

From: [Meade, Tina M](#)
To: [Office of Student Civil Rights](#)
Cc: [Superintendent](#); [Codd, Clover](#); [Ethics](#); [Treat, Noel R](#); [equity](#)
Subject: Re: Discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying by Seattle World School Principal
Date: Friday, May 25, 2018 3:28:12 PM
Attachments: [Complaint - Discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying by Seattle World School Principal\[1\].pdf](#)
[3207 3207SP.A.pdf](#)
[3210 3210SP.B.pdf](#)

Dear Mr. Hong,

This acknowledges receipt of your email and one (1) attachment, a signed letter matching the email, which was forwarded to me by my staff in the Office of Student Civil Rights.

Please find attached to this email the District's policies and procedures regarding the general prohibition against harassment, intimidation, and bullying (3207); and the District's nondiscrimination policy and procedure (3210).

Based on my review of your email/letter, you are raising concerns of discriminatory harassment as well as allegations of unprofessionalism and/or employee misconduct. As you are alleging acts of discriminatory harassment combined with other concerns of professional or employee misconduct, the District's Human Resources Department would be the department to follow-up on the allegations in accordance with Superintendent Procedure 3210SP.B. See page 1 of 3210SP.B. Consequently, my department is appropriately deferring any follow-up action on your correspondence to Human Resources as the designated department pursuant to 3210SP.B. Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Clover Codd was included in your original email, and has been included here as well.

If you have additional questions, I can be reached at 206-252-0306 or by direct email, cmmeade@seattleschools.org.

Best,

Christina "Tina" Meade, M.Ed., J.D.
Student Civil Rights Compliance Officer
Office of Student Civil Rights
Seattle Public Schools
Office: (206) 252-0306
cmmeade@seattleschools.org

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From: Office of Student Civil Rights <oscr@seattleschools.org>

Date: Friday, May 25, 2018 at 2:56 PM

To: Tina Meade <cmmeade@seattleschools.org>

Subject: FW: Discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying by Seattle World School Principal

From: James Hong <james.hong@vfaseattle.org>

Date: Friday, May 25, 2018 at 2:30 PM

To: Office of Student Civil Rights <oscr@seattleschools.org>

Cc: Superintendent <superintendent@seattleschools.org>, "Codd, Clover" <clcodd@seattleschools.org>, "Dahlberg, Jason R" <jrdahlberg@seattleschools.org>, Ethics <ethics@seattleschools.org>, "Treat, Noel R" <nrtreat@seattleschools.org>, "equity@k12.wa.us" <equity@k12.wa.us>

Subject: Discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying by Seattle World School Principal

Dear Ms. Meade:

Please accept this letter as a formal complaint of discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying against Seattle World School (SWS) Principal Oksana Britsova.

To provide some context, the SWS student body is a vulnerable population, a majority of whom are minorities and children of refugee and immigrant families. We believe that Principal Britsova has taken advantage of the students' vulnerability and targeted them based on their race, religion, national origin, or immigration status. At a minimum, Principal Britsova lacks the cultural competency to interact with this vulnerable student population.

Since May 12, 2018, numerous students have reported that Principal Oksana Britsova has threatened and bullied them, creating an unsafe and unwelcome school environment by harassing and intimidating students and violating professional boundaries.

- At least one student believes their immigration status is threatened as a result of a recent interaction with Principal Britsova at prom, during which she mentioned the words "immigration" and "police."
- As a result of witnessing this interaction, multiple students have been too afraid to come to school, believing that they needed to avoid Principal Britsova and her threats of "immigration" and "police."
- Principal Britsova yelling and waving her hands at students to the point where students were not sure if the principal was going to hit them or not.
- One student stated that they felt "as if they were criminals."
- Principal Britsova publicly shamed two students she had a disagreement with in order to coerce them into compliance.

- The students, including the ASB leadership, are afraid to be alone with Principal Britsova.
- Principal Britsova has displayed a pattern and practice of retaliation with students, staff, and volunteers, which has terrified the students and prevented witnesses from being willing to share their stories.

Numerous students have approached the Vietnamese Friendship Association (VFA) to report Principal Britsova's actions and requested help. They have shown tremendous courage in speaking up. At least one student who felt threatened provided an incident report to one of our staff members. We have also received unsolicited copies of student and family statements about the uncomfortable climate of intimidation at SWS. We are not enclosing copies of these complaints and statements to this letter until the complainants feel that the school district has addressed their fear of retaliation or deportation. Principal Britsova's threats of retaliation, if acted upon, could have catastrophic effects on the students whose immigration status leaves them particularly vulnerable.

While the examples provided above are detrimental to the learning outcomes of SWS students, the severity of the matter is beyond academic achievement. Refugee and immigrant families are a vulnerable population, and language and cultural barriers make reporting abuse difficult, if not outright impossible. Student concerns and fears are especially heightened in a time when refugees and immigrants are actively being targeted, harassed, attacked and deported.

SWS students and families need your support and leadership. In November 2016, during a time of heightened fear and anxiety in our nation and city, Superintendent Nyland had affirmed "We expect all students to be treated positively and with respect without fear of bullying or intimidation. Our commitment to the well-being of each and every student is stronger than ever." And yet, when ASB students sought a meeting with the District's Executive Director of Secondary Schools, Sarah Pritchett, they were told to talk to the Principal directly. When they expressed their fear of meeting with Principal Britsova, Ms. Pritchett disregarded their concerns. The VFA staff attempted to advocate on behalf of the students by seeking the assistance of the Education Ombuds, who directed us to petition the District's Superintendent to make a report of unprofessional conduct to the Office of Professional Practices.

We do not believe that this is an effective or efficient solution. Rather, we request that the Office of Student Civil Rights and the District's Human Resources address the matter for what it is - discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying and a pattern of retaliation against anybody who objects to Principal Britsova's actions. We respectfully request an objective, impartial investigation by a third party investigator. Finally, we urge you to place Principal Britsova on administrative leave and temporarily freeze her access to student and teacher files to ensure the safety of SWS students and prevent her from retaliating or making good on her threats to call the police on any student until an investigation is completed. This fear is particularly poignant in light of the Education Secretary Betsy De Vos's recent testimony before the House Education and Workforce Committee that it is up to individual schools to decide whether to call U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement if they suspect their students are undocumented.

VFA, SWS students and families, and community members hope to work with you on a solution to ensure refugee and immigrant families are safe and protected within Seattle Public Schools. We must act swiftly. In an era of #metoo, #blacklivesmatter and #neveragain, it's clear that our city and

nation demand students and families live and learn free from abuse and threats to their safety.

Best,

James

about.me/james.hong

**Support immigrant and refugee students and families by donating to VFA
at <https://www.vfaseattle.org/donate>**

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