

FORM 6

PETITION

(Respondent-Beekmantown Central School District Board of Education)

37 Eagle Way, West Chazy, NY 12992

310 Appeal to the State Education Department

The University of the State of New York

Albany, NY 12234

STATE OF NEW YORK

STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Verified Petition

In the matter of David J. Anderson, M.D., Robert G. Collier and John P. Bradley on behalf of the students of the Beekmantown Central School District from action of the Board of Education of the Beekmantown Central School District regarding the reassignment of two district principals, Mr. Garth Frechette and Ms. Diane Fox.

TO THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION:

1. On July 5, 2011, the Beekmantown Central School District Board of Education (BCSD BOE) voted 6 - 3 to reassign Principal Garth

Frechette from Beekmantown High School (BHS) to Cumberland Head Elementary (CHES) and Principal Diane Fox from CHES to BHS. This reassignment had not been discussed at any properly convened meeting of the BOE. Given that Principal Frechette has no elementary experience, Principal Fox has no high school experience, and the district budget had been defeated on June 30, 2011, and despite no public notice of this reassignment, many members of the public attended the July 5, 2011 board meeting for the purpose of obtaining more information regarding the reassignment. The following facts became apparent:

2. Superintendent of Schools Scott Amo did not authorize, approve of, or move the motion to reassign the principals. This is highly unusual and contrary to school board policy, Section 2000 - number 4(Exhibit A), section 2110(Exhibit B), and section 2111-E - number 8(Exhibit C). Mr. Amo has been quoted as saying this has never happened before in his professional experience (Exhibit H).
3. This action, despite its significance to hundreds of students, parents and teachers, was not brought to the public for any discussion of its educational merits. This is contrary to board policy section 2000 - number 1(Exhibit A), section 1000 - numbers 3, 7, 10 and 11(Exhibit D), and section 2110 - number 8(Exhibit B).
4. Multiple board members expressed ignorance of the action at the July 5, 2011 meeting. Mr. Marin asked that the motion be

postponed and discussed to provide for "due process"; his request was ignored. Board President Steve Trombley commented, "I don't know why we are doing this - it makes no sense," before voting no (Exhibit H). Ms. Armstrong voted no with no comment. However, board members Buckley, King, Kourofsky, Lavigne, Race and Stone voted yes with no discussion or comment.

5. Superintendent Amo was informed of the pending action one week prior to the July 5 meeting and was assured enough of its passage that he informed the principals of the likely reassignment (Exhibit H). This fact, combined with number 4 above, suggests that the board members who brought forward and passed this motion discussed the matter privately outside of a duly convened board meeting, contrary to board policy - section 2111(Exhibit E).
6. The community, concerned about the quality of the student's education, has expressed tremendous concern regarding the reassignment as there has been absolutely no information given to the public by any board member, each citing the principle that this is a personnel matter and as such, confidential. Queries have been referred to Superintendent Amo, who as noted above, has no knowledge of the motives for the action taken by six members of the board. Community concern has been documented by a petition to the board asking for a special meeting(Exhibit F), an online survey(Exhibit G), and a legal petition to the State Commissioner of Education.

7. Given the facts noted above and in light of adverse findings of a school system audit, as well as gross mishandling of the school budget vote, the community has lost confidence in the ability of the current board, in particular the six members who voted for this action, to act competently and ethically and in the best interests of the education of the students in the district.

WHEREFORE, and with the above facts and concerns in mind, we respectfully request:

1. Immediate mediation to take place between the BCSD board and the Beekmantown school district community by a designee of the NYS Education Department in order to ensure that the action of July 5, 2011, was done properly, not only in accordance with NYS law, but in accordance with the policies of the BCSD and in the best interest of the education of the students of the district.
2. Such other relief as the Commissioner deems just and proper.

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