

## **CDA School Board Refuses to Respond To Allegations of Ethical Misconduct and Open Meeting Law Violations**

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Thursday, March 28, 2013- In a letter dated March 26, 2013, Marc A. Lyons, attorney for CDA School District 271, provided a "courtesy" response informing the group of citizens who filed a grievance against the School Board of Trustees (Board) on March 14, 2013, that the Board will neither take action, nor issue a formal response because "the Board is not legally obligated to (do so)..." Interpreting the grievance as simply a difference of opinion about the IB and PYP programs and a disagreement about procedures for terminating district programs, he reminded the citizens that "the Board ultimately exercised its governance authority and decided to end those programs."

Ashlie Unruh: The fact that the Board "exercised its governance authority" to end PYP is not the problem. We never questioned the authority of the board to end a program, rather, we asked for accountability for what we considered unethical decision-making that was not based on policy or facts. Essentially, the message they are sending is that they removed a program simply because they had the authority to do so, not because they thoroughly researched unbiased resources, conducted a fair survey like they promised, utilized policy-based information, considered all available facts, or really listened to teachers and parents. This is not the way a school board should operate. The courtesy response from their attorney only highlights the Board's consistent and pervasive pattern of evasiveness and lack of accountability for their actions. If the Board was at all interested in restoring trust, they would have responded to these 200 citizens instead of avoiding us.

Nicole Olson: Unfortunately, by reducing the grievance to nothing more than a difference of opinion about PYP, the Board fails to recognize that the citizens' greatest concern is that the alleged behaviors exhibited in that decision-making process will be replicated in future decisions. We are seeking accountability and ethics in government, and well-reasoned, policy-based decisions. As Thomas Paine once famously wrote, "...a body of men, holding themselves accountable to nobody, ought not to be trusted by anybody." At this point, we will be considering other options for holding the Board accountable.