Investigative Report Regarding Irving Independent School District School Board's Resolution #12-13-124

On April 4, 2013, the Irving Independent School District (IISD) contracted with this investigator to act as a neutral, outside party to determine whether the items listed in the IISD Board of Trustees' Resolution Number 12-13-124 could be substantiated. This independent investigation was conducted by interviewing former and current IISD employees and Board members, and by reviewing documents provided by some of the employees who were interviewed.

It should be noted that Dr. Jones was contacted by this investigator on April 15, 17, and 22, and May 9, 2013 in an attempt to arrange a time to hear his response to each of the charges. However, when he replied to this investigator's email on May 9, Dr. Jones stated that he chose not to meet with this investigator to discuss the Board's charges, because there was nothing to investigate, and because he did not want IISD wasting more money.

It should also be noted that many of the IISD employees interviewed voiced concern about possible retaliation by Dr. Jones following their testimonies regarding this investigation.

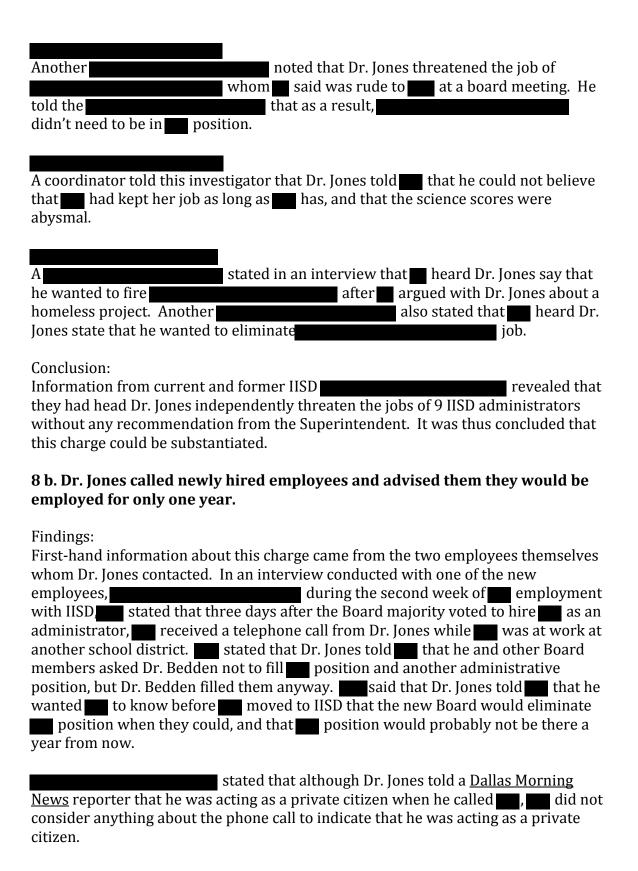
Below is a summary of the findings of the investigation, which has been organized by each charge made in the Board Resolution.

8 a. Dr. Jones threatened to terminate the employment contracts of several administrative employees without a recommendation from the Superintendent.

Findings:

Testimony revealed that Dr. Jones threatened to terminate the following administrators: Regarding An interview with one of IISD's Board members revealed that Dr. Jones told that he did not consider this particular to be qualified for job, and that would "be gone" once the new Board was in place. stated that Dr. Jones has threatened job, making such statements as, "Talk to your attorneys and ask them what we will do when we fire all of you for not meeting AYP!" He has also asked "Are you going to be able to work with the new board," a statement which suggests to that since does not share Dr. Jones' philosophy, may be ousted.

had with Dr. Jones. During the such threats against job as board?" and, "You see the chan	made of a conversation made of a conversation conversation, this investigator heard Dr. Jones make "Do you think you can work with the new school ages coming. If you can't get behind the vision of the you to leave." and, "After May 20, we will control the d to use an axe."
In an interview with another heard Dr. Jones tell to start looking for a new job."	, stated that has , "If you don't like it, it's time for you
	, they both noted that they about the district not needing the position filled by Γhis statement was made after a position was filled.
H	has heard Dr. Jones threaten the job of He has stated that due to mistakes he believes as made in hiring decisions, doesn't need to be
	gainst them was more about the area of instruction de them targets, because he disagreed with the
IISD employees' jobs. One of t	provided testimony to this investigator to of threats Dr. Jones has made to eliminate several the employees whose job was threatened was Dr. Jones referred to as "a cancer in this district" to address the issue of overrepresentation of African ation.
Jones talked to twice about scheduled. He did not like the High School, telling that member also stated that he he job. Written documentation in	ated in an interview with this investigator that Dr. It training approved by the school board that Itraining, and blamed for racial tension at Nimitz I job was at stake. Another Leadership Team and Dr. Jones threaten I the form of emails was found to exist that assure about this training, as well as his threats about



The other newly hired employee referenced in this charge, stated that a couple of days after the IISD Board voted to hire received a call at school district from a man who identified himself as a "concerned citizen." Dr. Jones told that he did not feel that the District needed to fill position, and as soon as the new Board was seated, they would work to eliminate job, so would not have the job for more than a year. The new administrator stated that Dr. Jones told that looked like a nice person, and asked him if they had met. That is when Dr. Jones told that he was on the Board, and when voiced concern about the appropriateness of talking with him, he told , "we never talked."
Both of the new administrators stated that they contacted the Superintendent immediately following their receipt of the calls from Dr. Jones, and documented their calls from Dr. Jones with written statements, one written on March 7^{th} and one written on March 9^{th} . A review of the administrators' written statements revealed that Dr. Jones made consecutive calls to them on March 7^{th} : one at $9:20$ am, and one at $9:30$ am.
In a March 28, 2013 <u>Dallas Morning News</u> article, Dr. Jones admitted making the calls to the two new employees, but stated that he made them as a private citizen.
According to an IISD , after a board policy meeting, Dr. Jones told two other that the two newly hired administrators would receive teacher contracts next year and be reassigned to teach.
Conclusion: The Board charge regarding Dr. Jones' calls to the two newly employed administrators was substantiated through interviews with the two new administrators themselves, along with their emails documenting the situation. Additionally, Dr. Jones admitted making the calls to the two new employees in an interview with a reporter from the Dallas Morning News .
8 c. Dr. Jones attempted to influence the decisions of administration regarding the management of subordinate positions by directing staff to not fill certain staff positions.
Findings: The responsible for filling administrative positions stated in an interview that Dr. Jones told should not fill the two administrative positions referenced in 8b above.
Another also stated that has heard Dr. Jones state that the District doesn't need one of the administrative positions referenced in 8b above.

Testimony from two support the allegation that Dr. Jones attempted to influence their decisions regarding the filling of the two administrative positions referenced in 8b above.
8 d. Dr. Jones disparaged the performance of the administrative staff to their subordinates with the intent of undermining the supervision of subordinates.
Findings: In an interview with one of the IISD, stated that Dr. Jones badmouthed in a phone call to a who works for . He has also called a liar to one of subordinates.
Testimony from another indicated that Dr. Jones disparaged Dr. Bedden to staff at Schulze Elementary, saying, "Bedden is late as usual." The documented this incident in a memo dated September 11, 2011.
Interviews with several IISD revealed that Dr. Jones has disparaged the job that Dr. Bedden is doing by personally telling them that he intends to terminate the Superintendent. The also told this investigator that Dr. Jones has attempted to undermine Dr. Bedden's authority by insinuating that if they support the Superintendent, their jobs will also be at stake.
Specifically, one stated that Dr. Jones has told that Dr. Bedden will be terminated after the Board has four votes, and that anyone who supports the administration is not doing themselve a favor. He also told this that should tell the principals that they shouldn't come to the board meetings, and that in doing so, they aren't doing themselves any favors. Dr. Jones has also insinuated to that if supports Dr. Bedden, won't have a job.
Another testified that Dr. Jones has frequently told that Dr. Bedden will be gone soon.
Similarly, according to a different had better get on board with the new board or leave.
Additionally, another stated in an interview that has heard Dr. Jones say that there are about to be like-minded people on the Board, and there is going to be a change, referring to getting rid of Dr. Bedden. also heard Dr. Jones say, "there's going to be a change, get out of the way" following a confrontation that Dr. Jones had with the Superintendent before he was elected.

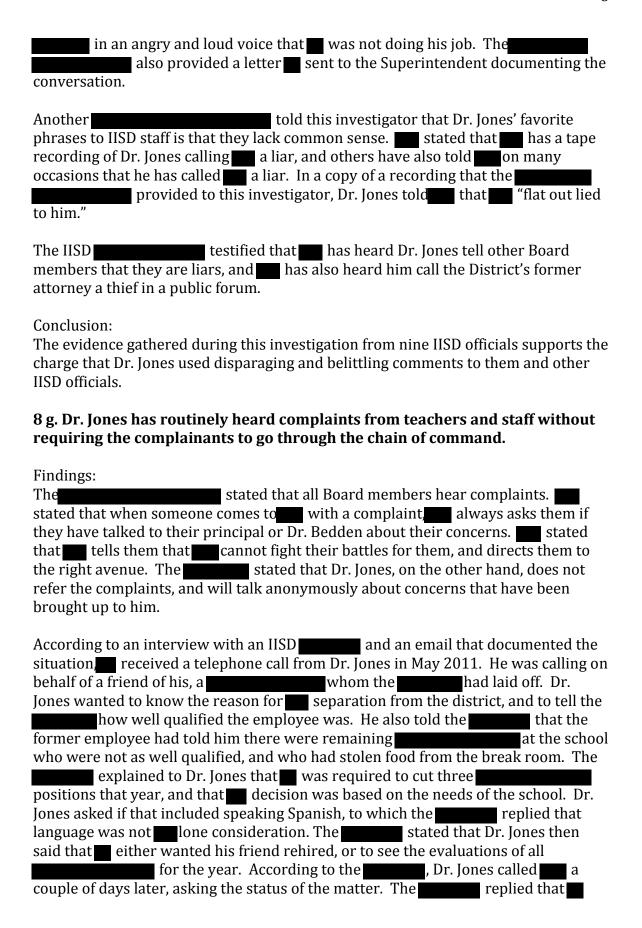
about a group of An incident was related by another principals who had been attending board meetings asked the Board President to read a statement at the end of a board meeting that voiced their concerns about Dr. Iones. The audience reacted to the statement with a standing ovation, but Dr. Jones responded to the statement by saying that those principals were not doing themselves any favors. Conclusion: This investigation found through interviews with six IISD that Dr. Jones has disparaged the performance of the Superintendent to them, by telling them that he intends to get rid of Dr. Bedden. Testimony from these administrators also revealed that Dr. Jones also attempted to undermine Dr. Bedden's authority by discouraging the administrators' support of Dr. Bedden. threatening their jobs if they did. An additional interview found that Dr. Jones disparaged the performance of an IISD Leadership Team member to one of subordinates. 8 e. Dr. Jones targeted the compensation of specific employees for reduction in the absence of a recommendation from the Superintendent. Findings: In an interview with a stated that Dr. Jones has talked about reducing the salaries of administrators who make more than \$90,000 during Board meetings. The School Board President told this investigator that although the process involving the budget comes through the Superintendent, Dr. Jones told on the phone that come May when there were four votes, salaries would be cut to \$90,000. In an interview with a indicated that Dr. Jones has stated that central office is paid too much. Additionally, another Leadership Team member testified that has heard Dr. Jones state in Board meetings that IISD people are overpaid. testified that has heard Dr. Jones say that Another IISD administrators make too much money. Testimony indicated that Dr. Jones has said that he wants to run IISD like a corporation and get cheap corporate people in to run it. According to a different has heard Dr. Jones talk about lowering salaries that are over \$90,000, and "trimming the fat." stated that Dr. Jones told that coordinators are paid too much, and that their jobs should be eliminated.

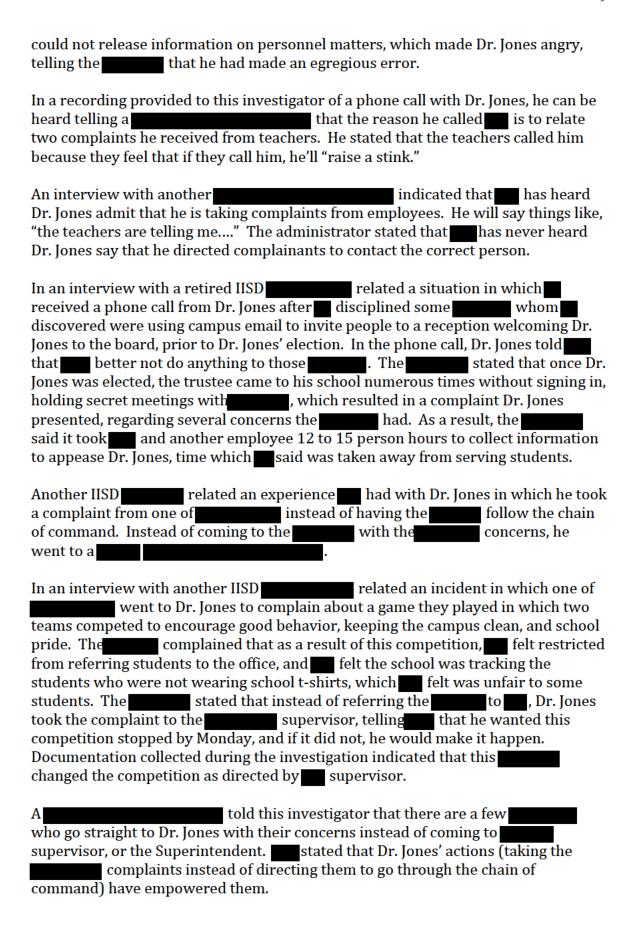
Conclusion:

The investigation found that evidence existed to conclude that there were many occasions when Dr. Jones threatened to lower the salaries of administrators, and that the idea of lowering salaries did not come from a recommendation from the Superintendent.

8 f. Dr. Jones made disparaging and belittling comments to several staff.

Findings:	
In an interview with one called him a liar numerous times.	stated that Dr. Jones has
Testimony from another conversations with Dr. Jones, he has called the liars.	indicated that in the Superintendent and another
Additionally, a different Jones call another	testified that has heard Dr. a liar.
Board President about being asked to look in administrator answered that did not talk Jones asked how the President could have kn stated that had only communicated the material stated that Dr. Jones asked to look in administrator answered that Dr. Jones asked to look in administrator answered that Dr. Jones asked to look in administrator answered that Dr. Jones asked how the President could have known asked that Dr. Jones ask	ent talked at length at a Board meeting ople's business. After the meeting, Dr., and asked why told the nto the soccer matter, to which the to the Board President about it. Dr. nown about it, and the administrator natter to the Superintendent. The nes called a liar in response to the soccer incident. The is not a liar, would never lie to a Board
A different testification test	
	hat Dr. Jones was abusive in the way he at an IISD high school, and telling Jones made cry.
	o what the





As elaborated on in Charge 9 d., Dr. Jones received a complaint from a parent from another school district, and looked into the matter himself by contacting a rather than telling the parent whom to contact. Numerous documents obtained during this investigation reflected Dr. Jones' personal involvement in complaints he received from people inside and outside of the district. Conclusion: Testimony from numerous IISD sources, as well as documents and audio recordings reflect that Dr. Jones indeed routinely hears complaints from teachers and staff without requiring them to go through the chain of command. 9 a. Dr. Iones attempted to influence decisions relating to curriculum and instruction by demanding consideration of specific language programs and the removal or implementation of certain instructional delivery strategies. Findings: stated that Dr. Jones' campaign focused on English The IISD only. stated that he has told the news about his views. He thinks Spanish accents need to go. In an interview with one of IISD's sated that has a recording of Dr. Jones criticizing project-based learning. In the recording that was provided to this investigator, Dr. Jones states that, "PBL will be going on next year over my dead body." Additionally, the stated that has heard Dr. Jones speak frequently about his desire for LEP students to be taught English through English immersion. stated that in work sessions and Board Another meetings, has heard Dr. Jones say that IISD should only offer English immersion to LEP students. also stated that has heard him say that project based learning is not all it is cracked up to be. According to a former received a phone call from Dr. Jones prior to his election to the board, in which he complained that pronounced name with a Spanish accent. He told that IISD should not be speaking any Spanish to its students, and would not listen to explanation of language acquisition. stated that after his election to the board, the department had to justify everything they did to Dr. Jones. One example provided was that he wanted IISD to provide one form to parents that would offer

them the options of bilingual education and ESL at one time. stated that the Texas Education Agency required parents to deny bilingual in order to accept ESL,

and that these options had to be on separate forms. The former IISD administrator stated that the Department was so busy trying to explain to Dr. Jones why they could not legally meet his demands, they could not do what they needed to do for the kids.
In another interview with an employee in the Education department, stated that Dr. Jones once approached and criticized the lanyard was wearing that said, "Education department" on it, saying, "That's not going to happen in this district."
Another testified that following a Drug Summit, Dr. Jones approached and complained that information had been provided in Spanish. explained that IISD receives Title I funds, and thus is required to provide information in Spanish.
According to an interview with an IISD has heard Dr. Jones talk about his support of heavy immersion and early exit of limited English proficient (LEP) students at Board meetings and to personally.
In an interview with an school and came upon some student science projects in Spanish posted on the walls of a hallway. The school administrator stated that Dr. Jones took exception to the Spanish displays, stating, "We're here in the United States, and this is in Spanish." The stated that tried to explain to Dr. Jones that they operate a bilingual program in which both languages are valued, but Dr. Jones would not listen. Instead, the trustee touted early exit programs.
An IISD employee stated that Dr. Jones called in 2011, posing as a parent of a young child. He asked about whether information about this program was offered in English as well as Spanish, and whether English-speaking students could attend the program. He then started telling about the benefits of English immersion, telling that should teach students in English, not Spanish.
An IISD told this investigator that Dr. Jones told he was against project based instruction. He said should not tell how to teach, that they should think outside the box. He also told the that needed to have teachers use basic math instruction with math facts and flashcards. Dr. Jones also told the principal that the district needed to go back to basal readers.
A testified about Dr. Jones supporting a video that bashed C Scope that was played during a noon work session, and arguing with when supported the district's use of it. As a result of disagreement with Dr. Jones about C Scope, had to write an email to apologize.

In addition to these testimonies, several emails were obtained that demonstrated Dr. Jones' involvement in curriculum and instruction issues.

Conclusion:

This investigation found extensive evidence indicating that Dr. Jones was deeply involved in trying to persuade district administration to implement or remove certain language programs and instructional strategies, thus substantiating this claim by the Board.

9 b. Dr. Jones directed staff to violate employee First Amendment rights by demanding administrative staff forbid staff from speaking Spanish in schools.

Findings: The IISD testified that Dr. Jones told the mot to let people speak Spanish.
Another that Dr. Jones told that his first order of business would be to take down all written materials that were in Spanish.
In an interview with a stated that Dr. Jones wanted the District to forbid the speaking of Spanish in its schools. and one of subordinates told Dr. Jones that they legally could not do that, so Dr. Jones asked the District's attorney, who told them the same thing.
In an interview with another staff to speak Spanish.
Another one of IISD's has heard Dr. Jones ask in Board meetings, "Why are they not speaking English in the hallways? They need to be modeling English."
As elaborated on under Charge 9 d., Dr. Jones instructed a to look into a situation involving a coach who spoke Spanish to his soccer players on the field.
Conclusion:

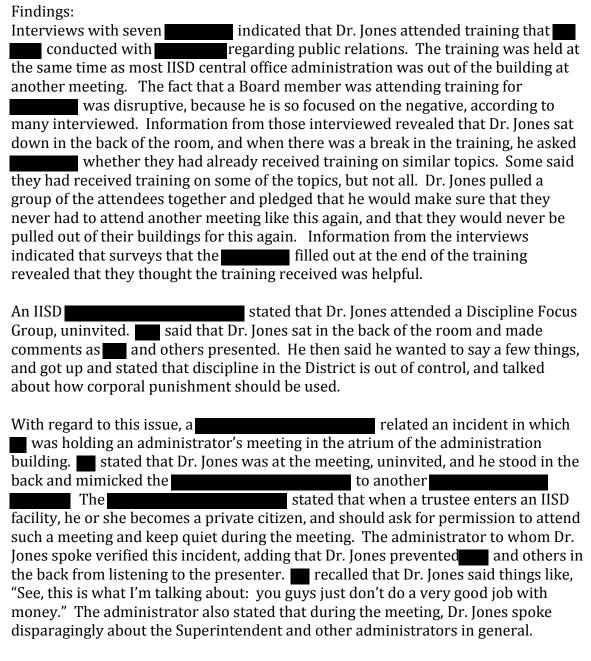
Testimony from six District administrators provided numerous examples of Dr. Iones trying to forbid the use of Spanish in the District, including the use of Spanish on a soccer field. The information gathered in this investigation supports the Board's charge that Dr. Iones directed administrative staff to forbid the use of Spanish.

9 c. Dr. Jones independently conducted an investigation of an employee by contacting a vendor to determine if a district employee has a substantial financial interest in the company and telling the company they should not be speaking to the administration.

An IISD testified that was invited to speak at a conference stated that officials from many other urban school districts also presented. stated that Dr. Jones did not personally confront about her trip to the conference.
An interview with the
Additionally, the provided this investigator information identifying board members, none of whom were affiliated with IISD. also provided information regarding the seminar hosted, in which an IISD administrator and other administrators from large school districts acted as presenters.
Conclusion: Information collected through an interview and the review of documentation confirmed that Dr. Jones independently conducted an investigation of an employee by contacting a vendor to determine if a district employee has a substantial financial interest in the company and telling the company they should not be speaking to the administration.
9 d. Dr. Jones directed an employee other than the Superintendent to investigate the alleged misconduct of another employee.
Findings: According to a, this charge concerns a situation in which Dr. Jones was contacted by a parent from another school district regarding a soccer game with a high school in IISD in which the IISD soccer coach yelled in Spanish at his players. Dr. Jones contacted this administrator and instructed to look into the matter. As emails between Dr. Jones and this administrator indicate, the administrator complied with Dr. Jones' directive, and discovered that the coach used Spanish as strategy, because the opposing players do not know what is telling players to do likened it to other coaches' use of hand signals or signage. This was reported back to Dr. Jones.
Conclusion: Information gathered through an interview with the involved, as well as emails regarding the issue indicate that Dr. Jones indeed

directed a district employee other than the Superintendent to investigate the alleged misconduct of another employee.

9 e. Dr. Jones attended district administrative training and/or meetings without specific invitation that has resulted in disruption of the training or meeting.



In a phone call in which this investigator attempted to schedule an interview with Dr. Jones, he commented to this investigator about the allegation that he attended and disrupted training and meetings that he was not invited to. He stated that the meeting was held in the atrium of the district headquarters, where he happened to

be, so it could not have been a private meeting, because it was being held in a public place, out in the open.

Conclusion:

Evidence obtained through testimony from numerous District administrators supported the Board's charge that Dr. Jones attended training and meetings uninvited, and that he disrupted the training and meetings.

Final Conclusion:

Information obtained during this investigation found irrefutable evidence that all of the charges that the IISD made against Dr. Steven Jones were based on a great deal of reliable, first-hand evidence. Although Dr. Jones declined the opportunity to participate in this investigation, it is safe to assume that any testimony he could have offered would have been refuted by the preponderance of evidence gathered.

Final report submitted by: Susan L. Mattison Number One Consulting, Inc. June 2, 2013