

# Bill Clevenger Interview Notes

I, Reed Sutman, interviewed Bill Clevenger on June 21, 2023 after the Board of Education Meeting. This was at MacArthur High School. The audio is at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwspS\\_ekalM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwspS_ekalM)

These are my notes of the interview. Many minor details are left out. Anything in "quotes" is a direct quote. Otherwise, it is paraphrased.

Reed: "a minute ago you kind of spoke to the effect that you don't think anything extra needs to be done for the transparency. Are you open to any suggestions like a accountability committee or opening an investigation into the history of this issue?"

Bill: "I'd have to look at that, because most of the people here who are in position today weren't here before. They had no responsibility for the previous actions. They weren't employed here. So when we get into discussions of five, ten years ago, the folks that are here today had nothing to do with that. So a better thought would be to move forward with our staff now, give them the benefit of the doubt, let them do their job that they were hired to do and what they're expected to do, and then let's move forward and create a climate that the community has confidence in. And we can move forward in that environment a lot better than we can. Let's look in the windshield rather than the rear view mirror."

Reed: Are you open to forming an accountability committee of teachers and parents?

Bill: "I'd have to look at it and understand exactly what might be proposed and what their role might be and how that role might materialize over a given number of years. I'm not a big one to create committees that aren't gonna have continuity and aren't gonna be, or aren't gonna have a successful impact on an organization. So I would have to see the whole scope of what the idea entails before we would have that conversation."

Reed: I'd like to ask you about an anonymous tip - I cut this from the recording.

Bill: Said he wasn't involved in the relevant conversation and doesn't have any idea about it. He said it was "staff to staff" conversation and his responsibility is at the board level, and those staff meetings with Dr. Clark and her staff, he's not privy to those.

Reed: I was getting a run around trying to get an interview with anyone who has background knowledge on the issue, with regard to the underlying process & why it took so long to get an analysis scheduled.

Bill: I think the scheduling was an unfortunate sequence of events, with the Contractor being unavailable for a period, then Metzger being unavailable. "And unfortunately those time delays led us to where we are." He says "that's the reality of the construction industry."

Bill: "And sometimes timing just doesn't work out. Could we have acted faster? Quite possibly. But the reality of it is we're where we are now and we need to move on these projects. We need to make determinations that are in the best interest of our students, they're in the best interest of our faculty and staff, and they're in the best interest of the overall Decatur community. And then let's not forget the cost factor of those. How does that weigh into the future of this [recording unclear]?"

Reed: Turns to Phil Winecke, who is walking by, and asks "Can I have a minute with you?" then returns to Clevenger. Winecke agrees.

Reed: "My big concern really is the transparency - it sounds like the district is on top of the building issues - and that I have been unable to get access to the administration that has background knowledge on the issues, to get my questions answered about the transparency. Which has been a hot topic for a while, and I think three different board candidates ran on transparency as a major platform issue. And I don't see anything meaningful being done to address that so far."

Bill: "Well, I've worked with the Open Meetings Act for 40 years. I think I know what the Open Meetings Act is all about, and I'm going to do my best to make sure that we comply with the Open Meetings Act, and that we work with our community for the betterment of our school system."

Bill: "I just have a long term history in the community. And you can look at my record over time and the things that have been accomplished over that time period, and I'm hoping to be able to provide that same kind of leadership here."