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RE: Megan Luloff

To Whom It May Concern,

I currently represent Mrs. Megan Luloff, a first grade teacher with the Davenport Community School District. For those who are not familiar, the Davenport School District is one of the most diverse school districts in the entire state of Iowa. Megan has been a dedicated teacher within this district for ten years, of which the majority of her employ at a racially diverse elementary school. Throughout this time, Megan has maintained an impeccable employment record.

Recently, Megan attended an adult Halloween party unrelated to her employment. Megan participated with friends who decided to attend the party as part of a group costume, dressing as characters from the movie Napoleon Dynamite. Megan dressed as the character "Lafawndah," a standout black character from the movie. In an effort to complete her costume Megan used a dark foundation to enhance her pigmentation to create the likeness of Lafawndah. At no point during her preparation for the party, or her participation at the event, did Megan ever intend to mock the character's ethnicity or take any action intended to be offensive to anyone. At this point in time Megan had never heard the term "Blackface" nor did she know the history of the term. If she had that knowledge she never would have participated in such a way that she deeply regrets her actions.

On Thursday, October 25, 2018, The Quad City Times Newspaper published a picture of Megan at the aforementioned costume party. It is clear from their article and accompanied picture, that the Quad City Times either acted, to promote an already divisive country (which it did) or meant said publication to cause death threats to Megan and her family (which it has). It is equally apparent, that this picture has now made thousands of citizens aware of what Blackface is historically and how hurtful it is to all African-Americans. For this awareness, Megan is thankful.

The Quad City Times reached out to Megan prior to their publication of the picture, which had been shared by an unknown source. This was the first time Megan had ever been presented with the notion that she had done anything opprobrious. At that time, she declined to

comment on the picture. She immediately started to investigate the situation to understand why this was offensive and abhorrent. She then received word that her superintendent received the same photo and that she was going to be investigated. It was at this time that she discovered that the offense was actually coming from something called "Blackface." Megan, along with many of her friends and family, were completely unaware of what Blackface was historically or that such a term even existed.

After hearing and understanding what Blackface is/was, Megan immediately understood the anger and outrage at the photo. She immediately took responsibility for her actions and participated fully in the District's investigation.

Megan is the mother to a child with albinism. Megan's child has an appearance that is much different than most of the people around him. She has often experienced stares, mocking, and ridicule on behalf of her child's appearance. Megan understands personally, how sensitive feelings about appearance can be. She knows how hurtful and damaging it can be when you think someone is mocking your appearance. Throughout history, people affected by albinism have been humiliated, mocked, sent away from their families, worst of all beaten and thought of as "witch craft." The history associated with albinism is not one that many are familiar with, but because of personal experience Megan certainly is. Unfortunately, this is a personal experience and knowledge that she did not have at the time with regard to Blackface.

Megan has worked with families and students of all race and ethnicities. Megan has loved and treated every child like her own and throughout her life and the duration of her career has never seen color as a distinguishing characteristic between her students. Megan's inclination to help and protect each and every one of her students despite racial background, leaves her morally and spiritually incapable of ever taking an action that she believes would offend or hurt someone. Megan's heart is broken for the families she has let down. She will be eternally sorry for her lapse in judgment and will have to live with this forever. However, Megan also intends to use this incident as a learning tool for the future. She will use this experience to help herself and others be more aware and sensitive to cultural diversity and history. Megan only hopes that her experience and lack of education on this topic will help others understand and avoid the same mistakes in the future.

Sincerely,



Catherine Z. Cartee, Attorney at Law
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