



James Irwin Family,

I'm writing to you today on behalf of the Board of Directors of the James Irwin Charter School Network to inform you that the Board has adopted a resolution opposing Colorado House Bill 19-1032, Comprehensive Human Sexuality Education. The bill, which has passed the Colorado House of Representatives and is currently under consideration in the Senate, clarifies content requirements for public schools that offer comprehensive human sexuality education. The bill prohibits instruction from explicitly or implicitly teaching or endorsing religious ideology or sectarian tenets or doctrines, using shame-based or stigmatizing language or instructional tools, employing gender norms or gender stereotypes, or excluding the relational or sexual experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender individuals.

Regardless of the content of the bill, which can be evaluated according to each of your personal points of view, the Board of Directors has expressed their opposition of the measure on the basis that legislative involvement in the education of our children is expressly opposed to the Colorado Charter School Act. James Irwin Charter Schools was founded on the principle that Directors of public schools shall have control of the instruction of the students. We know that you, as parents, chose James Irwin for a specific reason.

As a father of a current James Irwin student and a James Irwin alumni, my wife and I chose James Irwin six years ago directly as a result of the school's focus on character development and academic rigor. In some recent discussions regarding this bill, a colleague expressed that he would prefer to discuss these subjects with his children directly, through his own interactions or in conjunction with his chosen place of worship. This subject is one that the Board feels is firmly in the purview of families, and believe that neither our schools nor State government should remove that choice to have sensitive and personal conversations with your children.

To be clear, James Irwin Schools do not offer comprehensive human sexuality education, precisely for this reason. As such, this bill will not directly apply to our schools, and would not require us to implement such a program. The concern of the Board of Directors, however, is that this is a potential first step in legislative direction of local educational content. That is a concept that the Board is directly opposed to.

The collective Board of Directors has deliberated this subject and adopted the resolution in opposition based on our concern for autonomy for our schools and out of respect for your role in the education of your children. We would appreciate any discussion or questions that you may have regarding this subject.

Respectfully,

Duane K. L. France, President
James Irwin Charter Schools
Board of Directors

RESOLUTION 19-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ("BOARD") OF James Irwin Charter Schools, DECLARING ITS OFFICIAL OPPOSITION TO COLORADO HOUSE BILL 19-1032 ON THE GROUNDS IT VIOLATES THE AUTONOMY OF CHARTER SCHOOLS.

WHEREAS, it is the right and responsibility for parents to direct the education and upbringing of their children; and

WHEREAS, The Colorado Constitution, in Article IX, Section 15, declares that the directors of each local school district "shall have control of instruction in the public schools of their respective districts."; and

WHEREAS, The Colorado Legislature declared "the best education decisions are made by those who know the students best and who are responsible for implementing the decisions," in Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) § 22-30.5-102(1)(b); and

WHEREAS, the Colorado Department of Education provides an automatic waiver from state statutes to charter schools allowing charter schools "to determine the educational programs to be carried on in the schools," in C.R.S. § 22-32-109(1)(t); and


WHEREAS, James Irwin Charter Schools is partnered with parents to assist them in their responsibility to educate their children; and

WHEREAS, Colorado House Bill 19 -1032 (HB19-1032) is an inappropriate attempt by the state to usurp the curricular autonomy of charter schools, prescribing curriculum from the state level and removing waivers for schools that request them;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

James Irwin Charter Schools opposes Colorado House Bill 19-1032 as against the spirit and intent of the Charter School Act, allowing charter schools to make their own decisions on educational programs.

ADOPTED THIS 7th DAY OF MARCH 2019



Duane K. France, Board President