

Audio_09_10_2021_08_17_05

September 10, 2021

CB: Chuck Baldecchi

TB: Todd Ballaban

DT: Doug Turpin

CB: Hey Doug.

DT: Hey, Good Morning.

CB:How are you?

DT:I'm doing all right. I need to wear this?

CB: Yeah, yeah. Do you need a water or anything?

DT: Not right now. But I did have my morning caffeine so I might have to take a break.

TB: Is anyone else joining us?

DT: Not today No.

TB: Ok, no worries.

DT: Nicole didn't feel entirely comfortable (TB: ok) Yeah, she said that the kind of the exchange and everything that we had was making her feel a bit uncomfortable (TB: ok, ok) So. And she also happened to make a comment to me that when she came to drop the kids off that you didn't give her a very friendly look.

TB: When was this?

DT: Yesterday.

TB: Gosh I don't even remember her dropping the kids off. (DT: Ok) If I did I certainly didn't do it intentionally. I apologize. Okay, but I really don't even have any recollection of that.

DT: Okay. So yeah, maybe she just perceived that way, but she definitely did. And she said, you know, normally in years past would be like "hi, how are you doing?" She said it looked more like a kind of irritated glare. (TB:Okay, all right) And I was like, Okay.

TB: Why don't you...Why don't you... Did you want to kind of start, just because I know, we haven't had a chance to really connect and I, and then after that I'm sure we can kind of dig a little deeper. But I figured we, you know, did you want to just kind of kick things off?

DT: well ah sure, you know, I had sent you an email, and I was looking to have a discussion so that she could kind of hear our perspective on the whole thing. And that, you know, you would have more context, and I didn't want to send you a long epistle. I thought, you know, dialogue...I'm always a big dialogue type of person....and try to outline the concerns, just but very briefly, and then I thought we could have a kind of a collaborative discussion, and then determine, is there a problem? Yes, no. And then, if there is a problem, then can we do what I asked, which would be to switch out Logan to another teacher where he would feel much more comfortable, and we would feel much more comfortable? You

know, if you look at the kind of things that I was outlining, you know, the, did you get a chance to look at that YouTube video?

TB: I did, I did yes.

DT: So my question for you would be Woke: A Young Poets Guide to Justice. Is that political?

TB: well, I did confirm with the teacher that that video was never shown. The video was never shown she had she had not even seen the video, nor does she even know the name of the author. The poem that she got that she gives us one poem, and it was five minutes, so it wasn't over three days, was about...and have you read the poem?

DT: The actual poem, I'm not sure I've read that.

TB: But the poem is about how people have very different physical abilities. And some are really good athletes and some are really good artists. But in the end, our heart beats all the same. There literally wasn't even a snip of a political message in that particular poem, but the poems not being, the books not being used in Citizenship class, the books not being used in Humanities and she never showed the the YouTube video so I'm not sure where in fact, when I showed the teacher the video she said, I never seen this video but I you know, I'm interested it it's nice to hear the author's voice and I mean, she she said I would never show with my kids. So I'm not sure-

DT: We're talking about Monica.

TB: Yes she says, Monica said she has never shown that video or seen the video. (DT: Okay) Well, why um, this is why there's some there's a real inconsistency is with what was reported. Which is why I felt like it was really important to go seek the teachers perspective It didn't happen.

DT: Well, I have a hard time believing that could be true. Because this was mentioned over three days. And then he came and told me that this particular video which I went over, and I said, I want to be sure we're talking about the same thing was, was in fact

TB: Where'd you get the video?

DT: Another parent said this was going on in the class, and sent that information to me. So that prompted me to ask him about this. And, you know, my son is all about basketball, he's not into politics, doesn't have any interest whatsoever. So when he tells me that, in this class, they're going over voter ID laws, which he doesn't have any idea what voter ID laws, least he didn't, and that the teacher is telling them that this is another example of Jim Crow. This is another example of Republicans basically trying to suppress racial minorities and suppress their votes. He can't make that up. It just can't be. Well, there's just no way he would know. to even think about that. He doesn't know what Jim Crow is. He wouldn't know what voter ID laws are. I mean, It's just not possible, It's not credible to me. You know, you can say, well Doug, did you hear him saying? No, but I mean, I've got a brain, I can think, that's just doesn't make any sense. Do you guys know what they did yesterday?

TB: I spoke with the teacher yesterday, but I don't know what they did. Exactly.

DT: Okay. So what Logan told me they did was they spent a lot of time discussing a church, a black church that was bombed by white supremacists. And that that was the entire lesson

TB: That's part of the of the book that they're they're reading, which is also in chic. They did discuss Jim Crow, from a historical context. But Monica said that she didn't bring up the Republicans. She didn't

bring up voter id rights. But Jim Crow, which is part of American history, was absolutely discussed, but only in a historical context, not a political context. And so that was it, and all three humanities teachers did the exact same thing. This is not something that Monica is doing, you know, going rogue or anything like that. So I think those, those are the kinds of things that I had, that I fact checked with her, or at least I do trust the teacher. I mean, she had never seen the video, I believe her. I don't think she lied to me, I don't think she would risk her credibility in doing that. And so I think that of all of the things that were outlined in your email, the Jim Crow thing was true, they did discuss Jim Crow, but it's in their book, and it's in the seventh grade curriculum. And it's an eighth grade curriculum. And it should be, because it's a part of American history that needs to be

DT: But if you equate the current context of America, and you essentially are telling children, that it's still pretty much the same today, in your messaging, I don't think we're in the same place, we were in the 1960s. That was awful. That was horrendous. So I don't know of a person that I've ever known in my life that wouldn't say that was appalling and should be taught. But if you're also equating that to current conditions today, and you basically are telling the children that the Black Lives Matter movement, which I think is it true that, on her board, she has BLM, when you walk in there?

TB: I don't know. I don't know. But I think what's going on here, Doug, is that there's, there's some claims that and I say claims because they were not, they were not, the he teacher denies it. You could say that, you know, he said she said, Monica does not, does not believe that, she said and stands by it, that, you know, voter ID laws or talk telling that we were still in a Jim Crow society. She said, I never said any of that. And I'm being mischaracterized or misquoted by somebody, it might not be Logan, and maybe another parent and maybe another kid, but she was pretty hurt by that, right? Because she's taught for 30 years. And I think she knows there's some volatile things that you just don't do with sixth graders and you really sometimes shouldn't even do in schools and she's able to separate her beliefs from from that, but she is going to teach the historical context of the novel. And I think there's some there's maybe some gray areas in there, but you know, she did deny that you, I think like the YouTube video, what she did show was a video of Condoleezza Rice growing up in Birmingham and walking around her former town. That's the video she did show off YouTube. That seems to be a very relevant video, as you're understanding the geography of the setting of the book you're you're doing. I haven't actually seen the video, but she explained it to me. But she did tell me she said she's never said Joe Biden's name. She hasn't said Republicans, she doesn't go there, because it's a very, very polarizing time. And she was pretty appalled that somebody would report things that just didn't happen in her class, like showing a video that she'd never even seen.

DT: Logan tells me and I've heard this repeatedly. Because, you know, I come home from work, and I tried to spend some time with them, that he's continually writing essays about how to be, you know, an anti racist, how to be you know, how to fight with white supremacy or not white supremacy I misspoke. How to fight racism in society? That there there is no, no,

TB: they're not seen in the writing assignments That's not true. That's not, that's not true. Yeah, the writing assignments have to do with their book. They do talk about identity, which is a part of the book, just somebody, whether it's being a mom, whether it's being black, whether it's being poor, different

aspects of identity, which is a part of our seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth grade, part of every curriculum, really, but it has, she has not, that she hasn't even used the term anti racism. Kids. That's ah not a term we use with sixth graders. That's that's a very, very difficult and loaded concept. (DT: Yeah), so I'm not sure where Logan's getting this, but I've seen the writing assignments, and those are not what they what they're asking them to do. And so I just have to I have to be firm on that response that that's incorrect.

DT: I guess it's incorrect, according to what you're being told.

TB: I've seen it, I've seen assignments. I'm not being told, I'm actually seen them.

DT: So we don't have any way of seeing the curriculum, is there some means by which we could see the lesson plans, the assignments, I don't, I'm not aware of maybe there is some means by which this is available that I'm just not aware of.

TB: We don't, we don't give our parents lesson plans day to day, if you would like to have a specific writing assignment and know that Logan can show you from Google Classroom. They're the videos that they use in class are posted on Google Classroom. So the curriculum is really best done through the child showing you. If you have a question or concern about what's being posted, or what's being written, I'm more than happy to talk to you about that. But I think we get into some pretty dangerous territory is I mean, Chuck is a parent of a high school kid, I don't know that he's ever seen the curriculum, and I'm not speaking for you. But I just don't, that's not typically a good practice for us to share our entire curriculum,

CB: I mean, that I teach. So when you put stuff on google classroom, you can ask your child to see it. Alright, Doug, part of the reason I wanted to also meet and join this is I want to have a pretty serious conversation. I get, I'm just gonna put it out here. I want to know... You clearly don't have trust in Latin. I don't think you have trust in Monica, you don't seem to have trust in in either of us. I get that from your communication. I think the other piece that I really want to talk about is communication specifically. And that's part of the reason why I want to join the meeting, is I've been really troubled by your communication in a number of different ways. So I do find the communication with Todd really concerning, because it's riddled with accusations and things that are not accurate. And I look back, I'm just sorry, because we've had several different communications recently, you had communication after the conversation with John Comley like that you sent to the Board, or the Executive Committee. It was really inappropriate. I found again, a lot of things were accused or done. You also, I mean, after the meeting, you forwarded on that PowerPoint. It is highly inaccurate and wasn't vetted. And you sent it on in a way that is completely inappropriate and that's a blind copy to multiple people.

DT: That's just that's just totally untrue. (CB: No it is true) A Blind Copy to a lot of people?

CB: And you also have, I mean, here's the thing I just want you to know, I also have the invitation that you said to folks, for the for the [Name Redacted] is when they had a party, ReFocus Latin. And in it, you basically accused me of indoctrinating kids with liberal ideas. You sent that on in a way that is totally inappropriate. And I think what I'm, I want to do... so here's, here's just a couple things, this is, these are the contracts for your kids. The back of the contract is our parents school agreement. And it is my opinion that you are in pretty gross violation of that.

DT: So let me get this straight, I want to be sure that I'm understanding here. So I bring up concerns about my son, and how he's being taught, and the things that he's being taught. And so I come in here,

and you guys are telling me that we're in breach of our contract with the school that that we are in breach of our agreement with the school. So we're switching this from my concerns about my son, and my bringing this up in a, I think, a very professional environment asking for dialogue. And it's being switched to a discussion about ReFocus Latin. (CB: Well, the reason is-) You're twisting it around, say I am in breach, because I decided to bring with a group of other parents (CB: inaudible interruption). Look, I'm speaking please (CB: you are speaking but this conversation is going to be-) If you would let me finish. So you know, we're supposed to be civil here. Right? So So what is being done is because a bunch of parents, not just me have concerns that you are pushing a liberal progressive agenda in a way that is completely changing the character of the school. And we approach you in good faith (CB: no you did not approach me in good faith) spending the normal amount of time. Well, that's your your characterization, (CB: my characterization, my characterization) You know, we did we were completely open and transparent with you guys and ask for dialogue. We wanted to talk about things. We wanted to reach out to the school and have a conversation, because things were radically changing. We wanted to give you examples, we wanted to give you feedback, we wanted to understand what kind of response and see if we could go ahead and come together. And so far, your response has been to shut us all down.

CB: No. I want to make something clear. (DT: Yeah) Your communication. Multiple times that I've witnessed it, or has been sent on to me has been accurate, inaccurate, okay. Incorrect, and you make accusations. I have no problem with people bringing concerns, what I have problem with is continuously you are bringing concerns. You don't vet things. And the problem with that is you're not in harmony with the school, you clearly are not. And so my point is, is that I'm not, we're not going to continue to have emails and accusations sent. And I'm going to just sort of lay this out, Doug. We are not, this relationship doesn't seem to be working. You in Latin, don't seem to be jiving.

DT: I think it's maybe us, the administration in Latin, here, the change in the administration, and the change in the way that you want to run the school. Because there is nothing but there's been nothing besides a completely professional and civil approach. And a request for dialogue. My approaching the board with concerns, or parents approaching the Board with concerns is something that is entirely appropriate within the parents rights. You're saying that we're approaching the Board. You don't like it. So you want to silence me, you want to cancel me, (CB: I don't want to silence you) shut down any type of dialogue, because you don't like what I'm doing.

CB: Let me explain what's going to happen here. (DT: Yeah) If you want to stay at Latin, okay, you need to be a model parent. And you need to be able to have your facts straight, and interact with people in a courteous way. It is not appropriate to send any mass email on people. Okay, and that's what you did. It's also not appropriate to make accusations of a teacher on a regular basis and then not have an average. So that's going to change if you want to stay at Latin. If you don't want to do that. We can part our ways, but I also don't want to do that in the middle of the year for your child. So what I am outlining is my expectation is that you abide by our parent-school agreement, or you need to leave.

DT: Yeah, so a model parent, I need to toe the line. I need to go ahead and be happy with whatever you guys do. (CB: You can raise concerns-) I need to not speak my mind. No raising concerns. Because if I

raise concerns, you guys are going to want to kick our kids out. That's pretty much what you just told me.

CB: What I'm saying is, is that your behavior is inappropriate.

DT: Explain to me exactly what is inappropriate, I would like to break it down.

CB: So I'll tell you what's inappropriate. That email, I find that grossly inappropriate. (DT: Which email?) The one you just sent to Todd. (DT: Right) You make a lot of accusations that aren't true. That PowerPoint presentation, which you were part of is grossly inaccurate. And then it was forwarded on. You also, after Fletcher, you didn't like the answer Fletcher gave you about the masks. You went on and forwarded that on again, in a blind copy way to multiple parents who didn't, I actually heard from more parents who are concerned about your email, but actually people who are concerned about masks, that is inappropriate.

DT: So discussion about masks and vaccines and school policy among parents via email communications is forbidden, right? If it's not what you agree with, we can't have dialogue. (CB: Doug, you're missing the point) I mean, that's what I did. And you're characterizing it a different way as if it was somehow inappropriate for me to communicate with other parents here at the school - just within the parents not in the larger community, or forward on that PowerPoint is something wrong.

CB: So what I'm saying is, what I'm hearing from you is you don't want to abide by that.

DT: What you're saying, I want to be heard, that the order is I can't go ahead and communicate with other parents in any way that you deem critical.

CB: Doug, when you communicate you need to communicate appropriately.

DT: What's inappropriate about the PowerPoint, what exactly show me something that's inappropriate. In the PowerPoint

CB: the PowerPoint is inaccurate, in multiple stuff.

DT: Show me where

TB: Doug, I just gave you an example. We don't need to go line by line now on the PowerPoint.

DT: No on the power point because you're turning it all into Refocus Latin

TB: When you say something that the sixth grade citizenship reads, woke poetry, its wrong. Where did somebody get that information? It's not a part of our curriculum. They read one poem in a humanities class, not the citizenship class. It's wrong.

CB: 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.

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

CB: yea well it was said in the document,

DT: that that you guys were hiring people that were inappropriate

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

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

CB: So let me explain this. Look, Doug. Im going to tell you right now-

DT: 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.

CB: 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.

DT: 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.

CB: 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.

DT: You are threatening me that is what you're doing.

CB: This is not a threat.

DT: Yeah. What is it?

CB: It is not a threat, it is an expectation that you abide by this

DT: Right. But in order to abide by that (CB: and you don't want to) I in order to abide by that I can't go ahead and say anything that conflicts with your viewpoint or anything that conflicts with what you guys want to do here at Latin.

CB: That's not true.

DT: But it is, you are just shutting it down. You're saying that our communication with other parents-

CB: You don't have accurate information. And it's consistent. You don't

DT: Well, let's debate the facts then. And if you would like to do that

CB: I'm not-

DT: so whether or not something is accurate or not, because we asked you

CB: Doug, this conversation is over.

DT: Alright,

CB: Your family at the end of the day, you want to stay you can, and behave?

DT: If I can behave? If I can be a good boy, right?

CB: Right, but otherwise, otherwise, you need to leave the community. Is that clear?

DT: Okay, exactly. Oh, I think you've been unmistakably clear.

CB: We will return on a pro rated basis your tuition,

DT: So you are saying at the end of the day, you guys are kicking us out of this school

CB: You are no longer at Charlotte Latin. That's all that is clear to me that you don't want to work with us in good faith.

DT: Okay.

DT: Well, guys, I think you've made a tragic mistake here. A tragic mistake. So you're basically taking the differences that we have, that we brought you in good faith, and wanted to have dialogue about it. And you're basically wanting to shut us down. Tell us to be good, or else you are going to go ahead and kick us out

CB: Doug, what I'm saying. Is it the way you communicate with school is inappropriate, and I'm not going to accept it.

DT: Alright, so as of Friday, as of today, the kids, you're kicking our kids out

CB: Again, if you want to abide by that, and

DT: and by abiding means that I have to go ahead and no longer do anything that you guys don't like,

that's very, very clear. If you don't like our saying that we want to have a meeting to discuss, because I asked for a meeting with the school to discuss its policies. And you said, No, I asked for a meeting in a dialogue in a PowerPoint with a group of other concerned parents. You don't like that. So I have to be a model parent. Well, I have to go ahead and no longer

CB: I think what's clear right now Doug is that you no longer want to be a model parent. So I think what's best at the end of the day, good. At the end of the day, Turpin family and Latin are going to part ways. So there is no option anymore. It's clear from your reaction that you don't want to do that. So I'm sorry, it's come to this, but it is.

DT: Model parents-

CB: My expectation from you is

DT: that don't go ahead and say anything that conflicts with your worldview or how you want to do it.

CB: Doug I meet with people all the time who are disappointed with the school, but they do it in an appropriate way. You do not. Continually you communicate with the school in an inappropriate manner.

DT: inappropriate

CB: yeah, inappropriate.

DT: Okay. Well, this has been quite illuminating, and inappropriate. So anyway, ahh I guess I will take all of the actions that are necessary to respond. So anyway,

CB: you choose to do that.

DT: Yeah. Is there any other documents that you have?

CB: I just have a series of emails that I feel like are inappropriate. But this is your follow up conversation with John Comley that I thought was inappropriate. Here's the invitation to the [Name Redacted] Party, which I think is grossly inappropriate and in violation of

DT: Okay, the invitation to [Name Redacted] party, these are communications that are inappropriate. Okay, and can I have a copy of the school's bylaws?

CB: No, but you can have the contract that you signed, and the parent partnership. Okay, so the bylaws are more of a basis of how you set up the Board and its meetings. Yeah, but you've got that information. And again Doug, I will instruct the business office to prorate your tuition from the number of days to including that. And I'm sorry, it's come to this

DT: I doubt you are

CB: But you are not. You have no intention of working in good faith with a school.

DT: That's preposterous. That is preposterous. What is clear is you don't want to have dialogue. You don't want anything other it's kind of like an authoritarian regime here.

Is it? Really

Yes. I mean, if I go ahead and do anything, this if you don't like this meaning, oh, yeah.

DT: Is there another, is there more of a contract? May I have not yet had the data,

CB: you have a copy of both your kids contract? This is the entirety of it. This is this is your contract Okay, and then connected here at six is the parents school partnership. We have a link that you read that too.

DT: Can you send me a copy of this electronically??

CB: You have a copy. We have a moment of silence.

(Loud speaker: We've got we've got a moment's silence for a moment now pause for a moment of silence in remembrance of those who made the ultimate sacrifice on September 11 2001)
DT: This is shocking