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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Five Portland Public Schools Custodians hire James E. Leuenberger PC to represent them.

Portland Public Schools Custodians, Richard Brooks, Lonnie D. Fleming, Richard Reynolds, Donald W. Strong, and Edward Tschida, have hired James E. Leuenberger PC.

Richard Brooks, Richard Reynolds, and Edward Tschida are Petitioners on Review for the case of *Scherzinger v. McWilliams et al*, Oregon Supreme Court No. S52071.

Lonnie D. Fleming and Donald W. Strong are Petitioners on Review for the case of *Portland School District No. 1J v. Strong et al*, Oregon Supreme Court No. S52246.

The custodians were members of SEIU (Service Employees International Union) 140 when they were fired by the Portland Public District in Steve Goldschmidt's purported effort to cut the school district's budget.

Their two Supreme Court cases are "in abeyance" until the Supreme Court finally decides its *Walter v. Scherzinger*, No. S51669 case which was originally decided on October 13, 2005. The Supreme Court's opinion can be found at 339 Or 408, 121 P3d 644. *Walter v. Scherzinger* will become final when the Supreme Court decides the Portland School District's petition for reconsideration.

The custodians have two simple questions for the Portland School Board. Where is our money? Where are our jobs?

The Portland School Board should immediately withdraw its petition for reconsideration. It should immediately hire and pay the custodians.

There is no legitimate reason for the board to delay doing the right thing. The board was badly advised by former employee, Steve Goldschmidt.

The board, having fired Steve Goldschmidt, should take the next step in correcting his abuses. Hire and pay the custodians.

Steve Goldschmidt's decision to fire the custodians was not only illegal, it was morally wrong – it was morally indefensible. The board has a duty to treat its employees with respect. The board should not insult its employee's dignity. The board that ratified Steve Goldschmidt's decision abrogated its duty to the custodians. The current board must do better. It must do the right thing. It must hire and pay the custodians.

The board must be honest with the custodians and the public.

The board must, in good conscience, publish audits of expenses the Portland School District has incurred by hiring PHC janitors to mishandle the work that been done by the custodians. When the full story is told, Steve Goldschmidt's decision to fire the custodians will be shown to be as empty of economic sense as it was empty of moral justification.

It is not too late to admit to having made a mistake and to correct that mistake. The board must hire and pay the custodians.

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