

School Board Meeting - Tuesday, Feb. 4th

From:

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Date: Sunday, February 2, 2025 at 08:24 PM EST

Hello members of the Lee County School Board,

I am contacting you out of professional courtesy to inform you of a pending situation regarding my employment status with the LCSD. Due to a miscommunication (and a difference of opinion) back in October of 2019, I was placed on employment restriction (no-hire) list by the then Director of Human Resources. I do not believe this decision was fair and I have been trying to get my employment status changed since 2022.

In August of 2023, I was hired at a charter school in Lee County as a substitute teacher, and in November of 2023, I was promoted to full-time math tutor. I was rehired at the same school for the same position for the 2024-25 school year. In October of 2024, I was in the process of being hired as a full-time (salaried) classroom teacher; however, the charter school informed me that they could not keep me employed because of my employment status with the LCSD – I was terminated on October 28, 2024. The charter school said that they could rehire me if the LCSD ended my employment restriction.

I have contacted both _____ the Director of Professional Standards for the LCSD, and Superintendent Dr. Denise Carlin via email to explain my situation and to request a change to my employment status – so I can be rehired at the charter school – however, they refuse to change my status. The LCSD decision to keep me on their no-hire list has prevented me from obtaining employment as a math teacher in Lee County, and I do not believe this is fair – or legal.

I am looking into the legalities of Florida’s at-will employment law as it pertains to public school districts. According to my research, the at-will employment law does not apply to government employees... and a public-school teacher is considered a local government job – which is funded by taxpayers. As a first-year teacher, I was never given the opportunity to improve as a teacher. I made one mistake (as most first year teachers do) and was terminated within my 90-day probationary period at the decision (opinion) of the Director of Professional Standards (in 2010).

I do not believe I was treated fairly by the LCSD. If I was not “professional” enough to work in a classroom with students in 2010, why was I rehired multiple times, by different administrators afterwards? My multiple employment separations had nothing to do with my classroom performance. Twice, in 2012 and 2018, I was a victim of bait-n-switch tactics by administrators – the job I interviewed for was different than the job I was expected to perform. The administrators only terminated my employment because they could – it was within my 90-day probation period.

Please see the five (5) attached PDF document files below explaining in detail my work history with the LCSD and the reasons for my terminations & employment restriction:

- a) LCSD Employment History Report (official document from the district)
- b) LCSD Employment History Timeline (my explanation of my employment experience)
- c) LCSD Wrongful Termination (my description of the events that led to my terminations)
- d) Employment Reinstatement Letter (sent to LCSD in 2022)

e) LCSD Reasons for Employment Restriction

During a teacher shortage, why will a charter school be willing to hire me, but not a public school district? I feel the leadership of the LCSD is failing their teachers and students by refusing to employ a dedicated, proven, and [formally] certified math teacher. Why would anyone choose to be a teacher if there is no employment security? What's the point of investing in a teaching degree if you are not given the opportunity to improve and grow as a teacher?

How is denying students a caring math teacher in the best interest of the students? How can you expect to attract and keep quality teachers if the district is not willing to train them? What do you think the parents of LCSD students will say and think when they find out that during a teacher shortage the LCSD will not employ a dedicated, proven, and certified math teacher? I will be standing outside the LCSD building on Tuesday evening (Feb. 4th) with a sign so Lee County residents can be informed of this situation.

I have now been unemployed for three months and will be completely broke next month. The LCSD does not seem to care about how their decisions are affecting others, such as, denying students a math teacher and denying teachers a coworker. I should have 10-15 years of teaching experience within the LCSD, but instead I have zero. Why is that and how can that be allowed to happen? I feel I have been (and continue to be) cheated out of a teaching career - something I have come to enjoy.

If you would like to avoid the potential negative PR, please contact me before Tuesday evening's school board meeting to discuss this matter further.

Thank you and respectfully,