

Ms. Natalie M. Williams

Kathleen Pollina, Local Instructional Supervisor
Bronx Region One, NYC Department of Education
One Fordam Plaza, 7th floor Bronx, NY 10458

February 26, 2006

Ms. Pollina,

This letter is in reply to your letter dated February 21, 2006. In it, you state that I have been "insubordinate in that" I "did not comply with" "explicit directives".

On October 27, 2005; I was arrested falsely with a charge of trespassing by John F. Kennedy High School safety officers at the behest of Anthony Rotunno, the school principal. I consider this action to have been made in retaliation for the harassment charge that I filed against him with the police the previous day. (On October 26th, I filed harassment complaint #5570 against Mr. Rotunno; because he slammed a door against me and pinned me in the process of delivering Ms. Pollina's October 26 reassignment letter). I do not believe that I would have been arrested at all if the officers were not on Mr. Rotunno's payroll. I held a police sanctioned parade permit for the evening of October 27, 2005, as I stood more than 200 feet away from the 4th floor entrance to the building. As this false arrest occurred at approximately 6:30 pm; I note that this event occurred during non-school hours. I had spent my workday at 501 Courtlandt avenue; my re-assignment location. I also chose to return to the school on the night of October 27th for Open School; as this appearance was required for teachers; who were expected to be available to converse with parents. I did not however; get a chance to.

Ms. Pollina; I received your letter dated November 1, 2005 (which was postmarked on November 3rd) at my PO box in Utica, New York approximately one week after November 1; on about November 8th. In the time between my release from the false arrest on October 27th and my receipt of your directive; I did make communications to JFK HS staff in print and electronic form. Regarding the printed matter; I had no knowledge or control as to when or where such materials were released after these materials were delivered. I remind you that free speech is a right of all Americans; which is not to be restricted - even by employers. I intend to continue to exercise that right. I must also note that nowhere in your letter dated November 1, 2006 was there any restriction regarding the use of communications by mail.

The Apple School Night Event planned for November 16, 2005 was scheduled months in advance. I cancelled the event with the Apple Soho store after receiving your directive.

Regarding my return to the school on December 13, 2005. As you may recall; I had made numerous requests to both you, and the JFKHS Administration to retrieve my belongings. I had received an email from Ms. Armenikas; legal counsel at the Bronx Regional Office; permitting me entry to obtain my property on November 28th and on an unspecified date thereafter. Although I was in possession of this permission letter, Mr. Rotunno again used his school agents to arrest me on questionable grounds. As these trespassing accusations are to be addressed in Bronx Criminal Court, I will refrain from commenting further on this. Even after this second arrest, I continued to request access to my property. Ms. Pollina; although you were aware of the situation, you did not act in your capacity as the local instructional supervisor, to remedy it. I was finally allowed to reclaim most of my belongings on January 25, 2006 with the aid of a police escort and in possession of an order from the Bronx Supreme Court.

Regarding hear say from Mr. Kent and statements from students whom you have labeled A, B, C and D; such allegations remain to be proved. I have already informed you that I find both Mr. Kent's motivations and Mr. Rotunno's coercive tactics with students to be suspect.

May I clarify that the third paragraph from the end of your letter is inaccurate. Your November 1 directive never stated that I was "not to harass and disrupt school activities"; nor have I. I did not fail to follow your directives.

It is clear to me that, regardless of my explanations denying any 'misconduct' or 'insubordination'; you intend to proceed with "disciplinary action" - "including a U rating for 2005-6". I find it odd that you might have the authority to rate my pedagogic performance as "unsatisfactory"; as you have never seen me teach. For the record, my teaching abilities were confirmed by my receipt of the Who's Who Among America's Teachers Award for the 2004-2005 academic year.

As you, Ms. Pollina, threaten "charges under the Education Law which may lead to" my "termination." I must now consider your February 21, 2006 letter to be part of the John F. Kennedy High School Administration's ongoing harassment against me.

Please be advised that I will be preparing myself as I await specific 'charges'. As with the spate of letters which have preceded this one; please assure that this reply; with copies of the below referenced letters; is attached to the February 21 letter which you intend to place in my employee file.

I welcome the opportunity to clarify these matters at an impartial hearing.

Sincerely,

Ms. Natalie Williams

Cc: UFT Ms Lynn Winderbaum, Mr. Rodney Grubiak, Ms. Dianne Stillman
JFK HS Principal's Secretary; Ms. Marian Vey (for filing)

Referenced letters for Ms. Williams's February 26th, 2006 letter to Ms. Pollina:

October 26, 2005 reassignment letter from Ms. Pollina
October 26, 2005 Police Harassment Compliant #5570 filed by Ms. Williams
October 27, 2005 Police Parade Permit
October 27- November 28, 2005 'Dear Friends' letter from Ms. Williams
November 1, 2005 'directive' letter from Ms. Pollina
November 16, 2005 'Apple School Night' invite (cancelled by Ms. Williams)
November 23, 2005 permission to retrieve belongings letter from Ms. Armenikas
January 24, 2006 Bronx Supreme Court Order
January 26, 2006 summary of hearing meeting from Ms. Williams
February 21, 2006 'disciplinary action' letter from Ms. Pollina.
Who's Who Among America's Teachers Award Announcement

Referenced letters for Ms. Williams's February 2nd, 2006 letter to Ms. Pollina:

Ms. Williams' Demand for Property letter
February 8, 2006 - New York Times Article on grade changes in English Regent's Exam