

Sasha Linker

From: sandy s [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 10, 2022 10:58 PM
To: CommAsst
Subject: Claire Crandall stipulation comment

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EXTERNAL EMAIL

June 10, 2022
Re: Claire Crandall Stipulation

Dear Commissioners,

I commend the Commissioners for taking action against Claire Crandall. This stipulation correctly identifies one instance of Ms. Crandall's use of taxpayer money and her position to influence another agency to purchase her husband's product, Pinwheel. However, the stipulation and fine do not adequately represent the scope of the issue. It far exceeds one county. With all due respect, the stipulation and fine seem insignificant given the extent of the conflict of interest. I urge the Commission to levy the highest fine possible.

The Preschool For All (PFA) program for children living in San Diego County was directed through the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE). Claire was employed by SDCOE and supervised the entire data team. During her tenure she used her "insider knowledge" and position to influence the award of a lucrative contract to her husband's company, resulting in substantial personal gain and significant decrease in services for San Diego County preschool children.

Prior to the contract award, Claire often shared in staff meetings that she discussed PFA data needs with her husband and he helped with her with her data work. Claire then drafted the first Request for Proposal which greatly influenced the specific requirements of the contract. Subsequently Mark Crandall was awarded the contract. The database project was called Pinwheel.

During the bidding process the PFA staff did not know that Claire's husband was the owner of company bidding for the grant. All PFA participants were required to use Pinwheel. After the contract was assigned, the amount of the initial contract increased at least 400% as Claire expanded the scope of the contract. Claire's husband's company profited from a contract he participated in (unpaid) prior to the award. It seemed inappropriate that the husband of the data team coordinator be awarded the database expansion contract. Several SDCOE employees and persons from partner agencies expressed concern. One employee even left her position.

Preschool funds, provided by taxpayer monies, were allocated to the development of Mr. Crandall's database. Many PFA staff often met weekly with Mr. Crandall's team to teach them the early childhood content needed to develop the system. And, while SDCOE staff provided content and field testing, and PFA taxpayer-funded grant monies were the sole

funding stream, Mr. Crandall's company even collected a per child fee every year for the mandatory use of Pinwheel . Typically, all intellectual property and products would belong to SDCOE and PFA.

Claire and members of her data team travelled on work time to promote Pinwheel to other agencies. For a time Claire worked one day a week at her husband's company to ease the development process.

In summary, Claire and Mark Crandall used taxpayer paid resources, time and personnel for their personal gain. They made millions from the contract, selling of Pinwheel to other outside agencies, and per student fees. And the preschool children in San Diego County significantly lost much needed services and resources.

The children deserved more, the taxpayers deserve more, and the Crandall's deserve far less. Please expand the stipulation to the highest possible fine.

Sincerely,
Sandra Silverman