

February 23, 2017

To: Chris Coady, President, Haslett Board of Education (and all current members)  
From: Eric Thompson, Patricia Morley  
Re: Response to February 10 meeting with Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent

Dear Ms Coady and fellow Board Members:

Patty and I have followed the process you gave us to work directly with the Superintendent relative to our son Evan. We met for the second time February 10 with Mr Cook and Ms Jones.

On February 10 there were four major topics of discussion:

1. After the lengthy phone conversation Patty had with Mona Kay Woodhams what information was shared with Evan's teachers?
2. If she did not share information, why not?
3. Regardless of (1 or 2) why didn't any of Evan's teachers have us contacted by phone during the school day, especially considering that Evan was discussed at noon that day with teachers that were yet to see him in class?
4. No email responses from Principal Gillings to Eric's request for an explanation about Evan's detention and the other boy that was the protagonist.

Here is what we were told by the Superintendent, and we verified his responses with Ms Jones on February 13:

Mona Kay Woodhams did not share any details of the conversation she had with Patty with anyone in the school, including Principal Gillings. Furthermore, the superintendent told us that neither Principal Gillings nor Assistant Principal Woodams had received any information on October 11 about Evan from any of his teachers.

The reason for her not saying anything, according to the superintendent (and the assistant superintendent which we verified with her on February 13) is that she was bound by a confidentiality agreement and could not speak to anyone about what Patty and she discussed without expressed consent from Patty. He said this confidentiality agreement was in place due to the fact that Mona Kay Woodhams was a Guidance Counselor, and in that capacity she had a confidentiality agreement in place. Ms Woodhams did not inform us that such an agreement was in place at any time, and we had no way of knowing that we were required to provide specific instructions to her to tell Evan's teachers. When we asked the assistant superintendent where we would go to find any information or guidance from the school telling us that it was our responsibility to specifically ask that information be shared the assistant superintendent said that no information is posted anywhere or provided to parents ahead of time.

In response to why none of the teachers thought Evan should be sent to the guidance counselor, or to the office, or that we should have been notified is that in Mr Cook's words "there are so many kids that cry on a regular basis in middle school that Evan did not demonstrate to any of those teachers any behavior that rose to the level that we should be contacted or that he should have been referred to the guidance counselor." Mr Cook then proceeded to argue with us that the content of the email sent by Mrs Brookhouse was more about the test than about Evan's state of mind. I attach a copy for you to review and come to your own conclusions. He also confirms that in his mind that sending an email to our home account just before the end of the school day was sufficient notification and was completely acceptable.

As for why we never received any emails following up on our request to have explanation of Evan's detention he said that Assistant Principal Woodhams tried to call us. He had no explanation why she did not send an email in reply, nor did he have any explanation as to why she would not have left a voice message or continued to follow up with us until we received an answer. He also disputed that the second email we sent was never received. A copy of that email is also attached.

We did our duty as parents in accordance with all of the materials that you post and send to parents as it pertains to being part of a team for the betterment and health of our children. The superintendent believes that the actions of the associate principal were appropriate, and we can only conclude that he does not think that she had a responsibility to inform us of this confidentiality agreement at any time during the conversation. He also supports the opinions of the teachers that they did not see any reason to send Evan to counselor that day, or to have us contacted because they see so many tears in so many kids in middle school.

We continue to stand by our assertion that if any of Evan's teachers had known in advance to be on the lookout for unusual behavior from Evan and to call or notify the Associate Principal so that the parents could be contacted that at least one of Evan's teachers would have done so and Evan would be alive today.

We formally invite each and every one of you to come to our home to discuss these outcomes, either individually or as a group and tell us if you support the superintendent. We were told by the superintendent that he did not inform any teacher to avoid contact with us, and as of the date of this letter we have not heard from any of Evan's teachers... not even a sympathy card. We find this to be very disturbing, and as we said in our meetings with you we believe there is a cultural problem in the middle school, the superintendent denies that such a condition exists.

Signed  
Eric Thompson  
Patricia Morley