

The following is my statement concerning my search of Justin Cox on Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup> .

I was in the cafeteria with my plate about to sit down when some kind of commotion happened. I looked up to see Mrs. Felicia Lamb and Mrs. Allison Fisher motioning for me to come to their table. Several students were standing up pointing to the end of the table. I got to Mrs. Lamb first who told me that money was missing and that she thought that Justin Cox had it. Mrs. Fisher then explained that -----'s \$20 bill had fallen out of her pocket onto the floor and that Justin had dived under the table after it. ----- was crying and very upset. Justin was standing at the end of the table with several coins in his hand. Seven or eight students said that Justin got the \$20 when he dived under the table. I walked up to Justin and told him that if he had the money it would be better to just give it to me because if not I would have to search him. Justin said that he did not have the money and to "search me." I called Mr. Carr on the radio and asked him to meet me at my office because I needed him to be a witness.

Justin, Mr. Carr, and I went into my office and I shut the door. I again told Justin that if he had the money, it would be better to go ahead and give it to me. Justin said that he didn't have it and again said "search me." I explained to Justin that as a school administrator I had the authority to search him based on the information that I had been given by Mrs. Lamb and Mrs. Fisher as well as the seven or eight students pointing to him.

I told Justin to take off his shoes. I looked inside them and moved the tongue of each shoe from left to right. I told him to take off his socks. I turned them inside out and looked at both of them. I could see that Justin had on a pair of over-sized boxers. I told him to take off his jeans. I checked every pocket, the hem of both legs and the waistband. I ran my hands around the outside of the waistband of his boxers. I gave him his jeans to put back on. I turned his socks back right side in and gave them to him to put back on. I gave him his shoes to put back on. I could see that he had a t-shirt on under his shirt, so I asked him to take off his shirt. I checked the pockets on the shirt as well as the hem of the shirt tail and the hem of the sleeves. I asked him to pull up his t-shirt so that I could see under it. I gave him his shirt to put back on.

At this point, I knew that Justin did not have the money. I sat in front of him telling him that I was sorry that I had to search him. I again explained that as a school administrator, I had the authority to search him because two teachers thought he had the money as well as seven or eight students. At this point, Mrs. Fisher came and knocked on my door. I opened the door, and Mrs. Fisher told me that the \$20 dollar bill had just miraculously shown up on the floor. Mrs. Fisher said that the money was not on the floor when Justin and I left to go to my office. I told her that I was in the process of apologizing to Justin because he did not have it.

I shut the door and sat back down in front of Justin. I asked him if he knew what "having a good name" means. He looked puzzled. I said I don't mean Justin or Cox or Justin or Beiber. I said having a good name means that people respect you and people trust what you have to say. I said having a good name means having a good reputation. I asked Justin if he thought Mr. Carr had a good reputation. Justin

shook his head yes. I said “so do I.” I gave Justin an example of: What if the deputy came in here and told me that Mr. Carr had robbed a bank over the weekend? I told Justin that I would not believe it because I know Mr. Carr, and I know that Mr. Carr has a good name .... a good reputation. Mr. Carr is honest and trustworthy and a good man.

I explained to Justin that unfortunately over the course of this school year, there had been times that he had told some tales ... some lies. I looked at him and said “yes or no.” Justin shook his head yes. I said and unfortunately some of those tales ... those lies had been told to me. I looked at him and said “yes or no.” Justin shook his head yes.

I told Justin that he was going to another school next year ... UIS. I told him that he had the perfect opportunity to start building a good name ... a good reputation at this new school. I told him that he could start fresh at this new school. I told him that it would be as easy as trying to do the right thing and telling the truth even when he didn't do the right thing. I told him that none of us are perfect and that we all mess up, but having a good name means that you tell the truth about it. Mr. Carr added some words of wisdom to what I had just said to Justin. I again told Justin that I was sorry that I had to search him because I don't like to search students and because he didn't have the money. I told him to make a brand new start at UIS and always try to do the right thing and always tell the truth no matter what. I then asked Justin if I could have a hug. Justin stood up to hug me. I hugged Justin and told him that I was sorry.

\*Any staff member who has ever worked with me knows that I care for my students and that even when I have to discipline them, I love them.