



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 10, 2021

MEDIA STATEMENT – 6/10/2021 Update

In January, the Burlington Area School District began an investigation into classroom content posted by a Burlington High School teacher. Consistent with BASD’s policies, the teacher was placed on a non-disciplinary paid leave of absence to investigate relevant information.

The district hired an outside investigator to conduct the investigation and allegations in a subsequent discrimination complaint. The district received the final report from the investigator, Saveon Grenell, an attorney with Buelow Vetter Buikema Olson & Vliet, LLC, on May 20, 2021.

Board policy 2240 addresses teaching on controversial issues, defining a controversial issue as “a topic on which opposing points of view have been promulgated by a responsible opinion.” A discussion of current events in a high school level social studies course is consistent with the instructional goals of the class. The investigator learned that the specific resources that drew controversy, posted in the teacher’s Google Classroom, were supplemental and optional, not assignments.

The investigator concluded that the teacher did not violate Board policies, or state and federal laws as it pertains to any alleged discrimination. Further, there is no evidence that the teacher engaged in any unlawful activity on January 6, 2021, while in Washington D.C. The teacher will return to teaching at Burlington High School in the fall.

The district has met with the teacher to discuss the recommendations offered in the report and reiterate expectations moving forward. The teacher will participate in professional development related to culturally responsive education, consistent with the district’s ongoing commitment to nurturing an inclusive environment. The teacher will meet with district administrators to discuss expectations for curriculum and the discussion of controversial topics. The teacher will be observed consistent with and in addition to the district’s educator effectiveness protocol.

The Burlington Area School District sees ensuring all students experience an inclusive learning environment as a priority.

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