A Failure of Leadership – A Retaliatory Expulsion

"Charlotte Latin School prohibits retaliatory behavior against anyone who complains in good faith or participates in the complaint and/or investigation process pursuant to this policy, regardless of the outcome of the investigation." - CLS Family Handbook

Charlotte Latin Leadership under Chuck Baldecchi and Todd Ballaban have discouraged open dialogue, abandoned the parent school partnership and created a culture of fear. This is best displayed by the expulsion of Logan and Olivia Turpin in retaliation to Doug and Nicole's participation in REFOCUS Latin.

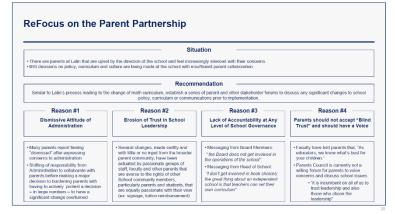
Discouraged Open Dialogue

Refocus Latin was created around concerns from at least 60 Latin parents. On August 24th, Refocus Latin created a presentation for the Board of Trustees' Executive Committee, at the request of the Board's Vice Chair, Mike Freno. "Respect is the foundation of the

Charlotte Latin School community" and the presentation honored that spirit by identifying concerns, providing recommendations, and identifying specific reasons for the concerns. The presentation was meant to be the starting point for dialog, created at the Boards request. You can see the presentation in full here.

However, Mr. Baldecchi was not interested in a dialogue. Instead, he began disparaging the parents involved in Refocus Latin, making inflammatory comments about the presentation even accusing the group of taking the presentation "viral".





On a 9/02/21 video to parents and teachers Mr. Baldecchi referenced the presentation by saying "One reads it and cringes. The statements made in it are inaccurate. They're invented in many cases, and very hurtful." Again, dissuading dialogue by saying "Do not engage with parents at parent night about this topic, if it comes up. If someone asks, point them to me, please."

You can view the faculty <u>video here</u>, and the transcript of it with our comments here. And the Sept Parents Council video transcript with our comments are here.

Mr. Baldecchi speaks of inclusivity and a supportive environment but that is only afforded to those who agree with him. Mr. Baldecchi is quick to label, alienate even expel when his views are questioned, or approaches challenged.

Abandoned the Parent-School Partnership

The Parent-School Partnership is part of the foundation of Charlotte Latin. There is an expectation that parents will be an active member in their child's education, and it promises the school will address concerns through direct conversation with parents. Over the years many have felt that this Partnership has devolved into a Parent-School Endorsement, where the new expectation is that

the parents will fully endorse all of the school's decisions acting as "Model Parents". If parents raise questions or express concerns they are placated or ignored, because mutual respect and open communications are no longer valued by the Charlotte Latin Leadership.

A Culture of Fear

"I'm not going to dignify the inaccuracies of the presentation that many of you have may have read." - Mr. Baldecchi. By discouraging open dialogue and abandoning the Parent-School Partnership, the head of school is creating a Culture of Fear. To the point where your opinion won't be granted dignity, if you disagree. The fear of being publicly labeled a white supremist if you hold a different opinion (see tweet from Latin parent). Or having your children expelled because the headmaster does not like what you have said. "You need to



leave Charlotte Latin. OK, I'm just gonna tell you it is not a good relationship, you clearly are in violation of this. I don't like the way you communicate." - Mr. Baldecchi from the recorded conversation on Sept 10th expulsion, the entire transcript is available <u>here</u>.

Charlotte Latin is devolving from a strong community of families to a politically divisive community of Us and Them. This is happening not just because of failure in leadership but because it is being cultivated by the leadership itself.