

From: [Julian Coca](#)
To: [Allen Steinhauser](#); [John Floresta](#)
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023 1:10:05 PM

FYI

There is a “fire Ragsdale” rally planned for Thursday. Would be great to have a counter voice

From: [David Owen](#)
To: [John Stafford](#)
Cc: [Julian Coca](#); [Chuck Polasky](#)
Subject: planning to record the Super's comments
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 10:14:53 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
Importance: High

Good morning, John!

We have been requested to record the Superintendent's comments during tomorrow evening's Board meeting to quickly edit and publish a video package. I plan to record your PCR feed through our system and be in the Board room to do a second recording using my camera gear.

1. Given community interest in the meeting, we expect electronic news outlets will appear. I will bring the mult-box to set up whenever you guys show up for facility check. Just let me know the day/time so I can coordinate with you.
2. I know we constrain the press cams to the media bullpen area, but do you have any objection to my locating to the left side of the staff tables to enable me to get a more straight-on shot? I could even prop a side door open to shoot from the hallway, closing it quietly when I have to pack up my camera and tripod to bolt.

Thanks!
- David

David Owen, Sr. Digital Media Producer | Communications

Cobb County School District

514 Glover Street SE | Marietta, GA 30060

W 770.514.3847 | cobbk12.org

david.owen@cobbk12.org



From: [John Floresta](#)
To: [Chapman, Leroy \(CMG-Atlanta\)](#)
Cc: [Sharon Churney](#)
Subject: FW: Cobb community members demand replacement of leadership to show that our district values educators, affirms all students, and rejects bigotry / Notice of community rally at CCSD district office on 9/14
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 11:25:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

Leroy,

Congratulations on your promotion! Since taking the reigns, I've noticed a positive shift in the paper at large and particularly appreciate your attention to accuracy.

At a time that is convenient for you and if willing, I'd like to schedule a call about the email chain below. If willing and able, my assistant (cc'd to this email) is happy to schedule with yours.

It appears Maureen was blind-copied to an email to our Board, from a local political activist, and that she is recruiting the activist for a "guest column". Although we haven't had a chance to discuss recently, education issues in Cobb continue to be the center of political debate. We certainly understand your staff have their own personal beliefs about schools, which may be in conflict with what [we expect a Cobb graduate to be able to know and do](#). Despite our performance as a school district, we are also familiar with Maureen's long-standing elevation of lower-performing metropolitan school districts, while critiquing Cobb at every opportunity.

However, from our perspective, exclusively and actively recruiting "guest columnists" from one side of the political aisle, to further attack the Board, Superintendent, and one of the highest performing school districts in the metro, goes well beyond "opinion journalism" and enjoins the newspaper into the realm of political activism.

I know we both would like to maintain the working relationship we have built over the last number of years, looking forward to navigating how to best do so.

Best,
John

John Floresta

Chief Strategy and Accountability Officer Cobb County School District

514 Glover Street SE | Marietta, GA 30060

W 770.514.2525 | cobbk12.org

John.floresta@cobbk12.org



From: Downey, Maureen (AJC-Atlanta) <Maureen.Downey@ajc.com>

Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 9:34 AM

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> RScamihorn Boardmember <RScamihorn.Boardmember@cobbk12.org>; BWheeler Boardmember <BWheeler.Boardmember@cobbk12.org>; DChastain Boardmember <DChastain.Boardmember@cobbk12.org>; DBanks Boardmember <DBanks.Boardmember@cobbk12.org>; LHutchins Boardmember <THutchins.Boardmember@cobbk12.org>; BSayler Boardmember <BSayler.Boardmember@cobbk12.org>; NDavis Boardmember <NDavis.Boardmember@cobbk12.org>; Chris Ragsdale <Chris.Ragsdale@cobbk12.org>; John Floresta <John.Floresta@cobbk12.org>

Cc: Jennifer Susko <jennifersusko@hotmail.com>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Cobb community members demand replacement of leadership to show that our district values educators, affirms all students, and rejects bigotry / Notice of community rally at CCSD district office on 9/14

Some people who received this message don't often get email from maureen.downey@ajc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Any chance this can be turned into a guest column for the AJC? 700 to 800 words?

Maureen Downey

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 9:23 AM

To: RScamihorn.Boardmember@cobbk12.org; BWheeler.Boardmember@cobbk12.org; DChastain.Boardmember@cobbk12.org; DBanks.Boardmember@cobbk12.org; THutchins.Boardmember@cobbk12.org; bsayler.boardmember@cobbk12.org; ndavis.boardmember@cobbk12.org; Chris.Ragsdale@cobbk12.org; John.Floresta@cobbk12.org

Cc: Jennifer Susko <jennifersusko@hotmail.com>; Melissa Marten <[REDACTED]>
[REDACTED]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Cobb community members demand replacement of leadership to show that our district values educators, affirms all students, and rejects bigotry / Notice of community rally at CCSD district office on 9/14

Good morning,

This email is to inform you of an upcoming protest/rally event, as well as the reasoning behind the event.

A group of concerned educators, students, families, and other community stakeholders will be gathering at the Cobb County School District headquarters on Thursday, September 14th to voice our concerns about the current poor leadership choices by Chris Ragsdale and his followers to foster school climates teeming with racism, homophobia and censorship through employing violent racists, firing teachers based on homophobic biases and removing books without

following CCSD's own policies and instead allowing outside influences of right wing hate groups to conduct business for our District. Our demands are listed below, and we do not plan to release pressure until they are met.

1. Fire Chris Dowd
2. Replace Chris Ragsdale
3. Remove CRT ban and 1619 Project ban
4. Explain why Libs of TikTok received action on their complaints within 2 days while CCSD students and community members have been waiting years for a response
5. Implement the promised anti-bias, anti-racist program/curriculum to reduce bullying and support marginalized students
6. Follow CCSD policy for book removal, no exceptions for outside groups' complaints
7. Define what constitutes a "controversial issue" or "divisive topic" to provide clarity and assurance to educators who are currently enduring a hostile work environment

The Cobb County community is angry that you cowered to an outside hate group like Libs of TikTok to remove books from libraries and threaten teachers' jobs and their willingness to participate in Reading Bowl. We do not want our property taxes going to a district who runs afoul of its own policies for book removal and responds immediately to politically driven hate groups when you do not even respond to us, your constituents, when we raise concerns. That you are employing Chris Dowd, known to have used the N-word and homophobic slurs during a violent raid of a gay night club while part of the disbanded Red Dog Unit, as the Executive Director of HR is outrageous. That he, with his proven bigotry and racism, is the one who investigated and fired a 5th grade teacher with a flawless performance record for reading a book that's inclusive of the LGBTQ+ community, one he has a demonstrated bias against, is unacceptable. He is dangerous for the entire CCSD community, and we demand his immediate firing. Teachers are scared for their jobs, feel as though they are in a hostile work environment, and their performance is likely suffering as a result. Cobb County School District already boasts declining reading scores and should therefore certainly not be intimidating teachers to get rid of their classroom libraries or postponing book fairs, all part of improving love of literacy and bolstering proficiency scores. None of the current actions led by Superintendent Ragsdale are going to improve his failing reading scores, and the Communications Team simply cannot fabricate any more graphs to trick us. We see the failure, and it all starts from the top. This is why we must replace Ragsdale immediately.

We will not stand by as dedicated school staff receive veiled threats and our school district constantly embarrasses itself in local and national news. We are holding you accountable and our efforts will remain consistent. The children and school staff deserve leadership who put them first, and we will not relent until this board consistently demonstrates its commitment to transparency, accountability, and a willingness to admit wrongdoing and work hard to correct it.

Thank you for your time,

Cobb Community Cares Coalition

From: [John Floresta](#)
To: [Julian Coca](#)
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 3:19:51 PM

The student who wrote the article in the ajc is planning on speaking in public comment tomorrow

From: [Julian Coca](#)
To: [Zachary Alderson](#); [Nan Kiel](#); [Daniel Vehar](#); [David Owen](#); [Bill Johnson](#); [Eric Rauch](#); [Amanda Chambers](#)
Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023 3:22:03 PM

FYI team

Daniel Vehar Zachary Alderson Amanda Chambers Eric Rauch

The student who wrote the article in the ajc is planning on speaking in public comment tomorrow. If so, has to have their parent with them (under the age of 18). If not - they can't speak... and the student's mom is a member of the Board of Electors... so.... she probably doesn't want to be in the limelight on this particular issue.

From: [Julian Coca](#)
To: [John Floresta](#)
Date: Thursday, September 14, 2023 2:16:16 PM

I hope that the threat of a an anti-rally would bring some folks out.

From: [Eric Rauch](#)
To: [Nan Kiel](#); [Julian Coca](#)
Date: Thursday, September 14, 2023 2:13:29 PM

They're still making their signs for their little rally.

From: [Eric Rauch](#)
To: [Nan Kiel](#); [Julian Coca](#)
Date: Thursday, September 14, 2023 2:24:57 PM

These 15 commenters are the same amount that will be pretending to be speaking for the majority at the rally.

From: [Eric Rauch](#)
To: [Nan Kiel](#); [Julian Coca](#)
Date: Thursday, September 14, 2023 7:34:30 PM

All the Replace Ragsdale children turned their back during his recognition. They show their true natures.

From: [Julian Coca](#)
To: [John Floresta](#)
Date: Thursday, September 14, 2023 7:53:37 PM

He should also add something like... "I am shocked that so many of you who have been protesting for years about covid, masks, guns, for and against school safety, ... would now be here demanding pornography be added to our school libraries. Shocked, I say. It's almost as if you plan to protest no matter what we do."

From: [Nan Kiel](#)
To: [Julian Coca](#); [Eric Rauch](#)
Date: Friday, September 15, 2023 2:10:43 PM

At least Jake actually pointed out the size of the rally: "As the meeting concluded, a small rally organized by a group of Ragsdale's vocal critics called for his ouster."

From: [Julian Coca](#)
To: [John Floresta](#)
Date: Saturday, September 16, 2023 12:03:11 PM

I've got a brilliant idea... when you try to convince the super to move me to another pay scale... lead with the "super of the year" article and then show him the social from the board meeting post and the news coverage... then say "Onan did that."