

August 10, 2012

Honorable Judge John D. Geathers
1015 Sumter Street
Columbia, SC 29101

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SC Court of Appeals

Dear Judge Geathers:

My name is Patricia M. Stukes. I am a former library media specialist with Lee County School District, Bishopville, South Carolina. I am writing to you, The Honorable Judge Daniel Pieper, and The Honorable Aphrodite Kunduros, regarding Appellate Case No. 2010-175166.

I am writing this letter to ask you to please reconsider your decision of upholding the non-renewal of my contract with Lee County School district based on the following:

- Per Attorney McRackan's comments that during the hearing that the district failed to follow proper procedures in my evaluations and failed to recognize documentary evidence that contradicted the evidence presented by the district's witnesses.
- An overwhelming number of inaccurate and misleading written comments per my ADEPT evaluation (district's exhibits) most specifically made by my former principal, Cheryl S. Stover. Dr. Stover has purposely been deceptive in her representation of the facts relative to my job performances as a professional librarian. Practically all of what she has stated (district's exhibits and her sworn statements) concerning the assessment of my job duties, professionalism, and character is based on untruths. Dr. Stover also sent inaccurate and disingenuous communications to the former Director of Instruction, Mrs. Bernice Wright and the former Director of Human Resources, Mrs. Melissa Gary, regarding my job performance, ineffective teaching strategies, my attitude, receiving support and assistance to help me perform my duties, etc. (district's exhibits).
- I was never given a comprehensive orientation for the ADEPT evaluation program. This is mandated by the South Carolina Department of Education.
- Each performance dimension of the ADEPT evaluation was implemented (Stukes exhibits). These exhibits dispute and rebut the allegations directed towards me.
- My attorneys, Deena McRackan and Elizabeth Dalzell, have argued that the timeline for my improvement plan was from January to April of 2008 and that it was cut short by approximately six (6) weeks. (I had no idea whatsoever that it would end until that day, March 10th when I was called to the office to go over the final evaluation with evaluators Brevard, Simpson and Cook. I was not given an explanation as to why it was cut short.) I sincerely believe I would not have been in this situation if I had had the time that was promised to me to complete the timeline and I would have passed this evaluation just as Attorney McRackan stated to Dr. Stover under cross-examination.
- Dr. Stover's failure to implement the formation of the Library Advisory Committee which would have provided assistance to me during the school year.
- The 3-1 school board of trustees vote--the person with the one vote who did not agree with his/her peers regarding this case was able to give me the benefit of the doubt—that there was some merit to my case.
- Use of the document compiled by Dr. Stover's West Lee Elementary School's Media Center Instructional Program was implemented throughout the school year covering the strategies and objectives for teaching library skills that she recommended.

- In December of 2007, during my preliminary evaluation, I was told by one of the evaluators that the preliminary evidence would not become a part of my final evaluation. In actuality, that did not happen. It was not deleted and therefore made it seem as if I did not correct the "deficiencies" or acted upon the suggestions and comments as recommended by the ADEPT team.
- There were several misleading accounts and distortions of the truth given in sworn statements by some of the district's witnesses against me.
- It should be duly noted that if I had been doing so poorly during the 2007-2008 school year that I would or **should have been written up, reprimanded, met with Dr. Stover and others involved several times during the school year.** There is not much evidence to support Dr. Stover's accusations in the school district's exhibits or her sworn testimony because I was an outstanding professional and ethical librarian with extremely high morals and values who excelled in performing the duties of the library, effectively taught library skills, collaborated with the teachers and students, developed positive relationships with the teachers, students, office staff, custodial staff, some parents, and some members of the community. Even Dr. Stover's own ADEPT statement describes that "In terms of professional conduct and ethical behavior, Mrs. Stukes follows established guidelines and procedures".
- I would like to appeal this case because it is a "witchhunt" devised by Dr. Stover and does not reflect my job performance and is the basis of Dr. Stover's personal vendetta against me.

This has been a very stressful, humiliating, belittling and demeaning process I have undergone based on intentional misrepresentations of the truths. Being without the monetary means (a job) for such a long period of time has been a very devastating loss to my family's financial status. It has been difficult finding employment because of this very biased and unfortunate situation.

I am not currently working and have not worked since the end of the 2007-2008 school year and cannot afford an attorney at this time. I would like for you to reconsider this case based on the aforementioned. Any assistance in holding this case until funds can become available or until I can find someone to represent me pro bono would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely and Humbly Submitted,

Patricia M. Stukes

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