

My name is Teresa Phillips, and I am a West Valley parent.

Effective school boards are said to conduct their business openly, honestly and in the best interests of the communities for which they serve.

The decision to reconstitute WVE was anything but collaborative, transparent, and honest. Since the June 11th announcement, there has seemed to be a concerted effort to reinforce a cloak of secrecy on what happened and to protect our elected officials from the public. Parents have pursued many avenues in search of the truth.

And as a result, I presently understand the School Board's position to be that you were fully informed of the issues at WVE and supported the Superintendent's decision. You neither voted on the decision nor ratified the MOU because you believe that it was within the Superintendent's scope of responsibilities to reassign the entire teaching and support staffs.

Well, I believe that the School Board and Administration, with assistance of attorneys, used a questionable and narrow interpretation of the law to justify your actions and stifle public opinion.

BUT THAT IS NOT THE POINT.

THE POINT IS....

We want a School Board that openly invites public input and enacts major policies only after consulting all sides and obtaining expert opinion on the consequences of a proposed decision.

We want a School Board who knows and enforces the difference between governance (which is their job) and management (which is the Administration's job).

We want a School Board who holds itself and the Administration accountable for failed policy and wrongdoing.

The decision to reconstitute WVE came as a HUGE shock to everyone. Were there a few bad teachers? Were there teachers who wouldn't embrace Common Core or iPads? Having had three principals in 4 years, perhaps many teachers were tired and fed up from lack of direction and support.

The Superintendent has acknowledged there was no intervention or mediation offered last year to the teachers. Instead, teachers were led to believe the Administration was conducting a "climate survey" when they were pulled aside for 5-minute interviews in May. Then there was the infamous session on June 2nd facilitated by Human Systems Dynamics, where the teachers

were assured they could speak freely without leadership in the room. That session proved to be pivotal in the decision to reassign everyone and wipe the slate clean.

I believe that the teachers were led to a predetermined outcome, while presented with the illusion that their voices mattered, and that help was on the way.

BUT THAT IS NOT THE POINT.

THE POINT IS....

This should have never happened. Our teachers should not have been transferred involuntarily from the school they helped create and nurture. Where there are people, there is tension and conflict. Diversity does not mean that we all look different, yet think and act the same way. Our differences can be seen as a challenge or an opportunity. Leaders can choose to be either collaborative or adversarial in their approaches to resolving conflict.

A school is not the building. A school is not the parents or kids who grow up and move on. A school is not the administrators who come and go every few years. The teachers are the school. It is the teachers and staff who carry-over the community's traditions year after year, generation after generation. It is the teachers who hold the precious memories for our children.

The teachers did not fail our community – our leaders failed our community.

The trust we have placed in our elected officials and Administration has been severely breached. I invite you tonight to make an effort to restore our trust and confidence in your leadership. I request that the members of the Board individually vote for or against the decision to transfer all the teachers and staff from WVE, as it came to be.

Thank you.