**Type of Action:** Type II (reporting) Whistleblower Protection Act

**Injuries Alleged:** demotion; emotional distress/mental anguish

**Name of Case: Sahouri v. Hartland Consolidated Schools, et al**

**Court:** Genesee County Circuit Court

**Case No:** 12-97958-CL

**Tried Before:** N/A

**Name of Judge: Judge Richard B. Yuille (2012-2019); Judge Mark Latchana (2020)**

**Settlement:** $300,000.00 via facilitation with Attorney Kathleen Bogas

**Key To Winning:** A courageous, honest and tenacious Plaintiff who would not give in to Defendants’ demand that she apologize for something she did not do

**Insurance Carrier:** Unknown

**Attorneys for Plaintiff:** Tom R. Pabst, Jarrett M. Pabst

**Attorney for Defendants:** Withheld

**Description of Case:**

**Whistleblower paid $300,000 to Settle Lawsuit**

After 8 years of being embattled with her employer, Tracey Sahouri, Plaintiff, has settled out of Court for $300,000 – half of which is being paid directly by her School District employer.

After Tracey and her husband were targeted and wrongfully ticketed by an out-of-control Argentine Township police officer (who is no longer employed with the Township) for allegedly providing alcohol to minors at a graduation party, her administrators pressed her to step down as an administrator, even though she, along with her husband, was innocent – and later acquitted – of the accused crime. The resulting case for malicious prosecution against the police officer and his employer Township settled for $150,000. By law, Tracey had to report the ticket to her employer, which she did, thereby making her a whistleblower for self-reporting, according to the Michigan Court of Appeals.

When Tracey refused to accept blame for something she didn’t do, Defendants decided to get rid of her as an administrator. Angry that Tracey would not bow to their wishes and destroy her reputation in order to “keep the heat off of them”, Defendants falsely accused Tracey of tampering with MEAP testing as a Proctor. This, along with Tracey reporting to police a death threat “Hit List” of names written on a bathroom mirror, and refusing to conceal that the child of a Board member attending the prom was drunk and throwing chairs around, all resulted in retaliatory moves to expedite her being demoted from Principal to teacher.

Not only did Defendants demote Tracey, they decided to make her worklife hellish by tasking her with what they thought would be impossible: setting up a virtual school system for the District, which Tracey did and exceeded expectations in doing so.

Defendants next stab at harassing Tracey was to put her in a near-empty building, instruct all other teachers not to have any contact with her; exclude her from staff meetings; and finally demand that she not have contact with students in person while she was at work. Her administrators and supervisors continually admonished her – even though students and parents to this day sing her praises repeatedly.

And – despite Defendants’ claim that Tracey cheated on the MEAP testing as a Proctor, and even though Defendants claimed Tracey was a horrible employee who never did anything correctly – Defendants put Tracey **back** in charge of the MEAP testing for Defendant School District, all under the same administrators who wanted her to sacrifice her career and reputation in order to save them from scrutiny and public pressure.

The 8 year-old case was prolonged by Defendants, who filed an Appeal with the Michigan Court of Appeals every time the trial Judge ruled against them – not less than 4 times! Moreover, when the Court of Appeals affirmed the circuit court, Defendants filed an Appeal with the Michigan Supreme Court, which was denied.

This case was settled via facilitation with Attorney Kathleen Bogas as the facilitator, who did an excellent job in allowing the parties to reach the $300,000 settlement.

In the end, because Tracey Sahouri has been vindicated with the help of her attorney, Tom Pabst, because she is an honest person and hardworking educator who to this day still has nothing but her students’ best interest at heart. This is a story about a woman who stood up for herself and her students, and a lesson for all us of to not apologize for something we didn’t do wrong. Social Justice Warriors, beware.