



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 16, 2023

Hamburg CSD encourages use of TikTok, disregards concerns on student safety

Hamburg, NY: The Hamburg Central School District recently posted on social media, asking for viewers to submit questions for Superintendent Michael Cornell. The graphic which was posted 1/12/23 on the @hamburgcsd Instagram story, encouraged viewers to use Tik Tok by stating, "He's going to answer the best ones on Tik Tok next week!".

Moms for Liberty Erie County Chair, Jackie Best, emailed Cornell and HCSD Public Information Officer, Ms. Kayla Green, urging them to reconsider promoting Tik Tok. Best is a resident of the HCSD and has three children in the district. "...the TikTok app was recently banned on devices of public employees managed by many government agencies including the House of Representatives, and at least seven states. (See CNN links below)," states Best in her email. "The ban is mainly due to the app being identified as a "high risk to users due to a number of security risks." In addition, TikTok is under investigation by multiple US Attorneys General for being harmful to children (see NBC News link below)." Best also noted concerns about TikTok's effects on mental health, creating addictive habits, and facilitating human trafficking.

Best ended her email by asking the district to reconsider using Tik Tok, and if not, to provide her, "an explanation as to why you think TikTok is a safe space for our children." In response, Cornell responded solely to Best stating, "Thanks for sharing how you feel." Cornell's short response is not new to Best and others in the district. Even before starting the Erie County Chapter of M4L, Best was outspoken at board meetings about COVID mandates and ran for school board in the Spring of 2022. More recently she has worked with other members of M4L to expose sexually explicit books on public school library shelves. "I understand that Mr. Cornell is not happy with the questions I ask to him or the board," states Best. "But I have every right as a Hamburg taxpayer, Hamburg parent and graduate of Hamburg myself to question policies and encourage change."

Since the hiring of Green last year, Hamburg has heavily increased its social media usage. "Hamburg seems to be acting like a private school that needs marketing to increase enrollment," states Best. "I don't understand why a public school is spending taxpayer money on someone to increase use of social media, which we know is detrimental to mental health." Ultimately Best agrees that it is a parent's responsibility to monitor their child's social media use. "Peer pressure to use social media is bad enough," notes Best. "Students don't need the encouragement of the district to use it."

For more information on Moms for Liberty of Erie County, visit <https://momsforliberty.org/chapters/erie-county-ny/>

Original Email sent by Best to Cornell & Green on 1/12/23:
Mr. Cornell & Ms. Green,

I was browsing Instagram tonight and saw the image below on the district's story. I wasn't aware the district had a TikTok account. However my bigger concern is that this image is actually inviting & encouraging students to use TikTok.

In case you're unaware, the TikTok app was recently banned on devices of public employees managed by many government agencies including the House of Representatives, and at least seven states. (See CNN links below). The ban is mainly due to the app being identified as a "high risk to users due to a number of security

risks."

In addition, TikTok is under investigation by multiple US Attorneys General for being harmful to children (see NBC News link below). Multiple concerns include the app having "harmful effects on young users' mental health", and that "the algorithm, which determines what content others see, sends users, youths in particular, down an addictive and harmful rabbit hole". TikTok has also been accused of violating children's privacy and facilitating human trafficking.

I myself used to use the app, and didn't realize the harmful affects. I deleted my account many months ago and also do not allow it on my son's phone.

Based on the ongoing concerns and investigations related to TikTok, I would urge the district to reconsider using it. If you continue, I'd appreciate an explanation as to why you think TikTok is a safe space for our children.

*Thank you in advance for your response,
Jackie Bes*

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/28/tech/house-bans-tiktok/index.html>

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/07/us/tiktok-ban-culture-cec/index.html>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/states-launch-probe-tiktoks-effect-kids-health-rcna18523>

###

Contact:
Jackie Best, Chapter Chair
716-697-2136
Moms4libertyerieny@gmail.com



hamburgcsd 11h



**Do you have a
question for
Mr. Cornell?**



Let us know here!

Type something....

**He's going to answer
the best ones on
TikTok next week!**