

**Memo:** School Board Policy Violation/Complaint

**To:** Tuscola School Board  
Complaint Managers: Michael Smith and Carol Munson

**From:** Jonathan Downing  
UniServ Director-IEA/NEA

**Violation/Complaint:**

On behalf of the Tuscola Education Association (TEA-IEA/NEA) I would like to bring to the attention of the Tuscola School Board and the Complaint Managers of Tuscola School District that the Tuscola CUSD #301 School Board Policy Manual was violated in Section 5-Personnel by the Superintendent Michael Smith of Tuscola CUSD #301. Specifically, the policies that were violated were 5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited and 5:120 Employee Ethics; Conduct; and Conflict of Interest during the NHS meeting that was held on November 8, 2017.

Policy 5:20 Workplace Harassment Prohibited clearly states, "The School District expects the workplace environment to be productive, respectful, and free of unlawful harassment." I am fully aware that the NHS meeting was for parents and students, which Mr. Smith was at the time, playing the parent role. While every parent has the right to be a voice for his child no matter what, his title may be in the community. However, Mr. Smith's behavior went beyond that of the role of a parent. Furthermore, no parent has behaved in this manner to an employee that we are aware of. Specifically, during the meeting, it is noted that Mr. Smith used profanity, raised his voice, used false accusations, and threatened and humiliated two Highly Qualified dedicated teachers. We do not believe that his behavior reflects respect and productivity according to policy 5:20.

Policy 5:120 Employee Ethics; Conduct; and Conflict of Interests clearly states, "Professional and Appropriate Conduct: All District employees (THIS INCLUDES SUPERINTENDENT SMITH) are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with staff members. In addition, the Code of Ethics of Illinois Educators, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, is incorporated by reference into this policy. Mr. Smith without a doubt displayed the highest form of disrespect towards the teachers in front of various individuals. He also displayed no form of integrity in which a superintendent should show that these Highly Qualified Teachers resigned from their positions as the NHS

coordinators. His behavior towards the teachers was rude and inconsiderate and he used his authority to bully the NHS program.

The School Superintendent Association code of ethics states that an educational leader's professional conduct must conform to an ethical code of behavior, and the code must set high standards for all educational leaders. The educational leader provides professional leadership across the district and also across the community. This responsibility requires this specific leader to maintain standards of exemplary professional conduct while recognizing that his or her actions will be viewed and appraised by the community, professional associates and students. Superintendent Smith must also fulfill all professional duties with honesty and integrity and always acts in a trustworthy and responsible manner. The Superintendent Association clearly states that Superintendent Smith must avoid using his position for personal gain through political, social, religious, economic or other influences. In other words, Superintendent Smith violated his own code of ethics by displaying this form of erratic behavior towards these teachers.

As you know, this form of behavior isn't new and without a doubt has been displayed in other situations that may not be entirely known to the entire Board or Policy Managers. The Board Policy clearly states that a violation of these policies may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. We look forward to the next steps and how this can be resolved for the teachers that were violated. You may reach me at my phone number 217.875.9353 or my email [jonathan.downing@ieanea.org](mailto:jonathan.downing@ieanea.org).