



VAN DERMYDEN MAKUS
Investigations Law Firm

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
(Public Release)

Western Placer Unified School District
Report Concerning Pastor Casey Tinnin
June 26, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introduction 1
- II. Independence And Investigative Methodology 2
- III. Background 4
 - A. The Landing Spot 4
 - B. Pastor Tinnin 5
 - C. Project Veritas 5
- IV. The Videos About Pastor Tinnin 6
 - A. Video #1 7
 - B. Video #2 11
 - C. Pastor Tinnin’s Response 13
- V. Investigative Findings 18
 - A. What Was The Landing Spot’s Authority To Be On Lincoln High School’s Campus? 18
 - B. What Were The Services Provided To Lincoln High School Youth By The Landing Spot?. 19
 - C. Did Pastor Tinnin Engage In Any Wrongdoing At Lincoln High School? 20
- VI. Statistics 23

I. Introduction

This investigation occurs in the midst of a highly charged public debate about the educational rights of students who identify as LGBTQIA+.¹ Embedded in this debate is whether the rights of children or parents should be prioritized. Should parents retain the exclusive right to mentor their children around gender identity and sexual orientation? Should public schools provide resources and support to students around these issues? Should public schools respect a student’s desire for privacy on these topics, such as not notifying parents about the use of the teen’s preferred name and pronouns, or do parents hold the right to be informed?

Across the United States – including Placer County, California – there is, and will continue to be, a fundamental disagreement about the role of public schools as it relates to its LGBTQIA+ students.

It is with this backdrop that Western Placer Unified School District (WPUSD) retained Van Dermyden Makus Law Corporation (Firm) in April 2023. The Firm was retained to commence an independent, third-party investigation into public claims against Pastor Casey Tinnin of The Landing Spot.² The Landing Spot provided unpaid services to Lincoln High School, a public high school in the WPUSD serving grades 9 through 12.³ The Landing Spot representatives were on the Lincoln High School campus on five occasions between October 26, 2022 and February 22, 2023.

WPUSD initiated this investigation in response to an audio and video recording (video) and an accompanying article posted on March 19, 2023. The video and article were posted by Project Veritas.^{4,5} The video was reposted on several platforms. A second video clip was released on April 18, 2023.^{6,7}

The videos contained portions of a conversation that occurred in February 2023 between Pastor Tinnin and two individuals at dinner at the Yard House restaurant in Roseville, California. At least one of the individuals is believed to be an undercover Project Veritas journalist (who self-identified as “Kyle Williams”); the other individual identified as his wife (“Alley Williams”).⁸ During the dinner, the three had a discussion centered around LGBTQIA+ issues and Pastor Tinnin’s work in Placer County schools. The videos were interspersed with commentary criticizing Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot.

In the wake of the videos and during the course of the Firm’s Investigation, much has been written in the press and social media about Pastor Tinnin and the Project Veritas video. Much has been debated in regional school board meetings, and by politicians, parents and concerned citizens. This publicity spawned hundreds of responses from supporters and critics alike.

¹ This acronym refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning persons, intersex, asexual or others in the community.

² Section III.A. further describes The Landing Spot.

³ According to its website, Placer County had a population of 390,628 in 2019. <https://www.placer.ca.gov/2763/About-Our-County>. Lincoln High School has a population of roughly 2,000 students. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sdprofile/details.aspx?cds=31669513134657>; <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/lincoln-high-school-profile/95648>.

⁴ See: <https://rumble.com/v2dvnwe-groomer-rev.-casey-tinnin-says-its-critical-to-discuss-sexual-identity-gend.html>; <https://www.projectveritas.com/news/california-reverend-says-it-is-critical-to-discuss-sexual-identity-and/>.

⁵ Section III.C. further describes Project Veritas.

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiCmnoa4Z1k>

⁷ This video was released by a Pastor of a church in Roseville, California. This Pastor has been critical of Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot. Although we made efforts to interview him, we have not been successful as of the time of this Report.

⁸ It is unknown if these are real names. As discussed further, below, we hereinafter refer to these individuals as “the Recorders.”

Although the debate is an important and timely issue, this investigation seeks neither to attempt to resolve, nor impose any opinion upon, the critical issues surrounding LGBTQIA+ students and schools. Instead, the sole purpose of this investigation is to objectively investigate concerns related to Pastor Tinnin of The Landing Spot at Lincoln High School in the WPUSD.

WPUSD charged us with determining the following:

- What was The Landing Spot's authority to be on Lincoln High School's campus?
- What services did The Landing Spot provide to students at Lincoln High School?
- Did Pastor Tinnin, or The Landing Spot representatives, engage in any wrongdoing at Lincoln High School?

As a preview, and based upon a thorough review of the evidence, we find that: The Landing Spot had authority to be on campus, although Lincoln High School should have required a separate background check (rather than relying on Pastor Tinnin's background checks performed at other schools); the services provided were support for LGBTQIA+ students in line with California law; and, Pastor Tinnin did not engage in any wrongdoing at Lincoln High School.

II. Independence And Investigative Methodology

In answering these questions about The Landing Spot, WPUSD gave this Firm full discretion to conduct the Investigation as we deemed necessary. We did not seek or receive direction about how to conduct the Investigation, nor receive direction on our conclusions. The results of this investigation are ours alone, not influenced by any individual at WPUSD.

WPUSD fully cooperated with us and gave us access to all requested information under its control and authority. Neither this Firm, nor WPUSD, however, had the ability to compel outside parties to participate in interviews or otherwise provide documentary or video information. We reached out to both proponents and detractors. Some participated; some did not. As a result, the conclusions in this investigation are limited to that information to which we had access. We nonetheless feel confident we had sufficient information to reach reasoned conclusions.

In conducting the Investigation, we did the following.

Videos. We reviewed the original eight-minute-30-second video posted by Project Veritas on its social media pages and website on March 19, 2023. Six minutes and 45 seconds of the video is Pastor Tinnin speaking. The remaining portion of the video is a voiceover from Project Veritas showing The Landing Spot's website, the Yard House dinner, and a video of Project Veritas visiting Roseville Joint Union High School District's (RJUHSD's) campus.

We also reviewed the nine-minute-17-second video posted on April 18, 2023 by a Pastor of The Family Church in Roseville, California. It depicts portions of the same dinner with the Recorders from approximately the four-minute-36-second mark to approximately the seven-minute-41-second mark. Three minutes and five seconds of the video is Pastor Tinnin speaking. The rest of the video shows the Pastor of The Family Church offering his opinion on the video, and a few-second clip from a different video of Pastor Tinnin.

We contacted Project Veritas requesting the full raw footage of the videos, or further clips from the videos. Project Veritas' attorney declined, stating: "We have received your request. Our investigation and release speak for themselves. We do not provide raw footage and stand by the veracity of our reporting."

We also reviewed Pastor Tinnin's three-minute-43-second video, during which he responded to the Project Veritas post.⁹

We further reviewed other videos. We reviewed a video from a "Town Hall" with a panel of guest speakers that took place at the Loomis Basin Congregational United Church of Christ (Loomis Basin UCC) on May 16, 2022. This Church operates The Landing Spot. We also reviewed video from the April 1, 2022 Second Annual Drag Show hosted by The Landing Spot in Loomis, California.

Interviews. We conducted multiple interviews, including The Landing Spot staffers and Pastor Tinnin; WPUUSD and Lincoln High School administrators, students, parents, counselors, and educators; and, community members. These included both supporters and opponents of Pastor Tinnin.

We did not limit the participants in this investigation. To the contrary, throughout our Investigation, we asked witnesses if they were aware of any individuals with relevant information. We made attempts to interview others who also had personal knowledge of The Landing Spot and Pastor Tinnin's work – whether proponents or opponents. We likewise made attempts to interview others who did not have personal knowledge of The Landing Spot and Pastor Tinnin's work, but yet had strong viewpoints on the issue – again, whether proponents or opponents. We also made efforts, without success, to identify and interview the two individuals who met with, and recorded, their dinner conversation with Pastor Tinnin. We made every effort to gather as much information as possible from as many different sources as possible.

District Parent Outreach Letters. We reviewed available letters sent to parents from the following Districts in response to the Project Veritas video: WPUUSD, RJUHSD, and Placer Union High School District. For its part, on May 5, 2023, Lincoln High School administrators sent the following message on ParentSquare, inviting parents to participate in this investigation:

Hello Lincoln High Families:

I wanted to send a short note to update families on the third-party review of The Landing Spot which is currently underway in our District. As announced at a Board meeting last month, the District has engaged an outside independent investigator to conduct a review of The Landing Spot's activities and services on Lincoln High School in response to the video published by Project Veritas. The Landing Spot is fully cooperating with the investigation.

The investigation is being conducted by Sue Ann Van Dermyden of Van Dermyden Makus Investigations Law Firm (916.779.2402 | sav@vmlawcorp.com

2520 Venture Oaks Way, Suite 450, Sacramento, CA 95833 | www.vmlawcorp.com).

⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPSMdvdSvzg>

If you have direct information that you believe would be helpful to the investigation, you are welcome to contact the firm.

We cannot estimate when the investigation will be concluded but will notify our families when that occurs and expect to share the outcome of the investigation as well.

Site Visits At Lincoln High Schools. On May 19, 2023 and June 5, 2023, our attorney-investigator visited the Lincoln High School campus and observed the location, room, windows and doors of the meeting room The Landing Spot used while on campus.

Background-Check Materials. We reviewed materials associated with Pastor Tinnin’s background check and 2022 fingerprint clearance from a Placer County school (other than Lincoln High School). Additionally, we interviewed an administrator from this Placer County school, who explained the background process the school underwent for Pastor Tinnin to provide services on its campus.

Board Meetings. We reviewed videos from four District Board meetings discussing The Landing Spot. These included Board meetings for WPUUSD (April 4, 2023 and May 2, 2023), RJUHSD (March 23, 2023), and Placer Union High School (April 18, 2023). In addition, we reviewed the minutes from all 2023 Board meetings, both for WPUUSD and RJUHSD.

Publicly Available Information. Throughout this investigation, we monitored ongoing and extensive media and online coverage. We reviewed online content from various sources, including: newspapers, articles, blogs, YouTube live-streaming, and press releases. We also closely monitored social media, including Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Nextdoor. The viewpoints and actions ranged from strong opposition to Pastor Tinnin (including death threats to Pastor Tinnin and protests at his personal residence),¹⁰ to robust support for (including a student walk-out and support letters) Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot’s services to students. Others took a more neutral view.

Police Departments. We contacted the Roseville Police Department and the Lincoln Police Department five times between April 14, 2023 to May 2, 2023 to determine whether either had initiated any active or inactive investigations into The Landing Spot or Pastor Tinnin. The Departments confirmed there were none.

Documents. We reviewed hundreds of documents provided by WPUUSD, Lincoln High School, Pastor Tinnin and witnesses.

III. Background

A. The Landing Spot

According to its website, The Landing Spot is a “non-religious support group for LGBTQ+ youth and their parents in Placer County.” It is “recognized for creating a safe place for LGBTQ+ youth suffering from depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, hunger, homelessness or loneliness, and creating a healthy, strong gay community here.”

¹⁰ Pastor Tinnin received death threats and member(s) of the Proud Boys presented outside his home on March 22 and 23, 2023 protesting his services and livestreaming his address. As a result, the Loomis Basin UCC postponed in-person events and worship services for a period of time for safety reasons.

The Landing Spot activities include hosting monthly support groups and organizing activities, speakers and events. In addition, The Landing Spot has met with high schools to work directly with school wellness center staff and counselors to provide support to LGBTQIA+ students. The Landing Spot has been operated since 2017 by Loomis Basin UCC.

B. Pastor Tinnin

Pastor Tinnin was a Youth Minister for over 15 years. In the past 10 years, he has been a Pastor in Placer County. He is currently the Senior Pastor at Loomis Basin UCC. In this role, Pastor Tinnin is a mandatory reporter. Pastor Tinnin received a Bachelor of Arts in Intercultural Studies from Trinity Lutheran College, a Masters in Theological Studies from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and a Masters in Divinity from Pacific School of Religion. Additionally, he is certified in Intercultural Competence, Clergy Boundary Training, Clergy Mandated Reporting, and Mental Health First Aid.

According to his resumé, since November 2016, Pastor Tinnin has been a Senior Pastor with the Loomis Basin UCC, providing pastoral care to congregants and the community; helping create spiritual formation opportunities and leading worship; building relationships with community partners to expand mission and vision; and, helping empower leaders in the community to build capacity for growth and change.

In January 2017, Pastor Tinnin founded The Landing Spot. Pastor Tinnin’s resumé delineates his intent in creating The Landing Spot as being to “create outreach events for LGBTQIA+ youth, manage a safe space for LGBT youth and allies, and provide crisis management and mediation between parents and LGBT youth.”

C. Project Veritas

According to its website, Project Veritas is a non-profit journalism enterprise, which “investigates and exposes corruption, dishonesty, self-dealing, waste, fraud, and other misconduct in both public and private institutions to achieve a more ethical and transparent society.” In 2022, Project Veritas announced its investigations “led directly to the passage of new legislation, federal and state investigations, congressional inquiries, the de-funding of taxpayer-funded groups, and arrests of those who defraud the American public.”¹¹

On its website, Project Veritas addresses the question of whether they are journalists. A Wikipedia post describes Project Veritas as an “American far-right activist group” that “produces deceptively edited videos for its undercover operations, which use secret recordings in an effort to discredit mainstream media organizations and progressive groups. Project Veritas also uses entrapment to generate bad publicity for its targets, and has propagated disinformation and conspiracy theories in its videos and operations.”¹²

On its website, Project Veritas addresses the Wikipedia post: “Despite the desire for Wikipedia and those with a dishonest motive to label Project Veritas as anything but journalists, government agencies, courts and other establishment media continue to appropriately refer to our activities under an umbrella of *journalism*. Project Veritas will continue to sue, depose, and expose those who defame us.”¹³ Its website

¹¹ <https://www.projectveritas.com/news/results-of-veritas-journalism/>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_Veritas

¹³ <https://www.projectveritas.com/are-we-journalists/>

lists several lawsuits Project Veritas has initiated, including against CNN, Twitter and The New York Times.¹⁴

IV. The Videos About Pastor Tinnin

In order to answer the three questions identified above, it is necessary to understand the content of the videos, which ultimately triggered the events leading to this investigation.

On March 19, 2023, Project Veritas posted a video (Video #1) and accompanying article related to a recorded meeting two individuals had with Pastor Tinnin in February 2023. On April 18, 2023, a local Pastor released a second video with clips from the night Pastor Tinnin met with Project Veritas journalists (Video #2).

Events Leading To The Project Veritas Videos. According to Pastor Tinnin, he believed he was meeting with parents of a high school student who were moving from Berkeley, California to Placer County. They identified themselves as a married couple named Kyle Williams and Alley Williams.¹⁵ We were not able to verify these as their true names, nor otherwise identify them in an effort to interview them. For ease of reference, as previously mentioned, we hereinafter refer to them individually and collectively as the Recorders, in reference to their video of Pastor Tinnin.

Without the benefit of meeting with either individual, we rely upon the following accounts from Pastor Tinnin and other witnesses. According to Pastor Tinnin, the Recorders reached out to him through The Landing Spot. Pastor Tinnin said the couple also represented they had a teenager, age 13, who was transitioning from male to female. Pastor Tinnin estimated he met “Kyle” four to five times in person, and Alley once (at the recorded dinner). He also exchanged text messages with “Kyle” between February 13, 2023 and March 2023. These messages reflect a cordial relationship between “Kyle” and Pastor Tinnin, in which they discuss a local drag show, and interest in the couple’s teen attending Camp Fruit Loop in late June and early July 2023.¹⁶ “Kyle” expressed concern about Placer County’s conservatism, and said he was “desperate” for resources and support for their teen.

This version of events was corroborated by other witnesses. They described meeting “Kyle” at church services at the Loomis Basin UCC, and at support group meetings held by The Landing Spot for parents of LGBTQIA+ teens. Witnesses said “Kyle” befriended The Landing Spot representatives and other support group parents, exchanging contact information with some.

Pastor Tinnin’s interactions with the Recorders culminated in their request to meet for dinner in February 2023 at the Yard House in Roseville, California. During the dinner, Pastor Tinnin recalled being concerned about how the Recorders would integrate into conservative Placer County, given some of their comments. For example, Pastor Tinnin recalled the Recorders made statements to him about the following: allowing their 13-year-old teenager to have sex with the teenager’s friends in their home; whether youth were permitted to have sex at Camp Fruit Loop; and, about “Kyle’s” bisexuality.

The Project Veritas Videos. The Recorders recorded the February 2023 discussion at this dinner. Pastor Tinnin estimated the dinner conversation was approximately one and a half hours long. The first video of

¹⁴ The website states Project Veritas’ founder was terminated with cause effective May 15, 2023.

¹⁵ Pastor Tinnin believed “Alley” was this individual’s first name, and “Williams” was both of their last names, but was unable to recall for certain.

¹⁶ Camp Fruit Loop is a camp in Placer County organized by The Landing Spot that held its first in-person camp for LGBTQIA+ youth in 2022. Attendance requires a completed “Youth permission, photo and medical consent form.”

the dinner is approximately eight minutes and 13 seconds long. The second video of the dinner is nine minutes and 17 seconds long. However, in the first video, Pastor Tinnin is shown speaking at the dinner for a total of approximately six minutes and 45 seconds, and in the second video, Pastor Tinnin is shown speaking for a total of approximately three minutes and five seconds. According to Pastor Tinnin, the recording occurred without his knowledge. He stated the videos do not depict the entirety of their discussion and therefore loses important and meaningful context.

Video #1 primarily shows clips of Pastor Tinnin speaking, sometimes without an accompanying question, context or preamble, although at limited times you can overhear the Recorders asking Pastor Tinnin questions. The video is interspersed with commentary critical of Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot by an unidentified and unseen individual.

We summarize key points from Video #1 here. Importantly, we only repeat what the video shows. Without the full recording of the one and one-half hour dinner, we cannot – and do not – verify the video depicts how the conversation occurred or the order of the statements. Notably, the video often shows Pastor Tinnin making statements without context or an accompanying question. Without a picture of the relational, environmental and cultural context of the exchange, the viewer does not have a full understanding of the meaning and clarity of the intended message. At other times, the video depicts questions from the unidentified and unseen Recorders (male and female), followed by a statement from Pastor Tinnin. Because it is unclear whether Pastor Tinnin’s responses are connected to the questions, it allows for certain assumptions about Pastor Tinnin’s comments that may be inaccurate. For the most part, the video focuses on Pastor Tinnin speaking. At no point does the video that was released capture images of either Recorder.

A. Video #1

The video opens with comments by Pastor Tinnin about “older queer folks” who are “mentoring” young adults about gender ideology, with parents “freaking” out. The video begins by showing Pastor Tinnin making each of the following statements, without any accompanying questions or context. It is unclear whether Pastor Tinnin made the statements in the order depicted here:

- “I know we’re like this close to having parents freaking the f*** out.”
- “In my mind how communities thrive is through intergenerational relationships.”
- “So, I and the older queer folks are mentoring these young adults.”
- “How do you talk to your kids about puberty? Have you considered blockers?”¹⁷

The video then suggests Pastor Tinnin is withholding information from, or lying to, parents about their students. The video cuts to a male voice asking the following question: “How critical is it do you think¹⁸ – to get them when they are young?” Pastor Tinnin is then depicted answering with the following, (although, again, it is unclear whether this statement followed the question):

- “Critical. We used to meet at the church because it was free, and kids would say they’re going to youth group.”

¹⁷ This refers to medicines that prevent puberty from happening.

¹⁸ Pastor Tinnin interrupts here, before the end of the question, with “critical.”

The video continues with Pastor Tinnin stating the following, without accompanying questions or dialogue:

- “We moved to the library because kids said they were ‘meeting their friends at the library.’”
- “So it is not lying, but it’s not fully the truth.” [Later, when given more context, Pastor Tinnin says, “But it keeps them safe. That’s all I f***king care about.”]
- “When they know that their queer kid is coming to me for support they’re gonna be upset.”

The video next suggests Pastor Tinnin calls Child Protective Services when parents do not honor their child’s identity or pronouns. The video continues with Pastor Tinnin stating the following, without accompanying questions or dialogue:

- “It’s when you are purposely misgendering them, when you are purposely not using their names...”

Although it is unclear if this immediately follows the above statement, the video contains a question by a female voice: “How do you handle that?” The video then shows Pastor Tinnin stating:

- “I call CPS.”

Following this, a male voice says, “So that’s your standard protocol?” Pastor Tinnin is then depicted answering with the following:

- “F*** yeah.”

The video next shows, without accompanying questions or dialogue, Pastor Tinnin stating:

- “If we want these kids to thrive and survive we must get to their parents first.”

The video now introduces a preamble, which reproduces much of the above dialogue, with some accompanying questions. Although some of the below is a repeat of the opening of the video, I repeat it here to follow the flow of the video.

It begins with an unidentified male voice stating: “Meet Reverend Casey Tinnin, of Loomis Basin Congregational Church in Loomis, California. Casey is also the founder of The Landing Spot, a nonprofit community center, meant to create – quote – a safe supportive and empowering space for LGBTQIA+ and their families. A Project Veritas undercover journalist met with Tinnin who went on to describe his non-profit’s involvement within local schools and how he creates curriculum that will ‘freak out parents out’ [...]”

This is where Pastor Tinnin begins the above-described conversation about, “So I am creating like curriculum because I am waiting. We are this close to having parents freaking the f*** out.” In the video, the Project Veritas reporter asked why (again unclear whether this was a sequential question): “Why? Like in a good way or a bad way?” The video then shows Pastor Tinnin responding: “No, when they know that their queer kid is coming to me for support, they’re gonna be upset.” Pastor Tinnin then discusses attending a school’s Gay Straight Alliance Club (GSA), and states 50 kids were in the GSA, half of whom were Mormon:

- “Those parents don’t want me talking – encouraging this lifestyle, right? Like, that’s the thing.”

Pastor Tinnin continues:

- “Like you are...there’s pastors in this community that say that I’m brainwashing their kids, I’m grooming them – awful, awful s**t.”

The Recorder then asks: “Those kids... what sort of steps – I mean, do you have to take steps to make sure they don’t find out?”

Pastor Tinnin is then depicted as saying – without verifying order, context or questions:

- “I have... so, what happens is they are referred to The Landing Spot meeting by the Wellness Center. The Wellness Center is not required to tell the parents, at least from what I understand, anything.”
- “Because it is therapy.”
- “Most of the high schools now have wellness centers.”
- “Which is something none of us had. Which is legit counseling at schools. Like it’s not like ‘go into your, go see your counselor’, it’s – they are therapists.” [Describing services by therapists with couches, fidgets toys, TV, music.]

At this point, the video asks to which 10 high schools Pastor Tinnin provides services. He responds. Project Veritas responds with critical commentary about The Landing Spot’s website. It then depicts its self-described “undercover journalist” as saying, “We looked into The Landing Spot. And for having programs integrated into so many schools, their website lacks any information about their mission, vision and activities, instead taken up by blank website template text blocks.” A female voice then asks: “The Landing Spot during the school, is it like a room you can go to?” The video then depicts Pastor Tinnin as saying:

- “No, it is a wellness center and they lock it because they don’t want kids just coming through and outing other kids.”

A male voice then says, “Is this during school hours?” The video then depicts them going to Roseville High School to “corroborate Casey’s claims.” The video shows a Psychiatrist at Roseville High School Wellness Center stating without context or a question: “So we have a Landing Spot group and unfortunately some things with our District right now has paused them coming on campus but we plan on continuing having that space.” The person then responds to an incomplete sentence of, “You don’t tell parents, right?” to which she responds, “No. That’s a protection thing in California. We have some parents that are really upset about that.”

At this point, the video cuts – without context or questions – to Pastor Tinnin (and as addressed above), saying:

- “We used to meet at the church because it was free, and kids would say they’re going to ‘youth group’, right?” and continuing with the earlier comment about moving to the library. “So it is not lying, but it’s not fully the truth.”

- “But it keeps them safe. That’s all I f***king care about.”

This then leads Pastor Tinnin to talk about:

- “In my mind how communities thrive is through intergenerational relationships.” And, “So, I and the older queer folks are mentoring these young adults.”

In the video, Pastor Tinnin then discusses college-age kids running his mentorship programs. Based on prompting, Pastor Tinnin then says:

- “Then if we get the high schoolers offering play dates where they’re just holding space for kids under 12 or under 13, and sort of like just creating fun stuff for them to do, while parents can process,.that would be the easiest low-hanging fruit, right?”

The Recorders then ask, “How critical is it, do you think, to get them while they are young?”

Pastor Tinnin says – although the context is unclear:

- “Critical. Because puberty is where we will see these kids really spin out because all of that dysphoria begins to arrive.”
- “And so if we can start helping parents talk about...how do you talk to your kids about puberty? Have you considered blockers?”

The video then adds commentary: “One of the most alarming claims that Tinnin tells our journalist, is that if he would hear of a parent misgendering a child, or calling them by their birthname, Tinnin would take it upon himself to call Child Protective Services on that parent.” The video shows Tinnin at this juncture stating:

- “Language matters, we are working together. We are not going to get this right. Kids get that. It is when you are purposefully misgendering them, when you are purposefully not using their name, when telling them things like, ‘You are not eating at my dinner table unless you go by the name that we gave you with the pronouns you were born with.’”

The female Recorder then asks, “Have you seen those situations? How do you handle that?” In the video, Pastor Tinnin is depicted as responding:

- “I call CPS. And they say, it is Placer County. This is a cultural difference because they are Christian.”

Again, the female Recorder asks, “How do you handle that?” The video depicts Pastor Tinnin as saying:

- “Outrage, anger.”

The Recorder then, presumably, asks: “Have you ever had anyone at CPS actually take a report for that?” to which he is depicted as responding:

- “I’ve had people take reports but I have not yet seen them follow through.”

The Recorder then seemingly asks the following question, “But that’s your standard protocol?” to which Pastor Tinnin allegedly responds:

- “F*** yeah.”

The video then shows Pastor Tinnin stating:

- “In the next five years, if I could get my 501c3, if we could help elevate access to jobs and housing, have a drop-in center, and get these kids emergency housing when needed, that is under the age of 18, then I would say, done.”

The video then ends.

B. Video #2

A second video from the February 2023 dinner was released on April 18, 2023. We summarize key points here:

The video opens with comments from a Pastor of The Family Church in Roseville, California, Matthew Oliver. He described The Landing Spot as a “defunct church” and Pastor Tinnin as a “perverted predator pastor” who has been “invading school campuses” and “manipulating our children, feeding them a whole bunch of junk.” Oliver briefly discussed the first video, specifically, when Pastor Tinnin made the “low-hanging fruit” comment, discussed “intergenerational relationships” and when “parents don’t go along with his perverted plan, he reports them to child services.” Oliver also made the following statements:

- Pastor Tinnin was on school campuses without prior background checks, and without being a licensed therapist.
- Pastor Tinnin and his team could, in the middle of a school day, “take your children into rooms without parents’ notification, without faculty involvement, into locked rooms with no windows, where who knows what’s going on.”
- “I talked to psychologists who said ‘[when he’s talking about] low-hanging fruit, [...] it’s suggesting grooming or multi-generational relationships, it sounds a lot like pedophilia [...]’”
- “The hope was there would be enough outrage by parents, by community members, that this would never happen. In fact, a lot of our school boards, they removed [The Landing Spot] immediately off the school campuses.”
- “What’s happening is there’s a group that’s doubling down to try to get them back on our school campuses and this Casey Tinnin back influencing and manipulating the minds of our children.”

Oliver then adds he was not involved with the Project Veritas video, but he wants to make sure the video “sees the light of day.” He said the second video talks about Pastor Tinnin wanting kids to lie to their parents, and those who watch it will be “disgusted,” “outraged,” and “grossed out.” Oliver then shows the second Project Veritas video, which depicts the following¹⁹:

¹⁹ Prior to showing the second Project Veritas video, Oliver discusses the importance of showing the video, but with no new allegations.

Pastor Tinnin says – although uncertain whether in context:

- “A lot of churches were doing this like ‘true love waits,’ ‘don’t watch pornography,’ ‘blah, blah, blah’ and you would be in these like accountability groups when those breakout sessions would happen, where men were being told, or boys were being told, ‘don’t masturbate, blah, blah, blah.’ And, women were being told, ‘Your sexual desires are inappropriate. Your body is to wait for your husband,’ so they’re shamed out of experimenting at all.”

The female journalist then asked, “How do you handle that with your kids?” Pastor Tinnin responded “What do you mean?” The female journalist clarified, “Like the children at The Landing Spot?” The video depicts Pastor Tinnin saying:

- “I’m like, no, you need to. You need to. Like that’s the whole point. Right? It’s like, it’s like agency of your body, dignity of your own voice. Like know what feels good, know what feels good. Like, advocate for yourself, right? Like, these are, this is what we are trying to empower young people to do.”²⁰
- “When I was a youth director in Auburn, I did like ‘ask a pastor anything night,’ and so one of the boys says, ‘So I was at this other church and they said masturbating was a sin. What do you think?’ And like all my high school boys lean in. You know it was just like [makes a movement showing how they leaned forward].”

The male journalist then said “they’re like, tune in the frequency.” Pastor Tinnin agreed, and then continued:

- “Yeah, yup, like quieter than they’ve ever been, and I was just like your body is your body and it is important for you to uh know what you like, and also though, the thing that, for me is, uh pornography is fine, but you must understand that is not what real sex is like, and we should not treat people like objects.”

Pastor Tinnin continued:

- “So those kids, those boys left youth group faster than any night I’d ever seen them [...].”

The male journalist asked, “They left?” Pastor Tinnin continued:

- “After church, normally, they’d stick around and fuck around, you know play basketball, no they all went home and one of the adults noticed and she, older lady, she said, ‘You just made those kids parents’ water bill go up by at least \$20.00.’ And I just burst into laughter, you know. She’s like, ‘You’re breaking people, you’re breaking people.’”

The female journalist responded, “Well, maybe they should have went home together.” The male journalist then said, “Right? Could have been more fun.” Pastor Tinnin nodded and said, “Yeah.”

The male journalist then laughed and said: “Ha ha oh man, this is awesome...and you know, you mentioned something, the whole, I keep going back to the ‘oh just hand them a pamphlet about

²⁰ Of note, in the captions on the video, Pastor Tinnin’s comment reads like this: “I’m like no you need to (sexually experiment). You need to (sexually experiment) [...].”

celibacy.’ It’s like okay, this is, you know, it almost reminds me of like the uh, the old school drug things, ‘We just don’t do ‘em.’ It’s like okay, kids are gonna have sex.”

Pastor Tinnin then responded:

- “Exactly.”

The male reporter continued with, “They’re gonna do it.”

Pastor Tinnin then said:

- “And what is the option? Like you are, when I see pastors in the community I’m known as like the liberal heretic. Like people know me now. I will wear that badge every day. I’m like, I’m gonna keep telling the truth. And the fact is, that when you say that your kid should remain celibate, when you pretend as if their sex life does not exist, all you’re doing is putting them in danger. Their lives are in danger.”

The video then cuts back to Oliver. Oliver thanks everyone for watching the video, and said the goal is to share it to make sure Pastor Tinnin becomes famous for “his horrible acts and statements he has made” so that “this is never allowed to happen again.” Oliver said, “We don’t just want to be outraged, what we wanna do is take action, good legal action, like going to school board meetings, voting in the right people into our community, encouraging our school board members, encouraging our electives.”

Further, Oliver said, “One of the things people wanna do is make this an ‘us against them,’ this is an LGBTQ against the world.” Oliver said that this is not an “us against them.” Rather, this is about “right vs. wrong” and “good vs. evil.”

Oliver then discussed Pastor Tinnin’s responsive video. Oliver explained Pastor Tinnin had an opportunity to bring clarification and “take ownership of his statements.” Oliver said “he has done a public statement where he doesn’t apologize, or he doesn’t bring clarification to ‘low-hanging fruit,’ to ‘multigenerational relationships,’ and encouraging children to lie.” But, “instead he plays the victim.” Oliver said the victim here is “your children” and “future generations.”

C. Pastor Tinnin’s Response

Pastor Tinnin prepared a video response to the Project Veritas videos.²¹ It depicts Pastor Tinnin stating the following:

Across the nation, LGBTQI people are under attack just for being their authentic selves. A radical, politically connected small group of people has an agenda to erase queer people from our schools, our churches, and our nation. While we in California may think this happens elsewhere, the sad reality is that this is happening right here in Placer County. Last week, I and my church, we were targets of their attacks. A far-right wing activist group is circulating a highly edited video to portray me as someone who preys on children. This could not be further from the truth. I am Pastor Casey Tinnin. I am an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, serving Loomis UCC in Northern California. I have served as

²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPSMdvdSvzg>

pastor to this community for over six years. Our church believes that God's love extends to all people, including queer people.

We work to spread that love to our neighbors just as Jesus taught us to do. I am also an out gay man and I am proud of who I am. My husband and I are part of this community. We volunteer. We walk our dog. We make dinner for our friends and we care about our neighbors. We also worked tirelessly to make sure that queer youth have a safe and welcoming place to go where they are celebrated for all of who they were created to be over and over. Teens came to us, turned away by their church communities, bullied at their schools, and sometimes even rejected by their families. That's why our church formed The Landing Spot in 2017, a non-religious program that provides support for queer teens and their parents. We do this through facilitated peer groups, social activities, and community events. Many parents and kids have told us that we have saved their lives.

Not one complaint has ever been lodged against us, ever. More than five years ago, The Landing Spot was invited by a local high school health counselor to be a resource for queer students in schools. Because there were no such resources available in Placer County. The Landing Spot has grown year after year and is clearly needed. The discredited group that created the smear campaign is Project Veritas. They targeted me in the same way that they have went after journalists, lawmakers, and other community leaders, generating damaging publicity for people they hold in contempt like me, my church, and the queer community. But it won't work, and we are not backing down. Make no mistake, I am not what these radicals are calling me. I am not a pedophile. I am not a groomer. There are no facts to even suggest these heinous false statements, and they would not make such statements against me if I was not gay.

This is a blatant attack on the queer community and our friends, and so we resolve that in response to this evil, this hate-filled action that we will stand up and show our strength, but beloved children of God, we are the hands. We are the feet, and we are the voice of Jesus in this world. Your messages, your public statements, and your generosity over the past week have shown that to be true. Thank you and peace to you all.

Pastor Tinnin also “went through and worked through the misinformation” in the Project Veritas video in the form of Questions and Answers.²² It depicts the following:

- Q: You said “fuck” and “fucking” a few times
- A: I use curse words just as many other adults do.
- Q: You say you created curriculum that will “freak out parents”
- A: I didn’t say that I created a curriculum that would “freak out parents.” I stated the reason why I created a curriculum. The purpose is to provide structure to show what topics are discussed in each meeting. I understood that if there ever was a parent that was “freaked out”

²² On March 30, 2023, Tinnin responded on the Loomis Basic UCC’s YouTube Channel. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPSMdvdSvzg>.

and wanted to know what was discussed in Landing Spot meetings, we could provide that information if it was ever necessary to do so.

- Q: You called out the number of LDS students at the Granite Bay HS GSA
- A: The LDS church is known for its extremely conservative views on LGBTQ people. I was making the point that these teens are likely to not have one other supportive adult in their lives. The example was used to show the great need for resources for LGBTQ teens in local high schools and the lifesaving work that The Landing Spot does.
- Q: You said, “Parents don’t want me talking to their kids,” and “encouraging this lifestyle,” “brainwashing kids,” “grooming kids”
- A: In the context of providing examples of hateful messages and lies that are commonly used against LGBTQ people, these were messages I’ve commonly heard used against me and others in the community. I never said that I was doing any of these things.
- Q: It was implied that teens are encouraged to lie to their parents about what they are doing at The Landing Spot
- A: Not at all. The Landing Spot is a support group for LGBTQ teens AND their parents. Parents meet monthly as well to get support during their child’s coming out process and to support other parents. The entire program is about keeping parents and teens together during what can be a difficult time. Per California Education Code Section 46010.1, students in grades 7-12 can be excused from class to obtain confidential medical services - including mental health services - without the prior consent of the parent or guardian. This law has been on the books since 1987. The Landing Spot was invited to the health centers on high school campuses as a resource for mental health professionals to refer LGBTQ students to peer groups for community. Because these referrals are made by mental health professionals, they are protected under the law and remain confidential. Teens are not encouraged to lie to their parents about the confidential medical services they are receiving. However, if they do not feel safe to tell their parents about those services, they are protected by the law. LGBTQ teens need this resource because many times they do not have a supportive adult they can confide in. The guarantee of confidentiality is what helps these individuals feel safe while navigating the coming out process.
- Q: When asked where The Landing Spot met, you stated it takes place behind locked doors at the wellness center. Further, you said you used to meet at the church and teens would say they are “going to youth group.” Later, The Landing Spot moved to the library and you explained that teens would say “we’re meeting friends at the library” which you stated “isn’t ‘lying’ but it’s not fully the truth. It keeps them safe and that is all I care about.”
- A: The Landing Spot meets at the wellness center on each high school campus. Just as you would expect privacy and confidentiality when you visit your doctor or mental health professional, the health center controls entrance into rooms. To be crystal clear, I and other Landing Spot volunteers are never alone in rooms with students. There are ALWAYS two Landing Spot adults and at least one school staff person present in all meetings at all times. All Landing Spot volunteers are background checked and fingerprinted at each school that we serve in the Roseville School District. There are never any unauthorized individuals present at Landing Spot meetings.

- For our monthly parent/teen peer support meetings outside of school, we began meeting at my church. Some teens that were not out to their parents would tell them they were attending a youth group. Later, the monthly parent/teen peer support meetings were held at the library because it was more centrally located to those who were attending. Again, some teens who were not out to their parents would say they were “meeting friends at the library.” While myself and other leaders of The Landing Spot never encouraged the youth to lie to their parents, we valued their ability to get the support they needed in a safe way.
- The truth is that not all youth are lucky enough to have a safe and supportive household. That is even more true for LGBTQ youth. Some of these students are not yet “out” to their parents and caregivers, for a variety of reasons. Meeting in safe, public spaces ensures the safety of our youth both during Landing Spot meetings and when they return home.
- Q: You said, “How communities thrive is through intergenerational relationships.”
- A: Speaking plainly, this is the same thing as saying it’s important for youth to have a strong bond with their grandparents. Seeing LGBTQ adults and elders thriving in their personal lives provides hope. It helps them see that “it gets better” and to know that there is a full and abundant life waiting for them.
- Q: You stated that, “College-age kids are running monthly meetings”
- A: Some of my Landing Spot volunteers are graduates of The Landing Spot program and they chose to come back as mentors. I and other adult volunteers have taught them how to lead meetings and hold safe spaces for teens. Again, these volunteers are also background checked and fingerprinted at each school that they serve.
- Q: You stated that highschoolers could offer “playdates” to kids under 12 or 13 while their parents “process,” that would be the easiest “low-hanging fruit.”
- A: All of our work is currently to serve youth between the ages of 13-18. Myself and other leaders of The Landing Spot are regularly asked by parents with children under age 13 to start a Landing Spot group for pre-teens. Because we didn’t have additional capacity for expanding group programs, leaders suggested empowering youth to aid other youth while offering counseling to parents as an easy solution to a difficult problem. Having younger youth talk to older youth is a common practice in other social groups, such as scouting organizations.
- Q: You were asked, “How critical is it to get ‘em while they’re young?” You immediately responded “critical...critical.” You then began to talk about puberty, dysphoria and blockers.
- A: I responded to this question in the context that these “parents” had a young trans child and they were asking how critical it is to seek gender affirming care at the beginning of puberty. For trans youth, when the effects of puberty changes their bodies, it can often lead to body dysphoria. This dysphoria causes young people to unravel into depression and other mental health challenges. My purpose was to let them know that parents need to speak with their trans teens about their changing bodies and, if parents feel it appropriate, to seek medical professional advice. I was very clear in the conversation that medical transition is not the only option for trans youth. There are many non-medical options to explore.

- Q: You stated that you call CPS when parents are misgendering their kids and refusing to call them by their chosen name.
- A: As a pastor, I am a mandated reporter. I never take reporting parents to Child Protective Services lightly. I understand the impact this action can have on families. The Landing Spot is all about keeping families together and safe. But, when I hear of a child being denied food, or shelter simply because they are LGBTQ, I have an obligation under the law to report this information to the appropriate authorities; just as any other mandated reporter would do.

Pastor Tinnin's response also included the following:

- Queer youth experience homelessness at higher rates than their straight and gender-conforming peers.
- Even in the year 2023, LGBTQ youth are often kicked out of their home when they come out to their parents.
- From Trevor Project:²³ 28% of LGBTQ youth reported experiencing homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives — and those who did, had two to four times the odds of reporting depression, anxiety, self-harm, considering suicide, and attempting suicide compared to those with stable housing.
- Having safe housing, with proper supervision from trained staff, is one way to ensure that these youth do not experience situations that can be damaging to their physical and mental health.
- Talk more about how the Sacramento LGBT center is already doing this. It's nothing new. We just want more of it.
- Puberty blockers are a safe, reversible medical intervention for transgender youth.
- More than 50% of trans and non-binary youth in the US considered suicide this year.
- According to the Mayo Clinic: Gender dysphoria that starts in childhood and worsens with the start of puberty rarely goes away.
- For children who have gender dysphoria, suppressing puberty might:
 - Improve mental well-being
 - Reduce depression and anxiety
 - Improve social interactions and integration with other kids

²³ The Trevor Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to “end suicide among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer & questioning young people.” See: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/strategic-plan/>

V. Investigative Findings

With this background, we now turn to the scope of this investigation and reach the following findings.

A. What Was The Landing Spot's Authority To Be On Lincoln High School's Campus?

Authority. The Landing Spot was granted verbal authority to be on the Lincoln High School campus by its Principal.²⁴ Principal Hladun agreed The Landing Spot would provide volunteer services to students once a month during the lunch period (approximately 30 to 50 minutes) beginning October 26, 2022. (The Landing Spot's last meeting at Lincoln High School occurred on February 22, 2023. At WPUSD's request, The Landing Spot discontinued services following release of the videos.)

Principal Hladun granted this authority after identifying a need to support the LGBTQIA+ community at the Lincoln High School campus. This followed a Spring 2022 incident on campus in which a male student was physically and verbally attacked because of his sexual orientation and gender expression. Following this incident, Principal Hladun spent time meeting with marginalized student groups, including the Gay Straight Alliance, the Black Student Union, the Association for Latin American Students, and the Women Empowerment Club. Through this, Principal Hladun learned about students' experiences, including, among other things, bullying and isolation. During this process, Principal Hladun learned from a parent about Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot.

In Fall 2022, Principal Hladun reached out to Pastor Tinnin. She and a Lincoln High School counselor and Assistant Vice Principal met with Pastor Tinnin to get to know him and learn about The Landing Spot's services. She learned Pastor Tinnin was working with students at other regional high schools. Principal Hladun contacted other school districts to discuss their experience with Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot.

See also Section VI, which sets forth studies and statistics. The information we reviewed corroborates the need for support services in schools for LGBTQIA+ students in line with California law.

Failure to Follow Protocol. Principal Hladun publicly acknowledged she did not follow protocol in allowing The Landing Spot to volunteer services at Lincoln High School.

On March 28, 2023, Principal Hladun sent a message to parents via ParentSquare regarding The Landing Spot. In relevant part, she stated that when she invited The Landing Spot to campus, she "inadvertently failed to move them through" the District's regular process regarding volunteers. Principal Hladun wrote, "While I did confirm that they had been fingerprinted and were in good standing in a neighboring district, my oversight of WPUSD policies is not acceptable."

WPUSD's policies provide that all new WPUSD volunteers working directly with students must pass a background check, including fingerprinting and a TB test.²⁵ Then, the Personnel Department collects their information, provides them with the necessary documentation to complete, and updates the internal spreadsheet once volunteers are cleared.

The Landing Spot representatives were not asked to follow this process. Principal Hladun accepted responsibility for this lack of compliance. While not offering this as an excuse, Principal Hladun explained

²⁴ Principal Jennifer Hladun has been with WPUSD for approximately 15 years, serving as Principal at Lincoln High School since January 2020 (just before the pandemic). Without dispute, witnesses spoke highly of her as an educator and leader.

²⁵ See: <https://www.wpusd.org/departments/personnel/volunteers>

how this occurred. One, there was a gap in time between her discussion with Pastor Tinnin (August 2022) and their first meeting on campus (October 2022) that contributed to her oversight. Upon recognizing this lapse in February 2023 (following the release of the videos), she requested that Pastor Tinnin undergo the background check. He agreed. This has not yet occurred, given the present investigation.

Two, Principal Hladun learned from other school districts that Pastor Tinnin had successfully passed a background check. Documents demonstrate Pastor Tinnin passed the background check, and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to provide services to RJUHSD.²⁶ That MOU provided: “In collaboration with RJUHSD, TLS is to create safe space via monthly meetings at RJUHSD campuses for LGBTQ+ teens to navigate the complexities of their experience, providing them with the dignity and respect they deserve as developing young adults. Through peer check-ins (highs and lows), announcement of upcoming off campus functions, and monthly TLS programming that centers peer-support and the lived experience of LGBTQ+ youth.” We also reviewed documents showing Pastor Tinnin passed RJUHSD’s background check.

B. What Were The Services Provided To Lincoln High School Youth By The Landing Spot?

Our investigation determined the following. Between October 26, 2022 and February 22, 2023, Lincoln High School provided The Landing Spot a space for students to voluntarily meet on campus once a month during lunch for approximately 30 to 50 minutes on five occasions. The meetings were held on the Lincoln High School campus in Room 15, which is a designated “conference room.”

The Landing Spot had a curriculum for each meeting that included the following:

- Open dialogue where students discussed, if they chose, their “highs” and “lows” for the month
- Time allowing, open discussion on an identified topic

The following topics were scheduled for discussion at Lincoln High School:

- October 2022: “What does it mean for you to be Fierce?”
 - Who would you define as fierce in pop culture?
 - Who in your life exemplifies fierce?
 - How can you be more fierce?
- November 2022: Coming Out 101
 - Have you come out/how long?
 - What was it like for you to come out?
 - How have you determined who is safe to come out to?
- December: Support Group Check-In
- January 2023: New Year Intentions
 - What goals do you have for this year?

²⁶ RJUHSD has not signed the MOU. The Landing Spot’s activities were paused on campus.

- What hopes do you offer for the world?
- February 2023: Healthy Relationships
 - What would you say a healthy relationship looks like? What are good examples?
 - What are examples of unhealthy relationships?

Our Investigation also determined that The Landing Spot did not provide services at Lincoln High School that fall into any of these categories: advocating on behalf of LGBTQIA+ students in any public or legal forum; sponsoring any students in any forum; promoting puberty blockers or other gender-affirming medical treatments; or, advocating or promoting classroom curriculum or education around LGBTQIA+ issues.

C. Did Pastor Tinnin Engage In Any Wrongdoing At Lincoln High School?

The evidence demonstrates that Pastor Tinnin did not engage in any wrongdoing at Lincoln High School campus, or engage in any wrongful conduct with Lincoln High School students that violated the law or was inconsistent with school policies.

In reaching these findings, we recognize Pastor Tinnin made comments in the videos that appear ill-advised and in some cases, cavalier, particularly given the sensitivity of LGBTQIA+ issues. In making these insensitive – and understandably polarizing – statements, it overshadowed the positive human impact he had on these students. However, it must be noted that these selected statements in the video are often without context or accompanying questions, and were made to those whom he reasonably believed shared his ideology. When Pastor Tinnin’s statements follow a question, we were further unable to verify (despite our requests for the raw footage) whether the answer was directly responsive. Nonetheless, regardless of the statements the video presents, we find Pastor Tinnin did not engage in any wrongdoing at Lincoln High School.

Based upon the evidence, we make the following findings:

- All of the criticism and commentary about Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot we received and read is based upon ideological differences and beliefs about the LGBTQIA+ community in general, and about a school’s role in the LGBTQIA+ community in particular, and not any personal knowledge about wrongdoing by Pastor Tinnin towards students or against parents.
- The only reports we had from those students and parents with personal knowledge of Pastor Tinnin and The Landing Spot – i.e., they attended the monthly meetings and otherwise interacted with Pastor Tinnin – praised his efforts and conduct. Some comments:
 - The Landing Spot meetings are similar to youth group meetings.
 - Everything that happened during The Landing Spot meetings was “incredibly appropriate.”
 - Pastor Tinnin supports and encourages youth, and tells them they are “worthy.”
 - Pastor Tinnin “doesn’t spend time preaching...[but] is a supportive person.”
 - The “whole purpose” of The Landing Spot meetings is to make “queer kids” feel like they “belong.”

- Pastor Tinnin “is a supportive figure for kids who don’t have that at home.”
- Prior to the release of the videos, Lincoln High School had not received any complaints by any parents or students about Pastor Tinnin or The Landing Spot engaging in any wrongdoing on campus, nor about any improper behavior towards students. Following release of the videos, Lincoln High School did receive complaints; however, none were by students (or their parents) with personal knowledge who attended The Landing Spot meetings or otherwise interacted with Pastor Tinnin.
- This Firm likewise did not receive any complaints from parents or students of Lincoln High School – despite an open invitation to contact us – about Pastor Tinnin’s conduct towards them.
- Project Veritas confirmed it is unaware of any complaints against Pastor Tinnin or The Landing Spot – “We also do not have any footage of any concerns/complaints into The Landing Spot/Tinnin as this was not part of our reporting.”
- The Roseville Police Department and the Lincoln Police Department confirmed, as of May 2023, they have not initiated any investigations, nor are there any active or inactive investigations, into The Landing Spot or Pastor Tinnin. Additionally, a RJUHSD representative contacted the Placer County CPS Department regarding The Landing Spot and Pastor Tinnin, and reported that CPS “would not take a report for this issue.”
- Lincoln High School students self-selected and voluntarily attended the five monthly, 30-to-50-minute lunch meetings with The Landing Spot, held between October 2022 and February 2023. They were not mandatory meetings. Project Veritas likewise confirmed it did not have any footage of The Landing Spot meetings on campuses.
- During the five monthly meetings at Lincoln High School between October 2022 and February 2023, Pastor Tinnin provided support to the LGBTQIA+ community at Lincoln High School through the meetings by discussing “highs and lows” and a specified topic when time allowed. These support services are in line with California law, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation and promotes equal rights and opportunities in the educational institutions of the state.²⁷ Moreover, the School Success and Opportunity Act, codified in the California Education Code in 2014²⁸ requires schools to permit students to participate in sex-segregated school programs, activities, and use facilities consistent with their gender identity, without respect to the gender listed in a pupil’s records. Additionally, caselaw supports this as well. In *Colin ex rel. Colin v. Orange Unified School Dist.*, 83 F.Supp.2d 1135 (2000), the District Court for the Central District of California stated “if a school that accepts federal funds allows some ‘noncurricular’ student groups,” it cannot deny others “on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at the student meetings.” *Id.* at 1142.
- We received no evidence that Pastor Tinnin, either during or outside the five Lincoln High School meetings, engaged in any efforts to recruit, indoctrinate, convert, brainwash or groom students into a certain belief, identity or lifestyle.

²⁷ Education Code Section 200.

²⁸ California Education Code, Section 221.5(f).

- There is a complete absence of evidence that Pastor Tinnin engaged in any conduct that was inappropriate towards youth, including pedophilia, at Lincoln High School or any other campus.
- The doors to The Landing Spot’s meeting room at Lincoln High School’s campus may have been locked at times during the five meetings held there. To the extent they were locked, this was not Pastor Tinnin’s or The Landing Spot’s decision. Rather, Lincoln High School has a policy requiring that doors remain locked at all times to ensure student safety with respect to school shootings. This is a policy that has been consistently communicated to Lincoln High School staff since October 2022. For example, “Classroom doors should be locked unless you are actively standing at them.”
- Pastor Tinnin has not reported any Lincoln High School parents to CPS for misgendering or not using their child’s preferred pronouns, nor does he have a pattern of doing so. As a clergy member, however, Pastor Tinnin is a mandated reporter, required to report any known or suspected instances of child abuse or neglect. In this capacity, he has made a single report to CPS several years ago for suspected physical and psychological abuse of a high school student (unrelated to Lincoln High School).
- Pastor Tinnin did not notify any parents that any students attended the five Lincoln High School meetings, nor how they identified, nor was he required to do so by law.²⁹ The California Department of Education issued answers to several frequently asked questions in response to the School Success and Opportunity Act, noting: “These FAQs are provided to promote the goals of reducing the stigmatization of and improving the educational integration of transgender and gender nonconforming students, maintaining the privacy of all students, and supporting healthy communication between educators, students, and parents to further the successful educational development and well-being of every student.” The Department of Education addresses whether a school representative may share a student’s gender identity with the student’s parents, other students or members of the public: “A transgender or gender nonconforming student may not express their gender identity openly in all contexts, including at home. Revealing a student’s gender identity or expression to others may compromise the student’s safety. Thus, preserving a student’s privacy is of the utmost importance. The right of transgender students to keep their transgender status private is grounded in California’s antidiscrimination laws as well as federal and state laws. Disclosing that a student is transgender without the student’s permission may violate California’s antidiscrimination law by increasing the student’s vulnerability to harassment and may violate the student’s right to privacy.” The Department Of Education cites to the following:
 - Public Records Act requests – The Education Code requires that schools keep student records private. Private information such as transgender status or gender identity falls within this code requirement and should not be released. (Education Code Section 49060.)
 - California Education Code, Section 221.5(f) and accompanying FAQs – While parental consent is required for a student to change their gender identification in official school records, students can ask to be addressed by the name or gender consistent with their gender identity at school without legal documentation in official school records.

²⁹ See: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/di/eo/faqs.asp>

- Family Educational and Privacy Rights (FERPA) – FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of students’ education records. FERPA provides that schools may only disclose information in school records with written permission from a student’s parents or from the student after the student reaches the age of 18. (20 U.S.C. Section 1232g.) This includes any “information that [...] would allow a reasonable person in the school community [...] to identify the student with reasonable certainty.” (34 C.F.R. Section 99.3.)
- California Constitution – Minors enjoy a right to privacy under Article I, Section I of the California Constitution that is enforceable against private parties and government officials. The right to privacy encompasses the right to non-disclosure (autonomy privacy) as well as in the collection and dissemination of personal information such as medical records and gender identity (informational privacy). Even when information is part of a student’s records and therefore covered by FERPA, the law provides several exceptions that permit appropriate communications under circumstances in which the student or others may be at risk of harm. Transgender or gender nonconforming students are often subject to stressors which can place them at risk of self-harm. FERPA expressly permits the disclosure of information from a student’s records “[...] to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.” (34 C.F.R. Section 99.36(a).) “If the educational agency or institution determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.” (*Id.* Section 99.36(c).)

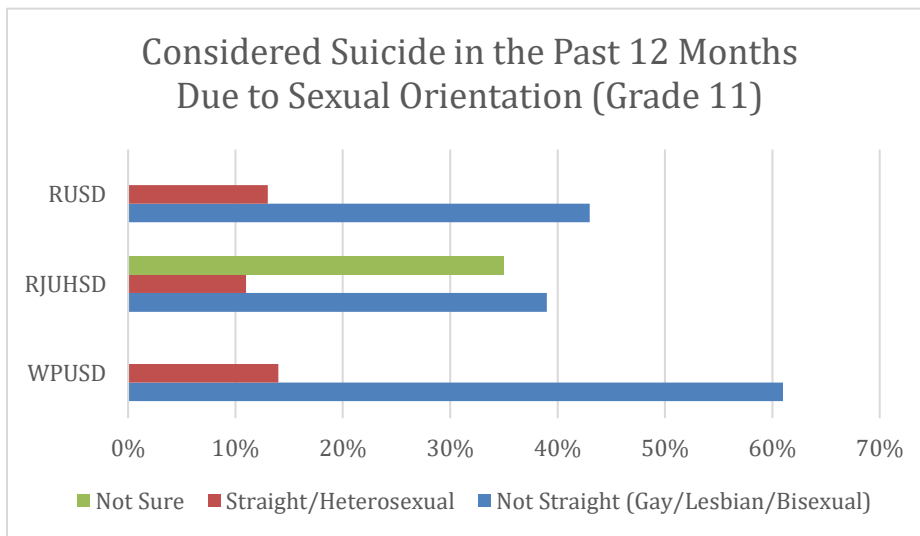
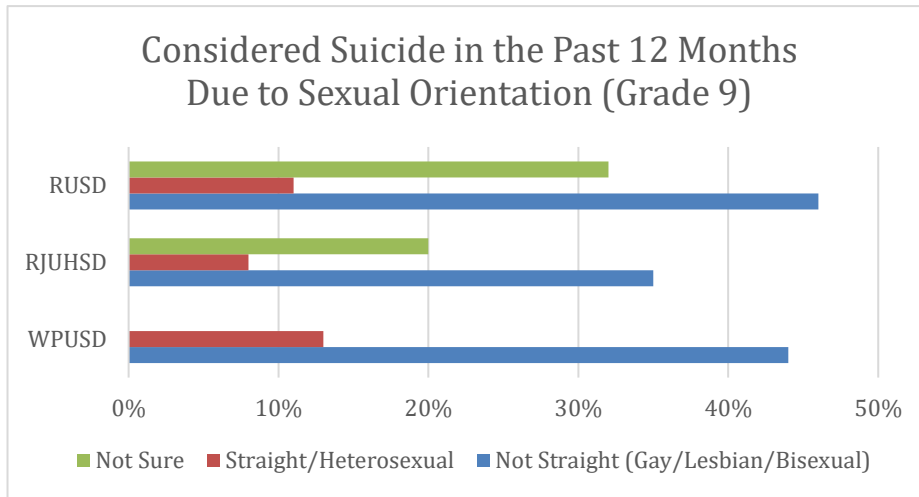
VI. Statistics

In reaching these findings, we researched statistics and opinions around LGBTQIA+ issues. Regardless of one’s beliefs around the LGBTQIA+ community, there remains a majority consensus on this – a majority believe schools should have trained counselors available to support transgender students. The statistics are sobering.

California Healthy Kids Survey. We reviewed studies directly relevant to regional schools.³⁰ According to an anonymous survey³¹ conducted in several school districts, LGBTQIA+ students at WPUSD, RJUHSD, and Rocklin Unified School District (RUSD) considered suicide at a greater rate than their heterosexual counterparts between 2021 and 2022 due to their sexual orientation:

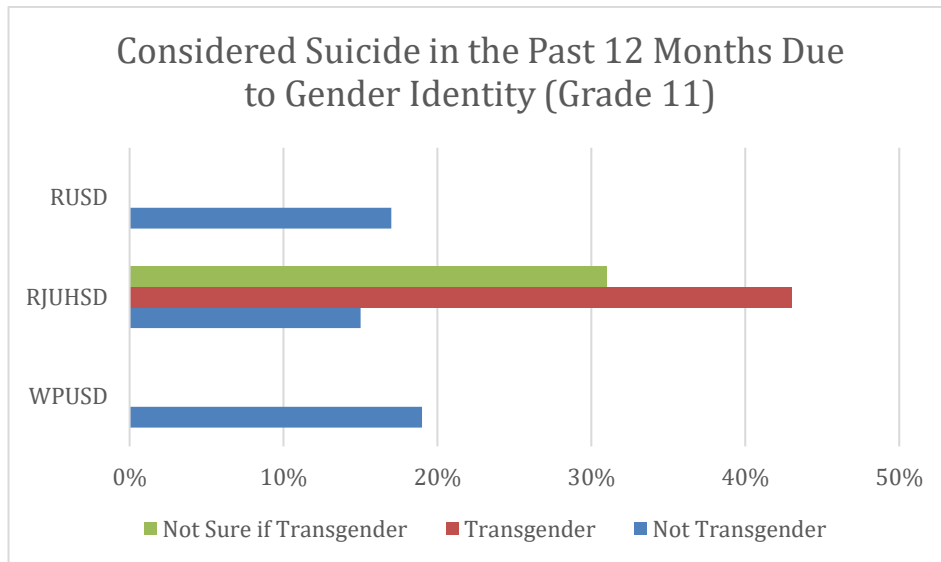
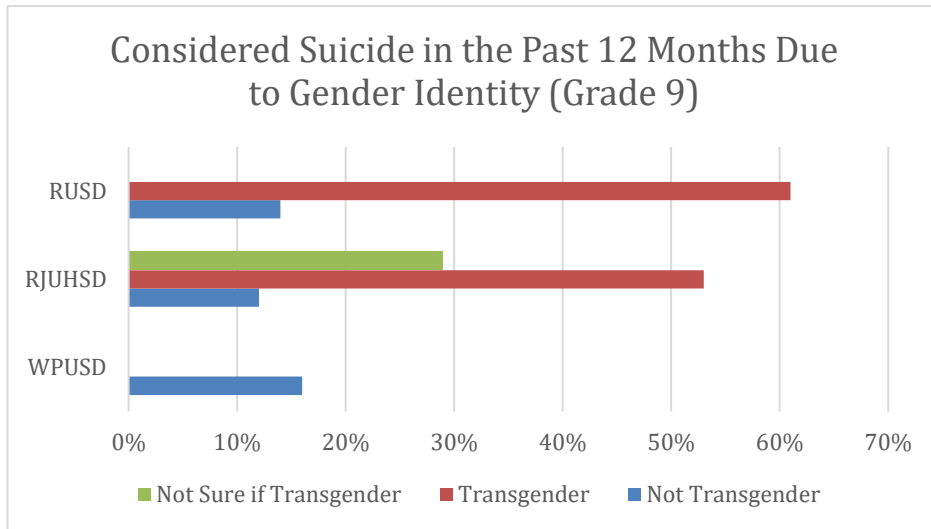
³⁰ This data is from the California Healthy Kids Survey. The California Department of Education encourages schools and districts to administer this survey to students. See: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/chks.asp>

³¹ A link to the survey is found here: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/wested/viz/shared/RBG8G39P4>



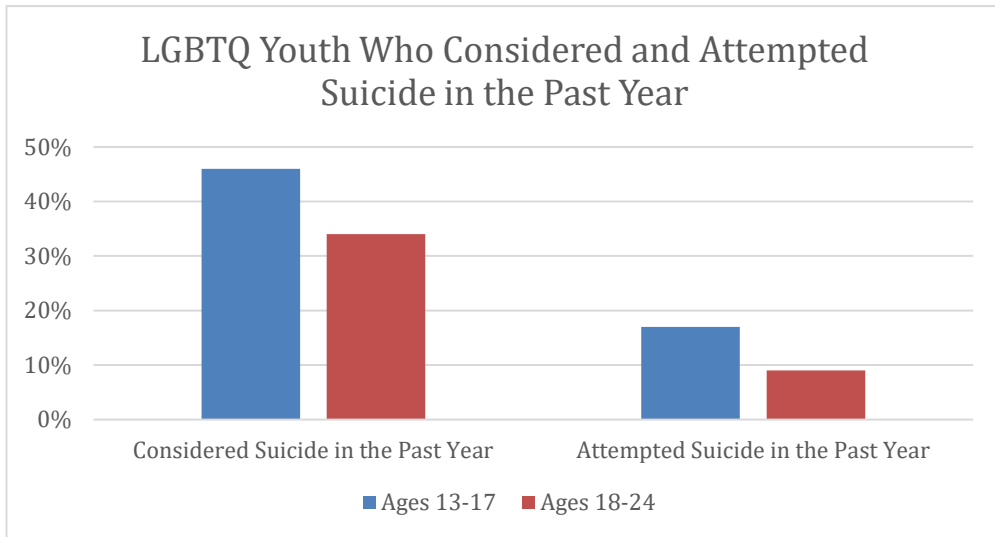
Students from WPUSD, RJUHSD, and RUSD likewise considered suicide in 2021-2022 due to their gender identity:³²

³² As provided in the charts, WPUSD did not report any student responses who identified as “Transgender” or “Not Sure if Transgender.” Similarly, RUSD did not report this information for grade 11.

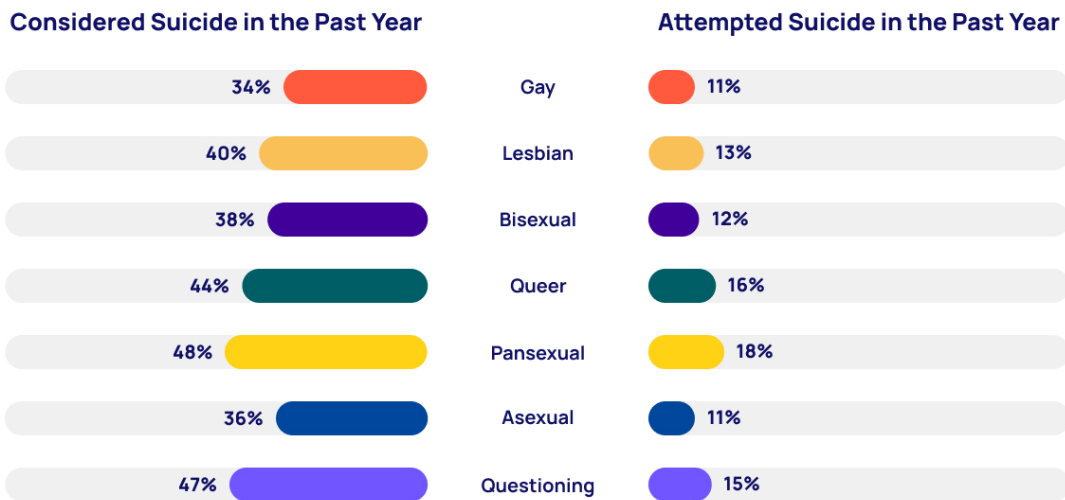


The Trevor Project. On a broader scale, we reviewed studies related to LGBTQ youth in America. The Trevor Project conducts yearly surveys wherein it “amplifies the experiences of more than 28,000 LGBTQ young people ages 13 to 24” in America.³³ In the Trevor Project’s 2023 U.S. National Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ Young People (Survey), it reported that 41% of LGBTQ youth “seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year,” and 14% actually attempted suicide. Among them, “transgender, nonbinary, and/or people of color reported higher [suicide] rates than their peers.” The following is the breakdown by age:

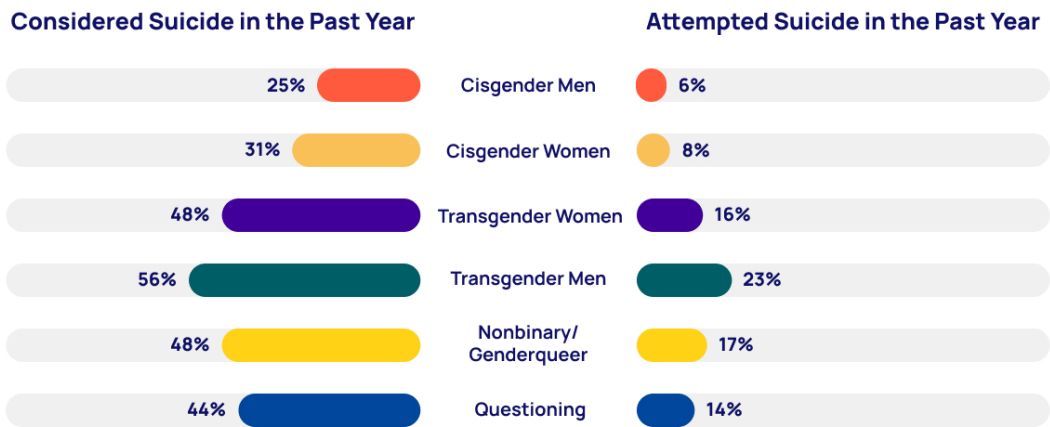
³³ See: <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2023/#intro>. For the full report, click on “Download Report” on the top right-hand side of this link.



Further, here is the breakdown of the sexual orientation of those who considered and attempted suicide in the LGBTQIA+ community in the past year:



Below is the breakdown of the gender identity of those who considered and attempted suicide in the LGBTQIA+ community in the past year:



The Survey also discussed the availability of mental health services for LGBTQ youth. Fifty-six percent of individuals who wanted mental health care were unable to receive it.

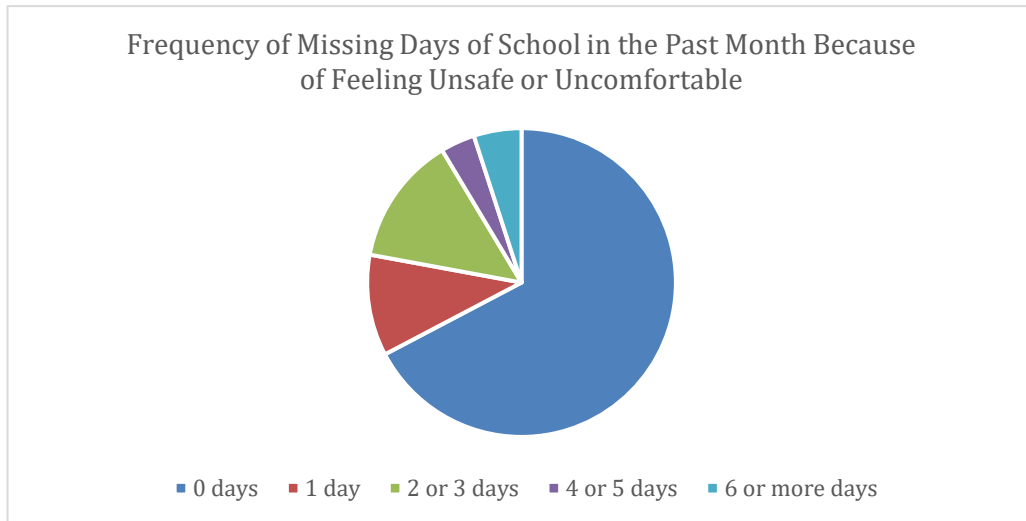
The Survey also explained that these young people do not always have support at home, and fewer than 40% of those surveyed believed their home was “LGBTQ-affirming.” This Survey stated that safe spaces make a difference to LGBTQ youth in these situations, and lowered the risk of suicide. Specifically, “LGBTQ young people who had access to affirming homes, schools, community events, and online spaces reported lower rates of attempting suicide compared to those who did not.” Transgender and nonbinary youth reported lower rates of attempting suicide if their school was “gender-affirming.”

YouGov. Polling by YouGov explores how Americans feel about issues related to transgender children. Surveys show Americans are divided on whether teachers have an obligation to disclose a child’s transgender identity to their parents in cases where the child feels unsafe in doing so. They are also split on whether a teacher should address the child by their preferred pronouns. <https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/articles-reports/2023/02/10/americans-opinions-transgender-children-schools>

Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN).³⁴ GLSEN conducted a National School Climate Survey (Climate Survey) in 2019.

The Climate Survey found LGBTQ students frequently missed school because they felt “unsafe or uncomfortable.” Specifically, 59.1% of LGBTQ youth felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, 42.5% felt unsafe because of gender expression, and 37.4% felt unsafe because of their gender. Below is a table that explains the frequency of missing days of school due to feeling unsafe or uncomfortable:

³⁴ GLSEN is an organization founded by teachers that advises on, advocates for, and researches “policies designed to protect LGBTQ students as well as students of marginalized identities.” See: <https://www.glsen.org/about-us>



Additionally, 77.6% of LGBTQ youth reported avoiding school functions because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and 71.8% reported avoiding extracurricular activities for the same reasons. Many students surveyed also reported hearing a wide array of anti-LGBTQ remarks at school.

The Climate Survey discussed the importance of school resources and support for LGBTQ students. Students who had the Gay-Straight Alliances/Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSA) club at their high school had a more positive experience. For example, these students were less likely to: hear the word “gay” used in a negative way; hear negative remarks regarding their gender expression; hear negative comments regarding transgender people; feel unsafe regarding their sexual orientation; and, miss school due to safety concerns. This Climate Survey also discussed the importance of supportive school staff.

California School Boards Association (CSBA).³⁵ The CSBA released a Policy Brief (Brief) in February 2014 titled “Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students.” This Brief stated that, among other things, a “safe, nondiscriminatory school environment—where students are not distracted by fear nor disengaged from learning because of nonacceptance by their peers or staff—is essential to student achievement.”

These statistics emphasize the need to provide support services to students is integral to their safety. California law requires it. Pastor Tinnin may have made some comments that were insensitive and otherwise polarizing. In doing so, it overshadowed the positive human impact he had on these students. In the end, the evidence demonstrates that Pastor Tinnin’s comments (albeit out of context) do not in turn equate to wrongdoing.



This concludes the investigation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Ann Van Dermyden

³⁵ CSBA is a nonprofit association “representing the elected officials who govern public school districts and county offices of education.” See: <https://www.csba.org/en/About/AboutCSBA#gsc.tab=0>