

Rapid Response for 6/18

Board Meeting - 7 PM

At the May school board meeting the board voted unanimously to approve Independence Law Center as Additional Legal Council for Warwick School District. For the 2024-2025 School Year.

This vote came after 40+ speakers from the public spoke in opposition of this agreement. 6 speakers elected to speak in support.

The June 6 Committee of the Whole meeting brought the acceptance of Dr. April Hershey's resignation. Other important updates:

- The Warwick SB was scheduled to meet in Executive Session with Bill Zee of Appel Yost and Zee on May 21, 2024. This meeting was canceled in the afternoon of May 21, 2024. This meeting has not yet occurred.
- Board members suggested that the community do additional research in response to voiced concerns related to risk and cost of ILC retention.
- Community members via email and public statement requested clarity, transparency and specifics detailing board concerns relative to Title IX, any identified deficiencies of current legal counsel, and what specific/different expertise ILC provides.
 - Board member Scott Landis asked the community to “trust” the board. He also stated that the contract could be terminated at any time.
 - As of the date of this memo, no additional clarity on the specific support ILC will provide has been publicly offered. Multiple requests have been made requesting greater detail.
 - **In an attempt to gain clarity not provided by the board, A Right-to-Know was filed requesting all written communication between ILC and Warwick School Board Members. The response to this request “ it does not exist” indicates coordination to partner with ILC absent a single written communication between the two entities.**
 - This requires the public to depend on board members' spoken words to verify their “due diligence” claims.
 - This agreement was not discussed at the Finance and Legal Committee.
- Board members recorded speaking during May 21 board meeting intermission. This recording can be found here: ([View here](#))
- There was zero board discussion on the resignation of Dr. Hershey at June COW.
- There was zero board discussion on the succession plan for Dr. Hershey at June COW..
- There was zero board recognition or apology related to the hot mic incident at June COW.

Title IX

[Title IX summary sheet](#)

[Title IX Resource page](#)

The final regulations released in April, 2024 will help to ensure that all persons, including students and employees, receive appropriate support if they experience sex discrimination in schools. The final regulations also provide greater clarity regarding: the definition of “sex-based harassment”; the scope of sex discrimination, including schools’ obligations not to discriminate based on sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity; and schools’ obligations to provide an educational environment free from discrimination on the basis of sex.

- Prohibit discrimination against LGBTQI+ students, employees, and others: The rule prohibits discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics in federally funded education programs, applying the reasoning of the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Bostock v. Clayton County*.
- Protect people from harm when they are separated or treated differently based on sex in school: The final regulations clarify that a school must not separate or treat people differently based on sex in a manner that subjects them to more than de minimis harm, except in limited circumstances permitted by Title IX. The final regulations further recognize that preventing someone from participating in school (including in sex-separate activities) consistent with their gender identity causes that person more than de minimis harm. This general nondiscrimination principle applies except in the limited circumstances specified by statute, such as in the context of sex-separate living facilities and sex-separate athletic teams. The final regulations do not include new rules governing eligibility criteria for athletic teams.

Calls to Action

Objectives

- What is the succession plan for interim and long term superintendent.
 - Of note- the highly controversial Superintendent, Abe Lucabaugh of Central Bucks School District, is still searching for a job.
- Request specific concerns, topics, issues with Title IX and policies that ILC will provide support.
 - This is how trust is built.
- Request transparency: where and how were conversations and due diligence conducted?
- Why was the retention of ILC not brought before the Legal and Finance Committee?
- Dispel Title IX Fear:
 - Bathrooms:
 - Schools should provide private bathrooms The school should provide gender neutral bathrooms to ensure privacy.
 - Showers:
 - Schools should provide private showers for everyone's comfort and security.
 - Sports:
 - Students should have spaces and opportunities to feel connected and included. Sports are about being connected. It reduces depression and shame.
 - Sexual Assault- Seperate Issue -
 - Predatory behavior, assault, sexual misconduct should be investigated thoroughly. This is not a title IX, or LGBTQIA issue, rather a discipline issue.
- [Direct Student Impact of ILC at Hempfield now known:](#)
 - A recent article highlights the impact of ILC on students at Hempfield School District.

"By July of that year, when the board enlisted the Independence Law Center to help it write an athletics policy, Yaeger had already withdrawn socially. ...It made me intensely physically uncomfortable to be around people who didn't seem to want me there," Yaeger said. "It also seemed like my very presence in the same space as some (other) people was like, I don't know, kind of like making them very upset." She was 15 years old. "At first, she said, she tried to ignore this difficult reality. "But it was like, suddenly it's impossible to ignore because my very being is apparently a political talking point."

1. Show up/speak up

Your presence at school board meetings is vital!

Meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the Month, every month.

- Committee of the Whole: Information sharing and discussion
- Board Meeting: Discussion and voting

Upcoming Meetings:

- **Board Meeting: June 18, 2024**
 - *Agenda: Not yet released*
 - *Location: Not yet determined*
- **Committee of the Whole: June 4, 2024**
 - *Agenda: Not yet determined*
 - *Location: Not yet determined*
 - *Doors open at 6:30. Meeting begins at 7:00pm.*

Some general guidelines about attending and speaking

- **If you would like to speak, you must email Boardsecretary@warwicksd.org before 3:30 that day.**
 - Include your name and topic.
 - If you are speaking to a topic listed on the agenda, you will be called to speak at the beginning of the meeting.
 - If you are speaking to a general topic not listed on the agenda, you will be called to speak at the end of the meeting.
- You can sign up to speak at BOTH the beginning, and end of the meeting! Just include those asks in your request to speak to Boardsecretary@warwicksd.org
- Speakers must be residents or taxpayers of this district, district employees, or district students.

Speaking tips

DO:

- Know your goal in speaking/writing
- Practice and time yourself (needs to be less than 3 minutes)
- Highlight Common ground
- Leave a path to join, to change minds

Do not:

- Shame anyone
- Do not curse, or speak disrespectfully

2. Let Your Voice Be Heard

Email the School Board

Sending letters to the school board, and to local newspapers can make a huge impact on decisions that are made. The school board can be reached collectively at the following email address:

Schoolboard@warwicksd.org

Please consider CC'ing WeAreLititz@gmail.com so we can keep track of advocacy efforts. Sending an email to either schoolboard@warwicksd.org or individual School Board members will result in posting a copy of that message to both the entire School Board and Superintendent, Dr. April Hershey.

Letters to the Editor

This is an easy and effective way to elevate the conversation about the issues facing Warwick School District. Your voice and opinion matter

[LNP Lancaster Online](#)

3. Follow and Share Socials

We will be using Facebook, Instagram and TikTok to help spread the word. Follow us and spread the word.

Our Websites

www.wearelititz.com

www.grandmasforlove.com

4. Sharing is Caring

Talk to community members, friends, and family. Do they know about the potential consequences of the board's decision? Feel free to copy, paste, and share this resource with others: [Rapid Response for 6/4 COW meeting](#)

Questions: Email us at wearelititz@gmail.com

Resources:

Key Facts and Arguments on Independence Law Center

Independence Law Center

School board members Emily Zimmerman (current board president) and Scott Landis (current VP), held a meeting with Randall Wenger, chief counsel of Independence Law Center. This meeting did not violate Sunshine Act Laws, however, was not held in good faith. In March of 2022, when legal representative changes were being considered, a public meeting was held interviewing 4 separate law firms. Firms interviewed were Fox Rothschild; Sweet, Stevens, Katz and Williams; Appel, Yost and Zee, and Kegel Kelin Litz and Lord (now part of Saxton & Stump).

Mr. Landis has publicly asserted that conversations with Independence Law Center are part of due diligence, and it's good business to listen to the advice they offer. Scott asserts that ILC offers a unique perspective SPECIFICALLY on Title XI law. This is a direct link to LGBTQ Issues, specifically, bathrooms, and sports.

ILC gets in the door by offering its services ``pro bono,`` with promises to write policies for the district on books and curriculum, bathroom policies, and other LGBTQ+ issues, but across Pennsylvania, these "free" policies have been very costly to taxpayers. ILC gets in the door by offering its services ``pro bono,`` with promises to write policies for the district on books and curriculum, bathroom policies, and other LGBTQ+ issues, but across Pennsylvania, these "free" policies have been very costly to taxpayers. More info can be found here: [The Dangers of ILC](#)

If Warwick follows the playbook of other school districts that are involved with Independence Law Center, changes in policy will be fast and furious.

Policies crafted by ILC:

216.2. STUDENT RECORDS – NAME, SEX, AND GENDER IDENTITY

123.1. SEX-BASED DISTINCTIONS IN ATHLETICS

The above policies were passed rapidly at South Western School Board in York quickly because they waived the 30 public review period. If you read their recent meeting notes below, specifically the comments at the end, you will see that they have quickly moved onto DEI and book banning.

[South Western York Recent School Board Minutes](#)

Articles:

- [How a Lancaster charity linked to a private Christian college influences public school policy in PA](#)

- [Lancaster County elected officials' proposals seek to erode the separation of church and state in public education](#)
- [Hempfield graduates reflect on how ILC policies affected them](#)

[Warwick School Board Plans Vote to Add Religious Firm_ \(LNP\)](#)

[Warwick School District Considers Change to Policy \(WGAL\)](#)

[South Western School Board Documents](#)

[Evening Sun Article](#)

[West Virginia Transgender Sports Ban Overturned](#)

[Dover School District Parents Worry](#)

[4/30 West Shore School Board Meeting with Education Law Center](#)

We Are Lititz Documents:

[We Are Lititz Request for Public Meeting Letter](#)

[We Are Lititz Request for Public Meeting DENIAL Response](#)

5. Campaign Statements and Arguments

(Coming soon)