

An Unjust Expulsion

“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

On Friday September 10th, our 11-year old son, Logan, and our 13-year old daughter, Olivia, were expelled by Chuck Baldecchi, with just hours' notice. Our children were ordered, without even knowing why, to clean out their lockers and were permanently removed from the school they had attended since TK. Our children were not expelled for any issues with their behavior.

The below are specific accusations made by Mr. Baldecchi on the recording I made of his expelling our children, with each referenced material provided and an explanation of why the evidence shows his actions constituted a wrongful expulsion.

Our children were not expelled for their actions.

They were expelled because Mr. Baldecchi did not like what their parents had to say.

The Board promised the members of Refocus Latin there would be no retaliation for our feedback. However, Chuck chose to retaliate against our children, with the hope to create a climate of fear that would silence any more unwanted attempts at dialog.

ACCUSATION: Mr. Baldecchi asserted that our communication to the school on COVID health policies were inappropriate communications that justified the expulsion of our children.

FACT: We requested that my wife, who is a Doctor, along with other parents that were Pediatricians or members of the medical community, be afforded with the opportunity to meet with the school to discuss COVID health policies.

COMMUNICATION: Our request for this meeting was summarily turned down, highlighting the breakdown in the School Parent Partnership.

Re: Mask Policy

 Gregory, Fletcher
To: Doug Turpin
Cc: Jean Asinger; Nicole Turpin

← Reply ← Reply All → Forward ...

Thu 8/12/2021 2:59 PM

On Thu, Aug 12, 2021 at 2:00 PM Doug Turpin

Fletcher, let's you and I talk at 3:30 then. It is still my hope and request that we can meet in person with the team that is making decisions on this policy, along with other concerned parents that could make whatever time works for the school. I believe this would be highly beneficial for all concerned.

I agree we can leave the medical discussion for when Jean can participate. Hopefully we can do it in person with my wife Nicole.

Just to be sure you both understand our message, neither Nicole or I are against vaccines. Both our mothers are 88 years old, former nurses (so we have a special place in our hearts for all nurses) and after doing extensive research, we both made sure they were vaccinated as soon as it was available. My mom has congestive heart failure, Parkinson's a variety of health issues. It made sense to get her vaccinated give the risk factors she has. We simply do not think it is that cut and dry for everyone and particularly for children. We also do not think anyone should face undue pressure to vaccinate and that it is a decision that is best made individually by the parent with their doctor's input based on their unique circumstances, including whether they had Covid already.

Thank you for making the time. I will call you at 3:30.

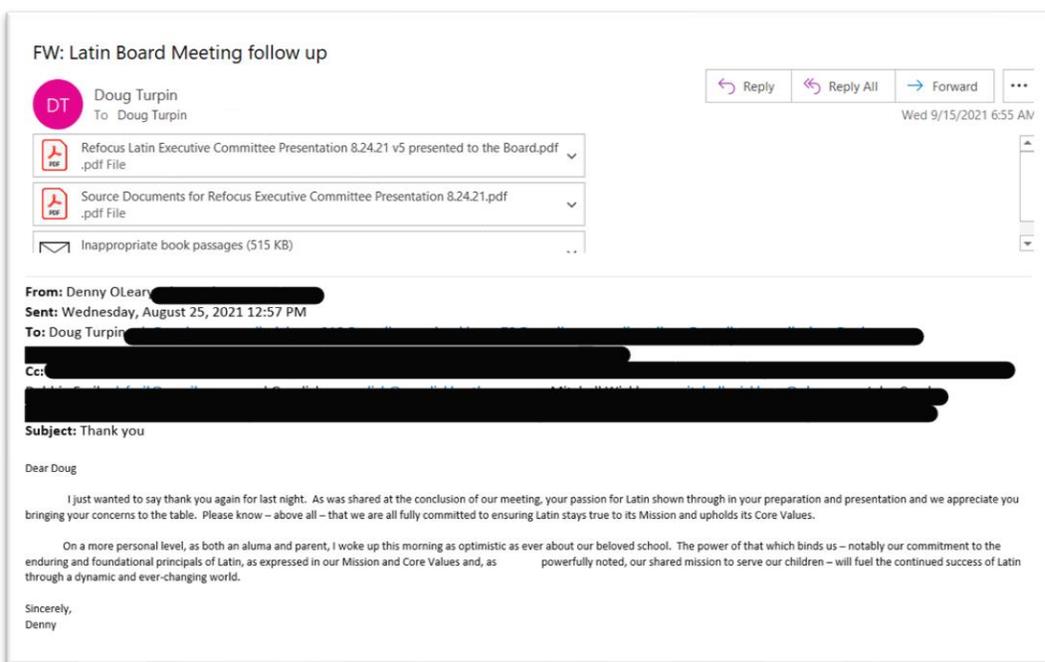
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SUMMARY: We were denied the opportunity to provide our feedback and concerns. However, our requests for dialog were civil and respectful. There was nothing improper about it, as Mr. Baldecchi alleged. We communicated our dismay that we would not even be able to have a discussion with them on this topic. We pointed out that this was a departure from the school's Parent-School Partnership. I was also told that they had not heard that this was even a concern, except from one other parent. However, I was already in communication with a significant number of other parents that had stated they expressed concerns, so I knew this was not accurate. I was told in my verbal conversation with Fletcher Gregory, that it may make a difference if it was not just a couple of parents that were concerned. I explained that there was a large group of concerned parents, for which I was attempting to ask as a spokesman. I outlined that I felt the school was making a mistake by being unwilling to even hear what they had to say.

ACCUSATION: We were told that our participation in the Refocus Latin group and our email communication in the creation of this presentation, was inappropriate communications that justified the expulsion of our children. Mr. Baldecchi falsely claimed that I had sent the presentation out to a wide audience via a "BCC". I explained to him this was untrue and requested proof for this claim.

FACT: A large number of families supported the message of Refocus Latin and participated in its creation. The email communications were collaborative and never went "viral".

COMMUNICATION: We were invited to create this presentation by Mike Freno, who is the Vice Chair of the Board. We did so in a civil and respectful manner, both in our communications with parents, and with the Board.



[Click To Read Entire Email](#) [Attachment Presentation](#), [Attachment Source Document](#), [Attachment Passage](#)

SUMMARY: Mr. Baldecchi falsely asserted in the video to the faculty, that we had gone "viral" with our presentation. To go viral means you have posted something on a public forum. The only social media post was by a Latin parent, opposing our viewpoint, who tweeted that Refocus Latin was a group of "White Supremacists". This assertion that our presentation went viral was a false statement intended as a retaliatory smear towards the families involved.



ACCUSATION: Mr. Baldecchi said I had personally stated, “that the school was hiring unqualified minority teachers.”

FACT: I never stated this. This is an inaccurate, slanderous, and defamatory statement.

COMMUNICATION: Below is the transcript of the September 1st meeting.

Chuck Baldecchi: Yeah, well, it's also wrong that the school would accept students or hire faculty because of their color, and then that they are also not up to the merit of the school. That's totally inappropriate.

Doug Turpin: Yeah, well, I didn't say that. And I don't think anybody in our group said that.

Chuck Baldecchi: yea well it was said in the document,

Doug Turpin: that that you guys were hiring people that were inappropriate

Chuck Baldecchi: it said that we were we were hiring folks of color that did not meet standards

Doug Turpin: that is a complete absolute fabrication. Let's pull out the PowerPoint here, and then show me exactly where it said that

Chuck Baldecchi: So, let me explain this. Look, Doug. I'm going to tell you right now-

Doug Turpin: You're entitled to your opinion, but you're not entitled to your own set of facts. That is not true. You just said something was wrong. There is nothing about that that is true.

Chuck Baldecchi: Your family, your family, you need to leave Charlotte Latin. OK, I'm just gonna tell you is not a good relationship, you clearly are in violation of this. I don't like the way you communicate.

Doug Turpin: You're telling me that I'm saying I'm untruths, so I asked you to pull up the PowerPoint to see if I said something.

Chuck Baldecchi: so what I'm happy to do is on a pro-rated basis, we will return the rest of your tuition. But I did not want to do this. I want to give you the chance to stay, but you're clearly, you do not want to have a great relationship with us.

[Click Here To Read Entire Transcript](#)

SUMMARY: The Refocus Latin presentation was critical of curriculum changes, lack of transparency, sexualized and age in appropriate material, and perceived changes in the direction of the school from its historical roots, all stated in a civil and respectful manner. You can see it has no reference to hiring unqualified minority teachers.

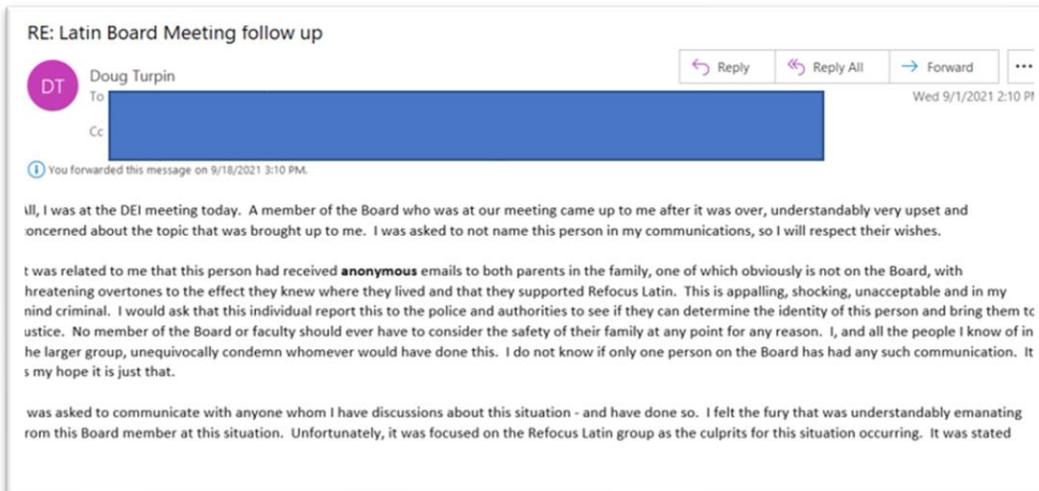
ReFocus on Classic Latin Education			
Situation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Latin's traditional education, particularly in English and History, is incrementally being replacedFormer Head of DEI has been placed in charge of all curriculum, an unusual arrangement in any event, but particularly based on educational and career focused substantially on DEI and social justiceAdministration has told parents that teachers oversee their own curriculum, an unacceptable policy			
Recommendation <p>Head of School is accountable to the Board for curriculum choices and teacher training. Establish an Ethical Literacy Working Group to secure a place for canonical works and traditions of western, classical education and make room for additional perspectives that depict society's challenges, redemptions and reasons for optimism.</p>			
Reason #1 Developmentally and Ethically Appropriate Curriculum	Reason #2 Meritocracy	Reason #3 Teacher Training	Reason #4 Classical Education with Thoughtful Supplementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Curriculum must be thoroughly researched as developmentally appropriate for each grade levelSeveral examples of books prescribed to students are crass, pornographic, angry and anti-western civilization (e.g., <i>Indian No More</i>, <i>Your Perfect Mexican Daughter</i>, <i>Between the World and Me</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>Grading for Equity</u> as summer faculty readingDEI goals superseding optimizing evaluations for admitting most qualified students and hiring most qualified faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Course content inconsistent with ethics and values of the school<ul style="list-style-type: none">Anti-American / Western CivAnti-White / IntersectionalityAnti-Law EnforcementExamples of school sponsored professional development that is political (Racial Literacy Classes, NAIS Conferences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Replacement of canonical works with single point-of-view works that leave little room for interpretation or debate of the textsFind room for diverse perspectives, address challenges and reactions to challenges in history – but teach principles and seek objective truth.

[Click Here To See The Entire Presentation](#)

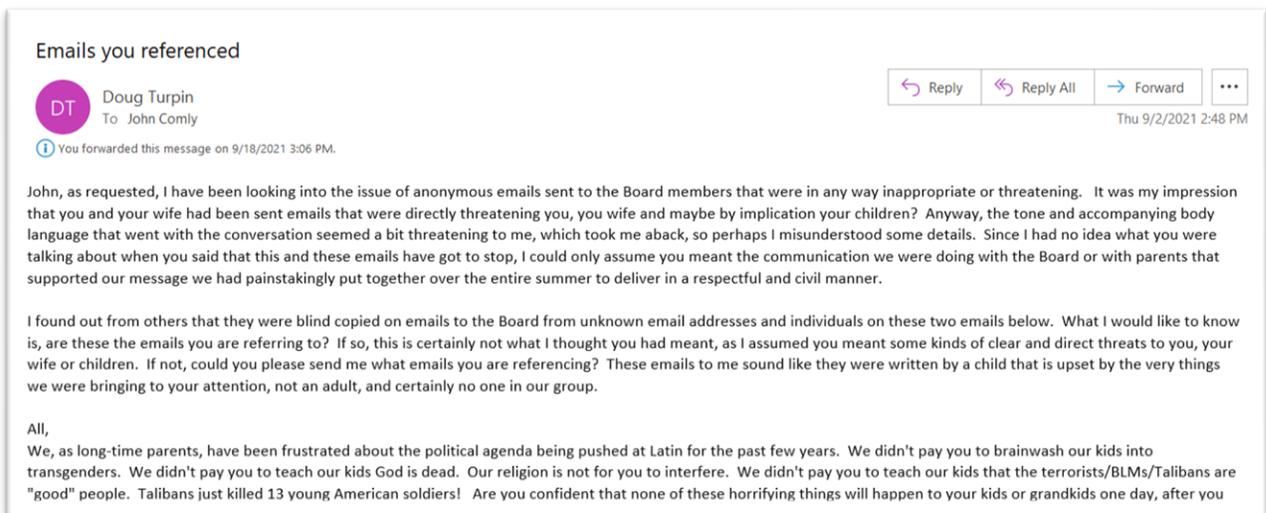
ACCUSATION: Mr. Baldecchi cited my email communications with John Comley as one of the inappropriate communications I had, which justified my children's immediate expulsion.

FACT: Mr. Comley himself came up to me as I was leaving a meeting about DEI on September 1st. He was highly agitated about getting anonymous emails, that I understood from what he was saying were threatening to him and his wife personally. He stated he believed these were coming from Refocus Latin parents (which I do not believe to be true). He requested that I look into it and do whatever I could to stop it. I promised him I would and that I would get back to him.

COMMUNICATION: I did that. And followed up with what I found.



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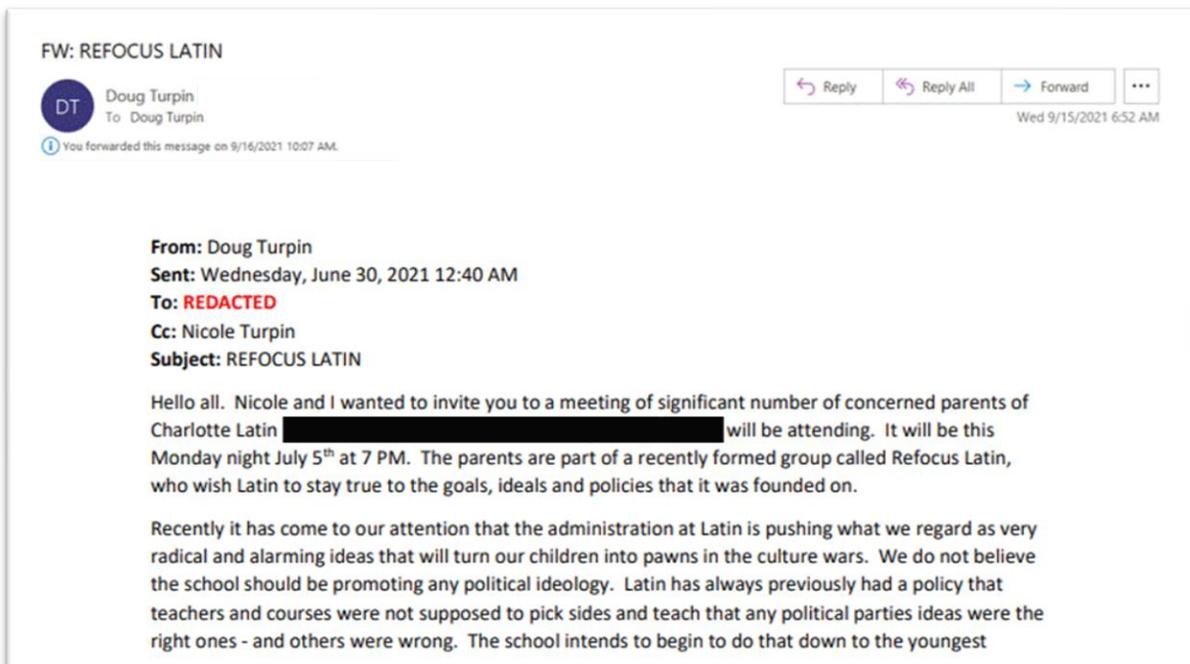
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SUMMARY: I found out that the only emails anyone knew about, were ones that had been randomly sent to various parents and Board members. I sent an email on what I had found out to John, to ask if these were the ones he was referring to. I did not get a response.

ACCUSATION: Mr. Baldecchi asserted that my sending an invitation over the summer to a few other parents we knew, who had indicated they shared some of the same concerns, was inappropriate communications and justified the expulsion of our children.

FACT: This was not a “secret meeting”. It was a gathering of parents, to discuss their concerns about their children’s school. There were many meetings at different locations and different times. All of them were devoted to trying to come up with the best communication strategy to approach the Board with our thoughts and concerns. The email references first hand faculty statements on what they were being required to learn relating to educational philosophy.

COMMUNICATION: The meeting was held under the spirit of participating within the Parent-School Partnership and seeking advice how to respectfully approach the school and the Board. The parents at this meeting have a true love for Latin. We all want to see it thrive.



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SUMMARY: There is nothing inappropriate for parents meeting together to talk about their children’s education. While only 10 members of Refocus Latin were invited to attend the Executive Board meeting, there are over 60 people who have participated in these conversations and many more that were supporters, just not actively involved in creation of the presentation. Even prominent alumni have contacted the school with messages of support for Refocus Latin and with requests for the Administration to engage in dialog.

ACCUSATION: Mr. Baldecchi asserted that the email communication with Todd Ballaban was inconsistent with school policies.

FACT: These emails were regarding concerns that my son had expressed, about not being allowed to pull down his mask to drink water, or go to the bathroom if he needed to, during his two-hour long humanities class (which was inconsistent with school policy). He felt as though he was being targeted. There was also a growing concern that while the curriculum is supposed to be apolitical, a teacher was presenting the material through a highly political lens.

COMMUNICATION: A email was sent to Todd Ballaban that only very briefly outlined some of the concerns.

RE: Call request



Doug Turpin
To: Ballaban, Todd
Cc: Nicole Turpin; Chuck Baldecchi; Godfrey, Michelle

Reply Reply All Forward

Wed 9/8/2021 2:46 PM

Todd, in one hours' time, you were able to look into this matter in depth, all without having any type of conversation with us? We asked for a simple discussion with you first so we could provide you information and context, which would have allowed you to have had an opportunity to understand what we were concerned with. My email did not go into great depth, because I assumed you would be willing to discuss this with us first. You run Middle School, so I am surprised that you thought it necessary to engage the Headmaster about this matter of a request to switch out a teacher.

Anyway, I am available Friday first thing in the morning when we drop off the kids at 8:15 for an in person meeting, or if you wish to meet at the end of the day, I can try to be there as early as 4:15.

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SUMMARY: This matter should have just been discussed on a call with Mr. Ballaban. He refused to hear directly from us regarding our concerns and instead of talking with us directly, he referred us to the headmaster. This meeting was a setup. He invited us, not to talk about our concerns, but to expel our children that same day, as is clearly indicated in tape recording from the meeting. You can read the [entire transcript here](#).

October 9th, 2020

An email was sent to individually to every member of the board asking for the opportunity to review the incident. Only Board Chair Denny O'Leary replied – declaring the matter was not reviewable.

RESPONSE: Denny effectively states that the Headmaster can expel any students at any time, if he deems a parent does not have a "positive, collaborative working relationship".

From: Denny OLeary
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2021 6:19 PM
To: Doug Turpin
Subject: Re: Regarding the expulsion of The Turpin family's two children from Latin

Dear Doug,

As you know, our school has in place a policy on the Parent School Partnership that requires a "positive, collaborative working relationship between the School and a student's parent" which we agree, as a condition of continued enrollment, is "essential to the fulfillment of the School's mission". The Board has delegated to the Head of School the authority to assess whether that relationship between parents and the school meets the requirements of the policy. It would be inappropriate for the Board to intervene in that determination, and we will not do so. We wish you well in finding an educational placement that meets your needs.

Sincerely,
Denny O'Leary
On behalf of the Charlotte Latin Board of Trustees

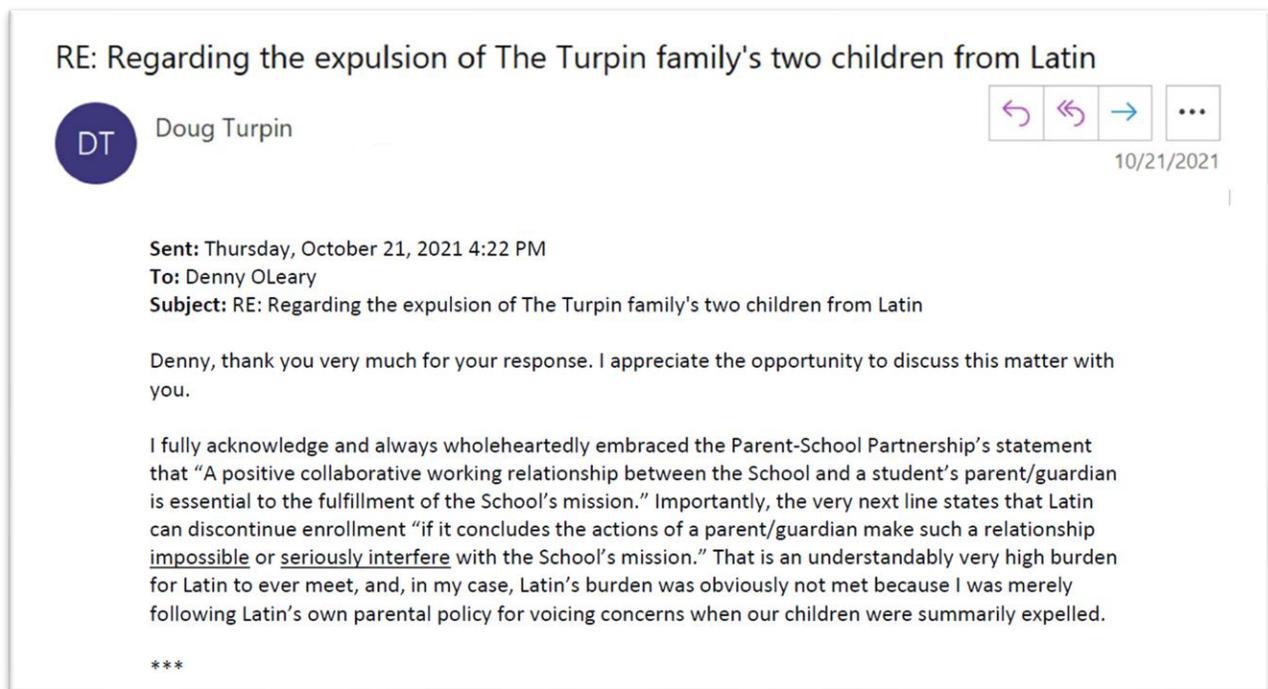
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SUMMARY: This same email that went to Denny was sent to every other member of the Board. Only Denny replied. In the few discussions I had with other Board members that would talk to me, it was clear that Denny, through her role as Board Chairperson, had told the Board that it was not their role to provide oversight on issues of expulsion. She had pushed hard to have the Board refuse to even look at

the information that I provided. If they had reviewed it, they would have seen there was no legitimate basis for the action Chuck took in expelling our children.

FACT: This standard leaves all Latin parents at risk of arbitrary expulsion of your children, if you say something Mr. Baldecchi does not like. The Board has both the power and the duty to check unjust and improper actions by the Administration. It is one of the central reasons it exists! To keep from getting to where we are today, the Turpin's attempted repeatedly to contact the Board through calls and emails, to ask them to perform their oversight duty of the Administration, as well as to protect fellow Latin parents and students in our family. Your contact to the Board can help override the pressure being exerted from the Denny to protect her friend Mr. Baldecchi and convince the Board to engage with the Turpin family to review the facts of this matter. Once they do, it should be easy to get them to overturn the Headmasters unjust action against our children and see the need for reforms to be implemented, so this can never happen again.

In response to Denny's email, I outlined why Mr. Baldecchi's action was not in keeping with the letter or the spirit of the enrollment agreement or the parent handbook.



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RESPONSE: Denny did not respond.

FACT: Not only is Mr. Baldecchi action improper based on the actual obligations of Latin to parents and students, it also conflicted with the explicit promise from the Board not to allow retaliation for the feedback provided by 60 parents from REFOCUS Latin - or the email to the parent body on September 14th about welcoming feedback from parents. His reckless retaliatory action has created a culture of fear at Latin, generated a negative public perception of the school, with numerous parents looking to leave, and tremendous liability through his misconduct. Latin deserves better.

Parents of Charlotte Latin Students Deserve Better. That is why we are also seeking to:

- **Change the Enrollment Agreement** to include protections against unjust expulsion.
- **Re-establish the parent-school partnership**, where Latin parents can share concerns without fear of retaliation.
- **Hold Annual Elections for the Board**, instead of allowing members to appoint other members and limit terms to a maximum of two years.
- **Hold Annual Elections for the Parent's Council**, no longer allowing the Board appoint the next Council, so it can be more representative of all Latin parents.
- **Provide a Detailed & Transparent Accounting** - Updating Latin Parents on the amounts distributed and where money from the Latin Fund is to be spent each year.
- **Remove the Headmaster Immediately** - to end this culture of fear and reinstate responsible leadership. Latin deserves better!