

Hello:

I am submitting this PDC complaint against the entity Citizens for Marysville Schools pursuant to RCW 42.17A.755(1).

I am requesting that this complaint be given the highest priority considering the current scrutiny surrounding the Marysville School District's financial mismanagement and the related double failure of the District's 2022 levy ballot measures. This complaint relates back to these issues.

After reading about the District's 2022 levy ballot measure failures in recent newspaper articles, I was prompted to review this pro-levy committee's filings. My review of the filings submitted by this committee revealed several significant irregularities.

## **2018**

In 2018, the committee filed its final report on 10/7/2019. The report indicated a cash on hand balance of \$5406.29 as of 10/31/18.<sup>1</sup> The committee's PDC listing indicated \$28,665.14 in total receipts and \$22,192.60 in total expenditures.<sup>2</sup>

## **2020**

The committee submitted a registration indicating participation in the 2020 election cycle.<sup>3</sup> The registration also listed Tracy Souza, Richard Ledford, Jodie Runyon, Scott Beebe, and Peggy King as officers. The PDC has defined officers to mean "[a]ny person designated by the committee as an officer on the C-1 or C-1pc registration statement and any person who alone or in conjunction with other persons makes, directs, or authorizes contribution, expenditure, strategic or policy decisions on behalf of the committee."<sup>4</sup>

Tracy Souza is currently listed as the Executive Director of Human Resources for the Marysville School District.<sup>5</sup> Souza is also – apparently - suing the Marysville School District.<sup>6</sup>

Richard Ledford was listed as the treasurer for the committee's 2020 pro-levy effort and was also the treasurer for Sen. John McCoy's campaign committee. Sen. John McCoy's campaign committee was fined \$5000 in 2018 which was attributed to Mr. Ledford's failing to disclose contributions totaling \$38,926 and expenditures totaling \$5,089 from 2015-2018.<sup>7</sup>

Jodie Runyon is currently listed as the Director of Communications, Engagement, and Outreach for the Marysville School District.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://web.pdc.wa.gov/rptimg/default.aspx?repno=100935086>

<sup>2</sup> <https://pdc.wa.gov/political-disclosure-reporting-data/browse-search-data/committees/co-2018-3468>

<sup>3</sup> [https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/public/registrations/registration?registration\\_id=17667](https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/public/registrations/registration?registration_id=17667)

<sup>4</sup> <https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=390-05-245>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.msd25.org/staff?page\\_no=12](https://www.msd25.org/staff?page_no=12)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.pacermonitor.com/public/case/53580195/Souza\\_v\\_Marysville\\_School\\_District\\_No\\_25\\_et\\_al](https://www.pacermonitor.com/public/case/53580195/Souza_v_Marysville_School_District_No_25_et_al)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.pdc.wa.gov/rules-enforcement/enforcement/enforcement-cases/34985>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.msd25.org/staff?page\\_no=11](https://www.msd25.org/staff?page_no=11)

Scott Beebe is not listed on the Marysville School District's staff roster.<sup>9</sup> However past Marysville School District articles indicate that he was the assistant superintendent in 2020.<sup>10</sup>

Peggy King is currently listed as an Administrative Assistant in the Marysville School District's troubled Finance and Operations division.<sup>11</sup>

On the 2020 committee's initial C4, the committee indicated a starting cash balance of \$6,472.54 as of 11/1/18.<sup>12</sup> Previously the committee had indicated a cash on hand balance for the day prior of \$5406.29 as of 10/31/18.<sup>13</sup> The unexplained discrepancy between these two numbers was \$1066.25. This suggests that there were either contributions or expenditures (or some combination thereof) that were not reported properly.

The committee's 2020 PDC listing indicated \$15,608.54 in total receipts and \$2,794.78 in total expenditures.<sup>14</sup>

The committee filed its final 2020 C4 on 3/4/20 and reported an ending cash on hand balance of \$12,813.76 as of 2/29/20.<sup>15</sup>

## **2022**

In 2022, the Marysville School District submitted two ballot propositions to Special Election ballots in both February and April. The voters rejected each of these propositions.

Citizens for Marysville Schools did not file a registration indicating that they were participating in the 2022 election cycle, nor did they file any C3 or C4 reports relating to the 2022 election cycle. The last report filed by this committee was filed on 3/4/20.

Based on this committee's previously reported support of Marysville School District levy measures, I suspect that there were significant levels of fundraising and expenditures relating to the 2022 election cycle campaign. However, because they failed to file even a single report relating to this election cycle, it is impossible to tell from their records. I did however find evidence that a PAC operated by SEIU 925 made a contribution to Citizens for Marysville Schools in January of 2022 for \$600.<sup>16</sup> This donation was never reported by the recipient committee and as mentioned previously, the last report filed by this committee was filed on 3/4/20.

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.msd25.org/staff?search=Beebe>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.msd25.org/article/199035>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.msd25.org/staff?search=Peggy%20King>

<sup>12</sup> <https://web.pdc.wa.gov/rptimg/default.aspx?repno=100938951>

<sup>13</sup> <https://web.pdc.wa.gov/rptimg/default.aspx?repno=100935086>

<sup>14</sup> <https://pdc.wa.gov/political-disclosure-reporting-data/browse-search-data/committees/co-2020-24420>

<sup>15</sup> <https://web.pdc.wa.gov/rptimg/default.aspx?repno=100959223>

<sup>16</sup> <https://web.pdc.wa.gov/rptimg/default.aspx?repno=110073670>

## **2023**

In 2023, a new committee was formed to support the Marysville School District's ballot proposition.<sup>17</sup> The committee was named Best Schools Marysville Sponsored by Citizens for Marysville Schools (BSM). The committee reported \$93,557.18 of total receipts and \$67,503.58 in total expenditures.

Ultimately, the Marysville School District's levy campaign for 2023 was successful.

The new committee's registration listed Jacob Read as the committee's "Treasurer Consultant" and Ron Friesen as the committee's Treasurer. Neither Friesen nor Read appear to be listed as employees of the Marysville School District.

On 12/21/2022, the new committee reported receiving a \$26,900.00 donation from Citizens for Marysville Schools.<sup>18</sup> This report was filed late.

This donation is concerning because the last report filed by Citizens for Marysville Schools indicated that the committee had a cash on hand balance of only \$12,813.76 as of 2/29/20.<sup>19</sup>

The fact that Citizens for Marysville Schools was capable of making a donation of this size indicates that it failed to accurately file reports subsequent to the last report it had filed.

Additionally, a donation of this size would have triggered Citizens for Marysville Schools to report the donation as an expenditure to the new committee, but it failed to do so.

This is evidence that the committee Citizens for Marysville Schools violated RCW 42.17A.235 and .240 by failing to accurately and timely account for contributions made and expenditures received.

### **Conclusion**

I am requesting that this complaint be given the highest priority considering the current scrutiny surrounding the Marysville School District's financial mismanagement and the related double failure of the District's 2022 levy ballot measures. This complaint relates back to these issues.

I am also requesting the PDC to investigate the possibility that the new political committee "Best Schools Marysville" is effectively "Citizens for Marysville Schools" in all but name and appearance. To this end, I would request that the PDC make a determination as to whether or not the officers of Citizens for Marysville Schools also served as de-facto officers for the new committee Best Schools Marysville.

Sincerely,

Conner Edwards  
(425) 533-1677 cell

---

<sup>17</sup> [https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/public/registrations/registration?registration\\_id=50377](https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/public/registrations/registration?registration_id=50377)

<sup>18</sup> <https://apollo.pdc.wa.gov/public/registrations/campaign-finance-report/110133440>

<sup>19</sup> <https://web.pdc.wa.gov/rptimg/default.aspx?repno=100959223>