

**NOTES: Muscota Emergency SLT Meeting: December 23, 2009
3:15-4:00p**

In Summary:

The environment in the school has grown increasingly tense.

Though Muscota staff have continually responded to their students' needs and carried out their responsibilities to the best of their ability, staff are now being threatened regularly, via written reprimands and admonished publicly in front of students and peers. Student teachers and children are required to report their teachers' activities to the Muscota Principal during confidential meetings. Staff and student teachers are instructed to avoid speaking to parents. Parents attending "informal gatherings" are given personal and professional information about individual teachers and their performance in their absence.

The claims made about staff's poor performance of their duties, are often untrue or inaccurate at best. When this practice is challenged the requests for mediation and arbitration go unanswered for several weeks at a time.

Most importantly, the manner in which staff and parents are being treated by the current Muscota administration undermines the goal of creating a positive, communal learning environment for children and adults so central to Muscota's mission.

At Muscota, a teacher-parent run collaborative school since 1993, teachers' responsibilities include: direct services to students and families, as well as training student teachers, designing and helping to facilitate a series of professional development activities, and a wide variety of school governance activities. They actively participate in writing the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), hiring new staff members, recruiting new students and families, organizing and carrying out a year-long calendar of school-wide, community-building cultural activities and professional development work specifically designed to meet Muscota's needs.

The Muscota New School is fortunate to have this group of devoted parent volunteers and a cadre of dedicated, experienced professionals, para professionals and school aides who have been members of

Muscota's professional community for years. They work many extra, often unpaid hours to take care of this small, progressive, student-centered, family friendly learning community.

Currently, the Muscota administration and the rest of the Muscota community are increasingly at odds over matters of school safety and governance. This hinders their ability to work well together to preserve a safe, productive learning environment for children and adults.