




## CONFIDENTIAL

**TO:** O'DELL HENDERSON, DIRECTOR  
LABOR MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

**FROM:** JEANINE RILEY, COMPLIANCE INVESTIGATOR   
COMPLIANCE AND INVESTIGATIONS

**SUBJECT:** KATHERINE STOLTZ, TEACHER, AND STUDENTS IN HER  
CLASS, MAUPIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**DATE:** NOVEMBER 25, 2019

***Allegation:*** On October 10, 2019, the office of Compliance and Investigations received a request for an investigation from Charita Kimbrough, principal. According to the request, it was alleged that Katherine Stoltz, teacher, was making inappropriate comments to the students in her class. According to the request, Ms. Stoltz called the students "monkeys" and "dummies." According to the request, Ms. Stoltz is allegedly requiring the students to do laps as punishment during recess, in extreme temperatures.

***Findings:*** On October 24, 2019, this investigator went to Maupin Elementary School and conducted interviews regarding the allegation received.

**Naomi Trabue, instructional assistant**

According to Ms. Trabue, she has served as Ms. Stoltz's assistant for the past two academic years. Ms. Trabue reported that she has never heard Ms. Stoltz call a student "out of their name." According to Ms. Trabue, she has never heard Ms. Stoltz call any student "dummies" or "monkeys." Ms. Trabue stated that she thought things were going well in their classroom and she was surprised to learn that there were any concerns reported.

Ms. Trabue reported that they do utilize walking laps as a behavior management tool. Ms. Trabue stated that she has never viewed the strategy as excessive or inappropriate and most of the teachers she has worked with do the same. During her interview, Ms. Trabue reported that most of the time, the students



have to compete a few laps and then they get to have the rest of their free time. During her interview, Ms. Trabue stated that while it may be warm some days when they go outside, she would never describe the temperature as extreme. According to Ms. Trabue, if the temperatures are too extreme one way or another (hot or cold) then they stay in and do activities indoors (Attachment A).

██████████, student

According to ██████████ she likes school and she thinks her teachers, Ms. Stoltz and Ms. Trabue, are both nice. ██████████ stated that she has never observed her teacher treat student's "mean." ██████████ stated that she has never heard any of her teachers call any student an inappropriate name. During her interview, ██████████ stated that she has never heard any teacher, including Ms. Stoltz, call students "stupid" or refer to them as "monkeys."

During her interview, ██████████ stated that they utilize a clip change/color change system to monitor student behavior. ██████████ stated that depending on their behavior, a student may be asked to move their clip up to a more positive status color, or they may have to move their clip down to a negative status color. ██████████ stated that the teacher then tells parents what color the student finishes the day on by writing it in their take home folder. According to ██████████ there are times at recess when students have to walk laps for bad behavior. ██████████ stated that if they are good when they walk their laps, they usually finish quickly and get to play the rest of the time. During her interview, ██████████ stated that she does not recall a time when students were forced to walk laps in extreme temperatures (either very hot or cold).

██████████ student

According to ██████████ he likes school and he thinks teachers Ms. Stoltz and Ms. Trabue are both nice. ██████████ reported that sometimes students call other students names; however, he has never heard any of his teachers call any student an inappropriate name. ██████████ stated that he has never heard any teachers, including Ms. Stoltz, call students "stupid" or refer to them as "monkeys." During his interview, ██████████ stated that they use a clip and move it up or down to change their color as the system to monitor student behavior. During his interview, ██████████ stated that there are times when students have to walk laps during recess, but they do not usually have to walk long and once they are done, they can play on the playground. During his interview, ██████████ stated that he does not recall a time when students were forced to walk laps in extreme temperatures.

██████████ student

According to ██████████ she likes school and she thinks her teachers Ms. Stoltz and Ms. Trabue are both nice. ██████████ stated that she has never heard any of her teachers call any students an inappropriate name. ██████████ stated that she has never heard any teacher, including Ms. Stoltz, call students "stupid" or refer to them as "monkeys." During her interview, ██████████ stated that they utilize a color change system to monitor student behavior. ██████████ stated that there are



times when students have to walk laps during recess, but if they walk their laps "good," they get to play the rest of the time. During her interview, [REDACTED] stated that she does not recall a time when students were forced to walk laps in extreme temperatures.

**Katie Queen, teacher**

Ms. Queen reported that she is a first grade teacher who has her class on the playground the same time as Ms. Stoltz. Ms. Queen reported that she has never had any concerns with Ms. Stoltz and her interactions with her students.

Ms. Queen stated that she has never heard Ms. Stoltz talk to any student in a derogatory manner, nor has she ever heard Ms. Stoltz call students out of their names. Ms. Queen stated that she recalls one incident when a student in Ms. Stoltz class lost their free time and Ms. Stoltz had the student go sit under a tree in the shade. Ms. Queen stated that she has never had any concerns about Ms. Stoltz having students walk in excessive temperatures, as alleged.

**Whitney Gearlds, Exceptional Child Education (ECE) teacher**

According to Ms. Gearlds, in her role, she has worked with Ms. Stoltz over the past two academic years. Ms. Gearlds stated that Ms. Stoltz is strict and keeps her class in order; however, she has never heard her call any student a derogatory or inappropriate name. Ms. Gearlds reported that while some students do have more laps assigned to them more frequently than others do, she has never had any concerns with Ms. Stoltz forcing students to walk in extreme temperatures, as alleged.

**Jenna Fracasso, teacher**

Ms. Fracasso reported that she has had a lot of interactions with Ms. Stoltz over the past three years as they both teach the same grade level. Ms. Fracasso stated that she feels she is "being put in the middle" of something she does not want to be part of regarding this investigation. Ms. Fracasso was asked to just speak on her observations, and not "pick a side" as she feels she is being asked to do. During her interview, Ms. Fracasso reported that she and Ms. Stoltz have different personalities, as she is more "warm and fuzzy" with the student's and Ms. Stoltz is more "strict and rigid." Ms. Fracasso stated that she has had private conversations with Ms. Stoltz about the students; however, she has never heard Ms. Stoltz call students names, including "dummies" or "monkeys" to their face.

Ms. Fracasso reported that she sometimes thinks Ms. Stoltz has a rough tone when talking to students; however, she does not think Ms. Stoltz is inappropriate. Ms. Fracasso reported that she has her students out on the playground at the same time as Ms. Stoltz. Ms. Fracasso stated that while Ms. Stoltz may have some of her students walk "a little longer" than what she makes her students, she has not observed Ms. Stoltz have students walk in extreme temperatures, as alleged.



**Katherine Stoltz, teacher**

James Hughley, Jefferson County Teachers Association (JCTA) union representative was present for the interview with Ms. Stoltz. According to Ms. Stoltz, she has never called any of her students an inappropriate name, including, "monkeys" and/or "stupid."

According to Ms. Stoltz, she denies the allegation that she requires students to walk in extreme temperatures. Ms. Stoltz reported that she, along with many other teachers at Maupin Elementary School, including the classes who are on the playground at the same time as her students, utilize "walking laps" during part of their recess time as a behavior management tool. Ms. Stoltz stated that this is a school wide practice and she has never been given a directive not to have students walk laps as a behavior management tool. According to Ms. Stoltz, she does not have students walk laps in extreme temperatures that would be harmful to their health or welfare, as alleged. Ms. Stoltz reported that if temperatures were too extreme, she would not have any of her students outside; rather, they would remain in her classroom for inside recess.

Ms. Stoltz stated that while the allegations were made by an "anonymous" source, Ms. Fracasso informed her that she was approached by Margaret Price, substitute teacher temporary appointment, who serves in the capacity of a long-term substitute at Maupin Elementary School. Ms. Stoltz reported that Ms. Fracasso informed her that Ms. Price asked Ms. Fracasso to "lie" and state that she had in fact heard Ms. Stoltz call student's derogatory names. Ms. Stoltz reported that Ms. Price was attempting to garner support for the claim that Ms. Price and Kimberly Johnson, counselor, reported to the new principal, Charita Kimbrough. Ms. Stoltz reported that in addition to her conversation with Ms. Fracasso, Ms. Price had a similar conversation with Ms. Gearlds, when attempting to garner support from her.

During her interview, Ms. Stoltz reported that she and Ms. Price have "some history," because when she was on maternity leave, Ms. Price was her long-term sub. Ms. Stoltz stated that when she returned from her leave, her class was "rearranged, and left in shambles." Ms. Stoltz stated that there has been an awkward tension between her and Ms. Price; however, prior to these allegations being made, she assumed they had moved on from the past issues. During her interview, Ms. Stoltz reported that Ms. Price and Dr. Johnson are good friends and Dr. Johnson has an established track record of making problems for staff, which have included making false statements about staff members, including the mental health counselor and the former principal. Ms. Stoltz reported that Dr. Johnson tries to be intimidating and a bully and she makes it difficult for people, so they elect to leave Maupin Elementary School. During her interview, Ms. Stoltz stated that other staff members have informed her that Dr. Johnson has inquired if they had been interviewed for this investigation. During her interview, Ms. Stoltz reported that staff are scared to go against Dr. Johnson

because they do not want to become the focus of her anger or agenda (Attachment B).

***Conclusion:***

This investigator finds the allegation that Ms. Stoltz is making inappropriate comments to the students in her class to be unsubstantiated. In addition, it is unsubstantiated that Ms. Stoltz is making students do laps, as punishment, in extreme temperatures. These findings are based on the interviews conducted and the statements obtained. There was a lack of evidence and witness corroboration to support the allegations made against Ms. Stoltz.

JR:gdl

c Charita Kimbrough



# ATTACHMENT A

Naomi Trabue

October 24, 2019

TO: Jeanine Riley, Compliance Investigator-JCPS

This letter is to confirm my statement regarding the accusation made against Mrs. Stoltz. I have never in my two years of being her assistant heard her call a student out of their name.

I also forgot to mention that Ms. Price (accuser) asked kindergarten teacher Jenna Fracasso to lie, in order to verify her accusation against Mrs. Stoltz.

Mrs. Stoltz is a good teacher who puts 100% effort in trying to teach her student's what they need to learn.

If you need any more information, please contact me at Maupin.

Thank you,

Naomi Trabue

**Riley, Jeanine N**

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**From:** Trabue, Naomi R.  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 24, 2019 2:59 PM  
**To:** Riley, Jeanine N  
**Subject:** Mrs. Stoltz  
**Attachments:** Naomi Trabue.docx



# ATTACHMENT B

The following is the statement of Katie Stoltz regarding the allegations made against me by an anonymous source.

According to the allegation, I have been accused of making inappropriate comments to my students and requiring some students to walk in extreme temperatures.

Regarding the allegation that I have called my students "monkeys" and "stupid", I hereby state that at no time I have ever called any of my students an inappropriate name. I have been falsely accused by the "anonymous" source. In addition, I was informed by a fellow teacher, Ms. Jenna Fracasso, that she was approached by Ms. Margaret Price, the current long-term substitute teacher at Maupin Elementary, and asked to "lie" and state that I had called students' names in order to support the claim of Ms. Price and Dr. Kimberly Johnson, the guidance counselor at Maupin Elementary. In addition to Ms. Jenna Fracasso stating this to me, she also repeated the conversation with Ms. Margaret Price to Ms. Whitney Gearlds, the ECE teacher at Maupin Elementary. Mrs. Whitney Gearlds then repeated Ms. Margaret Price's conversation with Jenna Fracasso to me.

Regarding the allegation that I have required students to walk in extreme temperatures, I hereby state that at no time have my students walked in extreme temperature that would be dangerous to their health and welfare. I hereby state that I, along with the other teachers at Maupin Elementary, have utilized "walking" during part of their recess as a "tool" to control their behavior. This behavior tool has been utilized by the other three teachers that have recess at the same time that I have. For example, I had a student hit another student so I have him walk for part of his recess. At no time, are the students walking during extreme heat. As a matter of fact, in extreme temperatures, my students would not be outside but instead would be inside my classroom having their recess.

I have been deeply bothered by these false allegations and by the fact that a teacher was approached and asked to "lie" to support the false allegations. This has been a defamation of my character.

*Katie Stoltz* 10/24/19



**Riley, Jeanine N**

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**From:** Stoltz, Katherine J.  
**Sent:** Friday, October 25, 2019 3:15 PM  
**To:** Riley, Jeanine N; James Hughley  
**Subject:** Stoltz statement  
**Attachments:** signed statement.pdf

Ms. Riley,

Attached please find my statement in regards to yesterdays meeting. Thank you so much for coming out. Have a great weekend.