FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 29, 2026
Contact: Laura Macklem
919-670-8540
laura@resonateright.com

FORMER WCPSS ADMINISTRATOR FILES AMENDED FEDERAL CLAIM AGAINST WAKE COUNTY SCHOOLS, CONSIDERS ADDITIONAL SUIT FOR HOLDING PUBLIC RECORDS HOSTAGE

Former Wake County school administrator Dr. Scott Lassiter has filed an amended federal complaint charging that Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) leaders weaponized a routine response to a student fight in order to manipulate the outcome of a high-profile State Senate race. WCPSS knew about Lassiter's intervention to stop the violent confrontation for months but waited until the last weeks of the election cycle to open an internal investigation.

WCPSS asked the federal judge to dismiss the case citing lack of specificity. However Lassiter's legal team is confident the amended complaint provides enough information to survive a motion to dismiss. "This amendment provides the district with the specificity they asked for while omitting unnecessarily embarrassing details that might undermine the good work of thousands of educators practicing in a troubled system," said Lassiter.

The complaint cites First Amendment retaliation, fraudulent inducement, an involuntary resignation, and deprivation of protected employment and occupational-liberty interests without due process.

Lassiter is also contemplating a separate lawsuit in North Carolina state court under Chapter 132, the state's public-records law, for holding the underlying public records he requested hostage with a $68,000 price tag.

"WCPSS has selectively used employee confidentiality to tell a slanted story and I'm asking for full transparency so the public can decide," Lassiter said. "The district's answer to releasing these public records is a $68,000 bill. The public deserves the records, not just the version school officials choose to justify their violation of the Constitution, state law, and their own policies."

The dispute stems from a May 22, 2024 incident at Connections Academy, an alternative school serving students removed from other schools for disciplinary reasons. Lassiter and another educator intervened in a physical conflict between students and removed the aggressive student from the area as emergency services were being deployed. According to the complaint, witness accounts described serious threats and resistance to staff with one uninvolved employee stating the student who was removed was "out for blood." Even after being removed from the area the aggressive student tried to force entry again by attempting to break a glass door in order to reach her intended victim.

"Two educators intervened in the same emergency. We protected life and aside from some hurt feelings there were no injuries and we kept everyone safe. One of us returned to work. I was told

to resign or face a public termination hearing in front of the Democratic school board while running for office as a Republican," Lassiter said. "WCPSS needs to explain that difference as well as other examples of disparate treatment noted in my suit. Public employees do not surrender their Constitutional rights when they report to work."

WCPSS took no employment action against Lassiter for more than three months. The complaint alleges that senior officials discussed the incident with him during that period without treating his conduct as grounds for discipline.

On September 5, 2024, during the closing months of his statistical dead-heat of a state Senate campaign, WCPSS suspended Lassiter with pay. Lassiter said his suspension letter was prepared before the district obtained his account of the incident and that Employee Relations Director Kendra Hill subsequently told him to resign or face a public recommendation for termination before the school board. Lassiter also said that either a board member or someone with knowledge of his confidential investigatory suspension leaked that information to the media.

The other educator initiated physical contact with the student, returned to work without further consequence. The complaint points to that disparate treatment, the timing of the suspension and administrators' conduct as evidence of political retaliation.

The complaint states that WCPSS negotiated a confidential resignation and broad release without disclosing it had already reported Lassiter to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, which has the authority to revoke professional educator licenses. The district then continued the licensure-reporting process after his departure.

"They applied enormous pressure on me to sign away my rights without telling me they had already reported me to the state," Lassiter said. "My career was on the line. I deserved the truth before I signed."

Lassiter incurred approximately $10,000 in legal expenses defending his educator license before a DPI conduct panel. The state ultimately cleared him of any wrongdoing. The employment barriers and professional harm nevertheless continued after his resignation, despite assurances that he would not be blacklisted. Lassiter says WCPSS has failed to provide truthful references to prospective employers and has actively blocked willing hiring managers from offering him employment.

The dispute also raises questions about the protections provided to educators responsible for responding to violence. Lassiter says he repeatedly advocated for school resource officers, weapons-detection technology, metal detectors, canine sweeps and stronger safety support for Connections Academy, but the district did not provide the protections he requested.

"WCPSS concentrated risk without commensurately providing basic safety resources. When violence erupted, educators were expected to step in. I was not willing to stand by while a student was being attacked," said Lassiter.

"Knowing what this has cost me, I would still act to protect a child. Parents should never have to wonder whether a school employee will hesitate to stop a violent assault on their child because stepping in could cost him his job."

Lassiter began serving WCPSS in 2010 as a teacher and later an administrator. He holds a doctorate in educational leadership and North Carolina principal and superintendent licenses. He was selected for and completed highly competitive district leadership development and was a semifinalist for Assistant Principal of the Year. Through the Lassiter Education Foundation, he has also supported extracurricular and enrichment opportunities for students, including those at Connections Academy.

“I am proud of what I accomplished in my time founding and leading Connections Academy. We had success with students others had given up on,” said Lassiter. “The vast majority of educators in WCPSS are sacrificing daily for the benefit of students, often in-spite of a system that seems more interested in limiting legal exposure and protecting optics than keeping students safe and educating them.”

Lassiter is represented by veteran North Carolina attorney Woody Webb Sr. of The Edmisten & Webb Law Firm, a former federal prosecutor and Civil Division Chief for the U.S. Attorney’s Office in the Eastern District of North Carolina. Webb brings more than five decades of legal experience and successfully represented legendary NC State basketball coach Jim Valvano, former NC State basketball player Monte Towe, Secretary of Transportation Garland Garret, United States Senator Lauch Faircloth.