



Newly Elected Conservative School Board Fires Superintendent, Bans Critical Race Theory

Description

In one meeting, Deon Jackson went from South Carolina's Berkeley County school superintendent to unemployed.

His firing came at the hand of a newly-elected school board, which appears to have declared a judgment day for woke practices in its district.

In its first meeting after the Nov. 8 election, the board fired superintendent Jackson and school counsel Tiffany Richardson. Then it hired Anthony Dixon as superintendent and retained Brandon Gaskins as counsel. And before the day was over, the board banned teaching critical race theory and created a board to review library books for pornographic content.

Moms for Liberty, an activist group that supports parental rights in education, endorsed six of the board's nine members. Many Moms for Liberty candidates won school board elections this November, as [reported](#) previously. The group's leaders say more aggressive school management decisions may soon be in order.

In Berkeley, the candidates' aggressive approach was a response to student discipline policies and slow learning post-COVID-19, said Christi Dixon, the Moms for Liberty chapter chair for Berkeley.

"Parents were seeing that their children weren't achieving at the levels that they had been previously. And there were a lot of changes," Dixon said.



Newly-elected Berkeley County, South Carolina school board members run their first meeting in Berkeley County, North Carolina on Nov. 15, 2022. (Photo courtesy of Christy Dixon)

Fire and Firings

When Jackson left the board meeting at which he was fired, it appeared that not everyone supported the board's decision.



Christy Dixon, the Moms for Liberty chapter chair for Berkeley County. (Photo courtesy of Christy Dixon)

Some parents watching walked out with him in protest, video from local network Live 5 WCSC News shows. Others cheered.

Former school board chair David Barrow called the firings a “travesty” and a “political witch hunt,” according to NBC.

So far, the board has yet to explain its rationale for firing Jackson and Richardson.

Board members Yvonne Bradley and Crystal Wigfall walked out of the room in protest after Jackson departed.

Moms for Liberty co-founder Tiffany Justice said the board might be newly-elected but that it knows exactly what it’s doing.

“These are people that have watched the former board. They interacted and watched the former superintendent. They have watched and interacted with the staff attorney,” she said. “The newly elected school board members have been keeping a list and checking it twice.”

According to Dixon, Jackson changed school discipline policies in ways that caused problems and usurped parental authority.

Schools under his authority told parents that school staff should be able to discipline students for behavior outside the school, she said.

“The example that they gave was that if a child and another student in their neighborhood got into some type of disagreement and it was going to spill over into the school environment, then they should be able to insert themselves into that situation,” Dixon said.

Jackson also supported “restorative practices,” she said.

According to the University of Florida, a “restorative” school justice system replaces suspensions and detentions with “restorative meeting circles” where offenders and victims practice “Restitution Planning.”

The previous school board wanted to spend \$1 million to hire five district-level administrators, said Dixon.

“We don’t have teachers’ aides. Could that money not be better served to get down into the schools and into the classrooms to help the teacher than to hire more top-heavy district-level administrators?” she asked.

Finally, the school district’s library included the book “Looking for Alaska,” which has sexually graphic language, Dixon said.

Dixon added that she didn’t know exactly why the board moved so fast to fire Jackson and Richardson but that she trusted they had good reason.



Parents concerned about Critical Race Theory took home these buttons from a school board activist training Jan. 19, 2022 in Sarasota, Florida. (Courtesy if Alexis Spiegelman)

“I’m not a board member, and they have protected information that they can’t share,” she said. “I just have to trust that they made the best decision with the information that only they had.”

National Implications

Moms for Liberty co-founder Tiffany Justice said Moms for Liberty and its candidates want to reclaim parental control of education. For many school employees, “Judgment Day” has arrived, she said.

“You’re going to see continued changes being made to the system. Parents are reclaiming public education in America,” she said.

Superintendents across America should expect more changes, Justice added.

“It’s time for school districts and superintendents to remember and understand that they work for the school board, who reports to the constituents of the community,” she said. “Not the other way around.”

Justice said that although she doesn’t know of any other school boards that have fired their superintendents, she expects that boards nationwide will follow Berkeley’s lead.

“Our children don’t have any time to waste. They don’t get time back. Two years of their lives have already been stolen from them by teachers’ unions and bureaucrats and the Biden administration,” she said.

by Jackson Elliott

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