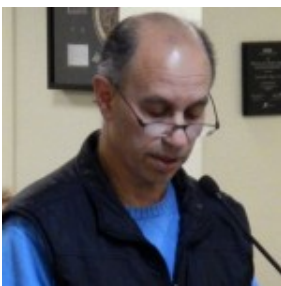


# Letter: Questioning Leadership choices at Mt. Tallac High

*Publisher's note: The letter below was first sent the Lake Tahoe Unified School District board of education and superintendent. It is reprinted with permission.*

**Dr. [Jim] Tarwater and School Board Members,**

The Mount Tallac High School graduation is scheduled for Friday morning. It is truly a remarkable achievement for a group of students who have overcome so many challenges and obstacles during their lifetime. For some, they will be the first in their family to graduate high school. The graduation ceremony is a very happy, but emotional time for the students, their families and friends, the Mount Tallac staff, and the many community members who attend the ceremony.



Harry Segal

Susan Baker, the heart and soul of the school, will certainly have a day filled with mixed emotions. Susan's determination and passion for helping each and every student, and along with the help of an incredible dedicated staff and many community members have made the school what it is today. Susan knows better than anyone what is needed to continue moving Mount Tallac forward in a positive direction.

Unfortunately, Dr. Tarwater and the school board have decided they know best. Not allowing Susan and the Mount Tallac staff to be a part of the decision-making process to choose her replacement, is an absolute disgrace. It shows a total lack of respect for Susan, the entire staff and especially a lack of good judgment and being sensitive to the needs of the Mount Tallac students.

There is no excuse for someone who has no connection with the school, other than title, to make a decision based on politics, rather than what is best for the children. There is no excuse for elected school board members to go along with the decision. The students depend on the superintendent and school board to do what is best for each and every child in this community, including the students at Mount Tallac. Do any of you actually believe the current decision for Susan's replacement is the best possible option?

This is not about Karen Tinlin, who is a very capable administrator. It is about the future of a school that helps students who have faced despair and hopelessness. It is about a school that gives positive guidance and hope to students. It is about a school that teaches students how to be successful in life. It is about a school where students feel safe and secure. It is about a school that performs "miracles" every day.

There is no way any of you can justify what has been done. Is this how all of you have chosen to thank Susan for her dedication and passion to help these children? Shame on all of you!

The choice is yours. You can make the needed changes to restore the integrity of our school district. Do what is right for the children of our community.

**Harry Segal, South Lake Tahoe**