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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Brevard County Teacher Faces Non-Renewal After Using Student's Preferred Name**

**Satellite Beach, FL:** Ms. Calhoun, a highly respected educator at Satellite High School, is being punished for doing what great teachers do every day: respecting her students. ***Her contract is not being renewed because she called a student by their preferred name.*** This is the reason she was reprimanded, and it's the reason she's now at risk of losing her job. By choosing to affirm a student's identity, Ms. Calhoun upheld the core values of inclusivity and respect that every learning environment should foster. For this, she is being forced out of a profession to which she has dedicated her life, with parents even calling for her teaching license to be revoked.

*"I have nothing but the utmost respect for Mrs. Calhoun and can proudly say that she has helped me arrive at where I am today. She even wrote me a recommendation letter for college applications, which helped me in my pursuit of undergraduate education. I believe teachers willing to help students in their educational journey beyond the classroom are invaluable, and I would be sad to see students robbed of such an amazing educator over something so trivial." - Charley Kennedy, 19, student*

Ms. Calhoun is more than just a teacher. She is a product of Brevard County schools, a role model within the Satellite High School community, and a trusted mentor to countless students. Her departure would be a significant loss to this district and a setback for any progress toward building safe and inclusive schools; the Brevard community supports this sentiment as a petition has reached over [4,871 signatures](#).

*"There were only a handful of teachers in my high school career who I felt took the time to know me and really cared about my academic and personal success. Mrs. Calhoun was one of these teachers. Melissa Calhoun is a woman whose passion for teaching is obvious. I had the privilege to be her student twice, and I can say with confidence she is an outstanding teacher. Don't fire a good teacher for respecting her students." - Erin Waggoner, 19, Student*

Ms. Calhoun's case is not just a local matter; it's part of a much larger national crisis in education. The question we must ask ourselves is simple: ***Do we want classrooms where students feel respected and seen or ones where teachers are afraid to acknowledge their humanity?***

We are calling on the Brevard County School Board to reverse this decision and renew Ms. Calhoun's contract. This moment is about more than policy. It's about standing up for students, supporting educators, and preserving the moral backbone of our public schools. Ms. Calhoun stood up for her student. Now it's time for us to stand up for her. ###