

Wausau School Board candidates Webster, Kocha: Call for reversal of Wausau School's 'Bathroom Guideline'

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"Wrongheaded; lack of leadership"

February 27, Wausau – Wausau school board challengers Lee Webster and Jeff Kocha on Monday called on the Wausau School Board President, Lance Trollop to immediately reverse its guidelines on making bathrooms open to any students based on their self-declared gender identity. This announcement comes following Trollop's statements on local TV on Feb. 23 when he indicated there would be no change despite a directive from the Trump administration reversing the Obama administration guidelines that the board had approved, against strong community opposition.

"These guidelines were misguided at best," stated Webster. "There was no need for the board to enact them as the Obama administration's guidelines were blocked by a federal court before the board acted. President Trump's decision to withdraw the guidelines totally removes the need for Wausau schools to have this policy in place. "Why was the board president so quick to implement the guidelines in August and so reluctant to take leadership to change them now?"

"The decision by board president Trollop to allow these guidelines to move forward was wrongheaded and his failure to reverse these guidelines, which most district parents do not support, shows a lack of leadership," added Kocha.

Webster and Kocha both expressed frustration that, even after dozens of residents and parents packed the board room last fall to express their opposition to the guidelines, the board allowed the recommendations from the superintendent to

move forward. “It is the job of the superintendent to *propose* policy or guidelines; it is a responsible board’s job to *enact* them as representatives of the community,” said Webster. “This board is allowing the superintendent to set policy. It is time for the board to have a president who is willing to lead based on Wausau values.”

“The primary stated reason for this guideline is to ‘protect’ students, and *privacy* should be the first concern” said Kocha. “But allowing biologically male students to use the female facilities is not a way to protect all students’ privacy. If this is about protection and privacy, we already have the facilities in place in every school – a private bathroom for *any* student who is uncomfortable using a public bathroom.”

Webster and Kocha are on the ballot for Wausau school board along with incumbents, Lance Trollop, Yvonne Henning and Jeff Leigh. The top three vote-getters on April 4 will join the other six incumbents on the board.

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