

Setting the Record Straight

Ferndale Schools' Position in Regards to Allegations from Civil Rights Group BAMN

You may recall from last year when inaccurate claims are made about the Ferndale Public Schools, we do not sit idly by and allow allegations to be printed, stated, or broadcast without doing our best to correct misinformation. Last year, it took us eight months of data analysis and reporting to provide Johns Hopkins University researchers with accurate graduation records to clear our name from the “dropout factory” list they published in October 2007. And Johns Hopkins published a correction and removed our name. This fall, the Ferndale Schools have been inaccurately labeled by another organization and we are facing a similar challenge to make sure untrue information is corrected, especially for our local school community.

The civil rights organization known as By Any Means Necessary (BAMN) is alleging the Ferndale Schools have established a separate, but unequal education system by creating University High School. Their actions began in September with the distribution of petitions that allege the school district practices segregation and offers an inferior curriculum at UHS compared to FHS.

BAMN has informed the Ferndale Schools they plan to demand that the district begin a process of regionalizing public education across the metropolitan area by

opening the doors of Ferndale High School to Detroit resident students. They point out that University High School has regional open enrollment. It is important to note the distinction between UHS and FHS enrollment policies. UHS was created as a regional magnet school offering a unique university/public school partnership as a high school reform model. By contrast, Ferndale High School, along with all the traditional K-12 schools in the district, is a traditional district school.

Even though BAMN has made allegations about the Ferndale Schools, their claims are not accurate and we want to make sure you have the facts regarding University High School, its purpose and mission, and student population, Ferndale High School enrollment options and student population, and the Ferndale Schools' mission to ensure all our students receive a quality education in a diverse and equitable environment. Until this matter is resolved, additional information will be provided in our Friday Fanouts, and posted on our website (watch for more information next week.)

Please contact Stephanie Hall, Director of Pupil Services and Community Relations, if you have any concerns or comments about this matter at shall@ferndale-schools.org, or 248/586-8651.