

## Michigan Education Association



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May 26, 1994

Eric Gilbertson, Ph.D., President  
Saginaw Valley State University  
University Center, Michigan 48710

Dear President Gilbertson:

It has come to my attention, through an article that appeared in the *Saginaw News*, that SVSU has hired Dr. Wayne Vasher to head the University's partnership with local K-12 public school districts to establish a university-operated charter school.

As an alumni of SVSU, and a strong advocate of university/local district partnerships, I wish to convey my concern for this decision.

Area educators recently convened in a SVSU College of Education forum to discuss the possibility of SVSU's involvement in establishing future charter schools. Since our relationship has been built upon mutual respect and trust, and in the spirit of "partnership", the aforementioned group worked diligently to develop a list of recommended criteria which we requested Dean Pierce deliver to you on our behalf. The criteria outlined the parameters for authorizing charter schools which we believe is essential to the development and maintenance of a continued partnership with the University.

Virtually every person in attendance expressed grave concern over financial and quality loss issues associated with the University establishing charter schools in *competition*, rather than in *cooperation* with local school districts.

The criteria we recommended ensured that the existent and productive community partnership between the University and area school districts would be maintained and strengthened. We also believe that said criteria would ensure quality improvement

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through staff development, community involvement and delivery of student services. I am apprehensive that the placement of Dr. Vasher in a position previously served by the College of Education will have a negative affect on this community "partnership" with the genuine concern that our spirit of respect and/or trust is being jeopardized.

The loss of even one student to a charter school authorized by the University will have significant financial impact on local districts. This financial loss will seriously impede their ability to deliver quality education programs to those students remaining in the district. Additionally, should the University charter or authorize the charter of the Oscoda Institute for Math and Science, districts will lose their best and brightest students to an elite institution causing a decline in district-wide national norm performance tests, as well as deprive remaining students of the positive role model these brighter students provide.

If your University establishes charter schools exclusive of adopting the recommended criteria from our work group, the MEA will:

1. Strongly encourage the teachers we represent to discontinue accepting the placement of SVSU student teachers;
2. Encourage professional staff to decline any involvement with the University relative to professional development or graduate course studies, etc.;
3. Encourage our members to refrain from any monetary contributions as alumni or University supporters;
4. Encourage local school Superintendents and Boards of Education to discontinue their support and participation in University programs.

If you wish to discuss this matter, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



David C. Sabedra, Executive Director  
Region 12-D Uniserv Office

cc: SVSU Board of Control Members