

PHILADELPHIA, PA, September 21, 2013 **/24-7PressRelease/** -- The Board of Trustees of ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania Schools has released their first official response to unionization at Olney Charter High School:

"The Olney Charter School Board ("Board") received the right to operate Olney Charter High School two years ago. Prior to doing so, the School was failing. The facilities were significantly deteriorated; students were not being prepared for their future and, many times, felt unsafe walking in the halls of their own school.

Upon being awarded the right to operate the School, the Board made significant investments in the School. These include:- Fully air-conditioned classrooms- Conversion from oil to gas heat in order not only to save money but more important to improve what had been an uneven distribution of heat throughout the building- New furniture and equipment for students and staff- Increased facility security- Improved the quality of the food served to our students and staff

The goal of these investments was to provide our students with a safe environment where they could receive a quality education which would prepare them for the future. Over the past two academic years, these investments have clearly resulted in positive changes, and Olney Charter High School has been a great turnaround story in Philadelphia. Reading and mathematics proficiency have risen significantly, enrollment has increased, and the Board has and continues to acknowledge the substantial role that our teachers have played in this transformation. Good teachers clearly make a difference.

Numerous statements have been made in the Notebook and elsewhere alleging that the School is attempting to prevent its teachers or anyone else from forming a union. We support the rights of all employees, and we have never attempted to block our employees from voting in a representation election, nor will we. At no point has it been demonstrated that a valid, uncoerced majority of the School's employees share that desire. This is commonly established through an election, overseen by the National Labor Relations Board, following the filing of a representation petition. However, no representation petition has been filed regarding the School's employees. If such a petition is filed, then each side can present the relevant information and all covered school employees can determine what will be best for them. Thus, everyone's voice can be heard on this important issue.

The Board's position has remained consistent that, if our employees vote to be represented by a union, the Board will obviously honor its obligations under the law. The Board will continue to make Olney a school where students can focus on learning and preparing themselves for a brighter future.

ASPIRA of PA Schools' Board of Trustees Addresses Unionizing at Olney Charter High School

Written by Australian Business

Fred Ramirez Chairperson, ASPIRA Schools"

The ASPIRA of PA Schools' Board has made indications that there will be future responses to the various claims being made about their financial management of Olney Charter High School.

About ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that seeks to empower the North Philadelphia community through advocacy, and the education and leadership development of its youth. In addition to its vast array of extended learning programs, ASPIRA of PA also manages five charter schools and a preschool. Please visit <http://aspirapa.org> to learn more.