

Date : 2/15/2024 2:03:05 PM

From : "George Sieburg"

To : "David Rodgers"

Cc : "Maggie Fehrman" , "Amy Ray" , "James Carter" , "Liza Kelly" , "Rebecca Strimer" , "Sarah Thornburg" , "Jesse Warren" , "shannon.baggett@acsgmail.net"

Subject : Re: MNSA - Stop discussions on merging

Dear David:

Thank you for your email. I appreciate your advocacy for your own children. Regardless of what happens with our middle schools, I hope that you will consider keeping your kids in our district. After all, the success of our public schools depends on families like yours recognizing the value that a public education has not only on children but on our community as a whole.Â

As you know, as lawmakers inÂ Raleigh continue to defund our public schools and allocate public dollars toward private and other non-public schools, districts are doing their utmost to stretch funds. I appreciate that you recognize theÂ funding shortfalls we're facing alongside the need to adequately support and pay our educators.

I am grateful for your continued interest and advocacyÂ for our district. Thanks again for your email.

Yours,

On Fri, Feb 9, 2024 at 12:43â€PM David Rodgers <[rodgersdl@gmail.com](mailto:rodgersdl@gmail.com)> wrote:

School Board Members and Superintendent,

As a parent of a child who went through AMS middle school and one who is currently at MNSA I can tell you there are huge differences between the two.

**If you merge the schools a lot of us will be looking for other options for middle school. You will lose â€œbutts in seatsâ€ and the funding from this exodus. This isn't a threat, itâ€™s just the reality as parents move their kids out of the ACS system looking for a better middle school and then likely high school, for their kids.**

There are a lot of things MNSA does well, I'll just highlight one. Parent teacher conferences or as MNSA has rebranded this, "Student Led Conferences". We just got back from our second one this year. It was amazing! Itâ€™s a student led presentation with a general overview of the past nine weeks, things that are going well, places to improve and goals for the next nine weeks with a plan of action to achieve these goals. Incredible! We left the first one wondering why all schools don't do this. When I spoke with parents of kids at AMS about this last fall after our first Student Led Conference they just sighed and lamented on how they weren't able to get a slot with a teacher as there weren't enough at AMS and how they wished their kid had gotten into MNSA.

This brings me to my next point. **If there is a waiting list of kids that want to get into MNSA each year maybe this is saying something about the program there.** If the concern is the â€œutilization rateâ€ of the facility, maybe allow these students to attend MNSA, shifting staff over from AMS,Â filling more classrooms and your utilization rate will increase at MNSA. Maybe put your central office at AMS in the unused space there and sell the central office. That's a desirable piece of land / facility that could be sold and is something to consider if you want to reduce expenses and or generate funds to be used elsewhere. If you're really thinking outside the box maybe ponder this a bit instead destroying MNSA.

I understand you all are in dire financial straits with declining enrollment. There are other more pressing issues for you all to examine than considering closing the best performing middle school with a waiting list of kids who want to get in. The teachers at MNSA are happier than any others in your system and just last fall Principal Baggett was named the best principal in your school system.Â **You will be shooting yourselves in the foot if 30 â€ 40 kids drop out of the ACS system because you close MNSA or merge it with AMS. Youâ€™ll lose \$300,000 - \$400,000 in funding or more, plus you will lose out on all that these families would have given to the school system in time and support as they will be in other schools.** There are a lot of us looking at options every day, there are lots to choose from. Don't ruin the best part of ACS. Stop wasting your time and all of ours discussing merging the middle schools. You will just be speeding up the downward spiral of our school system. Many of us specifically chose to live in the Asheville City School District because ACS was better on almost all metrics years ago. Now, not so much. You have competition. MNSA is blowing the doors off AMS. They are doing things right. Hopefully you all will realize this soon and will do the right thing here. Keep MNSA as it is.

All the best,

David

David L. Rodgers

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*The North Carolina Real Estate Commission requires that Real Estate Agents Â discuss with potential buyers and sellers the different ways we may work with them.Â ForÂ more information on this:Â <https://www.ncrec.gov/Brochures/Print/WWREAPrint.pdf>*

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George Sieburg

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