

March 27, 2017

Ms. Gianna Cook  
The Paulo Freire Charter School  
28 Burnet Street  
Newark, NJ 07102

Dear State Board of Education,

When I first found out the school was closing I was completely shocked and couldn't believe it was happening. So much so that I was determined to help find any other solution to help keep it open. I was very sad to hear that my school was closing. This school has helped me grow as an individual and has challenged me to be my best self at all times. The school closing is of course unfortunate because though it's closing I was able to gain friendships, internships, out-of-state college tours, and service abroad opportunities that have been afforded to me because I attend this wonderful school.

The Paulo Freire Charter School feels like a family- and it still feels like a family. The teachers/staff and students are really open to helping one another in any area, and have always stepped in to help me when I was weak. In addition, as an arts integration school, the Paulo Freire Charter School fueled my creative ability to express myself through projects, extracurricular activities, and everyday life. For example, when I was running for student body president, I wanted to make sure that students voice was heard. So, I had an idea to use the bomb squad step team in my campaigning process. When I was able to showcase the steppers, use a bull-horn so the crowds of students could hear, and give out little treats with vote signs on them. I was so happy to see how the creative performance came together and how everyone was able to work together in helping me achieve the position I now hold as President of the Paulo Freire Charter School.

If I did not attend Paulo Freire I would not value the things I value today such as having an open-mind, persistence, and resilience. These are the core values that are taught to us. During the short time period I have been at the school, I have been able to grow as an individual and intellectual. I have great classes, and receive a great education. Because of the Paulo Freire Charter School, I learned that it is important to have people by your side, such as my peers because in a college, you need to rely on your peers sometimes to be successful. My Freire Family has also taught me that when we are united and consistent we can do anything. There is a cliché that says “if you want something done, you must do it yourself.” Because of the Paulo Freire Charter School, I believe this cliché is wrong after years of believing it to be true. The students, staff, and administration of my school have taught me that it’s okay to depend and rely on one another because these are the very people that will hold you up when you are weak, and cheer you on when you succeed. I wouldn’t have learned this at any other school, and that is why the Paulo Freire Charter School isn’t just a school, but a family.

Sincerely,  
Gianna Cook, Class of 2019