

1/10/92 1615h CST

From Ted Kolderie

Fax for LYNN OLSON
This page only

Lynn!

Joe Nathan was saying last night the MFT local in Osseo had proposed a charter school in negotiations this year, and the Board has turned it down. That turns out not to be so, but the story is kind of interesting. My source for what follows is Mike Damyanovich, who talked with Larry Seavert, the exec dir of the Osseo FT.

The OFT is aware some people are pressing for a curriculum that excludes sex education and stresses 'family values'. Concerned that these folk might try to use the charter-school option and that the Board might say 'yes' as a neat way to get them out of its hair, the OFT proposed to management a provision for the contract so that if the board were willing to grant a charter the OFT (itself!) would have first option on it.

Management's response was that it wouldn't be granting any charters . . . so this was not a 'bargainable issue'. This checks: Mike himself had had some interest in organizing a charter school and had talked with the Sup't, Marl Ramsey, who told him: "No way".

When Mike talked to me today he said that, interestingly, this might still be in the picture. Osseo has a committee that has been looking at some kind of 'alternative' school. It had considered a 'magnet' school; but rejected that and proposed to disband. The Sup't said "No, don't do that".

Mike thinks there could still be proposals for a charter school (clearly the district can't prevent that) and thinks the prospect of such a proposal is causing the district to want to keep thinking itself about alternatives it might generate internally.

Mike's reading is simply that the district won't move unless it sees/fears that somebody else will instead. As he sees: This has big--and clear--implications for school-improvement strategy.

(This relates of course to the response that always comes up from opponents of the charter schools: "We could do this now!" Or: "Let us do this!" The answer being: You could . . . and we would . . . but you don't!)

Mike also said that at the big meeting about outcome-based education in Rochester recently one of the consultants from out of town "dropped the 'competition' bomb" (in Mike's words) . . . making this same point: 'When they set up a school next door that promises outcomes and all you can offer is . . .'. It sounds as if the consultant knows ~~the~~ the 'charter' law here but it's hard to ~~know~~ ^{tell} for sure.

About

TK