



**For Release**  
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## **Judge Rhodes confirms DEC will suppress charters** ***DPS leader admits new district will not survive unless school choice is hindered***

Lansing, MI – A key figure in the debate over legislation to reform the Detroit Public Schools today confirmed the primary purpose of the Detroit Education Commission is to control and manage student enrollment in serving the interests of the new traditional school district over charter public schools.

[In today's edition of \*The Detroit News\*](#), Judge Steven Rhodes, DPS Transition Manager, confirmed the “traditional school district’s future hinges on limiting the number of competing charter schools...and it will be more challenging for DPS to succeed without some kind of control over the opening of new charter schools.”

“Judge Rhodes has merely admitted what we’ve been saying for over a year – that the purpose of the DEC is to prop up the new traditional district at the expense of parental choice,” said Gary Naeyaert, Executive Director of the Great Lakes Education Project (GLEP). “While consistently disavowed by Mayor Duggan, The Coalition and other stakeholders, this fact is buried in the fine print of SB 710 and has now been confirmed by the state’s top internal authority,” Naeyaert continued.

GLEP commented that in bills passed by both the Senate and the House, there is agreement to split the district into the OldCo/NewCo format; use local property taxes to pay off 100% of the \$515 million in DPS’ operational debt; backfill the SAF with tobacco settlement funds to keep all districts whole; return the new district to local, elected leadership with oversight from the Financial Review Commission; and empower the State Reform Office to address chronically failing traditional and charter schools in Detroit.

“We believe this admission by Judge Rhodes should put the nail in the coffin of the DEC, and we urge the legislature to continue negotiations over the few remaining areas of disagreement, which include the specific amount of transition funding needed for the new district and a number of academic reforms passed by the House that weren’t debated by the Senate,” Naeyaert concluded.

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