News

Susan Haigh

View Author Profile

Associated Press

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

HARTFORD, Conn. — September 1, 2022

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

An assistant principal at a public elementary school in Connecticut is facing an investigation by state education officials after apparently being secretly recorded saying he'd prefer not to hire politically conservative staff, including Roman Catholics.

The Department of Education confirmed August 31 that it's looking into whether the assistant principal in the town of Greenwich violated rules of professional conduct. If there’s evidence the administrator's conduct violated any state laws or regulations, his certification could be suspended or revoked, said department spokesperson Eric Scoville.

Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont, who has lived in Greenwich for decades, issued a statement saying “discrimination of any kind has no place in Connecticut, especially in our public schools. This is not aligned with our Connecticut values.”

The video was released by Project Veritas, a conservative group known for using undercover methods to reveal supposed liberal bias.

Greenwich Superintendent of Schools Toni Jones said the administrator, identified by Project Veritas as Jeremy Boland, has been placed on administrative leave and that the district plans to conduct its own investigation.

“Late last evening, we were made aware of a video that had gone viral with a current administrator from Cos Cob School. We intend to do a full investigation and until that time, we will not make any public statements. We ask that you respect the investigation process during this time,” she wrote in the first of two emails to families in the school district.

“We do not, however, support any opinions that promote discriminatory hiring practices based on race, religion, gender, or age in any way, and we want to remind our entire community that our curriculum policies and procedures are strictly enforced by our Board,” she wrote.

Advertisement

The administrator is seen in a 12-minute video, which appears to have been taken covertly, speaking with a woman at various locations about how he tries not to hire politically conservative staff, including Catholics. He says: “Honestly, I don't want to," when asked if he'd hire a Catholic. When asked why, he says if someone is “raised a hardcore Catholic, it's like they're brainwashed. You can never change their mindset.”

He also talks about how “more progressive teachers” are “savvy" about “delivering a Democratic message” to students without having to reveal their personal political preferences.

A message was sent to Boland's personal email account seeking comment.

The video sparked concerns from the Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference. Executive Director Christopher Healy said the comments are “extremely disturbing and should be treated as a serious breach of public trust and state laws.”

Greenwich First Selectman Fred Camillo, a former educator, called for a review of the school system's hiring practices.

“To think that Roman Catholic applicants may have applied for teaching positions and not received proper consideration due to their religion seems like something from a bygone era, not 2022,” he said in a Facebook post. “According to this assistant principal, conservatives, older applicants, and others deemed not progressive were not given an opportunity afforded others.”

James O'Keefe, the founder of Project Veritas, appeared at a news conference Wednesday evening organized by Greenwich resident Leora Levy, the Republican U.S. Senate candidate, and other Greenwich Republicans. He said additional videos will be released.