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Troubled school troubles mother



Definition: Parent, Howard school system disagree over how to leave no child behind.

August 21, 2003 | By Tricia Bishop | Tricia Bishop,SUN STAFF

But Jareaux is having a hard time taking any of that into consideration because she is nearly frantic with the fear her advanced son will not be intellectually challenged.

Jareaux, 36, spent part of her childhood in Columbia, attending Dasher Green Elementary herself for a year and graduating from Wilde Lake High School. She moved back to the area in 2001 from Silver Spring, but kept her son at the private Owl School in Washington, which he had been attending since pre-school.

"I talked to her in detail," said Erica Powell, who transferred her two children out of Dasher Green last year and into Stevens Forest, and is not shy about counseling others to do the same.

Powell said her 9-year-old son, Tre Aikens, was struggling at Dasher Green even though he was taking advantage of the many extra resources available, including after-school programs and weekend classes.

"It wasn't making a difference," Powell said. "Something wasn't connecting."

Data on transfers for the 2003-2004 school year is being held until all information is in, Levene said. Jareaux is hoping her son will be among those counted, although it looks bleak.

Yesterday, Jareaux appealed the school system's decision before the county's school board of Education, which upheld the judgment.

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She had already launched a back-up campaign, contacting every media outlet she can think of, calling school administrators, meeting with staff at Dasher Green-Owen Brown and Waterloo, and even e-mailing the president of the United States.

Yesterday, after the disappointing hearing, she called the governor's office, bypassing the state Board of Education.

"It would be a waste of time. [The state board] doesn't have any guidance on how to implement the law," said Jareaux. "I'm hoping somebody [is paying attention] and says, 'OK, enough is enough. This needs to be addressed. The fight's not over.'"

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