

## Zinser, Leanne

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**From:** C [REDACTED] L [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 4, 2019 12:31 PM  
**To:** Patton, Kamela; Fishbane, Jon (Jonathan); Westberry, Jory; Lucarelli, Stephanie; MITCHELL, JENNIFER; Carter, Erick; Terry, Roy  
**Subject:** Aug 6 Agenda Item: B10 Mason Classical Academy

CCPS Board,

I strongly urge you to reword certain sections of the Mediation Settlement Agreement before voting to approve this document at the August 6 board meeting.

1. "Mason will have the following committees: a. School Advisory Council b. Grievance Committee c. Finance Committee d. Audit Committee"

For this item, there is no wording that says the members of those committees will be held by parents, community members, or non-board members. How many individuals need to staff each of these committees? In the past, this Board has staffed these positions with themselves or with people who do nothing. There is also no wording stating how often these committees must meet and what their responsibilities are.

2. "Mason will attach documents in advance to be published along with agendas discussed or reviewed by the Governing Board in order for the public to access those documents in advance of the meeting." We'll see - but if they don't, what recourse do I have? Do I file a grievance ... with the board? I would like verbiage that states that if this procedure is not followed then xyz will be the result (secretary for the board responsible for posting said items is either removed from the board or they serve out this year, regardless of term limit, with no chance for re-election).

3. "Counsel for Mason will provide training for all staff ... " ok, didn't Kelly Lichter go through a training at the District when she sat on the CCPS Board? AND, Hillsdale also trained Kelly Lichter and L [REDACTED] M [REDACTED] back when we had a 5-member board (along with Byron Donalds, Jason Lane, and M [REDACTED] M [REDACTED]) because that board wasn't following procedure and getting along. My point here is that, at what point do you have to admit that certain people have had sufficient training? I'd like to see wording that after training is accomplished, each board member will get 3 permit-able errors and then after that, their current board term will end at the next voting period, regardless of that individual's term limit. It's not a SMART goal - specific, measurable, actionable, results-oriented, and with a timeframe. This is how goals are framed for an employee. If the outcome is not going to be measured, what's the point?

4. "Through resolution, existing board members and any new Governing Board members will affirm that they will adhere to Mason's Charter and policies." Ok ... so in the case of MCA's first 5 years where they weren't being followed, what tactics do I have to hold them accountable if I find wrong doing? Go to the Grievance Committee? See item #3.

5. "Communications from the Governing Board to the parent community will be clarified as to whether it is from the Governing Board or from individual board members." This one is moot because no board member ever sends an email on their own without Kelly's approval first - their opinion is her opinion. So, every email sent is always representative of her view which is equal to the board. All parents know this. This is just semantics.

6. "The committees shall be fully constituted and functioning by October 15, 2019." Excellent - this one has a deadline. But ... what if they aren't fully constituted. What happens?

7. "The governing board shall be increased from three (3) members to five (5) members by October 15, 2019, with staggered, 1, 2, and 3 year terms." Ok - this one is BIG. I don't see verbiage regarding the number of terms one individual can serve. I am going to assume Kelly Lichter held your feet to the fire on this one - perhaps she actually stood up and walked out refusing to sign unless this item was worded so that she could get elected as often and she liked. If she did that, she held you hostage just like she did to the original volunteer parents and future board as they were assembling the original charter agreement and policies - she would not accept anything other than her ability to rule for as long as she wants. So this is simply a best practice suggestion for them because they've been running with 1-year terms in the past where they simply re-elect all board members at one meeting every year. This item #7 disturbs me because it shows me nothing will change. Absolutely no new ideas will enter the board. Kelly has stagnated the school because her and L [REDACTED] M [REDACTED]'s experience is through their children who are in [REDACTED] grade and lower. There is no focus on the Middle or High School experience and the unique challenges and opportunities that present there. They don't consider items such as getting the

school accredited so that middle and high school sports can participate with other public schools through FHSAA. They don't consider getting the high school curriculum accepted through the NCAA so that graduating high school students can obtain sports scholarships at a D1 or D2 school ... because they haven't had to handle that personally. There are SO many times us parents who have been at the school since day 1 feel there is a lack a focus for ALL students of ALL grades at MCA and it's because the board members are all friends because of their childrens' age. We need new ideas. Kelly thinks this school is still in its infancy (to quote her) - we need fresh ideas, people with experience outside of Real Estate and Interior Decoration to inject excellence into the whole school. AND - we need to know that Kelly will not always be in place. It's a best practice for a founder to not even serve on the board, much less be board president.

If there is ONE item that gets re-worded, I urge you to put term limits into Item #7!

8. "Mason will work expeditiously to hire a new principal." No deadline here. Did you know that CCMG received 100 resumes from individuals who wished to be ACCA's principal. CCMG vetted those resumes down to 12 and they selected one and recommended that individual to ACCA's board - and they hired that principal. So ... if CCMG has these resumes from ready, willing, and able principals who wish to run a classical, public charter school in Florida, why have they not gone back to that list to expeditiously hire a new Principal? Mr Whitehead is not qualified to be Principal ... we were shocked that they named him interim Principal because we all know 1. he isn't qualified to do what Hull did and 2. he was named in Jon Fishbane's report! I worked with Joe Whitehead for 2 years - I was part of the interview and hiring process - we hired him as VP because Hull needed a barrier - someone to field all the parent emails and issues he was receiving. So, we hired him as a different sort of candidate who could handle bullying and tough parents so Hull didn't have to. But is he qualified to be Principal? Absolutely not. He is not qualified to run the school. Further, why is there nothing in this document that the hired individual can't be Principal Hull? His resignation was a large part of their Cure document - why is there no mention of his not being able to be an employee of the school, in any capacity, going forward? Further, he is now the principal agent for CCMG ... so there would be a conflict of interest. I need to know that he is no longer a part of this school. I worked directly for him for 2 years - I know how he operates. Even if he's hired on paper as an 8th period music teacher (which he has held in the past 2-3 years), he would still be there running the school behind the scenes if he were physically onsite. This one makes me worry about how this next school year will run.

9. "... and audit ..." ok.

10. "The District agrees that all complaints by members of the school community shall be redirected to the Mason's Grievance Committee and that the District will not consider complaints from the school community until the complainant's have exhausted their administrative remedies at Mason. ..." I get this one - you don't want to deal with MCA complaints anymore or, ignore them assuming they are being handled at MCA. But again I go back to ... our only process is the Grievance process which will be the board members. I feel like I have been in an abusive relationship keeping quiet while watching my friends and other teachers and staff get abused ... and now, after becoming fully informed, after finally speaking out, even through fear of retaliation on me or my children, and after being encouraged by those who I thought were in place to protect me - who encouraged me to keep up the fight and to keep pushing back - that I have now been told that I need to simply work through this with my abuser because my abuser is going to training and they'll have a committee. I feel abandoned and used.

11. "Mason will place this Mediation Settlement Agreement on the agenda for a board meeting to be held on the morning of August 6, 2019 for approval. ..." Yep - MCA just posted the Board meeting this morning - right at the 48-hour mark.

12. ...

13. ...

14. "If there is litigation later to enforce this Agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to a recovery of their attorneys' fees." We've seen how this board spends our taxpayer dollars with a \$100,000 vote to fight so this one means nothing to them.

15-17 ...

I encourage each of you to read this document through the eyes of a family who has been with MCA for the entire ride, who is fully knowledgeable of their wrong doings, who watched them tear apart relationships and look at us informed parents who challenged them and told us to leave. I want you to consider that you have your children at this school currently and are hoping for another 6 years at MCA ... and view this document to see what part of it makes you feel better now.

Here's another exercise - look at this document again and try to find an area that isn't 100% in Kelly Lichter's favor. This document reads like the wish list Kelly Lichter walked into the mediation with - I don't see where she and her board had to compromise. Get training? Add 2 board members of your choosing? Have the committees you were supposed to have in the first place?

Joe Baird's findings were eye-opening ... Jon Fishbane's report was jaw dropping ... Hillsdale's findings were embarrassing.

In response to those discoveries, we get this document which is merely a stern talking to - not even a slap on the wrist - and a pat on the head with "try better next time".

Please reword this agreement so that this document better protects those families who are choosing to enter Round 2 with this Board! ... especially those parents who have not become fully informed of their wrong doing in the past.

Reference my email below from one month ago below where I wrote: "the current administration will feel invincible and above the law - they will be victorious and will point to the summer of 2019 as the main example for why they are 100% in the right in all of their actions. It will be SO MUCH WORSE than it already has been in the past."

This is how the parents I speak with feel right now - that the beast has been unleashed. She pushed the issue and came out victorious.

Lord have mercy on us all.

And by the way, I know you'll vote to simply approve this signed document.

I know this email was an exercise in futility.

That document is signed and it's all too easy to be done with this process.

I just had to send this email so that you knew, from an MCA parent perspective, how utterly disappointing this document is and how vulnerable my family now feels after putting ourselves on the line for this cause.

C [REDACTED] L [REDACTED]  
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On Monday, July 8, 2019, 06:19:40 PM EDT, C [REDACTED] L [REDACTED] wrote:

To whom it may concern,

I have had my [REDACTED] children enrolled at MCA for 5 years - they have attended since day 1.

Everyone has their story, I will spare you mine. Just know that I was an employee at MCA for 1.5 years in Years 2-3 - I have been a steady, strong, vocal supporter of the school. Yes, my children and I even spoke up at a CCPS Board meeting (years ago). In my role at MCA, I ran the lottery and enrollment and I gave tours. For 8 hours a day I sold the school I loved to new families. If anyone was a cheerleader for the school, it was me.

I worked closely with Principal Hull for 2 years. I had his trust. I was included in those inner circle meetings. In working closely with Principal Hull and getting to know him, I personally feel he was put into a role that was above his talent. His ego matched the title and his way with words did wonders in emails to parents and speeches to students, but he did not have a prior role model or experience in order to properly prepare him for this role which grew faster than he could. I saw my indirect role as a professional coach for him - to keep his moves professional and to ensure the Parents were always considered in his actions. When I saw how certain teachers and parents were treated, when I could not coach him before a decision or conversation had occurred, I knew I needed to leave the school. I left early in Year 3, after we deemed the Lottery to be complete in September. My resignation was a shock to him, but I knew I needed to carefully leave the school without making waves so my children would not suffer any potential ill will as a result of my leaving. In fact, I continued to volunteer from afar, setting up Spirit Nights this last school year, just to maintain my being on Hull's good side.

For the past 2 years I've kept my distance, not wanting to face the reality of what was happening to my friends (who have left) or the teachers. I thought, "my children's experience is fine". In fact, when I asked certain staff members I am close with about specific family's experiences that seemed too bad to be believed, they would vaguely address it and then say "But C [REDACTED], how is YOUR children's experience?" as a way to dismiss that family and direct me to appreciate what I have.

It takes a while to process and accumulate this knowledge of how this leadership acts. It takes time to see their same defenses used on multiple people or groups. I don't expect newer MCA parents to see what's really happening. Also, if one is not involved at the school, does not socialize with other MCA families, or does not attend Board meetings, one would never know the details - they would simply believe what the MCA emails tell them.



The fact is that MCA is not a healthy environment for children or parents. Parents figured out quickly to remain quiet if you had a problem or you would go from being on the good list to the bad list - your children would be at risk of being targeted (increased demerits) or you might get a degrading talking to by Hull. We saw what happened to our friends ... and then saw it happen again ... and then saw it happen again. We heard stories from teachers (after they left). It was something you didn't want to believe about your child's school. Some parents who would reasonably challenge a decision would be met with an escalating, awful experience so that the family could never consider staying at the school.

Since the Fishbane Report, I have now watched the Board target the families who sent the letter to Governor DeSantis at each Board meeting. At the Board meeting today, she told all of us to leave - to go to our zoned school if we don't like it at MCA. Kelly doesn't understand - she has an identity crisis - it's not that we don't like MCA, we don't care for the Board.

The email that Kelly Lichter sent on June 26 stated:

"Who is leading this evil effort? This [letter](#) to the Governor lists the names of most of the people actively working to undermine this institution.

When parents enroll their children at MCA, parents sign a contract with MCA. It specifically states that **continued attendance is dependent on following the parent contract**. These parents have not made any effort to resolve conflicts through our conflict resolution process. Instead, they went to CCPS, Hillsdale, Facebook and the media to damage the school and the individuals involved with MCA."

She sent the 107 names to the ENTIRE school in order to target us. This was meant as both a public shaming and as potential grounds on which to withdraw our children with the wording "continued attendance is dependent on following the parent contract". This was a threat. How are we supposed to send our children to a school whose Board threatens our children's enrollment? I am proud that my husband and I signed that letter - we are part of an effort to SAVE our school ... from Kelly Lichter. I feel this is an overt abuse of her power to silence dissenters.

I understand that your only lever is to either maintain or terminate MCA's charter. This is an unfortunate position, but you can not show the MCA Board that they can get away with everything they already have - they have targeted our children with that letter to the MCA population, they have threatened our children's enrollment and, as a result, I no longer feel that sending my children to MCA will be a safe environment. Further, Joe Whitehead, who is named in the Fishbane report, is now Interim Principal. If I were to send my children to MCA in August, and if they were targeted, who would I take this issue to? Their teacher, then the Head of Lower or Upper School, then Joe Whitehead! This organizational chart will not promote constructive outcomes - especially for those of us who have been named.

As scary as it sounds to request CCPS to "terminate the MCA charter", I am in favor of your doing so so that a new charter application can take its place. If you do not, the current administration will feel invincible and above the law - they will be victorious and will point to the summer of 2019 as the main example for why they are 100% in the right in all of their actions. It will be SO MUCH WORSE than it already has been in the past.

Many MCA Parents are ready to handle the load if MCA's charter is terminated. We will author a new charter application, we will fill a new Board, we will populate a PTA, and we will volunteer - we will do what it takes to carry the school we love forward. We will use Hillsdale's resources to guide our way, we will heal, and we will take MCA to the next level.

If you do not terminate the charter, MCA may fall on its own from the families who chose to protect their children from this environment by enrolling them at their zoned schools. I know that even though my family strongly wishes to remain at MCA, we have already taken tours at our zoned Middle and High Schools.

Please do whatever is in your power to ensure Kelly Lichter, Laura Miller, David Bolduc, and Joe Whitehead are no longer in leadership positions at Mason Classical Academy so that our students can continue to attend.

Thank you for your efforts.

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