

Dear usmnews.net

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Shortly after Martha Saunders "resigned" as President of Southern Miss, you ran a letter to the editor that seems to have predicted what has happened with Saunders. Apparently, less than six months after claiming exhaustion and "resigning" from her position as president, she is now refreshed and looking to move on. Would you run that letter again for your readers from the University of West Florida?

Name withheld

Dear usmnews.net (May 1, 2012)

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Here is an example of why I believe Saunders was fired. Presidents are fired via the resignation process. They serve at the pleasure of the Board. She was recently granted a multi-year [contract extension](#). So, like a colleague who was once President at another university, they gave her [Saunders] a payout. They gave my friend close to \$200,000 to serve as a consultant, but he did not do anything. It was hush money. I suspect Saunders may have received around the same amount to teach one class, a made up title, and will serve as a consultant, but they want her to just stay away. So, she will take the money and run. She went a long way with southern charm; but in the end her bad judgment and lack of administrative skills caught up with her. However, if she frames it right, Auntie Saunders may rise again. Don't count her out yet. There are plenty of low level colleges where she could rise again.

Here is a recent example from Wisconsin.

[President Resigns](#)

The widely held view was that ex-Chancellor Bunnell screwed up the campus; so the System President met with her. A few days later she announced her "resignation". Like Saunders she issued the following statement:

"We can all be proud of our university's many accomplishments in recent years," Bunnell said in a prepared statement. "UW-Stevens Point is now ready and poised to proceed to the next level."

Bunnell resigned on April 23 with an effective date of May 31 -- almost the same length of time as Saunders.

You can usually tell if an administrator has been forced out based on the length of time between resignation and departure. You do not want a discontented and unhappy administrators hanging around with signatory power. Saunders and another unhappy

administrator could cause millions of dollars in damages and countless legal problems for the institution. So you get them out fast. I suspect that Saunders is lame duck now and that pending the date of her announcement all major decisions must be approved by the Board.

Name withheld