

STATEMENT DRAFT 1:

Press statement
9/29/2022 6:30 pm

Fellow Salem and Keizer residents and parents:

I stand here today ethically troubled by what we've come to.

I am not here to tell you that we aren't going through one of the toughest times in recent history in our public schools or facing unprecedented challenges that most of us in public offices or leadership have ever experienced before or question the motive of anyone in public offices.

We all can agree there should be no room for violence, shouting, and disrespect in our schools or school board meetings.

I am here today to call attention to my fellow school board members. I want to say that

Dysfunctional School Board is harmful for all our children and families.

I ask what did we miss and why did we miss that we have this mess in our hands?

The **buck stops with the school Board**. I believe that that we cannot blame others and we must take full responsibility. We can not wash our hands off and claim we have no role.

CASTING BLAME DOES NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEMS, ACTION SOLVES THE PROBLEMS.

We must **stop Ghosting parents and families, fellow school board members and start acting like responsible adult public servants and elected leaders.**

How can we fulfil our fiduciary duty when people at the top can't even respond to emails? Stop elected directors from asking questions and restrict all discussion and debates?

I want to say to my fellow director, this is not Gaslighting when I point this out in the board meeting!

How long can we go along to get along and turn a blind eye when our children and families are being harmed?

I believe when Board keeps secrets amongst itself, district keeps secret from the board and the community, it is always bad news for all our children.

It harms the safety, learning and wellbeing of all our children. It is not acceptable.

I am left with no choice but to come to you directly as we have come to this state.

Silence or verbal violence, pretending to go along to get along is not the way to address the issues.

We all read the news report. **Many watched when a Veteran, Grandfather, school coach was jumped**

by a mob of 15-20 people, abuses hurled based on perceived skin color and nationality right in the school parking lot because he lawfully took some pictures few hours prior to that when he felt threatened by a group who had earlier targeted him.

I read the report and I am very troubled.

I am very troubled with the investigation that was conducted, the conclusions, recommendations, and the serious harm to the credibility of our school board and district as a result and our **public is now shut out of the public meeting, parents blamed as a collective punishment based on the recommendation!**

I have been bearing witness to the events and watching this develop in the years since I have been serving in the board since July 2019. Sadly, it has culminated in this serious turn of events in recent months.

From targeting the board directors, district leaders and now parents, grandparents and the public are free game.

All because they are perceived to be from the White community or have different views.

This is clearly wrong.

I watched this pattern of disrespect, distrust, and othering sections of our communities.

As an immigrant parent and person of color, I want to say that **right is right and wrong is wrong even if they are my children.**

I don't care what your skin color, gender, identity, nationality is, public school is for everyone.

Your history is my history. It is our American History. It is all our obligation to take responsibility, stand up and make our nation become what we want to see.

Not sit back and watch what our nation becomes!

Here are my observations why I am troubled with the investigation report that you read in the news media and some of the serious problems that I have been observing. I will take your questions after I share my observation.

ONE

I find this investigation did not consider all the observations and appears to overlook many facts and selectively used the facts to favor one side.

When did taking photographs of people on public property become illegal? Doesn't our first amendment provide protection for us to take photos in public places?

Let's not forget that Mr. George Floyd would not have received justice if it was not for the first amendment protection that allowed the woman to use her cell phone camera and record video of the gruesome murder of Mr. Floyd that ultimately brought justice.

TWO

The issue at hand is not whether pictures were taken on public property, but **why a group of 15-20 people mobbed the individual taking photos, shouting racial epithets and other hateful statements thus causing the individual to fear for his safety and life? Why was that allowed to happen with no consequences**, while the individual taking pictures was the subject of a biased investigation? **It appears that no one has been identified nor any group or organization has taken responsibility for the mob attacking a law-abiding Veteran and making abusive hate statements based on perceived skin color and nationality with impunity in plain sight of everyone?**

Three

I see a pattern of refusal of our school board and district leadership to take equal action to other misbehaviors at school board meetings. I have sat through many a meeting where people

in the room intimidate, yell at, and otherwise try to disrupt the testimony and presence of other concerned citizens.

Any white person who comes to the public-school board meeting is not ‘white supremacist, fascist, racist’. That is like calling someone a pedophile just because a child hugged them.

It is dangerous, slanderous and causes irreparable harm and divides our community. This is not chicken little story!

Let me be plain—I ask who has been recruiting, inciting, and funding our children and youth from vulnerable communities and placing them in the frontline?

Why have school board leaders not asked them to take accountability for their actions and ask for respect to be shown to all?

I haven't forgotten those who barricaded doors and banged on the glass windows during our meetings. Those who unlawfully set up a barbecue outside board meetings.

Those who also freely and without consequence take photos of the parents, families, children who attend the school board meeting.

By our failure to act, we have become complicit in this outcome and where we are now.

Are we giving tacit and overt endorsement to their bad acts and dangerous actions by covering up, preventing accountability,

funding them, allowing the district social media and facilities to be used to promote this group. Why have my questions gone unanswered? What are we covering up?

I have asked questions, and none have them have been answered by the district nor the board leadership and yet they have made all the attempts to shut down transparency, discussing the data, taken actions that have clearly violated or skirted our policies.

I am noticing a pattern to stop anyone from asking questions about accountability.

At a time where we should be working to rebuild our credibility, regain the trust of our community and families and help our communities feel safe and heal, it is taking us further away.

Solutions:

Moving forward:

1. We need to **get our focus back on safety, High quality learning and authentic family engagement**. Nothing else.
2. **Parents and students must be heard**. School Board leadership has allowed much to happen other than listening

to parents of students in this district. **It is an unacceptable choice to silence the voices of concerned parents because the board is afraid of standing up to their supporters. Because let's be honest...that is what this is all about.**

3. **Stop blaming, shaming, labeling, and doxing the parents and families.** They are scared, concerned about their child's safety, learning for heaven's sake. **That is basic maternal instinct. Not some ideology or politics.** Mothers and fathers of all skin color want their children safe, learn and do well. **Public school is for the public.** More we push them away, block them, they will get scared and not trust us.
4. **We can lift up vulnerable communities and also hold ourselves and everyone accountable. Our failure to be accountable, fair, and just is not the reason for collective punishment of all parents.**
5. When we have students and staff in the building, yet we banish the parents out of the school board meeting claiming we cannot keep them safe, it looks like our incompetency to do our job. Inclusive means include all, with no exception. Civil rights is for all. White children and families also have civil rights.