



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MISSOURI
ANDREW BAILEY

January 20, 2023

Dr. Brian Yearwood
Superintendent, Columbia Public Schools
1818 W Worley St.
Columbia, MO 65203

Dear Dr. Yearwood:

I am committed to ensuring that our school system is educating, not indoctrinating children, and that parents have a say in the process.

As such, along with thousands of parents in our state, I am deeply troubled by reports that you have used the authority of your office to actively undermine Missouri's laws by deliberately subjecting a group of middle school children to an adult-themed drag show performance.

It appears that the performance in question was planned and hosted by the City of Columbia. There is also evidence that Columbia Public Schools intentionally concealed the sexual nature of the presentation to which they invited middle-schoolers and that they actively discouraged parents from attending.

Missouri law contains a long list of statutes specifically written to protect the safety and innocence of our state's children. Your actions this week violated the spirit if not the letter of these statutes.

The Missouri General Assembly recently passed a new statute to protect school-aged children. This statute criminalized providing certain sexual material to a student and became effective in August.¹ But the protections our state provides to Missouri's children go further. Section 170.015 RSMo, also sets forth compliance with Missouri's sex education law which specifically details what public schools are and are not allowed to present to minors on the topic of sex. Transporting students to a drag show likely runs afoul of this statute.

Missouri law further requires that public officials such as those working in our schools report instances of child endangerment. Not only did you fail to report this incident but it appears city and school officials actively participated in taking underage children to witness an inappropriate sexual

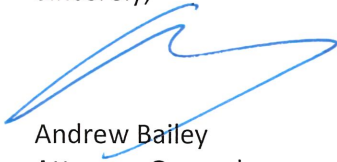
¹ Sec. 573.550, RSMo.

performance in the form of a drag show. This kind of performance has no place in the public educational system.

Children in our state have a constitutional right to a quality public education because in Missouri we understand that training the next generation is “essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties” we cherish.²

By this letter I am directing you to retain and not destroy any and all documents or other evidence in your possession that is in any way connected to this incident as this office evaluates what further action is appropriate.

Sincerely,



Andrew Bailey
Attorney General
State of Missouri

Cc: Hon. Barbara Buffaloe

² Mo. Const. Art. IX § 1(a). “A general diffusion of knowledge and intelligence being essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, the general assembly shall establish and maintain free public schools for the gratuitous instruction of all persons in this state within ages not in excess of twenty-one years as prescribed by law.”