

CECSD BOE: Resolution in Support of Quality Public Education & Fiscal Responsibility

- Whereas:* The Cortland Enlarged City School District Board of Education believes that a system of quality public education is one of the essential foundations of human achievement and happiness; and
- Whereas:* The Cortland Enlarged City School District Board of Education believes that responsible stewardship of public funds is an essential function of our elected service; and
- Whereas:* The state of New York's education aid distribution has resulted in significant gaps between the amount of education aid guaranteed by the state constitution and the amount of aid actually given to public schools; and
- Whereas:* This funding insufficiency has caused Cortland schools to experience ongoing fiscal challenges, including the need to reduce available programming, and
- Whereas:* Advocates for a proposed charter school in Truxton, NY are attempting to divert public school funds away from local community schools in order to support the operation of a privately-operated school; and
- Whereas:* That the proposed charter school would be a publicly funded yet privately-operated institution governed by a non-elected board that is not accountable to taxpayers within the impacted districts; and
- Whereas:* Current Charter School Law exempts charters from many of the state's statutory and regulatory requirements and creates inequity in important areas. Charter Schools are not held to the same rigorous standards and accountability that are required of Public Schools.
- Whereas:* Teacher certification requirements for a Charter School are a lesser standard than those required by New York State for Public School Teachers, thereby impacting the quality of education received at a Charter.
- Whereas:* The funding structure contained in the charter application does not appear to reflect realistic costs, especially for special education instruction and services; and
- Whereas:* The charter group's application indicates that \$7.2 million will be diverted away from existing local community schools during the initial charter period alone; and
- Whereas:* This diversion of funds away from the local community schools would result in either a significant reduction in educational opportunities for the vast majority of our students; or, in order to preserve existing educational opportunities for our students, those funds diverted to the proposed charter school would need to be replaced by local taxpayers; and
- Whereas:* In addition to the \$7.2 million that is expected be diverted away from local schools over the initial charter period alone, an additional \$1.5 million in new tax monies will also need to be collected to meet the proposed \$8.7 million revenue estimate for the initial charter period; and

Be It Resolved: That the Cortland Enlarged City School District's Board of Education does hereby request that New York State Board of Regents reject the proposal of the Truxton charter group ; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the Cortland Enlarged City School District's Board of Education urges the New York State Department of Education to disallow any future applications within the impacted districts; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the Cortland Enlarged City School District's Board of Education authorizes and directs the Superintendent to transmit an official copy of this resolution to the Governor, appropriate State and Federal Representatives and Senators, the State Department of Education, the members of the Board of Regents, and the Boards of Education of the impacted Districts.

Motion by David Lemon, second by Christine Gregory.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Christine Gregory, David Lemon, Janet Griffin, Melissa Davis-Howard, Peter Rogoff

October 23, 2017