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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release  
July 2, 2009

### **More Charter School Parents Receive Threatening Letters from TPS, As Investigation Continues**

(Toledo, OH) --- The Northwest Ohio Charter School Coalition (NWOCS) reported Friday that more charter schools said their parents received threatening letters from Toledo Public Schools demanding an appearance at a TPS Attendance Hearing or have their case referred to the Lucas County Juvenile Court.

The NWOCS is in the midst of an investigation since reports surfaced earlier this week that parents at two charter schools received the letter. One charter school reported that a parent received harassing truancy phone calls from TPS, even after telling the caller that the child was enrolled at a charter school.

On Friday three additional charter schools reported to the NWOCS that their parents had received the threatening letter as well. As of Friday, at least five Toledo charter schools reported that they were dealing with concerned parents in the aftermath of the letters being sent out.

Toledo School for the Arts, Achieve Career Preparatory Academy, and Autism Academy of Learning said Friday that their parents had been contacted.

Martin Porter, Director, Toledo School for the Arts, said he met with his staff and found out TSA was deal with upset parents.

“Our guidance department said their phone was ringing off the hook on Thursday, and they spent most of the morning addressing parents' concerns,” he said. “We told parents that we have full attendance records and grade cards. We put out an announcement on our phone call system to alert parents.”

Kerry Gordon-Keese, School Leader, Achieve Career Preparatory Academy, said many of their ninth grade parents received letters even though many of the children involved had attended the charter school for more than three years.

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charter school / tps letters update 1 / 9-25-2009 / add one

The Autism Academy of Learning reported that at least one parent had received the threatening letter.

Toledo School for the Arts, Achieve Career Preparatory Academy, and Autism Academy of Learning joined Maritime Academy and Eagle Academy who reported Wednesday that their parents received the TPS letters.

In addition to referring the student's case to Lucas County Juvenile Court, the letter also states that TPS would refer the case to Lucas County Children Services, as well. The letter also states that state support services would be contacted, as well as the Ohio Dept. of Motor Vehicles if the child is of driving age.

Also on Thursday, the NWOCSA filed a Freedom of Information request with Toledo Public Schools to get the names of the parents and students who received the threatening letters.

In the letter, the NWOCSA gives TPS until the close-of-business on September 29, 2009 to produce the list.

“The information will be used as part of an investigation by NWOCSA to determine how many charter school parents received this notice. We find it disturbing that in at least two cases, threatening letters were sent to established charter school parents who have had their child or children enrolled in at the same charter school for the past three years,” the letter stated.

The NWOCSA is a local organization representing the interests of over 30 Toledo-area charter schools who educate over 8,000 students.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Marty Porter, Director of Toledo School for the Arts, is available for sound for local media. Please contact him directly at 419-246-8732.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A copy of the Freedom of Information request is attached with this e-mail.