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U.S. DISTRICT COURT
N.D. OF ALABAMA

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ALABAMA
SOUTHERN DIVISION

LEE WILLIAMSON, *et al.*, Plaintiffs, v. HERITAGE PRESCHOOLS, LLC, *et al.*, Defendants.	)	Case No. 2:24-cv-00139-SGC

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER[1]

The defendants, Heritage Preschools, LLC, and Heritage Preschools of Homewood, LLC (collectively, "Heritage"), have moved to dismiss the complaint filed by the plaintiffs, Lee Williamson and Dr. Aletta Williamson, on behalf of themselves and as next friends of their minor child J.W. (the "Child") (collectively, the "Williamsons"). (Docs. 13-14).[2] Heritage's motion is fully briefed and ripe for adjudication. (Docs. 13, 14, 21, 24). For the reasons to follow, Heritage's motion will be denied.

[1] The parties have unanimously consented to magistrate judge jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c). (Doc. 25).

[2] Citations to the record refer to the document and page numbers assigned by the court's CM/ECF electronic document system and appear in the following format: (Doc. __ at __).

I. Allegations of the Complaint[3]

In 2021, the Williamsons enrolled the Child, who is biracial and African American, at Heritage, a private Christian preschool system in Alabama. (Doc. 1 at 2). The Williamsons contracted with Heritage for the Child to attend the Homewood preschool. (*Id.* at 4). Their older son had attended Heritage and graduated from Heritage in 2019. (*Id.* at 10).

The Child was two months old when he enrolled at Heritage. (*Id.* at 10). He was initially assigned to an infant class, and within a year and a half, he was promoted four times. (*Id.*). In May 2023, when the Child reached two years of age, Heritage promoted him to the Toddlers B classroom, led by Caroline Harmon, who is white. (*Id.* at 2, 10, 11). During May and June 2023, the Child was the only African American child in Harmon's class. (*Id.* at 11). In July 2023, another African American child joined Harmon's class. (*Id.*).

Before his promotion to Harmon's class, the Child rarely was disciplined at Heritage. (*Id.* at 2). After he joined Harmon's class, Harmon began writing "behavior reports" detailing the Child's misbehavior. (*Id.*). In one three-week period, the parents received about 30 reports of the Child's misbehavior. (*Id.* at 11). These reports—all or most of which were written by Harmon, in her presence,

[3] Because this is a motion to dismiss, the court accepts as true the following allegations contained in the Williamsons' complaint. *See Butler v. Sheriff of Palm Beach Cnty.*, 685 F.3d 1261, 1265 (11th Cir. 2012).

or at her direction—singled out the Child for ordinary toddler behavior such as hiding under desks, not staying in line, and not remaining on a cot during naptime. Other, non-African American children in Harmon's class also exhibited these behaviors, such as sitting under a desk, but Harmon did not report those children. (*Id.* at 3, 12). Harmon would also discipline the Child by putting him in time outs and excluding him from class time, but she did not discipline the non-African American children who engaged in similar behavior. (*Id.* at 12). Some of the reports involved more serious behavior, such as hitting others, that the Williamsons had never witnessed at home and the Child's prior teachers had never reported. (*Id.*). However, on days when another teacher substituted for Harmon, the Williamsons rarely received a disciplinary report about the Child. (*Id.*).

On one occasion, Dr. Williamson visited Harmon's class and saw a white student hit the Child. (*Id.* at 13). Even though Harmon routinely disciplined the Child for hitting, Harmon did not discipline the white child for this incident. (*Id.*). When Dr. Williamson discussed this issue with Harmon, Dr. Williamson advised Harmon she intended to have the Child evaluated for autism; Harmon dismissed these concerns and stated the Child was not autistic. (*Id.*). Dr. Williamson then raised her concerns about the excessive discipline and potential autism with Heritage's Homewood Director, Alexis Neal. (*Id.*). Neal told Dr. Williamson that

other autistic children attended Heritage and an autism diagnosis would not prevent the Child's continued enrollment at Heritage. (*Id.* at 14).

Harmon told her assistant teacher, who is African American, that if the Child received enough disciplinary reports, Heritage would disenroll him. (*Id.* at 13). Harmon made clear to the assistant that she wished the Child were not in the class and pressured the assistant to discipline the Child for behavior the assistant did not believe warranted discipline. (*Id.*). When Harmon would challenge the assistant's failure to "write up" the Child, the assistant explained the Child had not acted differently than the other students in the class. (*Id.*). The assistant was troubled by Harmon's discipline of the Child when other students were not disciplined for similar conduct. (*Id.*). The assistant informed the Williamsons about the discriminatory discipline, explaining that the Child did not behave worse than the other students in Harmon's class but Harmon disciplined the Child more frequently. (*Id.*). She warned the Williamsons to be careful, however, because Harmon "had gotten an African American teacher fired from Heritage the previous year." (*Id.* at 15).

The Williamsons met with Heritage administrators to discuss the situation. (*Id.*). They requested video footage of the classroom, so they could see the Child's behavior; Heritage would not allow them to see the recordings. (*Id.*). Heritage also refused the Williamsons' request for an occupational therapist to evaluate the Child

in the classroom and for the Child to transfer to another class. (*Id.*). Instead, the administrators stated it was their job to keep teachers and students safe; the Williamsons understood this statement to mean Heritage viewed their two-year-old son as a safety threat to an adult, invoking a stereotype of African American boys as dangerous. (*Id.*). The administrators then placed the Child on preschool probation: Heritage would instruct Harmon to monitor the Child's behavior for four weeks, after which Heritage would decide whether the Child could remain at the school. (*Id.* at 16).

During the probationary period, Harmon continued to discipline the Child for behavior for which she did not discipline the non-African American children. (*Id.*). Harmon also pressured the assistant teacher to discipline the Child when administrators were present in the classroom. (*Id.*). The assistant told the administrators, who would also ask about whether the assistant had reported the Child, that the Child was not a problem in the classroom. (*Id.* at 17). On July 19, 2023, the Child was diagnosed with a mild form of autism. (*Id.*).

At the end of the probationary period on July 28, 2023, Heritage informed the Williamsons the Child would be removed from the school because his behavior had not improved. (*Id.*). Heritage initially told the Williamsons they had two weeks to find alternative care, but when the Williamsons complained of discrimination and threatened legal action, Heritage expelled the Child from the school that same

day. (*Id.* at 17-18). Eventually, the Williamsons secured other daycare arrangements for the Child; as of the filing of the complaint, the Child had no disciplinary issues at his new school. (*Id.* at 19).

Most of Heritage's students are white. (*Id.* at 7). For years, Heritage has disciplined African American children for engaging in certain behaviors, but it does not discipline non-African American children that engage in those same behaviors. (*Id.* at 2). Heritage knows about this discriminatory discipline but allows it to continue. (*Id.*).

Another African American child, Doe, had a similar experience at Heritage's Ross Bridge location. (*Id.* at 7). After two-year-old Doe enrolled in 2018, he received multiple disciplinary reports detailing his allegedly poor behavior. (*Id.*). His mother was surprised by these reports because she had never witnessed or heard of Doe engaging in similar behavior. (*Id.* at 8). The reports about Doe also labeled him as "aggressive." (*Id.*). When Doe's mother visited his classroom to discuss the situation with Doe's teacher, she saw two of Doe's white classmates fighting, but Doe's teacher dismissed their behavior as "just roughhousing." (*Id.*). She complained to administrators that Doe's teacher was treating her son differently because of his race, but they ignored her complaints. (*Id.*).

In January 2023, a Birmingham-area CBS affiliate published a report concerning discriminatory discipline at Heritage. (*Id.* at 9). In that article, Briana

Merriweather detailed the issues her African American son experienced when he attended Heritage's Ross Bridge location. (*Id.*). Heritage administrators accused Merriweather's son of calling a teacher by an inappropriate name; Merriweather asked to review the video footage; although the administrators initially agreed, they then backtracked and told her it would be better for Heritage to end its relationship with her family. (*Id.*).

Before the Child joined Harmon's class, the Williamsons recommended that another member of the community, Ms. Roe, enroll her African American son at Heritage. (*Id.*). Roe did so, but she experienced issues similar to Merriweather, receiving multiple disciplinary reports for behavior that non-African American children engaged in without consequence. (*Id.* at 10).

The Williamsons filed this case on February 6, 2024, asserting three causes of action under 42 U.S.C. § 1981: (1) racially discriminatory contractual termination, (2) racially discriminatory interference with contractual performance, and (3) retaliation. (Doc. 1). On March 25, 2024, Heritage moved to dismiss the complaint. (Docs. 13-14). The motion is fully briefed and ripe for adjudication. (Docs. 13, 14, 21, 24).

II. Standard of Review

Under Rule 12(b)(6), a district court should dismiss a complaint for failing to state a claim upon which relief can be granted "only when the plaintiff's factual

allegations, if true, don't 'allow[] the court to draw the reasonable inference that the defendant is liable for the misconduct alleged.'" *Ziyadat v. Diamondrock Hosp. Co.*, 3 F.4th 1291, 1295 (11th Cir. 2021) (quoting *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009)). When determining whether the allegations of the complaint meet this standard, the court must "view the complaint in the light most favorable to the plaintiff and accept all [his] well-pleaded facts as true." *Id.* (quoting *Am. United Life Ins. Co. v. Martinez*, 480 F.3d 1043, 1057 (11th Cir. 2007)).

III. Analysis

Heritage asserts that the allegations of the Williamsons' complaint are stated "in such a conclusory fashion that all [sic] they fail to support their allegations of intentional racial discrimination and bring the assertion beyond the mere speculative to the 'plausible,'" thereby failing to state a claim upon which relief can be granted. (Doc. 14 at 10). More specifically, they argue the Williamsons allegations fail because (1) they do not identify a specific comparator, (2) their "Me Too" predecessor evidence is irrelevant, inadmissible, and does not support their claims, (3) the allegation that they did not witness troubling behavior at home does not support their claims under § 1981; and (4) the Williamsons did not sufficiently allege facts to support their § 1981 retaliation claim.

A. Specific Comparator

42 U.S.C. § 1981 prohibits racial discrimination in the making, performance, modification, and termination of contracts and the enjoyment of all benefits, privileges, terms, and conditions of the contractual relationship. To state a § 1981 claim, the Williamsons must allege (1) intentional racial discrimination (2) that caused a contractual injury. *See Ziyadat*, 3 F.4th at 1296. They may prove their claim with either direct or circumstantial evidence. *See id.* Here, the Williamsons do not allege direct discrimination, which would require allegations that Heritage overtly invoked race by, for example, the use of a racial slur or racially charged language. *See id.* Instead, their complaint rests on circumstantial evidence of discrimination.

To demonstrate circumstantial racial discrimination, the Williamsons may proceed under the *McDonnell Douglas* framework, originally used in Title VII claims. *See id.* (citing *Lewis v. City of Union City, Georgia*, 918 F.3d 1213, 1220 n.5 (11th Cir. 2019)); *Berry v. Crestwood Healthcare LP*, 84 F.4th 1300, 1307 (11th Cir. 2023). Relevant here, one of the elements of a prima facie case under the *McDonnell Douglas* framework requires the Williamsons to "point to comparators of a different race who were 'similarly situated in all material respects' and were not subject to the same mistreatment." *See id.* (quoting *Lewis*, 918 F.3d at 1229).

Heritage argues the Williamsons have not alleged proper comparators to support their discrimination claims because their comparators are an "amorphous 'group,'" which the Eleventh Circuit found insufficient in *Arafat v. School Board of Broward County*, 549 F. App'x 872, 875 (11th Cir. 2013). There, the court held that a generic reference to "younger males" did not identify valid comparators. *Id.* at 874. That generic reference, however, is much different than the comparators the Williamsons identify here – the Child's non-African American classmates who Harmon did not discipline even though they engaged in the same conduct as the Child. While Heritage takes issue with what they term "some nondescript collective of 'non-African American' others' for unspecified but supposedly sufficiently comparable conduct" a fair reading of the complaint shows the Williamsons' comparators are the Child's classmates in May, June, and July 2023. (Doc. 14 at 11). Given that this is a single preschool class of two-year-old children, the court is satisfied this group is sufficiently narrow and identifiable rather than some "nondescript collective of others."

This conclusion is supported by *Ziyadat*, in which the Arab plaintiff alleged one of the hotel's employees falsely accused him of engaging in inappropriate behavior at the hotel pool because of an animus toward Arabs, leading to the plaintiff's eviction from the hotel. *Ziyadat*, 3 F.4th at 1298. In reversing the district court's dismissal for failure to state a claim under § 1981, the Eleventh Circuit

found the plaintiff adequately alleged he was treated differently from comparators similarly situated to him in all material respects. *Id.* at 1296. The plaintiff alleged he and his fiancé were hotel guests, sat by the pool, and behaved appropriately; other, non-Arab guests sat by the pool and acted similarly; and the employee singled out the plaintiff and his fiancé, fabricated a story about them, and caused their eviction. *Id.* at 1297.

The Williamsons' allegations mirror those in *Ziyadat*. They assert the Child engaged in typical two-year-old behavior, as did his white classmates, but Harmon singled the Child out for punishment based on his race. Further, while they do not name the minor child, the Williamsons specifically allege both (1) Dr. Williamson witnessed a white child hit the Child without repercussion, and (2) the assistant teacher witnessed the white children in Harmon's class engage in the same behavior as the Child without suffering the consequences the Child suffered. As in *Ziyadat*, the Williamsons have sufficiently identified comparators to maintain their claim of race discrimination.

Heritage next complains that the Williamsons generically assert the non-African American children in Harmon's class engaged in the same behavior without consequence. According to Heritage, "circumstances and context matter"; sometimes children hitting other children is a problem, but other times it is not. (Doc. 14 at 13-14). Heritage believes the Williamsons' complaint must specifically

detail the surrounding circumstances and context of how, when, and why the Child's classmates hit each other to survive a motion to dismiss because otherwise, the court must engage in speculation about why the Child's classmates were disciplined differently.

Heritage appears to concede that the Child's classmates also engaged in hitting, yet it asks this court, in the context of a motion to dismiss, to consider potential differentiating circumstances and context—information not included in the complaint and, while perhaps knowable now to Heritage, knowable to the Williamsons and this court only after discovery. The complaint contains no allegations to support Heritage's suggestion that Harmon fairly and consistently distinguished between permissible and prohibited toddler-on-toddler hitting when issuing discipline. The Williamsons must only allege that "discriminatory animus caused" their injury, and they are not required "to conclusively rebut other possibilities." *Ziyadat*, 3 F.4th at 1298. Here, the Williamsons contend that at least some of the Child's classmates engaged in similar behavior to the Child's without consequence, and these allegations are sufficient to proceed.

Further, the Williamsons contend they are pursuing a "convincing mosaic" theory, which does not require specific comparators. (Doc. 21 at 8). The Williamsons may show a "convincing mosaic" by circumstantial evidence demonstrating, among other things, "(1) suspicious timing, ambiguous statements,

or other information from which discriminatory intent may be inferred, (2) 'systematically better treatment of similarly situated [persons],' and (3) pretext. *Jenkins v. Nell*, 26 F.4th 1243, 1250 (11th Cir. 2022) (quoting *Lewis*, 934 F.3d at 1185).

Here, the Williamsons' "convincing mosaic" includes allegations that (1) the Child's white classmates were systematically treated better than the Child; (2) the Child was repeatedly disciplined for conduct his white classmates engaged in without consequence; (3) Dr. Williamson witnessed a white student hit the Child without incurring discipline; (4) Harmon consistently wrote up the Child for normal toddler behavior, such as having trouble standing in line, but did not write up the white children for similar behavior; (5) the assistant teacher told the Williamsons the Child was not behaving worse than the white children, but Harmon disciplined the Child more; (6) the Child had no behavior issues until he was moved to Harmon's class, and he has had no disciplinary issues since leaving her class; (7) Heritage's statements that the Child was a threat to teachers was pretextual because he was engaged in normal toddler behavior; and (8) at least three other African American boys at various Heritage preschools have been similarly punished for behavior their white counterparts engaged in without consequence. The court is satisfied the Williamsons' complaint contains sufficient

allegations to proceed under either the *McDonnell Douglas* framework or a convincing mosaic theory.

B. "Me Too" Predecessor Evidence

For allegations of discrimination, the Eleventh Circuit permits evidence of prior incidents of discrimination—"Me Too" evidence—to show the defendant's racially discriminatory motive, intent, or plan. *See Goldsmith v. Bagby Elevator Co.*, 513 F.3d 1261, 1286 (11th Cir. 2008). Despite this, Heritage argues the Me Too allegations are irrelevant, inadmissible hearsay and otherwise do not support the Williamsons' claims. It argues the evidence is irrelevant because these actions occurred at other branches of its school and here, Harmon is Heritage's "cat's paw," so incidents at other locations have no bearing on Harmon's behavior. (Doc. 14 at 17). The Williamsons assert the Me Too evidence demonstrates Heritage is aware of its staff engaging in a pattern of discriminatory discipline against its African American students and thus Heritage knew, or should have known, about a pattern of discrimination within all its schools.

While Heritage argues the Me Too evidence is too attenuated to support the Williamsons' claims, the court has already explained the Williamsons have alleged facts sufficient to pursue a race discrimination claim under either the *McDonnell Douglas* or convincing mosaic frameworks. As the Williamsons observe, the cases Heritage cites involve motions for summary judgment and pretrial motions in

limine. (Doc. 21 at 8). In response, Heritage cites *Green v. Savage of Georgia, LLC*, in which the district court dismissed a race discrimination claim. 2015 WL 5120241 (M.D. Ga. Aug. 27, 2015). There, the court found the Me Too evidence insufficient because the plaintiff neither identified specific examples of disparate treatment nor "allege[d] specific facts connecting the prior acts of alleged discrimination against African Americans to his [] claim for race discrimination." *Id.* at *3. Here, however, the Williamsons provide specific details of at least two other situations in which they allege Heritage discriminated against African American students based on race. The Williamsons also cite several cases in which the Eleventh Circuit considered allegations that others in the protected class suffered discrimination by the same defendant. *See, e.g., Jenkins*, 26 F.4th at 1250–51; *Smith v. Lockheed-Martin Corp.*, 644 F.3d 1321, 1341 (11th Cir. 2011); *Goldsmith*, 513 F.3d at 1286. Accordingly, the court is not persuaded that any potential deficiency with the Me Too allegations requires dismissal at this juncture.

C. The Child's Behavior at Home

Next, Heritage complains that the Williamsons' complaint includes allegations that while at home, they did not witness the Child engaging in the problematic behaviors Harmon reported. Heritage believes the Williamsons' failure to allege their home, or the Child's new school, is a context similar to Harmon's class means they have failed to rule out "obvious alternative

explanation[s]" as required by *Iqbal*. According to Heritage, it "can obviously be the case that Ms. Harmon is just simply stricter on her students than her coworkers and peers, regardless of the student's race." (Doc. 14 at 20).

Heritage cites the "obvious alternative explanation[s]" language from *Iqbal* wholly out of context. There, the Court examined whether a policy directing law enforcement to arrest and detain individuals suspected to be involved in the September 11, 2001 attacks unconstitutionally discriminated against Arab Muslims. The plaintiff was arrested pursuant to that policy, and he filed a lawsuit alleging he was designated a person of "high interest" because of his race, religion, or national origin. It came "as no surprise" that such a policy would have a disparate impact on Arab Muslims, even though the purpose of the policy was to target neither Arabs nor Muslims. *Id.* at 682. The Court held:

> On the facts respondent alleges the arrests Mueller oversaw were likely lawful and justified by his nondiscriminatory intent to detain aliens who were illegally present in the United States and who had potential connections to those who committed terrorist acts. As between that "obvious alternative explanation" for the arrests, *Twombly*, *supra*, at 567, 127 S.Ct. 1955, and the purposeful, invidious discrimination respondent asks us to infer, discrimination is not a plausible conclusion.

Id. at 682.

The facts at issue here—Harmon's specific discriminatory treatment of the Child—are wholly different from *Iqbal's* national detainment policy addressing the September 11 attacks. Further, while Heritage contends it "*can* obviously be the

case" that Harmon is simply stricter than other teachers, the court disagrees that it *must* obviously be the case—particularly given that Harmon permitted the Child's white classmates to hit without consequence but routinely disciplined the Child for identical behavior. (Doc. 14 at 20, emphasis added).

Heritage also insists that Harmon's class is a wholly different context from the Child's home, his prior Heritage classrooms, and his new school because those other situations did not require the Child to stand in line or contain desks under which he could hide. The Williamsons counter—and the court agrees—this argument requires the court to accept facts outside the complaint. It cannot do so on a motion to dismiss. Accordingly, the Williamsons' complaint does not require dismissal on this basis.

D. Retaliation

Finally, Heritage argues the Williamsons failed to state a claim for retaliation for four reasons. First, it argues the two-week grace period Heritage withdrew after the Williamsons stated they would pursue legal action is not a contract protected by § 1981. The Williamsons respond that the parties contracted to provide education and childcare, and Heritage terminated that contract prematurely once the Williamsons raised the possibility of legal action. Under the *McDonnell Douglas* framework, which also applies to retaliation claims, a plaintiff establishes a prima facie retaliation case by showing (1) he engaged in a protected

activity, such as reporting discrimination, (2) he suffered an adverse action, and (3) a causal connection between the protected activity and causal connection. *Crawford v. Carroll*, 529 F.3d 961, 970 (11th Cir. 2008). Retaliation under § 1981 "includes retaliation for a plaintiff's opposition to race discrimination, whether or not he personally is the victim of race discrimination." *Tucker v. Talladega City Sch.*, 171 F. App'x 289, 295 (11th Cir. 2006). Whether or not the two-week grace period was its own contract, Heritage and the Williamsons did contract for Heritage to provide childcare for the Williamsons, thereby bringing this case within the purview of § 1981. Heritage's subsequent offer, and then withdrawal, of the two-week grace period was an adverse action that was causally connected to the Williamsons' complaint of discrimination. In the absence of authority holding otherwise, the court is satisfied the Williamsons have sufficiently pleaded retaliation.

Second, Heritage claims the damages resulting from the withdrawal of the two-week period are *de minimis*. The Williamsons respond that this is a jury argument that does not prevent their claims from proceeding now. They cite *Alvarez v. Royal Atlantic Developers, Inc.*, in which the Eleventh Circuit held that a plaintiff who was fired sooner than she otherwise would have been established an adverse action for purposes of a retaliation claim. 610 F.3d 1253, 1268 (11th Cir. 2010). This was true even though there was "no doubt that plans were underway to

fire Alvarez even if she had not complained of discrimination as she did in her letter" and the letter could not have caused the decision to fire her. *Id.* The court held that the "loss of a salary for a period of months, weeks, or days is a 'materially adverse' action which 'well might have dissuaded a reasonable worker from making or supporting a charge of discrimination.'" *Id.* (quoting *Burlington N. & Santa Fe Ry. Co. v. White*, 548 U.S. 53, 68 (2006)). Similarly, the loss of childcare for a period of two weeks is sufficiently adverse to state a claim for relief.

Third, Heritage contends that even though the Williamsons allege Heritage immediately terminated the contract after they stated they would file a complaint against Heritage with the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Williamsons do not allege they specifically raised race discrimination with Heritage's administrators. The Williamsons counter that the complaint asserts they complained that Harmon targeted the Child and they threatened to report Heritage to the federal civil rights agency that investigates race discrimination in schools. They contend that when viewed in the light most favorable to them, this sufficiently notified Heritage they were complaining of racial discrimination. Filing a complaint with the Civil Rights Office is a protected activity, and it is adequately related to racial discrimination to survive Heritage's motion to dismiss.

Finally, Heritage argues that, for all the other reasons presented in its motion to dismiss, the Williamsons did not reasonably believe Heritage had violated the law. The Williamsons respond that a plaintiff can reasonably believe a defendant violated the law even if a court disagrees, citing *Little v. United Techs., Carrier Transicold Div.*, 103 F.3d 956, 960 (11th Cir. 1997). The Williamsons allege they observed Heritage treating white students more favorably than their similarly behaved son, the only African American in his class for most of the period at issue. They also claim the assistant teacher told them Harmon treated the Child differently than his classmates. For all the reasons stated above, the Williamsons have more than adequately alleged Heritage unlawfully discriminated against the Child because of his race, and the court rejects this argument.

IV. Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, Heritage's motion to dismiss is **DENIED**. (Doc. 13). The court previously granted the parties' request to stay the deadline to conduct a Rule 26 conference. (Docs. 27, 28). The parties are **REMINDED** the deadline to conduct the conference was extended to 14 days after issuance of this order.

DONE this 14th day of March, 2025.

Staci G. Cornelius

STACI G. CORNELIUS
U.S. MAGISTRATE JUDGE