**BASIS and Greats Hearts Reaped Millions Earmarked for Poor and Minority Students**

Arizonans for Charter School Accountability

A Federal program that was designed to bring school choice to poor and minority students has been used by Basis Schools and Great Hearts Academies to build exclusive, college prep schools in affluent neighborhoods around the state, netting over $1 million for each school.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Diane Douglas proudly announced on October 4, 2018 that the Arizona Department of Education’s Arizona Charter Schools Program (AZCSP) was the recipient of a $55 million Title IV grant from the US Department of Education. The purpose of the grant is to hold competitive applications for school leaders interested in opening charter schools that serve disadvantaged Arizona students... Sub-recipients will be supported by a $250,000 annual award over a period of five years for a total of $1.25 million.

Educationally disadvantaged is defined in the grant as:

1. A school serving at least 40% racially and ethnically diverse students; or
2. A school serving at least 40% economically disadvantaged students eligible for federal lunch program support; or
3. A school serving at least 40% students with identified disabilities per IDEA; or
4. A school serving at least 40% English Language Learners (ELL).

BASIS Schools was awarded funds from this program in the past to build seven new schools and Great Hearts Inc. opened five schools, collecting millions in federal aid meant to serve poor, minority, and special needs students. Unfortunately, those at-risk students aren’t a part of the BASIS and Great Hearts model where Whites outnumber Hispanics 4 to 1. See Below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **BASIS** | Asian | Black | Hispanic/Latino | White | Multi-Race | Total | Free Lunch | Special Education |
| Basis Oro Valley | 108 |  | 79 | 355 | 13 | 571 | 0 | 0 |
| Basis Chandler | 660 | 15 | 32 | 169 | 16 | 897 | 0 | 0 |
| Basis Flagstaff | 48 |  | 65 | 477 | 35 | 640 | 0 | 17 |
| Basis Phoenix | 300 | 16 | 49 | 400 | 12 | 781 | 0 | 14 |
| Basis Tucson North | 193 | 35 | 174 | 637 | 16 | 1063 | 0 | 13 |
| Basis Ahwatukee | 361 | 32 | 52 | 278 | 25 | 756 | 0 | 0 |
| **Great Hearts** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Archway Arete | 39 | 16 | 97 | 333 | 36 | 533 | 0 | 41 |
| Archway Cicero | 27 | 12 | 60 | 391 | 17 | 516 | 0 | 28 |
| Archway Glendale | 58 |  | 62 | 366 | 30 | 537 | 0 | 45 |
| Archway Trivum East | 34 |  | 163 | 176 | 50 | 462 | 0 | 46 |
| Cicero Prep | 30 |  | 62 | 307 | 12 | 421 | 0 | 26 |
| **Total** | 1,858 | 126 | 895 | 3,889 | 262 | 7,177 | 0 | 230 |

The secret to qualifying for federal assistance is to serve affluent Asian college prep students. These eleven schools have enrolled 1858 Asian students, nearly 20% of all Asian charter students in the entire state. There are only 895 Hispanics enrolled, 12% of the total in a state where 45% of all K-12 students are Hispanic.

There are no ELL students. There are no free/reduced lunch students. Only 3% of students are in special education - three BASIS schools have no special education students at all. These schools do not provide a lunch program or transportation allowing disadvantaged children from the inner city to attend.

Instead, 80% of students in these elite schools are either White or Asian (see below). Often the term “underserved” is used when defining ethnic minorities to assure that genuinely at-risk students are being assisted. It would be difficult to argue that the 660 Asian students attending BASIS Chandler are an underserved population.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **BASIS** | % Special Education | % Hispanic | % Asian | % White | %White+Asian |
| Basis Oro Valley | 0% | 14% | 19% | 62% | 81% |
| Basis Chandler | 0% | 4% | 74% | 19% | 92% |
| Basis Flagstaff | 3% | 10% | 8% | 75% | 82% |
| Basis Phoenix | 2% | 6% | 38% | 51% | 90% |
| Basis Tucson North | 1% | 16% | 18% | 60% | 78% |
| Basis Ahwatukee | 0% | 7% | 48% | 37% | 85% |
| **Great Hearts** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Archway Arete | 8% | 18% | 7% | 62% | 70% |
| Archway Cicero | 5% | 12% | 5% | 76% | 81% |
| Archway Glendale | 8% | 12% | 11% | 68% | 79% |
| Archway Trivum East | 10% | 35% | 7% | 38% | 45% |
| Cicero Prep | 6% | 15% | 7% | 73% | 80% |
| **Total** | 3% | 12% | 26% | 54% | 80% |

The greed of corporate charter owners is to blame – taking every advantage they can to make a profit. But the Arizona Department of Education shares in the blame for allowing this to happen. Hopefully, the new $55 million grant will be given to charter owners who truly want to serve disadvantaged children.

(Data was gathered from the October 1, 2016 Enrollment Report and from Federal expenditures listed on page 9 of the Annual Financial Reports for the schools)