

Good afternoon. As you all have heard me say many, many times, I took this job because I wanted to help the children of the county where I grew up. I was that poor kid – the one who was homeless, in foster care, needed to see a dentist, needed mental health assistance, etc. – like the kids the Trust was established to serve. I have done the best I could to build this organization. When I got here, we had no policies in place, no staff, no office, not even a tax exemption certificate to buy a laptop. I'm grateful to the Appleyard Agency for allowing me to camp in their offices and for helping to get me up and running. I am proud of what I have accomplished.

This job is unbelievably political. I knew it would be: Pensacola is indeed a small town. However, my leadership is now being questioned, and my 37-year stellar career is getting a stain on it that cannot be erased. Perhaps I am not the best fit. My best is not good enough.

This is the hardest letter I've ever written in my career. I love this work. I love the Escambia Children's Trust. I adore you each as individuals. But I hate that there is constant chaos when powerful people in the community don't like the way things go. I did what I thought the Board wanted. I told people about the Trust and what we can do ... giving examples of what other CSCs/Trusts have done. I see now that I should have spent the last 18 months in my office, not in the community. For that and all the drama I have caused, I apologize. I am sorry that getting all the funding out into the community and engaging new grassroots organizations in our system was not enough. I'm sorry that the media latched on to the confusion that is inherent in starting a new organization rather than the great work that the Trust is doing. Hopefully, I've at least put together a wonderful, talented team who will continue to do great work and make you all proud. I also hope that the next executive director makes you proud. Clearly, I have not. So please accept this email as my official 60 days' notice pursuant to my contract, with my last day being October 15, 2023. I will continue to work hard and do my best, which is all I can do. I am looking for a new job and hope that I find a better fit and that my departure allows the Board to find an executive director whom you trust to run the agency.

Thank you for the opportunity to try to build something great here. I wish you each all the best.

Warm regards,
Tammy