

**C.A.R.E.
COALITION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY,
RESPECT AND EXCELLENCE**

March 29, 2018

Dr. Gabriel Trujillo

TUSD Superintendent

1010 E. Tenth St.

Tucson, Arizona 85719

C.A.R.E.'s Open rebuttal to DeConcini Memorandum (DeConcini report) dated October 25, 2016

RE: Augustine Romero and Complaint of Yolanda Sotelo

As you are aware, we are a group of concerned stakeholders in the public education system comprised of parents, teachers, substitutes, workers and taxpayers. We watch carefully what goes on in TUSD in the interest of promoting transparency at the district level and improved achievement (among other things) at the school site level.

Specifically, CARE is in receipt of the DeConcini report and we have thoroughly read the investigation into the grade changing incident at Pueblo H.S.

It is inconceivable to CARE that as cash strapped as TUSD is, to educate our children on top of recurring budget woes; TUSD's leadership continues to mismanage limited resources when they should be performing their basic elected and appointed duties. As commissioned by the district, the DeConcini report appears to be nothing more than an attempt to prevent the community from discovering the truth about a serious mistake. The investigation did not reveal anything substantive that was not known prior to the investigation. Clearly, the report attempted to discredit Ms. Sotelo's credibility and to unmistakably justify Dr. Romero's openly disregard of the law. The DeConcini report turns a complaint against Dr. Romero into a complaint against Ms. Sotelo, and yet offers no written evidence to support the counterclaim.

District administrators, Mr. Munger and Dr. Morado, including Dr. Sanchez (superintendent of record at the time) had all the requisite information necessary to fulfill their duties and on what actions to take re: changing of teacher's grades. Additionally, Dr. Romero did not direct Ms. Sotelo in writing or produce any other means of documented conversations and by his own admission, acknowledged that he changed the grades. Dr. Romero failed to take early action if he believed Ms. Sotelo allegedly was not following district policy nor did he remove her from the classroom, obvious delinquencies of district administration duties.

Furthermore, the DeConcini report in their "Conclusion and Recommendation" points out that Dr. Romero (on the issue of grade changing) has not been disciplined for his actions. Essentially this is contrary to what was reported at the March 27th 2018 board meeting. Therefore, one can reasonably conclude, Dr. Romero's two days of administrative leave without pay was not about the breaking of grade changing State Statute A.R.S 15-342 (11) and District Policy IKE.

The DeConcini report in of itself raises additional questions:

1. As this investigation uncovered that Dr. Romero unequivocally broke board policy and state statute, why didn't the Arizona Board of Education perform their own independent investigation?
2. After hearing that Mrs. Toro's testimony was not very helpful because she was not a party to most of what she reported, why did the community keep hearing about it as if she were a credible witness? The report appears to be full of assumptions and missing evidence when it comes to Dr. Romero fulfilling his job as a principal prior to simply taking the reins and changing the grades.

The event investigated here is toxic to teacher and student moral alike. Now that everyone knows that state statute and board policy were not followed, CARE insists the board take immediate action so that similar abuses do not happen again. TUSD, who continues to lose students and teachers coupled with too many classes filled by long term substitutes and is bureaucratically top-heavy, and does not appear to be self-correcting unforced errors. Mr. Munger must be held accountable for his negligence. The Board must rescind Dr. Romero's contract as a TUSD principal. Furthermore, we call for a reexamination of all principals to assure the public that every TUSD school provides a safe, efficient, effective learning environment and "a culture of high expectations for self, student, and staff performance."

As a watchdog group, our mission is to hold the TUSD School Board accountable for providing honest governance and to benefit the students. By critically monitoring the activities of the district and the board, we shine a light on problems that we find and suggest solutions.

Sincerely,

Coalition for Accountability, Respect and Excellence

CC Governing Board Members

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