

From: fergusonhcsc@gmail.com
Subject: Response to Biden letter on school board protests
Date: October 6, 2021 at 9:58 AM



To: vmgarcia@board.aldineisd.org, cslaven@nsba.org
Cc: fhenderson@usd345.com, kristi.swett@slcschools.org, Cwilson@wscloud.org, jbayteske@tcsd.org, steven.chapman@tuhsd.org, pjdoyle62@gmail.com, bfles@msad11.org, kathy.gebhardt@bvsvd.org, kathyannegreen@gmail.com, John Halkias halkiasj@plainlocal.org, phoepfner@cordovasd.org, rhopkins@dhalawfirm.com, dhubler@misd.net, MaraldoM@issaquah.wednet.edu, dsheehan05@yahoo.com, pinkfj@hotmail.com, beverly.slough@stjohns.k12.fl.us, ltedone@simsburyschools.net

To Viola Garcia, National School Boards Association president, and Chip Slaven, National School Boards Association interim executive director/CEO:

As a 12-year school board member, a strong supporter of the Ohio School Boards Association and an attendee of the National School Boards Association conference each year since 2011, I am extremely disappointed in your approach in the Sept. 29 letter sent to President Biden about protests at local school board meetings.

I contacted OSBA's president and the CEO, and they were not consulted before you issued such a partisan attack on our citizens—and PARENTS—who are exercising their First Amendment right of free speech.

I also gained information indicating that the national board was not consulted before the letter was sent. I would like to hear from you and board members whether discussions occurred. Consultations should've been at the top of your action list before issuing such an inflammatory letter. This appears to be a personal-agenda letter that has no place in a national organization that purports to represent 90,000 locally elected school board members, all of whom have varying views on many issues.

The national media attention that this letter generated has set back years of work by the NSBA, our state associations and local school board members. The constant flow of news headlines, commentary and social-media posts in the past week is extremely troubling. During my service, I have spent time explaining to legislators, executive-branch officials and others that our school board members come from all backgrounds and political persuasions. The letter totally undermines our work.

Death threats and physical confrontations have no place in the public forum. In Ohio, we have laws to deal with those who make threats or harass others. We have local board policies to deal with public comment, and we can call local law enforcement when decorum is violated. To call for the "resources of the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, and its National Threat Assessment Center" is extreme.

Further, to equate the actions of our citizens, our PARENTS, to "the equivalent (of) a form of **domestic terrorism** and hate crimes" is way over the line.

What were you thinking?

Continuing to quote from your letter, "NSBA requests a joint expedited review by the U.S. Departments of Justice, Education, and Homeland Security, along with the appropriate training, coordination, investigations, and enforcement mechanisms from the FBI, including any technical assistance necessary from, and state and local coordination with, its National Security Branch and Counter**terrorism** Division, as well as any other federal agency with relevant jurisdictional authority and oversight."

Local school boards have always been about local control. Calling for federal intervention is flat-out uncalled for. The NSBA website itself says: "NSBA believes it is crucial for local school boards to maintain decision-making authority at the local level as well as accountability for high-quality educational services. The expansion of federal intrusion on public education in recent years has impacted local policymaking in ways that impose unnecessary rules, conditions and restrictions, as well as significant costs, on local school governance." NSBA exists because of local school boards and their state associations. And you call for federal intervention? Do you not believe in NSBA's own policies?

And requesting use of "the Gun-Free School Zones Act, the PATRIOT Act in regards to **domestic terrorism**, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the Violent Interference with Federally Protected Rights statute, the Conspiracy Against Rights statute?"

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NSBA needs to be about the education of our children—every single one of them. You surely know that the country is evenly split on many political issues. NSBA does not need to become embroiled in such divisive politics at any level.

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Thank you for your quick response, Pam.

I would like to hear from all of you and how this happened. NSBA's future now appears to be at stake.

Best,
Bill

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Pam Doyle

From: John Halkias halkiasj@plainlocal.org
Subject: Re: Response to Biden letter on school board protests
Date: October 6, 2021 at 10:25 AM
To: Pam Doyle pjdoyle62@gmail.com
Cc: fergusonhcesc@gmail.com, vmgarcia@board.aldineisd.org, Chip Slaven cslaven@nsba.org, fhenderson@usd345.com, Kristi Swett kristi.swett@slcschools.org, Cwilson@wscloud.org, jbayteske@tcsd.org, steven.chapman@tuhsd.org, Becky Fles bfles@msad11.org, Kathleen Gebhardt kathy.gebhardt@bvsd.org, Green, Kathryn kathyannegreen@gmail.com, phoepfner@cordovasd.org, Ronnie Hopkins rhopkins@dhalawfirm.com, dhubler@misd.net, Maraldo, Marnie MaraldoM@issaquah.wednet.edu, dsheehan05@yahoo.com, Simon, Floyd (OK) pinkfj@hotmail.com, Beverly Slough beverly.slough@stjohns.k12.fl.us, ltedone@simsburyschools.net

JH

Bill,

Thank you for your letter. Knowing you as I do, I appreciate your thoughts, concerns, and comments. Thank you for expressing them, and letting the Board know your thoughts. I hope to see you in November at the Ohio Capital Conference.

John

John W. Halkias
Plain Local Schools
Board Member
NSBA Central Region Director
2019 OSBA Past President
Term 2018-2021
Home Phone: 330-494-4719
Cell : 234-262-0470



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You are welcome.

While we won't all agree on everything, I hope we can all agree to respect each other's views and take corrective measures when necessary.

Just to be clear, I too was not aware of the letter to President Biden until it was sent to the whole group.

Kindness. Respect. Tolerance. Civility. This cost nothing but reaps huge rewards that money cannot buy.

God Bless America.

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> Local school boards have always been about local control. Calling for federal intervention is flat-out uncalled for. The NSBA website itself says: “NSBA believes it is crucial for local school boards to maintain decision-making authority at the local level as well as accountability for high-quality educational services. The expansion of federal intrusion on public education in recent years has impacted local policymaking in ways that impose unnecessary rules, conditions and restrictions, as well as significant costs, on local school governance.” NSBA exists because of local school boards and their state associations. And you call for federal intervention? Do you not believe in NSBA’s own policies?

>

> And requesting use of “the Gun-Free School Zones Act, the PATRIOT Act in regards to domestic terrorism, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the Violent Interference with Federally Protected Rights statute, the Conspiracy Against Rights statute?”

>

> What were you thinking?

>

> I read virtually all of your linked stories. In every one of them, the school boards did what they needed to do. None of the stories supports any semblance of domestic terrorism, unless you think that people have no First Amendment rights. Do you even know what most people consider terrorism and the price that Americans have paid in defense of terrorism?

>

> Since when did you decide that citizens, PARENTS, cannot raise their voices, especially in those peaceful protests outside the boardroom? Since when did you decide that you speak for 90,000 school board members on any hot-button issue?

>

> I do not understand the inclusion of this one—<https://whnt.com/news/alabama-news/if-you-give-one-more-shot-you-yourself-will-be-executed-alabama-man-tells-missouri-pharmacists/>—about an Alabama man threatening pharmacists in a Missouri Walmart. What does that have to do with schools? Was it just padding? Did you think no one would check your references?

>

> And what does this have to do with the issue?: <https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/local/wilson/2021/09/08/jon-white-resigns-wilson-county-school-board-member/5750949001/> To quote the story, “White cited concerns about too much time away from his family, Tomlinson said.” There is nothing about protests, violence or anything else in the cited story.

>

> NSBA needs to be about the education of our children—every single one of them. You surely know that the country is evenly split on many political issues. NSBA does not need to become embroiled in such divisive politics at any level.

>

> I expect better from a national organization that says it represents us as school board members. I call on you to issue an apology to your state associations and to all board members, regardless of their positions on face masks, vaccinations, CRT or any other current political issue.

>

> If you persist in defending the letter, in defending your characterization as domestic terrorists those who just want to be voiceful for their children, I ask that you resign and go to work for an organization more aligned with your views of our citizens and your political leanings.

>

> Sincerely,

> Bill Ferguson Jr.

> Cincinnati

> Writing as a citizen and single board member, not for our board

>

>

> Pam Doyle



From: fergusonhcesc@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Response to Biden letter on school board protests
Date: October 6, 2021 at 10:38 AM
To: Pam Doyle pjdoyl62@gmail.com
Cc: vmgarcia@board.aldineisd.org, Chip Slaven cslaven@nsba.org, fhenderson@usd345.com, Swett, Kristi (UT) kristi.swett@slcschools.org, Cwilson@wscloud.org, jbayteske@tcsd.org, steven.chapman@tuhsd.org, Becky Fles bfles@msad11.org, Kathleen Gebhardt kathy.gebhardt@bvsd.org, Green, Kathryn kathyannegreen@gmail.com, John Halkias halkiasj@plainlocal.org, phoepfner@cordovasd.org, Ronnie Hopkins rhopkins@dhalawfirm.com, dhubler@misd.net, Maraldo, Marnie MaraldoM@issaquah.wednet.edu, dsheehan05@yahoo.com, Simon, Floyd (OK) pinkfj@hotmail.com, Beverly Slough beverly.slough@stjohns.k12.fl.us, ltedone@simsburyschools.net

Totally agree, Pam.

Thank you again,
Bill

On Oct 6, 2021, at 10:25 AM, Pam Doyle <pjdoyl62@gmail.com> wrote:

You are welcome.

While we won't all agree on everything, I hope we can all agree to respect each other's views and take corrective measures when necessary.

Just to be clear, I too was not aware of the letter to President Biden until it was sent to the whole group.

Kindness. Respect. Tolerance. Civility. This cost nothing but reaps huge rewards that money cannot buy.

God Bless America.

Pam

On Wed, Oct 6, 2021 at 9:22 AM <fergusonhcesc@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you for your quick response, Pam.

I would like to hear from all of you and how this happened. NSBA's future now appears to be at stake.

Best,
Bill

On Oct 6, 2021, at 10:06 AM, Pam Doyle <pjdoyl62@gmail.com> wrote:

Thank you for your letter.

Your concerns will be addressed.

Thank you for your service in public education and to the children in Ohio.

On Wed, Oct 6, 2021, 8:58 AM <fergusonhcesc@gmail.com> wrote:

To Viola Garcia, National School Boards Association president, and Chip Slaven, National School Boards Association interim executive director/CEO:

As a 12-year school board member, a strong supporter of the Ohio School Boards Association and an attendee of the National School Boards Association conference each year since 2011, I am extremely disappointed in your approach in the Sept. 29 letter sent to President Biden about protests at local school board meetings.

I contacted OSBA's president and the CEO, and they were not consulted before you issued such a partisan attack on our citizens —and PARENTS—who are exercising their First Amendment right of free speech.

I also gained information indicating that the national board was not consulted before the letter was sent. I would like to hear from you and board members whether discussions occurred. Consultations should've been at the top of your action list before issuing such an inflammatory letter. This appears to be a personal-agenda letter that has no place in a national organization that purports

such an inflammatory letter. This appears to be a personal agenda letter that has no place in a national organization that purports to represent 90,000 locally elected school board members, all of whom have varying views on many issues.

The national media attention that this letter generated has set back years of work by the NSBA, our state associations and local school board members. The constant flow of news headlines, commentary and social-media posts in the past week is extremely troubling. During my service, I have spent time explaining to legislators, executive-branch officials and others that our school board members come from all backgrounds and political persuasions. The letter totally undermines our work.

Death threats and physical confrontations have no place in the public forum. In Ohio, we have laws to deal with those who make threats or harass others. We have local board policies to deal with public comment, and we can call local law enforcement when decorum is violated. To call for the “resources of the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, and its National Threat Assessment Center” is extreme.

Further, to equate the actions of our citizens, our PARENTS, to “the equivalent (of) a form of domestic terrorism and hate crimes” is way over the line.

What were you thinking?

Continuing to quote from your letter, “NSBA requests a joint expedited review by the U.S. Departments of Justice, Education, and Homeland Security, along with the appropriate training, coordination, investigations, and enforcement mechanisms from the FBI, including any technical assistance necessary from, and state and local coordination with, its National Security Branch and Counterterrorism Division, as well as any other federal agency with relevant jurisdictional authority and oversight.”

Local school boards have always been about local control. Calling for federal intervention is flat-out uncalled for. The NSBA website itself says: “NSBA believes it is crucial for local school boards to maintain decision-making authority at the local level as well as accountability for high-quality educational services. The expansion of federal intrusion on public education in recent years has impacted local policymaking in ways that impose unnecessary rules, conditions and restrictions, as well as significant costs, on local school governance.” NSBA exists because of local school boards and their state associations. And you call for federal intervention? Do you not believe in NSBA’s own policies?

And requesting use of “the Gun-Free School Zones Act, the PATRIOT Act in regards to domestic terrorism, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the Violent Interference with Federally Protected Rights statute, the Conspiracy Against Rights statute?”

What were you thinking?

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Since when did you decide that citizens, PARENTS, cannot raise their voices, especially in those peaceful protests outside the boardroom? Since when did you decide that you speak for 90,000 school board members on any hot-button issue?

I do not understand the inclusion of this one—<https://whnt.com/news/alabama-news/if-you-give-one-more-shot-you-yourself-will-be-executed-alabama-man-tells-missouri-pharmacists/>—about an Alabama man threatening pharmacists in a Missouri Walmart. What does that have to do with schools? Was it just padding? Did you think no one would check your references?

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I expect better from a national organization that says it represents us as school board members. I call on you to issue an apology to your state associations and to all board members, regardless of their positions on face masks, vaccinations, CRT or any other current political issue.

If you persist in defending the letter, in defending your characterization as domestic terrorists those who just want to be voiceful for their children, I ask that you resign and go to work for an organization more aligned with your views of our citizens and your political leanings.

Sincerely,
Bill Ferguson Jr.
Cincinnati
Writing as a citizen and single board member, not for our board

Pam Doyle

