

ORIGINAL (Emailed to superintendent@capousd.org)

Dear Superintendent Brulte:

I am a resident and taxpayer within the Capistrano Unified School District. Although I don't have children currently enrolled in your schools, both of my grandsons graduated from Vista del Mar; my oldest grandson graduated from San Juan Hills in 2018 and my youngest grandson is currently enrolled there as a junior. I recently received a copy of a petition seeking my signature in support of the District taking disciplinary action against VDM teacher Kristen Hostetter. I do not know Ms. Hostetter or her husband. By way of background, I am a licensed California attorney and practiced labor law (representing public entities, including school districts) for thirty years.

If Ms. Hostetter is convicted of a crime, then the District certainly has the legal right to take whatever action is allowed by its administrative rules and California law. However, I have seen no evidence that Ms. Hostetter has been charged or convicted of a crime. I would be surprised if the District has the capabilities of conducting an adequate and fair administrative investigation of actions that allegedly took place thousands of miles away in Washington D.C. As long as Ms. Hostetter assembled and protested in a peaceful manner, her actions are protected under the First Amendment. Accordingly, I would ask that you chart a course of action that insures Ms. Hostetter's due process rights are protected in any District response to this Petition. I understand some parents are upset at the events that occurred in Washington D.C. Perhaps this should be a teachable moment – for those parents and their children – that our country is founded on principles of free speech and the right to peacefully protest and that those who engage in those activities should not be silenced merely because others disagree with them.

Finally, with respect to the concerns some parents have voiced about Ms. Hostetter traveling "unmasked" to Washington D.C. during the Covid crisis: I have personally observed VDM and San Clemente High School teachers in and around San Clemente in the last month not wearing masks in public (at the grocery store and in my Pilates classes). If action is going to be taken against any one teacher for going maskless, then action must be taken against every teacher for doing the same.

Thank you for listening, and thank you for what I hope is your lawful and considered response to this Petition.

Cynthia Ward Blaylock, Esq.

MODIFIED (Emailed to superintendent@capousd.org)

Dear Superintendent Brulte:

I am a resident and taxpayer within the Capistrano Unified School District. I recently received a copy of a petition seeking my signature in support of the District taking disciplinary action against VDM teacher Kristen Hostetter. I do not know Ms. Hostetter or her husband.

If Ms. Hostetter is convicted of a crime, then the District certainly has the legal right to take whatever action is allowed by its administrative rules and California law. However, I have seen no evidence that Ms. Hostetter has been charged or convicted of a crime. I would be surprised if the District has the capabilities of conducting an adequate and fair administrative investigation of actions that allegedly took place thousands of miles away in Washington D.C. As long as Ms. Hostetter assembled and protested in a peaceful manner, her actions are protected under the First Amendment. Accordingly, I would ask that you chart a course of action that ensures Ms. Hostetter's due process rights are protected in any District response to this Petition. I understand some parents are upset at the events that occurred in Washington D.C. Perhaps this should be a teachable moment – for those parents and their children – that our country is founded on principles of free speech and the right to peacefully protest and that those who engage in those activities should not be silenced merely because others disagree with them.

Finally, with respect to the concerns some parents have voiced about Ms. Hostetter traveling "unmasked" to Washington D.C. during the Covid crisis: I have personally observed VDM and San Clemente High School teachers in and around San Clemente in the last month not wearing masks in public (at the grocery store and elsewhere). If action is going to be taken against any one teacher for going maskless, then action must be taken against every teacher for doing the same.

Thank you for listening, and thank you for what I hope is your lawful and considered response to this Petition.