

1 August 90

To: the Files

In the course of the meeting today with Commissioner Nelson it was agreed:

1. That top priority for legislative activity in '91 will go to changes with direct effect in improving student learning.

2. That choice is unlikely to develop any further potential for improving student learning until students have more choices: diverse and quality schools to choose among, without having to travel.

3. That to make more quality learning opportunities available to students it would be desirable and feasible for the state to make it possible for new public schools to be started and offered not only by the local district but also by other public agencies. That in fact this has begun to happen, with the state schools and with the post-secondary option.

4. That it is desirable to have the initiative ^{for new schools} come from persons, especially ~~from~~ educators, with ideas for ~~new schools offering~~ new ways of serving unmet student needs.

5. That it would be desirable to make it possible for these new schools ("operators") to have a legal existence, and to relate to the other public agencies ("sponsors") through contract. That this arrangement would encourage the development (and use) of measures of student performance; and would provide a dimension of accountability not available simply through the combination of (a) a 'charter' from the state and (b) the decision/s of parents to enroll or to withdraw.

6. That there are various ways in which both the sponsors and the operators could be set up and organized; and that it is desirable for the state to allow multiple options.

7. That it is essential for such schools to be truly public; implementing state goals and objectives for student performance; accountable for fiscal and academic performance; and open to students regardless of race, religion or nationality, or physical condition, or previous school record. Other than this, regulations should be minimum: The purpose is to offer the maximum opportunity for innovation in learning methods and technology, and for professional decision-making at the school level.

8. That it is desirable to work aggressively on the design of this new arrangement; leading to a bill. That the commissioner will designate a senior person in the MDE to work with the effort; and that the group will be broadened to include two or more school administrators and some persons of color, and will meet again the week of August 13.