

March 21, 2011

To members of the Appropriations' Committee:

Explorations Charter School has proved to be a good fit for our daughter Lidia. We adopted Lidia at age twelve from Russia and the public schools in our town mostly served her well during the years that she was receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services. After she progressed beyond the need for those services she began to flounder in the public high school for a variety of reasons. Part of the problem is that our public school is large and the atmosphere is often chaotic. She needs a calm learning environment and does better when there are not a lot of people and crowds to distract her. In addition, she is also still adjusting emotionally to post-institutional life and has many appointments that sometimes intrude on the hours of the school day.

Explorations is much better able than the public school to help her manage her schedule and help keep her from falling behind when she has to miss classes. If she continues at Explorations the school will likely be able to arrange for her to study Russian as her foreign language, rather than forcing her to choose Spanish or French. At this point she is still struggling to master the finer points of English and adding a third language at this point would prove an unwelcome distraction.

Please pass Senate Bill 1195 so that Lidia can continue to receive the education she needs.

Denise Clapsaddle, parent of Lidia Sousa