

Subject: Cancelling Keith Ellison
From: Ann marie Hess <ahess7@icloud.com>
Date: 2/28/2025, 7:28 AM
To: bjjaszczak@rwps.org

How embarrassing for our beautiful town. Why would you deny your students this opportunity? It could have been such an honor for them, maybe even life changing. Maybe you could do an event on the KKK rally that was held here in 1923, it attracted an estimated 7,000 people and would perhaps be more acceptable to the people you listen to. I have no students in school, but I am a citizen of Red Wing, and this just looks like pre-obedience to the coming fascism. Shame.

Ann Marie Hess
Sent from my iPad

Subject: Re: Speaker cancellation reaction
From: Sara poole <sarapoole92@gmail.com>
Date: 2/28/2025, 8:24 AM
To: Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org>

Hi Bob, I'm wondering how a previously planned event could be disruptive to classes? I'm also hoping you reconsider making participation in the walk out an excused absence. It's not our students fault some parents somehow thought this visit would be harmful in anyway for anyone. Inclusion at our schools should be upheld and protected for all students. Thank you, Sara Poole

On Fri, Feb 28, 2025 at 7:13 AM Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org> wrote:

Dear Families,

As we shared earlier, we decided to cancel a visit from State Attorney General Keith Ellison due to concerns that learning could be disrupted by the event. We are aware that a student walkout is being planned at the high school today in protest of our decision.

While we respect our students' First Amendment right to protest, we must balance this with the safety of our schools and limiting disruptions to teaching and learning. We ask that any protest remains peaceful and positive.

We also must ensure that we respect the rights of all students—including those who wish not to participate in the protest. With this in mind, we will do everything we can to minimize disruptions to the learning process.

Per school policy, any students who walk out will be considered unexcused from school.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your attention to this update.

Sincerely,

Bob Jaszczak

Automated translation:

Queridas familias,

Como compartimos anteriormente, decidimos cancelar una visita del Fiscal General del Estado.

Si bien respetamos el derecho a protestar de la Primera Enmienda de nuestros estudiantes, c

Subject: Re: Speaker cancellation reaction
From: Chastite Younggoop <123knnyoung@gmail.com>
Date: 2/28/2025, 8:31 AM
To: Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org>

It sounds really professional to say that you're worried about learning being disrupted but that's more than likely not true. The real concern is probably federal funding being disrupted. There certainly wasn't any hesitation to throw kids to the curb during covid. Also, if you didn't promote segregation, the kids wouldn't have anything to protest.

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Subject: Re: Speaker cancellation reaction
From: Joshua Bethke <jbethke3@gmail.com>
Date: 2/28/2025, 8:31 AM
To: Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org>

Is there a protest for trying to bring politics to school

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También debemos asegurarnos de respetar los derechos de todos los estudiantes, incluidos ac

Subject: Re: Speaker cancellation reaction
From: Tamra Graham <tamragraham01@gmail.com>
Date: 2/28/2025, 8:51 AM
To: Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org>

Hello Mr. Jaszczak,

Thank you for the second email. My husband and I, [REDACTED] want to express our disappointment over the decision to cancel the event and whatever negative pressures that may have led to it. It would be helpful to students and parents to have a more specific explanation for the cancellation, particularly since participation in the event was voluntary. Naturally students hear and pass along rumors which may or may not be true. I believe they and parents need to understand the facts of the situation to the extent possible without violating confidentiality. As of now, I cannot explain the cancellation [REDACTED]

Thank you for the support you expressed in the first email for all students in the district. I hope future school events and activities will be intentionally planned to send the same message of welcome, inclusion, and support.

Best,
Tamra & Eric Graham

Sent from my iPhone

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Subject: Racism in Red Wing Public Schools

From: Nicky Buck <nmbuckss@gmail.com>

Date: 2/28/2025, 9:02 AM

To: Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org>, Jim Bryant <jrbryant@rwps.org>, Terese Bjornstad <tbjornstad@rwps.org>, Jennifer Tift <jdtift@rwps.org>, rjriester@rwps.org, jmkoenig@rwps.org, kanderson@rwps.org, Rachel Marshall Schoenfelder <rmarshallschoenfelder@rwps.org>

Hihanni Waste/Good Morning Superintendent and School Board Members,

I am emailing you for a few reasons today. From the recent decisions of cancelling the Keith Ellison event to the decisions being made at DEI committee to the on going racism that continues to happen.

I know RWPS #256 very well...and what moved me to be a past board member in the first place. I know your intentions, you're all good hearted people that just want to make a difference just like I am.

But this just cannot go on any longer if you choose to have and build relationships with people different than yourselves, for example Prairie Island Indian Community. In the very first meeting I connected RWPS School Board to PIIC Tribal Council, they said they will not support RWPS in the mascot issue unless the racism is addressed.

I don't know all the details but I know enough from multiple decades of experience as an ethnic person here in this town we all call home.

I know push back like you wouldn't believe and I also know I must ALWAYS do what's right by everyone even if it hurts some peoples feelings temporarily.

If chaos popped off during the event, then you could discipline appropriately like is was in this very district 27 years ago to make me the human being I am today.

I understand how you all must be feeling but unfortunately none of you will ever understand where people like me are feeling, and ongoing experiences are exhausting.

"Once a Winger, always a Winger" no matter what in Nicky Buck's Book and when the going gets tough I will be right by your side helping us make it through moments of adversity as well as celebrating our successes (as long as you honor our relationship by doing the right thing by everyone from here on out)

Please feel free to reach out to me for anything. 651 399 0010 nmbuckss@gmail.com

We're all in this together and we will make it through this and be the BEST district in all of the nation.

Pidamayayeye/Thank you all for your time!

Nicky Buck

Prairie Island Dakota

Subject: Re: Racism in Red Wing Public Schools
From: Terese Bjornstad <tbjornstad@rwps.org>
Date: 2/28/2025, 9:39 AM
To: Nicky Buck <nmbuckss@gmail.com>

Thank you!

Terese Bjornstad
School Board Director
Red Wing Public Schools

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Subject: Re: Racism in Red Wing Public Schools

From: Jennifer Tift <jdtift@rwps.org>

Date: 2/28/2025, 1:21 PM

To: Nicky Buck <nmbuckss@gmail.com>

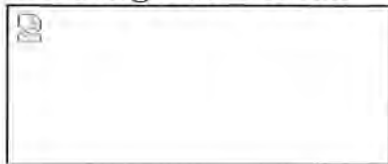
Thank you, Nicky. Can you help me understand what you mean by "the decision made at the DEI committee"? I'm not sure what that is referring to.

Thankful for you!

Jennifer Tift (she/her)

Clerk

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Subject: Re: Racism in Red Wing Public Schools

From: Nicky Buck <nmbuckss@gmail.com>

Date: 2/28/2025, 1:38 PM

To: Jennifer Tift <jdtift@rwps.org>

A parent on that committee told me the DEI committee is planning a diverse celebration in the spring celebrating all cultures. We are not there yet as a district, the racism has not been addressed in a manner that makes ethnic people feel safe, honored and respected. What the district needs to be doing is building a better foundation and repairing the harm done unto our African American relatives. *I had an opportunity to talk to Terese and Anne Robertson to explain this further.

Then they revisit their racial bias plan with the students, staff and ethnic parents (I say this because we need white people to stop speaking on behalf of ethnic people and we need to start representing ourselves authentically, at the end of the day my white mother does not experience what I experience.)

Then when the district has done the work they can celebrate all the beautiful and diverse cultures that make us great as Red Wing Public Schools.

Pidamayayeye,
Nicky

On Fri, Feb 28, 2025 at 1:21 PM Jennifer Tift <jdtift@rwps.org> wrote:

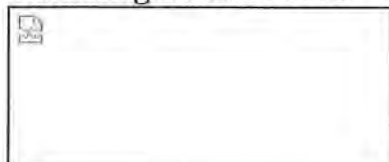
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Pidamayayeye/Thank you all for your time!
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Subject: Obeying in Advance

From: Jane Lorentzen <lorentzen.e.jane@gmail.com>

Date: 2/28/2025, 9:08 AM

To: tbjornstad@rwps.org, jmkoenig@rwps.org, jrbryant@rwps.org, rjriester@rwps.org, jdtift@rwps.org, kanderson@rwps.org

CC: akrobertson@rwps.org

RW School Board members and Ms. Robertson,

I sent this letter to Superintendent Jaszczak on Wednesday evening. I remain deeply disturbed by the cancellation of Keith Ellison's visit to the school and the lack of public explanation about how and why this decision was made.

Dear Supt. Jaszczak,

I write to express my dismay about your decision to cancel Keith Ellison's visit to the school.

As a former Red Wing High School graduate, daughter of a long-term school board member in RW, and the wife of a RWHS teacher, I am familiar with the community. I grew up in RW and worked as a psychologist there for almost a quarter of a century, and I am familiar with the racism long present in the community. It is both an overt and insidious problem and serves to undermine the well-being of non-white residents and white residents alike. Children of color will be less well served by the decision you made to cancel Mr. Ellison's talk.

As I have been reading how to respond ethically in this unsettled time politically in the US, I have read multiple sources that warn how important it is to not "obey in advance", as the historian Timothy Snyder first articulated. Loss of freedoms starts when people are afraid and obey bullies by giving in to their tactics easily.

If you knew of credible threats to public safety during Mr. Ellison's scheduled talk, the police should have managed them as you stood firm in welcoming the attorney general of our state. Taking the easy way out and cancelling Mr. Ellison's speech only serves to embolden the bullies in our midst.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jane Lorentzen

Subject: Re: Obeying in Advance
From: Terese Bjornstad <tbjornstad@rwps.org>
Date: 2/28/2025, 9:40 AM
To: Jane Lorentzen <lorentzen.e.jane@gmail.com>

Thank you.

Terese Bjornstad
School Board Director
Red Wing Public Schools

On Fri, Feb 28, 2025, 9:08 AM Jane Lorentzen <lorentzen.e.jane@gmail.com> wrote:

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From: Jennifer Tift <jdtift@rwps.org>
Date: 2/28/2025, 1:22 PM
To: Jane Lorentzen <lorentzen.e.jane@gmail.com>

Thank you so much for reaching out.

Jennifer Tift (she/her)

Clerk

Red Wing School Board



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CC: akrobertson@rwps.org

Dear Members of the ISD 256 school board and Ms. Robertson,

I sent the following letter to the Superintendent two days ago:

Supt. Jaszczak,

My name is Jamie Lorentzen. I was a devoted Red Wing High School English teacher between 1991 and 2018.

I am once again both saddened and disturbed to be staring racism in the face in Red Wing. In 2011, the Red Wing School District was sued for tolerating racism, requiring it to pay a \$90,000 settlement to a plaintiff—a settlement that made national news (*Time Magazine*, for instance, on August 5, 2011). On August 10, 2021, the Red Wing City Council approved Resolution #7675, declaring "Racism A Public Health Emergency," listing resolutions to robustly counter it. Then, in October 2024, parents came before the School Board and asked the District to take complaints of racial bullying more seriously and work to better support students of color.

Then came today.

Out of concern for some kind of unnamed local threat that was not made public (and should have been), you chose to cancel a program during Black History Month that included a talk by the highly articulate Black, Muslim Minnesota State Attorney General, Keith Ellison.

This decision goes against everything I poured my entire career into, and it makes a sham of your words to ISD 256 parents about "uplifting the voices and experiences of our most marginalized students," "educating students about racial harm," and recognizing "how words and actions, whether intentional or unintentional, can perpetuate discrimination and inequality."

Preventing lawful assembly that includes one of the highest elected officials in the state out of fear, instead of allowing Red Wing police to handle any concerns that become manifest, is capitulation.

And so, the bullies—whether they were local or national or both—won today, and you sided with them.

This all leaves me wondering what your plans are to support Black History Month next year after this year's capitulation. Going forward, I ask you to stand in firm support of public

education instead of inadvertently reinforcing those who threaten the very fabric of public education.

Jamie Lorentzen

Subject: Re: The Ellison cancellation
From: Terese Bjornstad <tbjornstad@rwps.org>
Date: 2/28/2025, 9:37 AM
To: James Lorentzen <lorentzenjamie@gmail.com>

Thank you!

Terese Bjornstad
School Board Director
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Date: 2/28/2025, 9:20 AM
To: Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org>

Reading, writing and arithmetic.

On Fri, Feb 28, 2025 at 7:13 AM Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org> wrote:

Dear Families,

As we shared earlier, we decided to cancel a visit from State Attorney General Keith Ellison due to concerns that learning could be disrupted by the event. We are aware that a student walkout is being planned at the high school today in protest of our decision.

While we respect our students' First Amendment right to protest, we must balance this with the safety of our schools and limiting disruptions to teaching and learning. We ask that any protest remains peaceful and positive.

We also must ensure that we respect the rights of all students—including those who wish not to participate in the protest. With this in mind, we will do everything we can to minimize disruptions to the learning process.

Per school policy, any students who walk out will be considered unexcused from school.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your attention to this update.

Sincerely,

Bob Jaszczak

Automated translation:

Queridas familias,

Como compartimos anteriormente, decidimos cancelar una visita del Fiscal General del Estado

Si bien respetamos el derecho a protestar de la Primera Enmienda de nuestros estudiantes, c

También debemos asegurarnos de respetar los derechos de todos los estudiantes, incluidos ac

Según la política escolar, cualquier estudiante que abandone la escuela se considerará inju

Subject: Re: Speaker cancellation reaction
From: Shannon <mrsnullaney@gmail.com>
Date: 2/28/2025, 11:37 AM
To: Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org>

Thank you for trying anyway. Understood and accepted.

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 28, 2025, at 7:13 AM, Bob Jaszczak <bjaszczak@rwps.org> wrote:

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Sincerely,

Bob Jaszczak

Automated translation:

Queridas familias,

Como compartimos anteriormente, decidimos cancelar una visita del Fiscal General del Estado

Subject: Keith Ellison program

From: Kim Newman <newman_kimberly@hotmail.com>

Date: 2/28/2025, 12:40 PM

To: "tbjornstad@rwps.org" <tbjornstad@rwps.org>, "rmarshallschoenfelder@rwps.org" <rmarshallschoenfelder@rwps.org>, "jmkoenig@rwps.org" <jmkoenig@rwps.org>, "jrbryant@rwps.org" <jrbryant@rwps.org>, "rjriester@rwps.org" <rjriester@rwps.org>, "jdtift@rwps.org" <jdtift@rwps.org>, "bjaszczak@rwps.org" <bjaszczak@rwps.org>, "kanderson@rwps.org" <kanderson@rwps.org>

We are writing to express our frustration with the recent decision by school district officials to cancel the Keith Ellison program. Local and state news sources do not name any tangible, credible threats to students or staff because of Mr. Ellison's scheduled visit. Declining to elaborate as to why the decision was made beyond mentioning "concerns over significant disruptions" suggests an absence of serious threat. Sadly, the lack of a concrete reason adds fuel to the speculation that this decision may have been politically or racially motivated.

As retired teachers for RWPS, we are dismayed and disheartened by this incident. The pride we once felt for this district and its vision to "embrace diversity by respectfully engaging all students, families, and staff" (excerpt from RWPS vision statement) is diminished today.

Sincerely,

Kim and Neal Newman

Sent from my iPad

Subject: Re: Keith Ellison program
From: Jennifer Tift <jdtift@rwps.org>
Date: 2/28/2025, 1:25 PM
To: Kim Newman <newman_kimberlya@hotmail.com>

Thank you so much for your email, Kim.

Jennifer Tift (she/her)

Clerk

Red Wing School Board



On Fri, Feb 28, 2025 at 12:40 PM Kim Newman <newman_kimberlya@hotmail.com> wrote:

We are writing to express our frustration with the recent decision by school district officials to cancel the Keith Ellison program. Local and state news sources do not name any tangible, credible threats to students or staff because of Mr. Ellison's scheduled visit. Declining to elaborate as to why the decision was made beyond mentioning "concerns over significant disruptions" suggests an absence of serious threat. Sadly, the lack of a concrete reason adds fuel to the speculation that this decision may have been politically or racially motivated.

As retired teachers for RWPS, we are dismayed and disheartened by this incident. The pride we once felt for this district and its vision to "embrace diversity by respectfully engaging all students, families, and staff" (excerpt from RWPS vision statement) is diminished today.

Sincerely,

Kim and Neal Newman

Sent from my iPad

Subject: Cancelling MN Attorney General event

From: Marie Past <mpast@mac.com>

Date: 2/28/2025, 1:33 PM

To: bjjaszczak@rwps.org

Dear Sir,

I am disappointed at your capitulation to right wing voices to not allow Attorney General Ellison to speak. You are basically signaling to them that bullying works. It signals also that you do not stand by your black students. Mr. Ellison is an elected official, the top attorney in the state. What safety are you worried about? If it is threats from adults in the community, you basically told them they are right. They won. What kind of lesson is that teaching your students?

Your lack of clarity on reasons for your decision is wrong.
This is cowardly.

Red Wing will not be on my tourism must see lists.

Sincerely,
Marie Past
Chaska, MN