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Now in Philadelphia, A High School Only For Foster Kids

Mike DeNardo, KYW Newsradio 1060 Philadelphia

A new high school — only for foster children — opened Wednesday in center city Philadelphia.

At the opening assembly of the Arise Academy Charter High School, board president Jill Welsh-Davis asked the 200 students how many high schools they’d attended.

Some said two, three, four. A few, she says, had been to six:

“Every time they’ve changed houses, whether it’s been to a new foster home or to another group home or some other kind of institution within the child welfare system, they’ve had to change schools.”

And that disruption increases the chances a foster student will drop out.

Charles Murray, who is currently working at an approximately 10th grade level at the school, says he doesn’t stand out as a foster teen at the Arise Academy:

“Everybody has practically been through the same thing you’ve been through. So it helps you a lot.”

Students work at their own pace in the school, which operates without formal grade levels.

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