



Community Unit School District #205

..... *Helping Students Achieve Their Dreams*

District Website: www.galesburg205.org
Lincoln Education Center: 932 Harrison Street, P.O. Box 1206, Galesburg, IL 61402-1206
Phone: (309) 973-2000 Fax: (309) 343-1319 & 343-7757

Dear Mr. Michael Crumm:

This letter is a response to your September 3, 2014 Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) request which was received by the district on that date. You have requested:

- 1. Copies of all public records, forms of communication and documents; including e-mails, memos, notes from phone conversations, SMS messages, etc. between district employee or board member from Galesburg CUSD #205, including Superintendent Bart Arthur, and Regional Superintendent Bonnie Harris, regarding the decision to decrease the number of required attendance days for the 2014-2015 school year.*
- 2. Copies of all public records, forms of communication and documents; including emails, memos, notes from phone conversations, SMS messages, etc. between any district employee or board member from Galesburg CUSD #205, including Superintendent Arthur, and Regional Superintendent Bonnie Harris, pertaining to public statements having been made, or preparing to be, made to any news outlets for the period of July 13, 2014 to September 1st, 2014. If this request requires more than the initial five days to complete, I request that any additional correspondence meeting the above criteria during the subsequent time period also be included at the time of receipt.*

The requested records are encompassed in the response e-mail .

Pursuant to Section 9 of the Act, 5 ILCS 140/9, you have a right to a review by the Public Access Counselor:

Ms. Sarah Pratt
Acting Public Access Counselor
Office of the Attorney General
500 S. 2nd Street
Springfield, IL 62706
Telephone: 312-814-5526 or
1-877-299-FOIA (1-877-299-3642)
Facsimile: 217-782-1396
E-mail: publicaccess@atg.state.il.us

You are further notified that you have the right to judicial review as provided in Section 11 of the Act, 5 ILCS 140/11.

This response was prepared and evaluated by Diane VanHootegeem, the Districts' FOIA officer.



Block Grant Concern

Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 3:18 AM

To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, jgibb@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, nkessler@galesburg205.org, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, rwelty@galesburg205.org, barthur@galesburg205.org, Diane VanHootegeem <dvanhootegeem@galesburg205.org>

I am concerned that the very youngest 205 students are being put at risk by rushing the start of the first attendance day. Putting the term "home visit" in the return to work proposal itself is not accurate. We as a staff at Bright Futures typically use 4 of the days at the beginning of the year to insure safety and build the parent/teacher team right from the start. Over a 3-day period, each child and their parent meet with the teacher for 30 minutes in the classroom. The aid orients the child to the classroom routine/setting while the teacher meets with parents to better understand the needs of the child. (self-help, medical, parent concerns...). The fourth day is allotted for accomplishing visits to the child's home. I could not in good conscience allow children to start without this orientation visit. I was able to get the visits scheduled on Thursday night and accomplish 18 of these visits last Friday. I have been working through the weekend to complete the rest before Tuesday. I was able to get the information on all of my students, but not all of my colleagues could access the information on Skyward. I was most impressed by a dad (I had his older daughter a few years ago.) who chose to drive 3 hours on Friday morning (after only finding out about the visit Thursday night) from Chicago (where he lives) to attend this welcome visit for his 3-year-old son.

I have not yet had time to completely figure out the impact the loss of 6 days could potentially have on the Early Childhood Block Grant. I have two welcome visits scheduled with families this morning. I will be back in my classroom (Yellow Room at Bright Futures) today (Monday) working and preparing after lunch if you would like additional information.

I don't believe the administration and board wants to hurt students. I believe we all wanted to get children back in school, but didn't realize in the middle of the night the larger ramifications of taking away 6 student attendance days. When the Civil War was over, many people felt that the South needed to be punished. President Lincoln had the incite and wisdom to know that punishing the South alone would not lead to the healing and wholeness of a nation. For healing and wholeness in the district to begin, I believe all parties need to admit guilt in this situation and commit to fixing what is broken. We need to address the underlying issues.

Sincerely,

Cindy Barshinger

309-368-1240

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Action requested: 174 student attendance days in 2014-2015 school year



Action requested: 174 student attendance days in 2014-2015 school year

Shannon Nelson <shannonisthequeen@gmail.com>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 1:21 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>, dblack@galesburg205.org
Cc: bharris@roe33.net

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I want to start out by acknowledging I'm sure you must feel vilified and unappreciated for all the work you have given to the educational system in District 205, many of you on a volunteer basis, giving of yourselves and your families time in the hopes of creating a better educational system for our community. The strike has been painful for the entire community and I'm sure it has been especially painful on you, as well as your families. I can only ask that you read my concerns and try and put those feelings aside for a moment and see the heart of my request.

It was a mistake to "not reward the teachers" and reduce the time given to educate our children to 168 days. In doing so you ignored the needs of the students, as well as our community, in an effort to make point. No one wins in this strike. No one. You had an opportunity to plant the seed of healing for our entire community with your return to work package and instead you sowed the seeds of dissension and unrest. By reducing the number of school days our students are educated, you are negating the entire message you have been trying to share during your tenure, that attendance is IMPORTANT and necessary for student success! Dream big??

Remember that concept? Do you believe parents in the community will take your message seriously after the hypocrisy of your decision to declare 6 days of their children's education irrelevant and unnecessary? Have you taken into account that my high school freshman will miss the equivalent of more than 6 days because of the impact of the 4 block curriculum? Do you believe that no child in our district will become sick and miss even more days of school this year on top of what you deemed unimportant in your quest to "not reward the teachers"?

The bottom line is this. The entire community would like to move on and start the healing process. The reduction of attendance days to 168 is the thorn in the paw of that healing process and it will continue to fester until you remove it and put things to rights. The parents will suffer as we struggle to deal with an administration that puts making a statement ahead of our children's future. Our children will suffer as they try and figure out how to fit a years worth of curriculum, and potentially much needed therapies, into a reduced time frame and still be competitive with their peers in other districts. The teachers will suffer as they will never again be able to let go of the mistrust and spitefulness of your actions. The balance statements on their bank accounts will remind them each and every month for the foreseeable future how deeply your actions hurt them. Future educators of our community will think twice before they apply here after reading the statements publicly made that expose your priorities, "the district will come out in front without paying the teachers' salaries." The community and small businesses in Galesburg will suffer as the discretionary income of a major portion of our community is drastically reduced and impacts their bottom line negatively. Do you believe these families losing thousands of dollars aren't going to be more frugal and cut back on the money they would have otherwise poured into our community? Is this a concern or is it still "a wash"?

Please do what is right and adopt a calendar of 174 student attendance days, the minimum number of days legal for student attendance in Illinois. It is the right thing to do for our entire community and I challenge you to provide an legitimate reason as to why it isn't.

Sincerely,
Shannon Nelson



the bad taste in my mouth

Robin Ragan <rragan@knox.edu>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 11:24 AM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>, dblack@galesburg205.org

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I write to express my displeasure over the terms of the Return-to-Work agreement you recently reached with the GEA. I have followed the strike and the communications from the sidelines, trying to hear each sides rationales. Today, the editorial in the paper summed up exactly what I was feeling:

"The 15-day teachers' strike seemed more like a prize fight than a negotiation. At least we hoped for an amicable finish, where teachers and District 205 would shake hands and put an end to the animosity that characterized the work stoppage. **Instead, we saw a punch below the belt by the district that has left teachers feeling bitter and shorts some 4,300 students on the full school year they deserve.** After a tentative deal was reached Thursday morning on a four-year contract, both sides added a return-to-work agreement that reduces the number of student attendance days from 174 to 168. The district clearly had the upper hand in negotiations — teachers were days away from losing their health insurance and had already missed one paycheck — and used that leverage to punish teachers with a school year that will dock them six days of pay."

I would also add that I feel Superintendent Arthur, in particular, has consistently created an atmosphere of anti-teacher sentiment, through his statements to the press, that I found shocking. Is it any wonder parents are rushing to defend teachers?

I hope the board can revisit the issue of lost days. I imagine the board miscalculated the response from parents. But more importantly, the board and Mr. Arthur need to reach out to teachers to heal these wounds.

Robin Ragan
parent of two district 205 students

“Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going.”

-Rita Mae Brown



Shortened School Calendar

Tom & Barb <barb_sherwin_654@comcast.net>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 4:22 AM

To: rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org,

mpalmer@galesburg205.org, mpanther2@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org,

barthur@galesburg205.org

Galesburg District 205 Board Members & Superintendent,

As a tax payer & registered voter I have never felt the need to personally voice my views until you included the Shortened School Calendar in the teachers return to work agreement. I just want to let you know that I strongly disagree with your decision of a Shortened School Calendar. I've read many of the letters that have been sent to various people in regards to this matter. I'm sure each of you have received your fair share of long emails. I'll keep mine short.

I hope you reconsider & reinstate the days you removed. I also hope to see at the very least a collective apology to the students, the teachers, & the community.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Sherwin



CUSD 205 School Calendar

Gabrielle Raley <gabe.raley@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 6:47 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, igibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, barthur@galesburg205.org, dblack@galesburg205.org

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I write to express my displeasure over the terms of the Return-to-Work agreement you recently reached with the GEA. With two children enrolled at Silas Willard this year, I am appalled to learn of the reduction from 174 days of student attendance to 168.

Mr. Arthur, you were quoted in today's Register Mail saying, "We would lose money from state aid [for reducing student attendance days], but it would be a wash, or the district will come out in front without paying the teachers' salaries." I take that statement to mean that state aid would offset most but perhaps not all of what it would cost to restore these six lost days to the calendar.

The most generous construction I can give to your shortening of the calendar is that the administration would rather save money than teach children. The state requires that children be in school for a minimum of 174 days. Would not most administrators strive to give them even more than that? A less generous construction is that the administration would rather punish teachers than teach children. Of course your constituents hope and trust that this is not the case, and I am eager to have this impression proved false.

I ask that you restore these six student attendance days to the calendar. If you find that you cannot, I ask that you explain to the parents and the community how losing these six days is in the best interests of the children.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Raley
818 Brown Ave
Galesburg, IL 61401



Back to work agreement

Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>
To: Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>
Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 5:18 PM

Josh,

I want you to know that I am proud of the work we have all put forth in building a contract for the staff of our district; that I am proud of the way in which we have stayed above all of the misinformation and personal attacks that have been part of the process; and that I have been proud to work with you and each of the other members of the board.

I just want to let you know that I think that we erred in taking away the six attendance days and giving the staff dock days. I can no longer support that. We owe it to our students to give them a full school year and we owe it to our community to receive the maximum amount of state aid that we can receive.

While we might feel the need to make the staff accountable for striking, and while we can abide by the theory that dock days will prevent further strikes, I think we owe it to ourselves to continue to remain above the level of those who have led a campaign of misinformation and attacks. We have to take the lead in the healing process. In the attachment I have enclosed a list of pros and cons concerning the back to work agreement and what we might do instead. I hope you think about it.

I will be asking that we work with the GEA to create a calendar that contains 174 attendance days for students.

Thanks,
Mike

The Board's intent was not to reward teachers for going on strik.docx
108K



school calendar

Emily Anderson <agentgodiva@gmail.com> Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 4:14 PM
To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org,
jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org,
barthur@galesburg205.org, dblack@galesburg205.org

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I write to express my displeasure over the terms of the Return-to-Work agreement you recently reached with the GEA. Specifically, I am appalled at the reduction, this year, from 174 days of student attendance to 168.

Mr. Arthur, you were quoted in today's *Register Mail* saying, "We would lose money from state aid [for reducing student attendance days], but it would be a wash, or the district will come out in front without paying the teachers' salaries." I take that statement to mean that state aid would offset most but perhaps not all of what it would cost to restore these six lost days to the calendar.

The most generous construction I can give to your shortening of the calendar is that the administration would rather save money than teach children. The state requires that children be in school for a minimum of 174 days. Would not most administrators strive to give them even more than that? Do we not all agree that *going to school* is in the children's best interest? Should we not spend whatever it takes to meet, at least, the very minimum that the law requires?

A less generous construction is that the administration would rather punish teachers than teach children. Of course your constituents hope and trust that this is not the case, and I am eager to have this impression proved false.

I ask that you restore these six student attendance days to the calendar. If you find that you cannot, I ask that you explain to the parents and the community how losing these six days is in the best interests of the children.

Sincerely,

Emily Anderson
948 N. Cherry St.
Galesburg, IL 61401

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - shortened school year



shortened school year

Vickie Banks <vjb1@grics.net>

Fri, Aug 29, 2014 at 7:24 PM

Reply-To: vjb1@grics.net

To: barthur@galesburg205.org

The purpose of this communication is to voice my strong objection to the Board's decision to shorten the 2014-15 school year. If there is a reason for this that somehow benefits the students then I would appreciate being enlightened. There is ample time in the year to make up all of the days of the strike that delayed the start of school. Shortening Spring break and adding days at the end of the year would still find the children out of school before the end of May. Even if snow days are used they would only be attending class in the first week of June. This decision appears to be punitive and vindictive in nature. The community will see ramifications from the loss of revenue as well. The restoration of these days would benefit students and also send a message of support to the teachers. I sincerely hope that this Board is not so shallow as to feel it is professional or in the best interests of the district and its students to follow through with this plan. I believe the reg!

ional superintendent has to approve the school calendar so I implore her to consider seriously all of the messages this decision sends to students, teachers, parents, and the community.

Sincerely, Vickie Banks



Shortened calendar

Mary Jane Shroyer <mjshroyer@gmail.com>

To: Tom Hawkins <thawkins@galesburg205.org>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 9:41 AM

Mr. Hawkins and Mr. Arthur,

Now that Mr. Arthur has confirmed to press that we will be shorted 6 instructional days, to the detriment of our students' educations, can we please stop playing coy and release to parents the calendar which has already been prepared for the teachers? We have a right to see it as it directly affects our lives.

Additionally, can you please tell me if we will be having our fees prorated and a refund issued to our accounts since the board has elected to steal 6 days from our children's school year? We paid fees for 174 attendance days for two children and do not feel we should have to bear the financial burden of the superintendent and board's decision not to give us a full academic year in order to make a political point. Mr. Arthur, given that you have told the Register-Mail the district will come out even or ahead, I do not feel that families should have to bear the financial burden of this misguided decision.

I find it shameful that the district leadership found it in their hearts to petition for a waiver for athletes to practice but could not find the same consideration for our scholars to receive instructional time for ISAT, AP, PSAT, SAT and ACT exams or for students with disabilities and developmental delays to receive therapies and interventions.

You had the opportunity to right a wrong and help our community begin healing but instead chose to act punitively toward our teachers, punishing our children, who are innocent in this sordid mess, in the process. Please do not tell me you did not choose the strike; that board line has grown tired. You chose not to end the strike with respect and concern for the education our students deserve and for the state funding owed to our local community.

I am very saddened to have lost so much respect for so many people in both union and district leadership over the last several weeks. I am embarrassed to have vocally supported the superintendent and school board members publicly when their names were being drug through the mud and they were accused of not caring about children. It is a very shameful resolution to a very shameful chapter in our district's history.

Sincerely,

—
Mary Jane Shroyer
mjshroyer@gmail.com
(309) 344-0158 (home)
(309) 299-1711 (cell)



being responsible

Sgfarmer <sgfarmer@aol.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:11 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galsburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org

I have read the proposal from the GEA and felt that I had to voice support for the Board of Education. We all want what is best for our children and look forward to having the best education available for the future. But ... what the teachers (or should I say paid union officials) have proposed is not reasonable or being responsible. Excellence is not achieved by saying a "school calendar work day cannot exceed 7 hours and 45 minutes (including lunch)" or outlining other early dismissals. Where is the motivation to be excellent in what you do?

Work stoppages should be available for unfair working conditions or unfair wages. I do not see how we are being unfair to our teaching professionals.

I just wanted you to all know that myself and many of my friends support the Board members for being reasonable. I just wish the GEA had contact information where I could have copied them on this email as well.

This is just a short note to thank you for your service.

Stan Farmer
1185 Dudley St
Galesburg, IL

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205

932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

It is the goal of the Board of Education to get a settlement that will be fair to our taxpayers and our teachers. The Board of Education currently faces a budget deficit of \$2.7 million. In spite of the current funding levels and the tough economic times, the board has made the following salary proposal to the Galesburg Education Association as of July 25, 2014:

Salary - Maintain the current salary schedule, which allows for an average 2.02% raise in 2014, a 2.06% raise in 2015, as well as an additional .25% increase, which will result in an overall average 2.27% raise in 2016.

The State has not met their obligation in funding the General State Aid formula for a number of years. The Board of Education's proposal also includes the opportunity for the GEA to request to reopen the contract exclusively for the purpose of bargaining wages, if the General State Aid is fully funded at 100% of the 2013-2014 formula structure.

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Mr. Bart Arthur, Superintendent

July 28, 2014
Date

8/13/14

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205

**932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On behalf of the Galesburg School District administration and board, we wanted to clarify some of the issues involved in the contract negotiations with the teachers' union and the union's recent action to stage a strike as the new school year was about to begin.

We have wonderful teachers and staff and we are hoping for a quick resolution to this unfortunate situation. Given the state's cuts in General State Aid, Transportation and other budget line items, we simply cannot go beyond our last offer and still fulfill our obligation to continue to provide top-quality educational opportunities for Galesburg students not only now but in future years.

During the past four years, the Galesburg school district has lost \$2,783,391 in General State Aid, not to mention state cuts in various other line items.

The union points to the reserve funds our district has managed to save by being good stewards of tax dollars, but those reserves have been drained from \$13.3 million three years ago to a projected \$8.3 million by the end of the 2014-15 school year primarily because of the aforementioned state budget cuts. Judging by the news reports and political rhetoric coming out of Springfield, we can reasonably expect the state's budget situation to get worse, not better in the foreseeable future. Those reserve funds do not replenish themselves during times of deficit spending. They are a school district's last line of defense against state cuts, late state payments and unexpected expenses – and when they are gone, they are gone.

While we wish that we had the resources to offer the teachers more, we believe that our last offer to our teachers for what amounts to a 5.04 percent increase over the next three years was fair given the economic situation in Galesburg and in our state and nation.

The bottom line is as administrators and the Board of Education; we must be fiscally responsible and do what we think is right for the students currently enrolled in Galesburg public schools as well as those children who will be attending our schools in the next decade and beyond. We will continue to do everything in our power to bring this strike to a quick resolution so our teachers can get back in the classroom to help educate our students. However, we cannot and will not mortgage the future of our school district or of the students who depend on us to provide them the best possible educational opportunities to succeed.

Bart A. Arthur
Superintendent

Michael D. Panther
Board President



Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Re: Board of Education Editorial

From: Jay Redfern

Redfern, Jay <jredfern@register-mail.com>
To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 14, 2014 at 1:12 PM

Received. Thank you, Alison.
Jay

On Thu, Aug 14, 2014 at 12:49 PM, Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org> wrote:

The Board of Education has submitted this editorial for publication and appreciates your willingness to publish it in its entirety.

Alison

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

Jay Redfern
Assistant Editor
The Register-Mail
140 S. Prairie St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
(309) 343-7181, Ext. 262
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Facebook: www.facebook.com/registermail
Twitter: @JayDRedfern
Blog: Jay Talking



This message may contain confidential and/or privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient or authorized to receive this for the intended recipient, you must not use, copy, disclose or take any action based on this message or any information herein. If you have received this message in error, please advise the sender immediately by sending a reply e-mail and delete this message. Thank you for your cooperation.

The educators' signs declare, "We want a fair settlement". The Board of Education also wants a "fair" settlement. We do not come to negotiations with the intent of depriving our educators of a "fair" contract. Indeed, the educators who are affected by the contract are the very people to whom we entrust our children on a daily basis. These educators are our friends, our neighbors, our spouses, our colleagues.

The problem lies in defining "fair". We can appreciate the difficulty experienced by the Union negotiation team in trying to determine "fair" among its members. Elementary teachers have needs which differ from High School teachers.

Paraprofessionals have needs which may differ from the needs of the teachers. To assimilate all the needs and desires into one platform is a herculean task. For the Board of Education, we not only need to address these needs brought to us by the Union. We also need to consider the needs and desires of taxpayers, parents, students and the community at large. We are obligated to follow State and Federal laws. We have a fiscal obligation to be certain that we can actually pay for all the contractual promises made.

Some people wonder why the district has funds to remodel buildings and build new ones, but not grant the requests made by the Union. A special referendum was passed in this community to provide the funds for the building projects. By law, those funds cannot be used for any expenses other than the building projects. By law, those funds cannot be used for education expenses, which include educator salaries.

The funds which the district receives and can be used for education expenses have been cut. This is true for two reasons. First, the State of Illinois has sent us less money each year for the past few years. We do not expect that to change. Second, our property values have remained flat, which means the amount of money we receive from property taxes has remained flat. This puts us in the situation of having an equal, or less, amount of money to spend each year, while inflation, salaries, and benefits require us to pay more money out each year. We do have savings. However, when we are spending more than we are taking in, eventually our savings will be exhausted.

This reality makes the Board of Education very concerned about promising "new" money. Our current contract has a salary schedule. Per that salary schedule, the majority of educators receive an increase in pay every year. For those educators who are on the teacher's salary schedule, we estimate that when they return to teaching this fall they will receive an increase in pay of two percent over that which they received last year. When these educators come back in the fall of 2015, they will again receive a pay increase. This salary schedule is published on the district's website.

The Union has asked that, in addition to the already agreed-upon, contractual raise, the salary schedule be increased. The Board is concerned about our ability to continue to raise the salary schedule each time there is a new contract negotiation, due to our concerns about flat or diminished funding.

Our current contract provides that if a long-time teacher gives the district a four year notice of their intent to retire, we will give them a six percent raise each year for four years. This allows the teacher to increase the amount of money they will receive under the pension system. We view this as a bonus to teachers who have devoted

much of their career to educating our students. When funds are available, bonuses are appropriate. However, in our current funding situation, we do not feel it is prudent to contractually obligate ourselves to this as a long-term obligation.

For more than 10 years, we've had a block schedule at Galesburg High School. We have received much feedback from parents who have indicated that there are problems with this schedule. Our current contract provides that the high school shall remain on a block schedule. The Board believes that the contractual right to the block schedule should be evaluated and possibly removed. A committee of educators, parents, administrators, students and community members should be assembled to evaluate the block schedule and make a recommendation to the Board.

During our last contract negotiation, the teachers expressed concern that they did not have enough time to handle paperwork and other duties which are best done without students in attendance. Both sides agreed to more early dismissal days. Now, three years later, we realize that we have so many early dismissal days that it makes a hardship for students and families. We hope to reach some sort of schedule which accommodates both the teachers and the families.

We believe a three year contract is in the best interest of our stakeholders. We do not want contracts to be so long-term that they become unfair and out of date, but they need to be long enough such that we can all return our attention to the kids and the classrooms. Our children need stability.

Our current contract provides that the Union president is released from one-half of his or her teaching load without reduction in salary or benefits. Stated differently, the Union president teaches half the day and attends to Union business during the other half of the day. The district continues to pay the president's full salary and benefits. We support the important work the president does for the Union, but we think it is inappropriate for that work to be subsidized with taxpayer money.

The Board is proud that many issues have been agreed-upon. The Board's negotiating team and the Union's negotiating team have worked hard, each trying to meet the disparate needs and wants of those they represent. The Board wishes to find the best combination of proposals which will allow educators to be fairly paid, in appropriate environments and with appropriate materials, so they can continue to do the often thankless job of providing excellence in education. But that combination of proposals must occur within a framework which also considers the needs of parents, students, taxpayers and our financial limitations.

We are saddened by this strike. We will continue to work with all stakeholders, hoping to facilitate discussion as to how we can accomplish our goals. We will be reaching out to local agencies to inquire as to ways we might be able to alleviate the hardship of working parents who may not have resources to deal with the delay in the start of the school year.

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000

F O R I M M E D I A T E R E L E A S E

As part of the offer made by the Board to the GEA on Tuesday, prior to the strike, the Board agreed to address the GEA's safety concerns by adding the following language to our board policy:

Safety: The following paragraph will be added to Board Policy 5:40 Communicable and Chronic Infectious Diseases:

Employees shall bring to the immediate attention of the Board any situation considered to be unsafe or unhealthy. If the Board determines that the situation is unsafe or unhealthy, but that work needs to continue, alternative work arrangements will be made. If the Board determines that working conditions pose a threat to the health or safety of students, every effort shall be made to correct the condition(s). No loss of pay, regular working hours, and/or benefits to affected Employees will occur. The Board shall make reasonable efforts to ensure a safe working environment.

We felt this was a fair compromise as it balanced the GEA's concerns about health and safety with privacy rights (specifically HIPAA laws) of students.

Recent media reports indicate that this issue has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the GEA. If there is a new proposal on this issue, we look forward to considering the new proposal when we can once again meet with the GEA and the mediator.

The Board firmly believes that our commitment to the building projects also addresses issues of work place safety. Educators and students at Lombard and Steele are already reaping the benefits of Operation Rebuild Achievement. We look forward to the opening of improved facilities at GHS and Silas Willard in the near future. These projects benefit our educators and our students.



Bart Arthur, Superintendent

August 14, 2014
Date

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205

**932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000**

F O R I M M E D I A T E R E L E A S E

The Galesburg CUSD #205 Board of Education has reached out to the federal mediator and are waiting on a response from the Galesburg Education Association (GEA) to determine the date for mediation to resume.


Bart Arthur
Bart Arthur, Superintendent

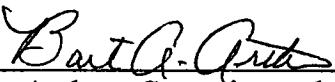
August 14, 2014
Date

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In the late afternoon on Thursday, August 14, 2014, the Board of Education received, through email and the mediator, a “supposal” from the Galesburg Education Association. The Board has reviewed it and a return “supposal” has been sent to mediator this morning.

Along with the contract proposal, the Board has sent a proposed agreement to the Galesburg Education Association, which, if agreed to, would allow all fall sports to resume practice. The Board looks forward to a response from the GEA.



Bart Arthur, Superintendent

August 15, 2014
Date

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Earlier this week, the high school football coach asked if the district was willing to give a waiver, or permission, for the football team to continue practicing during the strike. The district has the authority to grant such a waiver. At that time, the request was denied. The Board had several concerns, which led to the denial. The Board was concerned about interfering with the Union's right to strike. The Board did not want to create legal problems. The Board was also concerned about letting football players practice, but denying this opportunity to the other fall sports. The Board was concerned about the possible ramifications of letting boys play, but not girls. Finally, the Board was concerned about possible fallout from students and parents crossing the picket line to attend a practice.

On Thursday, the Board decided that we might be able to address these concerns with the Union such that we could feel comfortable with granting the waiver. The Board is not required to have the Union's permission to grant the waiver, but the decision to grant the waiver has implications for future dealings between the Board and the Union. It was the hope of the Board that we could agree on common principles concerning the waiver.

Through the mediator, the Board sent a written letter to the Union asking if they would agree, in writing, to the following:

1. Confirmation that the Union agrees with the decision to allow sports practices as in the best interests of students.
2. Confirmation that there will be no objection, at the picket line, to students or parents crossing the picket line.
3. Confirming the Union's support of all fall sports having the ability to practice.
4. Affirming that the Board decision to allow the waiver would not be used by the Union, at a later date, for legal action against the district.

The request to agree to these things in writing has been denied by the Union.

The Board has decided to grant the waiver for all fall sports. The Board does not wish to delay practice any longer and hopes that the grant of the waiver will not become an issue in the future. Practices may be held at the discretion of the coach so long as all rules and regulations for safety and supervision of students are followed. No coaches are required to have practices.


Bart Arthur, Superintendent

August 15, 2014
Date

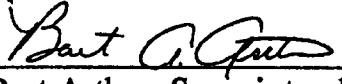
COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205

**932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Board of Education submitted a formal proposal tonight, August 24, 2014, to the Galesburg Education Association (GEA), which the Board feels addresses all of the remaining issues the GEA has with its employment. It is the Board's hope that this offer will solve the work stoppage and get our students back into their classrooms with their teachers.

Mediation is scheduled for Tuesday, August 26, 2014 at 2PM


Bart Arthur
Bart Arthur, Superintendent

August 24, 2014
Date

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205

**932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Message to the Public from the Board of Education of CUSD #205
August 25, 2014

Like many members of the community, the Board of Education is frustrated that our students are not in school as they should be at this time.

At the outset of the current strike, the union identified the following issues:

- Salary
- Length of contract
- Teacher retirement bonuses
- Just cause/
- Reduction in Force (RIF)
- Recall rights
- Work year
- Work hours
- Early dismissal days
- Building safety concerns
- Communicable diseases
- Student discipline

It is the Board's belief that agreement has been reached on all of these issues except for recall rights for teachers in the event of a reduction in force. This issue is complicated because of new provisions in the Illinois School Code, which mandates certain procedures. In good faith, the administration and members of the GEA have already developed our district evaluation plan through a joint committee with representatives from both groups. It is against the letter and the spirit of the new law to attempt to re-write the evaluation plan through the collective bargaining agreement, on short notice, and under the stressful conditions of the strike. The clear legislative intent of this law, which was passed by both houses of the Illinois legislature and signed into law by Governor Quinn, was to provide a system which allowed recall rights to be given to teachers with good evaluations and not just to teachers with the most seniority.

The Board of Education wants to see students back in school as soon as possible. However, the Board has a duty, and took an oath, to manage the district within the laws as created by the legislature. Within the confines of our duty to uphold the law, we will continue to work toward bringing this dispute to a conclusion as quickly as possible.

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 26, 2014

The Board of Education is disappointed to announce that no agreement was reached after eight hours of mediation today. The Board remains committed to following the Illinois School Code, and will not further rewrite the evaluation plan previously adopted by the joint committee of teachers and administrators. The Board has communicated this position to the Galesburg Education Association (GEA) since negotiations began in April.

The Board of Education is disappointed that the GEA insists on negotiating recall rights for teachers, which are in conflict with the state law. This insistence has delayed the start of school and disrupted the community at large. We have already lost eleven school days for our students and many of our athletes have missed important events.

Like many in the community, the Board of Education is disappointed that this continued strike will adversely affect the GHS football team. The team must have a sufficient number of wins to be eligible for state playoffs. As things stand, it appears unlikely that the team will be able to participate in Friday night's scheduled game with Moline.

The next mediation session is scheduled for Wednesday, August 27, 2014 at 10AM.

Galesburg CUSD No. 205
Board of Education

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
Phone: (309) 973-2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Galesburg Education Association and the Board of Education have officially ratified the contract for four years. Students in Galesburg CUSD No. 205 will officially start school on Friday, August 29, 2014. They will report to their respective buildings and we will have a 55-minute early dismissal.

Bright Futures students will begin on Tuesday, September 2, 2014.



Bart Arthur, Superintendent

August 28, 2014
Date



lison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Press Release

[View message](#)

Allison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Mon, Jul 28, 2014 at 6:09 PM

To: WGIL <news@wgil.com>, amartin@register-mail.com, Will Stevenson <wills@wgil.com>

Please see attached.

Alison

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

 **Press Release.pdf**
30K



Register Mail

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org> Fri, Aug 29, 2014 at 3:11 PM
 To: Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Bob Lindstrom-Work <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, Mike Panther-Home <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Work <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler-Home <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rwelty@galesburg205.org>, Rick Welty-Home <rickwelty@grics.net>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Tom Colclasure-Home <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Members of the Board,

This e-mail is to inform you that the Galesburg Register Mail questioned me about the dock days for teachers and paras. I couldn't push it off so there may be some press that will ignite the faculty even more. I have tried to remain professional, but I was very aggravated by the media for their insistence to keep the fires burning on this topic. I explained the need for the healing process to begin and that this would only stir up more emotions. I don't think it helped and Marty Hobe claimed I was hiding information, so I gave him our reason for making the teachers use dock days. If you don't work, unfortunately you don't get paid. The GEA chose to go out on strike and they should have told their members that they could suffer consequences for going on a work stoppage. Sorry to give this to you before the weekend, but I wanted you to know before the article ran.

Thank you,

Bart

--
 Alison Boone
 Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
 Galesburg CUSD #205
 932 Harrison Street
 Galesburg, IL 61401
 309.973.2101

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org> Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 4:33 AM
 To: BoardMembers <boardmembers@galesburg205.org>, Central Office Administrators <centralofficeadministrators@galesburg205.org>

It is 4:06am on Sunday morning and I could not sleep. Hard to believe? At any rate this is the e-mail I received from our board president and I could not wait until Tuesday to respond.

To address concerns of parents and teachers about not making up 5 days of school my response is as follows;
 - They were on a work stoppage for 11 days. Did this disrupt everything we had planned? Yes - The opening day ceremony to celebrate the trip to the Ron Clark academy. Diane and her team spent hours getting ready for a unique and exciting institute, all for not. We spent Title I money and had community organizations help us to fund this wonderful activity only to have it stopped because of the strike.

We gave up 5 of those days which will be made up and the teachers paid for days not worked. Less than 1/2 the

G
uok |

press release

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: David Braun <dbraun@millertracy.com>

Fri, Jul 25, 2014 at 9:39 AM

David,

Hear is my first draft of the press release. Please edit or delete sections or add to if you think we need more.

Thank you,

Bart



Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur.docx

15K

Draft

Press Release from Bart Arthur, Superintendent of CUSD #205

It is the goal of the Board of Education to get a settlement that will be fair to our tax payers and our teachers. The Board of Education currently faces a budget deficit of \$2.7 million. In spite of the current funding levels and the tough economic times, the board has made the following salary proposal to the Galesburg Education Association as of July 25, 2014:

Salary - Maintain the current salary schedule which allows for an average 2.02% raise in 2014, a 2.06% raise in 2015, as well as an additional .25% increase which will result in an overall average 2.27% raise in 2016.

The State has not met their obligation in funding the General State Aid formula for a number of years. The Board of Education's proposal also includes the opportunity for the GEA to request to reopen the contract exclusively for the purpose of bargaining wages, if the General State Aid is fully funded at 100% of the 2013-2014 formula structure.

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - press release



press release

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 9:34 PM

To: Panthers <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rickwelty@grics.net>, Bob Lindstrom <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>, Josh Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

I have sent the press release for David and Luke to look over and edit as needed. They requested that they send it to me in the morning. They needed to rest before editing, so I said that was fine. Please remain focused on settling and then the return to work agreement. Thank you and have a restful night.

Bart

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 10:19 PM

To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Bart

I must have missed something. What press release?

Tom

[Quoted text hidden]

bob@boblindstromlaw.com <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 10:24 PM

To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

What press release?

[Quoted text hidden]

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 7:52 AM

To: Bob Lindstrom <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

The press release on just cause and recall rights.

[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Collective bargaining



Collective bargaining

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 3:58 PM

To: Panthers <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rickwelty@grics.net>, Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>, Josh Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Bob Lindstrom <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Natalie Kessler <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

Good Afternoon,

We are disappointed that talks broke down today at 3pm. We are not scheduled to meet until Tuesday, August 26 at 2pm. The pressure will continue to mount until Tuesday so remember to stay strong and direct any media to my office. Please no, we are doing all we can to reach a fair settlement.

At this time, I would not recommend calling a special board meeting because it would give the perception that we are feeling the pressure. We are beginning to see some cracks in the GEA membership and would like for that to continue to grow. We will stay in touch and will call if we see the need to have a special meeting. David Braun recommends that we remain silent because we are very close to an agreement and anything stated in the press could result in movement backwards by the GEA. If you feel the need to put anything in the media, please send it to the office and we will get David's approval. In the meantime, Stay Strong.

Thank you,
Bart

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:01 PM

If we aren't meeting until Tuesday, we need to come out with press release on just cause and recall rights. Like, tomorrow. Please advise.

Sent from my iPhone
[Quoted text hidden]

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:04 PM

I agree. If you want to write it and send it to me, I will get it sent out. If you prefer to work in our office let me know. Thanks, Bart
[Quoted text hidden]

Natalie Kessler <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:12 PM

Thank you, Bart. I will plan to see you on Tuesday, but please let me know if you need any help. I will stay out of trouble, you do the same;)

Natalie Kessler

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Collective bargaining

Sent from my iPhone
[Quoted text hidden]

Bob Lindstrom <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:15 PM

Bart:

Since I am not part of the negotiating team, I obviously don't have all of the information that you have. That said, we are way beyond the time to put out to the public the fact that we cannot and will not violate Illinois law on the issues of just cause and recall rights. All of the emails I have received today relate to those two topics. Those are matters that resonate with some segments of the community. Some people see the issues as a matter of fairness as well as not costing money. I too agree there are cracks in the union and I believe the crack will get much wider if the membership learns what their team has been doing. The membership and the entire community need to know that since the first meeting between the parties, the union was advised that what they are seeking is illegal and will not be agreed to by the Board. The union is not above the law. It is sad that the union continues to use these issues to incite the public, especially at the so-called community meetings which will now be taking place. There is no reason to discuss these issues further with the union, and the Board needs to explain why it is having a problem coming to an agreement with a group that refuses to follow the law. That concept is understood by everyone I believe. In my opinion, this needs to be addressed immediately so that it is on the radio in the morning and in The Register-Mail on Thursday as well. Otherwise, the Board will be accused of stonewalling and delaying tactics. It is time to be out front.

Last weekend I watched a You Tube video of Brett Wolfe speaking at the rally in Lincoln Park. One of his points was he speaks to his students about the effect of things on the "average Joe". Well, the average Joe understands following the law.

Bob

From: Bart Arthur [mailto:barthur@galesburg205.org]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Collective bargaining

Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2014 3:59 PM

To: Panthers; Rick Welty; Molly Palmer; Josh Gibb; Bob Lindstrom; Natalie Kessler; Thomas Colclasure

Subject: Collective bargaining

[Quoted text hidden]

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Bob Lindstrom <bob@bobblindstromlaw.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:33 PM

Bob,

I have sent Molly an e-mail asking if she has the press release on just cause and recall rights. I have not hear back from her, but will get it out as soon as I can.

Thanks,

Bart

[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Fwd: Press Release



Fwd: Press Release

Nick Sutton <nsutton@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 3:59 PM

extremely well said!

have a relaxing weekend, you have Lombard's total support as long as all this takes!!!!

Nick Sutton
Principal Lombard Middle School
309-973-2004
Lombard Website

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Alison Boone** <aboone@galesburg205.org>
Date: Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 3:43 PM
Subject: Press Release
To: Nick Sutton <nsutton@galesburg205.org>, Nick Young <nyoung@galesburg205.org>, Tom Hawkins <thawkins@galesburg205.org>, Marilou Mol <mmol@galesburg205.org>, LeRoy VanMeter <rvanmeter@galesburg205.org>, Sharon Gonzalez <sgonzalez@galesburg205.org>, Ralph Henning <rhenning@galesburg205.org>

and it helps if its actually attached!
take 2.

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

Sports Press Release.pdf
51K

Nick Young <nyoung@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 4:51 PM

Great press release. Can this be sent to the entire district (i.e. teachers) so they can get the full press release?
Seems some media locations are leaving bits out. Go figure! Have a great weekend!
Thanks again,
Nick

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Fwd: Press Release

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Date: Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 3:43 PM

Subject: Press Release

To: Nick Sutton <nsutton@galesburg205.org>, Nick Young <nyoung@galesburg205.org>, Tom Hawkins <thawkins@galesburg205.org>, Marilou Mol <mmol@galesburg205.org>, LeRoy VanMeter <rvanmeter@galesburg205.org>, Sharon Gonzalez <sgonzalez@galesburg205.org>, Ralph Henning <rhenning@galesburg205.org>

and it helps if its actually attached!
take 2.

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

--
Nick Young
Assistant Principal/Athletic Director
Lombard Middle School
(309)-973-2004

 Sports Press Release.pdf
51K

Bart A. Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Nick Young <nyoung@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 7:18 PM

Thanks

Sent from my iPhone
[Quoted text hidden]

<Sports Press Release.pdf>

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Fwd: Press Release



Fwd: Press Release

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 4:30 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rick Welty** <rickwelty@grics.net>
Date: Friday, August 15, 2014
Subject: Press Release
To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Great job!

Rick

From: Alison Boone
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2014 3:39 PM
To: Robert Lindstrom ; Bob Lindstrom-Work ; Joshua Gibb ; Michael Panther ; Mike Panther-Home ; Molly Palmer ; Molly Palmer-Work ; Natalie Kessler ; Natalie Kessler-Home ; Rick Welty ; Rick Welty-Home ; Thomas Colclasure ; Tom Colclasure-Home
Subject: Press Release

The attached press release was sent to the media at 3:30pm.

Alison

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 4:30 PM

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Fwd: Press Release

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mike Panther** <mikepanther@gmail.com>
Date: Friday, August 15, 2014
Subject: Press Release
To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Great!

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 15, 2014, at 3:39 PM, Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org> wrote:

The attached press release was sent to the media at 3:30pm.

Alison

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

<Sports Press Release.pdf>

[Quoted text hidden]



letter from Board

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 14, 2014 at 12:13 PM

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

press release 8.12.2014.doc
29K

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Fwd: Press Release



Fwd: Press Release

Diane VanHootegem <dvanhootegem@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <bartur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 13, 2014 at 12:37 PM

Bart:

We still have "final offer" in the second paragraph. There is nothing we can do about it now, but wanted you to be aware.

Diane

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Date: Wed, Aug 13, 2014 at 10:50 AM

Date: Wed, May 16, 2012
Subject: Press Release

To: David Black <dblack@galesburg205.org>, Diane VanHootegem <dvanhootegem@galesburg205.org>, Tammie Bolden <tbolden@galesburg205.org>, Dawn Michaud <dmichaud@galesburg205.org>, Jonathan Bradburn <jbradburn@galesburg205.org>, Joan Hoschek <JHoschek@galesburg205.org>, Matt LeClere <mleclere@galesburg205.org>, Angela Stockman <astockman@galesburg205.org>, Matthew Lingafelter <mlingafelter@galesburg205.org>, Tom Hawkins <thawkins@galesburg205.org>, Nick Sutton <nsutton@galesburg205.org>, Roy VanMeter <rvanmeter@galesburg205.org>, Jason Spring <jspring@galesburg205.org>

This has been sent to the press this morning.

Alison

**Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101**

Strike Response Press Release.pdf

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Diane VanHootegem <dvanhootegem@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 13, 2014 at 1:04 PM

Yes, I have been made aware of it. Thank you, Bart
[Quoted text hidden]

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Fwd: Press Release

Diane VanHootegem <dvanhootegem@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 13, 2014 at 1:05 PM

Your radio interview was great!! Anything I need to prepare for special board mtg?
[Quoted text hidden]

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Diane VanHoetegem <dvanhoetegem@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 13, 2014 at 1:13 PM

Thank you Diane. I think we need to have any documentation of union activities that could be ULP's. The discussion will be on the ULP filed against us by the GEA. Bart
[Quoted text hidden]



Board Editorial

Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>

Tue, Aug 12, 2014 at 9:24 PM

To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>, "dblack@galesburg205.org" <dblack@galesburg205.org>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

press release 8.12.2014.doc
30K

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - press release



press release

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Mon, Jul 28, 2014 at 5:59 PM

Please send it out immediately.

Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur.docx
15K

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - update of the press release



update of the press release

1g@S

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Sun, Jul 27, 2014 at 8:44 AM

To: Central Office Administrators <centralofficeadministrators@galesburg205.org>

I have added to the press release just for the CO team to view. I wrote this out of frustration, but want you feedback about it.

If I haven't told you, I appreciate everything you have done, and will continue to do for the district.

Bart



Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur.docx

16K

Dawn Michaud <dmichaud@galesburg205.org>

Sun, Jul 27, 2014 at 3:31 PM

To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Cc: Central Office Administrators <centralofficeadministrators@galesburg205.org>

Thank you for all you do. I appreciate working on such a great team

Sent from Dawn's iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

> <Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur.docx>

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Interview



Interview

WGIL News <news@wgil.com>
To: barthur@galesburg205.org

Mon, Jul 28, 2014 at 9:13 PM

Bart,

I am in receipt of the press release. Thanks for the information. Would you be available tonight to answer a few questions? If so, please call me at 342-5200. I'll be here until 9:30 or so.

Thanks,

Tyler Maffitt

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)



(no subject)

David Braun <dbraun@millertracy.com>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Jul 25, 2014 at 1:08 PM

I made a very small change - call me when it is convenient (217-898-5172) and I can explain why the change, as well as an additional (positive) thought I had as I thought through the release.

Thank you,
David

--
David J. Braun
Miller, Tracy, Braun, Funk & Miller, Ltd.
316 S. Charter St., P.O. Box 80
Monticello, IL 61856
Telephone: 217-762-9416
Cellular: 217-898-5172
Facsimile: 217-762-9713
dbraun@millertracy.com

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Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur.docx
16K

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Jul 25, 2014 at 1:32 PM

[Quoted text hidden]

Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur.docx
16K

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - press release



>

press release

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: David Braun <dbraun@millertracy.com>

Fri, Jul 25, 2014 at 9:39 AM

David,

Hear is my first draft of the press release. Please edit or delete sections or add to if you think we need more.

Thank you,

Bart



Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur.docx

15K



channel 4

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Jul 24, 2014 at 4:20 PM

i sent this to you as a text as well but I'm not sure it went through:

channel 4 called and said they were sent a press release from the GEA. Said they plan to run the story tonight and that in an effort to present both sides and "keep things fair" he wanted to talk with you as well.
His name is Mike 309-786-5315

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101



Draft Press Release

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 14, 2014 at 12:26 PM

To: Robert Lindstrom <r.lindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Bob Lindstrom-Work <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, Mike Panther-Home <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Work <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler-Home <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <r.welty@galesburg205.org>, Rick Welty-Home <rickwelty@grics.net>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Tom Colclasure-Home <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, jgibb@ahealthycommunity.org

Molly and Bart have asked that you please look this over and email any suggestions, concerns or other.

Alisno

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

molly Safety Press Release 81414.pdf
72K

Draft

The educators' signs declare, "We want a fair settlement". The Board of Education also wants a "fair" settlement. We do not come to negotiations with the intent of depriving our educators of a "fair" contract. Indeed, the educators who are affected by the contract are the very people to whom we entrust our children on a daily basis. These educators are our friends, our neighbors, our spouses, our colleagues.

The problem lies in defining "fair". We can appreciate the difficulty experienced by the Union negotiation team in trying to determine "fair" among its members.

Elementary teachers have needs which differ from High School teachers.

Paraprofessionals have needs which may differ from the needs of the teachers. To assimilate all the needs and desires into one platform is a herculean task. For the Board of Education, we not only need to address these needs brought to us by the Union. We also need to consider the needs and desires of taxpayers, parents, students and the community at large. We are obligated to follow State and Federal laws. We have a fiscal obligation to be certain that we can actually pay for all the contractual promises made.

Some people wonder why the district has funds to remodel buildings and build new ones, but not grant the requests made by the Union. A special referendum was passed in this community to provide the funds for the building projects. By law, those funds cannot be used for any expenses other than the building projects. By law, those funds cannot be used for education expenses, which include educator salaries.

The funds which the district receives and can be used for education expenses have been cut. This is true for two reasons. First, the State of Illinois has sent us less money each year for the past few years. We do not expect that to change. Second, our property values have remained flat, which means the amount of money we receive from property taxes has remained flat. This puts us in the situation of having an equal, or less, amount of money to spend each year, while inflation, salaries, and benefits require us to pay more money out each year. We do have savings. However, when we are spending more than we are taking in, eventually our savings will be exhausted.

This reality makes the Board of Education very concerned about promising "new" money. Our current contract has a salary schedule. Per that salary schedule, the majority of educators receive an increase in pay every year. For those educators who are on the teacher's salary schedule, we estimate that when they return to teaching this fall they will receive an increase in pay of two percent over that which they received last year. When these educators come back in the fall of 2015, they will again receive a pay increase. This salary schedule is published on the district's website.

The Union has asked that, in addition to the already agreed-upon, contractual raise, the salary schedule be increased. The Board is concerned about our ability to continue to raise the salary schedule each time there is a new contract negotiation, due to our concerns about flat or diminished funding.

Our current contract provides that if a long-time teacher gives the district a four year notice of their intent to retire, we will give them a six percent raise each year for four years. This allows the teacher to increase the amount of money they will receive under the pension system. We view this as a bonus to teachers who have devoted much of their career to educating our students. When funds are available, bonuses are

appropriate. However, in our current funding situation, we do not feel it is prudent to contractually obligate ourselves to this as a long-term obligation.

For more than 10 years, we've had a block schedule at Galesburg High School. We have received much feedback from parents who have indicated that there are problems with this schedule. Our current contract provides that the high school shall remain on a block schedule. The Board believes that the contractual right to the block schedule should be evaluated and possibly removed. A committee of educators, parents, administrators, students and community members should be assembled to evaluate the block schedule and make a recommendation to the Board.

During our last contract negotiation, the teachers expressed concern that they did not have enough time to handle paperwork and other duties which are best done without students in attendance. Both sides agreed to more early dismissal days. Now, three years later, we realize that we have so many early dismissal days that it makes a hardship for students and families. We hope to reach some sort of schedule which accommodates both the teachers and the families.

We believe a three year contract is in the best interest of our stakeholders. We do not want contracts to be so long-term that they become unfair and out of date, but they need to be long enough such that we can all return our attention to the kids and the classrooms. Our children need stability.

Our current contract provides that the Union president is released from one-half of his or her teaching load without reduction in salary or benefits. Stated differently, the Union president teaches half the day and attends to Union business during the other half of the day. The district continues to pay the president's full salary and benefits. We support the important work the president does for the Union, but we think it is inappropriate for that work to be subsidized with taxpayer money.

The Board is proud that many issues have been agreed-upon. The Board's negotiating team and the Union's negotiating team have worked hard, each trying to meet the disparate needs and wants of those they represent. The Board wishes to find the best combination of proposals which will allow educators to be fairly paid, in appropriate environments and with appropriate materials, so they can continue to do the often thankless job of providing excellence in education. But that combination of proposals must occur within a framework which also considers the needs of parents, students, taxpayers and our financial limitations.

We are saddened by this strike. We will continue to work with all stakeholders, hoping to facilitate discussion as to how we can accomplish our goals. We will be reaching out to local agencies to inquire as to ways we might be able to alleviate the hardship of working parents who may not have resources to deal with the delay in the start of the school year.



Press Release

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Jul 25, 2014 at 2:04 PM

To: mpalmer@galesburg205.org, mpanther2@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, Bob Lindstrom-Work <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Mike Panther-Home <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Molly Palmer-Work <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, Natalie Kessler-Home <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Rick Welty-Home <rickwelty@grics.net>, Tom Colclasure-Home <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

When replying to this message, please ensure that you do not use the "Reply to All" button. Please reply only to the sender or to Mr. Bart Arthur, Superintendent, at barthur@galesburg205.org. Thank you!

Members of the Board:

Attached is the press release. This is not going out today. I would like you to look it over and share your thoughts with me. We will discuss it on Monday at the board meeting.

Bart

Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

Press Release on status of collective bargaining from Bart Arthur (1).pdf
181K

Draft

Press Release from Bart Arthur, Superintendent of CUSD #205

The Board of Education for CUSD #205 has made the following proposal to the Galesburg Education Association (GEA) for the contract since the initial offer sent to the Labor Board. The proposals on the main issues are:

1. Salary - proposed an average 2.8% raise in 2014, a 3.04% raise in 2015, and a 3.71% raise in 2016 for the 3 year period for certified staff. For paraprofessionals we have offered .5% for 2014 and 2015 and 3% for 2016. .
2. Retirement – the board has indicated its agreement to the union's proposed language for retirement.
To qualify one must have 20 or more years in district with age 55 and 35 years of service. 20-24 years = 4 years of 4%
25-29 years = 4 years of 5%
30 or more years = 4 years of 6%
No new hires would be eligible for the retirement bonus.
3. Early out days will remain as submitted to state for 2014 school year.
4. Many other issues have been dropped or tentatively agreed to by both sides. The board and administration wish to continue to meet with the GEA to come to a settlement. The next mediation session is scheduled for Tuesday, July 29 at 2pm.

It is the goal of the board to get a settlement that will be fair to our tax payers and the teachers. If the funding levels continue to remain stagnant or decrease, we will add to our deficit balance of \$2.7 million. Our proposal offers that the GEA may request to reopen the contract exclusively for the purpose of bargaining wages, only if the General State Aid is fully funded at 100% of the 2013-2014 formula structure.



FW: Press Release

Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>
To: Josh Gibb <jgibb@ahealthycommunity.org>
Cc: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 12:31 PM

From: Teresa Irons [teresa@boblindstromlaw.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 21, 2014 11:07 AM
To: Molly Palmer
Subject: Press Release

Molly:

See attached.

Very truly yours,

Teresa L. Irons, Legal Assistant to

Robert Lindstrom

Attorney at Law

Suite 412 Bondi Building

311 East Main Street

Galesburg, IL 61401

Telephone: (309) 343-3000

Facsimile: (309) 343-3001

Email: teresa@boblindstromlaw.com

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - FW: Press Release

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Please consider the environment before printing this email.

 **082114 CUSD press release.pdf**
26K

Draft

Two of the hot button issues in the ongoing teachers' strike are "just cause" and "recall rights" for teachers. Including terms addressing just cause and recall rights in the contract would violate Illinois law. The Union was informed of this at the very first meeting of the negotiating teams on April 24, 2014. The Union has repeatedly been told that the Board cannot and will not enter into a contract that violates Illinois law. Nevertheless, the Union has continued to raise these issues which have only inflamed and misled the public and prolonged the negotiations.

As the Union knows, the highest court in Illinois, the Illinois Supreme Court, has ruled that just cause provisions in a teachers' contract violate the Illinois School Code as they conflict with tenure rights already provided to teachers. The Board is obligated to follow the order of the Illinois Supreme Court. For clarity on this issue, the Board is providing the media the Opinion of the Illinois Supreme Court. Yes, other bargaining units with the District have just cause provisions in their contracts, however this is the case only because the teachers have the tenure rights set forth in the Illinois School Code which the other bargaining units do not.

As to the issue of recall rights, in 2012 the Illinois School Code was amended to address this issue. The terms are clear, tenured teachers do not have recall rights in the event of a reduction in force. Nevertheless, the Union wants the Board to enter into a contract which would provide for such recall rights in violation of the Illinois School Code. The Board cannot and will not rewrite the law which was approved by the Illinois House of Representatives, the Illinois Senate, and later signed by the Illinois Governor. As the Union knows, the issue of recall rights was raised in District 150 in Peoria. While negotiations with the Union have continued to take place, the Illinois Appellate Court in Ottawa, has issued an Opinion denying tenured teachers recall rights which supports the position of the Board. For clarity on this issue, the Board is providing the media with the Opinion of the Appellate Court which addressed the issue of recall rights.

The Union has alleged the District's school facilities are unsafe. All District facilities have been inspected on a regular basis as required by the Illinois State Board of Education. These inspections have not resulted in the Board being informed of any unsafe conditions in its facilities. The Board is, and always has been, dedicated to providing the students with a safe and secure learning environment.

Some members of the community have questioned why the Board has insisted on a mediator being present at all negotiating sessions. The Board is insistent on reaching an agreement with the Union that does not violate Illinois law. The fact that the Union is persisting in wanting to negotiate terms which violate Illinois law has resulted in the Board remaining firm in requiring the participation of a mediator from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

The Board is dedicated to hiring and retaining the best teachers possible for the students. The Board understands the entire community is weary of this senseless strike. The Board understands students want to be in the classroom. The strike can end swiftly as soon as the Union acknowledges it is not above the law.

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)



(no subject)

Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 3:39 PM

Where are we on issuing the press release?

Molly

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 9:02 PM

I have tried calling you several times with no success, but I am at the office now so please give me a call if you read this.

Thank you,
Bart

On Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 3:39 PM, Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com> wrote:

Where are we on issuing the press release?

Molly

Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 9:14 PM

Hi Bart,

I've been away from my phone. Sorry. I wish you weren't at the office. Please go home and rest. I know I am tired and cranky and I don't want to subject you to that!! I'll call you in the morning. Best, Molly

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 9:26 PM

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)

Ok, I will look forward to your call. You get some rest!!!

Bart

[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)



(no subject)

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 5:09 PM

To: Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Bob Lindstrom-Work <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, Mike Panther-Home <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Work <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler-Home <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rwelty@galesburg205.org>, Rick Welty-Home <rickwelty@grics.net>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Tom Colclasure-Home <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Members of the Board:

I am sorry that I was unable to get to this press release before now but my day was riddled with parent phone calls, parent demands to meet, principal's meeting, press conference, and a meeting at Carl Sandburg College.

I have reviewed the lengthier version of this press release and after David Braun's input, the CO team and I have concluded a more concise version is appropriate. This covers the RIF and recall rights only and will be more beneficial for our cause.

Although I continue to recommend that you remain silent, if you feel compelled to send out information this is a version I can support. Please advise.

Bart

--
Alison Boone
Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison Street
Galesburg, IL 61401
309.973.2101

Draft 82014.pdf
96K

Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 6:12 PM

Bart:

This is going to come off nasty, and I am very sorry for that.

This release is awful. It fails to clearly address the issues being discussed by the public. It shows tone deafness. It has no sizzle. Nobody will read it, let alone understand the message, whatever it may be.

Please leave this activity to the board members. At least two of us make a living persuading others. We also have clue about what is going on in the community, including the union. This is a critical time. It is not amateur hour.

I was appalled at what I heard from the union people this afternoon. For the umpteenth time their spokesperson

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)

uttered outright lies. She must be called out now and sternly.

Bart, the biggest thing the board has going for it is it's credibility. I hear this time and again. I know you want to be professional, and you are worried about relations after this is over, but failing to throw a punch at this time means the board's credibility is being messed with. I don't like that. Period.

Please agree to let the board fire back with appropriate toughness. The response can come from the board and not you. We need to act now.

Bob

[Quoted text hidden]

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96K

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 9:15 PM

Bob,

I understand and I tried to call you at 9:15pm to talk about this. If I don't reach you tonight I will try again in the morning.

Bart

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)



(no subject)

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 5:03 PM

Members of the Board:

I am sorry that I was unable to get this to the press release before now but my day was riddled with parent phone calls, parent demands to meet, principal's meeting, press conference, and a meeting at Carl Sandburg College.

I have reviewed the lengthier version of this press release and after David Braun's input, the CO team and I have concluded a more concise version is appropriate. This covers the RIF and recall rights only and will be more beneficial for our cause.

Although I continue to recommend that you remain silent, if you feel compelled to send out information this is a version I can support. Please advise.

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

Draft 82014.pdf
96K

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - press release



press release

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>

Sun, Aug 24, 2014 at 7:18 PM

Hi Molly,

Here is the press release. Look it over and edit as needed. Thanks, Bart

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

Press Release August 24 2014.docx
15K

Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>
To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Sun, Aug 24, 2014 at 7:30 PM

My suggestion in *italics*. We can discuss further. MEP

From: Bart Arthur [barthur@galesburg205.org]
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2014 7:18 PM
To: Molly Palmer
Subject: press release

[Quoted text hidden]

Press Release August 24 2014.docx
12K

Draft

Press Release from Bart Arthur, Superintendent of CUSD #205

The Board of Education submitted a formal proposal tonight, August 24, 2014, to the Galesburg Education Association (GEA) which the Board feels addresses all of the remaining issues the GEA has with its employment. It is the Board's hope that this offer will solve the work stoppage and get our students back into their classrooms with their teachers.

On Sunday, August 24, 2014 the Board of Education and the Galesburg Education Association met for approximately three hours. The Board of Education has tendered a formal proposal to the GEA, attempting to address all remaining issues. It is the hope of the Board that this offer will be taken to the GEA membership for a vote.



Register Mail

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org> Fri, Aug 29, 2014 at 3:11 PM
 To: Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Bob Lindstrom-Work <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, Mike Panther-Home <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Work <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler-Home <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rwelty@galesburg205.org>, Rick Welty-Home <rickwelty@grics.net>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Tom Colclasure-Home <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Members of the Board,

This e-mail is to inform you that the Galesburg Register Mail questioned me about the dock days for teachers and paras. I couldn't push it off so there may be some press that will ignite the faculty even more. I have tried to remain professional, but I was very aggravated by the media for their insistence to keep the fires burning on this topic. I explained the need for the healing process to begin and that this would only stir up more emotions. I don't think it helped and Marty Hobe claimed I was hiding information, so I gave him our reason for making the teachers use dock days. If you don't work, unfortunately you don't get paid. The GEA chose to go out on strike and they should have told their members that they could suffer consequences for going on a work stoppage. Sorry to give this to you before the weekend, but I wanted you to know before the article ran.

Thank you,

Bart

--
Alison Boone
 Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
 Galesburg CUSD #205
 932 Harrison Street
 Galesburg, IL 61401
 309.973.2101

Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com> Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 11:43 AM
 To: Tom Colclasure <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Tom Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>
 Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Tom, I sent this to Bart this am. I am working on a plan of how to present the idea of going to a full calendar. I think my plan does contain some restorative justice. I'll let you know when I have it worked out.

Mike

Begin forwarded message:

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Register Mail

From: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Register Mail

Date: August 30, 2014 11:39:44 AM CDT

To: Bart A. Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Bart, I have given careful thought to the 6 nonattendance / dock days. The enclosed attachment is a pros and cons list that I have made. I really think we should do what we can to restore the full calendar.

Mike

On Aug 29, 2014, at 4:38 PM, Bart A. Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org> wrote:

If we make them up they get paid.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 29, 2014, at 4:04 PM, Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com> wrote:

Bart,

He must have called me right after he talked to you and asked why all of the school days would not be made up. I told him that I did not want to make a response at this time, and that since I voted for the contract, I would refer to what you had already told him. But Bart, I want you to know that, now that I have thought about it, I am not pleased that we are cutting six days off of the calendar, that we tend to lose six days of state aid, and that regardless of our reasoning, the dock days seem vindictive. Sure the union leadership has to be accountable for the havoc that they caused the community, but we aren't making it easy for the healing process to occur by taking the stand that we have. I'm still thinking this over and trying to sort everything out in my mind, but right now I don't think that we have made the right choice even though our reasoning may be correct.

Mike

Benefits of not rewarding teachers who were on strike

Union will feel **consequence of their action**. May serve as **future strike deterrent**. (Although some are saying this makes a future strike more likely.)

May cause membership to **doubt their leadership**.

Administrators & Board team had **hurt feelings** over treatment by GEA negotiators. Want that recognized. (Does this really make them feel better?)

Damage done by “non-reward”:

Students lose six instructional days.

(HS students equivalent of 12 days) AP courses & drivers' ed hours hit hard

Eroded public/ parent trust. (And not just the ‘crazies;’ also the rational people who tried to defend the Board’s actions during strike.) They feel like their kids are being ‘robbed.’

Teachers in the ‘pipeline’ are punished for the rest of their lives by reduced income. (whether they wanted to strike or not.)

Loss of state aid

Economic hit to an already depressed local economy and eroded business trust. (also by people who may have supported the administration during the strike.)

Union leadership tried to paint a “Machavellian” picture of an administration that had no sense of loyalty to good, experienced teachers and would RIF them just to save money. There’s no history of that happening in #205, but the **back to work agreement reinforces that lack of trust in the minds of teachers and community members.**

Not all teachers wanted to strike, but all are suffering the consequences of their poor GEA leadership. A lot of teachers just wanted to go to work and stay out of the fray. The administration has now created a ‘common enemy,’ which will ultimately benefit the union.

Keeps discontent in the forefront and doesn’t allow for working together for the common good anytime soon. Doesn’t encourage open communication or allow healing to begin.

Downside of restoring days lost:

GEA isn't 'punished.' (But by punishing the GEA, who else punished?)

GEA isn't being held accountable for its actions.

Pride?

Positives for restoring days:

Allows everyone to move on. Healing won't start until we can change the conversation.

This **gesture** on the part of the Board would demonstrate that they truly have the best interest in the students and staff at heart, and want to move forward.

Acknowledges overwhelming support from members of the community who want the full number of student attendance days restored.

Restored dock days benefit the community economically.

Restored days benefit all students.

Board/administration show positive rather than negative leadership.

The real question isn't whose feelings were hurt or who was maligned by other side. Those are personal and emotional responses.

Can we give a good answer to the public about why the **students** are losing instructional days (other than to "not reward teachers for going on strike?")

What's in the best long-term interest of the community?

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Shortened School Calendar



Shortened School Calendar

Tom & Barb <barb_sherwin_654@comcast.net>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 4:22 AM

To: rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, mpanther2@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, barthur@galesburg205.org

Galesburg District 205 Board Members & Superintendent,

As a tax payer & registered voter I have never felt the need to personally voice my views until you included the Shortened School Calendar in the teachers return to work agreement. I just want to let you know that I strongly disagree with your decision of a Shortened School Calendar. I've read many of the letters that have been sent to various people in regards to this matter. I'm sure each of you have received your fair share of long emails. I'll keep mine short.

I hope you reconsider & reinstate the days you removed. I also hope to see at the very least a collective apology to the students, the teachers, & the community.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Sherwin

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:28 PM

To: Tom & Barb <barb_sherwin_654@comcast.net>

Barbara,

Thank you for your email. I too am dismayed at the fact that our students will lose 6 attendance days. I do feel that those days should be added on to the calendar. I have already told other board members that we should adopt a calendar that includes the full 174 attendance days. I also agree with you that there should be an apology to the students and the community for the fact that this strike occurred.

Sincerely,
Mike Panther
[Quoted text hidden]

Tom & Barb <barb_sherwin_654@comcast.net>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 5:15 PM

To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

Mr. Panther,

Thank you for your reply. I'm very pleased to hear you agree with me on this issue. Please let me know what else I can do as a member of the community to get District 205 to actually adopt a calendar that includes the full 174 attendance days?

Barbara Sherwin

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Shortened School Calendar

From: Michael Panther
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2014 2:28 PM
To: Tom & Barb
Subject: Re: Shortened School Calendar

[Quoted text hidden]



CUSD 205 School Calendar

Gabrielle Raley <gabe.raley@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 6:47 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, barthur@galesburg205.org, dblack@galesburg205.org

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I write to express my displeasure over the terms of the Return-to-Work agreement you recently reached with the GEA. With two children enrolled at Silas Willard this year, I am appalled to learn of the reduction from 174 days of student attendance to 168.

Mr. Arthur, you were quoted in today's Register Mail saying, "We would lose money from state aid [for reducing student attendance days], but it would be a wash, or the district will come out in front without paying the teachers' salaries." I take that statement to mean that state aid would offset most but perhaps not all of what it would cost to restore these six lost days to the calendar.

The most generous construction I can give to your shortening of the calendar is that the administration would rather save money than teach children. The state requires that children be in school for a minimum of 174 days. Would not most administrators strive to give them even more than that? A less generous construction is that the administration would rather punish teachers than teach children. Of course your constituents hope and trust that this is not the case, and I am eager to have this impression proved false.

I ask that you restore these six student attendance days to the calendar. If you find that you cannot, I ask that you explain to the parents and the community how losing these six days is in the best interests of the children.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Raley
818 Brown Ave
Galesburg, IL 61401

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>
To: Gabrielle Raley <gabe.raley@gmail.com>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:43 PM

Gabrielle.

Thank you for your email. I too am dismayed at the fact that our students will lose 6 attendance days. I do feel that those days should be added on to the calendar. I have already asked other board members to adopt a calendar that includes the full 174 attendance days. I hope that they agree.

Sincerely,
Mike Panther
[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - CUSD 205 School Calendar

Gabrielle Raley <gabe.raley@gmail.com>
To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 3:24 PM

Thank you so much for your reply, Mike. It is wonderful to know you are listening!

**Best,
Gabrielle**

[Quoted text hidden]



Open Letter to you and to the Register Mail

Nancy Eberhardt <neberhar@knox.edu>
To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org
Cc: Steve Cohn <scohn@knox.edu>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 11:57 PM

Mike,

Steve and I wrote this jointly and are sending a copy to the Register-Mail. (It bears only my signature because of the newspaper's policy that letters be "single author.") We sincerely hope you will find a way to use your position to help move things forward.

Nancy and Steve

An Open Letter to the President of the Board of Education

Dear Mr. Panther,

As the current President of the Board of Education, you are in a unique position to help our community move forward. Statements reported in Saturday's paper suggest that the Board's decision to shorten the school year was largely punitive, a way to "not reward" the teachers for going on strike. But punishing teachers who felt they had exhausted all other avenues to redress their concerns is not the way to build trust. I am making a last-ditch appeal to you, as Board President, to rise to the occasion and exercise the leadership needed in our current situation. I urge you to reverse decisions taken in the midst of a contentious argument. By doing so, you can strengthen the education of our children. You can bring hundreds of thousands of dollars of additional purchasing power of state funds into our community. You can add income to our underpaid teachers. You can impart positive momentum to the school year.

While the teacher's strike was unfortunate in many ways, it has increased solidarity among the teachers and reaffirmed the town's respect for our teachers. The Board should not view this outcome as a threat, but as an asset. We *need* energized and self-respecting teachers, and we are fortunate to have a community that understands this and supports them. Rather than trying to punish what is ultimately one of our most important assets, the teachers of our children, by tactics that also reduce the flow of state money into Galesburg, the Board should be lobbying Springfield for a larger and fairer share of state revenues for poorer school districts like ours. In short, we need the Board to act as the teachers' greatest advocate, not their most formidable opponent. The alternative leads to resentment, acrimony, economic hardship, and poorer schooling.

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Open Letter to you and to the Register Mail

Although the strike has ended, the manner in which it was ended did not create a climate in which people could begin the process of healing. In fact, it ended in a way that actually *increased* the animosity and distrust. This could be a pivotal point in the history of community, and few people are positioned to have more impact on the direction it takes than you are. I hope your legacy as Board President will be that of someone who was willing to act boldly, repair the damage, and help us move forward.

Sincerely,

Nancy Eberhardt

--
Nancy Eberhardt, Professor and Chair
Department of Anthropology and Sociology
Knox College

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>
To: Nancy Eberhardt <neberhar@knox.edu>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:37 PM

Nancy and Steve,

Thank you for your email. I appreciate your sentiments. I did vote for the contract on Thursday after it had been ratified by the teachers. Included in that vote was the back to work agreement that has been so distasteful to many. My "aye" vote was because I felt that students should be back in school. I do agree with you that the 6 nonattendance days were not necessary and I do feel that those days should be added on to the calendar. I have already asked other board members that we adopt a calendar that includes the full 174 attendance days. I hope that they agree.

Sincerely,
Mike Panther
[Quoted text hidden]

Nancy Eberhardt <neberhar@knox.edu>
To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>
Cc: Steve Cohn <scohn@knox.edu>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 3:19 PM

Thanks for your reply, Mike. Both Steve and I find this a very encouraging development.
We wish you the best of luck in making this happen!

Nancy and Steve
[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Length of the School Year



Length of the School Year

Duane Oldfield <doldfiel@knox.edu>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 1:44 PM
To: "mpanther2@galesburg205.org" <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, "rlindstrom@galesburg205.org"
<rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>, "jgibb@galesburg205.org" <jgibb@galesburg205.org>,
"mpalmer@galesburg205.org" <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, "tcolclasure@galesburg205.org"
<tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, "nkessler@galesburg205.org" <nkessler@galesburg205.org>,
"rwelty@galesburg205.org" <rwelty@galesburg205.org>

Dear School Board Members,

I am writing to express my dismay at the decision to significantly shorten the school year. I would be happy to see vacations trimmed and school go a little longer in May or June in order for my daughters to have a full year of instruction. As a recent Register Mail article indicated, Knoxville had no trouble making a similar adjustment to its school year in order to accommodate a late opening of their new high school. What I found particularly distressing were Bart Arthur's recent comments in the Register Mail that clearly implied that a key motivation for shortening the school year was to penalize the striking teachers. (Hopefully, this is not your motivation for supporting a shortened school year.) Teachers, administration, and the school board will need to work together after a difficult strike. Choosing a plan that imposes a significant financial penalty on teachers and shortchanges students is not the best way forward. It looks vindictive and will not promote healing. I hope that you will revisit this issue and decide to reinstate a full academic schedule.

Sincerely,

Duane Oldfield

*If you do stick with the shortened school year, fairness would indicate that the pain should be spread evenly. Bart Arthur and other top administrators did not have their usual superintending and administrating to do during the strike. Their pay should be cut as well.

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

To: Duane Oldfield <doldfiel@knox.edu>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:48 PM

Duane,

Thank you for your email. I too am dismayed at the fact that our students will lose 6 attendance days. I do feel that those days should be added on to the calendar. I have already asked other board members to work with me to adopt a calendar that includes the full 174 attendance days. I hope that they agree.

Sincerely,

Mike Panther

[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - school calendar



school calendar

Emily Anderson <agentgodiva@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 4:14 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, barthur@galesburg205.org, dblack@galesburg205.org

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I write to express my displeasure over the terms of the Return-to-Work agreement you recently reached with the GEA. Specifically, I am appalled at the reduction, this year, from 174 days of student attendance to 168.

Mr. Arthur, you were quoted in today's *Register Mail* saying, "We would lose money from state aid [for reducing student attendance days], but it would be a wash, or the district will come out in front without paying the teachers' salaries." I take that statement to mean that state aid would offset most but perhaps not all of what it would cost to restore these six lost days to the calendar.

The most generous construction I can give to your shortening of the calendar is that the administration would rather save money than teach children. The state requires that children be in school for a minimum of 174 days. Would not most administrators strive to give them even more than that? Do we not all agree that *going to school* is in the children's best interest? Should we not spend whatever it takes to meet, at least, the very minimum that the law requires?

A less generous construction is that the administration would rather punish teachers than teach children. Of course your constituents hope and trust that this is not the case, and I am eager to have this impression proved false.

I ask that you restore these six student attendance days to the calendar. If you find that you cannot, I ask that you explain to the parents and the community how losing these six days is in the best interests of the children.

Sincerely,

Emily Anderson
948 N. Cherry St.
Galesburg, IL 61401

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

To: Emily Anderson <agentgodiva@gmail.com>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:47 PM

Emily,

Thank you for your email. I too am dismayed at the fact that our students will lose 6 attendance days. I do feel that those days should be added on to the calendar. I have already asked other board members to adopt a calendar that includes the full 174 attendance days. I hope that they agree.

Sincerely,
Mike Panther
[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - please restore all instructional days



please restore all instructional days

Karen Kampwirth <kkampwir@knox.edu>
To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 4:47 PM

Dear Mr. Panther,

Please do whatever you can to right a really big wrong. As you probably know, in today's Register Mail Bart Arthur is paraphrased:

"Arthur said he has been quiet about docked days because he is trying to mend the community after the strike divided it. He said he wants to move on from the strike and move forward with transitioning students back to school."

Is he serious in saying that you want to move on from the strike? Is he serious in saying that he wants to mend the community? Punishing teachers, punishing hourly staff, punishing students, punishing parents, is not the way to mend the community.

I have two daughters, one who just started at GHS, one who just started at Churchill. I have been impressed by the skill and dedication of their teachers over the years. But they need time to teach. And my children need their full instructional days.

The job of the superintendent and the Board is not primarily to protect the football schedule. It is to protect the instructional year. There is still time for you to restore the full year.

thanks for all your efforts, Karen Kampwirth

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>
To: Karen Kampwirth <kkampwir@knox.edu>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:46 PM

Karen,

Thank you for your email. I too am dismayed at the fact that our students will lose 6 attendance days and I am concerned about the divisiveness that the back to work agreement has caused. I do feel that those days should be added on to the calendar. I have already asked other board members to adopt a calendar that includes the full 174 attendance days. I hope that they agree.

Sincerely,
Mike Panther
[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - the bad taste in my mouth



the bad taste in my mouth

Robin Ragan <rragan@knox.edu>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 11:24 AM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>, dblack@galesburg205.org

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I write to express my displeasure over the terms of the Return-to-Work agreement you recently reached with the GEA. I have followed the strike and the communications from the sidelines, trying to hear each sides rationales. Today, the editorial in the paper summed up exactly what I was feeling:

"The 15-day teachers' strike seemed more like a prize fight than a negotiation. At least we hoped for an amicable finish, where teachers and District 205 would shake hands and put an end to the animosity that characterized the work stoppage. **Instead, we saw a punch below the belt by the district that has left teachers feeling bitter and shorts some 4,300 students on the full school year they deserve.** After a tentative deal was reached Thursday morning on a four-year contract, both sides added a return-to-work agreement that reduces the number of student attendance days from 174 to 168. The district clearly had the upper hand in negotiations — teachers were days away from losing their health insurance and had already missed one paycheck — and used that leverage to punish teachers with a school year that will dock them six days of pay."

I would also add that I feel Superintendent Arthur, in particular, has consistently created an atmosphere of anti-teacher sentiment, through his statements to the press, that I found shocking. Is it any wonder parents are rushing to defend teachers?

I hope the board can revisit the issue of lost days. I imagine the board miscalculated the response from parents. But more importantly, the board and Mr. Arthur need to reach out to teachers to heal these wounds.

Robin Ragan
parent of two district 205 students

"Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going."

—Rita Mae Brown

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>
To: Robin Ragan <rragan@knox.edu>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:13 PM

Robin,

I too am dismayed at the 6 nonattendance days. I voted in favor of the contract, which included those days, because I felt that students needed to go back to school. I do plan to petition for the 6 days to be added back on to the calendar.

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - the bad taste in my mouth

Thank you for your sentiments,
Mike
[Quoted text hidden]

Robin Ragan <rragan@knox.edu>
To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 2:30 PM

Thank you so much for taking time to answer. I look forward to hearing how this discussion goes.
Please let me know if I can do anything to help.

Robin

Robin Ragan
Knox College
Associate Professor of Modern Languages (Spanish)
Director, Eleanor Stellyes Center for Global Studies
& the Peace Corps Prep Program
(309) 341-7445
cell for emergencies (309) 335-4061

“Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going.”

–Rita Mae Brown
[Quoted text hidden]



2014-15 school year

Mary Jane Shroyer <mjshroyer@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 29, 2014 at 10:51 PM

To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org

Mr. Panther and members of the Board,

It caused me great concern to hear that we will not be making up missed days due to the strike. I understand the board's desire to be punitive, but this seems for all the world like an emotional response in a time of great stress. The idea that the district would punish high school students preparing for SAT, PSAT, ACT, and AP exams, junior high and elementary students preparing for ISAT exams, and special needs students requiring therapy is distasteful and disheartening. If the board was hoping to repair its image in the community and restore trust with the teachers, I fear you have squandered any remaining chance.

Throughout the contract negotiations and strike, my husband and I have worked diligently to understand the issues at play, often with little to no information coming from the board, and we have tried to maintain a moderate stance, supporting those issues we deemed to be in the best interest of the district's students regardless of which side proposed them. That meant we spent a great deal of time over the last two weeks working to inform parents about legal concerns with just cause and recall rights and drumming up support for the board's position. I now find myself embarrassed and disappointed to have been vocal with that support. I feel hurt and betrayed, like you have sold out my children in a misguided attempt to prove a point.

I do not expect my letter will change your minds – for all I know there is no going back since the contract was ratified (but how can I know since you have not seen fit to inform the taxpayers and parents about what is happening? Why are your principals being cagey and shifty when asked about the calendar? It is bizarre and pathetic to watch). I do have to wonder if you will be prorating the fees which we paid for my two children and refunding the difference since you have chosen to short us six attendance days for each?

Sincerely,

--
Mary Jane Shroyer
mjshroyer@gmail.com
(309) 344-0158 (home)
(309) 299-1711 (cell)

Mr. Panther, (sorry, I still have to call you that!)

I am very relieved that the contract has been settled and that the professionals in this district can return to their classrooms and hopefully do the job we are hired to do: teach children, and teach them well. I admit that I am fearful that this duty will not be fulfilled in the near future, as many will continue to struggle with the outcome of the agreement.

As you may be aware, I made the decision to cross the line on Monday and returned to my classroom. It was a decision that was very difficult to make, but in the end I had to answer to my own self about my actions and doing what I believed was right. I could no longer stand behind the actions of my organization while I had children with special needs in my classroom without an appropriate teacher. Understand, again, I do not tell you this for any personal gain. My staff mostly welcomed me with open arms, but the wrath from some individuals will end no time soon, especially after my name was listed on a large screen in front of the membership at yesterday's meeting.

I am emailing you now to better understand the decision on behalf of the school board in regards to our terms to return to work. Many are accusing the board of "flat-out punishment". I'm sure you are already aware of this. Please do not take any of my questions as accusations - I don't want to be a part of that rhetoric right now. I decided I would ask you as I feel this is where I might be likely to get the most honest answers. I already have to be in defense mode with many with my decision to cross, but I have my information I need to do so. I would like to know answers to some of these questions so I am able to respond when questioned.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ui=2&ik=8eb269b38a&view=pt&cat=FOIA-9-8-14&search=cat&th=147ffcd33dd7f8f2&siml=147ffcd33dd7f8f2&siml=1...> 3/5

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Apology from GEA Member

1. Why did the board decide not to add days to the school year/not take holidays (with waivers, if we already have them) or break days to make it to at least the 174 day mark? My concern is that we say we are all here for the students, so it would seem we would want them in attendance for as many days as possible. Yes, I realize the union chose to strike and delay the start of school; however, if we could still add days to the end of the year, I guess I question why we wouldn't want to do that. Bart made reference to a law - can you explain more on that?
2. Will the district "save" money by giving us dock days? Reports have claimed that the district will stand to gain \$400-500,000 by giving us these dock days. Do you know what this would be in reference to?
3. These terms were negotiated, correct?

Separate question, and I'm not sure if you can answer it or not, but: Was the issue of combining Groups 3 and 4 indeed dropped from negotiations last Tuesday? I realize there are laws regarding these meetings but our chief negotiator stated this on a public forum on Facebook, so I took that as it was information that could be shared.

I truly hope that I receive an honest response from you, and I truly hope it was not the intent of the board to "punish" the teachers for holding a strike. Even though I did not agree with all of the actions of my union, I still believe that unions are a benefit to teachers to be able to collectively bargain with their employers and provide themselves with protection. I would hope the board is respectful of this and of their right to strike. All parties involved are supposed to and should be expected to conduct ourselves in an adult manner. Again, I do not ask these questions in an accusatory manner, but rather I am seeking an understanding from someone I trust will be truthful.

I hope that the board will be able to return to their lives as normal as possible, as is the same wish for the teachers and staff. This has obviously had a deep impact on all involved, which is unfortunate.

Thank you once again for your time,
Margie Rhoades
[Quoted text hidden]

Margie,

First of all, I have to congratulate you on taking a stand on what you believe is right. You made a decision that was, and likely will be, difficult for you. I hope that things can return to normal for you soon.

I think I'll deal with the punishment question first. And I trust that you understand that this is confidential, for the time being anyway. Wednesday night, after a settlement on the contract issues was reached, I and other board members were called (you have to remember that only 2 board members were involved in negotiations, the rest of us were at home with occasional updates) and asked what we should do about back to work issues. I was asked if I could support the six dock days that became part of the final agreement. My response was to do what was needed to get a settlement, but that it wouldn't bother me if there were no dock days. Now for the purpose of the dock days. I don't think the word punishment was ever used. The purpose that was conveyed to me and other board members was that there had to be dock days so that the GEA would not want to strike next time. And interestingly, I heard exactly that same reasoning from a former superintendent friend of mine this am. The question to your question then becomes, "Does trying to make someone not strike again constitute punishment?"

Right now I can't answer that, though I am trying to do that in my mind. And even though I really do think that all school days should be made up, and that we can ill-afford to lose state aid, and that I am trying as hard as I can to be forgiving of the behavior of the union leadership during this whole process, I still think there needs to be a way to get a message to the union leadership that they cannot act the way that they have if their true interests are in what is best for students. What that way is, I don't know, and I don't know if it is possible for the board to deliver the message.

I did vote for the contract with the dock days included. I most of all felt that we had to get kids back in school. I don't think that the majority of the board would have voted for the contract without the dock days. I suppose that I took a cowardly way out in not holding out for the dock days to be removed. I don't know. I do know that I have felt awful about the result of this since we voted. All day today I have been trying to think of a way to have a full

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ui=2&ik=8eb269b38a&view=pt&cat=FOIA-9-8-14&search=cat&th=147ffcd33dd7f8f2&siml=147ffcd33dd7f8f2&siml=1...> 4/5

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Apology from GEA Member

calendar for the students while still getting a message to the union leadership that what they have done has been wrong.

Now to your other questions.

#1 I think I answered the first part of it. It is not so much that the board didn't want 174 attendance days as they felt that there needed to be a way for the union to realize that they should not strike the next time. I don't know about the law that Bart referred to.

#2 I don't think we know how the dock days will affect the financial bottom line. I'm sure that the actual dollar amount has not been worked out. With that said, the dock days are not being used as a money-saving method.

#3 The dock days were negotiated. It took from 3:00 pm to 2:00 am to reach that agreement.

As for your question about dropping the combination of 3's and 4's on Tuesday, I don't know how or when that occurred. Again, I was not in the negotiation meetings. Unfortunately for us, we did not always have all of the information either.

I agree with you on the importance of unions, collective bargaining, and the right to strike. Unfortunately, I think in this case, the union leadership was not bargaining in good faith for the whole of the membership, that they were intent on striking (possibly from the start) when there really wasn't a need to do so, that they created an us against them attitude, and that they were more than willing to use their own members for their own purposes.

Right now I am searching for what my next step should be. I probably need a little more time to get a better perspective. I hope that things go well for you over the next weeks and months.

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - shortened school year



shortened school year

Vickie Banks <vjb1@grics.net>

Fri, Aug 29, 2014 at 12:02 PM

Reply-To: vjb1@grics.net

To: bhattar@roe33.net

Cc: jcolley@roe33.net, mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org

The purpose of this communication is to voice my strong objection to the Board's decision to shorten the 2014-15 school year. If there is a reason for this that somehow benefits the students then I would appreciate being enlightened. There is ample time in the year to make up all of the days of the strike that delayed the start of school. Shortening Spring break and adding days at the end of the year would still find the children out of school before the end of May. Even if snow days are used they would only be attending class in the first week of June. This decision appears to be punitive and vindictive in nature. The community will see ramifications from the loss of revenue as well. The restoration of these days would benefit students and also send a message of support to the teachers. I sincerely hope that this Board is not so shallow as to feel it is professional or in the best interests of the district and its students to follow through with this plan. I believe!

The regional superintendent has to approve the school calendar so I implore her to consider seriously all of the messages this decision sends to students, teachers, parents, and the community.

Sincerely, Vickie Banks

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - concerns about work stoppage



concerns about work stoppage

Dan & Julie Williams <djjmkwilliams@grics.net>
To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org

Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 2:33 PM

Board Members,

Please read and consider.

Thank you,

Julie Williams

district 205 letter.docx
15K

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>
To: Dan & Julie Williams <djjmkwilliams@grics.net>

Sun, Aug 24, 2014 at 6:37 PM

Julie,

Thank you for sharing your story. I'm sorry that it took me so long to respond. After reading what you write, I definitely see the need to carefully consider our policies concerning paraprofessionals and health care workers. Frankly, I have not been as up-to-date on that area of school policy as I should be. As far as Mr. Arthur's comments about 'dipping into savings', it does sound harsh. However, it is backed by a genuine concern by the board about the future of our district and its ability to pay bills. I'm sure that he didn't mean it in a mean-spirited way. The retirement bonus issue is one that I think is difficult. You are right that teachers want to have financial security as they retire. But to be honest, I think that teachers get a pretty good retirement without a retirement benefit. I retired as a teacher 7 years ago at age 56. I could have retired a year sooner. I presently am receiving almost 75% of the average of my last 4 years' salaries plus a 3% cost of living adjustment added every year. Many of our teachers make a pretty good salary at the end of their careers. To add on a bonus, in my opinion, is not fair to taxpayers, who must not only pay the cost of the bonus, but also pay the added cost of the increased pensions.

This is a difficult position that we are in. Unfortunately much of it is because of bad decisions by our state government that has helped create a monetary crisis in our schools and has forced us to follow mandates that we do not always agree with.

I hope everyone can be back in school soon.

Sincerely,
Mike Panther
[Quoted text hidden]

Dan & Julie Williams <djjmkwilliams@grics.net>
To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>

Tue, Aug 26, 2014 at 9:41 PM

Mike,

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - concerns about work stoppage

It is my turn to thank you for your response and addressing the points that I wrote about. I feel we are very fortunate to have a board president that has actually "walked in the shoes" that educators "walk" in today. Thank you for taking on this "unthankful position."

Julie

From: Michael Panther
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2014 6:37 PM
To: Dan & Julie Williams
Subject: Re: concerns about work stoppage

[Quoted text hidden]

First of all, I want to be honest about the reason why I am sending this email. I am writing this email as a parent of three children in district 205 and an educator from a nearby district. As a parent, I have been very interested in how my own children will be affected through this “work stoppage.” I have read press releases by District 205 and the Galesburg Education Association. Obviously, each press release has different information. I then attended the “rally” on Friday night by the Galesburg Education Association. As a parent, I was saddened to hear the issues that were still “open.” I then realized that I was only hearing one side. At that time, I decided to open the Galesburg website and read the actual proposals.

As I read the proposals, I was disappointed with the district’s proposal about the health aides. I definitely realize health care aides are not recognized by ISBE. Please allow me to explain my personal reasons for the disappointment. My middle daughter was born with a severe breathing issue. As she entered kindergarten, the teacher and classroom aide did not understand her health concern. My daughter does not like to bring attention to her and did not tell the teacher/aide that she was struggling. That evening, we ended up with an oxygen tank at home. At that time, a 504 medical plan was written for her. A school nurse was the only person that really knew what to listen for and what she needed. A paraprofessional is not a doctor/nurse and does not know “emergency” signs for students. There were many days that I would not have had my daughter attend school unless I had a medical professional employee that could watch her all day and that I trusted to notify me through-out the day via email/text/phone calls. Her legal 504 medical plan does allow her to have a home tutor after

three consecutive absences at the expense of the district. Stability was also a relief as a parent.

Another concern as a parent, was scheduling issues. Yes, my three children are finally old enough to transport themselves however, for the last 10 years, I have had to worry about these dates. I realize these early outs are critical for staff development and it was very helpful for me to know ahead of time of these dates. The early outs for the beginning of the year until September 1 gave me a definite time frame. I read the proposal that said 7 days, I feel like that could be confusing to many parents.

Now, I want to be clear that I am changing my view. I am now an educator. At this time, the economy is in critical state and most of it is not the district's fault. However, the comment on the press release by Mr. Arthur saying that the teachers wanted to "dip into the savings" is very harsh. As I read, the proposals, the salary proposals did not seem to be that far off.

Also as an educator, I was also disappointed with the retirement language being struck. I am aware that the state is laying the expense on the district but all of us (including you) want to retire at some point. As people entered the teaching profession, they knew they were giving up social security for the service that had put in as a child, college student, etc. The contractual retirement incentive should continue. It does allow the district to have a future financial plan to help with other salary expenses.

As a parent and educator, I did appreciate both proposals allowing for language that would be better understood and clarified for parents to read.

If you have any further questions or comments, please feel free to contact me.

Julie Williams

309-368-2271

djjmkwilliams@grics.net



being responsible

Sgfarmer <sgfarmer@aol.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:11 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org,
jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galsburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwealty@galesburg205.org

I have read the proposal from the GEA and felt that I had to voice support for the Board of Education. We all want what is best for our children and look forward to having the best education available for the future. But ... what the teachers (or should I say paid union officials) have proposed is not reasonable or being responsible. Excellence is not achieved by saying a "school calendar work day cannot exceed 7 hours and 45 minutes (including lunch)" or outlining other early dismissals. Where is the motivation to be excellent in what you do?

Work stoppages should be available for unfair working conditions or unfair wages. I do not see how we are being unfair to our teaching professionals.

I just wanted you to all know that myself and many of my friends support the Board members for being reasonable. I just wish the GEA had contact information where I could have copied them on this email as well.

This is just a short note to thank you for your service.

**Stan Farmer
1185 Dudley St
Galesburg, IL**

Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>
To: Sgfarmert <sgfarmer@aol.com>

Sun, Aug 24, 2014 at 1:15 PM

Stan,

Thank you for your support and input. The board is trying to be as reasonable and as fair as we can. Hopefully we can get a resolution today.

Sincerely,
Mike Panther
[Quoted text hidden]



Action requested: 174 student attendance days in 2014-2015 school year

Shannon Nelson <shannonisthequeen@gmail.com>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 1:21 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>, dblack@galesburg205.org
Cc: bharris@roe33.net

Dear Board Members, Superintendent Arthur, and Assistant Superintendent Black,

I want to start out by acknowledging I'm sure you must feel vilified and unappreciated for all the work you have given to the educational system in District 205, many of you on a volunteer basis, giving of yourselves and your families time in the hopes of creating a better educational system for our community. The strike has been painful for the entire community and I'm sure it has been especially painful on you, as well as your families. I can only ask that you read my concerns and try and put those feelings aside for a moment and see the heart of my request.

It was a mistake to "not reward the teachers" and reduce the time given to educate our children to 168 days. In doing so you ignored the needs of the students, as well as our community, in an effort to make point. No one wins in this strike. No one. You had an opportunity to plant the seed of healing for our entire community with your return to work package and instead you sowed the seeds of dissension and unrest. By reducing the number of school days our students are educated, you are negating the entire message you have been trying to share during your tenure, that attendance is IMPORTANT and necessary for student success! Dream big??

Remember that concept? Do you believe parents in the community will take your message seriously after the hypocrisy of your decision to declare 6 days of their children's education irrelevant and unnecessary? Have you taken into account that my high school freshman will miss the equivalent of more than 6 days because of the impact of the 4 block curriculum? Do you believe that no child in our district will become sick and miss even more days of school this year on top of what you deemed unimportant in your quest to "not reward the teachers"?

The bottom line is this. The entire community would like to move on and start the healing process. The reduction of attendance days to 168 is the thorn in the paw of that healing process and it will continue to fester until you remove it and put things to rights. The parents will suffer as we struggle to deal with an administration that puts making a statement ahead of our children's future. Our children will suffer as they try and figure out how to fit a years worth of curriculum, and potentially much needed therapies, into a reduced time frame and still be competitive with their peers in other districts. The teachers will suffer as they will never again be able to let go of the mistrust and spitefulness of your actions. The balance statements on their bank accounts will remind them each and every month for the foreseeable future how deeply your actions hurt them. Future educators of our community will think twice before they apply here after reading the statements publicly made that expose your priorities, "the district will come out in front without paying the teachers' salaries." The community and small businesses in Galesburg will suffer as the discretionary income of a major portion of our community is drastically reduced and impacts their bottom line negatively. Do you believe these families losing thousands of dollars aren't going to be more frugal and cut back on the money they would have otherwise poured into our community? Is this a concern or is it still "a wash"?

Please do what is right and adopt a calendar of 174 student attendance days, the minimum number of days legal for student attendance in Illinois. It is the right thing to do for our entire community and I challenge you to provide an legitimate reason as to why it isn't.

Sincerely,
Shannon Nelson



Register Mail

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org> Fri, Aug 29, 2014 at 3:11 PM
 To: Robert Lindstrom <r.lindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Bob Lindstrom-Work <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Michael Panther <m.panther2@galesburg205.org>, Mike Panther-Home <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Work <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, Natalie Kessler <n.kessler@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler-Home <natalie.kessler85@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <r.welty@galesburg205.org>, Rick Welty-Home <rickwelty@grics.net>, Thomas Colclasure <t.colclasure@galesburg205.org>, Tom Colclasure-Home <thomas.colclasure34@hotmail.com>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Members of the Board,

This e-mail is to inform you that the Galesburg Register Mail questioned me about the dock days for teachers and paras. I couldn't push it off so there may be some press that will ignite the faculty even more. I have tried to remain professional, but I was very aggravated by the media for their insistence to keep the fires burning on this topic. I explained the need for the healing process to begin and that this would only stir up more emotions. I don't think it helped and Marty Hobe claimed I was hiding information, so I gave him our reason for making the teachers use dock days. If you don't work, unfortunately you don't get paid. The GEA chose to go out on strike and they should have told their members that they could suffer consequences for going on a work stoppage. Sorry to give this to you before the weekend, but I wanted you to know before the article ran.

Thank you,

Bart

--
 Alison Boone
 Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
 Galesburg CUSD #205
 932 Harrison Street
 Galesburg, IL 61401
 309.973.2101

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org> Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 4:33 AM
 To: BoardMembers <boardmembers@galesburg205.org>, Central Office Administrators <centralofficeadministrators@galesburg205.org>

It is 4:06am on Sunday morning and I could not sleep. Hard to believe? At any rate this is the e-mail I received from our board president and I could not wait until Tuesday to respond.
 To address concerns of parents and teachers about not making up 5 days of school my response is as follows;
 - They were on a work stoppage for 11 days. Did this disrupt everything we had planned? Yes - The opening day ceremony to celebrate the trip to the Ron Clark academy. Diane and her team spent hours getting ready for a unique and exciting institute, all for not. We spent Title I money and had community organizations help us to fund this wonderful activity only to have it stopped because of the strike.
 We gave up 5 of those days which will be made up and the teachers paid for days not worked. Less than 1/2 the

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Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Register Mail

number of days on strike. Is there any other union that could go out and not work for 11 days and make up 5 of those days and be paid for them? I don't think you will find one.

And what about those days we are going to make up? Can we use Columbus Day? NO! Why? Because we paid thousands of dollars to prepare for an arbitration hearing with the GEA because they didn't want to work on Columbus Day. We went spent hours preparing to defend our point, only to have the GEA drop the claim the day of the arbitration hearing because they feared losing their case. Perhaps we could make up the time over spring break. I think not, because many of the GEA membership has already booked flights for vacations. We will probably face arbitration once again. Could we make up the 11 days at the end of the school year? I think the answer would be no, but I am only speculating on this point. However, we have summer school that we provide immediately after school is out for the kids in need. Wait the GEA membership is all about the needs of students, so they will support holding classes until mid June. Right!!!!

I am reminding you that I am recovering from a stroke and though it may not appear that I feel the pressure, believe me I do. Being called a liar and unethical is more than I can take. They can disagree with me and my decisions, but I have a hard time having my character questioned by some of the people in union leadership.

Judge not, lest ye be judged. At any rate, do as you wish with the strike days. Make them up, don't make them up it is your choice. I am thankful I only have to finish the year. I feel for the other CO team members if you decide to make the union whole. I have much more to say, but I am typed out and will continue at the next board meeting when you will get my resignation.

Respectfully,

Bart

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>
Date: Saturday, August 30, 2014
Subject: Register Mail
To: "Bart A. Arthur" <barthur@galesburg205.org>
Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Bart Arthur
 Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
 932 Harrison St.
 Galesburg, IL 61401
 309-973-2000

 **The Board's intent was not to reward teachers for going on strike.docx**
 108K

Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>
 To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Sun, Aug 31, 2014 at 11:32 AM

Amen, brother.

Sent from my iPhone
 [Quoted text hidden]

<The Board's intent was not to reward teachers for going on strike.docx>

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz, mpanther@grics.net, Bob Lindstrom <bob@bobblindstromlaw.com>, colclasuretom <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Josh Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>, Panthers

Tue, Sep 2, 2014 at 9:12 AM

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Register Mail

<mikepanther@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rickwelty@grics.net>, Rick Welty <rwlenty@galesburg205.org>, Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Central Office Administrators <centralofficeadministrators@galesburg205.org>

Mike,

First of all, we only docked the teachers for 4 days of pay and 2 days of benefit time. Therefore, the teachers and students are only missing 4 days of student attendance. Will that affect the teaching and learning in the scheme of a full year? No, probably not. If the teachers are following the Common Core standards they will focus on instruction that is necessary and cut out those items that are not in the standards.

I appreciate your comments about me, but I am totally in disagreement with what you have done. You have weakened the board and administration in the eyes of the union and parents. Now they feel they were right in holding the work stoppage and disrupting the lives of 4400 students.

I agree that many people on the teachers side are being punished for something they didn't agree with, but our attorney was very clear that we need to treat everyone the same to avoid the Carmi issue.

Bart

On Tue, Sep 2, 2014 at 8:35 AM, Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org> wrote:

Bart,

I am sorry that you have been subject to attacks and insinuations from members of the community and GEA leadership. Believe me, I think that they are undeserved and have occurred because of selfishness and ignorance on the part of those making the attacks. As someone who has worked with you for several years I have nothing but the utmost regard for your integrity and have total respect for you as a person. In trying to do what you think is best for the district, you have risked much and put yourself in a position to absorb much of the enmity of the union leadership and the public which would have otherwise been directed at the rest of us. I admire you for that.

The contract that has been negotiated is, I think, the fairest that could have been reached. It is as financially responsible as it could be; it stands the test of Illinois state law; and it goes a long way toward assuring that the teachers who work with our students are of a high quality and not just high seniority. I am proud of the final contract, which is the fairest one I think we could have reached for our students and our community, and I am glad that I stood with you and supported you as you led the board through the negotiation process.

As the back to work agreement was being negotiated, I told you that I could accept the six dock days although I also told you that it wouldn't bother me if there were none. I probably erred in not stating more emphatically that there should be none. I voted for the contract that had been ratified by the union membership because it assured that our students would be back in school the next day. Since my vote to approve the contract and the back to work agreement, I have had nothing but misgivings about the content of the back to work agreement. (Note that I have absolutely no problem with the contract and continue to support it wholeheartedly.) While I understand the reasoning that has been given to include the six nonattendance/dock days, and while I too see a need not to reward those people who led our district and our community into the havoc caused by the strike, there are many unintended and unfair consequences that the nonattendance days have caused.

I gave you a list Saturday of the pros and cons, as I saw them, of the back to work agreement. Not only are we depriving students of six school days, which could very negatively affect many of our students, we are also affecting our local economy. Money that we don't receive in state aid, and I would think it would be a sizable sum, is money that doesn't get pumped into our local economy which has already suffered enough blows.

While the dock days to the union leadership, and to the staff members who willingly followed, don't particularly bother me, I am bothered by all of the people who did not strike that will be missing income because of six less days of school. That includes people like bus drivers and playground supervisors and cafeteria workers and crossing guards who need the money that their work provides. And then there are teachers in the retirement pipeline, many of whom wanted no part of this strike, who stand to lose thousands of dollars over the course of their lives. Plus we have many people among the teachers and in the community who have supported us so far, who now only question why we had to be so punitive.

As I have thought about this, I feel that I can either let my bad feelings from all of the bad behavior of the union leadership and certain union members consume me or I can forgive it. I don't consider myself religious by any stretch of the imagination, but one theme that runs through my mind from my twelve years of Catholic education in Galesburg is that one should be willing to turn the other cheek and attempt to forgive their enemies. I am trying to do that because otherwise I think my anger would consume me. I know that you and

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the others on the negotiating team have had to withstand more of the craziness and pettiness and attacks than the rest of us have, and your anger is justified. However, I don't want it to make you anything other than the compassionate educator that you have always been. And I would hope that as you finish your career this year you can leave a legacy of someone who has been willing to build bridges and not someone who wants to punish those that didn't agree with him.

I have found myself trying to apply an historical context so that I can maybe get a grip on the healing process. I think of Abraham Lincoln after the Civil War. Rather than punish the South, as he well could have done, he chose to let soldiers go home and get their lives back together so that reconciliation could begin. I have also thought of World War I.. In the Versailles Treaty the Allies sought to punish the Central Powers so that they would feel shame and would never want to go to war again. As we know, that only led to feelings of hostility that helped lead to the rise of the Nazi Party and the outbreak of World War II. On the other hand, after World War II, the Allies worked to restore Germany, and that has been responsible for the good will that our countries share today.

Bart, I plan to ask the board at next week's meeting to reinstate the full calendar. If you want to call it throwing board members under the bus as Bob already has, and if you want to call it breaking up board unity, I really am sorry about that. I think that restoring the six days is the best thing we can do to begin the healing process and move on to a place where we can work together with teachers to educate our children. I know that I will be asking you and the other board members to defend your position, and I am sorry that I have to do that. But I don't feel that I can look either myself in the mirror or people in the community in the eye if I don't do something to try to make an attempt at restoring trust and giving our students the complete school year that they deserve.

Sincerely,
Mike

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>

Tue, Sep 2, 2014 at 9:26 AM

To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>, Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, "molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz" <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, "mpanther@grics.net" <mpanther@grics.net>, Bob Lindstrom <bob@bobblindstromlaw.com>, colclasuretom <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Josh Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>, Panthers <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rickwelty@grics.net>, Rick Welty <r welty@galesburg205.org>, Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Central Office Administrators <centralofficeadministrators@galesburg205.org>

Here is one other thing I'd add on the issue of damaging the students. Today, on the second day of school, my 9th grader is leaving at 1:30 to play volleyball in Quincy. My 7th grader is leaving at 2:00 to run cross country in Washington. Last year, during the last week of school, these girls did nothing but watch movies in class, and occasionally play softball. I hardly think our district goes full force, all day, 174 days a year. Please.

From: Bart Arthur [mailto:barthur@galesburg205.org]

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2014 9:13 AM

To: Michael Panther; molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz; mpanther@grics.net; Bob Lindstrom; colclasuretom; Josh Gibb; Molly Palmer; Natalie Kessler; Natalie Kessler; Panthers; Rick Welty; Rick Welty; Robert Lindstrom; Thomas Colclasure; Central Office Administrators

Subject: Re: Register Mail

[Quoted text hidden]



Block Grant Concern

Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 3:18 AM

To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, jgibb@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, nkessler@galesburg205.org, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, rwelty@galesburg205.org, barthur@galesburg205.org, Diane VanHootegeem <dvanhootegeem@galesburg205.org>

I am concerned that the very youngest 205 students are being put at risk by rushing the start of the first attendance day. Putting the term "home visit" in the return to work proposal itself is not accurate. We as a staff at Bright Futures typically use 4 of the days at the beginning of the year to insure safety and build the parent/teacher team right from the start. Over a 3-day period, each child and their parent meet with the teacher for 30 minutes in the classroom. The aid orients the child to the classroom routine/setting while the teacher meets with parents to better understand the needs of the child. (self-help, medical, parent concerns...). The fourth day is allotted for accomplishing visits to the child's home. I could not in good conscience allow children to start without this orientation visit. I was able to get the visits scheduled on Thursday night and accomplish 18 of these visits last Friday. I have been working through the weekend to complete the rest before Tuesday. I was able to get the information on all of my students, but not all of my colleagues could access the information on Skyward. I was most impressed by a dad (I had his older daughter a few years ago.) who chose to drive 3 hours on Friday morning (after only finding out about the visit Thursday night) from Chicago (where he lives) to attend this welcome visit for his 3-year-old son.

I have not yet had time to completely figure out the impact the loss of 6 days could potentially have on the Early Childhood Block Grant. I have two welcome visits scheduled with families this morning. I will be back in my classroom (Yellow Room at Bright Futures) today (Monday) working and preparing after lunch if you would like additional information.

I don't believe the administration and board wants to hurt students. I believe we all wanted to get children back in school, but didn't realize in the middle of the night the larger ramifications of taking away 6 student attendance days. When the Civil War was over, many people felt that the South needed to be punished. President Lincoln had the incite and wisdom to know that punishing the South alone would not lead to the healing and wholeness of a nation. For healing and wholeness in the district to begin, I believe all parties need to admit guilt in this situation and commit to fixing what is broken. We need to address the underlying issues.

Sincerely,

Cindy Barshinger

309-368-1240

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Block Grant Concern

Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>
 To: Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 9:11 AM

Dear Cindy,

First, I am concerned that you are sending email at 3 am. Yet, that does not surprise me. For what it is worth, I'm not sleeping or eating and "daily life" is not normal. This isn't good for any of us or those we serve.

I encourage you to work with Tammie Bolden and Diane V to address the special concerns of the preschool and its schedule. I don't think any of us know the full impact of the shortened schedule. We will have to address the issues and needs as they are identified. I support doing all we can to mitigate the impact on students.

I completely agree that the best decisions are not made in the middle of the night. They aren't made under strike conditions. They aren't made under threat, intimidation, or personal attack. Missing these days of school is painful to me, my children, all students, teachers, the Board, Administration and the community at large. But I believe this pain is a necessary part of the path to reconstruction. I don't want to punish anyone, but I do want EVERYONE who has been involved in this crisis to reflect and realize that our current ways of doing business are not working and have very serious consequences. I know I didn't get what I wanted out of contract negotiations and I think the GEA didn't get what it wanted. So, let's move away from hatred, mistrust, and trying to get people to give us what we want by force. Let us accept the bad situation we find ourselves in and vow to never let ourselves get to this situation again.

I could easily spend time defending myself and my colleagues. However, I think it is too late for that. I think the only way our district can heal is to start over with new leadership on both sides. I will not run for re-election. Get a whole new slate of board members and move on. But a new Board won't set us on the path to healing. You've got to have a whole new slate of leadership in the GEA. I can't control or influence that- it is entirely up to you and your colleagues.

For what it is worth, I have suffered and been punished personally and I realize that will continue. It was very evident on the first day of school that many teachers whom I've worked with and loved are no longer speaking to me. I am probably no longer welcome at Gale in the ways I have been in the past. I won't be able to be a room Mom for my kids, I won't be invited to chaperone field trips, family fun nights will be awkward and I won't want to go. I'll always be worrying that my kids didn't get the last spot on the team because of me. I'll always be worrying that in those situations where a teacher can offer grace or second chance, my child will be treated harshly. I am no longer welcome to be part of the school community which was so important to me.

I wish you the best as you move forward with your new students and your important role of rebuilding District 205.

Molly

[Quoted text hidden]

Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>
 To: Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 3:44 PM

Thank you so much for your reply. Believe it or not, I am not angry at the board or admin. I too am saddened by the process. I take responsibility for not being an involved GEA member and working to improve relationship. We get so busy in life, but it is not an excuse. We have been working all weekend to try to make sure the BF children have a safe start. I started conversation with Tammie today and will check in if she has heard word from the state in terms of compliance issues. I believe so much in what I do with children and families. I think you already know that from camp experiences. I would be willing to work 6 days without pay if it meant we could have those days back for the students.

I definitely understand that there is much broken in the GEA now. I am thinking I need to step up and be part of resolution and restoration. Just so you know, I continually encouraged people to please try to stay with the facts and think from the frontal lobe rather than emotions throughout the strike. Let me tell you that I never want to do this again. I don't necessarily feel the need for an entirely new board or entire GEA leadership. Maybe it has to be. I just want to work together. Just so you know, I would be honored to have lunch with you in public! I will also always love your children. They have been a joy in my life.

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Block Grant Concern

Prayers for healing. Thanks again for your reply.

Cindy

From: Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>

Date: Monday, September 1, 2014 9:11 AM

To: Jay Barshinger <barshinger@grics.net>

Subject: Re: Block Grant Concern

[Quoted text hidden]

Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>

To: Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 5:47 PM

Your email made me smile and I so needed that. I too will continue to pray for healing. Molly

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]

Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>

To: Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 9:52 PM

Thank you. I did take your advice and asked Tammie Bolden if we could work together to try to figure compliance issues and present a collaborative front. Thank you. If you are feeling lonely, truly. Breakfast, lunch, or dinner—my treat!

From: Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>

Date: Monday, September 1, 2014 5:47 PM

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]



Back to work agreement

Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 5:21 PM

To: Molly Palmer-Home <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Home <Molly.Palmer@palmerlaw.biz>

Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Molly,

I want you to know that I am proud of the work we have all put forth in building a contract for the staff of our district; that I am proud of the way in which we have stayed above all of the misinformation and personal attacks that have been part of the process; and that I have been proud to work with you and each of the other members of the board.

I just want to let you know that I think that we erred in taking away the six attendance days and giving the staff dock days. I can no longer support that. We owe it to our students to give them a full school year and we owe it to our community to receive the maximum amount of state aid that we can receive.

While we might feel the need to make the staff accountable for striking, and while we can abide by the theory that dock days will prevent further strikes, I think we owe it to ourselves to continue to remain above the level of those who have led a campaign of misinformation and attacks. We have to take the lead in the healing process. In the attachment I have enclosed a list of pros and cons concerning the back to work agreement and what we might do instead. I hope you think about it.

I will be asking that we work with the GEA to create a calendar that contains 174 attendance days for students.

Thanks,
Mike



The Board's intent was not to reward teachers for going on strike.docx

108K



being responsible

Sgfarmer <sgfarmer@aol.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:11 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galsburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org

I have read the proposal from the GEA and felt that I had to voice support for the Board of Education. We all want what is best for our children and look forward to having the best education available for the future. But ... what the teachers (or should I say paid union officials) have proposed is not reasonable or being responsible. Excellence is not achieved by saying a "school calendar work day cannot exceed 7 hours and 45 minutes (including lunch)" or outlining other early dismissals. Where is the motivation to be excellent in what you do?

Work stoppages should be available for unfair working conditions or unfair wages. I do not see how we are being unfair to our teaching professionals.

I just wanted you to all know that myself and many of my friends support the Board members for being reasonable. I just wish the GEA had contact information where I could have copied them on this email as well.

This is just a short note to thank you for your service.

**Stan Farmer
1185 Dudley St
Galesburg, IL**

Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>
To: Sgfarmer <sgfarmer@aol.com>

Tue, Aug 26, 2014 at 1:22 PM

Mr. Farmer,

Thank you for your words of support. They are truly appreciated.

Best,
Molly Palmer
[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - concerns about work stoppage



concerns about work stoppage

Dan & Julie Williams <djjmkwilliams@grics.net>
To: mpalmer@galesburg205.org

Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 2:36 PM

Board Members,

Please read and consider.

Julie Williams

district 205 letter.docx 15K

Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>
To: Dan & Julie Williams <dijmkwilliams@grics.net>

Mon, Aug 18, 2014 at 4:22 PM

Julie,

Thank you for taking the time to address specific issues in a calm way. I appreciate your input.

Best,

Molly Palmer

[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Press release



Press release

Mike Panther <mikeypanther@gmail.com>

Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 4:27 PM

To: Molly Palmer-Home <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Home <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>

Great job on the press release. Thanks.

Mike

Sent from my iPhone

Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>

Fri, Aug 15, 2014 at 5:21 PM

To: Mike Panther <mikeypanther@gmail.com>

Thanks!!

Sent from my iPhone

[Quoted text hidden]



Back to Work agreement

Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

To: Natalie Kessler <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>

Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 5:16 PM

Natalie,

I want you to know that I am proud of the work we have all put forth in building a contract for the staff of our district; that I am proud of the way in which we have stayed above all of the misinformation and personal attacks that have been part of the process; and that I have been proud to work with you and each of the other members of the board.

I just want to let you know that I think that we erred in taking away the six attendance days and giving the staff dock days. I can no longer support that. We owe it to our students to give them a full school year and we owe it to our community to receive the maximum amount of state aid that we can receive.

While we might feel the need to make the staff accountable for striking, and while we can abide by the theory that dock days will prevent further strikes, I think we owe it to ourselves to continue to remain above the level of those who have led a campaign of misinformation and attacks. We have to take the lead in the healing process. In the attachment I have enclosed a list of pros and cons concerning the back to work agreement and what we might do instead. I hope you think about it.

I will be asking that we work with the GEA to create a calendar that contains 174 attendance days for students.

Thanks,
Mike

The Board's intent was not to reward teachers for going on strike.docx
108K



Back to work agreement

Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 5:20 PM
To: Rick Welty Welty <rickwelty@grics.net>, Rick Welty Welty <rwelty@galesburg205.org>
Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Rick,

I want you to know that I am proud of the work we have all put forth in building a contract for the staff of our district; that I am proud of the way in which we have stayed above all of the misinformation and personal attacks that have been part of the process; and that I have been proud to work with you and each of the other members of the board.

I just want to let you know that I think that we erred in taking away the six attendance days and giving the staff dock days. I can no longer support that. We owe it to our students to give them a full school year and we owe it to our community to receive the maximum amount of state aid that we can receive.

While we might feel the need to make the staff accountable for striking, and while we can abide by the theory that dock days will prevent further strikes, I think we owe it to ourselves to continue to remain above the level of those who have led a campaign of misinformation and attacks. We have to take the lead in the healing process. In the attachment I have enclosed a list of pros and cons concerning the back to work agreement and what we might do instead. I hope you think about it.

I will be asking that we work with the GEA to create a calendar that contains 174 attendance days for students.

Thanks,
Mike

The Board's intent was not to reward teachers for going on strike.docx
108K

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)

**(no subject)**

LESS JG

Alison Boone <aboone@galesburg205.org> Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 5:09 PM
 To: Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>, Bob Lindstrom-Work <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Joshua Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, Mike Panther-Home <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, Molly Palmer-Work <molly.palmer@palmerlaw.biz>, Natalie Kessler <nkessler@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler-Home <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rwelty@galesburg205.org>, Rick Welty-Home <rickwelty@grics.net>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, Tom Colclasure-Home <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Members of the Board:

I am sorry that I was unable to get to this press release before now but my day was riddled with parent phone calls, parent demands to meet, principal's meeting, press conference, and a meeting at Carl Sandburg College.

I have reviewed the lengthier version of this press release and after David Braun's input, the CO team and I have concluded a more concise version is appropriate. This covers the RIF and recall rights only and will be more beneficial for our cause.

Although I continue to recommend that you remain silent, if you feel compelled to send out information this is a version I can support. Please advise.

Bart

--
 Alison Boone
 Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
 Galesburg CUSD #205
 932 Harrison Street
 Galesburg, IL 61401
 309.973.2101

Draft 82014.pdf
96K

Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>
 To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 6:12 PM

Bart:

This is going to come off nasty, and I am very sorry for that.

This release is awful. I fails to clearly address the issues being discussed by the public. It shows tone deafness. It has no sizzle. Nobody will read it, let alone understand the message, whatever it may be.

Please leave this activity to the board members. At least two of us make a living persuading others. We also have clue about what is going on in the community, including the union. This is a critical time. It is not amateur hour.

I was appalled at what I heard from the union people this afternoon. For the umpteenth time their spokesperson

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - (no subject)

uttered outright lies. She must be called out now and sternly.

Bart, the biggest thing the board has going for it is its' credibility. I hear this time and again. I know you want to be professional, and you are worried about relations after this is over, but failing to throw a punch at this time means the board's credibility is being messed with. I don't like that. Period.

Please agree to let the board fire back with appropriate toughness. The response can come from the board and not you. We need to act now.

Bob

[Quoted text hidden]

 **Draft 82014.pdf**

96K

Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>
To: molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 6:13 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>**
Date: Thursday, August 21, 2014
Subject:
[Quoted text hidden]

 **Draft 82014.pdf**

96K

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>
To: Robert Lindstrom <rlindstrom@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 9:15 PM

Bob,
I understand and I tried to call you at 9:15pm to talk about this. If I don't reach you tonight I will try again in the morning.
Bart
[Quoted text hidden]

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000



Block Grant Concern

Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 3:18 AM

To: Michael Panther <mpanther2@galesburg205.org>, jgibb@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, Molly Palmer <mpalmer@galesburg205.org>, nkessler@galesburg205.org, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>, rwelty@galesburg205.org, barthur@galesburg205.org, Diane VanHootegeem <dvanhootegeem@galesburg205.org>

I am concerned that the very youngest 205 students are being put at risk by rushing the start of the first attendance day. Putting the term "home visit" in the return to work proposal itself is not accurate. We as a staff at Bright Futures typically use 4 of the days at the beginning of the year to insure safety and build the parent/teacher team right from the start. Over a 3-day period, each child and their parent meet with the teacher for 30 minutes in the classroom. The aid orients the child to the classroom routine/setting while the teacher meets with parents to better understand the needs of the child. (self-help, medical, parent concerns...). The fourth day is allotted for accomplishing visits to the child's home. I could not in good conscience allow children to start without this orientation visit. I was able to get the visits scheduled on Thursday night and accomplish 18 of these visits last Friday. I have been working through the weekend to complete the rest before Tuesday. I was able to get the information on all of my students, but not all of my colleagues could access the information on Skyward. I was most impressed by a dad (I had his older daughter a few years ago.) who chose to drive 3 hours on Friday morning (after only finding out about the visit Thursday night) from Chicago (where he lives) to attend this welcome visit for his 3-year-old son.

I have not yet had time to completely figure out the impact the loss of 6 days could potentially have on the Early Childhood Block Grant. I have two welcome visits scheduled with families this morning. I will be back in my classroom (Yellow Room at Bright Futures) today (Monday) working and preparing after lunch if you would like additional information.

I don't believe the administration and board wants to hurt students. I believe we all wanted to get children back in school, but didn't realize in the middle of the night the larger ramifications of taking away 6 student attendance days. When the Civil War was over, many people felt that the South needed to be punished. President Lincoln had the incite and wisdom to know that punishing the South alone would not lead to the healing and wholeness of a nation. For healing and wholeness in the district to begin, I believe all parties need to admit guilt in this situation and commit to fixing what is broken. We need to address the underlying issues.

Sincerely,

Cindy Barshinger

309-368-1240

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - Block Grant Concern

Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>
To: Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 7:24 AM

Cindy

I've had the same thoughts as you in regards to Lincoln's views on reunification. It's too bad that we see he need to compare our current situation o the Civil War, but the analogy certainly fits. I was unaware of the consequences that the six days would have. I will call you later today.

Tom

[Quoted text hidden]

Barshinger family <barshinger@grics.net>
To: Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

Mon, Sep 1, 2014 at 3:46 PM

I will try to talk with Tammie today to see if she has heard back from the state regarding compliance issues. This program means so much to me. I would be willing to work 6 days without pay if we could give them back to the students. I will fill you in as soon as I find out.

Cindy

From: Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>
Date: Monday, September 1, 2014 7:24 AM
To: Jay Barshinger <barshinger@grics.net>
Subject: Re: Block Grant Concern

[Quoted text hidden]



Back to Work agreement

Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

To: Tom Colclasure <thomascolclasure34@hotmail.com>, Tom Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

Cc: Mike Panther <mikepanther@gmail.com>

Sat, Aug 30, 2014 at 5:15 PM

Tom,

I want you to know that I am proud of the work we have all put forth in building a contract for the staff of our district; that I am proud of the way in which we have stayed above all of the misinformation and personal attacks that have been part of the process; and that I have been proud to work with you and each of the other members of the board.

I just want to let you know that I think that we erred in taking away the six attendance days and giving the staff dock days. I can no longer support that. We owe it to our students to give them a full school year and we owe it to our community to receive the maximum amount of state aid that we can receive.

While we might feel the need to make the staff accountable for striking, and while we can abide by the theory that dock days will prevent further strikes, I think we owe it to ourselves to continue to remain above the level of those who have led a campaign of misinformation and attacks. We have to take the lead in the healing process. In the attachment I have enclosed a list of pros and cons concerning the back to work agreement and what we might do instead. I hope you think about it.

I will be asking that we work with the GEA to create a calendar that contains 174 attendance days for students.

Thanks,
Mike

The Board's intent was not to reward teachers for going on strike.docx
108K

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - press release



press release

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 9:34 PM

To: Panthers <mikepanther@gmail.com>, Rick Welty <rickwelty@grics.net>, Bob Lindstrom <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Molly Palmer <molly.palmer@galesburglaw.com>, Josh Gibb <jgibb@galesburg205.org>, Natalie Kessler <nataliekessler85@gmail.com>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

I have sent the press release for David and Luke to look over and edit as needed. They requested that they send it to me in the morning. They needed to rest before editing, so I said that was fine. Please remain focused on settling and then the return to work agreement. Thank you and have a restful night.

Bart

--
Bart Arthur
Superintendent Galesburg CUSD #205
932 Harrison St.
Galesburg, IL 61401
309-973-2000

Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 10:19 PM

To: Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Bart

I must have missed something. What press release?

Tom

[Quoted text hidden]

Bart Arthur <barthur@galesburg205.org>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 7:52 AM

To: Bob Lindstrom <bob@boblindstromlaw.com>, Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

The press release on just cause and recall rights.

On Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 10:24 PM, <bob@boblindstromlaw.com> wrote:

What press release?

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

9/8/2014

Community Unit School District #205 Mail - being responsible



Colclasure <colclasure@...

being responsible

Sgfarmer <sgfarmer@aol.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 4:11 PM

To: mpanther2@galesburg205.org, rlindstrom@galesburg205.org, mpalmer@galesburg205.org, jgibb@galesburg205.org, nkessler@galesburg205.org, tcolclasure@galesburg205.org, rwelty@galesburg205.org

I have read the proposal from the GEA and felt that I had to voice support for the Board of Education. We all want what is best for our children and look forward to having the best education available for the future. But ... what the teachers (or should I say paid union officials) have proposed is not reasonable or being responsible. Excellence is not achieved by saying a "school calendar work day cannot exceed 7 hours and 45 minutes (including lunch)" or outlining other early dismissals. Where is the motivation to be excellent in what you do?

Work stoppages should be available for unfair working conditions or unfair wages. I do not see how we are being unfair to our teaching professionals.

I just wanted you to all know that myself and many of my friends support the Board members for being reasonable. I just wish the GEA had contact information where I could have copied them on this email as well.

This is just a short note to thank you for your service.

Stan Farmer
1185 Dudley St
Galesburg, IL

Thomas Colclasure <tcolclasure@galesburg205.org>

To: Sgfarmer <sgfarmer@aol.com>

Wed, Aug 20, 2014 at 7:57 PM

Stan

I hope for a quick resolution and the resumption of education in Galesburg. Thank you for sharing your words of support.

Tom

[Quoted text hidden]