

RESOLUTION NO. 24-09-013

SPONSORED BY COMMISSIONERS Mike Akard, Nick Bright, Misty Davis, Jessica Hannah, Jeff Jopling, Scott King, and Steve Mikels

A RESOLUTION OF THE BLOUNT COUNTY COMMISSION REQUESTING A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION INTO PERSONNEL RECORDS DATING 2004 TO PRESENT INVOLVING ALL EXISTING REPORTS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT WITHIN BLOUNT COUNTY SCHOOLS TO HELP DETERMINE IF THERE HAVE BEEN ANY TRENDS SIMILAR TO THOSE CONCERNING THE INCIDENTS INVOLVING JOSEPH MICHAEL DALTON.

WHEREAS, it has come to the attention of the Blount County Commission that Joseph Michael Dalton, a former elementary school teacher and coach with Blount County Schools, has admitted to offensively touching five students at Walland and Friendsville Elementary Schools; and

WHEREAS, Dalton was arrested in January 2024 following an investigation and subsequently pleaded guilty to five counts of offensive touching on September 4, 2024; and

WHEREAS, police reports and the investigation heavily relied on surveillance footage that documented Dalton’s inappropriate interactions with students ranging in age from 9-12 years old; and

WHEREAS, it has been reported that Dalton continues to hold an active Tennessee educator license with a K-12 Physical Education endorsement with the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, although Dalton resigned from his position and did not return to the classroom after being charged, the seriousness of these incidents raises significant concerns regarding the oversight and protective measures in place within Blount County Schools to ensure the safety of students; and

WHEREAS, the safety and well-being of children in Blount County are of paramount concern to this Commission, and it is imperative that a thorough investigation is conducted to determine how these incidents occurred, whether appropriate safeguards were in place, and whether further actions are necessary to protect students from future harm.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Blount County Board of Commissioners hereby requests a full and independent investigation into the circumstances surrounding Joseph Michael Dalton’s employment, the offenses he committed, and the actions taken by Blount County Schools to address these serious allegations, including a review of their policies and practices regarding teacher conduct, reporting, personnel transfers and response to such incidents answering the questions “Who knew what?”, and “When did they know it?”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Blount County Board of Commissioners requests that the findings of this investigation be made public, and that additional appropriate disciplinary and preventive measures, if found to be warranted, be implemented within Blount County Schools to ensure the safety and security of all students in the district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THIS RESOLUTION TAKE EFFECT FROM AND AFTER PASSAGE, THE PUBLIC WELFARE REQUIRING IT.

Duly authorized and approved this ____ day of _____, 2024.

CERTIFICATION OF ACTION

ATTEST

Commission Chairman

County Clerk

County Mayor

Date

Approved

Vetoed