

To the Monroe Township School District Community:

On July 22, 2022, an article entitled “Superior Court suspends case for Monroe school board lawsuit; refers matter to Commissioner of Education” was posted to mycentraljersey.com. This article discussed two recent lawsuits filed by a Monroe resident, against the Board, in Middlesex County Superior Court. As the article failed to quote the papers filed by the Board or specify the details of the claims, clarification appears in order so that our fellow citizens are informed fully.

In two separate but nearly-identical lawsuits, Plaintiff Lilian Isaacs sought injunctive relief to have the Court step in and invalidate official Board action. Specifically, this individual wanted the Court to overturn the Board’s votes regarding the extension of the Superintendent’s contract and an employee’s suspension. To be clear, the Court did not overturn the votes in either case. In fact, the only decision that the Court did make was that it lacked the primary jurisdiction to make the determinations necessary in order to grant Plaintiff the relief requested. While not granting the Board's request to dismiss the suits outright at this time, the Court did agree with the Board's assertion that the School Ethics Commission and/or Commissioner of Education were the proper entities to consider the issues raised. As such, the Court referred both matters to the School Ethics Commission and/or Commissioner of Education.

The Court also did not grant Plaintiff’s additional, last-minute request to stop the Board from performing a vote on the Superintendent's contract at its next meeting. After the Court issued its Orders, Plaintiff also sent both the School Ethics Commission and the Commissioner of Education a letter requesting the same thing. The Board responded to both letters objecting to the inappropriate and improper nature of the requests. Neither of Plaintiff's letters resulted in any action and the Board's vote proceeded.

Again, the Orders entered by the Court granted none of the relief requested by Plaintiff in either lawsuit. The contract for the then-Acting Superintendent and the employee suspension which were the targets of the lawsuits were not impacted at all. While the Board requested the Court dismiss both lawsuits entirely, this request was denied without prejudice in order to allow the appropriate administrative agencies the opportunity to weigh in on the issues first, if at all. The fact that the Board’s request was denied without prejudice means that the Board can renew the request to dismiss both lawsuits if and when the School Ethics Commission and/or Commissioner of Education resolve the matters pending before them.