

DR. HAPTONSTALL'S RESPONSE
August 31, 2018

Dear Board of Education Members, District Staff, and Community Leaders,

I wish to respond to the Investigation Report submitted to you, and more importantly to talk about the future of this school district and the children we all serve. I was hired by this board, or at least the majority of this board, to make change. Change that would lead to innovative practices that will better engage students in their learning and provide higher outcomes for the quality of learning. The concept of the re-organization of the districts leadership was met with great enthusiasm from the board, the staff and the community. This was the first iteration of change, real change, that will set the stage for our teachers to have the resources and support they need to be successful. While I had hoped and even anticipated savings from the changes, I did offer, even in January that savings would be dependent on who we hired in our system. While this change was fast and at times somewhat taxing for our administrative departments, we got through the hiring. While that was the hard part, the piece that gets missed in all of the controversy over the cost, is that we have hired a group of people who are completely dedicated to the vision and mission of our district. Our leaders are already making positive changes that will lead to future success. This vision is my vision, the vision that I talked about with all of you, our staff and our community. I know there are areas we can improve upon and there were mistakes made during the re-organization process. In reading the report from the investigator, that seems heavily biased by having the voices of one or two specific employees from HR, there are a lot of reasons we need to make these changes and structure work, so we don't have siloed departments and we share information readily and become more transparent. Those were the goals of the entire process and at this moment in time, we are brought together to focus on this report, which to some is the culmination of a direction set by the news media and public pressure, and to others the potential end to a career.

Now, more than ever, this district needs to stay committed to the changes that are working to propel our school system and our children's futures forward in a positive manner. I am the person that our staff wants to lead this change and make our system better for our children. I do understand that this process cost more than I had anticipated, but in light of our very large budget and the fact that we received new money from the state that allowed us to provide significant resources to schools, put money back into reserves, the cost of excellence for our children will be evaluated over time and these dollars spent today will reap significant benefits for our children's future.

I would like now to address specific components of the report where I have a significant difference of opinion with the investigators conclusion or how the facts have been presented.

Key Points

*The report indicates I had a direct hand in modifying every administrative salary, which is not true and there is no evidence that supports that conclusion. I was involved in less than 10 direct changes and the HR compensation specialist, without direction from me modified the sheets every time someone was hired and did not have approval to do so.

*The report indicates I have a poor relationship with HR and Finance, which I would again argue is completely false. I would say that being a part of the team that decided not to rehire the previous executive director of HR and the fact her friend was charged with salaries played a major role in the outcome of this report.

DR. HAPTONSTALL'S RESPONSE

August 31, 2018

*The report does not indicate what savings were achieved by the positions that were eliminated.

*The report does not point out how my absence due to illness impacted the communication chain, including board knowledge of costs that might have been presented had I been available.

*The report does not point out that despite some knowledge of an issue by HR staff in early June, the board was not apprised of any issue at either board meeting that set an approved the district's budget.

In conclusion, I believe that the way this entire issue was handled gives the impression to our staff and community that while we talk about innovation and we encourage our staff members to try new things, knowing that failure and mistakes can happen, this is not truly what we believe. We have put a price on educational excellence for our children and we have allowed a news media driven outcome to overshadow the significant accomplishment of re-organizing an entire district staff, of a very large district, with the hope that these changes are going to lead to a better system for our kids and our community.

Dr. Ken Haptonstall

DR. HAPTONSTALL'S RESPONSE

August 31, 2018

Notes for Rebuttal –

Pg 1 – Second to last paragraph – “Significant Cost savings” – The entire slide said, “There should be a significant cost savings. The total savings is dependent on who is hired into positions in the new model. We will provide savings information to stakeholders in late April after all hiring has been completed”.

** The re-organization was prompted by the desire of the BOE and community members, including Jay Seaton, the Editor of the Daily Sentinel.

Last Paragraph – The investigator makes the statement that “Haptonstall was heavily involved and engagedBoard”. However her conclusion is that I did not communicate with the necessary parties or the board to accomplish the re-organization.

Pg 2 – Top I did move aggressively, but based on the board’s desire for implementation of the performance based system.

Third Paragraph – concerning postings having no salary information, most positions in our district do not have a salary and only sometimes have a range.

Last paragraph – “The decision by Haptonstall not to renew (This was actually a hiring team that made the decision and approved by the board of education in May). The Exec Director did still get paid from March until the end of June, but effectively abandoned her job duties, as noted in the report.

Pg 3 – Top Paragraph – “... at odds and their relationship deteriorated...” This is speculation and I don’t believe this is representative of the entire HR department, only one individual.

Second paragraph – I was asked by the board of education to communicate from my head and heart about the events that had transpired to lead to the costs and how the superintendent did not know about the costs, and was not attempting to blame anyone, only be honest. Again, I don’t believe this “fractured” the relationship as indicated and is very subjective as part of a “factual” document.

Bottom of second paragraph – “Haptonstall characterized the cost analysis ... “ I didn’t ever say that and I believe it requires a team approach to see how costs occur and if they are in line with the budget.

Third Paragraph - I did do this as these were the board secretary position that had been requested for over a year and a new position that was part of the re-organization and required a classified person to work on contract. Input had been requested months prior and told that this was not a priority or necessary by HR personnel tasked with that assignment.

Paragraph 5 – At Haptonstall’s direction Market data”. I did not ever see any research done by HR to define market value despite asking for that repeatedly as I did not think HR’s rationale for placement was appropriate as she is not from the world of education and has no clue about these positions.

Last paragraph – The assertion is that I asked HR to adjust everyone on the administrative pay schedule to meet the 10% market and that the change occurred every time we hired a new employee. I did not ask for this or understand that is what HR was doing as I did not get to review individual salary placements for the majority of the salary schedule. I only reviewed some of the more contentious and problematic salaries that were inequitable and probably illegal.

Page 4 Second Paragraph – “... the Committee’s members questioned whether he really valued their work”. I never said I didn’t, in fact the investigator noted just above that I said I did value the work. This

DR. HAPTONSTALL'S RESPONSE

August 31, 2018

is again where the investigator has provided conjecture instead of factual and documented information. She also left to question who cancelled the meetings, and I did not do this, again, not providing evidence.

Third Paragraph - ..., HR was constantly making modifications to the ... Modifications made by HR were not at my direction, and there is no evidence that I gave that direction. Also, the last sentence indicates that there was feedback from the Compensation Oversight Committee, but there is no indication of that feedback or that HR actually took these documents to that committee. Again, no evidence.

Fourth Paragraph – The brief mention at the end that there was a miscalculation on a document is probably the biggest understatement of the entire report as this was the basis for the information I was receiving, and unless I had physically checked the formulas, I would not have had the actual cost or been able to share them with the Board.

Page 5 – First paragraph – The ONLY salary offer I made was to the new HR director. Every other salary offer was made by HR. I only received salary sheets on less than 10 individuals for discussion.

Second Paragraph –“ ...and sometimes contentious discussions between HR and Haptonstall.” I have never had a contentious conversation with anyone in my life! This is one person’s possible interpretation of an event, but not how I operate. This person is also an individual who was not happy about this work or making changes, or the fact that her friend, the HR Director was not going to be returning back to work.

Third Paragraph – True – I did get involved in this situation because the job placement should reflect the job, not the individual’s servitude in our district. I did talk with both Tom Parrish and Doug Levinson (BOE members) about this at the time of this event and they agree that this made sense.

Fourth Paragraph – True – I did make a mistake, but it was still in the salary range, and was below the previous HR director,s salary. I did not request all the other salaries be adjusted as indicated at the end of this paragraph. This was done by one individual in HR.

Fifth Paragraph – Again, these adjustments were not made at my request. This was done in isolation and not with my approval. No documentation of approval. I did see big salary sheets, but only looked at the bottom line which has already been declared to be false due to improper calculations in those sheets.

Page 6 – Second Paragraph – “The lack of involvement.... ” Then this could be construed as the Executive Director of HR did not do her job and did not provide for consistent oversight.

Fourth Paragraph – There is an indication that HR participated in discussions with COC. Where are the results of those meetings and why wasn’t the superintendent or BOE informed?

Last Paragraph – ,... HR regularly provided updated salary projection information to finance. I did not get these updates. Who did and where is the documentation of this?

Page 7 – Fourth Paragraph – The finance staff disputes that I asked them to reconcile the difference in numbers they had with HR. I actually did ask for that and for an estimate of savings from positions that

DR. HAPTONSTALL'S RESPONSE
August 31, 2018

were eliminated, which was never produced and has not been indicated in this investigation in any manner.

Last Paragraph – the observation that the “salary schedule was adjusted” This was not by my design or direction and was done by the HR compensation specialist on her own. The Investigator also comments that a final cost analysis was never requested from finance. That would have to happen after everyone was hired, which would have been in July when I was very ill and on medical leave.

Page 8 Fifth Paragraph – “... the assumption that the reorganization would result in a decrease in administrative positions”. This was never the plan. The plan was to reduce executive administrative positions for more positions to work in schools in support of teachers and students. This was clear in the powerpoint delivered in January and was what Tom Parrish had indicated he wanted to see when the notion of a re-organization was being developed. This concept of less administration was bantered, incorrectly, by the Sentinel reporter and is misleading and false.

Page 9 Third Paragraph – The referenced email was during the time I returned from vacation and was very ill. The board directed me to take time to get healthy. In fact, I was told by John Williams to turn off my phone and email and let my staff handle things. If in fact there was knowledge of an issue by our staff, that should have been communicated widely by HR. It is also interesting to note that if this was on the Sentinel's radar, why didn't the reporter ask any questions of the Board of Education at either of the June board meetings where the budget was being approved. It seems that the Sentinel was waiting for a time that would be more harmful or dramatic to the district to either sell papers, or do significant damage to the superintendent.

Fourth Paragraph – The claim that I did not respond to concerns from MVEA concerning the reorganization is not true. I met many times with the MVEA president, and had her and her team members on most, if not all of the interview committees. This claim of creating a lack of trust is not due to lack of communication between myself and the association.

Fifth Paragraph – The assertion that I condoned the hiding of the APT salary schedule because I did not respond to a question is completely absurd. To not respond means that I “condoned” is a very reckless statement and one that a quality investigator would not include in an official report.

Page 10 First Paragraph – Again, the first line is completely false, conjecture and inappropriate for this report. Just because I didn't respond does not mean I condoned or directed personnel to do anything. I don't remember this conversation or in fact this meeting.

Paragraph Three – “There was no intentional attempt to obscure or manipulate the actual salary cost increase associated with the reorganization”. True, there was not!

Page 12 Second Paragraph – “There is no evidence of an intentional effort by Haptonstall to obscure the financial impact of the reorganization or mislead the Board.” Absolutely true, I did not!!

Third Paragraph – “... the reorganization resulted in significant salary cost increases that were not communicated to the Board.” Not true, I communicated the changes I had authorized to Tom Parrish on several occasions, and he responded that people in Mesa County are going to have to start realizing we

DR. HAPTONSTALL'S RESPONSE
August 31, 2018

are going to have to pay people to get good talent. (Paraphrasing, not exact quote. I do have an audio tape that confirms Tom did know about the changes.)