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SAS:JDN:NYL
JT
DJ 169-78-5

March 14, 2023

By Electronic Mail

Kathryn Larsen, Acting School Board Chair
Twin Valley School District

Barbara Anne Komons-Montroll, Superintendent
Windham Southwest Supervisory Union

c/o Adrienne Shea
Lynn, Lynn, Blackman & Manitsky, P.C.
76 St. Paul Street, Suite 400
Burlington, VT 05401

Re: Twin Valley School District Investigation and Related Findings

Dear Acting Chair Larsen and Superintendent Komons-Montroll:

We write about the U.S. Department of Justice's (the "United States") investigation into Twin Valley School District's (the "District") response to complaints of student-on-student harassment based on race and sex. The Civil Rights Division's Educational Opportunities Section and U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Vermont jointly conducted the investigation under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000c *et seq.* ("Title IV"). Title IV authorizes the United States to address complaints that a school board has denied students equal protection of the laws based on race, sex, and other protected classifications. 42 U.S.C. § 2000c-6. We appreciate the District's cooperation throughout our investigation and acknowledge the steps the District has taken to improve the school climate at Twin Valley Middle-High School and to strengthen its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

As part of its investigation, the United States reviewed complaints of harassment the District received from the 2019-2020 school year to the present; student discipline files; relevant District policies, procedures, and trainings; and correspondence on the District's response to allegations of race- or sex-based slurs or other harassment. The United States also interviewed

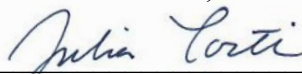
former members of the Twin Valley School District community and current District employees, including administrators and faculty at Twin Valley Elementary School and Twin Valley Middle-High School.

The United States concluded that the District knew of, and did not respond sufficiently to, individualized harassment and a broader hostile educational environment in Twin Valley Middle-High School. Specifically, the United States found that the District did not respond sufficiently to racial harassment that created a hostile environment for Black students. The United States also determined that students had experienced serious and persistent harassment based on sex, including based on sexual orientation and sex stereotypes.

We look forward to continuing to work with the District to ensure that its improved practices comply with federal antidiscrimination mandates. If you have any questions about this letter or the attached settlement agreement, please contact Natacha Y. Lam (Natacha.Lam@usdoj.gov) or Jules Torti (Julia.Torti@usdoj.gov).


Sincerely,

Nikolas P. Kerest, U.S. Attorney



Julia Torti, Chief, Civil Division
U.S. Attorney's Office
for the District of Vermont

Shaheena A. Simons, Chief



Jonathan D. Newton, Deputy Chief
Natacha Y. Lam, Trial Attorney
Educational Opportunities Section