



MANCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT
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April 3, 2017

Chairman Rick Ladd
House Education Committee
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman Ladd:

I am writing on behalf of the Manchester Board of School Committee and the Manchester Public School District against SB193, relative to diverting funding from public schools to private, charter and home school students. This legislation, if passed, would have an adverse impact on the Manchester Public School system's ability to meet the range of academic, social, emotional and physical needs of some of the most vulnerable students and families in the State of New Hampshire.

The State of New Hampshire has already passed legislation that is having detrimental impact on our ability to meet the needs of our students. The legislature eliminated the State's contribution to the cost of teacher retirement, shifting the total cost to the local property taxpayers. This year, alone, Manchester is paying over \$10 million into the retirement system. Local taxpayers are totally absorbing this burden, yet we have no control over the pension structure. In addition, the building aid has been frozen, and arguably, the negative impact in the largest cities such as Manchester is greater than anywhere in the State. This year we are facing a \$5M structural budget gap, largely due to the changes made in recent years in Concord. SB193 would create additional burden on Manchester residents, which further puts our most vulnerable students at risk of getting the support they need and deserve.

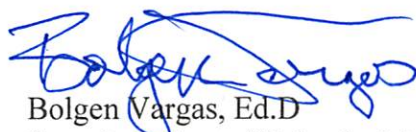
As the largest urban school district in the State of New Hampshire, we have a significant number of students in each category this bill seeks to address: private, charter, and homeschool. For example, we have more than 600 homeschool students, a number greater than some New Hampshire districts' total enrollment. Similarly, we have 592 students enrolled in charter schools. Therefore passing SB193 will divert a significant amount of Manchester resources to charter, private and home schools, leaving our schools with fewer resources to respond to the increasing needs of our student population.

It is the policy of the Manchester Board of School Committee, in its actions, and those of its employees, that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, color, marital status, physical or mental disability, religious creed, national origin or sexual orientation for employment in, or operation and administration of any program or activity in the Manchester School District. The Title IX Coordinator is Pamela Hogan; the 504 Coordinator is Dr. Jennifer Dolloff. Please see above for contact information.

I am a strong believer in public school choice; however, it should not be done to the detriment of the Manchester Public Schools and the State's mutual obligation to meet the needs of each one of our students. I urge you and your colleagues to please vote no to SB193. By doing so, you will maintain the opportunities available through the public education system and support the future economic and social vitality of the State of New Hampshire.

Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.

Respectfully submitted,



Bolgen Vargas, Ed.D
Superintendent of Schools, Manchester, NH

CC: Manchester Board of School Committee

House Education Committee