

# Former Superintendent Files Lawsuit Claiming Defamation Against One of the Largest School Districts in the Nation

*Dr. Christie Whitbeck claims defamation and breach of contract against Fort Bend ISD in Texas*

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Dr. Christie Whitbeck, who served as Superintendent of Fort Bend ISD from October 2021 to December 2023, has filed a lawsuit against the district and trustees Sonya Jones, David Hamilton and Judy Dae. The lawsuit alleges defamation and breach of contract under the terms of her Voluntary Retirement Agreement (VRA).

The VRA required the district and trustees to issue a unified public statement about her retirement and refrain from disparaging remarks. However, public comments and statements attributed to the trustees allegedly violated the agreement, damaging Dr. Whitbeck's professional reputation.

The complaint details several instances of alleged misconduct by Trustees Jones, Hamilton and Dae, including public comments which were widely circulated in local and regional media outlets, violating the VRA's non-disparagement clause.



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*Christie Whitbeck*

“Dr. Whitbeck's career deserves respect, not baseless attacks. Her work has earned the respect of the community, district staff, and even the board members who disparaged her,” [Chris Tritico](#), an attorney for Dr. Whitbeck, said.

Dr. Whitbeck's contract, originally set to run through

September 2024, was extended by the board in July 2023 through December 2026 following a

unanimous 7-0 vote and the approval of a salary raise.

The lawsuit outlines Dr. Whitbeck's accomplishments during her time as Superintendent, including implementation of fiscal changes that helped avoid a deficit, national recognition for her work in improving the district's performance, reorganization of the district's leadership to better align the administration with the district's needs, and introduction of new programs aimed at enhancing student achievement and support.

"Her performance was never the question. Her record speaks for itself. This was about a small faction of the board putting their preferences ahead of the community Dr. Whitbeck served," [Ron Rainey](#), another of Dr. Whitbeck's attorneys, said.

"Aside from the heartbreaking loss of my husband and son, this has been the most painful experience of my life. Never did I imagine enduring such malicious attacks on my character and career. I have dedicated my life to serving public education, and I refuse to let false, manufactured narratives define my legacy. It's time for certain board members to be held accountable for their actions and for the truth to come to light," Dr. Whitbeck said.

Dr. Whitbeck has served in public education for nearly four decades, including roles as teacher, principal, district administrator, and superintendent. A native Texan, she holds a Ph.D. in Public School Administration from Texas A&M University.

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