

August 7, 2019

Vicki Shockley

Home Address

Re: Complaint Against Beaufort County Board of Education Trustee

Dear Ms. Shockley:

I am writing to follow up on our telephone conversation of July 16, 2019. During that conversation, we discussed the letter of complaint you sent to Dr. Herbert Berg on June 20, 2019, about an incident that occurred at the District Teacher of the Year (TOY) meeting on June 6, 2019, in which Beaufort County Board of Education Trustee Will Smith discussed his concerns with you over what he perceives as a lack of diversity in the leadership team at Lady's Island Middle School, where you are a special education teacher. You stated Mr. Smith also accused your administration of a lack of transparency. When you tried to divert the conversation to talk about the positive things happening at Lady's Island, Mr. Smith became animated and loud, repeating his criticism about the school. Mr. Smith did not, however, act aggressively and you were not worried he would make physical contact with you.

You stated that, to your knowledge, Mr. Smith was not invited to the TOY meeting, which was attended by Superintendent Dr. Frank Rodriguez and the teachers of the year from across the District. You voiced a concern that, if Trustees regularly attend such meetings without the knowledge of the Superintendent, their presence could result in employees not feeling able to openly share their thoughts and opinions, particularly if the Trustee attending is not supportive of the District's mission.

On behalf of the Board, which retained me to review and respond to your letter of complaint, I have shared your concerns about the incident involving Mr. Smith with Dr. Rodriguez. I understand Dr. Rodriguez is in the process of developing procedures to share with the Board about his thoughts on the interactions of Trustees with District employees outside of Board meetings and committee meetings. Hopefully, the establishment and implementation of these procedures will result in a better understanding by Trustees of their role in the day-to-day operations of the District.

Thank you again for your willingness to talk with me. I hope you will have an enjoyable remainder of the summer and a successful 2019-20 school year.

Sincerely,

Andrea E. White

Bc: Clifford Bush, Esq.