

August 23, 2016

717 W. Gibbs Road  
Spokane, Washington 99224  
509-220-7941  
[donnamskoog@gmail.com](mailto:donnamskoog@gmail.com)

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Donna Skoog, and I taught at Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington, mainly as an English and Drama teacher from 1986 until my retirement in 2014. At this time I have maintained my license and work as a substitute teacher. My tenure at Riverside was enjoyable and successful for many reasons. However, as in any profession, a couple of incidents occurred that trouble me to this day. The purpose of this letter is to share with authorities the details of these two episodes.

The first episode began on the second “teacher day” in September 2007. This day is set up as a district-wide day for introductions and in-service. This is the day I met our new superintendent, Roberta Kramer. At that time I was the advisor for the National Honor Society. When I arrived that morning, my principal, John McCoy, took me aside and told me that our new superintendent, Roberta, gave him a mandate. The mandate was for me, as the NHS advisor, to reinstate a member who was removed from the society because of several issues the year before. I kept very accurate records, and despite my many efforts for him to regain his status as a member, he refused to comply with the rules required to maintain membership. One could say I bent over backwards to help him; nevertheless, I had no choice but to discharge him. Mr. McCoy explained to Roberta Kramer that he knew about the expulsion, that I followed protocol, and that he agreed with it. In so many words, she said she didn’t care and to make it happen. He apologized to me and explained that he was under pressure from her. I told him that I understood his position since she was the new superintendent, but I would need to think about it.

About an hour later Roberta Kramer introduced herself to me and said that she had heard of my husband who, at the time, was an assistant principal at Cheney High School. She said to me as she looked sternly into my eyes, “Just remember, Mike Dunn and I are like this.” As she said that, she gave the sign meaning “close” (index and middle finger overlapping), and then she abruptly turned and walked away. Mike Dunn was the superintendent of the Cheney School District at the time. I had heard upsetting stories about Mike Dunn’s power, and I had heard startling rumors about Roberta Kramer’s. I knew right then and there I had no choice but to do what she wanted. I felt that my principal and now my husband were at risk.

That night I rigged the procedures for reinstating a student into the NHS to show that this student should be given another chance. The year before I had already followed the "Second Chance" rule for him, therefore, I had to make things up to make it sound legitimate. I did all this by retyping two pages of our chapter constitution, taking out the legitimate pages, and inserting the fake pages into our chapter booklet. I then wrote a reinstatement letter to the expelled student. I did this knowing I was violating the sacred rules of the most honored high school club in the United States. I felt I had no choice, as my fear of retribution towards my principal, and especially my husband, was overwhelming. I was very ashamed of myself. I then immediately wrote a letter of resignation as the advisor to the National Honor Society for Riverside High School. The next morning I gave the reinstatement letter and resignation letter to Mr. McCoy. I did not tell him what I did to our documents to legitimize things. I did not tell the new advisor what I did. Until recently, I told no one what I did. To this day, Riverside's NHS documents are dishonest, thanks to my crumbling under the pressure of our new superintendent's demands. To this day, I am overwhelmed with guilt. I never knew why she wanted this done, but someone recently told me it was because he was the son of her friend.

The next incident occurred in the spring of 2013. I was the sophomore English teacher at Riverside, and therefore, I spent much of the school year preparing my students for the state's High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE). As you know, this mandatory test caused much fear and anxiety for students, parents, teachers, and administrators for different reasons. Ever since I was made the sophomore English teacher, our scores climbed. I felt I had the right recipe to help my students, even the lower learners, do well on the test as long as they followed my advice...and most did.

I must back up in time before I continue. Ever since Roberta Kramer became our district's superintendent, she would bring up her feelings about one of her sons in district and faculty meetings. He did not do well in middle school, and from the sound of it, she had trouble with him discipline-wise. She would say disparaging things about him and would speak about issues that should have been only talked about at home. I must say that it bothered me that she would talk about her son in such a public way, especially a professional, such as she. I had never met her son, but I felt sorry for him. Some teachers told me they didn't want him in their classes because Roberta was known to put pressure on his teachers. I finally did meet him when he was a sophomore and I found him to be a likeable person. He was smart, but he did not put much effort into his work. She continued to berate him off and on. She would say things to me privately that undermined his potential, while at the same time, saying that he must pass the HSPE no matter what. It was then that I told her that she has got to stop putting him down in public. I said I knew she could find a way to fire me if she wanted for what I just said. I quietly feared repercussions for my words,

but I knew I needed to say them. Throughout the year, she was constantly worried about him passing the test, and she would vocalize this to me. I had to tell her once again to keep her personal feelings about him out of the faculty meetings. I was worried that she would use my words against me. With this mounting pressure about the test, I then told her that I would make sure he passed the test. I didn't know how I would accomplish this because he rarely followed directions while preparing. I remember almost badgering him to follow directions. I could feel the pressure mounting.

The testing week approached, and test proctors were given their groups. I was given the A through G group as I had been given for years. I realized Roberta Kramer's son was not in my group. This worried me because I felt that without my presence, he would not do well. I called Roberta and told her this. In so many words she said that she would fix it. I told her to keep the change quiet. She said she would. Again, I felt the pressure mounting. The next day I had her son in my group. To this day I do not know how she arranged it.

On day one of the test, I let students sit wherever they wanted as long as they were two chairs apart from anyone else. However, I made Roberta's son sit right by my desk. A proctor can only read the directions that are in the directions booklet. They are not allowed to help individual students in any manner, or give and post any advice that is not given in the booklet. The students know this, so I dared not say anything to him. As the first day of writing began, I kept glancing at her son's booklet. I could see he wasn't writing much. I kept gesturing to him to write, hoping no one would notice. In fact, he was one of the first students finished. As the finish time was approaching I was alphabetizing the booklets and I looked inside her son's and saw that his responses were quite inadequate. I became very worried. Later, I called Roberta and said that he was not going to pass if he wrote like that on the second day of the writing portion. She said she would talk to him.

On the second day of the writing portion, I quietly asked him if his mother had talked to him, and he responded in the affirmative. This time he took a long time to complete his response. I once again looked in his booklet and I was relieved to see that he did well. I believed he would pass. I called Roberta and told her that our efforts had worked, but that she was not to tell anyone, especially not her son. She agreed. When we were finally given the results which showed he passed, she came to my room in tears thanking me for my help.

Although at the time I felt that the pressure was off, I knew what we had done was unethical and maybe even illegal. I once again felt the shame I had felt years earlier when I did something very wrong under pressure. I was ashamed because I had such success with my students passing. I didn't have to do this because towards the end of the school year I held a

mandatory “HSPE Boot Camp” for those that failed the first time. All of those students ended up passing the test! I believe Andrew could have eventually passed the test had he failed it the first time. But the pressure I felt from his mother was stronger than I was. For that I am ashamed. It was only until recently that I revealed this to anyone.

I realize that my actions may result in me losing my teaching certificate; I am willing to accept that. It will definitely put a stain on my legacy. Perhaps many people are disappointed in me, but many have told me they know the pressure Roberta Kramer can put on people. You may ask why I am reporting this now. It was only until recently that I found out in depth how much pressure Roberta Kramer has put on employees at Riverside School District. I can only imagine how many others did inappropriate things under duress and are suffering from the guilt of it. I cannot speak for them...I can only tell you the facts of how she pressured me with her power. I have found out that she did many unethical and maybe illegal things while being in charge of our district. This list is staggering. These accusations against Roberta Kramer resulted in a comprehensive investigation which eventually led to her resignation as the superintendent of the Riverside School District. The report can be obtained through Riverside School District. Roberta Kramer is now the assistant superintendent of the Pullman School District. She cannot be allowed to have so much power over people because of her history. She cannot be allowed to continue to be an educator in any capacity because of her record.

Please consider my story and read any other reports about Roberta Kramer that you may get. Please do the right thing and investigate her actions. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

April 13, 2017

717 W. Gibbs Rd.  
Spokane, Washington 99224  
509-220-7941  
donnamskoog@gmail.com

Bob Maxwell  
Superintendent  
Pullman School District  
240 SE Dexter Street  
Pullman, Washington 99163

Dear Mr. Maxwell,

My name is Donna Skoog, and I am a retired teacher from Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington. It has come to my attention that Pullman School District's Assistant Superintendent, Roberta Kramer, is facing protests from teachers and district citizens concerning certain actions she has taken against particular teachers in the district.

It is for this reason that I am sharing with you several of the documents associated with a similar situation Riverside School dealt with in 2016. These documents include letters, emails, posters, leaflets, and investigator and lawyer reports stemming from Ms. Kramer (Riverside's superintendent at the time) putting John McCoy, the high school principal, on administrative leave without due process. This caused a giant backlash from current students, staff, and community members, as well as ex-students, ex-teachers, ex-administrators, and ex-superintendents from Riverside. As you may know, Mr. McCoy was reinstated as the principal after much investigation.

The purpose of me sharing these documents with you is because Roberta Kramer should not be working as an employee in any school district. During Mr. McCoy's investigation, many instances of Ms. Kramer's unethical and illegal actions throughout her tenure at Riverside were disclosed. Her actions after putting Mr. McCoy on leave show her to be a very troubled person. In fact, it has since been revealed that she tried to take her own life during this time.

Please know that I am doing this because I truly believe that Roberta Kramer needs to take responsibility for her actions. I, too, am guilty of unethical behavior at times as you will read in the some of the documents, and I am willing to take responsibility for that. To put myself in this light was not an easy decision for me because my reputation is also at stake. However, it is worth it for me to do the right thing.

Please read these documents thoroughly and consider carefully how she has already affected and may affect Pullman School District in the future. I have also sent copies of these files to the district's board members. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

April 13, 2017

717 W. Gibbs Rd.  
Spokane, Washington 99224  
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Chris Reykdal  
Office of Superintendent  
Washington State  
Mail Stop: 47200  
Old Capitol Building  
P.O. Box 47200  
Olympia, Washington 98504-7200

Dear Mr. Reykdal,

My name is Donna Skoog, and I am a retired teacher from Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington. It has come to my attention that Pullman School District's Assistant Superintendent, Roberta Kramer, is facing protests from teachers and district citizens concerning certain actions she has taken against particular teachers in the district.

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Please read these documents thoroughly and consider carefully how she has already affected and may affect Pullman School District in the future. I have also sent copies of these files to the Pullman School District's board members as well as the previous Washington State School Superintendent. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

April 13, 2017

717 W. Gibbs Rd.  
Spokane, Washington 99224  
509-220-7941  
donnamskoog@gmail.com

Jim Evermore  
Pullman School District Board Member  
240 SE Dexter Street  
Pullman, Washington 99163

Dear Mr. Evermore,

My name is Donna Skoog, and I am a retired teacher from Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington. It has come to my attention that Pullman School District's Assistant Superintendent, Roberta Kramer, is facing protests from teachers and district citizens concerning certain actions she has taken against particular teachers in the district.

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Please read these documents thoroughly and consider carefully how she has already affected and may affect Pullman School District in the future. I have also sent copies of these files to the superintendent and the other district board members. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

April 13, 2017

717 W. Gibbs Rd.  
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509-220-7941  
donnamskoog@gmail.com

Karl Johanson  
Pullman School District Board Member  
240 SE Dexter Street  
Pullman, Washington 99163

Dear Mr. Johanson,

My name is Donna Skoog, and I am a retired teacher from Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington. It has come to my attention that Pullman School District's Assistant Superintendent, Roberta Kramer, is facing protests from teachers and district citizens concerning certain actions she has taken against particular teachers in the district.

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Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

April 13, 2017

717 W. Gibbs Rd.  
Spokane, Washington 99224  
509-220-7941  
donnamskoog@gmail.com

Dean Kinzer  
Pullman School District Board Member  
240 SE Dexter Street  
Pullman, Washington 99163

Dear Mr. Kinzer,

My name is Donna Skoog, and I am a retired teacher from Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington. It has come to my attention that Pullman School District's Assistant Superintendent, Roberta Kramer, is facing protests from teachers and district citizens concerning certain actions she has taken against particular teachers in the district.

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Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

April 13, 2017

717 W. Gibbs Rd.  
Spokane, Washington 99224  
509-220-7941  
donnamskoog@gmail.com

Allison Munch-Rotolo  
Pullman School District Board Member  
240 SE Dexter Street  
Pullman, Washington 99163

Dear Ms. Munch-Rotolo,

My name is Donna Skoog, and I am a retired teacher from Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington. It has come to my attention that Pullman School District's Assistant Superintendent, Roberta Kramer, is facing protests from teachers and district citizens concerning certain actions she has taken against particular teachers in the district.

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Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

April 13, 2017

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509-220-7941  
donnamskoog@gmail.com

Susan Weed  
Pullman School District Board Member  
240 SE Dexter Street  
Pullman, Washington 99163

Dear Ms. Weed,

My name is Donna Skoog, and I am a retired teacher from Riverside High School in Chattaroy, Washington. It has come to my attention that Pullman School District's Assistant Superintendent, Roberta Kramer, is facing protests from teachers and district citizens concerning certain actions she has taken against particular teachers in the district.

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Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

Spokane Office  
Bank of America Financial Center  
601 W. Riverside, Suite 1900  
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*Winston & Cashatt*

L A W Y E R S

*A Professional Service Corporation*

*Winston & Cashatt has offices in Spokane, Washington  
and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho*

May 26, 2016

Riverside School Board Member  
Roger Pratt  
34624 N. Milan Elk Road  
Charraroy, WA 99003

**Re: John McCoy**

Dear Mr. Pratt:

I have been retained by John McCoy to represent him regarding his employment by Riverside School District. Although I have communicated with the Superintendent and Paul Clay on numerous occasions, I have heard no response from either. Because of this lack of communication, we also believe the Board has not been fully informed.

Mr. McCoy has a spotless personnel record and has had no prior discipline imposed. Instead, Mr. McCoy was placed on administrative leave three weeks ago without full knowledge of the accusations, or an opportunity to defend himself. As he remains on administrative leave, his professional reputation continues to be damaged.

To date, Mr. McCoy has not been afforded his due process rights that he is entitled to by law. Additionally, the allegations we are aware of do not support termination for cause. Thus, we ask for immediate reinstatement to his job as the Principal of Riverside High School. Any further adverse action against Mr. McCoy's employment will be met with legal action to the fullest extent of the law. As the Riverside School District School Board, you must answer to your community regarding the running of the school district both fiscally and morally. It is your duty to ensure that you are fully informed by your superintendent, that the law is followed, and that Mr. McCoy is afforded all of his legal rights.

Very truly yours,



KAMMI MENCKE SMITH

KMS:kms

C. Matthew Andersen <sup>ID</sup>  
Beverly L. Anderson  
Patrick J. Cronin <sup>ID</sup>  
Kevin J. Curtis  
Greg M. Devlin <sup>ID</sup>  
Timothy R. Fischer <sup>ID</sup>  
David P. Gardner <sup>ID MT</sup>

Scott A. Gingras <sup>ID MT</sup>  
Erika B. Grubbs <sup>ID</sup>  
Jeffrey A. Herbster <sup>ID</sup>  
Michael T. Howard <sup>ID</sup>  
Carl E. Hueber <sup>ID</sup>  
Collette C. Leland <sup>ID</sup>  
Lisa A. Malpass <sup>ID</sup>

Megan E. Marshall <sup>ID</sup>  
Caitlin E. O'Brien <sup>ID</sup>  
Corey J. Quinn <sup>ID</sup>  
Benjamin H. Rascoff <sup>ID</sup>  
Jeffrey R. Ropp  
Kammi Mencke Smith <sup>ID</sup>  
Elizabeth A. Tellessen <sup>ID</sup>

*Of Counsel*  
Courtney R. Beaudoin <sup>ID</sup>  
John F. Bury  
Stephen L. Farnell  
Timothy M. Higgins  
Kenneth B. Howard <sup>ID</sup>

Fred C. Pflanz  
James E. Reed  
Richard W. Relyea  
Lawrence H. Vance, Jr.  
Lucinda S. Whaley  
Meriwether D. Williams <sup>ID</sup>

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and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho*

May 26, 2016

Riverside School Board Member  
Sandra Huggins  
28311 North Selkirk View Dr  
Chattaroy, WA 99003

**Re: John McCoy**

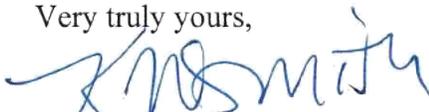
Dear Ms. Huggins:

I have been retained by John McCoy to represent him regarding his employment by Riverside School District. Although I have communicated with the Superintendent and Paul Clay on numerous occasions, I have heard no response from either. Because of this lack of communication, we also believe the Board has not been fully informed.

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Lucinda S. Whaley  
Meriwether D. Williams <sup>ID</sup>

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L A W Y E R S

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and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho*

May 26, 2016

Riverside School Board Member  
Chris Nieuwenhuis  
27110 North Dalton Road  
Deer Park, WA 99006

**Re: John McCoy**

Dear Mr. Nieuwenhuis:

I have been retained by John McCoy to represent him regarding his employment by Riverside School District. Although I have communicated with the Superintendent and Paul Clay on numerous occasions, I have heard no response from either. Because of this lack of communication, we also believe the Board has not been fully informed.

Mr. McCoy has a spotless personnel record and has had no prior discipline imposed. Instead, Mr. McCoy was placed on administrative leave three weeks ago without full knowledge of the accusations, or an opportunity to defend himself. As he remains on administrative leave, his professional reputation continues to be damaged.

To date, Mr. McCoy has not been afforded his due process rights that he is entitled to by law. Additionally, the allegations we are aware of do not support termination for cause. Thus, we ask for immediate reinstatement to his job as the Principal of Riverside High School. Any further adverse action against Mr. McCoy's employment will be met with legal action to the fullest extent of the law. As the Riverside School District School Board, you must answer to your community regarding the running of the school district both fiscally and morally. It is your duty to ensure that you are fully informed by your superintendent, that the law is followed, and that Mr. McCoy is afforded all of his legal rights.

Very truly yours,



KAMMI MENCKE SMITH

KMS:kms

C. Matthew Andersen <sup>ID</sup>  
Beverly L. Anderson  
Patrick J. Cronin <sup>ID</sup>  
Kevin J. Curtis  
Greg M. Devlin <sup>ID</sup>  
Timothy R. Fischer <sup>ID</sup>  
David P. Gardner <sup>ID MT</sup>

Scott A. Gingras <sup>ID MT</sup>  
Erika B. Grubbs <sup>ID</sup>  
Jeffrey A. Herbster <sup>ID</sup>  
Michael T. Howard <sup>ID</sup>  
Carl E. Hueber <sup>ID</sup>  
Collette C. Leland <sup>ID</sup>  
Lisa A. Malpass <sup>ID</sup>

Megan E. Marshall <sup>ID</sup>  
Caitlin E. O'Brien <sup>ID</sup>  
Corey J. Quinn <sup>ID</sup>  
Benjamin H. Rascoff <sup>ID</sup>  
Jeffrey R. Ropp  
Kammi Mencke Smith <sup>ID</sup>  
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**Of Counsel**  
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Fred C. Pflanz  
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LAWYERS

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May 26, 2016

Riverside School Board Member  
Gary Vanderholm  
67424 North Roadets Raod  
Elk, WA 99009

Re: John McCoy

Dear Mr. Vanderholm:

I have been retained by John McCoy to represent him regarding his employment by Riverside School District. Although I have communicated with the Superintendent and Paul Clay on numerous occasions, I have heard no response from either. Because of this lack of communication, we also believe the Board has not been fully informed.

Mr. McCoy has a spotless personnel record and has had no prior discipline imposed. Instead, Mr. McCoy was placed on administrative leave three weeks ago without full knowledge of the accusations, or an opportunity to defend himself. As he remains on administrative leave, his professional reputation continues to be damaged.

To date, Mr. McCoy has not been afforded his due process rights that he is entitled to by law. Additionally, the allegations we are aware of do not support termination for cause. Thus, we ask for immediate reinstatement to his job as the Principal of Riverside High School. Any further adverse action against Mr. McCoy's employment will be met with legal action to the fullest extent of the law. As the Riverside School District School Board, you must answer to your community regarding the running of the school district both fiscally and morally. It is your duty to ensure that you are fully informed by your superintendent, that the law is followed, and that Mr. McCoy is afforded all of his legal rights.

Very truly yours,



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To – The Riverside School Board and Riverside Supt.  
From – Jerry M. Wilson  
Regarding – Aug.1, 2016 School Board Meeting

Over the years I have attended over 350 school board meetings, and Mon. night's debacle has to be one of the worst, if not the worst, I have ever witnessed. Although Mon. night's meeting was my first in 16 yrs., I still believe there are a certain conduct and standards that are to be expected.

Roger – your conduct was the most disappointing, as you laughed and sneered at patron's questions. Then you denied laughing, although the entire audience saw you. Your answers were vague and sometimes belittling. Add to your actions, at an earlier meeting, shown on TV, and your conduct was completely unprofessional.

Gary – you tried to cover for the board's position, and especially, Roger's behavior, but the audience was not buying it. You cannot defend the indefensible. There is absolutely no excuse for the John McCoy case to drag on over 3 months. There is no excuse to cause patrons to sit over 4 ½ hrs. and then announce the investigation would continue. Then to avoid any timeline or indications, as to how the matter would proceed, is unreasonable.

Ms. Huggins – you never said anything, but your body language was very telling.

Mr. Roman – you refrained from speaking and, wisely so, since you are still “learning the ropes”. At least, you seemed to listen.

In addition to what I witnessed, I learned considerable from people in the audience over the 4 ½ hrs. These are my thoughts, for whatever they are worth:

1. No matter what any investigation reveals, or any evidence that exonerates Mr. McCoy, Roger and Ms. Huggins, are not going to vote for the reinstatement of John McCoy. I assume this can be attributed to some misguided allegiance to the previous supt. I would further suspect that each of you called that previous supt. for your next “marching orders”.
2. Gary and Mr. Roman, may be more objective, but are probably locked in a 2-2 vote on this issue.
3. It appears as if the former supt. has led the school board members around by their noses and left those members without the inclination and/or ability to think for themselves, and for what is best for the district. It's high time the school members stopped being puppets for the departed regime.

Suggestions –

Roger – you need to resign before you are forced out by petition or recall. You have no credibility and continuing on will only lead to more discomfort for you. I understand, that at an earlier meeting, you asked a patron if that patron wanted you to resign. If you asked patrons that question today, you most likely will get a resounding “YES”.

Gary – take charge – you have the experience and know the community very well. You also have a distinct view of what is right and what is wrong.

Ms. Huggins – your responsibility is to the district, and to overcome your personal biased opinion of Mr. McCoy's situation. Any change on your part is probably wishful thinking and resignation may be the best option for you and the community.

Mr. Roman – I can only guess as to the level of frustration you have endured since being on the board. Expectations are simple- study the issues objectively and act accordingly.

Mr. Russell – you handled yourself well, when a question was asked of you. You have created a good image in the first few days on the job, and you should be congratulated on that. Best of luck dealing with this board and ensuing issues that will come about.

This material is directed to each of you, as board members, not as individuals. Each of you may be a great individual, but as a board, you are a disaster.

GOOD LUCK.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of John McCoy's character. Although I am not privy to the accusations, I have worked closely with John McCoy for a decade and feel that I know his true character well. In those 10 years, he has shown himself to be an effective, hardworking, fair, and considerate principal. He cares about students, inspires the staff to do their best and creates policies to keep everyone in our school safe. The successes we have been celebrating are in large part because of John's leadership in our building. It is a shared sentiment by many in our building that John is a good principal and good person.

Of course there will always be disgruntled employees and customers. Some students will complain that the administration is too strict...this is to be expected from kids. In fact, it is a good sign that the adults are doing their job. Teachers, who are not having success in their classroom, or staff members who clash personalities with John, may also look to place blame. It is human nature to project our failures. I would hope that nobody would take serious action against someone by acting on that defensive mechanism. We see what we believe. We sometimes close ourselves off to seeing the good, the core of a person. We exaggerate, we blow things out of proportion. When we step back and see the whole truth, outside of our biases, only then can we make logical decisions guided by truth. Truth is different from facts as it requires context and perspective. The truth is that John McCoy is a good man, a good principal. If he wasn't, it would not have taken 13 years to notice this. Those of us who work with him daily are shocked to hear that he could have done something so wrong that he deserves to lose his position. Yes, mistakes are made, we all err, but if the punishment does not fit the crime, a bigger mistake is made that often leads more destruction; history has shown us this.

At this point, those of us who do not know of the alleged misconduct, can only speak to John's effectiveness as a principal. The trait that I admire most about John McCoy is his willingness to

hear our voices so that we are part of some of the decisions about the school. In staff meetings, he doesn't simply allow or tolerate opposition, he sometimes *invites* it. He brings controversial issues, such as school rules or pedagogical practices, to the discussion table. He gives everyone a chance to talk and I have never felt afraid to disagree with him. When I have disagreed with him, he did not treat me differently afterwards. This is not about rights. This is not about appeasement. This is about growth. No institution can grow without this practice. John knows that and is confident enough to take opposition, even when it is awkward or threatening. This is truly a person who is for the students, for the school. It is the core of who John is. Yet, when a principal must make decisions, John does so and follows through. He is flexible where he can be and firm when necessary. In the ten years that I have known him, he has been the same man. When I first came to Riverside from Chicago, I had only known the atmosphere of a large suburban school. I soon realized that a small school is different, not worse, not better necessarily. Perhaps more casual on the surface, but nevertheless, similar in its core to teach students. It was odd to have my students as neighbors or see a parent working in the same school their children attends. It was odd to see my principal in my classroom every day. (I saw my former principal in Illinois twice a year and would not have called him by his first name.) Riverside is a small, close knit school, with colleagues who have known each other for decades, taught and coached each other's children, and become friends with one another. Some may see these relationships as inappropriate. However, my point here is this. We must be careful when judging the appropriateness of something be it someone's attire, style, a comment, or a joke, for example. Let's consider the concept of code switching: our practice of changing our language depending on with who we are conversing. We speak differently to our mothers than to our friends. We speak differently to students we have worked with for a year than to students we have known for a day. Some people code switch better than others. Regardless, our language is not wholly who we are. Our true colors are revealed over time, not in a moment or

in a comment. I hope John's true character is not being judged by a few comments that he might have said in jest or in a lapse of thinking.

Let me end by telling you about one of the greatest lessons John McCoy has taught me regarding human compassion. In a faculty meeting where he was addressing the need for teachers to accommodate for special education students, he teared up as he spoke these words: "God altered some kids and you [teachers] should alter your methods and expectations to better serve them." He wanted us to realize that "one size fits all" does work in education. This is only one instance where he displayed his true self, his empathy for all kids, regardless of their abilities or IQ. His words deeply affected me. This is the evidence of an effective principal. John McCoy puts himself out there; he doesn't hide in his office. I see John in the hallways, conversing and joking with kids; he has an amiable, goofy personality at times. He loves high school. Whether the student is a popular athlete or someone who we would deem as "different," John talks to them and doesn't make anyone feel invisible. In a private conversation early this year, he told me how much he admired the courage of certain students at our school who made choices that caused them stand out. And I realized what a wonderful school we have where students like this could safely walk down our hallways and continue to be who they want to be each day. Of course they face some discrimination that is beyond the control of adults, but the mere fact that these students continue to be themselves each day is a testament to the positive atmosphere created by John McCoy.

Ultimately, I write to add another perspective to the investigation. To say that I have found John McCoy an effective leader who sets clear boundaries, high expectations, and a positive tone that focuses on student achievement.

May 26, 2016

To the Riverside School District Board and Citizens and Employees of Riverside School District:

I am writing to express my concern about the recent suspension of John McCoy as the principal of Riverside High School. The superintendent's actions were not above board and are illegal. John was not given his due process. Actions taken by the superintendent will reveal this. The allegations are too shallow and insignificant to result in such drastic actions towards him by the superintendent, and any lawyer, including his own, will tell you this. These actions have been perpetrated by a few because of either revenge or personal gain. If this action is allowed to continue, it will result in the bankruptcy of the district, plain and simple. Unless he is reinstated as principal of RHS, he can only do one thing, and that is to pursue his legal right to fight it. His reputation, as well as years of earning potential, are at stake. I am hoping and praying that when the board sees the evidence, they will do their duty: to serve the community legally and morally.

As a result of the superintendent's secretive maneuvers, the school is in complete turmoil. The atmosphere is toxic. People are afraid. I have received several letters describing the physical and emotional toll this action has taken on staff and students. Most staff want to support John, but they have been given warnings to not talk about it with each other or anyone else in the district, which violates their constitutional First Amendment rights. The interim leadership refuses to talk about it and has cancelled meetings to avoid any discussions.

John McCoy is responsible for the leadership that makes Riverside a great high school. He's made teachers accountable, brought in successful new programs, and supports established programs. He has created a harmonious atmosphere that once was discordant. He can be tough and I'm sure he's angered certain staff a time or two, but he believes strongly in what he is doing. We can all agree that he has a colorful personality, but that's what makes RHS a fun place to teach! I believe strongly in John McCoy. He truly is the best principal I have known during my years at RHS.

The illegal and clandestine actions taken by the superintendent towards John McCoy are a financial threat to the district. They have caused educational chaos among staff and students. They have brought the district extremely bad publicity. Her actions warrant immediate investigation which I believe will result in her suspension and eventual dismissal as the Riverside School District's superintendent.

Sincerely,

Donna Skoog

Retired Teacher of Riverside School District for 28 years

Sandi Friedman <fridoclans@gmail.com>

Attachments6/28/16

My husband and I attended the Riverside school board meeting on June 23rd, 2016 and were truly amazed by the proceedings. First we were greeted by two armed guards who were preventing a large number of patrons from attending the meeting. We were told that the fire marshall had been contacted and would only allow 87 people to sit in the room. The board had expected a large turnout, so why wasn't the meeting moved to a place that would accommodate all community patrons? Many people left which was the desire of school board and superintendent. In talking to long time residents none could ever recall having guards at a meeting. Seems the apparent logic to all of this, was the deliberate action of the board and superintendent to limit access to this meeting. Was intimidation the goal of the board and superintendent? A request is being sent to school board members and the superintendent for future meetings to be held in the high school to allow more patrons to attend and be involved.

Meeting opened and when time to take public comments the question was raised as to the legality of one board member who has not lived in the district for an extended time period. The board member in question then became very belligerent and claimed she still owned property in the district. The bylaws state very clearly that you have to reside in said district. When she was questioned further she stormed out of meeting calling patron a "jerk". She passed said patron's son in the hall and told him his dad was an asshole! After her exit, another board member tried to justify her being there because the non resident had great knowledge. No one seemed to have knowledge of the definition of "resident". Board members and the superintendent had knowledge of her not residing in our district.

Two other issues came out. The superintendent had forbidden the principals and other administrators from attending board meetings unless they were invited by the superintendent. The school board members were also told not to visit with school principals or staff. It appears that all access to information, must go through the superintendent.

in addition to our request the meetings be held in the high school auditorium, we are requesting that the board members and the superintendent be responsive to patron's concerns and to restrict the use of armed guards.

There are many more issues that the community, parents, students and staff want answered but the superintendent has not offered any answers.

## Appendix

a) Testimony will show that past and current administrators were given this directive which was followed up with board policy. (See Policy: 1620P, Section: 1000 – Board of Directors)

b) Documentation will show that districts of similar size do not use an administrator for the position of Human Resources, but rather a secretary. Documentation will show that the position of HR Director was changed and that the salary for this position was increased dramatically by \$45,000 over a five year period. Testimony will show that the superintendent and the HR Director are close friends who work out together daily. Documentation and testimony will show that districts of similar size do not employ a Director of Teaching and Learning.

Further testimony will show that the position of “Director of Teaching and Learning” was created in order to hire the current person in this position rather than hire her for the position of Assistant Principal for the high school for which she interviewed at the time. The superintendent spoke in confidence to John McCoy and Lynn Rowse (Riverside Elementary School Principal) in order to “make that happen” by insuring that the current person came in second in the interview process (It was clear that this person would not come close to that position when appropriately compared to the other candidates). The superintendent’s plan was to call the person and tell her she came in second, but that she would be hired for the “Director of Teaching and Learning.”

Additional testimony will show that the Director of Teaching and Learning has been granted preferential treatment, specifically to the number of days she has taken off from work, and to the hours she keeps with regard to arrival at work and leaving from work. When the topic of conversation and complaints among staff members from each of the schools became so numerous, administrators complained multiple times to the HR Director. The HR Director told administrators that she had raised concern about this issue to the superintendent. The superintendent responded by telling her that she didn’t need to worry about the hours this person was keeping or the number of days she was taking off. It was between her (the superintendent) and the Director of Teaching and Learning.

c) Testimony will show that the superintendent participated in a scheme with a teacher to ensure that steps were taken to enhance the chances of her son passing the state achievement test for writing. Testimony will further show that the superintendent knowingly cut the required nursing staff for a diabetic child in the care of the district. When the nurse stated that she would need to notify the parent that there would be no nurse available to take care of the needs of the child, she was told that she was to say nothing and that if she did, she would be considered insubordinate. (Also see Appendix b)

d) Testimony and documentation will show that the superintendent’s close friend and, long time board member, was living for an extended amount of time outside the boundaries of the school district. She used a false address for mail delivery. Testimony and video evidence will show that at least two other board members were aware, and therefore complicit in violating this policy/law that a board member

must resign upon changing his/her residence. Testimony and documentation will show that the superintendent was complicit in this knowledge and hiding of information as well.

e) Testimony and documentation will show that the sons of both the superintendent and the HR director were given preferential access to summer employment as grounds keepers. After the rate of pay had been increased due to low interest in the position, the two boys were hired without meeting the qualifications of the position. When the Head Grounds man commented that the boys did not meet the qualifications, he was called into the office of his supervisor and told that the superintendent and the HR director said that the son was to be given the job. They gave the reason that since an end of the year review had not taken place at the end of the summer the previous year, they had to hire him. Yet there have never been "end of the year reviews" for temporary help.

f) Testimony will show that the superintendent undermined the authority of the principal by violating/changing long-standing building policy to satisfy her own desires. The first will be that of issuing a building key to a college student to use the weight room and hiding this fact from the principal. When the principal became aware that multiple young college kids were in the weight room and the gym after school was out, he inquired about the key being issued. It was discovered that the maintenance supervisor was opposed to issuing the key and yet was told by the superintendent that he would have to issue the key because she said so. When the principal inquired of the superintendent regarding the issue of the key and when the principal expressed his concern for the potential liability to the district for such an irresponsible act, the superintendent said, it was "Just too bad" and she "had to go with this."

Since 2003, the building policy for students to be considered for placement as a teacher's aide is that they must be a senior in order to ensure that tall graduation requirements are met before allowing a "free" period. In the fall of 2012, the superintendent was talking with the principal in the hallway during lunch time. She stated that she would like to have a certain junior student to be an office aide at the district office. The principal said to the superintendent, "We have a long-standing policy that only seniors can be aides." The superintendent's response was an emphatic, "Not now you don't." The principal explained that if he allowed this, he would have 30 juniors in his office by 1:00 demanding to have their schedule changed and to become teacher's aides. She said, "Deal with it." and walked away.

A long standing policy for the graduation ceremony has been that male students must wear dress shoes and not tennis shoes. This has been discussed many times and has always been supported by all by virtue of the traditions associated with the graduation ceremony. As is customary by the principal, he had visited senior classed one month prior to graduation to explain the dress requirements for the ceremony. He had sent home for parent signatures a required form explaining the dress requirements to all parents. Nobody in the past 12 years had argued about the traditional dress. The superintendent had also singed the dress code for her son. On the day of graduation the superintendent called the principal and told him that he needed to lighten up on the shoe rule and that she didn't want to be the person who had to tell her son and all his friends that she supported this thing about shoes. Thirty minutes prior to the start of the graduation ceremony the superintendent's very good friend's son wore

tennis shoes and confronted the assistant principal, showing him his shoes and said, "Do we have a problem?"

g) Testimony and documents (attached) will show that on May 10, 2016, Principal, John McCoy, was asked to resign his position based on the findings of an investigator hired by the superintendent. When the principal asked for a copy of the summary report so that he could properly respond, she told him that she could provide it, but that if she did, "all this will go public." This very same day, a policy was changed making the superintendent the Public Records Officer for the district.

h) Testimony will show that on May 10, 2016, a meeting was conducted with the superintendent, the HR director, and principal, John McCoy. After reviewing some allegations, the superintendent told John McCoy that "You need to consider your options moving forward." After some clarification John asked, "Are you asking me to resign?" She said, "That is an option." John said, "And if I don't." The superintendent responded, "I don't want to even go there. Right now these are draft notes. If you resign, you can apply other places and continue to pursue what you love. If you don't, this all becomes public. I need you to call me tomorrow with your decision."

i) Testimony and documentation will show that the superintendent authorized the hiring of the board president's wife in a manner that showed preferential treatment.

j) Testimony will confirm that on two separate occasions, a board member spoke to two members of the community regarding information shared with the board by the superintendent regarding the current personnel issues involving the high school principal.

k) Testimony will show that the superintendent instructed the HR Director to discipline a staff member without administrative authority. The HR director does not possess administrative credentials authorizing her to discipline a staff member. The HR Director issued a verbal warning following an inquiry that did not involve an administrator. While the high school assistant principal was called to the meeting, along with the union representative, the administrator said nothing and the HR Director conducted the meeting as well as the inquiry.

l) Testimony will show that a custodian informed the principal that some college boys were using the gym weight room facility. The principal was very concerned for the potential liability to the district if somebody became injured or left the building open for theft or vandalism etc. When the principal inquired as to how the boys gained access to the facility, he learned that the superintendent had directed the maintenance supervisor to give a board member's college-age son a key to the weight room. The maintenance supervisor expressed his concern to the superintendent, but she insisted that he give the boy the key. When the principal contacted the superintendent and expressed his concern to the superintendent, she responded that she would accept responsibility for this. When the principal continued to express concern, the superintendent said, "Just go with me on this, John, I need to do this!"

m) Testimony from multiple administrators will confirm that from the very beginning of the superintendent's tenure in the district, she has had an unfavorable disposition toward Mr. McCoy. Testimony will verify that while it was obvious that the superintendent did not often appreciate Mr. McCoy's thoughts and ideas, more importantly, it was clear that if Mr. McCoy made a suggestion, it would always be put aside and that the administrators would have to strategize together, insisting that if some other administrator would put forth the suggestion, it would have a far greater chance for acceptance by the superintendent. Strategy to this effect was most crucial during times when the administrators were attempting to negotiate with the superintendent for their contracts each summer. Though John McCoy and Lynn Rowse were the two administrators who were chosen to represent the group, it was always decided by the group that Lynn and some other administrator should represent the group when approaching the superintendent.

n) Documents and testimony will show that prior to Superintendent Kramer's tenure in the district, the district administration recognized and openly negotiated with the administrators as the "Riverside Administrator Association (RAA). Roberta refused to recognize this group as a group with which she needed to negotiate. When the administrators suggested a discussion about the following year's contract, the superintendent said on multiple occasions, "Just write down what you want, give it to me and I'll say, 'yes' or 'no.'" Two years ago, during the 2014/15 school year, principal, John McCoy had ordered a booklet from Association of Washington School Administrators (AWSP) to seek the steps to follow in order to become a formally recognized bargaining unit with the district. When the superintendent became aware of this by seeing the printed material in his office, she discouraged this by saying, "You guys don't need to do that, I have looked into it and I know I have to at least listen to you."

Additional documentation and testimony will confirm that rather than to have a discussion about their contracts with the superintendent, she refused to meet with them and the administrators simply gave her a list of their requests, and she wrote in the margin, "yes, yes, no, no" etc.

o) Testimony and documentation will show that On May 3, 2016, the superintendent predetermined that she would place principal, John McCoy, on administrative leave. On this date, John McCoy was called to the district office and asked three questions. The first question had to do with an incident that took place somewhere between five and seven years prior and had been used as a catalyst for discussions about the hazards of busing elementary students with high school students. The next question was about whether or not Mr. McCoy had seen a transgender student at an assembly and made a comment to him and, later, about him. This never happened and it was denied by Mr. McCoy. The third question was about whether or not Mr. McCoy had spoken openly (and laughed) in the hallway about the fact that two students had attempted to have sex in the hallway before spring break. This was denied as well. The notice placing Mr. McCoy was handed to him, placing him on administrative leave regardless of the answers provided. Questions were asked and answered, but allegations were never mentioned. Mr. McCoy left the district never hearing what the allegations were. Mr. McCoy was encouraged to call either the Superintendent or the HR Director, if there were questions or if he had anything to add.

Mr. McCoy called when he got home and he reached the HR Director to ask for another ten minute extension to their meeting to add some remarks he wished to share. The HR Director said, "I know, I didn't want to put you on leave, but Roberta says we have to. I'm sorry you have to go through this."

I was never given that chance to meet and share a few more thoughts.

On May 5, 2013, Mr. McCoy met with the district-hired investigator. Nothing was ever mentioned about the three items he was asked about when placed on leave on May 3. The investigator said she would type up her summary and get it to Roberta by Monday or Tuesday the next week. When the principal inquired of her what the allegations were. She responded by saying, "It is likely that it is for creating a hostile work environment."

On May 10, 2016, Mr. McCoy met with the superintendent and the HR Director. Nothing about the three issues brought up in the first meeting were ever mentioned again. The items for which Mr. McCoy was placed on leave were never mentioned. He was asked to resign and he was told he was a "non truth teller." He was told to call the superintendent the next day with his decision. The HR Director stated that seven people had been interviewed.

Legal counsel encouraged Mr. McCoy not to resign, citing that there had been no due process, no plan of improvement, perfect evaluations for 29 years, and that there was not sufficient cause for dismissal.

Testimony will show that on May 13, 2016, when Mr. McCoy called to inform the superintendent that he would not be resigning, the superintendent told him that she would continue the investigation and that he would remain on leave until further notice. Mr. McCoy responded that he would prefer to return to work and fix the problem. The superintendent refused stating that she would never bring him back. The three original questions have not been mentioned since then and do not appear in the investigative notes at all.

Mr. McCoy had still not been notified of the actual allegations. The investigator said that it was for creating a hostile work environment and the superintendent had said it was for unprofessional conduct and maybe for violating a policy.

Testimony will show that it was not until May 20, 2016, the board members were informed and the high school staff was informed that Mr. McCoy had been placed on administrative leave.

On June 3, 2016, Mr. McCoy met with the hired investigator, the superintendent, and his legal counsel. Multiple requests had been made to receive a copy of the investigator's notes in order to respond to the allegations. Copies of the report were still not made available; however the investigator went through the findings up to that point. Mr. McCoy responded that the accusations were benign, taken mostly out of context, and that the situation could be remediated.

On June 13, 2016, Mr. McCoy wrote a letter to the board requesting an opportunity to meet with them in order to explain the context of the alleged comments and to answer any questions.

On June 23, 2016, the board president responded to Mr. McCoy's letter stating that the board would arrange a meeting with him. Mr. McCoy responded, again asking for the summary notes that had been requested since May 10<sup>th</sup>. On July 2, 2016, a letter accompanied by a copy of the investigative summary notes arrived at Mr. McCoy's residence wherein the board president asked for a copy of any investigative notes Mr. McCoy has prior to setting a meeting with the board.

p) Testimony will confirm that many staff members were extremely fearful of retaliation from the superintendent if they were to show any support for, or sympathy on behalf of Mr. McCoy. A staff member who was particularly overtly supportive of Mr. McCoy was issued a disciplinary step for an issue that, under regular circumstances, would not have been issued. This was felt to be retaliatory in nature due to the minor issue that would not have otherwise received any actionable attention.

Two counselors are the subject for the following issue: 1) A seasoned counselor, one of the crucial witnesses in this case, has shown herself to be rather supportive of Mr. McCoy. 2) Another counselor who prefers to work at the high school level, but was transferred several years ago following a disciplinary action issued from Mr. McCoy (but who was allowed to avoid the discipline by the superintendent), and whose son was sanctioned for drug and alcohol-related offenses by Mr. McCoy (but for whom the discipline was over- ridden by the superintendent), and who is suspected to be one of the complainants. Testimony and documentation will show that the first counselor may have been re-assigned to the elementary and middle schools, while the second counselor has a contract stating that she will be the counselor for grades 9-12 for the following school year; presumably an indication that the superintendent also assumes that Mr. McCoy will no longer be the principal.

## Court Order #1

The Riverside School Board of Chattaroy Washington is ordered to cease/freeze all action regarding administrative changes, reassignments or appointments regarding the superintendent and board member replacement pending a review of district actions by an impartial person or panel appointed by this court. The only exception to this will be the allowance to organize a board meeting to accept the resignation of the current superintendent, and the obligation of providing a contract and reinstating Mr. John McCoy to the position of High School Principal, as related to RCW 28A.405.210. Current district administrators and board continue to exercise actions that are bias, unethical, and illegal.

### Reasons/Justifications:

(See Appendix for details)

- a) Administrators were verbally instructed not to attend board meetings unless requested by the board or the superintendent (See appendix a).
- b) Superintendent has appointed friends to unwarranted and unnecessary positions at extremely high salaries. Preferential treatment has been given to these friends as well (See appendix b).
- c) Superintendent has coerced staff to violate the law (See appendix c).
- d) Board member has been residing outside the district boundaries for some time while acting in the full capacity as an illegal board member. The superintendent and at least two other board members were complicit in hiding this fact See appendix d).
- e) The superintendent and the Human Resources director coerced the maintenance supervisor to hire their son's, respectively, while the boys did not meet the qualifications listed on the posting, nor were their sons required to go through the process as required by other applicants (See appendix e).
- f) On multiple occasions, the superintendent made changes to high school policy, directly undermining the authority of the principal to fit her own needs/desires (See appendix f).
- g) On the day that the high school principal made a request for a critical investigative summary report, the superintendent changed the Public Records Officer from the previous person to herself (See appendix g).
- h) The superintendent threatened Mr. McCoy that if he did not resign, "All this goes public." When Mr. McCoy did not resign, the superintendent gave a copy of the personnel file letter placing him on administrative leave to the press (unethical and bias) (See appendix h).
- i) The Superintendent authorized the hiring of the Board president's wife (See appendix i).
- j) On at least two occasions, a board member illegally spoke to citizens regarding the current personnel issue related to Mr. McCoy (See appendix j).
- k) Human Resources Director was involved in staff discipline without the administrative authority to do so (See appendix k).
- l) Against the will of the maintenance supervisor, and behind the back of the high school principal, the superintendent gave a key to the PE facility to a college boy. When she was confronted regarding the issue and the potential for injury, and liability, both by the maintenance supervisor and the principal, the superintendent insisted that the issue remain quiet and refused to relent (See Appendix l).

m) Superintendent has exhibited a clear and distinct bias toward Mr. McCoy for many years as noted by other administrators present during regular administrative meetings (See Appendix m).

n) Superintendent has refused to recognize the Riverside Principals Association (RPA) as a group with which to negotiate. She has further discouraged the right for this group to organize themselves as a bargaining unit (See Appendix n).

o) The superintendent did not conduct a proper investigation into the alleged conduct of the principal (See appendix o).

p) The superintendent responded in a retaliatory manner regarding the disciplinary action taken against a staff member for showing support for the principal. The superintendent also retaliated by changing the contract status and work location of two school counselors (See appendix p).

Court Order #2

The Riverside School Board of Chattaroy, Washington is ordered to provide a contract to John McCoy as provided in RCW 28A.405.210 (Enclosed). The board is also ordered to return Mr. McCoy to his position as Riverside High School Principal for the 2016-2017 school year. These orders will take effect no later than July 15, 2016 unless the district can show cause for these orders not to be followed.