

May 2, 2013

Mr. Craig Oftedahl
Warroad Public School District I.S.D. #690
510 Cedar Ave. NW
Warroad, MN 56763

Mr. Oftedahl,

I am writing this letter to express my extreme frustration and disappointment in the school board's actions this past Tuesday April 30, 2013. Under normal circumstances, I would be willing to accept the school board's decision to reject yours and the rest of the hiring committee's recommendation that I become the District's Business Manager. In no uncertain terms, however, do I feel that my rejection was based on normal circumstances.

As you know, I applied for the Business Manager position when it was posted in the District office. The posting lacked any mention or reference to candidates being required to take a "skills proficiency test" in order to be selected for the position. Once I was selected for an interview, it is my understanding that I was one of six candidates selected. My interview was approximately one hour in length and after leaving the interview, I felt comfortable that I had put my best foot-forward. During my interview I felt that I provided the committee sincere answers and allowed the committee to fully explore any questions they may have had concerning my qualifications for the position. Last Friday April 26, 2013, you informed me that the committee had chosen me to become the District's Business Manager and that my ultimate hiring to that position was contingent on school board approval.

On Wednesday May 1, 2013 I was informed that your recommendation to the school board was rejected by a 5-1 vote. Again, while I could potentially understand the board's position under different circumstances, such circumstances are not present here. First, I am at a total loss as to why my integrity and forthrightness was questioned regarding my transcript. I am quite proud of the Bachelors degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Finance that I received from the University of Minnesota-Duluth. The UMD School of Business is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB International). This accreditation is earned by only 5% of business schools worldwide. This indicates that the faculty maintains the most demanding standards and meets the highest criteria in business education. I find it completely insulting that the board would have the audacity to question the reliability of my accomplishments with no factual basis to support their assertions. Second, the board's decision to suddenly require me to take a "skills proficiency test" in accounting and finance is something that is completely unexpected. As I mentioned, at no time during the application and interview process was this requirement ever set-forth. To me, this appears to be a

classic example of “moving the goal-posts” while the game is still being played. Furthermore, the board’s post-hoc decision-making leads to me believe that I am not competing on equal grounds with other applicants. And third, certain board member comments in support of their decision to reject your recommendation appear to be based on an animus towards a particular group of individuals who they perceive to be the root of the District’s problems. Not only is their belief that I fall within this certain group factually inaccurate, basing their decision on such belief is prohibited by state and federal law.

Based on information that has come to light over the past five days, and after consulting with those closest to me, I am contemplating taking further action. The Warroad School District and community as a whole deserves better than what transpired this past Tuesday night. To be clear, this letter is not a threat. This letter is to inform you, and others involved in the process, that I will pursue my options to the fullest extent allowed in order to remedy what I perceive to be a fundamentally unjust result in this hiring process.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Jay Hardwick

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JH' with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.