



Fair Schools Red Bank



Red Bank Charter School Misrepresents School-Age Demographics

Charter School Enrollment Under-Represents Latinos and Working Poor

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Fair Schools Red Bank and the Latino Coalition of New Jersey [LCNJ] announced today they filed an addendum to a federal civil rights complaint originally filed in November to secure equal educational opportunities for all of Red Bank’s public school students by ending the segregation caused by the Red Bank Charter School.

The addendum alleges that the Charter School leadership used outdated U.S. Census data – and an outright fabrication of the number of private school students living in the borough – in a deliberate attempt to mislead the state Department of Education and to perpetuate the myth that the taxpayer-funded 200-student school reflects the pre-K through 8th grade demographics of the community.

The contention is a fallacy, according to an analysis conducted by Fair Schools Red Bank, an organization that represents the interests of the parents of the more than 1,400 children who attend the Red Bank primary and middle schools.

Here are the two main issues uncovered in the analysis:

- The Red Bank Charter School used, and continues to use, outdated estimates from the U.S. Census’s 2006-2010 American Community Survey. Even when the charter school first used this woefully outdated set of statistics in December 2015 as part of an unsuccessful attempt to double its enrollment, a number of more recent data sets were available. As a result, the demographic information the charter school reported to state education officials grossly overstated (by 22 percent) the number of white pre-K through 8th grade children in the borough and significantly undercounted (19 percentage points) the number of Hispanic children in the same age group.
- The Red Bank Charter School has maintained that there are 658 children of pre-K through 8th grade ages in the borough who attend private schools. Multiple U.S. Census counts that were available to the charter school yet not cited in any official correspondence or public statement suggest the number of children in that cohort is approximately 145. The Census count is exactly in

line with research conducted by the Red Bank Public Schools, which found the number of private school students to be 66 and parochial school students to be about 75.

“The numbers cited by the Charter School appear to have been conjured from thin air,” said Wayne Woolley, the parent of two public school students. “No one should be surprised. Charter school leaders have a shameful habit of dismissing the impact of the segregation caused by their school, diminishing the negative financial impact their duplicative costs have on the community and overstating their academic performance.”

Frank Argote-Freyre, Director of LCNJ, said the statistics are part of a coordinated pattern of deception on the part of the Red Bank Charter School to perpetuate a segregated school funded by the taxpayers. “For more than a decade Red Bank Charter School officials have sought to perpetuate a bastion of segregation. The enrollment at the Red Bank Charter School is whiter and wealthier than the rest of the school district. It is a shameful legacy that the state Department of Education needs to bring to an end by declining to renew the school’s charter.”