

Rep. Pope: Holtz and Humphries threaten local control and integrity of DPI

Posted on Friday, Feb 17, 2017

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MADISON, Wis. – Representative Sondy Pope (D-Mt. Horeb), the ranking member of the Assembly Committee on Education, responded to recent news reports involving two candidates for State Superintendent – Lowell Holtz and John Humphries. Holtz and Humphries met in December of 2016 in order to negotiate a deal in which one candidate would drop out of the race in exchange for a highly paid position within the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and control of Wisconsin’s five largest school districts, contingent on the other candidate winning the Spring Election.

“By even having this discussion, both candidates have signaled their intention and willingness to use the position of Superintendent to create cushy positions for themselves and allies rather than focusing on how best to provide excellent education for Wisconsin students,” Rep. Pope said. “Clearly, they are willing to circumvent the powers of local elected school boards to the point of outright eliminating them in order to create new power structures for themselves.”

The documents that outline [Holtz’](#) and [Humphries’](#) December discussion shows that the election drop-out would receive a three year contract for a \$150,000 salary, a personal driver and full benefits, which may or may not cover [teeth whitening](#). In addition, they would receive near complete control of the Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Kenosha and Green Bay School Districts, which includes the ability to break apart the districts and dismantle the locally elected school boards. These districts represent nearly 20 percent of public school students.

“This incident was just a glimpse of the power grab that could lie ahead. Citizens of Wisconsin deserve leaders who are steady and will not give up their integrity at the first opportunity for personal financial gain,” said Rep. Pope. “While we cannot stop the national train wreck that is Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education, who both candidates strongly supported, it is my hope that Wisconsin citizens make better decisions and have better judgement than these candidates.”

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