

Date : 1/27/2017 3:20:22 PM  
From : [REDACTED]  
To : [REDACTED]  
Subject : Confidential

1/27/2017

After reflection, I feel that rather than calling for us all to meet in person, I can communicate via email instead to respect everyone's time and [REDACTED] request.

The reason I asked to meet was to ensure we all have the same information about recent communication issues. I am providing this information to [REDACTED] so that you can discuss if Stargate can improve our internal communication to better serve the students, staff, parents, and the organization as a whole.

I believe Stargate would benefit from implementing a formal grievance process or establishing an independent committee to address staff concerns, especially in challenging and highly sensitive situations. As of now, after a staff member has gone directly to the source without a satisfactory result, there is no other option for their concerns to be heard other than going to the board.

Additionally, [REDACTED] has asked me to clarify my intentions about conversations with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. To do this, I need to provide context. On [REDACTED], it was brought to Stargate's attention that a current [REDACTED] grader had allegedly raped a current [REDACTED] grader. [REDACTED] reported this allegation to Child Protective Services and to [REDACTED], and informed me about it later that same day. I attempted to establish communication among the key staff involved in order to make sure we were doing all we could to ensure the safety of our students throughout the investigation.

I emailed everyone involved multiple times over the course of nine days requesting a meeting. [REDACTED] responded via two different emails that there was no need for us to meet or communicate more about this situation at that time. I did not know what, if any, actions were being taken to protect our community.

Knowing there was an alleged rapist on campus, I was deeply concerned for our students. I anonymously sought advice from two independent sources (SROs) on how best to handle this kind of situation. In a meeting on [REDACTED], I told [REDACTED] about the process these SROs advised we follow. [REDACTED] responded to me by yelling and cursing at me and questioning my loyalty. I responded with an email to [REDACTED] detailing my concerns about this and other issues (see original email from Oct. 12, 2016 at end of this document). In this email I asked [REDACTED] the following questions that I felt needed to be addressed in a timely manner:

- What was insubordinate about anonymously gathering information about how to proceed in this situation from other SROs and then conveying best practices to Admin?
- Would you rather that going forward we continue to wait over a week to communicate with each other on alleged rape cases involving our students?
- What would you advise me to do differently in the [REDACTED] situation?
- What would you advise me to do differently in the alleged rape situation?
- Do you feel that other independent SROs are wrong about the expectations around communication and timeliness?
- Would you rather me not speak up when something doesn't feel right and it comes to the safety of our students?
- Have you consulted a lawyer about what steps we can and should be taking to protect the rest of our students throughout this investigation?
- How do you think it would look if an incident did occur at school with the alleged perpetrator and word got out that we all knew we had a potential sexual predator on campus yet did nothing to safeguard our other students?

[REDACTED] never responded in person or in writing to my concerns or to the above questions. I did not know where to turn as further additional events occurred.

Following the meeting [REDACTED], I was assured by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that there was a firm safety plan in place regarding the secondary student accused of sexually assaulting one of our elementary students. Several weeks after I emailed these concerns to [REDACTED] I was [REDACTED]. That same [REDACTED] grader came into the classroom without a chaperone to empty the recycling container. I asked him if he was going into all of the classrooms, which he confirmed. I then texted Admin. that the student was in our building and going to each classroom. I was told no one on Admin. was aware that this student, an alleged rapist, was unsupervised in the elementary building.

Additional communication issues arose. In the second meeting with the [REDACTED], following the [REDACTED] incident, the parents said that they requested an IEP every year from [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] acknowledged the annual IEP requests but stated that he told them that Stargate didn't have the resources for that. I sat in multiple meetings with [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] where [REDACTED] directed us to put more minutes than we could possibly ever serve in [REDACTED] IEP. I also was not comfortable with [REDACTED] telling us once [REDACTED] was coming back to the Secondary school that we should spend the rest of the school year collecting all of the necessary data to show that we cannot possibly meet [REDACTED] needs for next year.

At the time, I did not know what to do. I did not feel comfortable or safe approaching [REDACTED]. Additionally, since I had already gone to [REDACTED] with detailed concerns that he did not respond to, I did not feel that approaching him again was a viable option.

Without a process in place to resolve these situations, I spoke to my colleague [REDACTED] about my frustrations with what I saw as unethical decision-making that could be putting our students and community at risk. I asked her if she thought that talking to a member of the board would be a useful way to address these problems. Since she had shared multiple frustrations with me on a regular basis since the beginning of this school year, I asked her to think about if she wanted to talk with a board member as well. Following winter break, she shared with me that she did not want to talk with a Board member, and I told her that I completely understood and respected her decision. I stated that I also didn't want to talk with a board member, but didn't know what else to do.



My conversation with [REDACTED] occurred off campus over winter break. During a personal conversation, I became deeply upset as I talked about my concerns at Stargate, and my exasperation at ongoing situations in which our students were either being harmed or put at unnecessary risk by [REDACTED] decisions in both the accused rapist case as well as the [REDACTED] situation. I told [REDACTED] repeatedly that I didn't know what to do. I raised the possibility of approaching a Board member because I felt like I had no other choice.

I have since apologized to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for making them feel uncomfortable, pressured, or divided. On January 17, 2017, [REDACTED] acknowledged reading the letter I sent him on October 12, 2016 for the first time. To explain why he had never pursued further communication with me about my concerns, he stated that he interpreted my questions and concerns as rhetorical.

My only intention was, and still is, to change the communication system at Stargate to improve decision-making to better serve our students, staff, and organization. I hope that by providing context to these issues with you today, the admin team will determine that an independent committee or some other official grievance process would be beneficial for staff who feel they have communicated their concerns with a supervisor, have not received adequate responses, and have nowhere else to go.

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

\*This is a copy of the original email I sent to [REDACTED] on October 12, 2016

Dear [REDACTED],

My intention of this letter is to continue communicating with you in order to overcome our differences of opinions about a few recent issues. After the meeting with you, [REDACTED] and myself, I've been feeling pretty terrible, not least because I was yelled and cursed at by you for anonymously speaking with out-of-county SROs to determine if there was a protocol for such a situation. After being told there was a Child Protective Services report made by [REDACTED] about one of our [REDACTED] students alleging raping one of our [REDACTED] students, [REDACTED] told me that per [REDACTED] advice, [REDACTED] had called the alleged victim's mother to gather more information. According to [REDACTED] the mother of the alleged victim neither confirmed nor denied that anything had happened but her reaction implied that something sexually inappropriate had occurred; however, they preferred to deal with the matter within the family.

This delicate situation seemed to require a sense of urgency and communication from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to ensure all necessary staff understood how to proceed so we could keep our students safe. All I knew was that Stargate has a potential sexual offender in the same school building as [REDACTED] graders, and on the same campus as much younger students, one of whom is the alleged victim of a sex crime.

I was concerned that the alleged victim could be in potential harm as a result of the phone call from [REDACTED]. I was concerned that the alleged victim was still in unsupervised situations with the alleged perpetrator. I was concerned that the alleged victim was still being abused by the alleged perpetrator.

Since the main part of my job is to ensure the mental and physical safety of our students, timely and complete resolution of these allegations is incredibly important to me. After all, it is our obligation to the parents, students and community to take seriously the allegation that we may have a sexual predator amongst our students and on our campus daily. Just as CPS provides all mandatory reporters with a case number so we can follow up, it is my responsibility as [REDACTED] to follow up on the situation to ensure we're doing everything possible to protect our students.

I was surprised 4 days later when I learned from [REDACTED] that no further action had occurred. After she gave [REDACTED] an ultimatum, that he take action or she would, he called the alleged victim's mother. He then stated to [REDACTED] that it seems the allegation is legit and he'd pass the case onto a detective. Given that the accused student and alleged victim are currently at our schools, this 4 day delay does not seem reasonable to me.

After calling CPS and finding out they weren't investigating the initial report due to hearsay and vagueness, and that they had not received a report from the police about the allegation, I asked for advice. The supervisor at CPS stated that everyone involved in the situation should meet together, share all necessary information, write up a report together, and call CPS together as a group to ensure all the information that was known was communicated.

Following the advice of CPS, I attempted to communicate with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to follow the required actions, but didn't get anywhere. As this ran contrary to the CPS supervisor's advice and my own experience in mental health, my concern about the situation grew.

This is the first year that we have an SRO, so although this delay felt wrong to me, I recognized that I could be off base. I followed up with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but was not given any additional information—my attempts to convene a meeting, per CPS, were ignored.

After multiple attempts and 9 days of waiting for a response since the initial incident was reported to me on Monday, September 26th, I anonymously spoke with two separate out-of-county SROs to clarify if there is a protocol for this situation and if I was out of line. If they had said that we were following the appropriate protocol, I would have been relieved and would have dropped the issue; however, the two independent sources were shocked at our handling of the situation, which only furthered my concern for the physical and mental safety of our students.

Aside from [REDACTED] sharing the Child Protective Services report with me on September 26, [REDACTED] relaying that [REDACTED] advised [REDACTED] to call the alleged victim's parents and the results of that conversation, and [REDACTED] relaying to me her confrontation with [REDACTED], I received no other information until October 5th. This is despite my email to you requesting for us to all meet together to ensure



we were on the same page, and your response that we have an SRO and we should let him do his job.

Last Thursday (Oct. 6, 2016) at the meeting, I had hoped that providing you with two separate SROs' opinions about the importance of urgency and communication in such instances would help us improve our service to the students in the future as this situation was already inappropriately handled and pointing the finger would do no good. My only agenda was to move forward with increased communication and understanding of what to do in these situations to best protect and support our students, and to ensure we were doing everything possible to protect our students. I spoke throughout the entire meeting calmly and respectfully. What I received was anything but professional—you yelled and cursed at me, accused me of insubordination, and never even looked at the proposed protocol. I am left with the following questions:

1. What was insubordinate about anonymously gathering information about how to proceed in this situation from other SROs and then conveying best practices to Admin?
2. Would you rather that going forward we continue to wait over a week to communicate with each other on alleged rape cases involving our students?
3. Three weeks ago, you called [REDACTED] and I into a meeting to inform us that by talking to teachers and advising them, we were making your job more difficult. By telling [REDACTED] to take the proper steps to talk to you about her sexual harassment concerns and document any continuing instances, and confirming with other SROs that we were not appropriately dealing with the situation, I recognize that it makes your job more difficult. Sure it would be easier if these events never happened, but they did. I took what I believed to be the best course of action for our school, community and staff. I have asked your advice on how I could have handled either situation better or where I messed up. When pressed, you have relented that there was really nothing better I could have done—and yet I am yelled and cursed at for being insubordinate and called to a meeting to be told I am making your job "harder." If there is an easier way, I am open to hearing what it is:
  - a. What would you advise me to do differently in the [REDACTED] situation?
  - b. What would you advise me to do differently in the alleged rape situation?
2. Instead of a meeting that focused on where we could improve, the meeting was mostly about how I should have blindly assumed someone else was doing their job, despite no communication. No time was spent addressing what could have been done better by the SRO, Admin, or me.
  - a. Do you feel that other SROs are wrong about the expectations around communication and timeliness?
  - b. Would you rather me not speak up when something doesn't feel right and it comes to the safety of our students?
  - c. Have you consulted a lawyer about what steps we can and should be taking to protect the rest of our students throughout this investigation?
  - d. How do you think it would look if an incident did occur at school with the alleged perpetrator and word got out that we all knew we had a potential sexual predator on campus yet did nothing to safeguard our other students?

One of the things I have loved about Stargate is our commitment to the students and that the staff is encouraged to speak up if something does not feel right or we have ideas for improvement. Given this recent trend, I have felt that although I may take the right steps to resolve or improve a challenging situation, you will punish me for not sitting blithely by and accepting whatever you or [REDACTED] tell me.

1. My intention for bringing things up to you is not to make your job harder, but to address concerns immediately rather than push them aside so that they get bigger and eventually come back even worse—as with the meeting last week with [REDACTED] parents. They voiced that they trusted us and we let them down by not providing him with an IEP. Having worked in a school specifically for students with social and psychological problems, I brought my concerns that [REDACTED] should be at a school that can provide the right services for their needs. You disagreed and they stayed. After the legal training, [REDACTED] and I went to last year, [REDACTED] and I told you that we were open to lawsuits for not following the laws around IEPs, and that [REDACTED] was not handling the situations properly. Had we taken the right steps 4 years ago, or even last year, you would not be in a situation where the parents are asking why their children still aren't on IEPs despite the recommendation of countless doctors, psychiatrists, and their asking year after year.
  - a. Do you still feel that 4-years ago you made the right decision to keep [REDACTED] at Stargate only to tell the parents yesterday that we cannot provide the appropriate services for them?

With time, I hope that I will feel that I'm being treated fairly and not the messenger that is being shot for telling you what you don't want to hear. I hope that soon I can feel the same sense of support, respect, and trust for you [REDACTED]

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]