

Whitley County Board of Education


300 Main Street
Williamsburg, Kentucky 40769
(606) 549-7000
Fax: (606) 549-7006

SCOTT L. PAUL, Superintendent

PAULA TRICKETT, Deputy Superintendent
LARRY LAMBDIN, Board Chairman
J.E. JONES, Board Vice-Chairman

BOARD MEMBERS
DELMAR MAHAN
BRENDA HILL
MALORIE COOPER

03/17/2016

Mr. Derrick Shelton


Re: Notice of Termination of Your Employment Contract

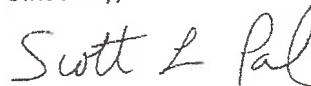
Dear Mr. Shelton:

This letter is to inform you of my decision regarding your future employment with the Whitley County Board of Education. You were suspended with pay on Tuesday, March 15th when a child remained on your bus after your morning bus route. Mr. Bobby Blakley, Transportation Director, was asked to do an investigation into the incident. According to his report, by your own admission, you failed to walk the entire length of your bus to ascertain that no students remained on the bus at the conclusion of your route.

This is a failure to follow safety protocols which are in place to prevent something like this from occurring. Your failure to follow safety directives is the grounds for which I am terminating your contract with the Whitley County Board of Education effective today, Thursday, March 17, 2016. See, KRS. 161.011 (7) and Board Policy 03.27.

I regret that it is necessary that I make this decision but under the circumstances, I have no alternative.

Sincerely,



Scott L. Paul
Superintendent

Cc: Personnel File
Bobby Blakley

At approximately 1:15 PM, Jordan Spitser asked me to come to his bus behind the bus garage. Upon arrival, I found Jordan and Kami Cox (both are bus drivers) with a young man. They told me he was found sitting on the steps of bus 998. The child, [REDACTED] appeared to be in good spirits. I asked why he was still on the bus. He told me he had fallen asleep. I asked why he didn't come into the garage when he woke up. He told me he was scared and went back to sleep. Kami brought him some food and milk to drink. Jordan knew the child from a few years back when he worked as bus monitor on his route. They talked as I contacted Mr. Paul to report what had happened.

(The bus was parked approximately 100 feet behind the bus garage. Somewhere between 8:15 AM-8:30 AM, the bus was moved to allow another bus to be pulled into the garage. Also, Jordan's bus was pulled in and backed out multiple times beside bus 998 between 8:15 AM and 1:00PM.)

I took [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and met with Mrs. Brashear. She and I questioned him. Mrs. Brashear asked him why he didn't get off the bus. He told her he was scared. She asked him what he was scared of. He hesitated; she said, "Is someone bothering you? Is someone on the bus bothering you?" He said someone in his room was bothering him but didn't know his name. Mrs. Brashear asked how he kept the driver from seeing him. He told her he hid and moved from seat to seat, so he wouldn't have to get off the bus. She explained to him how dangerous that behavior was.

Mrs. Brashear contacted [REDACTED] mother and explained that [REDACTED] had hidden on the bus and didn't get off at school that morning, because he didn't want to come to school. She told [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] said someone in his class was picking on him. [REDACTED] said that she had a hard time getting him to come to school anyway, because he didn't like to come to school. [REDACTED] asked why someone hadn't called to see why he wasn't at school. Mrs. Brashear told [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] teacher had tried to call her that morning to see why he wasn't at school, but no one answered any of the numbers that was on the enrollment form. [REDACTED] asked if [REDACTED] was ok, and Mrs. Brashear told her he didn't seem upset at all. Mrs. Brashear told [REDACTED] that they had given [REDACTED] something to eat. Mrs. Brashear asked [REDACTED] if she could come to school and get [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] said she didn't have a car at home, and would have to see if her husband could bring her the car. Mrs. Brashear offered for her and me to bring [REDACTED] home, if she was unable to get a car. She said she thought she could get the car, and she arrived about 15 minutes later. While waiting on her to arrive, [REDACTED] talked to us about his brother going to weightlifting and joining the military. During the entire time [REDACTED] never seemed to be alarmed in any way.

Upon arrival of his mother, he gave her a hug. She asked him why he didn't get off the bus. He told her he was tired. She said, "Why didn't you get off the bus?" again. His mother asked him if someone was bothering him. He shook his head yes, but couldn't or wouldn't tell her who it was. Again, Mrs. Brashear and I explained what had happened and what [REDACTED] had told us. His mom, Mrs. Brashear, and I talked with him about how dangerous his behavior could be. Mrs. Brashear told him that in the morning she would come to his classroom and try to determine who is bothering him. He and his mother seemed to be fine with that resolution. He and his mother left the building at this time.

I returned to the garage to talk with Derrick Shelton, the driver. I asked him if he checked his bus at the end of the route. He told me he started back to check the bus when he noticed his wife had pulled in. He had a family emergency and turned and exited the bus. He told me he ordinarily never gets off the bus without checking it. He apologized many times. I asked if the monitor checked the bus. He told me he thought she did. I told him he would be suspended pending an investigation.

I spoke to Alicia Eversole, bus monitor. I asked her if she checked the bus when they returned to the bus garage. She told me that she had walked to the emergency door and no kids were left on the bus. I asked her why she didn't go all the way to the back. She told me the elementary students didn't sit past the emergency door. I asked if she remembered where [REDACTED] was sitting. She told me, she thought it was about 6 seats back from the front.

Bobby Blalock

3-17-16

Open records request

March 25, 2016

To: Whitley County Superintendent Scott Paul

CC: Board Attorney Tim Crawford

From: Mark White, News Journal News Editor

Subject: Open records request

Pursuant to the Kentucky Open Records Act, I am requesting a copy of any disciplinary action taken by the district against the bus driver, who was terminated in connection with the March 15 incident where an 11-year-old Whitley Central Intermediate School student was left on the bus, including the identity of the driver.

I can pick up copies of any documents from your office, they can be faxed to me at (606) 549-0644 or e-mailed to me at

mwhite@corbinnewsjournal.com, whichever is more convenient for you.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach me by e-mail, by phone at my Williamsburg office, (606) 549-0643, or on my cell phone at (606) 521-1558. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Mark White