

Virginia School Superintendent Fired for Cover Up of Multiple Sexual Assaults on Students

Read Time: 2 Minutes 20 Seconds

Justice is finally being served in Loudoun County, Virginia.

On Thursday in a two-hour closed session meeting, the Loudoun County (Va.) Public Schools Board Education voted unanimously to fire Superintendent Scott Ziegler for the gross mishandling of two sexual assaults that took place at two separate high schools at the hands of the same student.

Ziegler's dismissal comes less than a week after a grand jury released a report concluding that district leaders were "looking out for their own best interests" in the sexual assault cases.

A special grand jury investigation of the school district's handling of the two sexual assaults by the same student—he attacked one girl in a bathroom at Stone Bridge High School and after being transferred to Broad Run High School he attacked another in an empty classroom—concluded that administrators "prioritized their own best interests over those of the school district and community."

It was also found that they blocked transparency to the public and attempted to obstruct the jury's own investigation.

The School Board refused to comment after its closed-door meeting.

However, Jessica Smith, the mother of the first victim, told , "It's unfortunate that it took a special grand jury report for

anyone to take action. The firing of Ziegler was way overdue and we hope this is the first of many firings for all those who failed these young women who now have to deal with what happened to them for the rest of their lives.”

reported that, under the terms of his contract and because he was fired without cause, Ziegler will be paid his full \$323,000 annual salary for the next year in monthly installments. The School Board had approved a \$28,000 raise for Ziegler in July.

Two days prior to the closed-door school board meeting, Loudon County Chair Phyllis Randall implored the School Board to fire Ziegler.

“Let me say this as clearly as possible: Dr. Scott Ziegler needs to be fired,” Randall said in a Board of Supervisors meeting. “I’m not dancing around this. We had a young woman violently raped and other one assaulted, and this was, for all intents and purposes, on his part, a coverup.

“They were failed at multiple, multiple levels. So School Board and LCPS, get together. Get it together. Fire him. Fire him today. Fire him tonight. If you read that report, you can’t come out with anything else.”

reported that Supervisor Kristen C. Umstattd said a constituent urged her to compare the incidents at Loudoun County to the Penn State University scandal of a few years ago involving a coach, Jerry Sandusky, who was found guilty of 45 counts of sexual abuse of young boys over a 15-year-period.

“If we put the children at the center of this question, it is hard to find a meaningful difference in this case,” Umstattd said. ... “In both cases, children were betrayed by those whose first and foremost job is to protect them, and in both cases, their emotional scars will be with them for the rest of their lives. {eo}

Bring *Charisma* magazine home with a subscription today!

Shawn A. Akers *is the online editor at Charisma Media.*