

For immediate release
June 9, 2020

NEA Tiverton takes vote of no confidence in Superintendent

Tiverton, R.I. – The faculty members of NEA Tiverton met last week and, with overwhelming support, took a vote of no confidence in Peter Sanchioni, the Superintendent of the Tiverton school system. While the vote was unanimous, a few members not in attendance did not agree with this step, and we remain troubled that even this protected action would lead to further bullying and intimidation from the Superintendent.

The members listed the following concerns:

1. **The termination of the union president for doing union work.** The Superintendent has continually demonstrated a refusal to acknowledge the fact that when the union and management come to the table, they sit as equals.
2. **The perpetuation of a distressing culture.** Instead of cultivating a culture of open dialogue and soliciting input, the Superintendent's top-down management style is one of bullying and intimidation with the expectation that union members will just fall in line. When individuals step forward to challenge the Superintendent, they are met with a domineering, belittling attitude and sarcastic responses.
3. **The demoralization of ineffective leadership.** The recent debacle of the Superintendent distributing layoff notices – faulty notices – that used inaccurate termination language during a global pandemic; a difficult time when educators and support professionals are already stretched thin and stress levels are heightened.
4. **The basic failure to understand the necessity of educating the whole child.** In these times of strife and uncertainty, the failure of the Superintendent to grasp the importance of educating our students in all aspects of the world they will someday enter as adults – including art, music, health and physical education, as well as providing for the social and emotional needs with guidance and social services and ensuring those with special needs are treated as equals – shocks our collective conscience.

Therefore, despite low morale in our ranks brought on by the onslaught of failure of the Superintendent's leadership at every turn, NEA Tiverton has come together to call upon the Tiverton School Committee to bring about an independent agent to investigate our concerns. We would expect this agent to report directly to the School Committee, as we believe an outsider would not be subjected to the tactics we have endured.

At a time when leadership from the top needed to show vision and the ability to collaborate with those on the front lines of our children's education, we were instead given the back of his hand and essentially told we were to be seen and not heard.

We have never lost faith in our students. We have lost confidence in our Superintendent.

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