



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Demond Means, Ed.D.

Superintendent

September 12, 2019

Dr. LaKeisha Gantt
Clarke County School District
Board of Education President

Ms. Linda Davis
Clarke County School District
Board of Education Vice President

Dear Dr. Gantt & Ms. Davis:

As you are aware, on August 9, 2019, AdvancED, the accrediting agency for the Clarke County School District, notified the Office of the Superintendent of complaints regarding the Clarke County school system. The complaints from community stakeholders alleged that the conduct of some members of the Board of Education is interfering with the board's ability to function responsibly and effectively. Additionally, the complaints alleged that board member conduct is impeding the autonomy of district leaders in meeting their goals for achievement and instruction. Finally, the complaints alleged that board member conduct is impeding the effective day-to-day operations of the district.

The August 9 letter requested that the Office of the Superintendent provide a written response to the complaints. After careful deliberation, the Office of the Superintendent has determined that there is sufficient information to support the allegations that some members of the current board have interfered with the board's ability to function responsibly and effectively. Further, some board members' behavior has negatively affected district leadership's ability to meet our established goals for achievement and instruction, while also affecting the management of day-to-day operations.

The situations involving specific board members demonstrate that the current situation in the district is dire and intervention from AdvancEd is necessary to make significant and sustainable change in governance protocol. Although I have raised these potential violations of board policies and state law with the board on several occasions, there has been no positive change to date.

The current situation is unsustainable, and the academic program of the school district is at risk if there is no immediate intervention and recalibration of governance roles, responsibilities, and relationships from an outside third party.

Enclosed is the response that will be submitted to AdvancEd no later than September 13.

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I understand the significance and potential ramifications of involving an outside group or organization in working with the Clarke County School District Board of Education and the Office of the Superintendent. However, I firmly believe that we have passed the point at which the board will engage in any meaningful change without the intervention of AdvancEd. In short, the current state of the Board of Education is consuming resources and distracting professional attention away from how we can best serve the children and families of the Clarke County School District.

Based on the ongoing issues related to the superintendent-board relationship and the failure or refusal to respect the separate and distinct role of the board and that of the superintendent, I believe we have reached a critical point. I have an affirmative duty to formally request that a Special Review Team be appointed by AdvancEd to work with the district on its governance practices and the superintendent-board relationship. The intervention of an AdvancED Special Review Team is desperately needed at this time.

It is with the intent of moving forward that I implore AdvancEd to intervene and help refocus the roles, responsibilities, and relationships vital to a productive and positive governance environment. Without the support of AdvancEd, I do not believe the district will achieve its mission and goals, as outlined in policies BH (Domain II: Strategic Planning, #1) and BA.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Demond A. Means". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Demond A. Means, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Clarke County School District

CC: Clarke County School District Board of Education
Michael Pruett