppose the Innovative School District for the following reasons:

- **Lack of partnership** between citizens and the State.
- **Lack of community engagement** in a top-down initiative.
- **Lack of accountability** as school leadership is moved away from locally elected and appointed personnel to an entity that does not answer directly to our families.
- **Lack of appropriate funds.** The State is may require districts to pay for transportation and meals for Innovative School District students without providing the required funds further taxing a limited budget to serve our students.
- **Failed model I.** Research demonstrates that minority students do not perform better at Charter Schools and often fair worse than in public schools.
- **Failed model II.** This type of “district” has been tried in other States resulting in long-lasting damaging effects to the schools, families, and district. Tennessee’s Achievement School District, which North Carolina has looked to in creating the Innovative School District, has been an abysmal failure. After 4 years, 5 of the 6 schools in the Achievement School District are in the bottom 2.5% and the sixth school is in the bottom 7%. These schools are worse off than before and far from the State’s goal of the top 25% within 5 years. (Tennessee Department of Education Statistics)

We support Durham Public Schools Staff and the Durham Board of Education because of their proven track record and deep compassion in service to our students. Together we can improve all of our schools.

For a better future for all students,
The Board of Directors of the Durham Council of PTAs