



J. Michael Clára
Salt Lake City School Board
District Two

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14 February 2014

Delivered via Electronic Mail & USPS
Kristi Swett, President
Salt Lake City School District, Board
2256 South King Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84109

Re: A Call for an Independent Investigation!

Dear President Swett,

On behalf of my neighbors, I am asking you to exercise the authority of your office and call for **an outside independent investigation** into the circumstances leading up the events that occurred on Tuesday, January 28, 2014, in the school cafeteria of Uintah Elementary.

The events of that day were appalling and shocked the conscious of people across the country. While not as publicized, the reaction of school district bureaucracy was nothing short of disgraceful. The internal investigation that ensued was tainted and from what I could tell, lacked objectivity and was absent any degree of integrity. This is an observation shared by many of my neighbors.

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

Although this fiasco did not unfold in a school in my neighborhood, we are nevertheless sympathetic to the plight of the children from Uintah Elementary. For the most part, board member Laurel Young, who represents that area, has been silent on the matter. My neighbors insist that I speak up and call for an independent investigation, in the name of governmental transparency. They maintain, that the following questions, cry out for answers:

- What responsibility does the superintendent bear in this fiasco?
- What responsibility does the business administrator bear in this fiasco?
- What responsibility does the auxiliary services manager bear in this fiasco?
- What responsibility does the child nutrition director bear in this fiasco?
- What responsibility does the public information officer bear in this fiasco?
- What responsibility does the principal bear in this fiasco?

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

POLICY & PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

Beyond those responsible, not having to account for their part in this fiasco, I am asked the following questions:

- Who is taking responsibility for the fact that there was no board policy on this issue?
- Who is taking responsibility that there was no department policy that addressed this issue?
- Who is taking responsibility for the department policy that was in place and outdated?
- Who is taking responsibility for the proliferation of the practice of taking food from children and throwing it away?
- Who is taking responsibility for spending over a quarter of a million dollars for a software upgrade that actually caused more problems than it solved?

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PROCUREMENT QUESTIONS

Earlier this week, I contacted Business Administrator, Janet Roberts and requested a copy of the contract between the school district and the MyPaymentsPlus company. Ms. Roberts advised me that no signed contract existed.

Ms. Roberts instead sent me a 10 page, Request for Proposal (RFP) form titled: Student Lunch Accounting System. The last page is titled **CERTIFICATION OF PROPOSAL** and has blank lines for who submitted the proposal, firms name, authorized signature, name and titles, telephone number and date.

I then sent an email to Ms. Roberts asking for a signed and dated copy of this document and she stated that none exist. Ms. Roberts instead sent me an RFP Selection Recap Sheet that states that the winning bidder is Horizon for \$348,200.00.

I noted that on page 4, it has a section: IMPORTANT DATES. One of the items states the following:

SELECTION & RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD –February 26, 2013

I have searched the minutes and audios of the school board meetings around that date and find no record whatsoever that this issue was presented to the school board.

I did find the requisition for **\$181,164.95** in the March 05, 2013 Purchase Report and a requisition for **\$208,136.78** in the June 18, 2013 Purchase Report. The requisition states that this it was submitted by Kelly Orton for the “**purchase of a new lunch accounting system**”. I also located another expenditure amount for **\$9,623.80** in the September 17, 2013, Purchase Report. All three of these were paid to the following company: *Horizon Software International LLC*.

If my math is correct, those expenditures exceed the amount on the RFP. It also appears that the expenditures on the Transparent-Gov-Utah page do not match the Purchase Reports. Another red flag, is that when I google the name of the company that is receiving this money, I find two addresses; one is in Georgia and the other is a trailer in West Valley City, Utah.

Because the business administrator is sending me blank forms, I have no idea which of these two locations or both, is receiving all of my neighbor's tax dollars. There may be perfectly reasonable explanations for all the discrepancies associated with the procurement process. If past history is any indicator, these questions will remain unanswered.

Most of my neighbors and other elected officials have called into question the district's choice of investigator. Many observers were shocked to see that the district had appointed the Child Nutrition Manager, to investigate an incident that by his own admission, he bears responsibility for its occurrence. I am sure you are aware that the community at large has lost confidence in the leadership of the district, as it appears that the bureaucracy is just protecting itself and has no interest in reaching the truth in this matter.

This entire episode and the poor handling of its aftermath is an embarrassment to our city, community and school district. The rampant bully culture that allows an out of control bureaucracy to blame students, parents and lunch ladies must stop!

The public is looking to the school board, to fill the gapping void of leadership. I implore you to call for an outside, independent investigation. I am convinced, that accountability on this matter must take place before the lost public trust can be restored. Moreover, the outcome of such an investigation will place us on the path to healing the wounds that a somewhat schizophrenic school bureaucracy has, and continues to inflict on our communities.

Shalom,



J. Michael Clára
Board Member

cc: Mr. Sean Reyes, Utah Attorney General
Mr. John Dougall, Utah State Auditor
Mr. Sim Gill, Salt Lake County District Attorney

Enclosure: GRAMA Request to Business Administrator Janet Roberts

