



# FINDLAY DIGITAL ACADEMY

Where Learning Fits You™

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*Sandra White, Superintendent • Larry Grove, Principal • Linda Huffman, Guidance*

March 16, 2015

Dear Chairman Hayes and Committee Members,

I am Sandra White, the superintendent of Findlay Digital Academy (FDA) which is a public conversion charter school sponsored by Findlay City Schools (FCS). Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony on HB 2.

Findlay Digital Academy is an on-line Dropout Recovery School that serves a very at-risk population of 160 students in grades 9-12. We were recently named the Charter School of the Year by the Ohio Alliance of Public Charter Schools as we exceeded standards in all areas of our report card. The prior year we were a School of Distinction. We have received the Ohio Auditor of State Award from Dave Yost for our last two audit cycles. We graduate more students every year than many of the public high schools in our county. We are a charter school that is touching the future and helping students earn a high school diploma and experience success. We are getting the job done!

However, there are two areas in HB 2 that would force us to close our doors if the language is not changed. The areas of concern are:

- HB 2 lines 1388 – 1390 state that a sponsor cannot sell goods and services to the charter school(s) that it sponsors. Findlay Digital Academy purchases our tutors, bussing for mandated testing, and some technical services from our sponsor. The way the law is written would also exclude us from purchasing services from any vendor our sponsor uses. This would mean that as an Apple computer-based school we could no longer purchase Apple computers. I have talked to the administrators of other similar charter schools about this proposed language and the consensus is that this language would lead to our extinction.

- HB 2 (lines 506 - 519) states that our report card data would be rolled into our sponsor district data. While FCS sponsors us, we are truly a separate school district and should be treated as such. If a student from school A open-enrolls in school B, that student's data does not roll back to school A. School A is not educating the student and is not held accountable for that student. The same should be true for charter schools. It is a question of putting the accountability on the school that is educating the student. Districts will be reluctant to sponsor charter schools if this roll up occurs. Our sponsor has already expressed that sentiment.

I have always believed you to be supporters of school choice. Not any one model of education fits all. This legislation has the potential of shutting down schools that are giving Ohio's students a viable option of earning a diploma and becoming productive citizens. Please help us to be able to continue to serve our students and Ohio.

Sincerely,



Sandra H. White