

Respondent Name
We Want Accountability PAC
Complainant Name
Joshua Skipper
Complaint Description
<p>Jskipper12 reported via the portal (Mon, 9 Oct 2023 at 3:19 PM)</p> <p>On October 7, 2023, Annette Rose, an individual, posted a photo of campaign signs on Facebook (Exhibit 1). One campaign sign is for Michael Connors, a candidate for Kennewick School Board. Two other signs point arrows toward the Michael Connors sign and state: "Voted with Liberals 100%" and "Kept Our Kids In MASKS".</p> <p>Exhibit 2 shows another sign with arrows pointing to a Michael Connors sign that states: "Supports CRT in Schools".</p> <p>Exhibit 3 shows "Paid for by We Want Accountability PAC" on the signs.</p> <p>Exhibit 4 is a Facebook screenshot from May 1, 2022, where Annette Rose shares a photo of a campaign sign for a school board candidate with a small sign adjacent that reads "VOTED TO MASK YOUR CHILD" with an arrow pointing to the candidate's sign. Annette Rose comments "We need to get some of these signs made up for future elections... specifically anyone on the school board who thinks they're going to stay in office." Micah Valentine, a current Kennewick School Board Director, replies with "Love this!"</p> <p>Each of these signs appears to be a violation of RCW 42.117A.335(1)(a):</p> <p>(1) It is a violation of this chapter for a person to sponsor with actual malice a statement constituting libel or defamation per se under the following circumstances:</p> <p>(a) Political advertising or an electioneering communication that contains a false statement of material fact about a candidate for public office;</p> <p>Claim: "Voted with Liberals 100%"</p> <p>This statement is verifiably false. In a July 2022 radio interview on the Lars Larson Show, Kennewick School Board Director Micah Valentine stated, "Gabe and I, we ran specifically on a CRT platform...we ran specifically on that platform and we won...so the people spoke. At this point, our board is essentially we have two conservatives and three leftists. And those three leftists are absolutely lock-step and they've never not voted together." (Source: https://soundcloud.com/thelarslarsonshow/micah-valentine-at-least-one-nw-school-board-is-acting-to-protect-kids-from-crt)</p> <p>Accordingly, the "Liberals" on the board are supposedly Michael Connors, Ron Mabry, and Diane Sundvik, and the "Conservatives" are Gabe Galbraith and Micah Valentine.</p>

One example proving this claim false is from the board minutes dated April 12, 2023 (Exhibit 5). A motion was made by Gabe Galbraith to accept Resolution No. 6, 2022-2023: WSSDA Weighted Vote Removal Resolution which was seconded by Micah Valentine. The roll call vote was Mr. Connors: Yes; Mr. Mabry: Abstain; Ms. Sundvik: No; Mr. Valentine: Yes; Mr. Galbraith: Yes.

Further, per Micah Valentine's own website, in February 2019 he wrote:

"Kids should be in school. At the time of this post, the Kennewick School Board is not doing their job. Their job is to protect kids and they are not doing that. Click to see the members. We need more members like Michael Connors.

Members who voted to keep kids out of school.

- Diane Sundvik
- Dawn Adams
- Ron Mabry

We need to vote them out. We should also replace Heather Kintzley."

(Source: <https://micahvalentine.us/covid-19-risk-for-children/>)

Mr. Valentine's own blog post contradicts the statement he made in the radio interview, and this is further evidence of the political advertisement's falsehood.

Claim: "Kept Our Kids in MASKS"

This is a false statement. A unanimous opinion was issued by the Supreme Court of the State of Washington in the matter of the recall of three Richland School Board directors on April 27, 2023. That ruling notes that "state statutes give the governor and the secretary of health the power to mandate masking pursuant to their authority under a state of emergency, and the local school board did not have the power to override that state-level action." Further, it concludes the Richland School Board's "decision to vote to remove the mask mandate was not within the board's discretionary power." Therefore, it was clearly not within the authority of Michael Connors individually nor the Kennewick School Board as a whole to remove masks from students in the district during the Governor's state of emergency.

Further, at no point was a motion made during a Kennewick School Board meeting to make masks optional or otherwise. The "Conservative" board members could have made a motion at any time but declined to do so.

Claim: "Supports CRT in Schools"

This is a false statement. On August 24, 2022, the Kennewick School Board (including Michael Connors) unanimously passed Policy 2340, INSTRUCTION: Race and the

Curriculum (Exhibit 6). One week later, on August 29, 2022, the Washington Policy Center posted a blog entitled "Kennewick School Board votes to protect children from Critical Race Theory racism"

(Source: <https://www.washingtonpolicy.org/publications/detail/kennewick-school-board-votes-to-protect-children-from-critical-race-theory-racism>)

On September 1, 2022, Micah Valentine posted on Facebook celebrating "#noCRT" and included links and screenshots from national media attention that declared "Kennewick School District in Washington State has voted 5-0 to ban critical race theory from the curriculum." (Exhibit 7) It stands to reason that if Michael Connors voted for Policy 2340 which was celebrated as a ban on critical race theory, he does not support CRT in schools.

Year to date, Annette Rose has donated \$600 to the We Want Accountability PAC. The Benton County Republican Central Committee has donated \$4,000. The Benton County Republican Central Committee has endorsed the opponent of Michael Connors. (Source: <https://www.bcrpwa.com/endorsements-7623>)

These signs paid for by the We Want Accountability PAC are a blatant attempt to deceive the public. These false statements are material as they attempt to portray Michael Connors as a "liberal" candidate to harm him politically to the benefit of their preferred candidate.

What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?

The violations deceive the public about a candidate.

List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found

Exhibit 1 - Facebook screen shot of political advertisements

(<https://www.facebook.com/annetteprose/posts/pfbid0Fy8M9K9QFEnjLP4fRAbBTnQnZT2kbBgqSL3hgzwaogTbpGx9ZqdE7gd8aL5I>)

Exhibit 2 - Photo of political advertisements

Exhibit 3 - Photo of a political advertisement

Exhibit 4 - Facebook screen shot

Exhibit 5 - Kennewick School Board Meeting Minutes - April 12, 2023

Exhibit 6 - Kennewick School Board Meeting Minutes - August 24, 2022

Exhibit 7 - Facebook screen shot

(<https://www.facebook.com/MicahValentineBIZ/posts/pfbid02QxAh325z4kS3qpVaD8phoKBkehv9VC5DZaQQqX64VTBQyfcACmF1WdkkGeWPI>)

List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them

Certification (Complainant)

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

KENNEWICK SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING / Remote Board Meeting
August 24, 2022

M I N U T E S

MEMBERS PRESENT

Board Members: Michael Connors, President of the Board; Ron Mabry, Vice President of the Board; Diane Sundvik, Legislative Representative of the Board; Micah Valentine, Board Member; Gabe Galbraith, Board Member; and Dr. Traci Pierce, Superintendent and Secretary of the Board.

Cabinet Members: Dr. Doug Christensen, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources; Matt Scott, Assistant Superintendent of K-12 Education; Rob Phillips, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education; Alyssa St. Hilaire, Assistant Superintendent Teaching & Learning; Vic Roberts, Executive Director of Business Operations; Robyn Chastain, Executive Director of Communications and Public Relations; Ron Cone, Executive Director of Information Technology.

Other Guest(s): Bronson Brown, District Legal Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

President Michael Connors called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance with approximately 59 online and in-person staff and guests in attendance.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARENTS, STAFF, AND RESIDENTS

Tyler Thompson – Commented on his concerns regarding a Board member posting a picture of himself on social media with United States Representative Matt Gaetz, as he is being investigated by the Justice Department.

Rachel Ostler – Commented on Critical Race Theory (CRT) in schools.

CONSENT ITEMS

Motion by Diane Sundvik to approve the consent items as presented.

Seconded by Gabe Galbraith.

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Yes
	Ms. Sundvik	Yes
	Mr. Valentine	Yes
	Mr. Galbraith	Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

The consent items were as follows:

- Minutes of Regular School Board Meeting July 27, 2022
- Personnel Actions – Certificated, Classified, and Extracurricular
- Out of Endorsement Teacher Plans (2022-2023)
- Payroll and Vouchers Ending July 31, 2022
- Budget Status Report Ending July 31, 2022

SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce reported that new administrators and our new student Board Representative, London Moody, would be introduced at the September 14 School Board Meeting. Dr. Pierce shared that Staff Professional Days would occur Friday, Monday, and Tuesday, and that the annual All Staff Welcome Back event would be held Tuesday morning. She invited Board members to attend. She added that the district provided a Kindergarten Kick-Off for many of the incoming kindergartens and that many high schools do a “freshmen only” day on the first day of school, August 31. Dr. Pierce shared that Gesa Credit Union donated \$59,233, through the Affinity Debit Card program, and that the funds go directly to support student ASB programs.

Board Member Gabe Galbraith reported he attended the recent Kennewick Police Department active shooter training held at Kamiakin High School. He also gave a “shout-out” to Ms. Heights at Ridge View Elementary for sending letters to her students from last year (his child included) and complimented her for her positively impacting students.

Board Member Micah Valentine shared that he was able to meet with the new Southridge High School Athletic Director, Rick Wells, as well as with some other great teachers. Mr. Valentine commented that the district is working to create a soccer field in the grass area along 4th Avenue.

Board Member Diane Sundvik reported attending the active shooter training at Kamiakin by listening on her scanner. Ms. Sundvik shared that she attended the Benton Franklin Mobility Task Force meeting, the Richland School District Board meeting (online), the Racial Equity and Social Justice Tri-Cities Coalition meeting, the League of Urban Latin American Citizens meeting, and the WSSDA networking meeting.

Board Member Ron Mabry reported he attended the National School Board Association meeting in San Antonio, Texas. He shared that he was also invited by the library staff at Washington Elementary School to visit them, along with all the Board members.

President Mike Connors reported that he attended the active shooter training and complimented Kennewick Police Department on their efforts to help keep our schools and students safe.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS

2022 - 2023 Strategic Objectives

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce presented the strategic objectives for 2022 – 23, sharing how the objectives are updated each year and aligned with the Board’s priorities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Policy No. 2340, INSTRUCTION: Race and the Curriculum, First Reading

Dr. Pierce reviewed the Board discussion that was held during the June 8 Board retreat, along with the policy she drafted and first presented on June 22. She reminded the Board of their discussion from June 22 and possible minor edits to the proposed Policy No. 2340.

Attorney Bronson Brown explained the difference between a policy and a resolution, highlighting that a resolution is a statement of where the Board stands, and a policy provides direction for staff and is also an enforceable.

Motion by Gabe Galbraith to approve Policy No. 2340, INSTRUCTION: Race and the Curriculum for first and second reading.

Seconded by Micah Valentine.

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Yes
	Ms. Sundvik	Yes
	Mr. Valentine	Yes
	Mr. Galbraith	Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

Ron Mabry commented that while this policy covers race and our curriculum, he also wants to ensure that there are appropriate policies to prevent and hold students accountable for racism or racist acts. Mr. Mabry noted a racist incident that occurred at a school last year and shared that he did not see the disciplinary results from the incident that occurred last year. Dr. Pierce replied that she does have specific discipline information regarding the incident, and while she cannot share it publicly, she would follow up with information to the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

Policy No. 7430, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: Lease Capitalization Threshold, First Reading

Vic Roberts presented a new policy regarding the accounting of leases on financial statements. The policy specifies that the new accounting standard would be effective for leases if the lease cost is greater than 1.5% of prior year's General Fund expenditures. Washington School District Business Officials (WASBO) recommended that school districts adopt a policy to create a threshold for when the new lease capitalization standard (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) would be in effect.

Motion by Diane Sundvik to approve Policy No. 7430, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT: Lease Capitalization Threshold for first and second reading.

Seconded by Ron Mabry

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Yes
	Ms. Sundvik	Yes
	Mr. Valentine	Yes
	Mr. Galbraith	Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

Policy No. 3545, STUDENTS: Interscholastic Academic Eligibility, First Reading

Matt Scott explained that Policy No. 3545 needed some revisions per WIAA eligibility requirements.

Board discussion followed regarding “initially enrolled” classes and eligibility.

Motion by Ron Mabry to approve Policy No. 3545, STUDENTS: Interscholastic Academic Eligibility for first reading.

Seconded by Diane Sundvik.

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Yes
	Ms. Sundvik	Yes
	Mr. Valentine	Yes
	Mr. Galbraith	Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

Policy No. 3122, STUDENTS: Excused and Unexcused Absences, First Reading

Matt Scott presented updates regarding symptoms of mental health being included under excused absences per recent legislation.

Motion by Diane Sundvik to approve Policy No. 3122, STUDENTS: Excused and Unexcused Absences for first and second reading.

Seconded by Gabe Galbraith.

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Yes
	Ms. Sundvik	Yes

Mr. Valentine	Yes
Mr. Galbraith	Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

Policy No. 2310, INSTRUCTION: Selection and Adoption of Instructional Materials, First Reading

Dr. Pierce presented updates to Policy No. 2310 and 2311, combining the policies into one.

Discussion by Board members included the possibility for more public opportunities online to weigh in on material being looked at for adoption, along with interpreters.

Motion made by Diane Sundvik to approve Policy No. 2310, INSTRUCTION: Selection and Adoption of Instructional Materials for first and second reading.

Seconded by Ron Mabry.

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Yes
	Ms. Sundvik	Yes
	Mr. Valentine	Yes
	Mr. Galbraith	Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

NEXT MEETING AGENDA

The Board reviewed items for the next meeting agenda:

- A. Strategic Goal Report: All Students are Engaged Learners (Reading and Math Results)
- B. Strategic Goal Report: All Families are Key Partners
- C. Annual Update: Technology Operations

Per Board's request, an update on our arms policy will be added to the list of items above.

OTHER BUSINESS AS AUTHORIZED BY LAW.

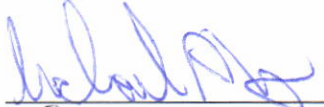
Board Preparation for WSSDA General Assembly

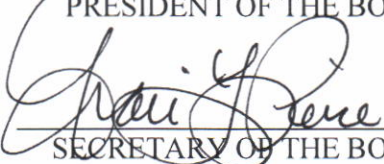
Following Board discussions, it was decided that each Board member would review the legislative positions, identify their priorities, and send them to President Connors and Dr. Pierce. Dr. Pierce would then compile the results and send them back to the Board. Diane Sundvik, Legislative Representative, will be voting on behalf of the Board and has asked the other members to let her know who else would be available to help with the vote and what times would work best for them.

There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 7:17 p.m.



RECORDING SECRETARY



PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD


SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

Approved: September 14, 2022

KENNEWICK SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
April 12, 2023

M I N U T E S

MEMBERS PRESENT

Board Members: Michael Connors, President of the Board; Ron Mabry, Vice President of the Board; Diane Sundvik, Legislative Representative of the Board; Micah Valentine, Board Member; Gabe Galbraith, Board Member; London Moody, Student Representative to the Board; and Dr. Traci Pierce, Superintendent and Secretary of the Board.

Cabinet Members: Dr. Doug Christensen, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources; Matt Scott, Assistant Superintendent of K-12 Education; Rob Phillips, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education; Alyssa St. Hilaire, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning; Vic Roberts, Executive Director of Business Operations; Robyn Chastain, Executive Director of Communications and Public Relations; Ron Cone, Executive Director of Information Technology.

CALL TO ORDER

President Michael Connors called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with approximately 179 online and in-person staff and guests in attendance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led/recited in both English and Spanish by 4th-grade students from Ms. Amanda Brown's class at Fuerza Elementary School.

RECOGNITION

School Bus Driver Appreciation Day – April 25

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce shared statistics from the transportation department and recognized them for School Bus Driver Appreciation Week.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARENTS, STAFF, AND RESIDENTS

Tina Gregory commented on freedom of speech and individual rights and asked the Board to stand up for our children.

CONSENT ITEMS

Motion by Diane Sundvik to approve the consent items as presented.

Seconded by Ron Mabry.

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Yes
	Ms. Sundvik	Yes
	Mr. Valentine	Yes

Mr. Galbraith Yes

Motion carried 5-0.

The consent items were as follows:

- Minutes of Regular Board Meeting March 22, 2023
- Personnel Actions – Certificated, Classified, and Extracurricular
- Out of Endorsement Teacher Plans 2022-2023
- Highly Capable Program Plan

SUPERINTENDENT/BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Student Representative to the Board, London Moody, reported she attended the Superintendent Student Advisory Council meeting where feedback was provided for communicating and publicizing the opportunity for students to apply for the two Student School Board Representative positions.

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce added to London's report by sharing that communication would begin next week for the position of Student Representative and Representative-Elect with an application deadline of May 15. Dr. Pierce reminded the Board that April 19 is a "Get To Know KSD" session, with the topic "What it Means to be a Board Member." The Board will host a panel discussion for the session. She also reminded the Board that April 26 is a Board Study Session focused on the boundary process.

Board Member Gabe Galbraith reported he visited Vista Elementary School.

Board Member Micah Valentine shared that he had conversations with parents and staff members.

Board Member Diane Sundvik reported that she was a judge for the LULAC Cesar Chavez-Delores Huerta poster contest at Amistad Elementary. Ms. Sundvik also reported that she visited LULAC/2nd Harvest Food Distribution at Amistad Elementary, attended the LULAC Chavez-Huerta poster award ceremony at Columbia Basin College, and attended the Racial Equity & Social Justice monthly meeting. She attended KEY Connections, KSD Elementary Choir Festival at KaHS, the WSSDA Large Schools Caucus meeting regarding WA State Legislature Special Education funding, and the WSSDA Legislative Representative Networking Hour.

Board President Mike Connors reported attending the boundary presentation last night at Sage Crest Elementary.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Community Education and Engagement

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce reviewed the January Retreat discussion about Community Education. She shared program statistics and growth and reported on the Community

Education status and budget. Dr. Pierce presented the current and updated Family and Community Engagement structures and new plans for the Community Education Coordinator position.

Annual Staff / Human Resources Update

Dr. Doug Christensen, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, presented the Annual Staff and Human Resources report. He shared current staff statistics; recruiting, hiring, and retention efforts; annual staff survey data; staff recognition; and professional growth and evaluation efforts.

2023 – 2024 Preliminary Budget

Executive Director of Business Operations Vic Roberts presented updates to General Fund Materials/Supply/Operating Costs (MSOC) budget and presented Capital Project Fund budget projections for 2022-23 to 2026-27. He updated the Board on the 2019 Bond final project, Ridge View Elementary School, with a target completion date of December 2023. Mr. Roberts reviewed the process and potential projects for the next bond and presented a timeline for Board consideration. He shared that final budget approval would be sought at the June 21 Board meeting.

Legislative Page Program

Superintendent Dr. Traci Pierce reported on the Legislative Page Program. She shared about current requirements, program benefits, and the scholarship program available to students.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

WSSDA Policy Changes and Proposed Resolution

Motion by Gabe Galbraith to accept Resolution No. 6, 2022-2023: WSSDA Weighted Vote Removal Resolution.

Seconded by Micah Valentine.

Roll call vote:	Mr. Connors	Yes
	Mr. Mabry	Abstain
	Ms. Sundvik	No
	Mr. Valentine	Yes
	Mr. Galbraith	Yes

Motion carried 3-1.

WSSDA Annual Conference – Proposed Break Out Session

Ron Mabry shared that he would send Board members a proposal to review and then have a vote on April 19 at a Special School Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING AGENDA

The Board reviewed items for the next meeting agenda:


- A. April 19, Special School Board Meeting and Get to Know KSD session
- B. April 26, 2023, Board Study Session: Boundary Process

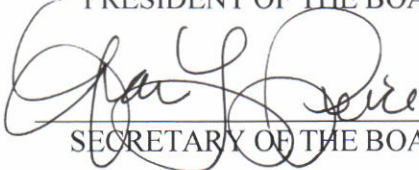
OTHER BUSINESS AS AUTHORIZED BY LAW.

There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 7:38 p.m.



RECORDING SECRETARY



PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD


SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

Approved: May 10, 2023



Micah Valentine · Follow

September 1, 2022 · 🌐



Working hard to honor the commitments we ran on. We said we would push back on the WOKE ideologies from [#Olympia](#) & [#DC](#) and we will. We are listening and working. We will not simply rubber stamp what flows in. We are the check in the check and balance. [#Elections](#) [#Matter](#)

1. <https://dailycaller.com/.../washington-school-board.../>
2. <https://www.washingtonpolicy.org/.../kennewick-school...>
3. <https://www.tri-cityherald.com/.../article264889949.html>
4. Minute 108
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/1CSjxvk4jfXjgZiWZVsuVO...>
5. <https://arizonasuntimes.com/.../washington-school-board.../>

[#NoCRT](#) [#no](#) [#crt](#) [#ksd](#) [#kennewick](#) Gabe Galbraith for Kennewick School Board

5:24 ↗

← Messages



Thread



Christopher F. Rufo
@realchrisrufo

BREAKING: Kennewick School District in Washington State has voted 5-0 to ban critical race theory from the curriculum.



8/31/22 · [Twitter Web App](#)

Replies 67 Quote Tweets 4,917 Likes





Kennewick Election

Active 6m ago



Unread messages

2:28 PM

Annette

#RNHAFL #RNHAFLInAction



We need to get some of these signs made up for future elections... specifically anyone on the school board who thinks they're going to stay in office. (Besides obviously the new members)



3:05 PM

Micah

Love this!



Aa







Annette Parrish Rose

1d · 🌐



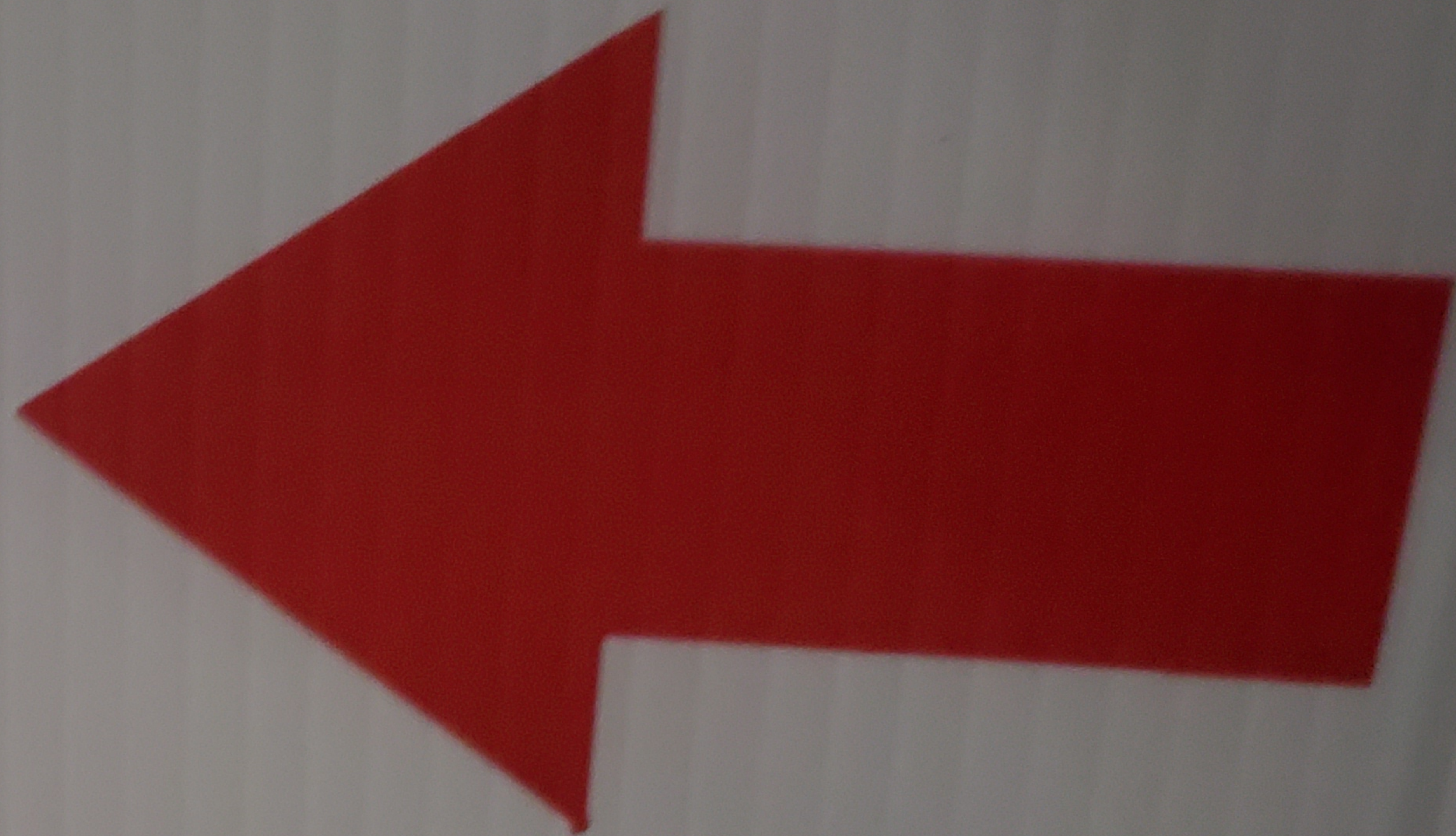
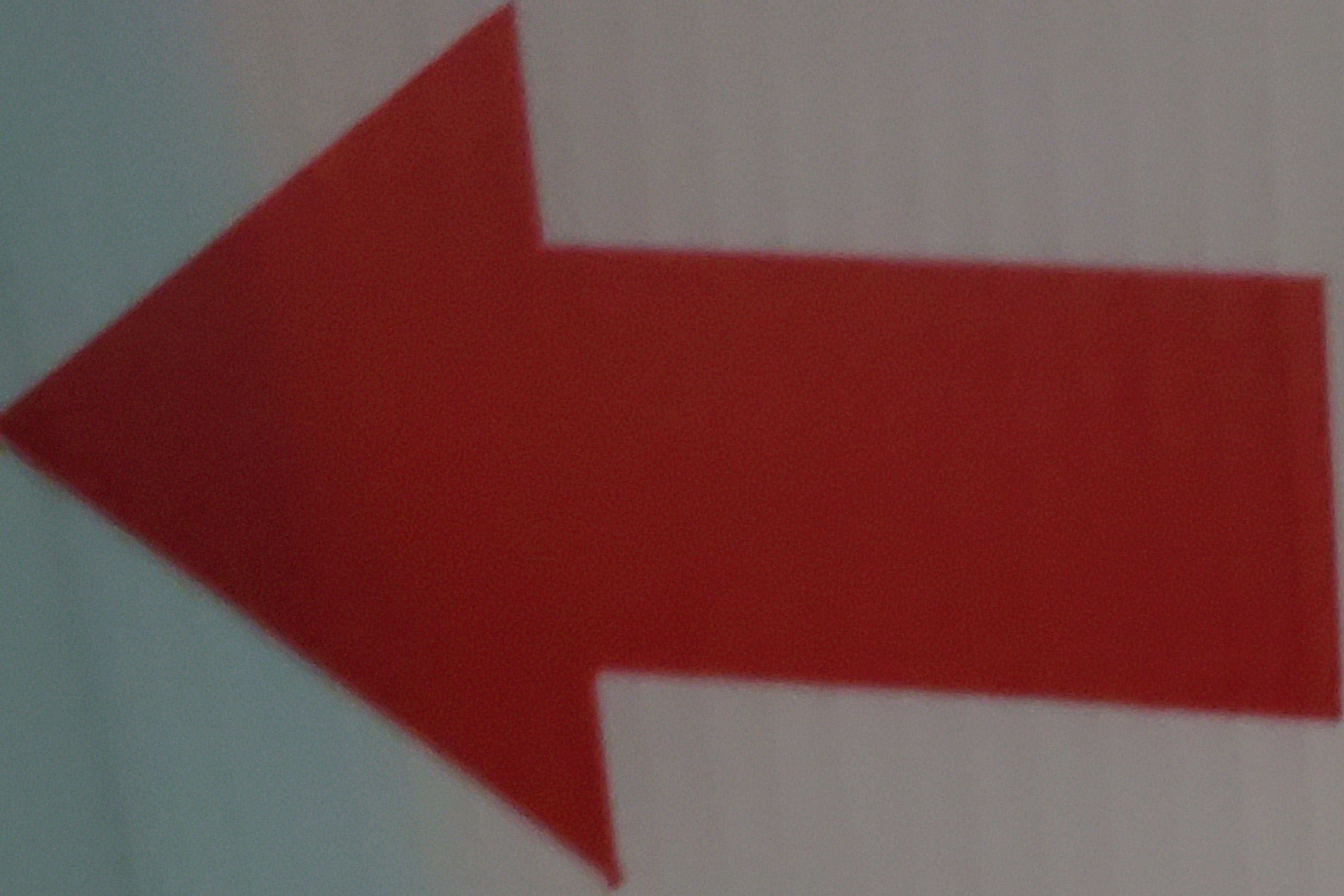
👍❤️😂 7

1 comment 3 shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



Paid for by We Want Accountability PAC