

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

Case No.: 01-2024-CF-000917

vs.

Division: 1

RYAN MICHAEL CLEMENS,

Defendant.

_____ /

MOTION TO MODIFY PRETRIAL RELEASE

COMES NOW, Defendant, RYAN MICHAEL CLEMENS, through undersigned counsel, and respectfully requests this Honorable Court modify the terms of his pretrial release in the following fashion only: to allow him unsupervised contact with his own children, E.C. (5 years old) and K.C. (12).

AS GROUNDS for this Motion, counsel would show:

1. On March 14, 2024, Mr. Clemens, the former assistant principal at St. Patrick's Interparish School, was arrested by law enforcement on allegations of tampering with evidence and child neglect without causing great bodily harm. At first appearance, the Court entered an order allowing only supervised contact with minors under 18 years of age.
2. No formal charges have been filed as of the date of this writing.
3. Mr. Clemens has no prior arrests or convictions, nor has he ever before been accused of harming or endangering a child. He holds both a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership.

4. He is married to Rachel Clemens, a 5th grade teacher. They and their minor children, E.C., 5 years of age, and K.C., 12, reside together here in Gainesville.

5. The Court's order allowing only supervised contact with minors under 18 years of age, without an exception for their own two minor children, causes unnecessary inconvenience for all concerned.

6. Rachel Clemens joins her husband in this request, and would show that the order is not necessary for the protection of their children.

7. Mr. Clemens is truly humbled to have so many stand up for his character during this challenging time. Below are some excerpts pulled from the letters received:

My experience with Ryan was very positive and pleasant. He was one of the few St. Patrick's Interparish School staff I would entrust with my son's well-being and care. In these past four and a half years, I have witnessed him have integrity and practice the values of a great educator. He is caring and fair, he is understanding and stern, and he is willing to listen and ask for direction when needed. I will forever be grateful to Ryan, I do not know that my son would be here today had it not been, in part, for his guidance and caring nature. I am thankful he was my son's teacher; my son, two years after leaving St. Patrick's Interparish School, continues to speak highly of Coach Ryan. I appreciate your time in reading my experiences. Ryan's kindness and character are in part why my son was able to graduate from St. Patrick's Interparish School and is flourishing after his turbulent end in St. Patrick's Interparish School.

* * *

My youngest son had Mr. Clemens as his Physical Education Teacher and described him as fun, caring and kind. He also trusted and confided in Mr. Clemens when faced with bullying. As a parent, I have always felt that Mr. Clemens genuinely cares not only about the well-being of all the students but of the school as a whole.

Additionally, I have had the personal experience of having Mr. Clemens' youngest daughter in the classroom in which I work. Mr. Clemens has consistently shown himself to be a loving and dedicated father and is actively involved in her life.

* * *

Through these 20 something years of having Ryan in our lives I do not remember one time he did not put others before him, never speaking ill of anyone. Ryan Clemens is very compassionate, a wonderful listener. His tenderness, kindness and supportiveness of others makes him the gentleman he is today.

* * *

In closing, I would reiterate that Mr. Ryan Clemens has been an outstanding Coach, Educator, and Assistant Principal at St. Patrick Interparish School. My family and I have witnessed firsthand how Mr. Clemens works with students because we have seen him coach and educate our very own children. Mr. Clemens cares for and respects students while upholding a vision for their education that I wish was more prevalent in our educational system. He is a devoted professional who goes out of his way to promote, respect, and elevate his students.

* * *

I am the father to four boys, and they call Ryan Uncle RyRy. They look forward to his visits, and Ryan always spends time with them. He buys them gifts and spoils them with his time and money. He made it to the hospital after every birth when he was close or came to visit as soon as possible when we lived far away. Ryan cares for my children like they are his own.

Ryan's warmth and compassion extend beyond his encounters with children; he treats everyone with dignity and respect. Ryan addresses every conversation with empathy and compassion, whether with colleagues, friends, or strangers. He listens intently, offering support and encouragement as required. Ryan believes in every person's inherent worth, and his actions reflect this view, as he regularly shows care and consideration for people around him.

* * *

Before he was married and with kids of his own. There was never a weekend when he was not spending time with his nephew to help guide and provide good fun but also incredible dedication to what family and character looks like. As for what I would want for my son to grow up and be like, Ryan has to be near the top of my list when it comes to his passion for helping, outstanding character and empathy to try and see the good in this world. I hope you understand that it is not a hyperbole when I say that Mr. Clemens is one of the most honest and upstanding individuals I have ever encountered in my time on this earth.

* * *

But probably my most significant memory of Ryan was when I came back to Gainesville after the Air Force in 2011. I was diagnosed with some conditions and while waiting for my next surgery, was pretty much bed ridden. It was the lowest point of my life. And then after 14 years of friendship, our core group of friends collectively decided that I was faking and all stopped speaking to me at once. All but Ryan. Because while they all were judging a situation they hadn't actually seen in person, Ryan showed up. He came and listened, he hugged me as I cried, and understood the toll the illness had taken on me and all my relationships. My parents will forever remember when he showed up to go to the Gator game with us after I was heartbroken over my friendships and weak from my condition. The compassion and loyalty he showed me in those moments changed me and are a testament to the wonderful person he is.

* * *

My name is Mike Vick. I am a 71 year old retired potato farmer/tree grower, certified dog trainer, a native of South Florida, and a U.S. Army veteran.

I have known Ryan for about 11 years since he became my son-in-law. I was first impressed by Ryan's character when he came to me and asked for my permission to marry my daughter...something that's a bit unusual these days, and through the years, he has shown me many times what a wonderful man he truly is. I have seen his kindness, compassion, and patience many times with his family and those around him. And even his father-in-law! He has always been very kind and respectful to me. I remember once when he was trying to explain something to me and I just wasn't getting it. The more impatient I became with myself, the more patient he became with me, and that impressed me. You can't fake that kind of stuff. At least not for long, and Ryan has always been that way. That's just the kind of guy he is, and when I got to know his family, I knew why he is the man he is. He comes from a wonderful close-knit family and was raised by a mother who clearly taught him not only how to treat his wife and children, but how to treat everyone he meets, and he learned his lessons well.

Ryan has always worked very hard and sacrificed whatever he needed to in order to take care of his family, recently earning his masters degree. His devotion to them is pure. I am so thankful that he is such a wonderful father for my granddaughters and a wonderful husband for my daughter. I never worry about them. I have always described Ryan as "the guy that every daddy wants his little girl to marry." He is a quality individual. A man of honor and integrity. A man of patience and kindness. I am proud of Ryan, and I am proud to call him family.

* * *

His care for each student was impressive, and I soon realized that the students saw that they could rely on him for any need they had. His interactions and counsel with them straightened out whatever their issue was and got them back on track at their own best level. Whenever I encountered a behavior problem that I felt was beyond my experience in the classroom, it was Ryan that I'd call for, and he would reliably solve the issue. He had one goal, in my mind, to be present for each student and teacher, for whatever might arise, to assist in such a way as to return things gone wrong into a more positive direction. And he did it very well. A true professional with a good heart.

8. The Office of the State Attorney is opposed to this motion.

WHEREFORE, Defendant, RYAN MICHAEL CLEMENS, respectfully requests this Honorable Court modify the terms of his pretrial release in the following fashion only: that he may have unsupervised contact with his own children, E.C. (5 years old) and K.C. (12).

HUTSON LAW FIRM, P.A.

/s/ Bennett A. Hutson
Bennett A. Hutson
Florida Bar No. 12025
2750 N.W. 43rd Street, Suite 102
Gainesville, FL 32606
eservice@rightatyourside.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I filed and served the foregoing through the Florida Courts E-Filing Portal, which will serve a copy to all counsel of record.

/s/ Bennett A. Hutson