



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Winnipeg, MB

Day 1

April 13, 2023

EVIDENCE

Witness 7: Pierre Attallah

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[00:00:00]

Kyle Morgan

We should go ahead with the next witness. It's Mr. Attallah.

Hello sir, can you state your full name?

Pierre Attallah

Pierre Nicola Attallah.

Kyle Morgan

And can you spell your first and last name?

Pierre Attallah

P-I-E-Double R-E A-T-T-A-L-L-A-H

Kyle Morgan

Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Pierre Attallah

I will.

Kyle Morgan

Where are you from, sir?

Pierre Attallah

I was born in England and raised most of my life in Canada, in Winnipeg.

Kyle Morgan

OK. And what's your profession?

Pierre Attallah

I'm an IT specialist. I've got a BSc in computer science from the University of Manitoba.

Kyle Morgan

Okay. I understand you experienced some difficulties as a parent regarding COVID measures that were in place.

Pierre Attallah

I have two kids in school, elementary school at the time. I was actively involved in their school on a regular basis, on a daily basis sometimes. I was volunteering at the school. I was also working as lunch supervisor for an hour a day, which fit nicely with my other work schedule. I was praised by the parents, the students, and the staff.

Kyle Morgan

I understand your sons experienced some difficulty with the rules that were in place at school. Is that right?

Pierre Attallah

Yes, they were forced to wear a mask in school, and they were targeted by the staff because I didn't agree with the mask mandate that the school was putting in place, and I was speaking out against it. I was pointing out that the public health orders did not apply to any public school in Manitoba. Because I questioned the school about it, they said it was because of the public health orders. But when I showed them the public health orders, it clearly stated the opposite. And they insisted on forcing the masks on the kids.

Kyle Morgan

And how did your sons respond to the mask wearing?

Pierre Attallah

Well, my younger son experienced the worst. He was struggling to be heard, so he was constantly speaking louder than he normally would, which resulted in scarring to his vocal cords. And it led to a really hoarse tone of voice for him. He also developed scarring around his ears where the straps were. There was a day where it started to bleed, and he asked to call home, actually, from the school. And the school principal in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division at Valentine's School, she, the principal at the time, denied him the phone call home to talk to me. When he was trying to take his mask off, he was called into the office to be disciplined for that, and when he was in there, he asked to call home and speak to me, and the principal denied that request of him.

Kyle Morgan

Now you mentioned there was some injury to the vocal cords. How do you know there was an injury there?

Pierre Attallah

Well, he was getting speech pathology from the St. James-Assiniboia School Division speech pathologist. And I asked her if the chemicals in the mask were causing damage to his throat, and she corrected me. She said, "No, he's talking louder when he has the mask on, which is straining constantly for eight hours a day, straining his vocal cords." That was coming from the school's speech pathologist. She also, the school speech pathologist, also referred him to an ear, nose, and throat specialist to investigate it. So we went to the ENT specialist, and he confirmed that there was scarring to his vocal cords and damage to his voice.

Kyle Morgan

Now, did this specialist recommend anything?

Pierre Attallah

Well, I asked the specialist if he could get a mask exemption. Because if the speech pathologist is saying that the mask is causing him to talk louder and that's causing the scarring of his vocal cords, he should certainly be able to write an exemption, so that he could go back to speaking normally and have his condition get better. But he denied the request to give a mask exemption. He said that the boy has to talk quieter.

Kyle Morgan

Now your older son, I understand, might have experienced some effects also. Is that right?

Pierre Attallah

Yes. Because I was actively communicating with the principal of the school and the staff to not put the mask on them,

[00:05:00]

they were more actively watching my kids. And at lunchtime, the educational assistant who was in the room with my older son, she would watch him eat with her arms crossed and tell him to put his mask on constantly while he was eating. She would stare at him, cross her arms, tap her foot. And then, it led to him no longer eating because he was hungry. It changed his eating style. It was like a psychological abuse. At the end, when he did put the mask on, she would force him to say thank you.

Kyle Morgan

So did you try to speak to the school staff about these issues?

Pierre Attallah

Yes, when I found out that this was going on, I went to the school with a letter. It was a notice of liability. I also included an affidavit of my son's statement and a letter, again, asking them to stop forcing the masks on the kids. And the principal wouldn't allow me my

parental right to speak with the school staff. *The Public Schools Act* of Manitoba states that a parent has the right to speak to any school staff member in the school. And the principal would not let me show that letter to that EA [educational assistant]. She denied that.

Kyle Morgan

I believe you spoke to the Superintendent of the School Division. Is that right?

Pierre Attallah

I had, yes. I had a meeting later with the Superintendent of the Division, which is the highest paid employee of the Division. And he said that he was launching an external child abuse investigation. And that was a couple years ago, but I have not received any details of that investigation. I filed a FIPPA [*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*] request to get more information about it. And the school division denied me, the father, access to any records of the investigation. I then contacted the Ombudsman to make a complaint about my FIPPA request, and the Ombudsman said it would take about a year to get to it. They weren't very interested in pursuing it. So I was experiencing several levels of governmental failure.

Kyle Morgan

Did you reach out to any other government officials at all?

Pierre Attallah

Yes. I wrote a letter to the Minister of Education because by this point, after the school had seen my written material and the notice of liability, they gave me a no trespass order, which prevented me from talking to anybody on the school property or even being able to pick up my son on school property. Which led to more humiliating and inhumane treatment by the school staff. I learned from my FIPPA request that they were told not to speak to me. So when I would show up at the school, if I said hi to a staff member, they would turn around, turn their back to me, and walk away without even saying hello. I wrote to the Minister of Education, and he didn't respond. That was Wayne Ewasko, Minister of Education.

Kyle Morgan

Did it ever cross your mind to take your children out of this school?

Pierre Attallah

Yes, that's an excellent question. My partner, their mother, wanted them in the school and was in favour of everything that was happening. And the school was favouring her testimony over my request.

Kyle Morgan

Now, just to get the timeline here. You said that you issued a notice of liability to the school staff. Do you know when that was?

Pierre Attallah

I gave them a couple, that would have been around December 2020, or 2021.

Kyle Morgan

Okay. And then they gave you a trespassing notice. When was that?

Pierre Attallah

That was shortly after I delivered the paperwork: the notice of liability and the affidavit and all the court documents that I had in the letter.

Kyle Morgan

You mentioned before that you were working as the lunch supervisor, is that right?

Pierre Attallah

Yes.

Kyle Morgan

And that was a paid position?

Pierre Attallah

It was a paid position, yes.

Kyle Morgan

And what happened with that employment?

[00:10:00]

Pierre Attallah

Well, the principal called me and was demanding my vaccination status. And I told her that my vaccination status was protected and private and confidential. At which point she wanted to end the conversation. And I asked her, "You said that you were going to explain testing procedures." But she didn't want to do that. She just had a bit of a chuckle in her voice and said that it was basically over.

Kyle Morgan

Do you have an opinion on vaccines, in general?

Pierre Attallah

Well, my father, back in 1955, he developed a vaccine for hay fever while he was getting his PhD in biochemistry at the University of [inaudible 00:10:54]. Back in 2002, when he was still alive, there was a SARS outbreak. And they talked a lot about all these policies that were implemented in COVID. They were all talked about in 2002. They weren't implemented back then. But I had a conversation with my father at that time. And I see him

as the expert. And I can tell you what he told me. He told me that he studied viruses like this in the past, and they come and they go, and they come quickly. And I said, “Dad, you made a vaccine. Can they make a vaccine for this?” And he said, “Well, it usually comes and goes too quickly. By the time you made a vaccine, it’s already gone, so we don’t make vaccines for coronaviruses.”

Kyle Morgan

But you’re somebody that isn’t opposed to vaccines to begin with. Is that right?

Pierre Attallah

No, I’ve had all my vaccines my whole life and my kids prior to, they had received all. I was giving them vaccines as well.

Kyle Morgan

Can you describe any effects that your children might have to this day over the things that have happened?

Pierre Attallah

Yes. I mean, well, when they were not allowed to go to school, there was a major— I think, the age group of six-, seven-, eight-year-old children, as a whole, I mean, for my kids, I noticed it for my kids. But being taken out of the school system, it was very detrimental to their education. There was a major delay to their education as a result of that because it wasn’t really possible to do the— The learning at home wasn’t working. It was very infrequent, very short intervals of a video with a teacher. It just didn’t make any sense.

Kyle Morgan

Looking back at everything that’s happened, what do you think would have been better?

Pierre Attallah

Well, one of the things I noticed when the public officials, the politicians were speaking, they would always start their statements with “We believe,” “We believe,” and “We believe in science.” And my dad taught me that there’s no belief in science. Science needs to be understood, not believed.

Kyle Morgan

Are there any other effects that you’ve experienced, did you want to mention? Or I can open it up to the commissioners if they have any questions.

Pierre Attallah

I’ll take questions from the commissioners.

Kyle Morgan

Okay. Did anyone have any questions? I think those are all the questions I had for you.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Did the teachers at any point feel that they were bullying your children?

Pierre Attallah

Well, I can't speak to how they felt about doing it. But the school division seems to be hiring people that don't question that. I think if you're the kind of person that has a conscience, I think they limit it. Those people were pulled out of the system, and all that you are left with is these Marxist people that will do whatever they're told to do. Like in the instance of the EA who was told to target my son, I don't think— I'm not sure what their thought process is, but that's the type of people that they're putting in there.

I can also say that from the school system, I was completely disconnected from my children's education. I wasn't able to see the work they were doing. I wasn't able to speak to their teachers. And it escalated. It escalated. It was almost like gaslighting where they felt that the measures they took weren't strong enough. So after the trespass order came into effect, they said, "Well, now you can't speak to the schoolteachers." Later, it was, "Now you can't even email them." "Stop emailing them." "Don't say hi to them." It was complete escalation to the point where I was completely cut off.

And it affects, still today.

[00:15:00]

These things are still going on. And it affects my children's education and their ability to get the most out of their education. Because if I want to see some of their work that they worked on, it might take me two weeks of communication going through the principal just to get maybe an assignment that they worked on a few weeks ago. I don't agree with a lot of the things the school divisions are doing. They hold back all the student work for the entire year and give you an incomplete assignment bundle in June, on the last day, right before the teacher leaves, so you don't have a chance to ask questions. It's pretty ridiculous what's going on in the school system today. I applaud the people who are homeschooling. And that's my intention, is to move towards homeschooling for me and my kids.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

I was just also wondering about the schoolboard level. Have you checked out the policies? Because they receive public funds, so I'm just wondering how they could say that you're not allowed to have access to the school or to your children's records if they're accepting public funds.

Pierre Attallah

That's a very good question. In the no trespass letters, they do not provide a reason. It's completely arbitrary, which is a violation of the Charter of Rights. However, this school division, the St. James-Assiniboia School Division, their superintendent is the Chair of Mass.mb.ca, which stands for Manitoba Association of School Superintendents. They pledge their allegiance to global corporations, not to Canadians, not to Canadian citizenship. They call it global citizenship. Global citizenship does not include the *Canadian Charter of Rights [and] Freedoms*, Bill of Rights, any of that. It's a complete betrayal of being Canadian.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Thank you.

Kyle Morgan

I don't know if there's any other questions. Thank you very much, Mr. Attallah, for your testimony.

Pierre Attallah

Thank you for having me.

[00:17:16]

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The evidence offered in this transcript is a true and faithful record of witness testimony given during the National Citizens Inquiry (NCI) hearings. The transcript was prepared by members of a team of volunteers using an "intelligent verbatim" transcription method.

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