

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY
SENATOR, 63RD DISTRICT

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August 27, 2013

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Dr. John B. King, Jr.
Commissioner of Education
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Commissioner King:

I write on behalf of 550 students, hundreds of parents and the dozens of teachers and administrators who call Pinnacle Charter School home. I am disappointed that a school with high enrollment, showing a clear pattern of improvement in test scores, would be closed a week before the start of the school year. This decision will negatively impact stakeholders in the Buffalo community. I urge you to keep the school open and let the students return to their school next week.

Pinnacle Charter School is a school on the rise serving Buffalo's economically disadvantaged youth. Buffalo needs schools like Pinnacle, that are willing to take on challenging situations and work through them for the betterment of their students. Simply sending Pinnacle Charter School's students to various Buffalo Public Schools will further complicate the situation for Buffalo Public Schools, which is working to overcome their own challenges.

There are solutions to the problems Pinnacle has faced over the past few years. One of these solutions is to allow Pinnacle Charter due time with regards to their turnaround plan. Their test scores continue to show improvement due to an aggressive approach by the Pinnacle's teachers and administration. I implore the Education Department to work with the administrators of Pinnacle Charter School to find sensible solutions for the students, parents and teachers.

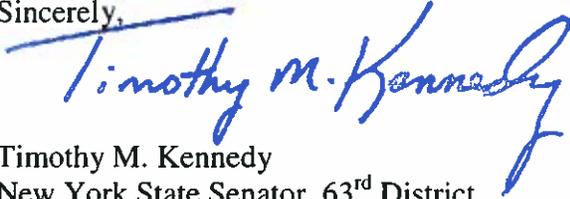
Pinnacle's administration has shown a willingness to work with the state to find optimal solutions for their students. I believe the best solution includes allowing Pinnacle to again open its doors on September 4th to welcome the 550 students who attend Pinnacle Charter School and continue to show improvement.

Of these 550 students, there are kindergartners who are preparing for their first day of school, first through eighth graders anxiously waiting to see their friends after a long summer and hundreds of students who now must start all over again at critical times in their development.

This last-minute decision to close Pinnacle just a week before classes start will prove to be a detriment to the children and families who deserve consistency and quality in their education.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this request. For further reference, please do not hesitate to contact me at (716)-826-2683.

Sincerely,



Timothy M. Kennedy
New York State Senator, 63rd District

cc: Board of Regents Chancellor Meryll H. Tisch
Board of Regents Vice Chancellor Anthony S. Bottar
Board of Regents Chancellor Emeritus Robert M. Bennett
Regent James C. Dawson
Regent Geraldine D. Chapey
Regent Harry Phillips III
Regent James R. Tallon, Jr.
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Regent T. Andrew Brown