

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

WORK SESSION
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2021
7:00 PM

MINUTES

Call to Order	President Theresa Lydon called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.
Pledge	The meeting opened with the pledge to the flag.
Attendance	Those present included: Mr. Cesario, Ms. Crowell, Mrs. Donahue, Ms. Evans, Mr. LaPorte, Ms. Lindsey, Mrs. Lydon, Mr. Raso and Ms. Shaw. Also present were Dr. William P. Stropkaj, Superintendent; Dr. Shannon Varley, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Staff Development; Mr. Joseph Kubiak, Director of Finance and Human Resources/Board Secretary; Mr. Michael Brungo, Solicitor and Mrs. Maureen S. Myers, Assistant Board Secretary/Recording Secretary were present.
Public Comment	<p>Dr. Stropkaj read aloud the public comment that was received from members of the community.</p> <p>Public Comment was submitted by Debbie Klein, Xavier, Ezekiel Daure, Kayla Ovesney, Jannifer Sakulsky, Christine Pasquale-Bain, John Wilson, David Hommrich, Erin Auses, Daysha Love, Chelsey LaQuatra, Danielle and Brian Prince, Jen Sakulsky, Karen Sikorski, Joe Hartnett, Bethany Hemingway, Paul O'Donnell and Vickie Bruce.</p> <p>Public Comment was also submitted live during the Work Session Meeting. Those who contributed to Public Comment were Bryan Gigliotti, Juline Babajanov, David Hommrich, Vickie Bruce, Philip Yamalis and Colleen Tortorella.</p>
Board President's Report	<p>BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Mrs. Theresa Lydon</p> <p>The following action items will be considered at the February 16, 2021 Business/Legislative Meeting:</p> <p><u>BOARD ACTION REQUESTED</u></p>
Board Minutes	<p>BOARD MINUTES</p> <p>It is recommended that the Board approve the Work Session Minutes of January 12, 2021 and the Business/Legislative Minutes of January 19, 2021.</p>
For Information Only	<p><u>FOR INFORMATION ONLY</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parkway West Career and Technology Center Report <i>Ms. Annie Shaw</i>

- SHASDA Report *Mr. Santo Raso*
- PSBA/Legislative Report *Mrs. Theresa Lydon*
- News from the Boroughs

Executive Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was held to receive legal advice on tax collections.

Superintendent’s Report

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – Dr. William P. Stropkaj

The following action items will be considered at the February 16, 2021 Business/Legislative Meeting:

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

Revisions to Calendar

REVISIONS TO THE 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

It is recommended that the Board approve the following changes to the 2020/2021 school year calendar:

- February 12, 2021 will be a full day of school for students
- February 15, 2021 will be a full day of school for students
- April 1, 2021 will be a full day of school for students
- April 2, 2021 will be an early dismissal for students
- April 5, 2021 will be a full day of school for students
- June 15, 2021 is the last day of school for students
- June 15, 2021 will be graduation
- June 15, 2021 will be the last day for teachers

Adoption 2021/2022 Calendar

ADOPTION OF THE 2021/2022 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

It is recommended that the Board approve the adopt the 2021/2022 school year calendar as presented by the Superintendent. (*Pages 5-6*)

Removal of Policies

REMOVAL OF POLICIES

It is recommended that the Board approval the removal of the following policies:

- Policy 314: *Physical Examination*
- Policy 414: *Physical Examination*
- Policy 418: *Penalties for Tardiness*
- Policy 514: *Penalties for Tardiness*
- Policy 518: *Physical Examination*

**KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

August 2021				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

September 2021				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

October 2021				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

November 2021				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

December 2021				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

January 2022				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

February 2022				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28				

March 2022				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

April 2022				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

May 2022				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

June 2022				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

July 2022				
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

- First & Last Student Day
- △ Early Dismissal(s) for Students
(Professional Development/Act 80 for Staff)
- ◇ Early Dismissal(s) for Students
- Professional Development and/or Clerical
- Holiday Dates – No School
- Kennywood Picnic

**KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

STUDENT / TEACHER DAYS				
		<u>Month</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
August 25, 26	Professional Development			
August 27	Clerical			
August 30	First Day for Students	August	2	5
September 6	Labor Day (No School)	September	21	21
		October	21	21
November 1	Professional Development/Conferences			
November 2	Professional Development/Clerical			
November 25 - 29	Thanksgiving Vacation (No School)	November	17	19
December 24-31	Winter Recess (No School)	December	17	17
January 17	Martin Luther King Day (No School)			
January 21	Clerical	January	19	20
February 21	Presidents' Day (No School)	February	19	19
March 31	Professional Development	March	22	23
April 1	Professional Development/Clerical			
April 14 - 18	Spring Break	April	17	18
May 17	Professional Development			
May 30	Memorial Day (No School)	May	20	21
June 9	Last Day for Students			
June 10	Graduation			
June 10	Last Day for Teachers; Clerical	June	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
			182	192

FACULTY DAYS

August 25, 26	Professional Development
August 27	Clerical
November 1	Parent Conferences/Professional Development
November 2	Professional Development/Clerical
January 21	Clerical
March 31	Professional Development
April 1	Professional Development/Clerical
May 17	Professional Development
June 10	Clerical

PARAPROFESSIONAL DAYS

August 25	Professional Development
August 26	Professional Development
November 2	Training

Kennywood Picnic
To Be Determined

END OF GRADING PERIODS

October 29, 2021	End of First Grading Period
January 20, 2022	End of Second Grading Period
March 30, 2022	End of Third Grading Period
June 9, 2022	End of Fourth Grading Period

Personnel Report

PERSONNEL REPORT – Mr. Matthew Cesario

The following action items will be considered at the February 16, 2021 Business/Legislative Meeting:

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

Retirement

RETIREMENT

The Administration recommends that the Board accept the following retirement:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>
Anna Benvenuti	Technology Integration Specialist	August 4, 2021

Appointments

APPOINTMENTS

1. Substitute Custodian

The Administration recommends that the Board approve the employment of the following substitute custodian at a rate of \$11.50/hour:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Julia Beadle	January 22, 2021

Finance Report

FINANCE REPORT – Ms. Raeann Lindsey

The following action items will be considered at the February 16, 2021 Business/Legislative Meeting:

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

Accounts Payable

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE APPROVAL LISTS THROUGH JANUARY 31, 2021

The Administration recommends approval of the following Accounts Payable lists as presented in the *Finance Package*:

A. General Fund as of January 31, 2021 (Check No. 63643-63832)	\$589,970.54
B. Food Service Fund as of January 31, 2021 (Check No. 9530-9537)	\$9,270.36
C. Athletics as of January 31, 2021 (Check No. 3242-3247)	\$9,234.60
D. Capital Reserve as of January 31, 2021 (None)	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$608,475.50

AIU Program of Services

**ALLEGHENY INTERMEDIATE UNIT 2021/2022 PROGRAM OF SERVICES BUDGETS
FINANCE DIVISION**

The Administration recommends that the Board approve the proposed 2021/2022 Allegheny Intermediate Unit Program of Services Budget in the amount of \$2,161,057.00. The Allegheny County (AIU3) school districts' total contribution to the budget is \$1,811,545.00. The Keystone Oaks School District contribution to the Program of Services Budget is estimated to be \$38,297.00 and will be determined by PDE according to District Aid Ratio and Weighted Average Daily Membership (WADM).

For Information Only

The District's contribution for the 2021/2022 school year is an increase of \$517.64 compared to the 2020/2021 school year.

EXONERATION OF TAX COLLECTORS

It is recommended that the Board approve the exoneration of the real estate tax collectors as outlines below:

**KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT – Castle Shannon
RESOLUTION NO. 02-21**

THE RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS OF THE KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT EXONERATING THE TAX COLLECTOR OF THE **BOROUGH OF CASTLE SHANNON**, NAMELY **EILEEN O'MALLEY** FOR THE TAXABLE YEAR OF 2020 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT DATED _____.

WHEREAS, the Keystone Oaks School District is a corporation located at 1000 Kelton Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Castle Shannon comprises one geographical area of the said Keystone Oaks School District; and

WHEREAS, *Eileen O'Malley* is the elected Tax Collector for the Borough of Castle Shannon and has collected taxes for the year of 2020 at a rate of 19.499 mills at face; and

WHEREAS, on _____, the said elected Tax Collector of the Borough of Castle Shannon, *Eileen O'Malley*, as filed with the Board of School Directors of the Keystone Oaks School District an accounting showing all taxes collected with the exception of \$ _____ (includes penalty), the said taxes being delinquent and subject to lien and have been transferred to the delinquent and lien tax collection, **MBM Collection Services, LLC**.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of School Directors of the Keystone Oaks School District that the Board hereby exonerates *Eileen O'Malley* for taxes found to be delinquent and lien in the amount of \$ _____ arising out of the collection of the 2020 tax duplicate in the amount of 19.499 mills at the face on behalf of the Keystone Oaks School District, and the said Borough of Castle Shannon Tax Collector, *Eileen O'Malley*, is therefore, exonerated from the aforementioned delinquent and lien taxes on the day and date below mentioned.

ADOPTED this 16th day of February 2021.

ATTEST:

Keystone Oaks School District

BY: _____
Joseph A. Kubiak, Director of Finance &
Human Resources

BY: _____
Theresa Lydon, President,
Board of School Directors

APPROVE as to legal form this 16th day of February 2021.

BY: _____
Maiello, Brungo & Maiello, LLP

**KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT - Dormont
RESOLUTION NO. 03-21**

THE RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS OF THE
KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT EXONERATING THE TAX COLLECTOR
OF THE **BOROUGH OF DORMONT**, NAMELY **HARVEY LEIBERMAN** FOR
THE TAXABLE YEAR OF 2020 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TAX
COLLECTOR'S REPORT DATED _____.

WHEREAS, the Keystone Oaks School District is a corporation located at 1000 Kelton Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Dormont comprises one geographical area of the said Keystone Oaks School District; and

WHEREAS, *Harvey Leiberman* is the elected Tax Collector for the Borough of Dormont and has collected taxes for the year of 2020 at a rate of 19.499 mills at face; and

WHEREAS, on _____, the said elected Tax Collector of the Borough of Dormont, *Harvey Leiberman*, as filed with the Board of School Directors of the Keystone Oaks School District an accounting showing all taxes collected with the exception of \$ _____ (includes penalty), the said taxes being delinquent and subject to lien and have been transferred to the delinquent and lien tax collection, **MBM Collection Services, LLC**.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of School Directors of the Keystone Oaks School District that the Board hereby exonerates *Harvey Leiberman* for taxes found to be delinquent and lien in the amount of _____ arising out of the collection of the 2020 tax duplicate in the amount of 19.499 mills at the face on behalf of the Keystone Oaks School District, and the said Borough of Dormont Tax Collector, *Harvey Leiberman*, is therefore, exonerated from the aforementioned delinquent and lien taxes on the day and date below mentioned.

ADOPTED this 18th day of February 2020.

ATTEST:

Keystone Oaks School District

BY: _____
Joseph A. Kubiak, Director of Finance &
Human Resources
Directors

BY: _____
Theresa Lydon, President,
Board of School

APPROVE as to legal form this 18th day of February 2020.

BY: _____
Maiello, Brungo & Maiello, LLP

**KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT – Green Tree
RESOLUTION NO. 04-21**

THE RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS OF THE
KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT EXONERATING THE TAX COLLECTOR
OF THE **BOROUGH OF GREEN TREE**, NAMELY **BABETTE LEGLER** FOR THE
TAXABLE YEAR OF 2020 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TAX COLLECTOR'S
REPORT DATED _____.

WHEREAS, the Keystone Oaks School District is a corporation located at 1000 Kelton
Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Green Tree comprises one geographical area of the said
Keystone Oaks School District; and

WHEREAS, *Babette Legler* is the elected Tax Collector for the Borough of Green Tree
and has collected taxes for the year of 2020 at a rate of 19.444 mills at face; and

WHEREAS, on _____, the said elected Tax Collector of the Borough of
Green Tree, *Babette Legler*, as filed with the Board of School Directors of the Keystone
Oaks School District an accounting showing all taxes collected with the exception of
\$ _____ (includes penalty), the said taxes being delinquent and subject to lien
and have been transferred to the delinquent and lien tax collection, **MBM Collection
Services, LLC**.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of School Directors of the Keystone
Oaks School District that the Board hereby exonerates *Babette Legler* for taxes found to
be delinquent and lien in the amount of \$ _____ arising out of the collection of
the 2020 tax duplicate in the amount of 19.499 mills at the face on behalf of the Keystone
Oaks School District, and the said Borough of Green Tree Tax Collector, *Babette Legler*,
is therefore, exonerated from the aforementioned delinquent and lien taxes on the day
and date below mentioned.

ADOPTED this 16th day of February 2021.

ATTEST: Keystone Oaks School District

BY: _____
Joseph A. Kubiak, Director of Finance &
Human Resources
Directors

BY: _____
Theresa Lydon, President,
Board of School

APPROVE as to legal form this 16th day of February 2021.

BY: _____
Maiello, Brungo & Maiello, LLP

Activities & Athletics
Report

ACTIVITIES & ATHLETICS REPORT – Mr. Thomas LaPorte

The following action items will be considered at the February 16, 2021
Business/Legislative Meeting:

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of Clubs

APPROVAL OF CLUBS FOR THE 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR

It is recommended that the Board approve the following club for the 2020/2021 school
year:

<u>Club</u>	<u>Compensation</u>
Stage Crew	\$1,200.00 (pro-rated)

Competitive Event

COMPETITIVE EVENT

It is recommended that the Board approve the following competitive event:

Odyssey of the Mind, Western PA Competition (Level I)
March 6, 2021
Virtual Event
Number of Teams – 5 (33 students)
Activity Sponsor – Jessica Dobson
Total District Funds Requested - \$529.98 (\$16.06 per person)

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Mr. Cesario, seconded by Mrs. Shaw, the meeting was adjourned at
7:49 p.m.

Motion passed 9-0

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph A. Kubiak
Board Secretary

Maureen S. Myers
Assistant Board Secretary

Work Session Public Comment

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Name	Borough of Residency	Comment
Debbie Klein	Castle Shannon	My only comment is to say thank you to the board members. Your job must feel very thankless and unfair right now. Doing what you know is best for the community long term is not easy. It must be tempting to give into the mounting pressure and say this is some future boards problem. I genuinely hope that an agreement can be found that meets the needs of the teachers while keeping the school district in good standing financially. What's right isn't always what's easy. Thank you for your time and your diligence.
Xavier	Castle Shannon	When will we have school again
Ezekiel M. Daure	Castle Shannon	Give the teachers what they deserve, they are working through a pandemic and trust me it is way HARDER than it looks. We are behind the teachers here. KOEACARES
Kayla Ovesney	Greentree	We need to get these children back to school. We can not wait to see what negative effects will become of this. They need to learn, be social and be present at school.
Jennifer Sakulsky		<p>I read this on FB and thought I'd share. Our seniors have not only had these feelings throughout the pandemic, but now have the stress of a strike to add to it. I'm asking you and the KOEA to consider all of our students, but especially our seniors. Thank you.</p> <p>As a young girl, I would sit back and watch my older siblings do things their senior year and I would think to myself "wow, that will be so much fun". For example, doing silly things for the yearbook, heading off to prom, attending basketball/football games with their friends to sit in the student section, walking down the halls of the school their last few months, singing karaoke at lunchtime just because, getting dressed up and attending senior breakfast, walking across the stage at graduation (the normal way).. I could go on for days. My point is, the seniors of 2021 have been so overlooked. We had our junior prom ripped away from us and now we probably will not have a senior prom either. Our whole senior year, we have been waiting for something.. anything to change. We want to go to school. We want to be recognized for all of the hard work we have put into these last 12 years. You might say "It will all pass", "I don't even remember my senior year", "It's going to be okay".. but for the class of 2021, it feels like no one cares that this was SUPPOSED to be our year. It's very difficult to finish strong when it feels like no one is paying attention to the words we are saying. Do you think we are motivated? Do you think we are happy with staring at a Chromebook 75% of the day? Do you think we want to sit in our rooms wondering if things might change the last few months of senior year? The answer is simply NO. This is depressing. We are sad! We are angry! We are hurting! All we are asking for is a "semi-</p>

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		<p>normal” senior year. Please say a special prayer for the class of 2021. We will definitely need your thoughts and prayers from this point forward.</p> <p>Sincerely, A 2021 Graduate</p>
Christine L Pasquale-Bain	Dormont	<p>Now that the work stoppage is over (on 2/10), does that mean another strike will not occur for the remainder of spring 2021? I’m considering cyber-school to avoid further impact to my children’s education, especially if another strike is forthcoming in spring 2021. If I do decide to enroll them in cyber school for the remainder of this school year, would it be an issue for them to return to KOMS/KOHS in the fall 2021? The pandemic is having a major negative impact on our children's education & mental health and now this strike. I’m not convinced the teachers deserve a pay increase while being remote/hybrid due to my children not learning anything and basically having to teach themselves, so I agree with the school’s decision. But I do have to do what is best for my kids. My other question is, if there are only 2-4 students attending each class, since most parents are keeping their kids remote, why can't the students that want to be in school attend 5 days a week? Combine the 2 cohorts and you’d still have space to safely distance them</p>
John Wilson	Dormont	<p>I am writing to you to urge you to complete this contract with the teachers. I am a resident but do not have kids in school right now but i still want the best schools so our area can grow. It is ridiculous to ask teachers to take any type of pay cut or freeze and that needs dropped from your proposal now!! Compromise, get it done. I hope board members will speak out for the teachers and for settling this immediately. thank you.</p>
David N Hommrich	Greentree	<p>Many thanks to all of you serving on the school board. I know its a thankless job...so thanks!</p> <p>Here's a suggestion, for what its worth. I think the idea of secret negotiations on a union contract is doomed to fail. In my experience its just a matter of time until the union begins taking interviews with the press and putting their message out there. You sort of don't have a choice at that point.</p> <p>Instead.....I recommend continuing with the FAQ approach that you've recently adopted. You are putting so much more information out there than we ever did when I was on the board, and the community is benefiting from it. Keep up the great work! These are taxpayer dollars we're talking about.....there shouldn't be any secrets.</p>

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Erin Auses	Dormont	<p>We have 4 children going to school virtually in KOSD this year and EVERY. SINGLE. TEACHER. Has gone above and beyond the call of duty to keep parents informed of what's happening in the classroom, to make clear all assignments & class schedules, to create a class community - which is nearly impossible to do virtually - that our children feel a part of & connected to, all while delivering a high-level education. They have spent their summer figuring out how they're all going to teach virtually and in the classroom under these extreme conditions without any federal direction or additional support. They have all adapted their teaching styles differently and effectively. I am in awe of their resourcefulness & dedication to educating my children.</p> <p>It is absolutely unacceptable that they are at a point where they feel the need to strike in order to be heard. After all they have had to deal with this year, a reasonable renewal of their contract should not even be a question. Give them WHATEVER they are asking for. Which isn't even that much.</p> <p>Sincerely, Erin Auses</p>
Daysha Love	Greentree	<p>The School Board needs to be doing everything possible to resolve this contract issue. This is effect our children and community. Our teachers and students want to be in school. This is their livelihood and a secondary concern for you, obviously. You should be spending every second to negotiate until this is resolved and finding a comprise. Everyone has been through enough. The budgetary concerns and constraints brought by the school board are beyond absurd. Have you polled the district tax payers? No, I have yet to be asked. Education is the foundation for our future, so act like it matters to you and stop fighting over every penny. We trust these individuals with our most precious aspects of life, yet we don't want to pay them? This is unacceptable to have this come up unresolved again!!</p>
Chelsey LaQuatra	Greentree	<p>The teachers at Aiken have been so wonderful with my children. They have gone above and beyond and deserve an amazing contract that is fair for the extraordinary work that they do. I am also a graduate of Keystone Oaks and I can not remember a time where it ever got to this point. Please resolve this contract issue immediately so that my children do not have to endure anymore unnecessary routine changes in their academics, considering the amount of change that have already occurred since the pandemic started.</p>
Danielle and Brian Prince	Dormont	<p>To whom it may concern</p>

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Our names are Danielle and Brian Prince. We are current residents of Dormont. I (Danielle) am a proud 2003 Keystone Oaks graduate. We currently reside in my childhood home. That being said, we are quite upset about the current teacher strike.

To be fair, we have chosen to send our children (currently we have five) to a private, Catholic school. This is not because we don't believe in public education, but because we value and treasure our Catholic faith. We decided it was important to us to have that faith taught to our children in the school they attend. A Catholic school can provide that, and no public district can do the same.

However, I am a teacher who has taken a pause in my career to stay home and raise our children. Brian also has years of experience in teaching and a few as a principal in upstate New York. My heart is one for public education. I completely believe in its mission and cause. As much as it gives me pause each August to pay our school taxes for schools we are not using, we both believe that public education is in some ways, a matter of common good. Good schools produce good citizens. And good citizens benefit communities in many ways.

When we first heard that teachers planned to strike on February 1, we were truly shocked and appalled. This past year has been nothing short of abnormal and chaotic. In the blink of eye, everyone's lives changed in some way last March. For the children in this community, it meant they were no longer in a classroom with teachers face to face and learning. Instead, they were on computers and expected to learn virtually at home for the rest of the year. Anyone who is honest can tell you what a disaster that was in every way. Kids lost months of knowledge and course work. Skills became lost. Most students fell behind.

Also during this time, many people, not just teachers, had to learn how to work from home. Brian had to learn how to have virtual meetings with his team. He had to learn how to supervise people from afar without ever being able to see them in person. He had to coordinate technology issues and schedules of staff all while working from the confines of our bedroom while the kids went crazy downstairs. It was not easy.

We, however, like the teachers, were some of the lucky ones who got to continue working and making a pay check during covid. Not many can say the same.

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And I think this is the major reason we find this strike so appalling. While some people can't pay their bills in our district and are lining up at food banks to feed their families, our teachers are upset that they may not get a pay raise this year and the cost of their insurance may increase. Here's a fact. Brian is in social work now and has not seen a pay raise in years. Covid made sure he won't be seeing one anytime soon, either. While he has not seen a raise, the price of our health insurance has continued to increase each year. This means that each year we are actually losing money and seeing less take home pay.

Mr. Kevin Gallagher went on a public radio show and actually had the audacity to say that teachers can't afford to go a year without a raise. That comment was beyond insulting and condescending. Many people, not just social workers, do not get raises every single year just because they completed a year of service. Hardly anyone doesn't see their health insurance prices increase year to year. This is life. And this is especially life during covid. Clearly Mr. Gallagher is out of touch with reality.

It is also clear the union is out of touch with reality because the fact that students are now not learning at all is criminal. After a year of virtual learning and random days in the classroom, here they sit doing absolutely nothing. They are now only losing more ground and losing more skills. Some have suggested that this isn't a huge deal since the state plans to move the benchmarks back, but that doesn't make students losing ground and not making gains okay.

These teachers claim they care about the students. This statement is false. Teachers who care about their students exist where our children attend school. Our children's teachers are in the classrooms five days a week, teaching a rigorous curriculum to students who attend five days a week in person and also to students who choose to join class virtually each day. They have had to learn how to adapt and change how they teach. They are learning how to teach students in the class as well as online at the same time. Yet they aren't demanding large pay raises. Instead, they are working for about half of what the KO teachers are making. And they aren't complaining. They are showing up and loving our kids on a daily basis. They are teaching them while keeping them socially distanced and in masks. They are going above and beyond to make school feel as normal as possible. They care about our kids.

The KO teachers who are on strike do not at all care about the students. This is all about them and their selfish desires for more money that just doesn't exist. The teachers strike is

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truly at its heart a very selfish move. It is very off-putting in a time when many would kill to make what a first year teacher in this district makes. (And yes, you can say teachers deserve it. I am a teacher. I paused my career because I couldn't work my tail off at school and give 100% to my own family. It was nonstop work to teach. But there's still a limit to what teachers are worth.)

Mr. Gallagher consistently points to a fund that has millions sitting in it. Apparently, he does not like to budget in his own life. Nor does he understand how a budget works. Sometimes you must plan ahead. We have a savings account personally. I'd love to just blow it all and take a dream vacation. But our roof might go next year. And our house needs repointed. If I blow the money now, I'll have to finance everything else in the future and go into debt. This is not good financial planning or budgeting. We appreciate that the board has worked so hard to run a balanced budget. There were years when that wasn't happening, and it was disastrous. We would like the board to continue to budget in this manner.

Mr. Gallagher also likes to throw around the CARES Act money. Again, he shows just how out of touch he is. That money is a one time deposit. It is not recurring. It is meant to do things necessary to keep things up and running now during covid. Getting all students technology, for example. Or helping to pay staffs' current salaries with the tax revenue decrease because of covid. It is not meant to give teachers large raises that can't continue to be paid in the future.

From what I have read, the district has offered two generous deals to the union. They have refused both. Both deals include raises to our taxes each year for the next five. I cannot tell you how upsetting that is. A one time raise is one thing. Inflation happens. Raising taxes happens. But to do so each year for five years is not sustainable on our end as homeowners. We are going to be chased out of a community we have worked hard to live in because of school taxes. People looking to buy also won't be thrilled with this idea and will look to other communities that better suit their financial objectives. Raising taxes in a pandemic is just in bad taste. Many have lost jobs. Many are just barely getting by. Many can't pay their rents or mortgages as it is. Raising taxes would just compound those problems.

I also worry that if you plot it all out, in 2026, more than half the teachers will be making over \$100,000 from the pay steps offered. How is the board going to afford to pay that

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		<p>without totally jacking taxes through the roof at that point? We can't simply depend on teachers to retire. Some of my favorite teachers are teaching still to this day way past their retirement age. If covid has taught us anything it is that you can't bank on things happening. Always plan for the worst and hope for the best.</p> <p>For all those residents saying, "Just give the teachers what they want," I really can't disagree more. What the teachers want is selfish, unaffordable, and unfair to everyone except the teachers. I am also not a fan of rewarding their terrible decision to strike with a big fat contract that they love. The strike is hurting students. Teachers should care about students. Clearly, these teachers have placed their own selfish interests ahead of students' well being.</p> <p>In the end, we would ask that you offer the teachers a moderate plan that calls for a very little, if any, one time tax raise. No raising taxes every year for the next five. One and done. And please make that one at a reasonable percentage so homeowners can actually afford their houses. This is a pandemic. Teachers need to understand that. Most industries have lost money. Education is not immune and the board cannot just grow money in the back yard.</p> <p>I wish with all my heart that teachers could step back and look at the bigger picture. As a teacher, I feel like I have a true right to say everything I just said. As much as my heart belongs in public education, it is stunts like the one these teachers just pulled that make me disgusted and wondering why I would even bother becoming involved in such a broken system.</p> <p>We pray that this ends well for all involved, but especially for the students.</p> <p>We thank you for listening and for your time. Sincerely,</p> <p>Danielle and Brian Prince</p>
Jen Sakulsky	Greentree	<p>I am hearing that the KOEA has been trying to set up discussions, however the board has not responded to their requests. Is this true and if it is, why have there not been any further discussions? My daughter is a senior and I am concerned that another strike is inevitable with no further meetings scheduled. It's so upsetting with the stressful year</p>

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		they've already had because of the pandemic that now their graduation date could be pushed back to the end of June. Disappointing.
Karen Sikorski	Other	Your school district has some amazing teachers, that always go the extra mile. I personally know several. There is no excuse for for this strike. They deserve both a raise and the credit for this years service. I have never seen such supportive comments from students and families for the teachers and wish my children had had such wonderful teachers!
Joe Hartnett	Castle Shannon	At the end of the 19/20 school year (another year where teachers received raises) teachers didn't have to teach nearly the final 3 months but still rightfully received full pay. Given the loss of tax revenue now due to Covid, a 1/2 year pay freeze doesn't seem all that unfair.
Bethany Hemingway	Castle Shannon	I graduated from Keystone Oaks High School in 2003. During my high school years, I faced many barriers and challenges/ traumas no kids should experience, but I had the support of the most amazing teachers who still work at the high school today (esp Mrs. Kreizer; Ms. Lowers, Mrs. Ftiz ; and Ms. Bodganski). It it was not for these amazing women, and Mr. Yerace and Mr. Colley I would never be where I am today. They literally saved my life and helped mold me into the human I have become. This is why I returned and bought a home in Castle Shannon. I wanted my kids to have the same positive experiences with their teachers as I did. These people prepared me for life. Many 2003 alums have all returned to the district for the same reasons I mentioned above. We are generations of families who continue coming back to this area. Our parents still live here and a part of the tax base. They want the best education for their grandchildren. I already started talking to pass grads who live in the district, and we all are planning to run for seats to take back our district.
Paul O'Donnell	Greentree	Entering for public record and to be read at the board meeting the email I sent to the School Board representatives from Green Tree Borough (Cesario, Lydon, Laporte). I've redacted my phone number from the original message. I offered the board members the opportunity to provide feedback on my note and even though I stated that I did not require a response, I was nonetheless disappointed to not hear from a single one of them. The arrogance shown by the school board across the district is disheartening and the reaction of the community as a whole disappointing. The actions/attitude of the school board combined with the way the people within the three communities have gone at each other in public forums over this work stoppage does not make me feel good about staying in this district long term.

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		<p>"I am writing the three of you (my elected representatives to the school board) as a Green Tree resident who is dissatisfied by the actions of the School Board to allow the teacher's contract to lapse so frequently over the last decade to the point that the teachers were left with no choice but to vote in favor of a work stoppage in order to prove their dissatisfaction with their contract situation. As the son of a father who spent 40+ years as a member of a labor union and who participated in and stood on many picket lines, I fully understand the how and the why of the situation.</p> <p>I hope that since you all have called their bluff and they have followed through on their threat to strike that you will not allow this to happen a second time. The argument made by the district that current financial situations do not allow for the requested standard annual wage increases that have historically been included in the teacher's compensation is laughable. If you have not appropriately budgeted over the last decade with planned wage increases taken into consideration for subsequent years, then you and your predecessors have all failed in your duties.</p> <p>Also, the district has cited a loss of revenue due to reassessment of commercial properties but has made no mention of the increase in revenues from residential real estate as a result of suing homeowners after the purchase of new property for a reassessment. I was one of those back in 2016. I fought the reassessment, I won, you appealed, and then you won (103 W Manilla; look it up if you like). How much more revenue has the district realized as a result of these types of reassessments? No one knows because all you have shared is the loss.</p> <p>Respond if you feel the need, feel free to call me (PHONE NUMBER REDACTED) as well if you feel the need, however I don't require either. I simply ask that you all do what is right by the residents of the community and reach a fair, equitable, and long term agreement so that both sides can move on.</p>
Vickie Bruce	Castle Shannon	<p>Good evening I'm Vickie Bruce from Castle Shannon. I wanted to reach out again to ask that you continue to meet with the KOEA to work out a fair and equitable contract for the teachers, nurses, counselors, and mental health therapists. As this has been our 6th year with the district, we have had to deal with three negotiations, which is truly unheard of. I understand the financial concern in a pandemic year, however, this isn't something that just popped up this year. The continued small contract or extensions placed on old contracts are</p>

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the reason we are at this point in a pandemic year. It's never a good time, but this weighs on all shoulders. I am concerned for my children's education and in losing the amazing teachers and staff we currently have. Our district has come such a long way, we need to continue to push forward, not fall behind. Continuing this ongoing saga of negotiations every couple of years is a black eye on the district. It's embarrassing.

I will not even begin to pretend I know the inner workings of tax revenue, federal covid relief funds, or what programs you allocate these monies to. I can tell you that I do know the ins and outs of working in a school system and what goes on behind the scenes. I can tell you I see what these teachers have done for years, and have mastered this crazy year, all day and every day. Our district should be proud of what our kids have been provided, both from a school board and teacher standpoint. Without any real guidance from the state, KO has taken an otherwise miserable year and made it work. More than work. I wish half of these parents who complain can see what other districts are doing. Mine is just now going to hybrid at the end of February. The teachers are working double, if not triple, the amount of time they typically do planning out in person and then uploading, formatting, transition, re-writing, google reworking every single thing to make sure our kids have what they need to succeed both virtually and in the building. Freezing pay during this year is unacceptable. My daughter has a 504, and like most parents with children who need extra help, I was concerned how this year was going to work for her and if she would flounder. Thanks to Ms. Devine, Ms. Harke, and Mr. Galentine, she is thriving. Any time there started to be even a remote concern, they all would work as a team, pivot and try something that would work. It was like a beautiful dance. I am so thankful for our teachers. The same holds true with my son's teachers Mrs. Zimmerman and Mrs. Niccolai. He was a shell of himself until we got him back in hybrid. He is just so excited to learn again. They deserve their raises/steps this year without a doubt.

I guess my biggest take away is this. I tend to believe you get what you pay for. I am willing to pay extra taxes if that means my children get a wonderful education from teachers that feel appreciated and love to work for our school district. From what I have seen so far, you have done an amazing job of picking the teachers for this district, let's keep them around. I think one thing has been made pretty clear during this past week, there are a lot of families that agree with me. It's a small price to pay for an excellent education and to retain amazing teachers.

Thank you for your time.

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