Jay Marden 4 days ago
to me, Ted, spencer, Appel, Tricia

Ted,

I am responding to Shel’s email to provide an accurate account of my involvement in this matter:

- Throughout the process, I have been **fully supportive** of including a Menorah or any other secular or religious symbol at the tree lighting
I don't think I own a menorah that small.

Just so you know, it looks like this:

It's going to be tiny compared to the tree but it's about 6-feet tall.

I just want you to know -- it's the one we discussed already.

Yes I think you attached this picture to your email
Carmel River PTA would like to invite you to join us for our tree lighting celebration at River School.

Friday, December 10th at 4:30 PM on the lower playground, tree will be lit at approximately 5:15 PM.
Next week, December 8th, 3:15 pm in our Ottertoreum, our PTA will host its next meeting.

The agenda is as follows:

1. Welcome and norms
2. Treasurer report
3. Teacher appreciation week report of breakfast and lunch
4. Field trips update
5. River School Tree Lighting and Holiday Store
6. Principal report

We hope you can join us!

Majo Spencer, PTA President
Melissa Anderson, PTA Vice President
Carmel Unified School District  
Uniform Complaint Filing Form

Please refer to Board Policy 1312.3 for information about the types of complaints to be investigated under the Uniform Complaint Procedures. Please reference this link to the Regulations for details about the complaint process.

Complainant's Information:

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Email address

Name of Other Party Involved:

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School/Site which is subject to complaint

Name of student (if relevant)

Description of Complaint (please be clear and concise in your statement of the circumstances involved in your complaint).

(If necessary, continue on back side of this sheet)
Specific remedy sought by complainant:

Signature of complainant or representative

Date

I understand that in accordance with Board Policy 1312.3 I have the option of resolving my complaint through a neutral mediator and hereby request mediation.

Signature of complainant

Date

(This portion of form to be completed by school district staff.)

Date received by the Chief Technology Officer

File #

Signature of person receiving complaint

Date of Final Written Decision: Findings and disposition of complaint
(see attached full report.)

Date complainant noticed of right to appeal the decision to the California Department of Education and procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal.

Date Logged

Logged by

Links:

Board Policy 1312.3
Administrative Regulations 1312.3
Dear All,

We would like to donate a WINIX air filter which is a HEPA filter for the room. This filter has benefits for smoke, though is not rated for particulates as small as COVID.

We can bring it tomorrow.

Kind regards,
Melissa
Also, please call me Shel or Michele and please let me know if you prefer that I refer to you as Sup. or Dr. Knight. I really find it discourteous in our friendly California & small town culture to maintain overly formal titles that are less welcoming. However if you truly insist on calling me by an overly formal title, despite my consistent and oft request otherwise, my legal last name is Woodruff Lyons.

Thanks,

Shel

On Fri, Jan 28, 2022, 8:46 AM *********** wrote:

Dear Ted,

What? I only sent you two emails in the past 24 hours and they were on the exact same chain and same issue -- regarding the Complaint that you first claimed already had a full response so I could move on to the appeal, and then that you suddenly and shockingly claimed didn't even request a response so you should get an extra month to now respond! You were not on any other emails that I sent or to my knowledge.

Please forward me any other emails that you are talking about ASAP as those are public records anyway and don't get redacted when the only personal names are mine and/or my children. I do expect those emails immediately since you are referencing emails and I have no awareness at all of what you are discussing. At the very least, I want the names of the board members who forwarded you the emails by Monday and the copies of the emails by the end of next month (without redactions).

Thank you. It sounds like ***********

Warmest regards,

Shel

On Fri, Jan 28, 2022, 8:27 AM Ted Knight <tknight@carmelunified.org> wrote:

Ms. Lyons,
I can see that you have sent me, and several board members, various emails in the past 24 hours. We are working on a response and will be in touch soon.
Sincerely, Ted Knight

--

E. Ted Knight, EdD
he/him/his
Superintendent Carmel Unified School District
4380 Carmel Valley Road
Carmel, CA 93923
(831) 624-1546 ext. 2020

The information contained in this email may be personal and confidential and is intended only for the recipients named above (and any of the recipient’s authorized designees). If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient of this message or of any attachments to the message, you are hereby notified that you have received this document in error and that any review, dissemination, distribution, or copying of this message, including any attachments, is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete the original message. Thank you.

Link to CUSD Nondiscrimination Notice
Thanks for your email and for calling me Shel. I can tell whenever you are just forwarding Will's emails because they are all addressed Ms. Lyons. Thank you also for taking the time to read this long email that addresses the issues you raised.

First, I take responsibility and apologize that I didn't make it clear that you need to reply to the offer. Yes, of course, there needs to be an agreement on extension because otherwise I would have needed to wait until February 7th to file the appeal when if you weren't going to agree to respond by the 4th, I would only need to wait until February 1st to file the appeal. And, since there are only 30 days to file an appeal, the agreed upon date of response is critical. So, again, if you agree in writing by or before January 31st that you will provide a response by February 4th, that is fine. But, if you do not agree in writing, then the deadline is January 31st. **You still need to respond by or before Monday and tell me whether or not you are agreeing to the February 4th extension.** Your attorney should have explained to you that the way that this process works because the deadline is set by CUSD to be no later than 60 days unless I agree to an extension, but I cannot agree to any extension unless we agree on a date and there is a commitment on CUSD's portion, too. As a specific example, let's say that I gave you until the 4th without an agreement from you, you don't ever respond, and then I wait until the 4th of March to file my appeal which is 30 days from the 4th. We'll will just say that I missed the appeal deadline because it would have been 30 days from the agreed upon deadline which was only agreed upon deadline. It's a real issue and you can be in a lot of trouble if you don't respond to extension deadlines or if you rely upon them without an agreement, so as your attorney should have explained to you, you always need an agreement for an extension to be valid.

Second of all, in response to your bizarre accusation that I sent too many emails and don't give enough time for a response, I want to be honest about what happened Tuesday evening. Yes, I kindly and considerately sent you all the emails Tuesday evening to show you the record of what you wrote since you yourself seemed to have no idea what you wrote to be as your own "reply in writing". It was an incredibly generous gesture on my part as I searched through every single email you had sent me since November 30th to find the needle in the haystack you claimed existed as a response to my Complaint. In the end, you finally admitted that it did not exist, but that was after putting me on a wild goose chase looking for that nonexistent email. And, as I look for emails from you since that date, I have about 50 chains of emails from you that I was searching through, so if you didn't want so many emails, maybe you should have responded and admitted that no such email actually existed. Going forward, it would be helpful to take responsibility -- admit that you messed up, never responded to the Complaint at all, and to let me know that I could stop looking for that nonexistent email. I was literally hunting for it until you finally responded on Wednesday, a full day later, to finally admit that it was all a shenanigan on your part. What a way to rewrite history to say that I wasn't giving you time to reply! Again, I only have a 30-day time period to reply so imagine if instead of sending it certified mail as these responses are normally sent, you actually sent it only via email, it goes to my spam, and Tuesday was my 30th day. You make it sound like I was harassing you, when your email basically told me that my appeal time might have already expired. I just don't think you have any understanding of what it meant when you sent that irresponsible emailing claiming to have already replied in writing instead of apologizing for your complete failure to respond timely and asking kindly and humbly for an extension. It's quite appalling. When you finally do reply, I only send one email in response and I wait **over 24 hours** for your response. I think it is an understatement to say that I give CUSD plenty of time to respond to emails and issues -- I give them more than the situation usually calls for -- and it is generally CUSD that adds all this insane time-sensitivity to every single issue by waiting to announce more Christian-favored programs until last minute, by refusing to timely respond to Complaints, by making crazy statements that the response already existed when it did not.

Third, in response to your question, I think you have all the key documents/information to my awareness. I know that you received a lot of key documents from Trish in May and June about the systematic racism & discrimination. Then I forwarded you more key documents back in July/August when we were initially talking about the discrimination issues at River, and so you should have your own investigations/reports, too. Then I submitted more evidence with my declaration from which the judge declared: "**Plaintiffs' allegations of Defendants' systemic endorsement of Christian beliefs and traditions, while disadvantaging those of other religions, are very serious. Plaintiffs' allegations regarding the feelings of exclusion experienced by the minor children are particularly troubling.**" Then I sent you that Google drive link -- by the way, please do not forward it as it has sensitive teacher and minor information there and you and Will are the only ones who received the link on purpose, because I will need to redact that information before I can make it available. Then I sent you the 1/26 CUSD Board meeting testimony. I think you have enough information to decide in my favor comfortably on the Complaint. Here's the issue -- I have requested the right to have **any** secular Hanukkah symbols (menorah, dreidels, gelt, sufganiyot) at any existing or a
separate schoolwide event (e.g., the Christmas Santa Parade, the Christmas Music Concert, the Christmas Red & Green Days, the Christmas Tree Lighting at my own expense. That request has been repeatedly and systematically denied for years. I have been told that any inclusion of Hanukkah or any other minority (non-Christmas) holiday in December would never be on a schoolwide event. There is a preference for one holiday (Christmas) over other holidays (Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Diwali, Eid, Ramadan, etc) in the prohibition of secular symbols only for one group - namely Jewish ethnic, religious, or ancestral groups (menorah, dreidel, gelt, sufganiyot) where the Christmas secular symbols are all being allowed, promoted, and encouraged. In fact, they are all being endorsed in a way that is religious -- the tree is decorated with religious Christian symbols, the candy canes have religious notes tied to them. It's disgusting and it amounts to racial, religious, ancestral, and cultural discrimination. The U.S. Supreme Court applauded a city display of a menorah over 30 years ago in County of Allegheny v. ACLU, 492 U.S. 573 (1989). The Court found that a menorah and tree displayed together “must be understood as conveying the city's secular recognition of different traditions for celebrating the winter-holiday season” and concluded “the menorah is readily understood as simply a recognition that Christmas is not the only traditional way of observing the winter-holiday season.” The Court found the display showed “a respect for religious pluralism, a respect commanded by the Constitution.” The Court determined it would be a form of discrimination against Jews to allow Pittsburgh to celebrate Christmas as a cultural tradition while simultaneously disallowing the city’s acknowledgment of Chanukah as a contemporaneous cultural tradition. I think you have a winner here. If you want to find for me in any way -- just to mediate this situation or agree that it is to the extent of egregious -- River schoolchildren are being reported for hate incidents as a result of these school policies -- you can do it. If you don't want to find for me, I am confident that Will will find a way for you to find against me by quoting only the most specific of cases and claiming that all these school-hour, school site, school sponsored events are all "PTA" or "optional" or some other long-shot line. And, then I will appeal to the CDE and just hope that the CDE will step in. I think that the Federal District Judge made a strong showing that CUSD does 100% have a problem here and that was without me talking about the extent of issues that this Complaint raises.

Please do address the PRA within the next month -- that can only be a couple emails and without redactions.

Thanks,
Shel

On Fri, Jan 28, 2022 at 3:35 PM Ted Knight <tknight@carmelunified.org> wrote:

Shel,

Regarding your most recent email as to the response to your uniform complaint, I understood your January 26 email to agree to an extension until February 4 and it did not appear from that email that you were asking the District to affirmatively agree to your partial agreement to its extension request. Nonetheless, the District is currently working on preparing a formal response to the allegations in the uniform complaint and will provide the response to you as soon as possible. To that end, if you have any additional documents which you believe are evidence, or information leading to evidence, to support the allegations in the complaint, please forward them to my attention.

Further, to clarify, while my prior email was focused on the last 24 hours, it appears you have sent, to me alone, nine emails since Tuesday evening, many times less than a few hours apart. Going forward, it would be helpful to allow the District time to respond to your emails before adding to or modifying them as it makes it difficult to identify and fully respond to any requests.

Finally, I wanted to let you know that the District will respond to your most recent PRA request separately.

And feel free to address me as Ted or whatever makes you most comfortable, Ted
Hi Jessica,

Perfect! Thank you! You've been awesome for our District in terms of organization and responsiveness.

It sounds like you are saying that the 30-days only starts from today when I added counsel because that's what your receipt says. That means that the time did not run from last Wednesday when I initially emailed you as Ted's official substitute and the entire Board.

I will do it right the first time next time so I don't lose those 4 days in the future since it's not fair to me. I keep getting inconsistent information from Ted. Half the time he says to just email him and not counsel, and promises that he'll forward everything to counsel. But then the other half, he blames me for him not responding timely because I didn't include counsel. Like I have an outstanding Complaint with him from November 30th that he never replied to because he never told counsel about it. Yet he then told me and counsel that he replied in a chain to both of us in an email that doesn't exist because he had told me not to include counsel. I'm fine either way but I just don't want to get the short end of the stick when I am following his instructions and he doesn't take responsibility for forgetting to forward to counsel.

That's a long way of saying that I understand that the 30-days starts running from today ;)

Have a great weekend! You're doing a fabulous job in representing CUSD!

Warmest,

Shel

On Sun, Jan 30, 2022, 4:08 PM Jessica Hull <jhull@carmelunified.org> wrote:
Thank you, Shel. I am confirming Ted and our legal counsel are in receipt of your emailed complaint today. We will respond within the 30 day timeframe.

Jessica Hull (she/her/hers)
Director of Communications and Community Relations
Carmel Unified School District
P.O. Box 222700, Carmel, CA 93922
jhull@carmelunified.org
office (831) 624-1546 ext. 2022
cell (209) 679-4858
CalSPRA President-elect
NSPRA Southwest Region Front-Runner 2021

On Sun, Jan 30, 2022 at 3:59 PM [Redacted] wrote:
Dear Jessica,

Hi. I hope you are well. Thank you for filling in for Superintendent Knight at the last meeting. You did a superb job!

I am following up on the Brown Act Violation. I am not copying Ted as you were his fill-in at the relevant meeting, I already had asked you to forward to him last week if necessary, and he told me that he is overwhelmed with emails, implying that he cannot handle them. However, since I never got a response on whether CUSD was going to require me to send a formal Brown Act Violation letter to counsel and multiple days have passed, I am sending a formal letter to CUSD counsel as a precaution. This is important because Brown Act violations have deadlines both to be noticed and for a response. If you consider my notice last week to be sufficient, the deadline is 30 days from last week. Otherwise, it is 30 days from today. Please let me know which one you consider to be the "start" date so I know how to send these violations in the future and get the time to start running, as I want to be in compliance with CUSD's requests for legal communications.
Dear CUSD Counsel:

This letter is to call your attention to a substantial violation of central provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act at Wednesday’s CUSD meeting on January 26, 2022. The nature of the violation is as follows:

In its meeting of January 26, 2022, CUSD Board failed to allow for Board Comment on the following Action item:

**III.A. Districtwide Mental Health/Wellness Presentation**

Immediately following the presentation, CUSD President only allowed for comment from the CUSD Board members and then moved to the next item:

**III.B. Ratification of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Carmel Unified School District and the Association of Carmel Teachers Regarding COVID-19 Leave**

I waited for a chance to speak and was surprised when no opportunity was present. I was completely caught off guard since I was right at the front and there were other members of the public present. The agenda would not allow me to have a chance to speak beforehand as public comment was limited to non-agendized items.

I.F. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDIZED, OPEN SESSION, AND CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

**Quick Summary / Abstract:**

Members of the public may address the Board regarding items on the closed session and open session agenda or topics within the Board's jurisdiction that are **not on the agenda**, at this time.

Moreover, I relistened to the meeting and CUSD President made it clear that I could not speak about item III.A. during public comment because she stated that it was only for non-agendized items. I also relistened to item III.A. and she did not provide any opportunity for public comment.

**VIOLATION:** Failure to allow for any public comment on Action item III.A was improper. There was no agenda item for public comment on agenda items, so that was my only time to publically comment on that item. This action/failure was not in compliance with, nor in the spirit or intention of, the Brown Act because it prevented the public from being able to exercise their legally protected right to comment.

Pursuant to that provision (Government Code Section 54960.1), I demand that the CUSD Board cure and correct the illegally taken action as follows:

1) Put "Public Comment for January 26 2022 "Districtwide Mental Health/Wellness Presentation" on the agenda.
2) Explain at the February 16 2022 CUSD Board meeting that "Public Comment for January 26 2022 "Districtwide Mental Health/Wellness Presentation" is on the agenda as it did not occur on January 26th and is an opportunity for members of the public to speak on the January 26 2022 "Districtwide Mental Health/Wellness Presentation"
3) Allow the public to comment on January 26 2022 "Districtwide Mental Health/Wellness Presentation"
4) Provide an opportunity for the Board to respond after the public comment January 26 2022 "Districtwide Mental Health/Wellness Presentation" as the Board would have typically commented on public comment of an agendized item.
5) Out of courtesy for the members of the public who waited to speak after that agendized item and were thwarted from speaking last week and to stop further thwart of our rights by making us wait any longer, make sure that this item is either immediately preceding public comment on non-agendized issues (ideally since those of us who want to comment already waited through the January 26th meeting) or immediately following public comment on non-agendized items (less ideal but acceptable if that is the only option).

*It is not acceptable to force those of us who wanted to speak last week to use our 3 minutes of next month’s public comment on this topic that we should have had a separate opportunity to speak last month. However, it will be acceptable to allow for 6 minutes of public comment for each person if the Board is then provided an opportunity to respond at the end of public comment to any issues raised that relate to the January 26th presentation as they typically would have if public comment on that topic had occurred during last week’s meeting like it should have.*

These actions are necessary to redress the illegality and provide the public the awareness and opportunity to comment of which it was deprived, including a full disclosure at the subsequent meeting that public comment on this agendized item did not occur, notice of which is properly included on the posted agenda.
As provided by Section 54960.1, you have 30 days from the receipt of this demand to either cure or correct the challenged action or inform me of your decision not to do so. If you fail to cure or correct as demanded, such inaction may leave me no recourse but to seek a judicial invalidation of the challenged action pursuant to Section 54960.1, in which case I would also ask the court to order you to pay my court costs and reasonable attorney fees in this matter, pursuant to Section 54960.5.

Respectfully yours,

Michele R. Woodruff Lyons  
CBN 234821

On Wed, Jan 26, 2022 at 7:14 PM [redacted] wrote:

Dear CUSD Board:

First, thank you for your service.

Second, I am incredibly disappointed that there was no public comment allowed re the wellness centers. I stayed until almost 6:30 to hear and comment regarding Mr. Gonzalez's talk. I'll send a much more formal cure notice if that's really going to be forced. Otherwise, I think the Board should add an agenda item *before* public comment for the next meeting so those of us who were not allowed to talk tonight can speak without needing to wait again since it's not fair. Please let me know by tomorrow if you need a more formal correct/cure notice if you'll admit that public comment was completely skipped, the board commented and then it went to the next agenda item without allowing those of us in the audience to speak.

Third, during public comment [redacted] testified about the racism being experienced by them first hand by teachers, staff, and school admin, as well as other CUSD students. If you'd like a copy of the discriminatory curriculum or evidence that students only receive awards for Christmas colors (there are only red and green days and blue isn't included and it's multiple otter bucks) or evidence that a federal judge considers the discrimination on campus to be "very serious", please let me know. Ted has seen everything and known about these issues since July (actually earlier from Trish) so it's not questioned, but it's just a fact. It's heartbreaking (as you saw multiple grown witnesses to the antisemitism [redacted] that I've had to raise these issues of racism at River for multiple years. Ted even refuses to meet with the ADL on these issues of discrimination, telling the ADL that they have to meet again with Jay even though I already met with Jay on these exact issues and was specifically told that the next person to meet with is Ted. Jay isn't going to change his mind -- he's very discriminatory in all his emails, his programs/activities, and even the curriculum he has his teachers use to teach Hanukkah as a "Israeli" (and not American) holiday. For Ted to refuse to even meet with the well-respected Anti-Defamation League on and by the request of parents as our representative of approximately 50 parents and children after the parents already met with and tried to work with Jay is basically condoning the discrimination to continue and refusing to take it seriously. After the testimony, I hope someone on the board has the good sense to tell Ted to meet with the ADL for crying aloud and to provide a deadline for him to agree to meet with Ms. Appel, copied here, in case any of you want to reach out to her directly to learn more. I think our board can take a more proactive position -- Ted could and should be told that he has 1-week to respond to the ADL and must set up a meeting with them before the February board meeting. You, our powerful CUSD school board members, know that this hate on campus is real, that antisemitism is happening, and that it is all being taught by staff & peers starting at a very young age. We need the ADL to get involved and help CUSD and help these students. Indeed, we even heard from Mr. Gonzalez's talk and question/answer session with the board (again, there was no public comment allowed), that it's having negative mental health impacts on students. It's critical that we do not delay any longer. Ted could meet with the ADL before February meeting (and talk about it in his update then), and CUSD could have a report from the ADL in the March or April meeting, and then we could take action in May and June to start the amazing ADL programs this August. Our schools are in desperate need of help combating hate and bigotry, and providing resources to teachers and students.

Of note, I'm copying Ms. Hull to the email as a courtesy since she's filling in for Ted [redacted], and trust that she'll know whether Ted and/or Will should be forwarded the notice to correct and cure.

Thank you again.

Warmest,

Shel
Hi Jay,

I hope you are well.

It's obvious that Majo is not going to reply. I've been reaching out to her for over a month. So please just answer the following yes/no questions (check in with her if you don't know the answers):

1) Will the dance happening in April be outdoors?
2) Will the carnival happening in April be outdoors?
3) Will the events be limited by grade-level?
4) Will the events have anything in their names that make it sound that they discriminate by gender (e.g. girl/boy, daughter/son, father/daughter)?
5) Will invitations be given to students on any gender basis (e.g. just girls get invitations to the dance)?

I know that the principal of a school must serve as a conduit of communication in this case as I am a PTA member and tried to get a response from the PTA who is refusing to reply despite multiple kind requests from a parent. At this point, I do feel like the refusal to reply is motivated by racial discrimination as I've been racially discriminated against from the PTA in the past.

Also, while I was told by multiple other parents that you were told that the dance name needed to change (is that even true?), I was never told that Majo was even informed of the same so making her reply is unfair. I loathe how you put Majo in the middle constantly whether it's discrimination against racial minorities or now against LGBTQ+ minorities. I keep trying to protect her because it's clear that you are the one with the influence and making the decisions. Majo even told me that she's not allowed to do anything without your approval. So if you don't approve of her changing the dance name, she can't. And even when you put in writing that you were "fully supportive" of including menorahs (and minorities), she had to cover for you (while she had told me that she absolutely wanted the event not to be racist).

Please just tell me by the end of the day without more back and forth if the names of the events will be changed. You can write -- "as I've been told by Majo" -- if you are indeed being told the answers by Majo or "as I understand" if Majo isn't telling you anything but that's just your understanding.

Also, I do want to add that I am really happy that you are working to make the events more inclusive! As you know, it means the world to me, [redacted] This good news is the exact sort of good news that our school really needs right now to end that homogenized sadness that we all experienced in December with the multitude of Christmas-only curriculum, programs, activities during and after school hours. I think it is going to be a great way to end the year and I'm really thrilled to start working towards really having the school gain the value in differences of all the students at our school. After all, variety is the spice of life!

Thank you,

Warmest,

Shel

On Mon, Jan 31, 2022, 9:16 AM [redacted] wrote:

Hi Majo,

I hope you are well.

I'm following up. Please give me a update of what is happening with the dance. I'm really hoping for good news from you that the dance is now inclusive so we don't have homogenized sadness in our school anymore. The tree lighting excluding minorities was a huge disappointment for everyone. Let's make sure that the dance includes LGBTQ families, single parent families, adoptive families, foster families, military families, grandparent families, and others because there is value in differences. Can you make sure to let me know what is happening with the dance sometime today?
Feel free to call me and I'll follow up with text. Thanks for everything you are doing with the PTA. Your involvement and commitment is greatly appreciated. Keep up the good work!

Warm regards,
Shel

On Fri, Jan 28, 2022, 10:49 AM [redacted] wrote:

Dear Jay,

Thank you for responding and correcting me. In the past, the school has done the advertising and the invitations were all done during school hours, so I didn't know that it's been changed to a PTA-only event without any school involvement anymore. That's good to know. I'm adding Majo now -- Majo, can you give us the good news? I heard that Ted spoke to the CUSD attorneys and they decided it was a Title IX violation and discriminatory, so that he was not approving it as a school event. I hope we are doing something right at this school!

Please let me know the update.

Thanks!

Warmest regards,

Shel

On Fri, Jan 28, 2022 at 10:46 AM Jay Marden <jmarden@carmelunified.org> wrote:

Shel,
You will have to inquire with the PTA about any recent development regarding the events in question. They are PTA sponsored and hosted and as such it is appropriate for them to respond.

Jay

On Thu, Jan 27, 2022 at 10:19 PM [redacted] wrote:

Dear Jay,

I hope you are doing well..

[redacted] spoke yesterday at the Board meeting. I hope you had a chance to listen to it. It starts at minute 43: Board of Education Meeting January 26, 2022 - YouTube.

After that testimony from [redacted] I just heard from another parent that the Father-Daughter dance will finally change its name to be more inclusive because it's violating Title IX and other laws to protect student rights (e.g., transgender students, non-binary students) besides obviously being ethically and morally wrong when school should be a safe and inclusive place for all students.

Can you please confirm? I am thrilled to get this positive news of inclusion, progress, and welcoming happening at River, which is all that so many parents, students, staff/teachers, including our entire family and everyone we know, have wanted and asked for years. Thank you so much for making sure that River is sensitive to all students and making positive changes under your leadership! I'd love to be a part of this positive change in any way possible.

If this is true, I hope that you send out the update about this name change to be inclusive of students regardless of gender with your Friday email tomorrow. This is exactly the type of positive news that this school and community needs to know that we are progressing into a more inclusive, welcoming, and positive environment to be a safe, welcoming, and inclusive place for all students to learn and thrive. (Of note, I personally think a grade division would be fine -- [redacted] -- but not a gender division which the Superintendent has told parents is illegal.)

Thank you again for making sure River is creating cherished traditions that are kind and sensitive, instead of just divisive and exclusionary ones! I could not be happier to hear that we are finally moving in the right direction instead of the wrong one!

Warmest regards,
Re: CUSD Honors Black History Month

From: [Redacted]  
To: Ted Knight <tknight@carmelunified.org>

Ted,

Beautifully written!

I am so incredibly hopeful that there will be action and improvement, and not just because it is illegal, but also just because it is wrong. All students should feel safe and welcome in schools. I really do hope that you decide to approve the complaint on Friday because that will be a positive step to forcing racial discrimination to stop. But even if you deny the complaint, I have confidence that an outside agency will step in to enforce the laws and discrimination will be stopped. You followed an interim Superintendent who wasn't really empowered to do anything, and she followed an outgoing Superintendent who wasn't really inclined to do anything, so a lot of parents and students have been waiting a lot of years for action. There is finally enough momentum that everyone is realizing just how widespread the problems have become. While I wish stronger action was taken back in July when I first shared the discrimination, it is not too late.

It is also important to note that CHS Principal Lyons has started an Anti-Hate Task Force and should be commended for being proactive in this manner so that other school site leaders feel safe in making positive progress in schools. CUSD needs to work harder at publicly applauding the positive work that is happening, too, so that the entire community sees that there is a response to condemn racism and to make our schools more inclusive. Your email was a start in the right direction.

Warmest regards,

Shel

On Tue, Feb 1, 2022 at 3:59 PM Ted Knight via ParentSquare <donotreply@parentsquare.com> wrote:
nation, honors the contributions of Black Americans through culturally relevant teaching and learning in our schools. I recently read that February became recognized by President Ford as Black History Month in 1976, due to the contributions of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas, whose birthdays are both celebrated in February and are credited for their roles in abolishing slavery.

In learning more about the month, I found the story of Black History Month begins in 1915, half a century after the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in the United States. That September, the Harvard-trained historian Carter G. Woodson and the prominent minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), an organization dedicated to researching and promoting achievements by Black Americans and other peoples of African descent. Known today as the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), the group sponsored a national Negro History week in 1926. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month.

We know that celebrating Black History involves much more than a month-long commemoration, and providing equitable access to education
and an inclusive environment for all students is a critical part of our district focus each and every day. We have heard that there are some in our community who have serious concerns about our efforts to create a sense of belonging for all students, staff, and families. We are listening. We will continue to do all we can for the students, families, staff and the community of CUSD to ensure inclusive environments, equitable access to education, and space to have conversations about our progress.

I hope you will join me in honoring Black History Month by remembering and celebrating the work and legacy of our African American heroes.

Sincerely,
Dr. Ted Knight
Superintendent

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Appreciate

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