

Dear DCTA members;

We have been informed by Superintendent Boasberg that he intends to send a letter to teachers and principals today regarding changes to the 2010/2011 Staffing Process with an emphasis on how teachers are “forced placed”.

The letter refers to the fact that DCTA has been involved in conversations with Mr. Boasberg regarding these changes. It is true that the superintendent has talked to us about his goal of making sure all hiring is of “mutual consent” by both the teacher and the hiring school. **But, I would like to make it clear that we have not reached consensus on how this goal could be attained.**

As you will see in Mr. Boasberg’s letter, his idea on how to alleviate the “problem” of forced placement is to make sure low performing schools (in the Red Zone according to the School Performance Framework) and Title schools (that serve our students in low socio-economic areas) will not have any forced placed teachers. This idea is predicated on the basic assumption that just because a teacher is “forced placed” in a school – that the school is disadvantaged. There are a lot of reasons these school may be low performing -- including issues with the school leadership and high-turnover rates among faculty -- not only at the beginning and ending of school years, but even in the middle of the year. There is no research that I am aware of that confirms low student outcomes are directly tied to the number of teachers “forced” into schools.

I have told Mr. Boasberg that DCTA is ready to talk about the whole system of properly evaluating and mentoring teachers – as well as reviewing and improving principal effectiveness – but that we do not agree on placing blame for student low performance on teachers who are involuntarily transferred -- especially when these transfers are not because of teacher low performance.

The superintendent also plans to send a letter to principals today outlining a new site-based budgeting process regarding substitutes. We are in discussions with the district on how this will have to be implemented in order to honor the contract. We will send you final details on this issue next week.

As we continue to engage with the district on these issues, please let me know your concerns and ideas.

Thanks,

Henry Roman