

8 May 1991

Launa Ellison, the Minneapolis teacher who'd had the school board member ask about her support for charter schools said yesterday that she's now had a good, open discussion with the board member -- Sandra Harp.

Launa said she didn't feel intimidated in any way. Sandra was mainly concerned to see why the sort of thing teachers want to do can't be done within existing district arrangements.

Launa spent more than two hours explaining why it can't. Sandra seemed to accept that. She is understandably concerned about avoiding an arrangement that excludes certain kids. Launa also explained how that is avoided.

Incidentally: Sandra said the word about Launa's name being "on a list of people supporting charter schools" came to her from the school boards association. She wouldn't elaborate further.

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Joel Sutter, formerly with the Legislature and now business manager for Rosemount/Apple Valley, said a good word for the idea around the edges of the spring meeting of the MN school business officials the other day -- with a reason we've never heard before.

It went something like this:

We're heading toward a third high school. Like the ones we have now it'll have something like 2,000 kids. We ought not to be offering students nothing but a high school experience with 700 people in their graduating class.

We ought to take that increment of 2,000 kids and offer them a variety of alternative kinds of school.

This would also help in capital-facilities planning. If we build another 2,000-student high school we'll close a building before those bonds are paid off!

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The superintendent of schools in New Milford CT called Tuesday to ask about MN charter schools legislation. They have exactly the same idea there, he said: to let groups of educators go to the state board for the OK to set up an innovative school.

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