Tioga Independent School District

Josh Ballinger, Superintendent
Keith Kirkland, Secondary School Principal
Jana Smith, Elementary School Principal

October 13, 2023

Dear Brad Strickland,

This letter is formal notification that you are being placed on administrative leave with pay effective today, October 13, 2023. Pursuant to Tioga Independent School District ("Tioga ISD" or "District") Policies, you are being placed on administrative leave pending an investigation of allegations made by Parent 1 & 2 against you of "grooming." Specifically, it has been alleged that Parent 1&2 daughter, Student 1 had an inappropriate teacher-student relationship with you while she was a student at Tioga High School. I have determined that the District's best interest will be served by placing you on administrative leave at this time.

While on leave, you are prohibited from entering any facility within the District or attending any District functions/activities without my or my designee's written consent. You are also directed to refrain from any conduct which in any way constitutes or could be reasonably interpreted as retaliation against, or harassment of, any employee and/or student, of the District. Violation of this directive may result in adverse employment action against you up to, and including termination of your contract. While this matter is being investigated, you are directed as follows:

1. The individual conducting the investigation is not a law enforcement officer and the investigation is not a criminal investigation. The purpose of the investigation or inquiry is to gather facts in order to determine whether or not a District policy or procedure was violated and/or to determine the cause of an incident or event.
2. As an employee of the District, you are directed to cooperate with the investigation or inquiry, and to provide truthful, complete responses to questions asked by the investigator, both verbally and/or in writing.
3. You are directed to treat the investigation or inquiry as confidential as it may involve sensitive employee and/or student information. Disclosure of this information may compromise the integrity of the investigation and the District's ability to fairly and accurately investigate this matter. The District has narrowly tailored the following directives to meet the District's compelling interest in: maintaining the confidentiality of student information; ability to conduct an accurate and thorough investigation; and ability to maintain a non-disruptive work environment.
4. Until you receive written authorization from me, the investigator and/or Keith Kirkland that this directive is no longer effective, you are directed to not discuss this investigation or inquiry, or any information that you and the investigator discuss, with any District employee (except the

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investigator, Safety and Security personnel or Human Resources staff) or any other person who is in any way connected to the incident or event under investigation, or who is a possible witness in this investigation.

5. Disclosure of information pertaining to this investigation in violation of this directive and/or failure to comply with the directives herein may result in disciplinary action against you up to, and including, nonrenewal, non extension or termination of your employment.
6. You may request written permission for an exception to this directive from Keith Kirkland to the extent necessary to pursue a grievance pursuant to Board Policies DGBA (LEGAL) and DGBA (LOCAL).
7. You are directed to refrain from any conduct that constitutes or could be interpreted as retaliation against any individual involved in the investigation pursuant to Board Policies DIA (LEGAL), DIA (LOCAL), FFH (LEGAL) and FFH (LOCAL).
8. The directives outlined herein remain in effect until the conclusion of the investigation. You will be notified in writing when the investigation is concluded.

In conjunction with the investigation, you are directed to submit a written response to the allegations to me by email no later than October 16, 2023 at 3:00 PM. You will be contacted when the investigation regarding your conduct has been completed. It is the District's intention to proceed with the Level 3 School Board Hearing requested by Parent 1 & 2 to be held at approximately 7:00 PM on October 16, 2023 in the Tioga Secondary Building. Your presence is requested, please.

All employees have the right to file a written grievance in accordance with Board Policies DGBA (LEGAL), DGBA (LOCAL), and DGBA (EXHIBIT), and/or to exercise their rights under state and/or federal regulations, which can be accessed via Policy On-line at: https://policyonline.tasb.org/PolicyOnline?key=529

If you have any questions regarding this action, you may contact me by phone or email.

Sincerely,

Josh Ballinger

Josh Ballinger, Superintendent Tioga Independent School District
855 McKnight Road
Tioga, TX 76271
940-202-2536
josh.ballinger@tiogaisd.net

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I have received a copy of this document. I understand that my signature below indicates receipt of this document, not necessarily agreement with its contents. In addition, I understand it is my responsibility to comply with all lawful directives issued by the District, regardless of whether I agree with the directives. I further understand that I will attach a written response to this document within 3 District business days by email correspondence, as requested in the letter.

_____ _____

Brad Strickland Date

***An email reply acknowledging this letter is acceptable and no signature return is necessary.

Tioga Secondary School
855 McKnight Road
Tioga, TX 76271
TEL: (940) 202-2536

Tioga Elementary School
405 N. Florence Street
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