

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | FEBRUARY 3, 2020

## School Board Response to Investigation

**Richmond, Michigan** — As many of you know, the District has been the subject of recent media reports arising in connection with employee complaints concerning the District's Superintendent, Brian Walmsley. These complaints, which were received last fall, generally allege that Mr. Walmsley's managerial practices with certain employees were harassing and otherwise violated Board policy.

To help with our investigation, we enlisted the assistance of Thrun Law Firm, which has served as School Board counsel for many years. At our direction, and with the consent of the administrator complainants, the investigating attorney, who had no prior involvement with the District and had never spoken to any District employee prior to her involvement, conducted an extensive investigation in the following weeks. That investigation included speaking to all of the complainants and other witnesses with knowledge of the circumstances and reviewing relevant documentation in connection with the allegations. Her findings and legal conclusions were summarized in a detailed report and legal analysis which was provided to the Board for consideration in a closed session occurring on January 2 of this year.

After extensive discussion, the Board adopted a resolution which did not substantiate the complaints, but found that remedial efforts should be undertaken to address employee concerns. These remedial efforts are in the process of being implemented in the District.

We are keenly aware of some of the rumors and inaccurate information circulating in social media and the community ascribing improper and even nefarious motives to the actions of the Board or the administration.

Responding to inaccurate or false narratives can be very difficult due to the sensitivities of circumstances like this. For example, the District has had numerous requests seeking release of the investigative report. We have determined that we will not be releasing that report because it contains highly sensitive and detailed statements from more than a dozen witnesses whose identities that we want to protect. Likewise, the report is subject to the attorney-client privilege which could be breached if we released even parts of the report. Michigan law is clear that we have such authority and we think this is the proper decision under the circumstances.

Making difficult or unpopular decisions is an inevitable part of serving as a School Board member and we realize that some in the community may ascribe improper motives to the Board in making this decision. Nothing could be further from the truth. We took this complaint very seriously and spent many hours going over the investigation and its accompanying report prior to coming to our conclusion. We ask that you remember and respect the fact that we are not just school Board members:

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972, Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, and Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of the Richmond Community School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, military status, national origin or ancestry, sex (including sexual orientation), disability, age (except as authorized by law,) height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination during any program, activity, service or employment. Inquiries related to any nondiscrimination policies should be directed to the Superintendent, 35276 Division Road, Richmond, MI 48062, (586) 727-3565.

We are also your friends, neighbors and community members who have chosen to devote our time and energy to making Richmond Community Schools and the fine community it serves the very best it can be. Anything less than this serves no purpose and only hurts this great school district, its employees and the children we educate.

Although we are not able to discuss the investigation, each of us welcome your comments and suggestions and most importantly, your continued support as we implement remedial measures that we anticipate should address the concerns that have come to our attention. We are confident that we will be able to move forward from this event in a productive way and we will be better for it.

Sincerely,

Richmond Community Schools Board of Education

Questions regarding this Press Release should be directed to Margaret Teltow, Board President.  
[Mteltow@richmond.k12.mi.us](mailto:Mteltow@richmond.k12.mi.us)

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