
[STAFF] Fwd: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Theillinoisreporter.com

michael.saunders@mcusd709.org Saunders, Michael
To: craig.smock@mcusd709.org Craig Smock, troy.teater@mcusd709.org Troy Teater

Sunday, August 20, 2023 at 12:53:56 PM Central Daylight Time

FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bonnie Kurowski** <bonniekurowski1@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Aug 20, 2023 at 9:50 AM
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Theillinoisreporter.com
To: <michael.saunders@mcusd709.org>

Hello Mr. Sanders,

My name is Bonnie and I am with IL Reporter and IL Political Writer. I am reaching out to see if you would be interested in answering a few questions by EOD Tuesday for my article being published Wed. Please let me know.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Bonnie Kurowski
630-300-8141

Questions:

1. What is the district's policy on use of email and electronic devices by district employees?
2. Do any of the emails found (or those not yet revealed publicly) violate district policy? What about state policy or law? Why was the Gadsden flag flown at the school?
3. Is it true that the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag is referred to as "the colorful flag?" in the school by employees? students? If yes: Why? How did that come about? Have any students received any disciplined connected to any attempt to display, promote, or speak the accurate name of the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag?
If no: Are faculty and staff free to wear/display/teach about the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag?
yes? ok
no? - Why not? Isn't that erasure? A violation of freedom of speech, freedom of expression?
4. Should school emails be used to promote the anti-reproductive rights of women and girls?
5. Have any students been tested on bible quotes, christian dogma, or christian references as part of their academic pedagogy?
Yes - What other religions were included
No - Have you ever used christian churches in presentations to the public schoolchildren on school grounds?
6. Would you like to make a statement?

craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig

Sunday, August 20, 2023 at 2:07:07 PM Central Daylight Time

To: michael.saunders@mcusd709.org Saunders, Michael
Cc: troy.teater@mcusd709.org Troy Teater

I received a similar email from her with different questions. We can talk about whether we are responding to this tomorrow.

Craig

On Sun, Aug 20, 2023 at 12:54 PM Saunders, Michael <michael.saunders@mcusd709.org> wrote:
FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bonnie Kurowski** <bonniekurowski1@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Aug 20, 2023 at 9:50 AM
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] Theillinoisreporter.com
To: <michael.saunders@mcusd709.org>

Hello Mr. Sanders,

My name is Bonnie and I am with IL Reporter and IL Political Writer. I am reaching out to see if you would be interested in answering a few questions by EOD Tuesday for my article being published Wed. Please let me know.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Bonnie Kurowski
630-300-8141

Questions:

1. What is the district's policy on use of email and electronic devices by district employees?
2. Do any of the emails found (or those not yet revealed publicly) violate district policy? What about state policy or law?
Why was the Gadsden flag flown at the school?
3. Is it true that the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag is referred to as "the colorful flag?" in the school by employees? students?
If yes: Why? How did that come about? Have any students received any disciplined connected to any attempt to display, promote, or speak the accurate name of the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag?
If no: Are faculty and staff free to wear/display/teach about the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag?
yes? ok
no? - Why not? Isn't that erasure? A violation of freedom of speech, freedom of expression?
4. Should school emails be used to promote the anti-reproductive rights of women and girls?
5. Have any students been tested on bible quotes, christian dogma, or christian references as part of their academic pedagogy?
Yes - What other religions were included
No - Have you ever used christian churches in presentations to the public schoolchildren on school grounds?
6. Would you like to make a statement?

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



craig.smock@mcusd709.org **Smock, Craig**
To: joseph.sander@mcusd709.org Joseph Sander, troy.teater@mcusd709.org Troy Teater

Monday, August 21, 2023 at 8:02:32AM Central Daylight Time

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Saunders, Michael** <michael.saunders@mcusd709.org>
Date: Sun, Aug 20, 2023 at 12:54 PM
Subject: [STAFF] Fwd: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] TheIllinoisReporter.com
To: Craig Smock <craig.smock@mcusd709.org>, Troy Teater <troy.teater@mcusd709.org>

FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Bonnie Kurowski** <bonniekurowski1@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Aug 20, 2023 at 9:50 AM
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] TheIllinoisReporter.com
To: <michael.saunders@mcusd709.org>

Hello Mr. Sanders,

My name is Bonnie and I am with IL Reporter and IL Political Writer. I am reaching out to see if you would be interested in answering a few questions by EOD Tuesday for my article being published Wed. Please let me know.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Bonnie Kurowski
630-300-8141

Questions:

1. What is the district's policy on use of email and electronic devices by district employees?

2. Do any of the emails found (or those not yet revealed publicly) violate district policy? What about state policy or law?
Why was the Gadsden flag flown at the school?
3. Is it true that the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag is referred to as "the colorful flag?" in the school by employees? students?
If yes: Why? How did that come about? Have any students received any disciplined connected to any attempt to display, promote, or speak the accurate name of the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag?
If no: Are faculty and staff free to wear/display/teach about the LGBTQ+ rainbow "Pride" flag?
yes? ok
no? - Why not? Isn't that erasure? A violation of freedom of speech, freedom of expression?
4. Should school emails be used to promote the anti-reproductive rights of women and girls?
5. Have any students been tested on bible quotes, christian dogma, or christian references as part of their academic pedagogy?
Yes - What other religions were included
No - Have you ever used christian churches in presentations to the public schoolchildren on school grounds?
6. Would you like to make a statement?

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



[STAFF] Fwd: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] FOIA Request

valerie.smith@mcusd709.org
To: troy.teater@mcusd709.org
Cc: craig.smock@mcusd709.org

Friday, August 25, 2023 at 4:37:03 PM Central Daylight Time



Valerie Smith
Administrative Assistant
Superintendent & Board of Education
1050 S. FOURTH AVE MORTON. IL 61550
valerie.smith@mcusd709.org
TELEPHONE: (309)263-2581 x:8040
FAX: (309)266-6320

"Being joyful isn't what makes you grateful. Being grateful is what makes you joyful." - Ann Voskamp

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Elizabeth Seils** <ESeils@week.com>
Date: Fri, Aug 25, 2023 at 3:46 PM
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] FOIA Request
To: info@mcusd709.org <info@mcusd709.org>

Good afternoon,

This is a Freedom of Information Act request for school district emails including the words "Black Lives Matter," "CRT," "LGBTQ," "gay," "trans" and "colorful flag."

I would also like any memos on the district or school level containing those words. If there is a different way administrators communicate with their faculty and staff, please let me know so I can amend my request.

This is not a commercial request, but rather for information-gathering purposes. Happy to answer any questions. Thank you in advance!

Elizabeth Seils
Multi-Media Journalist | 25News
c: (773) 960 - 0618 | o: (309) 698 - 3743

[STAFF] FYI

kate.wyman@mcusd709.org Wyman, Kate
To: craig.smock@mcusd709.org Craig Smock

Friday, August 25, 2023 at 5:13:08 PM Central Daylight Time

Craig,

I am confident you aware this article has been published and on social media today.

<https://illinoiseagle.com/2023/08/25/thousands-of-anti-lgbtq-emails-found-in-morton-school-principals-work-email-account/>

Kate

craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig
To: kate.wyman@mcusd709.org Wyman, Kate

Friday, August 25, 2023 at 5:14:09 PM Central Daylight Time

Yes I am, thank you.

On Fri, Aug 25, 2023 at 5:13 PM Wyman, Kate <kate.wyman@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Craig,

I am confident you aware this article has been published and on social media today.

<https://illinoiseagle.com/2023/08/25/thousands-of-anti-lgbtq-emails-found-in-morton-school-principals-work-email-account/>

Kate

--

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



[STAFF] Fwd: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] FOIA Request for Review – 2023 PAC 77590

troy.teater@mcusd709.org Teater, Troy
To: Craig.Smock@mcusd709.org Craig Smock

Thursday, August 24, 2023 at 5:41:45AM Central Daylight Time

FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Barnaby, Shannon** <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov>
Date: Wed, Aug 23, 2023 at 5:45 PM
Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] FOIA Request for Review – 2023 PAC 77590
To: hmcmeekan@gmail.com <hmcmeekan@gmail.com>
CC: Public Access <Public.Access@ilag.gov>, troy.teater@mcusd709.org <troy.teater@mcusd709.org>

Dear Ms. McMeekan:

Please see the attached determination in the above-stated Request for Review. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau
Office of the Illinois Attorney General
shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov
(312-550-4480)
Pronouns: she/her/hers

Attachments:

77590 f unf sd .pdf 152k



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF ILLINOIS

KWAME RAOUL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

August 23, 2023

Via electronic mail
Ms. Heather McMeekan
hmcmeekan@gmail.com

RE: FOIA Request for Review – 2023 PAC 77590

Dear Ms. McMeekan:

This determination is issued pursuant to section 9.5(c) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 ILCS 140/9.5(c) (West 2022)). For the reasons explained below, the Public Access Bureau concludes that your Request for Review is unfounded.

On August 1, 2023, you submitted a FOIA request to Morton Community Unit School District No. 709 (District) seeking "[t]he search engine history of all browsers in the Principal's Office and the administration office for Ward Grundy Elementary School for the time period of Jan 1, 2023 - June 1, 2023."¹ On August 3, 2023, the District replied by stating "[t]he search engine history is not a record the [D]istrict keeps."² Later that day, the Public Access Bureau received your Request for Review, which appears to dispute the District's response. You state "[t]he browser history can be often be downloaded from browsers."³

The requirements of FOIA apply to records "having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of any public body" to which a request is submitted. 5 ILCS 140/2(c) (West 2022). FOIA generally requires a public body to conduct a "reasonable search tailored to the nature of a particular

¹E-mail from Heather McMeekan to FOIA Officer (August 1, 2023).

²E-mail from Troy Teater, [Assistant Superintendent], [Morton Community Unit School District No. 709] to [Heather McMeekan] (August 3, 2023).

³E-mail from Heather McMeekan to [Benjamin Silver], [Assistant Attorney General], [Public Access Bureau] (August 3, 2023).

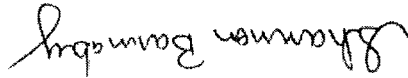
request." *Campbell v. United States Department of Justice*, 164 F.3d 20, 28 (D.C. Cir. 1998). However, "[a] requester is entitled only to records that an agency has in fact chosen to create and retain." *Yeager v. Drug Enforcement Administration*, 678 F.2d 315, 321 (D.C. Cir. 1982); see also *Kissinger v. Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press*, 445 U.S. 136, 152, 100 S. Ct. 960, 969 (1980) (the Federal FOIA "does not obligate agencies to create or retain documents; it only obligates them to provide access to those which it in fact has created and retained."). FOIA does not require a public body to conduct a search that would be futile. See *Am.-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee v. United States Department of Homeland Security*, 516 F. Supp. 2d 83, 88 (D.D.C. 2007) (affidavit explaining why Federal agency did not collect the type of records requested was sufficient to demonstrate that a search would be futile and was therefore unnecessary).

Your Request for Review asserts that the District should be able to provide you with the relevant web browser history logs because that information can be downloaded from a browser. The express wording of your FOIA request, however, seeks "search engine history" not web browser history. The District's response to your FOIA request specifically stated that it did not have any responsive records concerning your request for search engine history. Further, in an e-mail with an Assistant Attorney General in the Public Access Bureau on August 18, 2023, Mr. Troy Teater, the District's Assistant Superintendent and FOIA Officer, confirmed that while the District does have access to information concerning websites that a District device may try to access (i.e., web browsing logs) for some period of time, it does not have any records that reflect the search terms or text that an individual may have entered into a search engine or website (i.e., search engine history). This office has not received any facts indicating that the District possesses responsive search engine history records, and it appears that a search for such records would be futile. Accordingly, this office will not take any additional action on this matter.

In addition to resolving Requests for Review, the Office of the Public Access Counselor is charged with providing advice and education to both the public and public officials. See 15 ILCS 205/7(a), (b), (c) (West 2022). In that capacity, this office notes that a broad, categorical request seeking all of the District's web browser history logs for all browsers in the principal and administrator's offices at a particular elementary school, for a period of six months would likely be unduly burdensome. See *Shehadeh v. Madigan*, 2013 IL App (4th) 120742, ¶¶5-6, 996 N.E.2d 1243, 1245 (2013) (finding a request that identified 9,200 potentially responsive records to be "patently broad on its face, as it sought *any* publication or record that would or could be used by *any* public body to comply with Illinois's FOIA provisions." (Emphasis in original). In the event that you plan to submit a new FOIA request to the District seeking web browser history logs, you may want to consider narrowing the scope of your request to one or two browser users, for a timeframe that occurred within the last 30 days, and for a much narrower period of time, such as for one or two days.

This file is closed. If you have questions, my e-mail address is shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov.

Very truly yours,



SHANNON BARNABY
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau

77373 f un f sd

cc: *Via electronic mail*

Mr. Troy A. Teater

Assistant Superintendent

Morton Community Unit School District No. 709
1050 South Fourth Avenue, Suite 200

Morton, Illinois 61550

troy.teater@mcusd709.org

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] 2023 PAC 77590

Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov Barnaby, Shannon
To: troy.teater@mcusd709.org 'troy.teater@mcusd709.org'

Thursday, August 17, 2023 at 6:26:17 PM Central Daylight Time

Good Afternoon, Mr. Teater:

I hope this email finds you doing well. Our office is in receipt of the attached Request for Review (77590). Before we proceed formally, I wanted to reach out to you to see if you were aware of this office's previous determination that entries in web browsing logs pertaining to the transaction of public business are public records subject to disclosure. I've attached an example to this email. Please read and let me know if the Morton Community Unit School District 709 would like to reconsider its position in this Request for Review. If not, we can certainly go to further inquiry and will be more than happy to consider the District's arguments. Please let me know either way at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby

Senior Assistant Attorney General

Public Access Bureau

Office of the Illinois Attorney General

shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov

(312-550-4480)

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Attachments:

77590 Initial Docs.pdf 404k

59362 f 3a search proper mun.pdf 218k

troy.teater@mcusd709.org Teater, Troy
To: Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov Barnaby, Shannon
Cc: Craig.Smock@mcusd709.org Craig Smock

Thursday, August 17, 2023 at 9:49:55 PM Central Daylight Time

Mrs. Barnaby,

On August 1st, Ms. McMeekan requested:

"The search engine history of all browsers in the Principal's Office and the administration office for Ward Grundy Elementary School for the time period of Jan 1, 2023 - June 1, 2023."

Search engines like Google Search, Bing, Yahoo, DuckDuckGo, Baidu, Yandex, and others are programs designed to search databases like the web-based on the criteria a user enters. The district does not record the criteria entered in search engines, so we are unable to provide the information that she requested.

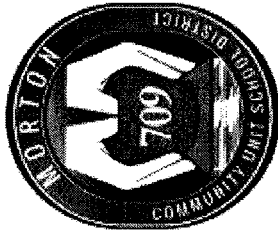
The district does track websites that district devices try to access or browsing history. So we know when search engines are being accessed, not what criteria are being used in search engines. There isn't a recorded history of searches.

We did not deny the request. We can't fulfill the request because we do not have those records.

As far as web browsing logs (which you are referencing), we do have those and I would agree that the public is entitled to them. Our browsing logs would not go back to January 1 and depending on the machine and the number of users, a week of browsing history can be enormous.

I am more than happy to assist Ms. McMeekan in gaining access to the records we have, but I have found at times it is difficult to determine exactly what she is requesting. I recently worked with Benjamin Silver, from your office, to help Ms. McMeekan request an email search that wasn't unduly burdensome

If Ms. McMeekan would like browsing history, I would recommend narrowing the search down to a single user or two users, selecting a time interval within the last 30 days, and making the time interval a day or two (depending on the days selected). That might be a manageable search that we would have the records.



Troy A. Teater Ed. D.
Assistant Superintendent

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 6:26 PM Barnaby, Shannon <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov> wrote:

Good Afternoon, Mr. Teater:

I hope this email finds you doing well. Our office is in receipt of the attached Request for Review (77590). Before we proceed formally, I wanted to reach out to you to see if you were aware of this office's previous determination that entries in web browsing logs pertaining to the transaction of public business are public records subject to disclosure. I've attached an example to this email. Please read and let me know if the Morton Community Unit School District 709 would like to reconsider its position in this Request for Review. If not, we can certainly go to further inquiry and will be more than happy to consider the District's arguments. Please let me know either way at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau
Office of the Illinois Attorney General
shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov
(312-550-4480)
Pronouns: she/her/hers

craig.smock@mcusd709.org Smock, Craig
To: troy.teater@mcusd709.org Teater, Troy

Friday, August 18, 2023 at 7:54:04AM Central Daylight Time

Well said.

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 9:50 PM Teater, Troy <troy.teater@mcusd709.org> wrote:
Mrs. Barnaby,

On August 1st, Ms. McMeekan requested:

"The search engine history of all browsers in the Principal's Office and the administration office for Ward Grundy Elementary School for the time period of Jan 1, 2023 - June 1, 2023."

Search engines like Google Search, Bing, Yahoo, DuckDuckGo, Baidu, Yandex, and others are programs designed to search databases like the web-based on the criteria a user enters. The district does not record the criteria entered in search engines, so we are unable to provide the information that she requested.

The district does track websites that district devices try to access or browsing history. So we know when search engines are being accessed, not what criteria are being used in search engines. There isn't a recorded history of searches.

We did not deny the request. We can't fulfill the request because we do not have those records.

As far as web browsing logs (which you are referencing), we do have those and I would agree that the public is entitled to them. Our browsing logs would not go back to January 1 and depending on the machine and the number of users, a week of browsing history can be enormous.

I am more than happy to assist Ms. McMeekan in gaining access to the records we have, but I have found at times it is difficult to determine exactly what she is requesting. I recently worked with Benjamin Silver, from your office, to help Ms. McMeekan request an email search that wasn't unduly burdensome

If Ms. McMeekan would like browsing history, I would recommend narrowing the search down to a single user or two users, selecting a time interval within the last 30 days, and making the time interval a day or two (depending on the days selected). That might be a manageable search that we would have the records.



Troy A. Teater Ed. D.
Assistant Superintendent

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 6:26 PM Barnaby, Shannon <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov> wrote:

Good Afternoon, Mr. Teater:

I hope this email finds you doing well. Our office is in receipt of the attached Request for Review (77590). Before we proceed formally, I wanted to reach out to you to see if you were aware of this office's previous determination that entries in web browsing logs pertaining to the transaction of public business are public records subject to disclosure. I've attached an example to this email. Please read and let me know if the Morton Community Unit School District 709 would like to reconsider its position in this Request for Review. If not, we can certainly go to further inquiry and will be more than happy to consider the District's arguments. Please let me know either way at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau
Office of the Illinois Attorney General

shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov
(312-550-4480)

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Dr. Craig Smock
Superintendent
Morton C.U.S.D. 709



Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov Barnaby, Shannon
To: troy.teater@mcusd709.org 'Teater, Troy'

Friday, August 18, 2023 at 10:18:50AM Central Daylight Time

Good Morning, Mr. Teater:

This is helpful information. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby

Senior Assistant Attorney General

Public Access Bureau

Office of the Illinois Attorney General

shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov

(312-550-4480)

Pronouns: she/her/hers

From: Teater, Troy <troy.teater@mcusd709.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:50 PM
To: Barnaby, Shannon <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov>
Cc: Craig Smock <Craig.Smock@mcusd709.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] 2023 PAC 77590

Mrs. Barnaby,

On August 1st, Ms. McMeekan requested:

"The search engine history of all browsers in the Principal's Office and the administration office for Ward Grundy Elementary School for the time period of Jan 1, 2023 - June 1, 2023."

Search engines like Google Search, Bing, Yahoo, DuckDuckGo, Baidu, Yandex, and others are programs designed to search databases like the web-based on the criteria a user enters. The district does not record the criteria entered in search engines, so we are unable to provide the information that she requested.

The district does track websites that district devices try to access or browsing history. So we know when search engines are being accessed, not what criteria are being used in search engines. There isn't a recorded history of searches.

We did not deny the request. We can't fulfill the request because we do not have those records.

As far as web browsing logs (which you are referencing), we do have those and I would agree that the public is entitled to them. Our browsing logs would not go back to January 1 and depending on the machine and the number of users, a week of browsing history can be enormous.

I am more than happy to assist Ms. McMeekan in gaining access to the records we have, but I have found at times it is difficult to determine exactly what she is requesting. I recently worked with Benjamin Silver, from your office, to help Ms. McMeekan request an email search that wasn't unduly burdensome

If Ms. McMeekan would like browsing history, I would recommend narrowing the search down to a single user or two users, selecting a time interval within the last 30 days, and making the time interval a day or two (depending on the days selected). That might be a manageable search that we would have the records.



Troy A. Teater Ed. D.
Assistant Superintendent

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 6:26 PM Barnaby, Shannon <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov> wrote:

Good Afternoon, Mr. Teater:

I hope this email finds you doing well. Our office is in receipt of the attached Request for Review (77590). Before we proceed formally, I wanted to reach out to you to see if you were aware of this office's previous determination that entries in web browsing logs pertaining to the transaction of public business are public records subject to disclosure. I've attached an example to this email. Please read and let me know if the Morton Community Unit School District 709 would like to reconsider its position in this Request for Review. If not, we can certainly go to further inquiry and will be more than happy to consider the District's arguments. Please let me know either way at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby

Senior Assistant Attorney General

Public Access Bureau

Office of the Illinois Attorney General

shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov

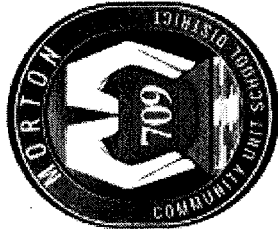
(312-550-4480)

Pronouns: she/her/hers

This is a staff email account managed by Morton Community Unit School District 709. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

troy.teater@mcusd709.org Teater, Troy
To: Craig Smock@mcusd709.org Craig Smock

FYI



Troy A. Teater Ed. D.
Assistant Superintendent

Friday, August 18, 2023 at 11:49:53AM Central Daylight Time

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Barnaby, Shannon** <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov>
Date: Fri, Aug 18, 2023 at 10:18AM
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] 2023 PAC 77590
To: Teater, Troy <troy.teater@mcusd709.org>

Good Morning, Mr. Teater:

This is helpful information. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau
Office of the Illinois Attorney General
shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov
(312-550-4480)
Pronouns: she/her/hers

From: Teater, Troy <troy.teater@mcusd709.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:50 PM
To: Barnaby, Shannon <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov>
Cc: Craig Smock <Craig.Smock@mcusd709.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] 2023 PAC 77590

Mrs. Barnaby,

On August 1st, Ms. McMeekan requested:

"The search engine history of all browsers in the Principal's Office and the administration office for Ward Grundy Elementary School for the time period of Jan 1, 2023 - June 1, 2023."

Search engines like Google Search, Bing, Yahoo, DuckDuckGo, Baidu, Yandex, and others are programs designed to search databases like the web-based on the criteria a user enters. The district does not record the criteria entered in search engines, so we are unable to provide the information that she requested.

The district does track websites that district devices try to access or browsing history. So we know when search engines are being accessed, not what criteria are being used in search engines. There isn't a recorded history of searches.

We did not deny the request. We can't fulfill the request because we do not have those records.

As far as web browsing logs (which you are referencing), we do have those and I would agree that the public is entitled to them. Our browsing logs would not go back to January 1 and depending on the machine and the number of users, a week of browsing history can be enormous.

I am more than happy to assist Ms. McMeekan in gaining access to the records we have, but I have found at times it is difficult to determine exactly what she is requesting. I recently worked with Benjamin Silver, from your office, to help Ms. McMeekan request an email search that wasn't unduly burdensome

If Ms. McMeekan would like browsing history, I would recommend narrowing the search down to a single user or two users, selecting a time interval within the last 30 days, and making the time interval a day or two (depending on the days selected). That might be a manageable search that we would have the records.



Troy A. Teater Ed. D.
Assistant Superintendent

On Thu, Aug 17, 2023 at 6:26 PM Barnaby, Shannon <Shannon.Barnaby@ilag.gov> wrote:

Good Afternoon, Mr. Teater:

I hope this email finds you doing well. Our office is in receipt of the attached Request for Review (77590). Before we proceed formally, I wanted to reach out to you to see if you were aware of this office's previous determination that entries in web browsing logs pertaining to the transaction of public business are public records subject to disclosure. I've attached an example to this email. Please read and let me know if the Morton Community Unit School District 709 would like to reconsider its position in this Request for Review. If not, we can certainly go to further inquiry and will be more than happy to consider the District's arguments. Please let me know either way at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,

Shannon Barnaby
Senior Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau
Office of the Illinois Attorney General
shannon.barnaby@ilag.gov
(312-550-4480)
Pronouns: she/her/hers

This is a staff email account managed by Morton Community Unit School District 709. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] 2023 PAC 77517

Benjamin.Silver@ilag.gov Silver, Benjamin
To: hmcmeekan@gmail.com 'Heather McMeekan'
Cc: troy.teater@mcusd709.org 'Teater, Troy', Public.Access@ilag.gov Public Access

Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 4:14:58 PM Central Daylight Time

Dear Ms. McMeekan,

Attached is a letter confirming that the Public Access Bureau has closed 2023 PAC 77517. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Ben Silver
Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau
C: 773-590-7878
benjamin.silver@ilag.gov

Attachments:
77517 f pb resp sd.pdf 1.3M



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF ILLINOIS

KWAME RAOUL
ATTORNEY GENERAL

August 15, 2023

Via electronic mail
Ms. Heather McMeekan
hmcmeekean@gmail.com

RE: FOIA Request for Review – 2023 PAC 77517

Dear Ms. McMeekan:

On August 14, 2023, the Morton Community Unit School District 709 (District) responded to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 ILCS 140/1 *et seq.* (West 2022)) request at issue in this Request for Review. (Copy of response e-mail enclosed.) This response resolves your complaint that the District had failed to respond to your FOIA request. Accordingly, this file is closed. Please contact me at benjamin.silver@ilag.gov if you have questions. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin J. Silver".

BENJAMIN J. SILVER
Assistant Attorney General
Public Access Bureau

77517 f pb resp sd

Enclosure

cc: *Via electronic mail*

Mr. Troy A. Teater
Assistant Superintendent
Morton Community Unit School District 709
1050 South Fourth Avenue
Morton, Illinois 61550-2596
troy.teater@mcusd709.org

From: Teater, Troy
To: Heather McMeekan
Cc: Public Access; Silver, Benjamin
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] 2023 PAC 77517
Date: Monday, August 14, 2023 2:26:11 PM
Attachments: image.png
 image.png
 image.png
 image.png
 image.png

Ms. McMeekan,

Your response can be found at: <https://www.morton709.org/freedom-of-information>



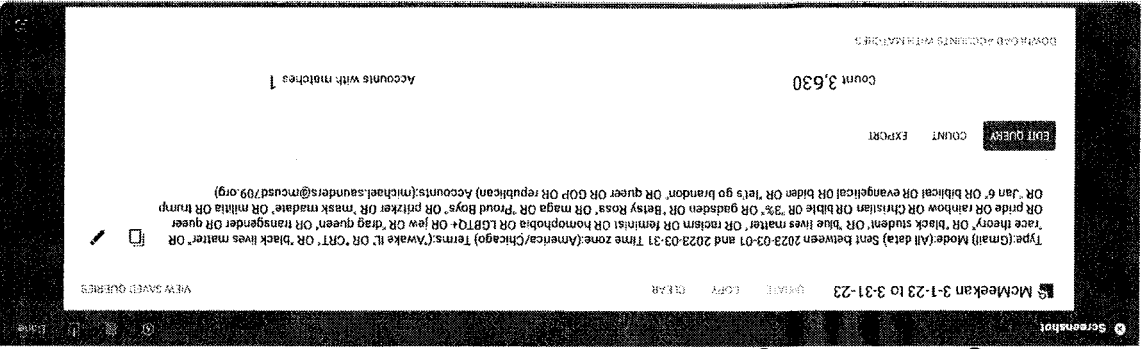
On Mon, Aug 7, 2023 at 10:08 AM Heather McMeekan <hmcmeekan@gmail.com> wrote:
 HI,

Let's limit the search now to just these terms:

- “Black Lives Matter”
- “CRT”
- “LGBTQ”
- “gay”
- “colorful flag”

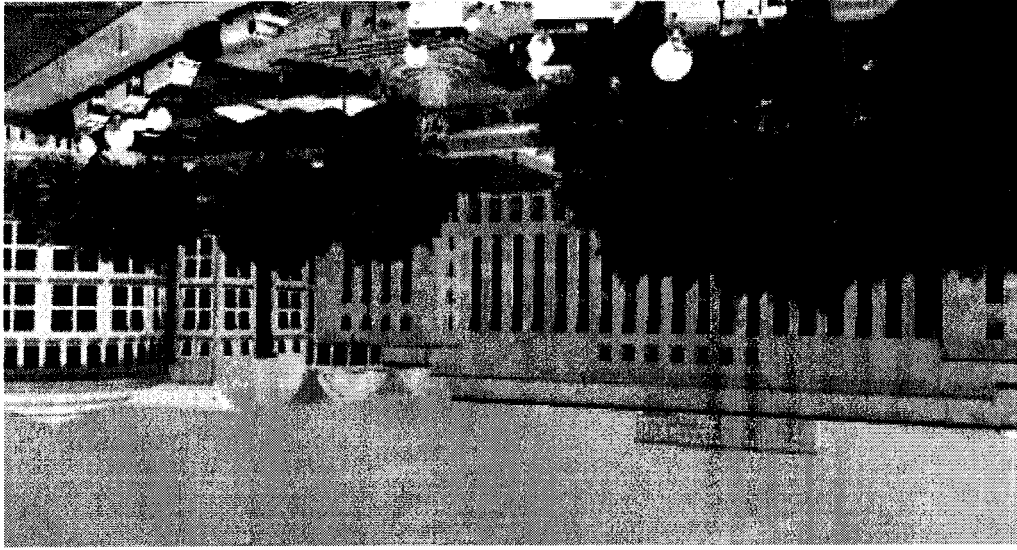
Thanks,
 Heather McMeekan

On Tue, Aug 1, 2023 at 12:12 PM Teater, Troy <troy.teater@mcsd709.org> wrote:
 The date range of March still produces 3,630 emails.



While most of the emails will be from unsolicited sources and not need redactions, some

Former President Donald Trump facing additional charges in classified documents case



Breaking News

Chicago Tribune

are not. Therefore I cannot assign the task of reviewing the emails to just anyone due to the sensitive nature of some of the emails. Most of the estimated time per email is the time needed to open the email (when opening an email as a third party, Google requires adding a reason) and then printing/saving/sorting.....not redacting.

As a public school, our emails are public information and therefore we are subjected to a tremendous number of unsolicited emails from all sorts of sources. Google has a robust SPAM filter and we work with outside consultants to maintain the settings. It is not uncommon for a single user to get over 2,000 emails a week (about 300 a day).

As far as extremist groups, your search isn't limited to such groups. Key words like Biden, Trump, Pritzker, LGBTQ+, transgender, Christian, Bible, racism, and rainbow are all words that are common to most media outlets. Most news feeds send out emails containing these words.

August 1, 2023

By David Leonhardt



Good morning. We're covering a new Biden-Trump poll, a drone in Moscow and the U.S. women's soccer team.

Is there a specific extremist group you are looking for?



On Mon, Jul 31, 2023 at 3:43 PM Heather McMeekan <hmcmeeakan@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi,

I'd be willing to further narrow the time frame to March, 2023. How many are found when doing the search with the narrowed timeframe?

Also, most of those are likely spam, needing no redaction.

If one person's email is receiving such a high volume of emails with language mentioning extremist groups, key terms, I have these questions

- 1) Are appropriate spam filters in place?
- 2) Are the incoming spams being marked/reporter by the email user?
- 3) What are the top ten domains sending the highest volume of such emails with these key terms to a tax-payer funded email address?
- 4) How did the email address get on so many discussions regarding extremism/extremist groups?

Thank you,
Heather McMeekan

On Mon, Jul 31, 2023 at 9:12 AM Teater, Troy <trroy.teater@mcsd709.org> wrote:

Mr. Silver,

I ran the search for emails containing the keywords indicated in the request from January 1, 2022 to May 25, 2023. The search resulted in 58,608 emails.

Search CLEAR SAVE VIEW SAVED QUERIES

Type (Email) Mode (All data) Sent between 2022-01-01 and 2023-05-25 Time zone: (America/Chicago) Terms: ('Awake II' OR 'CRT' OR 'black lives matter' OR 'race theory' OR 'black student' OR 'blue lives matter' OR racism OR feminist OR homophobia OR LGBTQ+ OR jew OR 'drag queen' OR transgender OR queer OR 'Jan 6' OR biblical OR evangelical OR Biden OR 'lets go Brandon' OR queer OR GOP OR republican) Accounts: (michael.sanders@mcsd709.org)

EDIT QUERY COUNT EXPORT

Count 58,608

Accounts with matches 1

DOWNLOAD ACCOUNTS WITH MATCHES

I re-ran the search for emails containing the keywords indicated in the request for the revised timeframe of March 1, 2023 to May 25, 2023. The search resulted in 8,979.

Search CLEAR SAVE VIEW SAVED QUERIES

Type (Email) Mode (All data) Sent between 2023-03-01 and 2023-05-25 Time zone: (America/Chicago) Terms: ('Awake II' OR 'CRT' OR 'black lives matter' OR 'race theory' OR 'black student' OR 'blue lives matter' OR racism OR feminist OR homophobia OR LGBTQ+ OR jew OR 'drag queen' OR transgender OR queer OR 'Jan 6' OR biblical OR evangelical OR Biden OR 'lets go Brandon' OR queer OR GOP OR republican) Accounts: (michael.sanders@mcsd709.org)

EDIT QUERY COUNT EXPORT

Count 8,979

Accounts with matches 1

DOWNLOAD ACCOUNTS WITH MATCHES

If we print, read and redact 8,979 emails at 20-30 per hour it would take us roughly between 300 and 450 hours to complete. Since some of these emails may contain sensitive personal information regarding our families, we would be limited in who can actually review the emails to redact.

I believe the request would be unduly burdensome for the district. How should I proceed?



On Fri, Jul 28, 2023 at 12:53 PM Silver, Benjamin <Benjamin.Silver@ilag.gov> wrote:

Dear Mr. Teater:

Attached is a letter from the Public Access Bureau regarding 2023 PAC 77517. Please note that this Request for Review concerns Ms. McMeekan's narrowed June 9, 2023, FOIA request, in which she offered to exclude records contained on a private phone or e-mail account.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Ben Silver

Assistant Attorney General

Public Access Bureau

C: 773-590-7878

benjamin.silver@ilag.gov

This is a staff email account managed by Morton Community Unit School District 709. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

--

Warmest Wishes,

Heather McMeekan

This is a staff email account managed by Morton Community Unit School District 709. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

--

Warmest Wishes,

Heather McMeekan

This is a staff email account managed by Morton Community Unit School District 709. This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

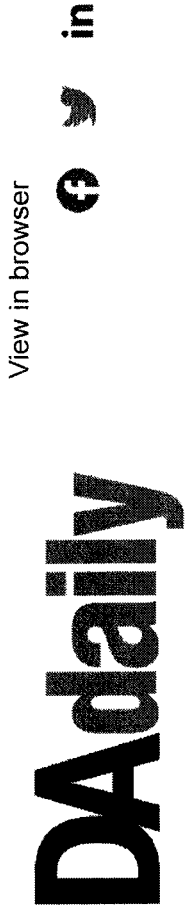
[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Superintendent wonders when educators stopped being viewed as heroes

enewsletter@districtadministrationmagazine.com DA Daily PM Newsletter

To: DA@omeda.com DA Daily PM Newsletter

To: thomas.neeley@morton709.org

Thursday, August 31, 2023 at 3:05:23 PM Central Daylight Time



The Two-Minute Afternoon Briefing for K-12 Leaders

Advertisement

The advertisement features a stylized graphic with a grid pattern on the left and a dark background on the right. The text is centered and reads: 'ROAD TO FETC', 'Engaging All Students with Esports in Education:', 'Sharing Strategies and Lessons Learned as Esports Programs Grow Nationally', 'September 13 | 4:00PM ET | 1 Hour', and a 'REGISTER NOW' button.

TRENDING ON DA

Being shelf-less: How digital reading and listening boost literacy

Gretchen Zaitzeff, DA guest columnist

Reading apps allow educators to drop entire libraries into students' hands, inviting them to read in print, on their phones while traveling, and through their headphones when being

active.
Read more >>

TOP STORY



Superintendent wonders when educators stopped being viewed as heroes

How the public went so quickly from calling educators the heroes of the pandemic to "villains" and "groomers" bothers Papillion La Vista Community Schools Superintendent Andrew Rikli.
Read more >>

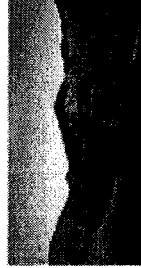
Advertisement

DA District AdministrationSM

SUPERINTENDENTS SUMMIT



Lake Geneva, WI,
Grand Geneva
October 11-13, 2023



Tucson, AZ,
JW Marriott Tucson
Starr Pass
November 8-10, 2023



Naples, FL,
Naples Grande
Beech Resort
December 13-15, 2023

Space is limited, reserve your spot NOW!

AROUND THE NATION

Houston ISD's Mike Miles doubles down on open-door classroom policy

Chron

Miles said requiring teachers to leave their doors open during class time is about

administrators observing the quality of instruction.

Read more >>

American classrooms need more educators. Can virtual teachers step in to bridge the gap?'

USA Today

Most observers, including some providers of these very services, agree this isn't ideal.

Students with virtual teachers often say they like the classes but would prefer the instruction to be in-person.

Read more >>

Over 30 new LGBTQ education laws are in effect as students go back to school

NBC News

Students and teachers have to contend with a variety of restrictions on LGBTQ content and bathroom and pronoun use.

Read more >>

Entire contents copyright © 2023 *District Administration*® All rights reserved. May not be reproduced in any form without written permission.

District Administration®

222 Lakeview Ave. West Palm Beach, FL 33401

You're receiving this email at thomas.neeley@morton709.org because you signed up for a *District Administration*® eNewsletter or attended one of our conferences. Don't forget to add districtadministrationmagazine.com to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox.

You may [unsubscribe](#), if you no longer wish to receive our emails. [Manage My Subscriptions](#). Read our [privacy policy](#).

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] These are 2023-24's best high schools for 3 reasons

Wednesday, August 30, 2023 at 4:02:12AM Central Daylight Time

enewslatters@districtadministrationmagazine.com DA Daily Newsletter

To: DA@omeda.com DA Daily Newsletter

To: thomas.neeley@morton709.org

View in browser   

DAdaily

The Two-Minute Briefing for K12 Leaders

Advertisement

DA District Administration[®] SUPERINTENDENTS SUMMIT



Lake Geneva, WI,
Grand Geneva
October 11-13, 2023



Tucson, AZ,
JW Marriott Tucson
Starr Pass
November 8-10, 2023



Naples, FL,
Naples Grande
Beach Resort
December 13-15, 2023

Space is limited, reserve your spot NOW!

TRENDING ON DA

An Amazon wish list of reasons to help your teachers buy back-to-school supplies

"Our schools are, sadly, under-resourced and there is an unstated expectation that educators will spend their own money on school supplies and equipment," Vice President

of the National Education Association Princess Moss told *USA Today*. "We don't ask nurses and doctors to provide their own equipment for doing their jobs."

Read more >>

Sponsored Content

Revitalize and empower your staff

Sponsored by Marzano Resources

As an all-inclusive research-into-practice resource center, Marzano Resources is committed to helping your school or district become highly effective at preparing every learner for their future. Our experts have the knowledge and experience to help you reach your goals.

Learn more >>

TOP STORY



These are 2023-24's best high schools for 3 reasons

U.S. News' analysis of nearly 18,000 public schools across the country ranks schools based on college preparedness, student achievement and STEM education.

Read more >>

UPCOMING WEBINARS / DA Ed Talks

The Science of Reading and Implementation in ELL and Emergent Bilingual Instruction

Sponsored by Lexia

Attend this 20-minute DA Ed Talk to gain exclusive access to insights from these meetings about how to support equitable, positive literacy outcomes and high achievement for multilingual learners.

Register now >>

How AI Will Empower Administrators and Educators for Tomorrow's Learning

Sponsored by Imagine Learning

Artificial intelligence has transformative potential to revolutionize K-12 education. In this DA Ed Talk, two edtech experts will outline how AI-powered technology can and will empower educators to personalize instruction, optimize teaching, and create more effective learning environments.

Register now >>

The 3 Grading Reform Challenges Every School Leader Must Overcome

Sponsored by Otus

Attend this web seminar with Dr. Matt Townsley, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Northern Iowa, and Becky Peppler, Director of the FIRST Education STAGR Center, to learn about the most common challenges that can arise, and practical ways for district leaders to address them.

Register now >>

AROUND THE NATION

Forsyth County Schools cancel talks after author says the word 'gay' to elementary school students

Georgia Public Broadcasting

Author Marc Tyler Nobleman has spoken to students of all ages all over the country hundreds of times about the the history of the superhero Batman—without incident.

Read more >>

Where's 'woke'? Republicans test a different education message

The New York Times

Ron DeSantis rose to prominence in part on his “anti-woke” agenda, especially when it comes to education. In some settings, culture-war messaging seems to be receding.

Read more >>

More than 150 bats found inside Utah high school as students returned from summer break

USA Today

The Brazilian free-tailed bats entered the Salt Lake City school through small openings on the third floor of the school, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources said.

Read more >>

Entire contents copyright © 2023 *District Administration*® All rights reserved. May not be reproduced in any form without written permission.

District Administration®

222 Lakeview Ave. West Palm Beach, FL 33401

You're receiving this email at thomas.neeley@morton709.org because you signed up for a *District Administration*® eNewsletter or attended one of our conferences. Don't forget to add districtadministrationmagazine.com to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails by clicking [Manage My Subscriptions](#). Read our [privacy policy](#).

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Eye on Education August 28, 2023

iasa@iasaedu.org IASA

To: jnevel@iasaedu.org

To: craig.smock@mcusd709.org

Monday, August 28, 2023 at 8:55:32AM Central Daylight Time



The banner features the text "Leading with Intention" in a stylized font on the left, a portrait of Merlyna Valentine in the center, and "Friday Closing Keynote Speaker: Merlyna Valentine 'Prove What's Possible'" on the right. Below the portrait is the text "IASA 59TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE Sept. 27-29, 2023". A "Register CLICK HERE" button is in the bottom right corner.

August 28, 2023

Eye ON EDUCATION IASA

Your daily synopsis of education news

State. Rep. Mayfield discusses Illinois Literacy Plan

The Lake County News-Sun spoke to state Rep. Rita Mayfield. From the story:

A school board member before joining the Illinois General Assembly in 2010, state Rep. Rita Mayfield, D-Waukegan, has long advocated for laws dealing with literacy and her persistence now has the Illinois State Board of Education crafting a statewide plan.

Unable to muster sufficient votes among her colleagues in Springfield after introducing legislation for a statewide literacy plan last year, Mayfield started her quest again when the 103rd General Assembly was convened in January.

Working with colleagues and stakeholders, Mayfield helped muster support for legislation requiring the ISBE to create a statewide literacy plan by the end of January. The legislature sent it to Gov. J.B. Ritzler June 16 and he signed it July 28.

Centralia HS introduces technology to help monitor student emails

Southern Illinois News reports on Centralia HS. From the story:

Centralia High School has introduced a monitoring service for student e-mail accounts.

Superintendent Chuck Lane says it's another step to protect students.

"Gaggle is a tool for our district to use to improve the safety and wellness of our students. It will monitor their content searched online and school-appointed emails to make sure if they are talking about harming themselves or bringing a weapon to school it will alert us and we will contact the parent and the student. It's just another way to keep our students safe."

Lane says they will continue to use the app, Apptegy. It will now allow for increased communication between the school, parents, and students.

[Southern Illinois Now](#)

Editorial: Congrats to Illinois' newest Teacher of the Year, coming to us direct from Idaho

The Chicago Tribune Editorial Board wrote about education in Illinois. From the story:

Karen Lauritzen is the reigning "Teacher of the Year" for Idaho, but she recently left her job at an elementary school in the land of potatoes for a friendlier environment.

Illinois.

Shortly after receiving the top teacher honor for 2023, Lauritzen became the target of far-right activists who noted her support of gay rights and Black Lives Matter on her personal social media accounts. Abuse followed, not only from strangers but also from parents of her fourth-grade students, including one who cited a lesson she taught about the United Nations as evidence of left-wing indoctrination.

Lauritzen moved over the summer to a college downstate where she teaches budding educators, and the change has been good, she said in an interview. One big difference is the state's culturally responsive teaching standards, she said, which help teachers better reach their students. And she marveled about how her teenage son's new high school offers a diversity seminar that Idaho would have shunned.

"It's like heaven here," she said.

[Chicago Tribune](#)

Previewing IASA Annual Conference

Want to know more about this year's keynote speakers? Learn how IASA picks breakout sessions? And gain practical tips to maximize your conference experience? [This podcast](#) is all about IASA's 59th Annual Conference, Sept. 27-29 in Springfield. Our guests are Dr. Roger Alvey, IASA President, and Dr. Courtney Orzel, Associate Director of Professional Development.



to learn more about [IASA Aflac coverage options](#).

How are districts preparing for the end of American Rescue Plan funds?

Education Dive reports on school spending. From the story:

As school systems plan for the end of federal COVID-19 emergency funding, the immediate priority areas for remaining monies include increasing instructional time and investing in high-quality curriculum materials, according to a survey by AASA, The School Superintendents Association.

Adding specialist staff and boosting teacher planning and development were other top priorities for investment in the near future. Spending on curriculum, such as hardware, software and professional development, likely ranked higher than adding personnel on the priority list due to worries over paying for increased staffing when these one-time funds dissipate, AASA said in a report on the survey findings.

As districts prepare for the September 2024 obligation deadline for American Rescue Plan funds, the survey reveals 53% of district leaders anticipate they will need to decrease specialist staffing, such as behavioral health personnel and reading specialists. Other top areas of projected cuts or reductions are to summer learning programs and staff compensation.

[Education Dive](#)

IASA | 2648 Beechler Court, Springfield, IL 62703-7305

[Unsubscribe craig.smock@mcusd709.org](mailto:unsubscribe.craig.smock@mcusd709.org)

Constant Contact Data Notice

Sent by iasa@iasaedu.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!