

February 14, 2021

Dear Altamont CUSD 10 Board,

It is with significant sadness and disappointment I write to you today to request a release from my contract to serve as your district's next Superintendent. I had such excitement when your faith in my professional abilities manifested into the opportunity to lead such a fantastic district. However, the events over this past week with the backlash from the community because of my involvement in professional wrestling and an acting job I accepted over 20 years ago have taken a personal toll on myself, the Board, and created a distraction from what is really important—doing what is right for the students of the district.

For the past 15 years, I have devoted my life to creating great opportunities for students. As an educator and leader, I have been successful in lifting up schools in difficult situations and improving the climate and culture so progress can be made on the behalf of kids. When I visited Altamont and spoke to folks, I felt that my skillset as a leader and steadfast commitment for doing what is right for students were a good fit for what the district currently needs. As I write this letter, I still hold those same beliefs.

Everyone has a past. I am not ashamed of my involvement in the professional wrestling business. Over the years, I had the opportunity to travel, meet interesting people from all walks of life, and entertain thousands. As a wrestler and promoter, I also had the opportunity to donate my time and resources to raise tens of thousands of dollars for charities, people in need, and even schools. With regards to my participation as a paid actor on an over-the-top talk show 20 years ago, I will admit, the 43 year old David would have passed but the 22 year old me saw it as cool and exciting at the time. At no time did I ever hurt anyone or do anything illegal. I am sure all of us have times when they would go back and make different decisions, however I believe that everything that has happened to me has shaped who I am today, and I would not change that.

While I may have a colorful past, part of me believes that some of the backlash received comes from a part of me that I could not change even if I wanted to. Being a gay man, I have been encouraged by the progress made over the last several years, but there is still a long way to go in promoting tolerance and equality. We live in a fantastic country that gives us the right to agree and disagree in all areas of society. That is fundamental to our democracy. It is my hope that we continue a respectful dialogue and learn to be more tolerant and respectful of people's differences.

I want to end by expressing my sincerest gratitude to the Board. Your support and confidence shown over the last several days means the world to me. As I stated during the interview process, I always want to do what is best for students knowing that may not always be what is easiest for adults. This truly was a dream opportunity for me, and I was hoping to join the Altamont community and work to make it a better place for all. I do not want to be a distraction for doing what is right for kids and will not stand in the way of progress. I care too much about the success of your students, district, and community. I only hope this can serve as a learning opportunity for the Altamont community and a means to move forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Martin, Ed.D.