

J. Michael Clára
Salt Lake City School Board
District Two

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20 February 2014

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DELIVERED VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
Mr. McKell Withers
Salt Lake City School District
440 East 100 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111-1891

Re: GRAMA REQUEST: Public Relations Firm

Dear Mr. Withers,

Pursuant to **Government Records Access Management Act (GRAMA)**, *Utah Code §63g-2-204*: I am requesting a copy of all records (*a book, letter, document, paper, map, plan, photograph, film, card, tape, recording, electronic data, or other documentary material regardless of physical form or characteristics*) pertaining or associated with the District's hiring of a public relations firm under the "Expedited Request for Proposal" RFP # JB1499-PR.

According to the Salt Lake Tribune article titled: **After Tossed Lunches, Utah District Eyes \$49,999.00 PR Hire** (02/20/14), the school board will vote to pay the PR Firm that has already been hired by the district at the March school board meeting.

In order to make an informed vote, I would need to see the information I am seeking through this GRAMA request.

I also believe it was unprincipled of you to not mention this RFP to the school board at our last meeting just two days ago. I would think that after your years of service as a superintendent you would realize the importance of keeping the entire school board apprised of all activities surrounding this matter. This is yet another example of the poor leadership that you have demonstrated throughout this ordeal.

The board vice president is quoted in the article as mentioning some concern about bringing every RFP to the board. I believe that in her zeal to protect your reputation she has lost sight of reality. The fact of the matter is that making these types of decisions about this particular incident, in isolation and secrecy is not only an insult to the other members of the school board but also robs the public of their right to an open government, we call it: TRANSPARENCY. I would admonish you to grasp it, embrace it, for it will go a long way in healing the community of this travesty.

"Local school boards are the bedrock of our society, yet they are invisible to the public"

Señor Florez -Deseret News

After reading one the quotes from Jason Olsen in the Tribune article, I find myself asking: Does it really take a firm to see what the district did poorly and where changes can be made? I pose that same question to you.

I would submit that you needn't look far for the answer:

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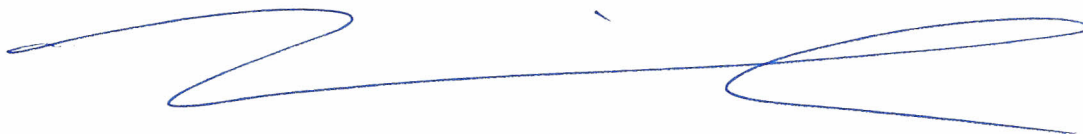
"Cheryl Snapp Conner, founder of Snapp Conner PR...called the district's handling of the situation so far a "case study in horrific PR." She goes on to say "the district should have apologized immediately and worked to resolve the situation as quickly as possible." (Tribune: After Tossed Lunches, Utah District Eyes \$49,999.00 PR Hire, 02/20/14). I would add, take responsibility. Simple enough, isn't it? I am also interested in learning why an apology was not immediately issued. Was that a PIO decision or your decision?"

I believe that your dissemination of these documents is in keeping with Utah's Open and Public Meetings Act:

"In enacting this chapter, the Legislature finds and declares that the state, its agencies and political subdivisions, exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly" (see Utah code §52-4-101).

Utah Code §63g-2-203(4) encourages agencies to fulfill a records request without charge. Based on Utah Code §63g -2-203 (4a), I am requesting a waiver of copy costs because releasing the records primarily benefits the public rather than a person. Furthermore, based on Utah Code §63g -2-203 (4c) my *"legal rights are directly implicated by the information in the record"* as I am an elected member of the Board of Education (see Utah Code §53A-3-402). I am of the opinion that the public has a right to examine all the records pertaining to this RFP. I recognize that you will respond to my request within 5 business days, as permitted by Utah Code §63g -2-204 (3)(b).

Shalom,



J. Michael Clára
Board Member, District 2

