

## STATEMENT OF DR. CARL LEBUHN

It came to my attention today that members of the community have shared a photograph on social media in which Paducah School Superintendent Dr. Donald Shively is in a costume wearing blackface make-up and a Paducah Tilghman High School t-shirt. To be clear, I and all of the members of the Paducah Board of Education find the use of blackface to be deeply offensive.

However, to Dr. Shively's credit, he self-reported the existence of this photograph taken over 15 years ago to the Board of Education in February of 2019. I was informed of the matter by Dr. Shively a few days prior to the February 2019 board meeting. In response, the Board held an executive session to discuss this personnel matter, consistent with the open meetings laws of Kentucky. In attendance during that executive session were all of the members of the Board of Education, including myself, Dr. Felix Akojie, Mary Hunter Hancock, Janice Howard, and Dr. James Hudson.

During the executive session, Dr. Shively described the costume, which he recalls wearing in October of 2002. Dr. Shively's description of the costume from that time matches the costume depicted in the photograph. Dr. Shively further apologized to the Board, expressed his embarrassment and remorse for his actions, and stated that he understood the offensive and inappropriate nature of the costume. Dr. Shively assured the Board that there were no other incidents of a similar nature. Dr. Shively's apology and remorse were felt to be sincere by the Board.

The Board discussed the matter for a considerable time outside of Dr. Shively's presence. During that conversation, all members of the Board expressed or agreed that, while the costume was offensive and inappropriate, Dr. Shively's demonstrated attitude and actions, dedication to the District, and commitment to ensuring equity for all students are more telling of his character and racial attitudes than an incident from almost two decades ago. Dr. Shively has and continues to work to improve outcomes for all students, decrease the achievement gap, and provide opportunities for all students, regardless of race or background. As a result, at that time, no discipline or action was proposed or acted upon by the Board.