

Alliance for Education in Waukesha  
July 5, 2023  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### ACT NOW TO PROTECT FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS IN WAUKESHA SCHOOLS

The Alliance has been made aware that a public hearing to consider the recommendation for termination of Heyer Elementary School First Grade Teacher, Melissa Tempel is scheduled for July 12, 2023 at noon at the School District of Waukesha (SDW) administrative offices.

Tempel gained national attention when she shared the District's decision to prohibit first graders from performing Dolly Parton and Miley Cyrus' song, "Rainbowland," in the first-grade musical. Tempel had been placed on leave on April 3, 2023. After more than a month-long investigation, the District Superintendent recommended termination asserting that Tempel violated administrative guidelines in the form and forum she chose to disagree with the decision of the District. Tempel, a 23-year veteran educator, is an award winning, National Board Certified Teacher, an advocate for inclusivity and ally for marginalized students.

As a result of the District's actions and delays in decision making, first grade students at Heyer finished their school year in a chaotic environment and without their trusted teacher Ms. Tempel. The Alliance is concerned about the District's on-going misuse of policy as a shield for its pattern of harmful decisions negatively impacting the students and school community and the potential impact of her termination on First Amendment rights, teacher retention, and the promise for more transparent communication with parents.

In support of First Amendment and transparent communication between schools, parents and community members, the Alliance is encouraging the public to join them in the following actions:

- Residents within the bounds of the School District of Waukesha are encouraged to write letters to the SDW of Waukesha Board in support of Melissa Tempel. A link to Board members emails can be accessed using a link on the Alliance [website](#). Please utilize their District e-mails and do not contact them personally. As an added measure of accountability, we invite you to copy the Alliance on those emails: [Allianceforeducationwaukesha@gmail.com](mailto:Allianceforeducationwaukesha@gmail.com).
- Join the Alliance and other community members on **July 8<sup>th</sup>** at United Unitarian Universalist Congregation at 506 N. Washington Ave, Waukesha to organize and make posters for a silent rally on July 12th to protect First Amendment rights in public schools.
- Attend the silent rally to demonstrate the dangers inherent in the infringement on public employees First Amendment Rights on **July 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM** prior to the public hearing at the District Offices at **301 Hyde Park Ave**, Waukesha. We are encouraging attendees to wear black armbands, black face masks, or other First Amendment t-shirts to remind the SDW Administration and Board of the importance of protecting this fundamental right.

- **Attend the public hearing on July 12<sup>th</sup> at noon at District Administration Offices at 301 Hyde Park Avenue in Waukesha.** Please wear black or black armbands to show your support for First Amendment Rights.

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