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**From:** Michael Schwerin [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 28, 2022 2:42:49 PM  
**To:** Smith, Stacie <Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Re: [EXTERNAL]Reaching Out

Stacie,

Thank you for your reply - I apologize that I am slow to reply, but it has been a busy weekend with the primary election tomorrow. I do know that school financing is a difficult and cumbersome process - and something that myself and others within the district (and county for that matter) are willing to help push to change. In the mean time, I do believe that if you are willing to make some hard choices, you and the board can look at the expenses to ensure that we are able to lower the M&O rate to match the increased value. In my professional career I have managed parts or complete budgets for organizations, so I do understand that it can be difficult to have those conversations or make those decisions, but it can be done - and without sacrificing teachers or student/teacher ratios. The additional revenues from new building would mean that there still would be some overall budget growth. I know when the City of Wylie first discussed this there was a lot of talk about reduced services (I was even one of those that was worried about just that thing), but the council was able to make a difference and lower the rate. Looking at historical data over this weekend, I know that other districts in the area (some in high growth even) have been able to lower their rate more substantially than we were able to (I wasn't looking at values, so I do know that could explain some of that), but as I have stated many times over the past year, we need courageous leaders that are willing to question the impossible and find a way.

I also want to thank you for being willing to converse with members of the community. Whether it was intensional or not, the view was that you and the rest of the board were not this open.

I hope to see you tonight - my daughter has a band concert that should be done in time for me to be there, so we will see.

Sincerely,

Michael Schwerin  
[REDACTED]

On Feb 25, 2022, at 4:56 PM, Smith, Stacie <[Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net](mailto:Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net)> wrote:

Mr. Schwerin,

Thank you for your email. I appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns.

Regarding taxes, I would echo what Mr. Atkins said in his reply to you earlier this morning. While I believe we made some progress with House Bill 3 in the 86th Legislature, school finance is very complicated, and more work needs to be done. As Mr. Atkins noted, there are two pots of money – Maintenance & Operations and Interest & Sinking. M&O covers general operating expenses such as teacher salaries, while I&S pays our debt. The M&O taxes are collected by us and given to the state. After calculating their formulas, the state returns money to us for our budget.

Since 2018-19, our district has lowered the M&O rate each year. In 2018-19, the M&O rate was \$1.17; for 2021-22, it is \$0.9898. You can see our tax rates on the [financial transparency](#) section of our website. Our overall tax rate has also gone down each year since 2018-19. Unfortunately, taxpayers are paying more in taxes due to increasing property values. Fiscal responsibility and resource stewardship are very important to me as an elected official and as a taxpayer.

Please know if I am not in agreement with something, I will vote against it. However, as part of my responsibility as a trustee, I strive to do my due diligence. This includes conducting research, asking questions, and expressing any concerns or hesitations I may have. As Board President, I meet weekly with Dr. Vinson and his administrative team. I try to view everything through the lens of both a taxpayer and a parent. I ask myself, “are we doing what is in the best interest of kids?”

This Chromebook purchase is a one-time expense, paid for in full. These Chromebooks will help our students prepare for online STAAR testing. If students are required to test online, we must provide them with the devices to test on. If you have further questions or need additional clarification, Dr. Spicer would be happy to speak with you.

Please encourage any concerned community members to reach out to me – I would love to hear their concerns. Community concerns are among the items I would like to be able to take into consideration.

I was not a witness to the conversation you have referenced. Dr. Vinson has my support and trust. As you noted, I legally cannot discuss the superintendent’s evaluation.

Again, thank you for taking the time to email me. As a reminder, the duty of the school board is to govern—not manage—the district. Trustees should not be involved in the day-to-day operations of the district. However, Dr. Vinson always keeps trustees apprised of what’s going on in the school district, and I can assure you that if I ever have a concern or question, he responds quickly or works diligently to get them answered.

Please don’t hesitate to reply if you have additional questions.

Stacie Smith  
President  
Wylie ISD Board of Trustees

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**From:** Michael Schwerin [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 25, 2022 9:49 AM  
**To:** Smith, Stacie <[Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net](mailto:Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Reaching Out

Stacie,

I hope you are doing well! I wanted to reach out to ask about a couple of things, in particular, questions about the budget. These are questions that I would expect you to answer as an elected official and not need to ask Dr. Vinson for answers. Many parents are rightfully concerned that you and the others on the school board have ceded control as elected officials to the superintendent, rather than speaking with and for the voters. This is quite an interesting response since you all are elected to represent us, the taxpayers, not the school district. Other elected officials, including school board members from other districts have had no problem speaking directly with taxpayers - even having groups of taxpayers to learn what the concerns are and dealing with them. The only entity that seems to be afraid to talk with the public is the Wylie ISD School Board. One has to wonder why that is?

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Are you aware of the financial troubles that have beset Lovejoy ISD over the past year or two? They moved down a path that I see Wylie ISD going - every request from administration is given a 7-0 vote yes, without a discussion on the additional, long term costs to the school. The laptop vote last month was just such a vote. There was no discussion to the long term costs associated with these computers, or how we could look at other ways of achieving the STAR testing on computers. As an elected official, what is YOUR personal decision process you go through to make these decisions to spend additional, unbudgeted funds?

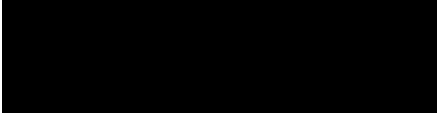
Over the past year, myself and many other concerned taxpayers have received comments from others in the community about the challenges within the school district and administration. They have thanked us for speaking out, that there is a problem with communication and community concerns being heard. Are you even aware of the number of people that are concerned? Having a conversation with the community would help you understand the breadth of this problem, which is why I continue to ask you to do that - especially now as President of the Board.

Finally, I wanted to know what your reaction or response is to the superintendent accusing parents of harassing administrative staff members. Parents were asking for clarification on a presentation following the November Board meeting and the superintendent clearly (I was not in the conversation and heard it loud and clear) told them to stop harassing his staff. Since when is asking questions harassment? I would hope that Dr. Vinson's struggles to communicate with parents and the community was discussed in his review and contract extension (I know you cannot say anything about that, but I do hope that has been discussed, since you and the board are his supervisors).

Thank you for all that you do - and for stepping up to be an elected official. If you have any questions about these concerns, please do reach out to me and I am happy to discuss further.

All the Best,

Michael Schwerin



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**From:** Jacob Day <jacob.w.day@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 28, 2022 3:24 PM  
**To:** Smith, Stacie  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Fwd: [EXTERNAL]Reaching Out

Fyi.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Day, Jacob <[Jacob.Day@wylieisd.net](mailto:Jacob.Day@wylieisd.net)>  
**Date:** Fri, Feb 25, 2022, 5:56 PM  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]Reaching Out  
**To:** Michael Schwerin [REDACTED] Smith, Stacie <[Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net](mailto:Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net)>

Mr. Schwerin,

I've looped in board president, Stacie Smith, in case your email was intended for only the board president. If this is the case, please feel free to disregard the rest of my message.

Thank you for taking the time to reach out and express your concerns.

Regarding taxes, as I'm sure you can imagine, anything related to state and federal funds can be quite complicated. As it happens, we have approved a lower tax rate over the last couple of years. Rising property values are something we don't have control over, unfortunately. I'd encourage you to attend the budget workshops in coming months as we prepare for next year's budget, which will include discussion on the tax rate.

I am aware that Lovejoy ISD is having some financial woes.

Regarding 7-0 votes, I don't really have a comment other than to say that I would not vote "yes" for

something I am not in favor of. As long as the administration continues to propose solutions that I feel are in the best interest of the teachers and students of this district, I will continue to vote yes.

Regarding the Chrome books (a much more economical alternative to a windows based laptop), please see my comment above.

Please encourage those that you have discussions with to reach out to me regarding their concerns. I strive to take all inputs into consideration.

To circle back to your initial point, I believe you and I have a fundamental difference of opinion about the role of the school board. To simplify, I believe you would prefer that I and the board were a micro-managing style supervisor. I'm not a micro manager, and don't feel that is the role of a school board.

Best,  
Jacob Day

On Feb 25, 2022 9:49 AM, Michael Schwerin [REDACTED] wrote:

Jacob,

I hope you are doing well! I wanted to reach out to ask about a couple of things, in particular, questions about the budget. These are questions that I would expect you to answer as an elected official and not need to ask Dr. Vinson for answers. Many parents are rightfully concerned that you and the others on the school board have ceded control as elected officials to the superintendent, rather than speaking with and for the voters. This is quite an interesting response since you all are elected to represent us, the taxpayers, not the school district. Other elected officials, including school board members from other districts have had no problem speaking directly with taxpayers - even having groups of taxpayers to learn what the concerns are and dealing with them. The only entity that seems to be afraid to talk with the public is the Wylie ISD School Board. One has to wonder why that is?

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Finally, I wanted to know what your reaction or response is to the superintendent accusing parents

of harassing administrative staff members. Parents were asking for clarification on a presentation following the November Board meeting and the superintendent clearly (I was not in the conversation and heard it loud and clear) told them to stop harassing his staff. Since when is asking questions harassment? I would hope that Dr. Vinson's struggles to communicate with parents and the community was discussed in his review and contract extension (I know you cannot say anything about that, but I do hope that has been discussed, since you and the board are his supervisors).

Thank you for all that you do - and for stepping up to be an elected official. If you have any questions about these concerns, please do reach out to me and I am happy to discuss further.

All the Best,

Michael Schwerin



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**From:** matt atkins <matt.atkins1234@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 25, 2022 11:08:05 AM  
**To:** Michael Schwerin [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Smith, Stacie <Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Re: [EXTERNAL]Reaching Out

Mr. Schwerin,

I take my responsibility as a school board member very seriously and the budget is an area that I have paid close attention to over my tenure. Public school funding is a very complicated process and is one that really needs to be overhauled, in my opinion. When I first joined the board, I met with the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations at the time to learn all that I could about the budget and in particular the collection of taxes and where that goes. Through that process, I learned that the school funding system is antiquated and set up poorly for school districts. We have two tax rates, which I am sure you have seen as we have voted on them each year. We have one for Maintenance and Operations and one for Interest and Sinking. The M&O taxes get collected by us and given to the state. From there, they return money to us for our budget based upon many factors. I would love nothing more than to adopt an effective tax rate, but the state will not let that happen for the schools based upon their funding formula. For every penny we reduce the tax rate, the state returns less and less to the district. It is a punitive process that is designed to keep districts from lowering the M&O tax rate. It is essentially a reformulated robin hood program.

The I&S is one that can only be used for capital improvements or repayment of bond debt for capital improvements. Over the last 15 years or so, Wylie has been growing so fast that we have had to issue bonds to make capacity improvements for the district. Since I have been on the board, we have retired as much debt as possible and have made use of low interest rates to lessen the debt burden on the district. One important key factor in our last bond election was that we did not build new schools, but added capacity. This was to keep our operating costs as low as possible as well as get the most bang for our buck in the way of capacity improvements. I am proud to say that we have set the district up for a very different financial situation than the Lovejoy situation you mention. One key distinction is the fast growth allotment that both us and Lovejoy have had over the last few years. We did not allocate that money for annual expenses that would outlast the life of that allotment. Other districts used that money for staff and recurring annual expenses which causes financial strain when you no longer are considered fast growth.

The computers we added last time were part of a longer term plan and much of the financial information was provided in our packets. I do believe this information is available online. As was mentioned in Dr. Spicer's presentation, we look at these one time expenditures after we have a better understanding of where we are on our budget mid year.

I want you to know that I am available to meet with you or anyone regarding concerns you may have. I have never hidden my cell phone number and it is at the bottom of this email. Over the last two years, I have not had anyone follow through on meeting with me. I have only had a few phone calls outside of two individuals with which I have spent countless hours communicating with.

Please let me know if there is anything I can help with or answer any further questions. If you would like to meet,



please let me know and we can coordinate a time to meet and discuss anything.

Thanks for standing in the cold that day and exercising one of our greatest privileges we have as Americans.

Matt Atkins  
214-641-2717

On Fri, Feb 25, 2022 at 9:49 AM Michael Schwerin [REDACTED] wrote:

Matt,

I hope you are doing well. It was good to see you this week while I was poll greeting! I wanted to reach out to ask about a couple of things, in particular, questions about the budget. These are questions that I would expect you to answer as an elected official and not need to ask Dr. Vinson for answers. Many parents are rightfully concerned that you and the others on the school board have ceded control as elected officials to the superintendent, rather than speaking with and for the voters. This is quite an interesting response since you all are elected to represent us, the taxpayers, not the school district. Other elected officials, including school board members from other districts have had no problem speaking directly with taxpayers - even having groups of taxpayers to learn what the concerns are and dealing with them. The only entity that seems to be afraid to talk with the public is the Wylie ISD School Board. One has to wonder why that is?

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Finally, I wanted to know what your reaction or response is to the superintendent accusing parents of harassing administrative staff members. Parents were asking for clarification on a presentation following the November Board meeting and the superintendent clearly (I was not in the conversation and heard it loud and clear) told them to stop harassing his staff. Since when is asking questions harassment? I would hope that Dr. Vinson's struggles to communicate with parents and the community was discussed in his review and contract extension (I know you cannot say anything about that, but I do hope that has been discussed, since you and the board are his supervisors).

Thank you for all that you do - and for stepping up to be an elected official. If you have any questions about these concerns, please do reach out to me and I am happy to discuss further.

All the Best,

Michael Schwerin



**From:** Mitch Herzog <mitchdherzog1@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Friday, February 25, 2022 10:27:52 AM

**To:** Michael Schwerin [REDACTED]; Smith, Stacie <Stacie.Smith@wylieisd.net>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Re: [EXTERNAL]Reaching Out

Michael, it was nice to speak with you in an informal atmosphere. The meeting went well and it's always a good time for open discussion from both sides. I'm glad we had the opportunity to personally meet.

As to your questions, we receive an abundance of Emails from citizens that we represent. I'm forwarding this, as well as any others I receive, to Board President Smith and she will handle them as she sees proper. I'm copying her on this return E-mail.

WISD has come a long way since DR Vinson became Superintendent. I can assure that the entire Board as well as administration is aware of what happened in LoveJoy as well as a few other districts that are struggling right now as far as what they did right and what they did wrong.

On a personal note I would say this. Being a board member takes an incredible amount of time as I'm sure you are aware. We need people who put in the time that it takes to make WISD great. We have board members who do this now. However, you also put in this time. You should consider running for the Board. There is no better way to make a difference than to jump in.

Thank you  
Mitch

On Fri, Feb 25, 2022 at 9:50 AM Michael Schwerin [REDACTED] wrote:

Mitch,

I hope you are doing well. It was good to see you last week at the Diversity & Inclusion pillar meeting. I appreciated you representing the board at the meeting. I wanted to reach out to ask about a couple of things, in particularly about the budget. These are questions that I would expect you to answer as an elected official and not need to ask Dr. Vinson for answers. Many parents are rightfully concerned that you and the others on the school board have ceded control as elected officials to the superintendent, rather than speaking with and for the voters. This is quite an interesting response since you all are elected to represent us, the taxpayers, not the school district. Other elected officials, including school board members from other districts have had no problem speaking directly with taxpayers - even having groups of taxpayers to learn what the concerns are and dealing with them. The only entity that seems to be afraid to talk with the public is the Wylie ISD School Board. One has to wonder why that is?

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Thank you for all that you do - and for stepping up to be an elected official. If you have any questions about these concerns, please do reach out to me and I am happy to discuss further.

All the Best,

Michael Schwerin



**From:** Leggett, Heather  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 26, 2022 8:31 AM  
**To:** Michael Schwerin [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]Reaching Out

Good morning! It was good to see you at the polls as well. I just noticed on the bottom of your email that you live on [REDACTED] We used to live on the same street until we moved in 2012.

I know our board president answered your email which is customary when the entire board gets the same email. Please let President Smith know if you have any other questions as I know topics like school finance can be extremely confusing. Our district is in the best financial situation that we have ever been in. That is proven by our excellent financial rating and numerous finance awards. Scott Roderick it's also a great resource for funding questions.

As for the computers, this is a one time cost and I 100% agree that we need our students train and get comfortable with these before all state testing goes online. Please know that I do my due diligence and no vote is taken lightly. My degree is an education and the students, teachers and taxpayers of this district are always a top priority... That's why I do this job.

Have a good weekend (stay warm) and I will see you Monday evening at the board meeting.

Heather Leggett  
Wylie ISD Board Trustee

On Feb 25, 2022, at 9:49 AM, Michael Schwerin [REDACTED] wrote:

Heather,

I hope you are doing well. It was good to see while I was poll greeting this week - and I loved that you were sharing the experience with your new voters! I wanted to reach out to ask about a couple of things, in particular, questions about the budget. These are questions that I would expect you to answer as an elected official and not need to ask Dr. Vinson for answers. Many parents are rightfully concerned that you and the others on the school board have ceded control as elected officials to the superintendent, rather than speaking with and for the voters. This is quite an interesting response since you all are elected to represent us, the taxpayers, not the school district. Other elected officials, including school board members from other districts have had no problem speaking directly with taxpayers - even having groups of taxpayers to learn what the concerns are and dealing with them. The only entity that seems to be afraid to talk with the public is the Wylie ISD School Board. One has to wonder why that is?

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Thank you for all that you do - and for stepping up to be an elected official. If you have any questions about these concerns, please do reach out to me and I am happy to discuss further.

All the Best,

Michael Schwerin

