

## Entry 6 Polonious Deposition

### DEPOSITION SUMMARY OF LYNN POLONIOUS

I am the Vice-Head Master of Brahmin Preparatory School and have held this position for the last 10 years. I have my master's degree in Education. As Vice-Head Master, I am responsible for the enforcement of our code of conduct for both faculty and students.

Rufus Jones, while talented and gifted as a teacher, has much to learn in matters of tact and diplomacy. He has a tendency to take an accusatory tone toward colleagues which is both unnecessary and inappropriate. I have counseled with him before, warning him that he should refrain from this in the future.

At a monthly faculty meeting on September 30th, 20XX-2, Mr. Jones used a harsh and unprofessional tone and insulting language he used at an all school meeting concerning the speaking invitation to Walther von Stroheim. The Head Master and I both participated in the decision to invite von Stroheim. I gave specific assurances regarding von Stroheim, having read his book, "The Silver Lining: A Re-Appraisal Of The Effects Of Slavery."

It is my observation that the von Stroheim incident at the faculty meeting caused by Jones had a very negative impact on faculty, students and parents at this school. Rufus Jones handled this in an inappropriate, angry manner.

At Head Master Winslow's request, I met with Mr. Jones in private and directed him to make an apology to all faculty for his behavior. He declined to apologize. I considered this to be insubordinate, contrary to the goal of maintaining the civility so necessary in a proper academic environment.

On October 21, 20XX-2, Head Winslow ordered me to put Jones on formal probation. I did so and Mr. Jones took offense at the request for an apology and said, "I am just being made a scapegoat for calling attention to the racism that exists at this school." But he did not raise his voice at any time during this meeting, nor did he challenge the authority of the vice-principal to take this disciplinary action.

In April of 20XX-3 Robin Peterson sent out an all faculty and staff e-mail criticizing the administration for failure to retain faculty of color and accusing the school of harboring both subtle and overt racism. Many of the faculty members and I were hurt by the tone and the content of her e-mail and we did not want a meeting called for by Peterson to occur. The Head Master, I and the other administrators of the school decided to approach Ms. Peterson outside the formal disciplinary system at the school. I met with her and requested that she call off the meeting. Ms. Peterson reluctantly agreed. Head Master Winslow sent out an all faculty and staff e-mail cancelling the meeting. Ms. Peterson was not put on probation or otherwise punished for sending the e-mail. Ms. Peterson's case was much different than Mr. Jones's. Mr. Jones was angry, entrenched and intractable.

Our school remains deeply and firmly devoted to diversity and inclusion, implemented by our continuing training program in this area. All administrators and faculty at this school will continue to maintain a positive atmosphere, enabling our students to learn and

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thrive, focusing on the academic excellence on which we pride ourselves. Our fundamental task is to educate young adults to become good citizens.