John and Katharine Blevins

1525 Overlook Dr.

Saint Leonard, MD 20685

410-541-9467

ccpseducation101@gmail.com

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Daniel D. Curry, soon-to-be-former Superintendent and de facto Records Custodian

1305 Dares Beach Road

Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Daniel D. Curry:

We have a little more to share and plenty of questions to ask stemming from our Wednesday, 7/8 records pickup at the Central Office. We were supposed to be reviewing, collecting and paying for financial records we requested on 5/17 and reviewing and possibly collecting and paying for email records we requested on 6/02. We paid in protest for both sets of records, without the opportunity to review them, and the records we received were disorganized and incomplete. We feel *very* good about how the first phase of our PIA lawsuit turned out and are eager, if necessary, to move to phase two before our second suit. If anyone who claims to know us has been lying and saying that has not always been the plan as things have unfolded, their motives are anything but altruistic and should be questioned, no matter how “merciful” of a persona they have worked so hard to cultivate and project. It makes no sense why you would continue to work to make things as bad for CCPS as possible, except you and others are terrified of what our records requests and current PIA suit and future suit/s will expose. We are attaching the only file of 117 disorganized .PDF emails we received, for emails to and from nearly 50 CCPS staff members, which refer in code to our three children. If you or anyone else copied on this letter can look at these emails and justify it as an even remotely full production of records compared to what we requested, we would love to hear an explanation; and, *you* can deal with the privacy violations for a change, since you’ve actively disregarded our 2+-year-long requests for proper redaction of a host of records. How can you rationalize requiring staff to refer to students and staff in difficult-to-trace *code* names - ostensibly for “privacy” - but won’t allow for the proper redaction of those or employee Social Security and driver’s license numbers, and student email addresses? Board meetings have been conducted virtually for months, and public comments posted online. But, after commenters’ addresses and names weren’t properly redacted all comments were removed, and “will be posted at a later.” Later *what*? Over a week later, where are the comments? Who *are* you trying to compromise? Why don’t you go ahead and allow Ms. Maxey to do her job as the Records Custodian, independent of any interference, to provide us the records we requested?

Calvert Recorder editor and education reporter Mike Reid’s Friday, 7/10 ‘Sit-down with the superintendent of schools,’ was more of his typical, purposely misleading and sycophantic reporting, designed to prop up you, and the majority of the Board which allows you to continue to wreak havoc on people’s lives, simply because you and they do not want to acknowledge your involvement in CCPS’ deterioration, wish to maintain access and control, and preserve your positions and images. The photo accompanying the article shows you standing in front of the Central Office, strategically positioned next to one of the signs stating the Central Office is closed. Until Monday, 7/6 at 10:12am, the Central Office was open by appointment; however, it was then “closed” because of fear surrounding our impending Wednesday, 7/8 9am PIA records pickup. The Recorder deadline for Friday, 7/10 publication was Wednesday, 7/8. So, sometime between 10:12am on 7/6, and the 7/8 deadline, you and Mike Reid concocted the “sit-down,” mostly to talk about CCPS’ handling of COVID – the ostensible cause of the abrupt “closure” of CCPS buildings. But there are too many contradictions. You state in the article CCPS has been in “Phase 2” since June. Phase 2 is more relaxed than 1, and appointments *could* be made, at least as of 6/22. According to the banner still at the top of the CCPS site – “Beginning June 22, schools and the district office will be staffed Monday-Thursday. Doors will not be open to the public without an appointment.” We are unsure if appointments could be made during Phase 1, but that didn’t stop you from having staff who were able to work from home come in to work, without regard for their health and other needs. We believe you have actively exploited the COVID crisis and take pleasure in the inconvenience and risk you cause them, while you have had the option to work from home as you wish, even though you made it to the front doors of the Central Office (just like us) for your photo. “I don’t really have any regrets.” Really, you don’t? Could you be any more pompous? What sort of “leader” can’t or won’t identify areas where they wish they handled things differently, if only to help others facing similar predicaments, instead of absconding any responsibility as “a great opportunity to learn?” What a cop-out. Why do you refuse to use the simple word “teachers?” Is it because you have no respect for teachers and you’re making clear their unimportance by refusing to acknowledge them? It isn’t because of qualms of conscience over what you do to them. And your Speak Up program rollout was pathetic and completely unimpactful, because you only pretend to care about “equity,” “racism,” and other forms of discrimination and abuse, to facilitate your malicious and sick goals. You’re using a complicit, toadying “reporter” as a knowing, eager helpmate to try to protect yourself from a *records* request? That’s pitiful.

It was mentioned to us there is signage at different schools around the County indicating visits can be made by appointment, and we drove around and took pictures of some of them. It really doesn’t look like CCPS “buildings are closed to the public at this time.” How are parents withdrawing their kids from or touring and registering them for school? How are hiring and interviews being conducted (like the person we saw let in to the building right after we were denied entry)? What about summertime maintenance and upgrades?

Mr. Titus’ 7/8 performance was as unconvincing as your silly “news” story. We didn’t have to call the main number at 9 am, and there was no need to wait “in order to give staff a few moments to get to the front door.” Mr. Titus was earlier and far more eager than that, and it was abundantly clear *he* was using COVID as an excuse, too. Given his role and title it seems logical he would have keys to most, if not all buildings, including the Central Office. Are we to believe he couldn’t have produced a key to let himself into the building if he wished, or called someone to let him in? No unlocked side doors? His “fear” over being locked out of the building was only a ploy to distract, similar to how he spoke with false worry and panic over COVID. If he was so truly worried about COVID he probably wouldn’t have interacted with us as he did; we promised to abide by social distancing guidelines but there were a few times we forgot and came into close proximity of each other, though we were in no way threatening toward him nor he us. None of us expressed any worry over those instances, and it did not occur to John or me until afterward we should have better observed distancing guidelines. Were we supposed to be intimidated out of records by COVID, Mr. Titus’ role and his State Police shirt, after you initially tried to require us to make *four* different visits to the Central Office over two PIA requests?

On 7/20 we received a response to our latest 7/8 financial records request, and it looks better than those we received prior. Oddly, it sounds like we won’t have to pay anything for the records, which include two different sets of eFinance ledgers, each spanning nearly six-year periods (but for the ~1.5 years of vendor ledgers received from Phase 1), and which supposedly will require less than two hours to produce. So why did six years of *one* set of basic fund ledgers recently cost us $121.02? We are not receptive to warnings that some of these basic eFinance ledgers might be “likely protected from disclosure.” Some of the ledgers we requested are identical to vendor ledgers we received from the first phase of our PIA suit, and those were subject to only reasonable, minor redaction. I don’t think the other ledger sets in this current request require *any* redaction, and there is certainly no justification for withholding any of them. Moreover, “subject to inspection?” Really, we’re going to be allowed to inspect? We’re fine with not paying for the records and receiving them via email; however, they should all easily be provided as requested. To prevent confusion we included in our request screenshot excerpts of the ledgers we want, and even though you noted they are more current examples, we should receive ledgers for the full timeframe/s requested, back to when eFinance first came in to use, which we can prove. It makes no sense why the product to a records request which will require less than two hours to produce would take a full month to be ready, but you’re dragging out things until the last possible moment and chose to spend even more time on the response. With how badly our records pickups go for CCPS, you’ve given up and are trying to keep us as far away from the Central Office as possible. If you can get the records sooner to us that would be nice. Otherwise we’ll expect them shortly before or on 8/7.

Attached is a timeline of everything which has happened over the span of these 5/17 and 6/02 PIA requests (hope I haven’t excluded anything). That’s a lot of energy to spend if you’re not afraid, and a lot of energy for us to waste on your stupid and petty games. This process could and should be simple and *honest*.

Why make things any worse,

John Blevins Katharine Blevins

Cc: Ms. Karen Maxey, Assistant to the Board and Records Custodian

Mr. Cary Hansel, Hansel Law

Ms. Inez Claggett, not complicit BoE member

Ms. Pamela Cousins, not complicit BoE member

Ms. Dawn Balinski, complicit BoE member

Ms. Tracy McGuire, complicit BoE member

Mr. William Phalen, complicit BoE member

Dr. Susan Johnson, Director of Secondary School Improvement

Ms. Kim Roof, Director of Student Services

Ms. Diane Workman, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Anthony Navarro, Executive Director of Administration

Ms. Edith Hutchins, CFO

Mr. Kevin Michael, Director of Procurement and Resource Management

Mr. Jonathan McClellan, IT Director

Mr. Joel Parmer, IT Program Coordinator

Ms. Schuchita Warner, Director of School Construction

Mr. Darrell Barricklow, Supervisor for School Construction

**Mr. Larry Titus,** Community Resources & School Safety Specialist

Mr. Mike Reid, complicit editor and education reporter, the Calvert Recorder