

NEVADA BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING 9-1-16 by Dr. Kit Kotler

Good morning. Thank you for listening to my comments. I am Dr. Kit Kotler, the Executive Director of Silver State Charter Schools. I've heard it said that people don't want to hear what you have accomplished UNTIL they've heard what you've overcome. That makes sense to me. So here's what I've overcome in order to sit before you today:

- I'm the youngest of five children from a lower middle class family;
- I was beaten every single day by an older sibling and often had to go to school with black and blue marks all over me;
- As a child, I was repeatedly sexually abused by more than one family member;
- I often went to bed hungry and at one point was this tall and only weighed 86 pounds;
- I have a disability which SSCS has refused to accommodate.

Here's what I've accomplished:

- I am a first generation college graduate-the only one of the five of us to go to college;
- I graduated with honors, while working full time, from my undergraduate, masters, and doctoral programs; I hold a Masters in Teaching and Learning and a Doctorate in Education Administration. I've successfully increased achievement in every school I have focused on, increasing scores in one Detroit charter school from the 22nd percentile proficient to over 75% proficient in every subject and grade level tested. My expertise is in increasing achievement in urban schools.

I came to Silver State Charter Schools because, being a spiritual person, I asked God to send me to whatever school needed me most in the United States.

Here's what YOU need to know about what's going on at Silver State Charter Schools, in Carson City:

1. Children are being harmed at the school and their futures as high performing, productive citizens are being ruined because they are receiving an inferior education. The credit recovery software I wrote grants for is not

being used, in favor of using the old software that produced a 22% and 26.5% graduation rate, respectively. Our average high school student is four years behind in math and 2-3 years behind in ELA. Last year teachers were in class three days a week and gave themselves four days off each week - while receiving greater than full time pay. The school will not turn around using these practices.

2. Procedural and process issues are going on at this public school that would not be allowed to go on at any other public school in Nevada. These issues have overwhelming negative effects on the school and its children. These issues have the potential to cause a negative impact for *all* other public schools in the state because of the precedent currently being set at SSCS, a public charter school. The school is violating Nevada Public Records Law (as is, apparently, SPCSA), Nevada Bullying Laws, Federal Civil Rights Law, and more.
3. The actions that are being taken at SSCS (again, brought about by SPCSA) potentially puts another black eye on all schools in the state of Nevada because the result of these actions will most likely end up in the courts and will hit all of the newspapers in Nevada, and probably across the nation.

I found out last week while reading the front page of a newspaper article that I am being fired. I do not deserve to be fired. I have not been notified by any hearing officer of a hearing date at which I am to report; I don't even know what all of the charges are except that I turned in a report late to SPCSA and some people made complaints about me-not surprising given my responsibility to turn around the school. I don't expect everyone to love me but I do expect accountability and I do believe all children deserve and can get a high quality education in the state of Nevada.

In conclusion, the precedents being set now negatively impact all students and all public schools in the state. One person, from an out-of-state, privately run, for profit company is being paid a lot of Nevada's public dollars to make ALL of the decisions that a seven-member volunteer public, non-profit governing board is supposed to be making on behalf of a public school for *three years*- which is how long SPCSA estimated it would take him to find 7 new governing board members (should take about a month). One wonders whether his expenses comply with Nevada law either.

I will not let this go and neither should you. I've overcome too much, accomplished too much, and care too much about our children to be cast aside as a worthless piece of meat with a ruined career and not even be able to collect unemployment to survive. No, I will fight this thing. You should fight it, too, as it is a dangerous precedent for all public schools and SSCS students are being hurt-when this could have been the year for a complete turnaround. I encourage you to read the documents I have included and I am submitting this document and also all other documents I brought with me for the public record. If possible, I would like to be placed on the agenda in the future to discuss solutions to Nevada's achievement issues. This is my area of expertise and I have suggestions that will work. Thank you for your consideration.