



## ***Illinois School for the Deaf Alumni Association***

***125 Webster Avenue  
Jacksonville, IL 62650***

June 28, 2016

Dr. Beth Purvis  
Secretary of Education  
100 W. Randolph, JRTC Suite 16-100  
Chicago, IL 60601-3220

Dear Dr. Purvis:

On behalf of Illinois School for the Deaf Alumni Association, we want to express how the alumni felt about the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission's selection of the four individuals to the ISD Superintendent Search steering committee and the timing of the "Listening Tour".

Your letter, undated but distributed on May 19, 2016, announcing the selection of John Miller to lead the superintendent search and to conduct a "listening tour". According to the letter, over the next few weeks, John was to do a "listening tour" and share the findings with you, Dimas, and Kris Smith. We were not too happy about this decision because it was redundant and a waste of time. Yet, we patiently waited for the findings of the quick "listening tour".

On June, 21, 2016, via the *Communication Matters* newsletter, it announced the selections of four individuals to the steering committee to assist John Miller with the "listening tour" which will not occur over the next few weeks but starting in September. We are very upset and disappointed with the selections and the delay of the superintendent search.

Three important groups, Illinois School for the Deaf Alumni Association, Illinois Association for the Deaf, and Jacksonville Community Center for the Deaf, were intentionally left out of the steering committee. The above named organizations have been very active in the search of the superintendent of the Illinois School for the Deaf and have vested interest in the school's future, especially alumni. We, the alumni, grew up at ISD and consider it our home. We care with passion about the school. We know what ISD needs and the type of superintendent to lead it. We want to see ISD thrive as an elite school for our future deaf and hard of hearing children. Not one of those deaf or hard of hearing individuals selected have actually gone to ISD. Why not select an ISD alumnus or two? One is a former superintendent. Why not select an employee who currently works at ISD? Why not select a representative from one of the three organizations? Who cares more than those who call ISD home and work there?

Your timeline of over next few weeks now becomes several months, possibly half a year when you will get your results. The pool of available candidates will not be available by the time you act on the results from the "listening tour". In all reality, we might not be able to fill the vacancy until next summer. ISD needs a leader as it has been leaderless for more than a year. The school has been neglected and is in disarray. This appears to be a common practice within the Governor's office.

Beth, we, along with the Illinois Association for the Deaf and Jacksonville Community Center for the Deaf, actually are the pulse of the deaf community. Unlike the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission who has been out of touch with the deaf community and must have a "listening tour" in order to discover the same results that we have told you. You heard us but you have not been listening.

Thank you,

Susan Dramin-Weiss  
ISDAA President

Charles Bright  
ISDAA Vice President

cc: Secretary Dimas, DHS  
Kris Smith, DHS-DORS  
John Miller, IDHHC  
Corey Axelrod, IAD  
Kevin Ryan, IAD  
Deloris Summer, JCCD  
Jerry Covell  
Paula Chance