



Chair Mary McCray Comments Special Board Meeting July 19, 2019

Before I entertain a motion to go into closed session this morning, I want to address two things.

The first is Due Process.

See, here at CMS, every one of our 19,500 employees have due process rights. The cafeteria worker, the janitor, the teacher, the principal, and even the Superintendent. They have the right, enshrined into law here in North Carolina, to due process for any employment status change. It's one of the great things about working here at CMS and, frankly, being an American citizen, the knowledge that each and every employee has this right, the right to due process. I recognize that conversations about the Board ensuring each employee's due process rights only gets discussed when we're speaking about the Superintendent, with the implication that the Board is giving the Superintendent special treatment, but make no mistake... every single employee at CMS has the exact same right to due process. And we are not going to violate any employee's rights or the laws of this state just to avoid criticism.

The second thing I want to discuss this morning are Confidential Personnel Records.

We are not naive to the desire to know details about what happened when. But we are a government body and we must follow the laws of North Carolina and those laws make it crystal clear what information about employees the Board can and cannot disclose. Each and every board member around this dais raised their hand and took an oath to uphold and faithfully execute the laws of the state and we are not going to abandon

that oath just because it is convenient to do so.

This Board wants to keep you informed of everything we do as we conduct business, but the law is clear on this and this Board is going to follow the law. Every employee should have confidence that this Board will honor and protect each and every employee's legal right to privacy. We are going to do this even if it means bad PR for the nine of us. That is what we have done and will do for every single employee, regardless of where they fall on the org chart.

We also have a responsibility to the people across our State who sent their elected representatives to Raleigh to pass these laws. It is not the role of this Board to decide which laws we are going to follow and which ones we're going to ignore for political expediency. We owe it to our community to follow each and every law and we are going to do just that. There are 19,500 employees and over 147,000 students counting on us and we are not going to let them down.

We embrace criticism from all quarters, as the freedom to criticize the government is an important and cherished American right. We just hope that those who would criticize us would recognize that this Board is committed to another cherished and important American right, which is the principle that government bodies are required to follow the law on the same basis as the citizens they serve. Our community, our employees, and our students will be able to say with confidence that this Board is going to do what's right, regardless of whatever political pressure falls onto us to do otherwise. Legally and morally we owe it to them to do so, and we will do no less.