

TESTIMONY
AT
the HEARING ON SB 183
(INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOL ACT --- or "CHARTER SCHOOLS")

February 25, 1992
1:30 PM

SENATE

- 1) My name is Jerome Moers
- 2) My address is 2850 South Eaton Way, Denver, Colorado 80227
- 3) My wife and I are Deaf parents of four Deaf children --- all grown up with college degrees (one has a master's degree and another is on verge of earning it). I am the representative of Colorado Association of the Deaf --- and the Deaf community in general.
- 4) (Show the large Denver Post clipping of Feb. 23 of "A School of Their Own"). It talks about girls' academies proving value of same-sex education. The problems that girls have in coed schools parallel in principle to those of Deaf children who are mainstreamed in public schools.
- 5) First, let me emphasize our recognition that some Deaf children are so gifted and talented that their educational learning is very successful. They can stay where they are. We are speaking for the majority of the Deaf children who don't fare educationally well in mainstream schools.
- 6) The biggest problem the Deaf have in mainstream schools is lack of direct teaching from teachers. Even if teachers are certified by the state, they are truly not qualified to deal with deaf education. Teaching is relayed through an interpreter. And many of interpreters are not certified and do not sign well. They could not understand the Deaf's signing even much worse. Let me quote the section from the clipping --- (1). When a teacher asks a question, hearing children will immediately raise their hands while the interpreter is not finished interpreting the question. Eventually, the Deaf children's feelings of confidence and competence quickly disintegrate. Their involvement in class discussion or debate is soon diminished. Their self-esteem hits rock bottom and their assertiveness becomes nonexistent.
- 7) Deafness is unique. Public school staff is not trained in deaf education. Thus, the Deaf children endure the sufferance and upon their graduation from high school, their average reading level is between third and fourth grade.

(NEXT PAGE)

*This page was not included in my
Testimony last Thursday.*

- 8) For reasons just mentioned plus many reasons too numerous to identify here, we the Deaf adults strongly support this bill. Once the bill is passed, the work can be started toward setting up a magnet school of the Deaf possibly in the Denver area because of its proximity to the large Deaf children population and because their parents wish their children to be home daily. In fact, the steering committee for the school has its first meeting last month!

MISSION STATEMENT

The MISSION of the Metro Denver-based Magnet School of the Deaf is to provide for Deaf children, early childhood through twelfth grade, an education that is:

- Deaf-centered,
- visually-oriented,
- supportive of the child's home,
- staffed by competent personnel, and
- administered by parents, Deaf community representatives, and teachers.

THANKS

Dear Senator Bill Owens,

Thank you for asking for a copy of these notes. I'm enclosing the Denver Post article just in case you don't have a copy of it.

Thank you for your attack at the existing education bureaucracy! And also thanks for adding to my vocabulary the new word "eviscerate". Smile.

*Sincerely,
Jerry*

Mr. Jerome R. Moers
2850 South Eaton Way
Denver, CO 80227-4116

Ph: 986-3583 VIA relay 1-800-659-3656