

February 3, 2023

Subject: Vote of No Confidence regarding President William B. Caldwell, IV

To The Board of Trustees:

We are reaching out to you today to express our great concern and fear regarding the current climate and uncertain future of the institution of Georgia Military College. At this critical juncture, we as members of the Prep School Faculty of Georgia Military College issue a vote of No Confidence in the president of the college, William B. Caldwell, for the following reasons:

1. Failure to follow policy and procedures:

- The GMC employee handbook states in section 2.1.5 “Discharge” that “Discharge will occur after a careful review of the case with the appropriate administrator [...] and a review of the case by the Vice President of Human Resources for documentation adequacy and compliance with GMC policy.” The events surrounding the termination of Principal Steve Greer occurred within two hours of the email from Principal Greer to the faculty stating that he was informed that he would not be returning after the end of the school year but would be finishing out his contract.

2. Actions that are not in the best interest of the institution:

- The termination of Principal Steve Greer, which has led to negative press for the institution. Terminating him instantly after that email was a knee-jerk reaction that has brought about outrage by parents, students, faculty, staff, and the community at large. This has led to a Change.org petition calling for the retirement of William B. Caldwell, IV, which has garnered over 800 signatures within only 36 hours.
- The appearance of a misappropriation of funds that has led to a special audit by the Department of Audits and Accounts / House Appropriations Committee of the Georgia State Legislature and could lead to fundamental changes in the structure of GMC Prep School or the termination of the K-3 program. At the end of SY 21-22, Governor Kemp authorized a one-time \$2000 payment for full-time teachers. Teachers in the prep school began asking about this stipend in the spring of 2022, and we were initially told in a faculty meeting in May 2022 that we would not receive this stipend. After Principal Greer requested clarification with the institution, we were eventually informed we would receive a partial sum so that the funds, earmarked for teachers of grades 4-12, could be distributed among all teachers. The reduced pre-tax amount was stated at \$1744, and the actual amount after taxes was \$1126.

- In meetings, William B. Caldwell has repeatedly been heard to speak about events happening at the institution and how it will affect his legacy. The wording is often “How will this affect MY legacy” instead of remaining focused on the goal shared by the faculty of this institution: educating students and elevating their character. The perception is that his focus is firmly on himself rather than on the good of the institution.

3. Expansion of prep school without legislative approval:

- Although we have not been briefed and were only recently informed by our Principal via email on January 25th at 2:24 p.m. about the special audit, it is logical to assume that the unauthorized expansion of grades K-3 is the action that led to the scrutiny by the Department of Audits and Accounts / House Appropriations Committee of the Georgia legislature, thus bringing about the audit that may spell disaster for GMC. This topic is obviously very important to the faculty and staff of GMC Prep, especially in light of the future employment of staff and faculty.

4. Lack of transparency and trust:

- Meetings to discuss the state of the school are rare, never include our most important stakeholders—the parents, and issues that do not present the current administration in the best light (e.g., audit by the state, lack of completion of the Fine Arts building, lack of progress on the Academic Center of Excellence, vastly decreased enrollment in the Junior College) are omitted entirely. When uncomfortable briefings are held (such as the meeting held at 3:15 p.m. on January 31st following the sudden termination of Principal Greer), questions are not allowed by LTG Caldwell.
- At our most recent institutional assembly on Wednesday, January 25th at 3:30 p.m., at the end of the presentations, the President did not open the floor for questions but simply dismissed the faculty and staff and referred all questions to the Director of Communications.
- The position of Assistant Superintendent was suddenly created in the Spring of 2021 without the Board of Trustees’ approval (not found in board minutes), and was not announced or posted for other qualified applicants.
- In addition, the Prep School Superintendent position was invented without discussion with faculty and staff, and solely for the purpose of receiving state

funds to help cover a portion of the President's salary. Since 1879, our institution had never installed a superintendent, and the need for such a position is baffling.

- There is overall concern among the faculty regarding the relationship between the institution and NewDay USA. Since Caldwell brought them to GMC, their organization has had increasing influence and control over areas of the institution. For one example, the Prep School Center for Education of the Arts had to undergo a name change to the NewDay USA Center for Leadership, and a building originally intended solely for student use has become at least partially a center focused on the initiatives of NewDay USA.

5. Fear of retaliation:

- When berating administration in a meeting about an error that had occurred with the roster for a sporting event, Caldwell declared, "I'm so powerful it's scary!" after threatening to fire the employees with whom he was speaking. He actually said, "If I want to fire someone, I just turn to Jill Robbins and say 'Make it happen!'" There were six employees present for these statements.
- There is a pervasive air throughout the institution that questions are not welcome, and that pushback could result in retaliation and even termination. For that reason, most faculty are extremely reluctant to sign their actual names to this document, and will instead sign "Anonymous Teacher" in an attempt to protect their employment. Several teachers are so concerned that even that precaution was not enough; however, they have provided their verbal support.

Based on the above concerns, we are requesting a meeting with the entire GMC Board of Trustees in an off-campus location and without the presence of administration to discuss the future of our beloved institution. It is our carefully considered opinion that Georgia Military College Board of Trustees should ask for the immediate resignation of William B. Caldwell, IV. We have no confidence in his leadership.

Signed,

/// original copy signed by teachers/staff ///