

Public Statement to CUSD Board/Superintendent, 10/21/21: Kevin Shaeffer.

ENOUGH:

I'm here today to say Enough. Reflecting on the just the events of this past summer I want to yell it, but at the risk of being deemed uncivil I'll simply say - enough. Enough of what?

I'll start with enough of the mistakes and poor judgment from this Board and this Administration.

It's a Fitting time for a Baseball reference. You all are 0-3 over these past months. Really 0-4 if you count the 4x4 implementation. And the mistakes you've made and your mismanagement have led to a lot of emotional debate and anger in our community.

Let's not generalize. Here are a 4 examples from just the past several months.

1. The 4x4 Implementation: I understand that most switches to 4x4 are unpleasant, but that leadership train wreck eroded the trust in you from EVERY stakeholder. Parents, Students, and Teachers. Have we forgotten that CUSD HS teachers literally revolted against you and this Administration for the way you implemented 4x4? Did your judgements and actions cause harm? I submit that they did - in that they created division, distrust, and demotivated many students.

2. The Basketball Game "Apology" Statement: Many of us were aghast at the language in your June 20 Board statement. Time and again we made clear that it went far beyond only being an "apology" - and absolutely rushed to judge the motivations of what fueled the young men involved. Yes, many of us spoke out loudly, some calling for your resignations when the CIF levied unfair punishment on the entire CUSD athletic program. Did your judgements and actions cause harm? I submit they did - to the young men on the team, to the CUSD athletic program, and to the community as a whole.

3. The NPFH program: Many of us in the community have spoken out forcefully against it. While NPFH may not explicitly be CRT, it is a third-party program with a self-described mission to promote racial and social justice activism. Many residents loudly voiced concerns that it was secretly adopted, that valuable classroom time was being spent on it, and questioned whether it was mandatory or not.

4. Brown Act Violation: Simply put, it was clear from day one of the basketball game response that the majority of this Board and the Superintendent knowingly ignored Brown Act guidelines for your official conduct. In doing so you further degraded the trust we have in you.

So just recently, In the face of community pressure and community awareness you did the following:

1. You finally backed off and rescinded the condemning language of the hasty June 20 Board statement. Though it wasn't unanimous - Ms Antrim and Ms Valdes-Clayton you still stand by the racism, classism and colorism language.

2. You admitted that the NPFH program was implemented without the knowledge or oversight of the School Board (one of you actually said you felt swindled by the Superintendent's actions). You admitted that NPFH was improperly introduced into classrooms - especially at the High School. To use the carefully crafted admission of the Superintendent - it exceeded "traditional club boundaries". And finally the Superintendent pledged that moving forward NPFH will STRICTLY stay within CLUB policy guidelines operate solely as a voluntary club.

3. And finally, You admitted that a Brown Act violation occurred and sought to legally cure it.

Here's the bottom line, you had to correct 3 significant and serious errors in judgement and action. Your batting 0 for 3. You were forced to backtrack and admit errors ONLY because of intense and steady public dissent. Community members, some organized in a group, some individually, used their voices to increase awareness and ultimately bring about corrective actions and change.

And now we have a Board member, Ms Antrim, stating that a vocal parent group is "terrorizing our community."

As I've seen the last months unfold, I've seen the people in WTPC be leading voices in advocating for school excellence and increasing community awareness about the very issues you all have had to correct and make right.

Ms Antrim, you've also said that you've had your picture on a WTPC website, and separately that you and the Board had your addresses listed publicly by someone-somewhere, tortillas have been found on your cars, and that you've received social media threats.

I personally find the posting of addresses, social media language like that, and any actions on your property gross, just gross.

I've also asked the WTPC group about the posting of your picture and have learned that it was a screen shot of a public video, during a local publicly attended march a week before the June basketball game, and that you were walking with Luke Serna, the same Luke Serna who we all know was the adult individual responsible for the tortilla incident in June. It was that group's effort to highlight your relationship with Luke Serna on their website timeline. That's the context as it was explained to me - and furthermore, I'm told that group removed the photo showing you, your children, and Luke Serna - when they learned it was upsetting to you.

There are so many of us in this community Ms Antrim who will stand up to improper behavior. Individuals who engage in threatening or intimidating actions should hear this loud and clear, you're wrong, you won't be tolerated, and our community should protect our own, always. But I'll say in the very same breath, Ms. Antrim, I question your castigation and direct implications that a local parent group is responsible for all of those acts.

Of note, Ms Antrim, your dad called me yesterday. I've never met or talked to him before. We had a very cordial conversation about my public comments criticizing your accusation. He sent me a text thanking me for my gentlemanly perspectives. But then today he followed up that contact with a text asking if I'd like to write a clarification, or if I wanted to be publicly called out for my lack of investigative curiosity, due diligence, demeaning and damaging accusations.

Needless to say, I haven't and won't respond to your dad, and refuse to be extorted. If you don't like measured criticism like mine - for not being ok with you accusing an entire parent group of "terrorizing our community" - then that's on you, and I guess on your dad too.

To the parents listening tonight, In these times, where emotions are high and the disagreements many, it's ok to speak loudly, and when necessary fiercely, against authority and to defend what you believe is right. Does that equate to "terrorizing our community"? It does not.

But to be CLEAR: If someone makes threats, intimidates, or heaven forbid is violent - that's absolutely wrong and should be condemned publicly by anyone with any decency.

I'll also say this - I was out of town for the last few school board meetings, but did watch online. In one of them I heard what appeared to be overly emotional and improper behavior from adults sitting in this room directed at a very vocal and passionately activist CUSD student. If that was you - if your ears are ringing right now, good - it appeared that you were wrong in those moments, and you should apologize to the student.

In the past 24 months we've all been through a lot, a lot of pain, anger, protest, and outrage. Coronado has seen our share of public demonstrations - on different sides of several issues. Are we better off? I hope for the most part we are. But I also know that not enough people stand up, speak truth with no agenda, and say, enough is enough. So here I am here today, saying enough.

On all sides - enough of verbal smearing, uncivil behavior, and the "terrorizing the community" talk.

Ms Antrim, you are a strong willed, very smart, and articulate person. I believe that you try to choose your words carefully.

You've made a sweeping and condemning statement - and many compassionate, but upset, community members who have been vocal against this Board, get swept up in a condemnation like that. So please speak specifically and let those who you're speaking out against respond in kind.

I can't imagine that upon reflection you believe there are locally organized groups here to "terrorize our community" over these issues.

But if you do, here's what I would do, sit down with the leadership of that group, with some local reporters, and talk. Sit down with each other and talk.

You may not want to do that.

If not, I hope that you and this Board don't harbor an agenda to stifle dissent and limit criticism of what many of us feel has been poor management from this Board and Administration.

0-3 isn't good in baseball, and it shouldn't be acceptable in our District.

Let's get back to focusing on academic excellence.