

Three Lakes School District Residents Call On Walker To Retract Campaign Ad

Written by Democratic Party of Wisconsin, TJ Helmstetter
Monday, 13 August 2018 18:00

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/three-lakes-wi-s5.jpg>



Gov. Walker's "Teach Our Kids" campaign ad angers residents of small northwoods town who feel they are owed a retraction and an apology.

THREE LAKES - According to [WXPR radio](#) in nearby Rhinelander, some 60 people showed up last Thursday night for a special Three Lakes School Board meeting, demanding answers as to why a political ad appeared to show the district supporting Gov. Scott Walker's re-election bid.



What they got, says WXPR, was a public apology from District Administrator George Karling: "Recently, I failed to vet the purpose of the governor's visit as thoroughly as I should have even though the intent and purpose was expressed to me," Karling said.

The reaction of local residents was far less forgiving.

"Was this all a big mistake? The ad gives the impression that Walker was responsible for the success of the Three Lakes school, and that is questionable. It's wrong for a governor to use school property for his political gain." -- **Patricia Radke, resident of Three Lakes**

"Politics don't belong in the public schools. How would you feel if your taxpayer money was going to help promote candidate you disagree with? The law says that campaign activity is not appropriate in government buildings, and that's what's upsetting me. We are very proud of the

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school district, our kids went there, and it's not that we don't want the good aspects of the school to be promoted. It's just not ethical to do a campaign ad." -- **Deana Bigley, resident of Sugar Camp**

"I find it highly offensive that a school board member would try to speak on behalf of the entire community in the ad. We're very proud of that Fab Lab. What we didn't like was that it was being used to support Governor Walker, when we are asked to pass referendums to keep our schools open. It wasn't the governor's money, it was taxpayer money. We are underfunded and Walker gives very little back into the schools." -- **John Bigley, resident of Sugar Camp**

"People have very short memories. it was only 9 months that the \$15 million bond issue was on the ballot. it passed with flying colors, it wasn't even close. but nobody that I'm aware of remembers Scott Walker coming to Three Lakes to offer to help bail out the school. He wasn't here, it was the voters in the district that helped bail out Three Lakes school district. We are owed a retraction and an apology that is shared statewide. The ad was viewed statewide and so should the retraction." -- **Gretchen Hoover, resident of Sugar Camp**

"It's presumptuous to assume that everyone in the district supports the governor. I was offended. Organizations like school boards are not supposed to be partisan. It's not enough to stop running the ad, it needs to be made clear that the ad misstated the district's position. We need to get a full retraction." -- **Kathy Noel, resident of Sugar Camp.**

[The ad is presented below](#) .

So, as of the weekend, Walker remained in hot water with the residents of the Three Lakes School district, which said the ad should be pulled. But "no word" came from Walker if it actually would be.

Several key points remain:

- Because of a partisan political decision by a rogue administrator, Three Lakes School District allowed Scott Walker to use school resources and staff members to film a [campaign ad](#) .

Board members were informed Walker would be visiting the school, but were not informed it was to film a campaign ad.

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- After backlash, the Three Lakes school board convened a " [packed](#) " special session last night, during which they [unanimously passed](#) a policy that would prevent such partisan activity to happen again.

- The Three Lakes school board said that the ad would stop running on TV and online, but the Walker campaign has not yet commented. The ad was still running on TV stations as of yesterday morning.

- Notably, Walker was touting funding for this school district in the ad despite the fact that the district was forced to ask voters to approve a [\\$15 million referendum](#) in order to keep its doors open.

The reaction from the DPW was quick.

"Scott Walker owes Three Lakes an apology for improperly using the district for his partisan political purposes. While he's at it, he should also apologize for his failure to fund the school, which forced voters to approve a \$15 million referendum. His campaign should immediately promise to pull the footage from all channels - online and on TV - and promise to never use the footage again." -- TJ Helmstetter, DPW spokesperson for 2018 gubernatorial campaign