

November 12, 2019

Joint Performance Review Committee

Attn: Senator Jimmy Hickey Jr and Representative Jimmy Gazaway, Chairs

To the Esteemed Committee:

It is with an open heart and honesty that I write this letter of concern in regard to the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts (ASMSA). I was an employee at this institution from Aug. 2013-May 2019. Throughout my time at ASMSA, I always found great pleasure in working with prospective and current students and parents. I did my job so well that I eventually developed life-long friendships with many people I encountered during that time period. My work and love for admissions spoke for itself. This was a place that gave me meaningful relationships with so many wonderful people. However, in April 2019, my position was stripped from me and I feel I was wrongfully terminated. So how is it that I've done my job effectively and efficiently over 5 years but still be terminated?

Several people have found themselves asking this same question. Good people are being fired and leaving ASMSA at an alarming rate due to direct conflicts and difference of opinions with Corey Alderdice. Not many people are willing to step up and bring things into the light because they simply fear losing their jobs due to retaliation by Corey. For example, when one is filing a grievance against the Director, he is the judge, jury and executioner. How is this not a conflict when the Director himself gets the pleasure of dismissing your grievance without any type of communication? This is something I'm asking the committee to investigate as to why there isn't an appropriate grievance policy in place to ensure employees will not be retaliated against by the Director himself for filing a grievance upon him, such as myself.

In my opinion, I feel the University of Arkansas System has failed me and many others by not hearing our story and allowing Corey to present his case in full and use his words to dismiss our concerns. Furthermore, in my opinion, Dr. Bobbitt has enabled Corey to victimize not only staff but parents, students and alums by not holding him accountable and not having an effective checks and balance process. I've sent emails to Dr. Bobbitt about my issues. Some parents have sent letters to Dr. Bobbitt about their concerns (drugs and sexual assault of a student on campus) to no avail. What will have to occur before some order is restored to what once was considered the "Dream School" of Arkansas?

Below is a list of things I feel that the committee should thoroughly investigate that's going on at the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts under the leadership of Corey Alderdice:

1. Concerns about grant funding and its use from 2012-Present
2. Grievance Policy
3. Excessive Japan and Washington, D.C. trips on the school's budget
4. Non-employee receiving ASMSA emails by blind carbon copy (bcc) with personal information that possibly violates laws, i.e. Stephanie Alderdice
5. Conflict of interest with wife's company SixtyOne Celsius
 - a. Photographer for Honors Convocation
 - b. Hiring of wife's employee to design new ASMSA website
 - i. Was there a bidding process held?
6. Requiring that I admit more low-income students in order to get more grants saying "By now Valerie you should know that a kid wearing Hollister is not low-income."
 - a. This occurred around September/October 2018

7. Possibly breaking FERPA laws by allowing a former ASMSA employee to help decide the Class of 2021/2022-Olivia Gatton Jarrell
8. Possible misrepresentation of a Ph.D on LinkedIn
 - a. Will the committee confirm if this was a requirement of his employment
9. Necessity to have 4 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations on campus purchased with school funds
10. Allegedly taking students off campus to ride in his Tesla without proper checkout afterhours

ASMSA is a jewel in the state of Arkansas and an attraction in the city of Hot Springs. It has had a long-standing valuable reputation that I feel is being tarnished under the leadership of Corey Alderdice. If it were up to me to make a decision today, I would place ASMSA under the guidance and direction of ADE and remove Corey Alderdice immediately from his position as Director as I believe he does not possess the qualifications and maturity level that this position demands.

Should you have any questions or concerns for me, please feel free to contact me via email at valerie.denise.carpenter@gmail.com. Thank you for hearing my concerns!

Sincerely,

Valerie Carpenter

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