

Re: Brookwood Advisors

From: J. Kandle [REDACTED]
To: McBride, Summer <summermcbride@ccusd.org>

Wed, Oct 12, 2022 at 11:50 AM PDT (GMT-07:00)

Dear Board Member McBride,

You are amazing! If only every Board member could be as amazing as you! I have always said that!

I kept channeling all my positive energy as I watched last night with bated breath. I literally got up and was jumping around with a happy dance as President Levin's mindset eventually shifted...because of YOU! You did it (along with the community speaking up)! But, you nailed it with the Facilities Plan contract speech. You are simply incredible and I wish you all my best in getting this process sorted out so that it is fair!

It seems to me that the Superintendent with some Board members were trying to pull a fast one - just my opinion as a current outsider! It seemed very "shady" as was mentioned - and thank you for fighting to see a change!

I had every confidence the Superintendent was up to the challenge of CCUSD at first, but my personal feelings have shifted in recent months and it seems he is unable or unwilling to nudge the ship in the right direction. I have always told my spouse that I believe an effective Superintendent only needs to make small corrections to the "ship's course" to make big changes. However, the devil is in the details and it takes an adept administrator to know when and which minor changes to make to effect BIG change... This situation is evidence that the Superintendent may be out of touch and unable or unwilling to make those small course corrections to make the right changes.

Sincerely,
Joe

On Tue, Oct 11, 2022 at 8:33 PM J. Kandle <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Board Member McBride,

Thank you for your email. This means a lot to me!

I would like to provide the first quarter report from the Education Foundation of Palm Springs Unified:

[REDACTED]

They raised over \$450K+ in the first quarter alone and this is from a community that does not have the same wealthy resources of Culver City. This reinforces my belief that the CCUSD Educational Foundation is not a priority of the District and the conversations may be different if it were. A robust educational foundation is vital if the District is looking for additional sources of funding to fill in gaps (housing stipends, for example, to retain staff and allow them to live where they want). CCUSD does not need to sell or lease out property in order to fill in funding gaps!

Thank you!
Joe

On Tue, Oct 11, 2022 at 8:08 PM McBride, Summer <summermcbride@ccusd.org> wrote:

Please accept my apology for not replying sooner. I actually started a reply and never sent it.

Thank you for your input. I appreciate it and completely agree. I think I know your spouse, and their gain in joining a new, supportive district was absolutely our loss.

I have many of the same concerns you shared about the Brookwood contract, and will do my best to protect our district (and thereby, our students and staff) from entering into a contract that is not in our school community's best interest.

Warmly,

Summer

Summer McBride
Culver City Board of Education
c: 310.630.9134
 Image result for ccusd logo
www.ccusd.org

On Tue, Oct 11, 2022 at 7:48 PM J. Kandle <[REDACTED]> wrote:
Speaking of replies, I never received one!

On Thu, Sep 29, 2022 at 1:15 PM J. Kandle <[REDACTED]> wrote:
Dear Board,

After watching the long board meeting on Tuesday, I would like to provide some thoughts. As the spouse of an accomplished CCUSD educators who left last year because of unaffordability, I can offer you first-hand experience. In my opinion, the proposal from Brookwood Advisors is the completely wrong direction for your public school district. You are attempting to place a band-aid on major issues, as is often the case with public institutions. The idea of renting out market-rate apartments or district property to pay for your needs is outlandish.

I understand that retaining talent is important, as I have been telling my spouse who left your district. However, going down the road with Brookwood Advisors does nothing to solve the root of the problem causing the symptom of unaffordability or the lack of adequate funding for the district. If anything comes of the proposal, you will still have a revolving door of employees leaving before they max-out service-credit accepted by other districts that located in more affordable areas of the State. Any employee housing would be a revolving door. In fact, you may contribute to the gentrification and unaffordability of the Culver City area, making your problem even worse! The only way you can retain quality talent is by paying them appropriately to live in the area. How about stipends paid for by the educational foundation?

There is inherent value in keeping schools as just schools (many of your neighbors will agree and fight zoning changes). There is much more to life than the constant pursuit to build, build, build and generating more revenue. Maybe CCUSD should look to its wealthy community and fill in funding gaps through a robust educational foundation, which seems to be almost an afterthought at CCUSD? You have untapped resources in your community because the education foundation is not a priority.

As the spouse of one of your former educators, I can think of a dozen priorities where you should be spending your time and money vs. this boondoggle. Just because housing and building mixed-use buildings are trending at the moment does not mean your public school district should jump on the wagon. The proposal by Brookwood Advisors would do little to nothing to solve your problems of retaining quality staff and increasing your funding, unless your idea of public schooling is to sell out to corporations and have it located above a Starbucks, Whole Foods and trendy housing few in your community can afford!

Sincerely,
Joe Kandle

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Re: Agreement - CCUSD and Brookwood Advisors

From: Groya, Julie <juliegroya@ccusd.org>
To: Summer McBride <summermcbride@ccusd.org>

Mon, Sep 26, 2022 at 8:56 AM PDT (GMT-07:00)

Dear Summer, thank you so much for your (always) thoughtful response. You are so right about prioritizing money spent in this district. I have seen time & time again where funds that WE HAVE already are not spent on the things we've been told they'd be spent on. I haven't seen our district be stellar with timely payments to teachers for services rendered, so I can imagine similar occurrences happening for businesses' services and repairs of our sites. I also completely understand you opposing this contract with Brookwood. It is incredibly expensive, especially when much of this work has already been done! That would be a huge waste of our CCUSD funds.

I simply wanted to ensure that the idea of affordable housing for staff would not be another one of these flash-in-the-pan concepts we quickly forget because a new emergency occurs that must be dealt with and paid for. I think you know what I mean.

I want you to know you are doing the right thing - holding the district/city accountable. I hope other Board Members join you in this. It is critical.

Thank you for your work on the behalf of our families & staff, Summer!

Julie

On Sun, Sep 25, 2022 at 1:50 PM Summer McBride <summermcbride@ccusd.org> wrote:

Hi Julie,

Thanks for your email. I really appreciate your feedback and understand your concerns. To share a little about myself, my family and I have been renters in CC for 15 years. In that time, we've seen our rent nearly double. I'm aware of and am disheartened by the current lack of affordable housing in CC for staff and our students' families, alike. I fully support housing development in CC. I desire to see the city invest in a variety of developments, especially non-profit construction like what's being planned through the Culver-Palms Methodist church and Community Corp of Santa Monica. I also support permanent rent control and upzoning with the affordable housing overlays. For me, this isn't about preventing housing development or more affordable housing. It's about prioritizing our district's needs, many of which are dire. I oppose this contract because it is costly, not timely, and has already been a greater distraction pulling resources, time, and finances away from our most urgent needs.

This is not just now becoming my argument against prioritizing workforce housing. I've been the only board member, for literally years, calling out the district for not investing more of the bond dollars into the necessary repairs and upgrades that were identified years ago in our districtwide needs assessment. Most of the projects identified have still gone unaddressed. I'm not trying to delay an opportunity for housing. I'm trying to finally get our district to respond to the countless requests for repairs submitted over the years.

Additionally, during the 2019-20 school year, the district invested \$400k in a master facilities plan that had an energy plan and housing specs attached to it. We've already done much of this work in surveying our facilities, and that process actually involved a multitude of stakeholders who were able to give input on the final presentation. This new contract is not only incredibly expensive, but it is also redundant. We are past the point of needing to do further studies and should be at the point where we start implementing a plan to fix what we already know is broken. If we made this commitment and could be truly proud of the spaces where our staff work and students learn, then I would fully support exploring workforce housing. I can't, in good conscience, put the needs of potential employees ahead of our current staff and school community. I also think we should be demanding more from our City leaders, because housing is directly under their purview. We are already stretched incredibly thin with limited funding and person-power, I fear that the district's dereliction of our responsibility to care for facilities maintenance, retrofitting, and upgrades will only worsen as we redirect

our attention to a new, ambitious endeavor that is only indirectly related to our duty to educate students in the safest, healthiest environments.

If you're interested, I would be more than happy to schedule a time to speak with you to answer any other questions or hear your thoughts. More than anything, I just want the district to make a plan and stick to it for once. We have started so many initiatives with good intentions, but more often than not, end up doing patch work or not following through at all. I know I sound really critical, and I am, but it's because I love this district and I know we can do better for staff and students in so many ways, including housing, if we prioritize based on greatest, most immediate needs.

Summer

On Sep 25, 2022, at 12:40 PM, Groya, Julie <juliegroya@ccusd.org> wrote:

Good afternoon board members,

I am writing this email to express my opinion regarding the possible agreement between CCUSD and Brookwood Advisors.

I have been a teacher in Culver City since 2002. During that time, I have rented three different places - finally finding a nearby rental house to raise my two children. Finding a place to live in Culver City proper, proved to be an impossible task. Fortunately, as an employee, my children can attend Culver City schools.

I have personally witnessed several incredible teachers leave CCUSD, due to a growing family and inability to afford housing for them. It's disappointing to see, especially with the difficulties CCUSD has with hiring & retaining good teachers, as of late, too.

Yes, almost half a million dollars is a huge investment, and I wish there were more than just this one consulting group to choose from. Was this our only choice?

However, I believe truly discussing and thoroughly considering options for teacher/staff housing is critical for CCUSD. There IS no affordable housing in West LA anymore. Teachers and other similarly paid workers are forced to drive far distances to work in/near Culver City.

Some people have expressed this would be wasteful spending when CCUSD facilities have significant repair needs. Unfortunately, these facilities have needed repairs for years, if not decades. I would hate to think this would *now* be the argument used against helping our teachers/staff remain employees.

If Brookwood Advisors is deemed too expensive, I implore you to keep this topic of discussion open this year until a more reasonably priced organization is found.

Additionally, with all the rental properties currently going up in West LA/CC, I find it hard to believe there would not already be an organization who's done some of this investigation legwork, and might be able to continue for CCUSD at a more minimal cost?

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter!

Julie Groya, CCMS

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Julie Groya
ELD Teacher
ELD Site Specialist



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Julie Groya
ELD Teacher
ELD Site Specialist

