

To: Regional School Board Members and
Superintendent of Schools
Amity Regional School District #5;
First Selectpersons – Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge

From: Richard Blumenthal, Attorney General
Theodore S. Sergi, Commissioner of Education

Date: April 3, 2003

Subject: Investigation of Complaints

We have attached the latest report of our offices on matters that were brought to our attention from several sources. Having reviewed this report with our staff members who performed this work as a joint effort, we offer the following advice and counsel.

1. The findings in this report demonstrate a significant failure of leadership on the part of both elected and appointed officials of the Amity school district.
2. Clearly, on more than one occasion, elected members of the board of education breached their duty to the citizens who elected them.
3. The facts regarding financial mismanagement, including an unauthorized loan and other questionable business practices, reflect a systemic disregard for the appropriate role school board members should play in the business affairs of a school district. The board of education bears responsibility, and should be held accountable for the improprieties revealed in this report, including those associated with the ServiceMaster and Kahn Inter Corp. transactions.
4. Members of the regional school board who served during these events have clearly lost the public's confidence, and now lack the credibility to inspire a "yes" vote on the district's proposed budget.
5. The need now is to move forward, and break with the past pattern of mismanagement. Indeed, voters in all three communities have repeatedly voiced their opinion that new leadership is needed.
6. The new superintendent of schools, new business manager and new members of the board deserve the opportunity to serve the district and its citizens free from the onus of past practices and actions.

We urge all members of the regional school board to be vigilant in their fiduciary duties. The board, acting publicly and openly, together with its superintendent of schools, must carry out its responsibilities and ensure fiscal accountability.

We urge the board members who served the district during these events, in the interests of the children of the Amity school district, to respect the need for new leadership.

We further urge all other local officials to allow the new leadership team the time to demonstrate its responsible guardianship of public funds, and its ability to communicate with political leaders and the public.

Collectively or separately, current Board members should recognize the desperate need for new leadership, and demonstrate their commitment to the children whose education is at stake by respecting the repeated calls by parents and voters for accountability. A new start, with fresh energy and ideas, should be everyone's priority.