

Thank you for your inquiry and the opportunity to share my thoughts Mr. Petty. I have included the rest of the Board and Superintendent Leyko as a courtesy and for transparency.

As I said last night, and I apologize in advance now, my responses are usually pretty lengthy because I try so hard to ensure my messages will not be misconstrued and can stand on their own merit. Before I go further, I would like to clearly state my hopes and intentions for my following message:

- This response is solely about me, my understandings, my experiences, my observations, and my interactions.
- I do not have any ulterior motives. I am merely trying to do the job our community elected me to do. I do not want to destroy, disrupt, dismantle or denigrate any one individually or as a group.
- I hope that in responding to your inquiry I am able to clarify and hold myself accountable for my actions (see first bullet).
 - As you will read in the disclaimer in my signature block (included again for visibility and emphasis): The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in this correspondence belong solely to me as the author. The opinions or views expressed are not intended to reflect the views, thoughts, or opinions of the East Lansing Public Schools Board of Education or its Board of Trustees. This correspondence is not intended to speak on the Board's behalf.

I really don't want to invest any more energy into this as I feel that this distracts from the important issues I have been trying to get addressed. I believe that, the greatest of my responsibilities as an elected official and a responsible citizen, I am to champion transparency and raise the voice of all. I apologize to you Mr. Petty for not responding to previous requests for on-the-record interviews. The declination of an interview is not me trying to skirt transparency. I am a very private person who just likes to use my skills, knowledge, and abilities to help others. It takes absolutely everything I can muster to have to continue to be subjected to the environment that has been cultivated within this Board.

I try to ensure that what I say during meetings (my apologies, I am aware that my voice is not being picked up well and I am making a concerted effort to be cognizant of this) is accurately recorded and available for publication for the purpose of transparency. I also find that me providing a transcript of my thoughts leaves less room for any misrepresentations. I say all of that to say, I am trying to the best of my abilities and level of comfort to be as transparent as possible in my elected capacity and as a person just trying to improve daily. I feel more comfortable with my thoughts being conveyed in

my own words and will continue to communicate transparently in this way. I hope you can understand.

I started this response with saying that I do not want to put any more energy into this and I don't, but now I would like to expound on what I mean by this. I don't want the focus of my actions to be shifted to the triviality of a "moment of contention" as you reported in your [coverage](#) on January 13th. What gets missed when this happens is the underlying issue/problem(s) while we focus on sensationalizing the damaging emotional effects that do not hold weight in any of the concerns I have raised.

Each of us were elected by our community to be a catalyst for the amplification of their voices. The underlying issues I have been trying to bring awareness to center on the concerns of our students, staff, and community by prioritizing their voices. In my efforts to advocate for the population that feels unheard I have maintained my focus on the work and not on individual board members and their actions. My efforts have been focused on uplifting the voices of everyone who emailed, called/texted/social media'd (is this a word? If not I was first 😊), and took the time to attend one of our meetings and speak at public comment. The concerns that each individual raised meant something to them and therefore they meant something to me. We do not have to agree but we should still have avenues for everyone to be heard, including board members.

There have been words spoken, actions taken, and ways of interacting that have been cultivated over the duration of the two+ years I have been on this Board that I personally find restrictive and contradictory to ensuring all voices are heard. While I am the focus of these unnecessary distractions and deflections (my actions, my understandings, my experiences, my observations, and my interactions) all I did was annotate and verbalize the actions, behaviors, and words of others that were already captured both in meeting recordings, minutes, and news articles, and follow up for accountability. To take it out on the messenger right? Yikes!

We each have to take accountability and responsibility for our actions. I apologize to anyone that is/was offended by my behavior and language in my frustration at last night's meeting. I understand that the way I responded in the moment felt aggressive and off-putting to some present. Since more than one thing can be true at any time, the lack of acknowledgement of what transpired (unfairly in my humble opinion) before I responded is a clear disconnect from the reality of the situation. For anyone that was harmed by my aggression, please accept my sincerest apologies.

This is me at this stage in my humanity, influenced for over two years by these interactions, not an excuse, I can do better and will in the future. However, I will no longer accept the responsibility of the narrative, that I have

done something wrong or that I am trying to denigrate anyone by calling for accountability for our actions. I apologize to anyone who has feelings that have been hurt by my efforts to get all voices heard. My intent is not to cause harm which is why I focus my efforts on tangible data and policy, not individual's or their character.

We can continue to try to deflect and lay the blame of the District's problems at my feet for raising the community's concerns but at the end of the day, I raised my concerns based on the information from the community's input. Nothing personal and not a jab at anyone, but I can't help but wonder, if we would have redirected all of this energy and time into the conversations I was asking for, would we be here now? I don't want to focus on pointing fingers, instead I would like to focus on efforts that will benefit everyone and propel us forward together as a community. Before this can happen, we have to acknowledge that we are being told that harm has been and is being inflicted in our community. Not addressing the problems make conversations easier but they don't prevent or stop the harm. The concerns being raised are valid and need to be addressed.

At the end of the meeting last night, we were asked how we feel, and I responded optimistic. I truly hold so much hope for the promise of this District and the work that is being done. Just because I highlight the concerns of the community doesn't mean that I think nothing good is happening. Moving forward I hope that we are able to find a way to communicate that places the voices of our students, staff, each other and community over personal biases.

Thank you again for your understanding and the opportunity to share my experience.

Thank you in advance for your support and collaboration,

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