



Michael Clara &lt;donmiguelslc@gmail.com&gt;

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**AGENDA REQUEST - USE OF TITLE DR**

1 message

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**Michael Clára** <donmiguelslc@gmail.com>

Thu, Oct 20, 2016 at 3:40 PM

To: Heather Bennett &lt;Heather.Bennett@slcschools.org&gt;, Tiffany Sandberg &lt;Tiffany.Sandberg@slcschools.org&gt;

Bcc: "J. Michael Clára" &lt;donmiguelslc@gmail.com&gt;

Heather and Tiffany,

As per Board policy B-2 which states: “Any board member may request that a topic be placed on an upcoming meeting agenda by contacting the board president or vice president. In general, scheduling of topics is at the discretion of board leadership...”

I am requesting that you place the topic of “employee use of the title Dr.” on the November 1, 2016 – Board agenda.

It has come to my attention that several Administrators have received letters of Discipline due to the fact that they are using the title of "Dr." subsequent to successfully defending their dissertation and prior to their Doctorate being noted on their transcript. I am also told that these Administrators are part of an ongoing appeal process within the District (proceeding).

The Board has received numerous testimonies from those in higher education, advising us that this is the common practice at the University of Utah. The latest testimony was from Dr. Coleman at our last Board meeting (see attached video).

I am also of the opinion, that newly appointed Superintendent Cunningham is in violation of several Board policies in her feeble attempt to intimidate school district administrators. Superintendent Cunningham is in violation of Board Policy G-19 and its accompanying Procedure which in part states:

Expressly Prohibits Retaliation which is defined as:

“any form of sanction or adverse treatment, including but not limited to intimidation, reprisal, or harassment of any individual because he or she...**has testified**, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, **proceeding**, or **hearing** related to a complaint...”

The G-19 procedure goes on to state:

“The district prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, and **retaliation** on all district premises, during district sponsored activities, in all aspects of employment with the district, and by all district students and employees.... **Any request to stop the unlawful behavior outlined in these procedures must be complied with immediately.** Individuals are encouraged to make such requests in order to resolve these situations if possible. Supervisors are responsible for taking prompt necessary steps, including appropriate disciplinary action, to ensure and maintain a working and educational environment free of intimidation, coercion, discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.”

Accordingly, I am requesting that this issue be placed on the Board’s November 1, 2016 agenda for discussion. The Superintendent is an appointee of the Board and we are therefore her supervisor. I am recommending that we take formal action and “request” that she discontinue her “unlawful behavior” that is having an adverse impact on our administrators, teachers, and students alike. Surely, you can see that no good will come out of creating a hostile work environment for our school Principals. If a Principal feels under siege by the Superintendent, what impact do you think that is going to have on teachers? On students? On the life of the school? On the surrounding community?

The Board Handbook states:

“The board is empowered to make policy decisions for district schools. Board members act as trustees for the community; therefore, policies are often understood as expressions of the community’s aspirations for its public schools.”

In this case, the Board has no policy in place, outlining when an educator in the Doctoral program can use the title “Dr.” The standard for the University of Utah is that the title can be used following the successful defense of one’s dissertation.

Moreover, in some circles, McKell Withers is considered the smartest person in the state of Utah when it comes to secondary education. McKell set the standard for this District; he used the title "Dr." as early as 2003, yet did not receive his degree until December of 2005 (see attached video).

As one who has governing authority over this District, I cannot in good conscious remain silent and allow the current Superintendent to punish Administrators for following the custom of the day. Our current Board policies are silent on this practice. Placing this issue on the agenda will afford the Board and the public the opportunity to weigh in on this practice and make a determination if a standard should be expressed in the form of a policy.

Dr. Coleman Speaking Truth To Power

<https://youtu.be/A7zSg7BBv2U>

When Did McKell Receive His Doctrate?

<https://youtu.be/xbnea8baZk0>

Un abrazo,

**Michael Clára**

**M:** 801-205-0389

**BB:**5EF20737

Board Member, District 2

**§ 53-3-401, Utah Code:** Notwithstanding a local school board's status as a body corporate, an elected member of a local school board **serves and represents the residents of the local school board member's district**, and that service and representation may not be restricted or impaired by the local school board member's membership on, or obligations to, the local school board. HB 250 - Local School Board Amendments /2014 Legislative Session