Dear Board Members, June 19, 2017

My name is Melany Aho. I was raised in Corbett, I graduated from Corbett High School, and I chose to stay and raise my children in this community. I am the lucky parent of 4 amazing children who all attend school here. I have been a licensed elementary school teacher for 20 years and I know first-hand what an important and challenging job teaching is. I am vested in the success of this school and this community.

I am writing regarding the current litigation our district is facing. I met the mother who is placing the law suit several years ago because our daughters are friends. I've completely trusted this mother with the care of my child at birthday parties and playdates. I have come to respect the way she parents and I have witnessed her raising her children with love and wisdom. When I heard about the lawsuit, I spoke with her directly because I wanted to hear her side of the story first hand. I was shocked when I heard through the paper and radio about this lawsuit, but even more so after speaking with the mother and witnessing the pain a broken family brings. The fact her family's suffering is direct result of actions made by employees of our school district and inaction by our administration is horrible. It is a shame the actions of a few reflect so badly on the many teachers that do a wonderful job every day.

Members of this Board and Administration have stated this family is only suing for the money and that it is a "family issue, not a district issue." If that is the case:

- Then school staff shouldn't have taken the action they did or been involved and this wouldn't have happened at school. The fact that school staff was involved and much of this did happen at school makes this undoubtedly a school issue.
- If it was truly about money, the Family would not have provided the Administration a list of remedies to the situation back in December prior to the law suit.

The Family is suing the District because what was done to them was completely wrong and should never happen to another family in the future. I call their actions showing "conviction" and doing what is right even when others don't. I would only hope I would have the courage to take the same action if I was in their shoes. It is disturbing to me that this happened months before I heard about it and the teacher involved finished the school year without suspension and is still allowed to teach my children next year. This has caused a lack of trust which is unfair to every district employee who is doing an amazing job. Parents are taking their children out of Corbett as a direct result of the Administration and Board's inaction. It needs to be rectified immediately and due to the Administration's **inaction** it is now the School Board's responsibility to take action and insure our children's safety.

My concerns as a parent of 4 students attending CSD:

I am very concerned that some of the teacher(s) and staff who have direct contact with my own children have made such poor choices. My own children have experienced the poor choices of Administration and some teachers at CAPS in the past with inappropriate books, politically charged PG-13 movies when they were in elementary school without my knowledge, and music they were exposed to directly from their teachers (Our children's 3-5 homeroom teacher was amazing and is no

longer an employee of the district) and the staff. After my husband met with the administration and teachers and they defended they their actions, we didn't trust that any change would occur and our children are no longer attending CAPS. Trust is everything when it comes to our children.

As a result of this pattern of behavior, I can't help but wonder what some of the Corbett District employees feel they have a right to...

- **do to my children? (take them from me without my permission?)**
- **say to my children? (the last presidential election comes to mind and the inappropriate words and opinions of some teachers)**
- **share with my children? (Personal details, experiences, or advice to groom them away from how they were raised or their personal beliefs)**
- **give to my children? (Religious pamphlets? Books written for young adults when they are 11?)**

I am very concerned that the Administration has taken no obvious disciplinary action toward the teacher and staff involved with this case. Even worse, providing legal counsel in their defense. I need to know our districts administration is strong enough to stop something from happening that is wrong. I need to know the administration will not look the other way when an employee makes poor choices.

I am concerned the school board has taken no disciplinary action toward the superintendent who made very poor choices regarding the wishes of the family involved with the lawsuit and showed a lack of leadership and sound judgement when he didn't put his staff that was involved on administrative leave.

As a Teacher:

***If I had concerns about a student's treatment at home, it is my legal responsibility as a mandatory reporter to report my concerns to Children's Services ASAP. This is also the responsibility of all district classified staff, coaches, and volunteers of school sponsored clubs to report suspected abuse. (In this case, no reports were submitted until after a teacher hid a student from the parents.)**

***I would never meddle with how parents choose to raise their children.**

***I would never tell my students any personal, political, social, or religious beliefs. Even worse attempt to persuade them in any of these directions.**

***I would never hand a child a suicide hotline card without follow-up by contacting the parents, Children's Services and/or a counselor to discuss my concerns and ask how I could help the situation.**

***I would never aid a student to run away from home. If I did find myself in a situation, I would communicate with parents, school administration and/or police to find a solution. (The teacher involved helped orchestrate the runaway and purposely kept the student from parents and police.)**

***I would never disregard my responsibilities as a teacher even if the student was a close friend of my child. A teacher's responsibilities as a professional must come first.**

We all know that actions speak louder than words. We all know that we can get fired from our jobs due to choices we make inside and outside of our workplace. When it comes to our children and those who are in authority over them, trust is everything. Everything. Actions here have caused mistrust.

I am really hoping (expecting) you, our school board members, will take actions that will show you are putting our children and family's rights first, not a teacher or administrator that have shown very poor judgement. I don't just want to support this school district, I need to be able to trust and support it, as my children are my priority. As I said, I am vested in the success of this school and I still hope it will be the center of our community one day, not something that divides us. Everything considered, I don't trust our district can be successful under the current leadership.

Thank you for your time. I trust you to show conviction and do what is right.

Melany Aho