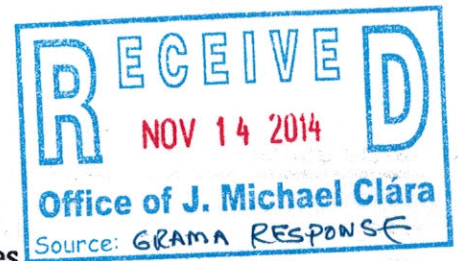




December 17, 2014



The Honorable Rebecca D. Lockhart
Speaker of the Utah House of Representatives
1413 South 1710 East
Provo, Utah 84606

Dear Speaker Lockhart,

We recently received a copy of a fifteen-page letter addressed to you, and apparently also sent to others, from a member of the Salt Lake City School District Board of Education, Michael Clára.

This letter is distressing for many reasons, chief among them the fact that his narrative descriptions of board processes and interactions with our administrators are distorted, misrepresented, and in some cases, wholly invented.

We expect competing priorities and policy disagreements among members of our board. Indeed we believe that diverse opinions are necessary to the healthy function of any governing board or legislative body. We have always been ready, willing, and able to engage in constructive deliberation with Mr. Clára on issues over which the board has jurisdiction.

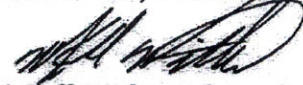
We are also happy to answer questions or consider ideas brought to us by concerned citizens, including other elected officials. We would welcome you or any of your colleagues as visitors at our board meetings or in our schools. We encourage you to watch or listen to our recorded meetings (available at <http://www.slcschools.org/board-of-education/board-meetings/>) and to contact us if you have concerns about the way in which we conduct the people's business. We seek continuous improvement in accomplishing the goals of our district's Student Achievement Plan.

If you should have further correspondence with Mr. Clára, please encourage him to bring the energy he currently devotes to letter writing and filing complaints to discussions at our board table. We believe that his perspective, if it can be conveyed through civil discourse, could make a valuable contribution to our board decision-making.

Cordially,


Kristi Swett, Board President


Heather Bennett, Board Vice President


McKell Withers, Superintendent


Janet Roberts, Business Administrator

BOARD OF EDUCATION

p 801.578.8349
f 801.578.8685

Salt Lake City School District
440 East 100 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

www.slcschools.org

Cc: SLCS Board of Education; (Copied on Mr. Clára's 11/20/13 letter to Speaker Lockhart: Senators Niederhauser, Reid, Stephenson, Osmond, Urquhart, and Representatives Hughes and King.)



SALT LAKE CITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Your Best Choice

April 1, 2014

On March 18, 2014, during the open meeting portion of the board's study session, Board Member Clára made numerous personally offensive and defamatory comments about Superintendent McKell Withers and Business Administrator Janet Roberts. While this statement is in direct response to those remarks, we recognize that Mr. Clára has made similar pronouncements in other meetings that have, up until this point, gone unchallenged. Given Mr. Clára's accusations, we feel the superintendent and business administrator are entitled to a public apology from the board, and clear evidence of the board's support for their overall leadership.

As a board, we agreed to abide by our statement of ethics, which includes the following: "I will treat fellow board members, district staff, and members of the public with respect and consideration, through civil discourse, exhibiting both honesty and decorum whether we agree or disagree on issues." Board Member Clára exhibited disregard for this board's commitment to civil discourse and disrespect for the superintendent and business administrator. Moreover, Mr. Clára showed contempt for the board's adopted parliamentary procedures when he failed to heed the board chair's repeated requests to cease his invective, which was in no way related to the agenda item being discussed by the board. His comments offended Dr. Withers, Ms. Roberts, other board members, and district employees attending the meeting.

For more than a decade, the superintendent and business administrator have demonstrated collaborative leadership, a focus on problem solving, and a genuine commitment to protecting and expanding opportunities for both students and employees. Over the past year, Mr. Clára's actions have unjustly maligned Dr. Withers and Ms. Roberts and tarnished the reputation of the board and district as a whole.

For these reasons, we offer Dr. Withers and Ms. Roberts our sincere apology and reaffirm our support for their leadership of the district.

Kristi Swett

Kristi Swett, President

Heather Bennett

Heather Bennett, Vice President

David F. Young
Janet Roberts

Members of the Board of Education

Douglas A. Nelson

Addition to the Official Minutes

Agenda Item: E2

Board Business Meeting: 04/01/14

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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