

# One Wisconsin Now: Personnel records detail troubled tenure of Lowell Holtz at Beloit School District

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MADISON, Wis. — The questionable ethics and self dealing of Lowell Holtz, candidate for state Superintendent of Public Instruction, have been on full display with revelations he attempted to negotiate a sleazy campaign endorsement deal that would have cost state taxpayers at least \$500,000 and was working on his campaign during the workday, including using his school email while an employee of the Whitnall School District. [A weekend Wisconsin State Journal story](#) uncovers that concerns about his ethics and job performance date back to his 2006-2009 tenure at the Beloit School District, based on a review of his personnel file.

“These files show that Lowell Holtz has been making questionable ethical decisions and underperforming on the job for at least a decade,” said One Wisconsin Now Executive Director Scot Ross. “He was reprimanded for ethical lapses and criticized for questionable decisions by a School Board that found his willingness to work with them and follow district policies lacking.”

Among the discoveries from Holtz’s personnel file from his tenure as the Beloit school superintendent, obtained under the state open records law by One Wisconsin Now and included in the story, are:

**JOB DUTIES REVISED AND LIMITED**

*"Just before Holtz sought to dissolve his contract with the school district in order to run for state superintendent in the 2009 race, Erikson informed Holtz he was ordered to focus on specific projects the board outlined and that his remaining duties would be delegated to others."*

[[See the 2009 memo](#)]

### **"PERFORMANCE DEFICIENCIES" NOTED**

*"...according to a May 30, 2008, letter to Holtz from Beloit School Board president John Erikson, School Board members extended Holtz's contract for one year instead of more because of what Erikson characterized as "performance deficiencies."*

*Erikson wrote the board was significantly concerned about Holtz's "lack of communication with the Board regarding significant matters" and said the board is often "unaware of important developments within the District."*

*Holtz would not have his contract renewed if his performance did not improve, Erikson wrote."*

[[See the 2008 memo](#)]

### **CONTROVERSIAL HIRING OF HIS WIFE**

*... he also was criticized for the district's hiring of his wife, Sue Holtz, to work as an online coordinator by contracting with the Cooperative Educational Support Agency she worked for and not posting the position. A board member said the group was "surprised" by the decision.*

*"I am not comfortable with the way some personnel decisions have been made," an unidentified board member wrote in his evaluation. "It is unclear to me who Mrs. Holtz reports directly to."*

*Later that year, Holtz's wife was recommended to be hired for a full-time district administrator position and ultimately withdrew her name from consideration after questions arose from the public about nepotism, according to Beloit Daily News articles published in October 2007."*

[[Excerpt from evaluation](#)]