

Kevin Harty, J.D.
Board Counsel
Traverse City Area Public Schools

November 21, 2017

Dear Mr. Harty:

This letter is addressed to you as board counsel. We trust in your legal and political acumen to share its contents in a fashion that will ensure that our concerns are addressed in a manner that is in the best interests of the district and the children and community we serve.

On behalf of the Administration Team at TCAPS, we are sharing the following ongoing concerns with you so as to expedite a resolution that refocuses the human and fiscal resources of our District on the work of teaching and learning and growing our kids.

On September 25th, 2017, the Principals of the Traverse City Administrators Association (TCAA) shared a letter with our Board of Education asking for an independent investigation into the “pattern and practice of harassment and intimidation by the Executive Team onto the Administration Team”. We were grateful that our Board of Education responded by adopting a resolution to hire a special counsel to investigate the Executive Team’s long standing harassment and abuse of power towards principals and administrators.

TCAA members have two pressing concerns at this time:

- As of November 20th, 2017, the special counsel’s investigation has focused solely on the three TCAA members involved in July/August 2017 Executive Team escalation framed around the Rock at West Senior High and the related removal of an East Middle School Administrator. While these incidents at EMS and WSH are the most recent egregious examples, they are not the sole or primary reason the TCAA petitioned the BOE. We want to ensure this investigation covers the patterns of treatment by Executive Team to many other current and former TCAA members. We are becoming increasingly concerned that their stories have not been heard. Additional detailed statements from administrators are attached to this letter. We are asking that the matters addressed in these statements be included as part of the board’s investigation.
- Of additional concern is the fact that since the inception of the Special Counsel’s investigation, Executive Team members have ceased to fully execute their duties and have intentionally left principals unsupported in meeting the needs of the students and staff of our district. Communication and behavior of Executive Team members has changed drastically including:
 - Lack of Executive Team presence to show recognition and support for staff and students at school events and ceremonies.

- Consistent cancellation of district meetings by Executive Team members, including, but not limited to:
 - District Acceleration Network Meetings, directed by Parker, Soma, McCall, canceled on 10/13, 10/27, 11/3, 11/10, 11/17, 12/1, 12/8, and 12/15
 - District 'Family' Administrative meeting, directed by Soma and all of ET, canceled on 11/8
 - Principal and Curriculum Leader meetings canceled on 10/11, 11/15, 11/16 by Parker
 - All sessions of the TCAPS Administrative Intern program for 2017-18 have been canceled by McCall. No notification of this cancellation was sent to principals.
 - Numerous other meetings with Executive members on specific topics have been canceled without reason while other district-level meetings have proceeded with no Executive Team members present (Soma, Parker, McCall)
- Lack of timely, clear, and consistent response from Executive Team members to district level questions posed by Principals via voice mail, email, and text messages. In some cases, this intentional neglect has even been in situations where child safety was at issue.

The Principals of the TCAA continue to believe in our work and in the care and support of our staff and students. We will continue to run our schools with integrity and resiliency and will shield our students and staff from this needless district level conflict. To continue to effectively support our kids, our Principals desperately need:

1. Expediency and inclusion of all principal complaints in the Special Counsel's investigation.
2. Immediate cessation of Executive Team tactics to avoid meetings, decision making and the work of the district when support is requested by Principals. These non-supportive tactics are being viewed as retaliation against the Principals and should not be tolerated.

The Executive Team's behavior since the September board meeting demonstrates the lack of professional leadership that led the TCAA to request this investigation in the first place.

Thank you for your continued support and service to our community.

Sincerely,

Traverse City Administrators Association

Cc: David Revore