

Browning Public Schools
Board Agenda Request
Meeting To Be Held: February 11, 2025



Recognition: ☐ Students ☐ Staff ☐ Parents
Information: ☐ Building Report ☐ Old Business ☐ Superintendent's Report
Action: ☒ Resignations ☐ Hiring ☐ Contract Service Agreements
 ☐ Travel Out-of-State ☐ Travel In State ☐ Approvals
 ☐ Termination ☐ Legal Matters ☐ Other:
 This action request pertains to ☐ Elementary (only) ☐ High School/District Wide

Date: February 7, 2025

To: Rebecca Rappold
 Superintendent of Schools

From: Beverly Sinclair
Title: Director of Human Resources

Subject: Resignation

Description: The following resignation has been accepted by the Superintendent:

🚩 Rebecca Craig, ELA, Reading Intervention Teacher-BHS, Effective 1-23-2025

Financial Impact: N/A

Attachment(s): Resignation Letter

Superintendent Action: ☐ Approved ☐ Denied ☐ Deferred Initial & date: _____

Comments: _____

Board Action: ☐ N/A (Info) ☐ Approved ☐ Denied ☐ Table to: _____

Received

FEB 06 2025

January 23, 2025

From: Rebecca Elise Craig, BHS ELA Teacher and BHS Soccer Coach

Browning Schools-HS Dept.

To: Sandi Campbell, Browning High School Principal and the Browning Public School District Board

Subject: Resignation from Position as High School ELA Teacher

Dear Ms. Campbell and Members of the School Board,

With deep sadness and frustration, I submit my resignation as a high school English Language Arts teacher at Browning High School, effective immediately. This decision has been forced upon me due to the actions taken by Mrs. Rappold and Mr. Reed Reagan, who decided to evict me from district housing right before the holiday season in November. I feel this decision was forced onto me, and it is solely due to being made homeless.

Three days before it would become illegal to evict a family due to the winter months (10/28/24), I went to leave work and go home to my rented apartment above Napi Elementary. Waiting for me outside were Rebecca Rappold, Superintendent, and Reed Reagan. They told me I was being evicted and I had to move out of my Napi apartment. I was told to be out the day before Thanksgiving. I was shocked and horrified by this confrontation. Then, I was mortified that they wanted me out right before the holiday season!

I asked and I was not provided a reason for this eviction. Their decision was with no cause or breach of lease on my part. Their lack of empathy and consideration not only left me facing homelessness but also displaced two children in my care, who are students within this very district. Again, I want to state that I was served this eviction notice merely three days before it became illegal to evict a family during the winter months. This entire situation represents not just the loss of my livelihood but, even more tragically, the displacement of two students by their own school district—by their own people. *A decision which unambiguously epitomizes and perpetuates lateral violence against its own students.*

As I stated above, this action is a glaring example of lateral violence towards their people and stands in direct contradiction to the values and goals of the Browning Public School District. I relocated from Virginia, leaving behind my family and friends, hoping to become part of the fantastic and beautiful community of the Blackfeet Nation. One of my goals was to become a top-notch second-grade teacher at the Browning Elementary School. I dedicated myself to the students in my classroom and on the field, stepping up as a soccer coach when no one else would volunteer. I possess the skills and knowledge necessary to support and grow this new district sport and have done so with enthusiasm and commitment.

I'd also like to point out that this eviction of a family contributes to the homeless crisis and dropout statistics within this community. *This unequivocally disproves the*

identified goals of the district's superintendent, "ensuring every student has access to the highest quality of support services" and being "committed to fostering a collaborative environment... to support the success and well-being of all our students," as declared in her own official statement. All of these goals are a sham and not being adhered to when you evict an educator and her family from their security and safe place.

Despite my dedication and contributions, the district leadership, particularly Superintendent Rappold, and Mr. Reagan has treated me with ignorance and a callous attitude. I even sought assistance from the school board and was denied my right to speak by Mrs. Donna Yellow Owl, which wasn't her purview, as it should have been the Chairman that told me to stop talking during public comment. I tried to appeal this decision and request an extension, but instead was denied access to housing. I was also denied the opportunity to explain my situation to the board or even request additional time to secure appropriate housing for my small family. *The Superintendent's unwillingness to engage in a collaborative effort to reach a resolution, the subsequent actions of her office, her henchman, Mr. Reagan and the acquiescence and complicity of the school board, have placed me in a professionally and personally untenable position.* These actions have left me with no choice but to seek a new home for myself and my children outside this community, as affordable teacher housing is unavailable here. *This is unquestionably an act of neocolonialism, taking away these children's right to reside on their tribe's reservation, which is afforded to them according to the Indian Child Welfare Act, which ironically took effect the day before Thanksgiving.*

Throughout my tenure, I have witnessed the oppression of dedicated educators by the district's leadership, with the superintendent(s), chairperson(s), and school board consistently ignoring the educators' pleas for help. In my time here at Browning Public Schools, I have witnessed multiple attacks on its educators, and my family's eviction, plus the consequences of it, prove this point. The consistent personal vendettas disprove that BPS prioritizes the needs of their students and staff.

Please, I beg you to pay attention to your educators' voices. They have been trying to communicate to you and you're choosing to ignore them by labeling them as complainers, disadents, and/or needing to "be put out to pasture," when they're **forced** to resign one after another from their positions. Contrary to the narrative of a teacher shortage, the real issue lies in the pervasive disrespect and disregard for teachers within this district. Educators are expected to function as robots. We're told curriculum is a tool, but expected to recite curriculum verbatim without room for creativity, joy or love in teaching. However, this expectation changed upon moving to the high school, and I found my beloved home. I was finally allowed to be creative and allowed to naturally connect with my students in meaningful ways, fostering a love for learning within them. Furthermore, this district is missing a valuable opportunity to allow its educators to teach about its rich Native language and culture. Instead, the district permits the enforcement of outsider ideals and culture to permeate your children's education, denying them the chance to learn and

appreciate their own heritage. How many millions of dollars are spent on consultants that have no idea the beauty and richness of this community's history, only to enforce and pretend they're the experts. Trust your educators! They're the experts. This attitude is part of the lateral violence towards your own community's children and educators by forcing them to conform.

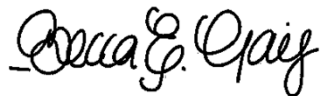
This forced resignation will not only affect me and my family, but it will also disrupt the education of over 115 students. These students will now lose a teacher who genuinely loves them and their community. The bond I have built with my students cannot be easily replaced, and their academic progress will undoubtedly suffer due to this abrupt change midyear.

Given the circumstances that have led to my resignation, I request a waiver of any penalties associated with my departure. This decision has not been made lightly; rather, it has been imposed upon me due to the district leadership's lack of support and understanding. After two months of still reporting to work everyday during this forced displacement, I cannot continue living a homeless lifestyle and living out of bags in my car, couch surfing, and with my children in tow. It's time for us to move on and find another community to support our physical and mental health needs.

I hope that my resignation will serve as a reminder of the importance of leadership that supports not only the professional, but also the personal welfare of its employees, and ALL of the children in the district you've been entrusted to serve and protect, regardless of their parents and their past; one that would make breaking generational trauma a goal, instead of directly contributing to it; one that would accept invitations to participate in open dialogue instead of having a resolute determination to silence the people who are asking for help, and allow for collaboration to seek a resolution for problems, instead of using her position to create them and as a means to demonstrate her power over the people she was elected to serve; and ultimately one that doesn't perpetrate her own prejudice and impose deprivation upon conjecture.

I am profoundly disheartened that my time at Browning Public Schools has come to such an unfortunate and disappointing end and which made my choice to move inevitable. Despite these challenges, I remain deeply grateful for the relationships I have built with my students and colleagues. I will always cherish my time within the Blackfeet Nation community and wish you all good luck in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rebecca Elise Craig". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'R'.

-Rebecca Elise Craig.

"Never forget, everything Hitler did in Germany was legal." -Martin Luther King Jr.