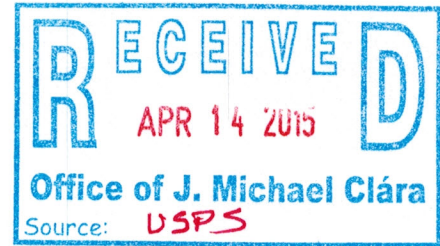


Board President Heather Bennett
909 South 800 East
Salt Lake City, Utah 84105



Dear Board President Bennett:

I have contemplated writing this letter for over one year but have always assumed you, Kristi Swett and Dr. Withers would recognize the dysfunction within your board and work to satisfactorily resolve it. I hope you will read this letter even though it is being sent anonymously. It is meant to help, by providing information, not be harmful or hurtful. I am not revealing who I am due to the fact that I don't want to harm my relationship with Dr. Withers and what I am going to say may not sit well with him.

I work in public education, in a Wasatch Front district, and want to share with you some of what is being said about Dr. Withers, you and Kristi Swett. I'm sure those close to each of you are saying what you are doing is the right thing and you believe them but the education community and patrons, along the Wasatch Front, are concerned about what they see, read and hear about the Salt Lake City School District Board of Education and they have some strong opinions about the three of you. If you were my board president, I would appreciate someone writing this letter.

I am sharing this information for two reasons. First, I want to help your district get back to educating students and second, I believe much of what people are saying. It is a widely accepted understanding among the education communities, along the Wasatch Front, that it is the responsibility of the superintendent to advise the board, even in board relations. Every school district board has dissenters, disagreements and discord but the public doesn't see the public chaos and public board leadership dysfunction on other district boards. If you think all of this is due to Mr. Clara's behavior, you are wrong. It is based on the superintendent and board leaderships' decision of how to deal with Mr. Clara and other high profile issues such as the Uintah lunch debacle and bus malfunctions. If Dr. Withers is advising you to address Mr. Clara in the manner you have, over the past two years, he is irresponsible and negligent in his duty. If Dr. Withers is not advising you to be responsive and inclusive of Mr. Clara and provide the information and dialogue to engage in conversation regarding the information, Mr. Clara states he is requesting, and to consider some discussion around the academic performance of students on your west side, he is irresponsible and negligent in his duty. If he advised you to ignore the lunchroom situation or advised you to hire a public relations firm to address the backlash, he is irresponsible and negligent in his duty. If the decisions of how to address these issues are those of board leadership and Dr. Withers is not advising you to abandon these paths of addressing the issues, he is irresponsible and negligent in his duty.

There is a very strong sentiment, among the public and education communities, that Dr. Withers is not providing appropriate and necessary leadership to adequately steward the Salt Lake City School District. There is a very strong sentiment, among the public and education communities, that Salt Lake City School District is not in the business of educating students but leadership protecting themselves from their lack of ability to lead the capitol city district. There is a very strong sentiment, among the public and education communities, that the leadership is wasting fiscal resources to hire attorneys and police officers to protect themselves from their incompetence.

You will note that my letter has changed from Dr. Withers' role of advisor to the board to leadership incompetence. The switch in focus is due to another widely accepted understanding that if the board is always being reactive, putting out fires or operating in chaos and dysfunction, they should look to the effectiveness of their superintendent to turn things around. If a board doesn't look at the effectiveness of the superintendent and have such expectations, then the widely accepted understanding is that it is the board leadership that is dysfunctional and irresponsible and negligent in their duty.

It appears the public and education communities are beginning to turn off the spotlight on Dr. Withers and it is now shining on the Board Leadership. There is a very strong sentiment, among the public and education communities, that maybe Dr. Withers has been trying to advise you and you are rogue or ungovernable board leadership. President Bennett, I know you a little bit and when I hear people starting to say; "Did you see Heather Bennett lose her cool?" or "Can you believe Heather Bennett is actually saying she's afraid of Mr. Clara?" or "I can't believe Heather Bennett doesn't demand a student focus on board business and district leadership." or "I can't believe someone doesn't called the board leadership on their waste of fiscal resources. Using district money to hire attorneys and police officers is not educating students. If Heather Bennett is afraid, she should leave the board." then, I believe it is time to write you this letter and bring your attention to what the dialogue is in the education community and public.

There is nothing being said in the education community and public that is flattering to Salt Lake City School District or the Board Leadership. Regardless of what you are being told, it is not a flattering or favorable dialogue.

The education community and public are looking closely at the role Tiffany Sandberg will play as a member of the board leadership. Will she allow the same dysfunction to continue and become another incompetent member of the district leadership? Will she see the dysfunction and lack of leadership focus on educating students and be a voice of change? There is some optimism that Tiffany Sandberg will be a change agent of the past lackluster and guarded leadership. The education community and public are, also, looking closely at the new board members. They are hopeful the new board members realize their role is not to take sides but to

participate in educating students and addressing what is getting in the way of educating students. In addition, there is hope the new board members will not continue to allow the wasting of resources with Public Relations firms, attorneys and police protection; allow all voices of the board to be heard and take proactive steps to re-instill the reputation Salt Lake City School District has held in the past. If you don't believe this is the dialogue, read some of the recent SLTrib on line comments. Many of us, along the Wasatch Front, would like to see your district hold a place of honor with the other districts.

I hope this information is helpful and will possibly bring about some reflective thought regarding how the Salt Lake City School District board is conducting business, what appropriate steps should be taken to bring the board together to conduct the business of educating students and hold a position of respect and trust with the public.

Cc: Tiffany Sandberg
Kristi Swett
Michael Clara
Katherine Kennedy
Rosemary Emery
Melissa Ford
Dr. Withers

