



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DSEA President Stephanie Ingram and Christina EA President Darren Tyson issue joint statement on Christina School Board Comments

“DSEA and Christina Education Association (CEA) members chose to safely and peacefully protest outside of the Christina School Board meeting (that the public was not permitted to enter due to COVID) on Tuesday evening. They held a drive-in protest to voice the concerns not being addressed by the Christina School Board and Superintendent around returning to in-person instruction. Knowing that not all of them would be given the time to speak, and having had public comment cut short in prior meetings, they found this to be the only way to have their concerns heard by the leaders who make the decisions that directly affect their lives.

This gathering of cars and socially distant educators caused CSD School Board members to not come to the physical meeting, and then comment during the meeting that they felt unsafe attending in-person because of what happened at the Capitol Building last week. Superintendent Shelton also referenced the insurrection when referring to the opinions of these educators as well.

We find it completely inappropriate and offensive to compare educators who are voicing their fears and concerns in a peaceful manner to the violence at the U.S. Capitol last week. The mere reference to beliefs of insurrectionists at the U.S. Capitol when discussing their employees peacefully protesting is both inappropriate and completely unprofessional. Instead of acknowledging the fears and concerns of their employees, the reality of the pandemic, and the fact that the community spread numbers are now higher than when the School Board decided to move to remote instruction in December, they choose to chide their employees who they sent back into school buildings.

This disingenuous behavior shines a light on the relationship between administrator and employee in the Christina School District and why their educators don't feel appreciated or heard. That is why we stand with our members in the Christina School District and call for a public apology from Superintendent Shelton, Keeley Powell, and Claire O'Neal for their offensive comments. This is the very least that can be done to try to heal this fractured relationship.

No employee should ever be made to feel like a criminal by their employer for merely voicing their concerns over health and safety.”

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