



IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

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Response to Heritage Academy's Press Release

June 20, 2019

By Alan L. Reed – Chairman

On April 11, 2019 the Idaho Public Charter School Commission held a meeting to review the renewal of a few of the many charter schools the Commission authorizes, to consider renewing their charter. The status, of a majority of the schools discussed was held in an open meeting because the student data was large enough individual students could not be identified. Some schools had small data numbers and due to our responsibility to keep individual student information confidential, we were instructed to hold the discussion concerning these schools in an executive session. This was the direction given to us by our attorney from the Attorney General's Office. Our attorney was present during the entire meeting and was responsible to make sure we did not stray into any topic or discussion not appropriate under the law.

Let's address the paragraph that puts words in my mouth and misquotes what was said. The author of the press release stated I said, "What are we going to do with that town?" That is an inflammatory sentence by it's self. Our discussion was concerning the test scores of the students at the charter school and the local district. They are well below state average and I was concerned for the children's education in the area. The schools have a challenge there. Administrators for the charter school have even expressed the unique challenge they have to educate their students. This is what I said, "As a society what are we going to do with that town." My continued sentence was, "to help with those children". Many people began speaking and drowned out my sentence and thoughts. My comments and thoughts were only for the help and benefit of the children and their schools. That was clearly left out of the press release.

The next quote they gave me credit for was, "I wouldn't consider opening an ice cream shop in Jerome because ice cream doesn't build brain cells". As you listen to the recording we are discussing the data of the schools, another commissioner makes a comment off topic, that maybe if I put an ice cream store in Jerome it would help. This suggestion was so off topic and strange, I made an off-the-cuff remark; back at that commissioner because that was not a solution. Was it meant as a disparaging or disrespectful comment at the people of Jerome? No. It was a response back to a person for something they said. In the press release I was truly misquoted and completely taken out of context.

Our goal for the executive session was to keep individual student data confidential to protect children. Because of that reason this session was not to be recorded. Due to a mistake, it was

recorded. Then because of another mistake, it was sent out. Due to these two mistakes we did not do very well for those children. I am sorry about that and sincerely apologize to them.

Were there violations? We were under the close eye of the attorney from the Attorney General's Office and we were told everything was in line with the law. We take the open meeting law very seriously and so does the Attorney General. That is why one of his attorneys are with us all of the time.

Were things said that sounded harsh, tough and unsupportive. Our words could have been interpreted that way. When you are in a meeting where you believe you are having a very frank and honest discussion that is only between you and another person you do not protect your language the way you would in a public meeting. You are not always "politically correct". That does not mean you are not sincere about wanting to help, serve and do what ever you can to help someone. The commission only wants to help each school and the children that attend to be better each day school is in session.

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