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October 5, 2018

Dear Parents of Students in Marketing II;

The School District of Janesville's Board of Education approves the academic standards—what we want students to know and be able to do—which guide our curriculum and teacher instruction in the courses offered to students. We provide our teachers with some liberty to determine the tools and additional resources they wish to use as a way to enhance the learning experience and meet the needs of students.

Recently, the teacher of your student's class selected a video to use as an additional resource. It was intended to be used as part of a lesson on economics and labor unions, and to generate a classroom discussion on the pros and cons of unions. Unfortunately, it did not offer a fair and balanced presentation of facts.

We want our students to become critical thinkers—individuals that can see opposing points of view, evidence, information, and be able to come to their own conclusions. A lesson on the pros and cons of unions does not automatically fall into a category of a controversial topic; however, if not presented in a way that allows a fair discussion of all points of view, then it becomes controversial.

After receiving a parent complaint, I was able to view the video, and it is evident that using it violated our school board policies regarding the instruction of controversial topics. The problem with this particular video is that it is heavily biased toward one point of view, and it did not fairly present a whole picture. The teacher should have come to discuss this with me before using it in any lesson. For this, we apologize.

To remedy this situation, we will ensure additional lessons will be taught in this class to provide a more balanced view of the topic. And to minimize the possibility of this happening again, we will work with the teacher to review lesson plans prior to instruction.

We believe this was an isolated incident, and are following established district disciplinary policies and procedures concerning this matter. We believe that Craig High School provides a learning environment that helps students grow as young adults and to develop their own thoughts, perspectives, and opinions, so that they can contribute positively to society.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.

Dr. Alison Bjoin, Principal  
Craig High School