

...closed in 1940 and became the Lee Theater and then ...
...in 1962 followed by Carson Marine in 1970. It burned down in March 19...

LETTERS AND COMMENTARY

Petitioners list reasons to remove school board chair

An online petition at <https://tinyurl.com/bdhrccymm> is being circulated by the Somerset Education Association and Caucus of African American Leaders, organizations led by incoming President Phaedra Spencer and Convener James Jones, respectively.

...

Petition for Removal of Chairman Matthew Lankford from the Somerset County Board of

Education:

We, the undersigned residents and stakeholders of Somerset County, Md., formally request the immediate removal of Matthew Lankford, Chairman of the Somerset County Board of Education, pursuant to applicable Maryland Education Code provisions regarding the removal of school board members for willful neglect of duty, misconduct in office, and incompetency.

Grounds for Removal:

Willful Neglect of Duty

Chairman Lankford has consistently failed to uphold his responsibilities to the students, staff, and community of Somerset County. This includes:

- Ignoring public concerns and teacher input on critical issues.
- Failing to take timely or appropriate action to address systemic problems within the district.
- Neglecting to advocate for equitable resource distribution, curriculum development, and staff support.

Misconduct in Office

Chairman Lankford has exhibited conduct unbecoming of his role. This includes:

- Abusing his authority to suppress dissenting voices or concerns raised by community members and staff.
- Failing to act transparently and ethically in board proceedings.
- Demonstrating bias and a lack of impartiality in decision-making processes that directly impact the quality of education.

See **Commentary** on page 9

Commentary

- From page 8

Incompetency

Chairman Lankford has demonstrated an inability to effectively fulfill his role and has significantly hindered

the progress and well-being of Somerset County Public Schools. This includes:

- Inability to effectively manage and utilize resources, leading to financial inefficiencies and missed growth opportunities.

- Poor decision-making skills, leading to ineffective policies and initiatives that do not meet the district's needs.

- Inadequate communication with board members, stakeholders, and community members, causing confusion

and delays in important operations and relationships.

We respectfully request that the Maryland State Board of Education expedite proceedings for his removal in accordance with the law.