

# MARCH TO DEFEND PUBLIC EDUCATION IN JEFFERSON COUNTY!

May 5, 2018

Meet at Iroquois Park at 12:30 PM

## PARENTS! WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The public has spoken. Thanks to your calls, emails, and visits to legislators during the 2018 General Assembly, we staved off the threats of funding charters and scholarship tax credits one more year. Immediately after session ended, Governor Matt Bevin used backdoor, political maneuvering to fill seven of the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE) open board seats with charter advocates, who then replaced our highly competent and successful commissioner, Dr. Stephen Pruitt.

Subsequently and without justification, KDE's brand-new commissioner, Dr. Wayne Lewis, who has only been on the job two weeks, has recommended an unprecedented and unwarranted state takeover of Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS). Though Commissioner Lewis was undoubtedly a successful educator during his 5 years of teaching, he has minimal knowledge or experience in dealing with a district of the size and/or diversity of JCPS. Considering the exchange of rhetoric and growing publicity of the state takeover in recent days, we would like to share our opposition to the state of Kentucky taking over Jefferson County Public School System.

Dr. Pollio has done more in his ten months as acting superintendent, and 22 years of teaching and leading in turnaround schools, than previous superintendents had done in their entire tenures. Though Dr. Pollio has worked tirelessly and transparently to improve our district, Governor Matt Bevin is spearheading a concerted, sinister effort to dismantle our public school system and the teachers' union, Jefferson County Teachers Association (JCTA). This tactic has been used around the nation and the results have been devastating. We do not need to follow in the footsteps of urban school districts like Chicago, Detroit, New Orleans, Jersey City, Nashville, Indiana, and others that have gone down this dangerous, experimental and costly path of privatizing public education. Kentucky cannot afford this detour!

As parents, teachers, and citizens of Jefferson County, we are the immediate stakeholders in JCPS. Many of us are active in public education and have laid the foundation for significant and overdue reforms. It would be a travesty to go against the grassroots efforts by local people to fix our own local problems. A state takeover of the district diminishes the voices of local people, gives our tax dollars away to state government to spend as they see fit, and communicates that the people furthest from our local problems are better equipped to fix them. Data proves otherwise. Additionally, to remove or silence our elected Board member of JCPS is unconstitutional. We the people of Jefferson County elected them and we should not be silenced by Governor Bevin's draconian tactics and ulterior motives.

Unlike other districts, approximately 70% of the funding that operates JCPS comes from local tax dollars raised by our local elected school board, who are accountable to us! The governor believes stripping several million more dollars from Kentucky's public education system, and farming our elected leaders' responsibilities out to private corporations for profit, will somehow make it better? Data shows these solutions DO NOT help our gap students, despite that being the reason we supposedly are making this change. How can our students ever succeed if even more of our own tax dollars are taken from our schools?

Multiple studies have shown that state management does not have better results than improvement efforts under local control and in many cases have caused more harm, especially to students of color and students with disabilities. Let's look at the state of Michigan. Betsy DeVos's home state of Michigan went through a state takeover and 79% of students showed no improvement or lost ground on state assessments. No other urban district like ours has ever benefited from a state takeover, even when they were mismanaged. And in our case, it's not even warranted!

So, please. Join parents, students, teachers, staff, taxpayers and community leaders on **Saturday, May 5th at Iroquois park at 12:30 p.m.** as we march to the outside of Churchill Downs where we will hold a subsequent rally to Defend Public Education in Jefferson County.

More info can be found about the attempted state takeover and planned responses at [OurJCPS.org](http://OurJCPS.org).

**#OurJCPS**

Sign the  
petition at:

