

Negotiations stall

RICHMOND A day into the first teachers strike in District 2's history, there was little indication Friday night that the sides would settle soon.

With talks stalled, no plans were made to resume classes Monday.

Although representatives for both teachers and administrators have said they were more than willing to talk, no future meeting date had been set as of Friday evening.

District 2 teachers and support staff members began striking Friday morning, canceling classes for about 1,600 students at the district's three schools. Teachers carried signs that read "On strike for a fair contract" and "We want a fair settlement" in front of Nippersink Middle School.

Usually teachers get low salaries and good benefits, Richmond/Spring Grove Education Association President Denise Gossell said Friday from the picket line. But they want to give us a low salary and no benefits.

Ruth Burline, who has two children enrolled at Spring Grove Grade School, brought coffee and doughnuts to teachers as they walked the picket line dressed in heavy jackets, hats and gloves because of the 45-degree temperature.

"It's such a cold day to be here," Burline said as she glanced over at her two children. "We support our teachers. They give 100 percent and above."

"It's hard for the kids, but we need good teachers and we want these teachers to stay," Burline added.

But many residents have expressed support for the school board's decision to stand firm.

Spring Grove resident Henry Konkol had children in the district when teachers came close to striking in 2005. He now has a son attending Richmond Grade School and is frustrated with the contract negotiations coming to a stalemate.

Konkol said he did not mind paying taxes to pay teachers salaries, but he did have an issue with paying more for their benefits.

"There's nothing wrong with telling the teachers that they have to fund some of their retirement plan," he said. "I think that they need to get into the world of reality and realize that you can't have everything paid by the taxpayers."

As the owner of a vending company, Konkol has to fund all of his retirement savings.

Although his son enjoyed having the day off school, the youth ultimately will be the one to pay for the teachers striking, Konkol said.

"The children are suffering from this, too," he said. "When you're an adult, you realize the repercussions of this."

School board President Patty Anderson addressed the role of the students in a letter to the community Friday, citing current fees as testament that the district has not kept up with textbook replacements, supplies, sports programs and technology because of financial challenges.

"It is this board's hope that by presenting the RSGEA with a competitive and fair compensation package and exercising prudent expenditure control, that all aspects of children's education—teachers, textbooks, supplies, technology, etc.—will be improved as soon as possible, and not over the course of many, many years," Anderson said.

Anderson said the disagreement stemmed from teachers not wanting to contribute to both their health insurance and retirement benefits.

"The union is having difficulty accepting the fact that teachers should have to contribute to their benefits, when they never have before," Anderson said.

Three union offers during Thursday's negotiations were rejected by the board.

The first offer was to renegotiate the contract at the time of any increase in employee contributions to their retirement system.

A second offer was for employees to pay full contributions to the retirement system without any increase in their contributions to their health-insurance

premiums.

The last RSGEA offer included employee contributions at 0.5 percent of their salary for health-care benefits, but not until the fourth year of a contract.

The last offer unanimously was rejected by the board, Anderson said.

Accepting the offer would have cost the district in excess of 100,000 in health-insurance premiums when compared to the board's offer to have employees contribute 0.5 percent in the second year of the contract and 1 percent in the third year, Anderson said.

The latest offer from both sides still included a 3.5-percent salary increase each year of the contract.

Strike status

Classes have been canceled for Monday and indefinitely.

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Let's stick to the facts today, as the emotions won't help us work through any of this. If not already done, I recommend everyone to view the teacher contracts (Freed. Inf. Act) and to read through the district budget before posting. Also, talk/listen to ALL sides: teachers, boe, and learn about the union. Drop the union. We can pay you based on your own performance. Many of you will do very well and can create an attractive compensation package without bringing in 139 others.

Thanks BOE for taking the right stand for the students & taxpayers! Unfortunately & selfishly, by closing the schools for 1 day, the teachers now understand where we, the BOE & taxpayers, are at in the negotiations. The teachers should return to work immediately. It is clear their demands are unreasonable. The teachers can work while their union leadership figures out how to accept the reality of paying for benefits like the rest of the working people in this town!

Yes, parentandtaxpayer, I agree that SOME of our teachers deserve this package, however, my wallet cannot afford to pay for those that don't deserve this package, not to mention our School District budget cannot pay for it either. Referendums have failed and so where does the \$\$ come from? Just like at home, you have to save the \$\$ for vacation, a new deck, a pool, before you go get one. When the district has the money, then we can look deeper into our compensation for those that have earned it.

There is nothing stopping you from writing a check and mailing it to the union. You could be a role model for other people who feel that teachers are underpaid and this education stoppage is being done for the children. That way, you could fund the teacher retirement to your heart's content and not force other people to finance your favorite charity. A happy ending all around.

To all of you who believe the union should go away. It is because of people like you that unions are here to stay. The teachers do contribute to their benefits but the BOE would like to raise that contribution and give a small raise just a little above the cost of living. This reasoning is why the teachers are on strike. The members of the union need to stand strong the BOE will cave once parents know the real story.

Left Center, Then put the facts out there! In "my world" I see a 3.5% raise as wonderful. I would love to not pay into a rising healthcare system at the tune of 14%. Not to mention NOT having a pension. The point is everyone has taken paycuts, healthcare has sky rocketed and we fund our own retirement. The bottom line is, we consider ourselves blessed in today's economy. The statements by Mrs. Gossel are amusing. Small pay raises and less benefits. This group gets more than the taxpayers do!

The BOE's last offer to the union (before the strike) included 3.5% raise (BOE's idea), status quo-.5%-1% of salary toward health insurance (union's idea) and cap TRS contributions at current rate. The union said, "OK, but instead of capping TRS, how about we end the contract when the TRS actually increases (there would be plenty of notice) and negotiate a new contract when we have the data (i.e. how much the TRS increase actually will be)?" The Board said no, because we could POSSIBLY find ourselves negotiating again in as short as one year. I guess strike is better???

I guess your home may be up for foreclosure next; at least the teachers have enough sense to protect what they have!.....I know, why would the BOE not have started reduced benefits with new hires rather than taking dollars out the teachers pockets. This sounds like a reasonable solution which by the way is an accepted union practice.

Teachers unions are one of the biggest obstacles there is to quality education. Teachers should be paid based on results, not simply for showing up year after year. The unions don't want to touch this. They would rather promote and protect mediocrity in their ranks than improve the quality of the education our children receive. They are all about themselves.

Simply showing up is not the case. Many of our teachers spend their evenings, weekends, and summers continuing their educations. Not to mention endless outside school hours spent preparing for students. Anyone who believes teaching is a 8:30 to 3:30 job has not walked in a teachers shoes. And before anyone says it yes, they continue their educations for potentially higher salaries, but also to be better prepared for the children.

For the most part, anything that a teacher does outside the classroom is a compensated activity.(coaching, advising a club, etc.) Preparing for the next day's class does not require "endless hours". Teachers are not poorly compensated. That is a myth kept alive by the teachers unions. As far as these folks continuing their education, the taxpayers pay for that too.

The BOE is doing the right thing by sticking to their guns. The teachers need to remember in the real world not everything is free. Everyone else has to contribute to their own pension fund and healthcare. Also, consider that state law requires all kids attend school; if my daughter is sick for more than 3 days she has to have a doctor's note. As far as I'm concerned, if the strike lasts more than 3 days, it's illegal. The district operates under huge deficit now. Teachers who strike for unrealistic demands send kids the wrong message.

While parents are bombarded with fund raisers, and the district is in a huge deficit, it is irresponsible for teachers to demand 100% of their pensions be funded from money that is meant to be used for education, not for planning future vacations. Bottom line, teachers need to know that their retirement accounts will NEVER be more important than our childrens' education!

I think the best approach is to just ignore the striking teachers. When you drive by the school don't even look their way. Just like everywhere else, we do have some good teachers, but the Union Contract forces us to also pay salaries and benefits for mediocre teachers. When the Union says "STRIKE" all teachers (even the ones that don't have an issue with the current compensation package) are forced out of work. What's in it for the Union? Do higher wages mean more \$\$\$ coming in to the Union through Dues? It seems like a real racket to me.

There is something wrong, when a district has parents volunteering to work in the science lab, grading papers at home, reading to younger students, teaching their kids math facts at home because it is not in the curriculum, and now the teachers are crying foul? Just what exactly will I get as a parent, with these "teachers" getting 3.5%, which, in my world, is an employee consistently exceeding expectations? I supply a decade's worth of paper towels, baggies, and wipes, pay an additional \$200 for the privilege of going to school in this district. Stop the insanity! Go BOE!

Most of you don't have a clue what teachers do! My sister spends before & late after school, & weekends preparing. Her husband is always complaining, she is not able to spend time with their own family b/c she is 'working'/preparing for your kids. DO NOT post comments you have absolutely no solid information about. Go walk a day in a teachers shoes. See that teaching is more than teaching. Teachers teach, counsel, feed breakfast/snack to some kids. They buy their own supplies, B-day treats, Mother/Father's day gift, weekly enrichment projects & more ALL FOR YOUR KIDS!

Teachers do NOT get paid during a strike. rgsmom-STOP telling lies. My sister is NOT getting paid during this strike. Everyone speaking negatively needs to stop dividing this small community & appreciate what these great teachers really do for your kids. You want to get mad; just wait til the BOE gives Admin raises, when they are already sky high!! That is what the community should rally against-No more ridiculously high salaries for administrators in this small district, wasteful spending like copying machine fees & so much more ++ state funding fairness. Support your children's Teachers!

Luvmyboyz-Why would you think your teacher is the one to blame for supply list of Paper towels, etc.. If the BOE provided the necessary supplies, it wouldn't be requested!! MAYBE parents should rally for all day kindergarten so curriculum like the science lab can adequately be covered. Did you know that most states have had all day kindergarten for 15 years or more?? Your issues are from BOE cutbacks not from teachers. Get some facts & you will be for the teachers b/c teachers are for your kids!!

To clarify, we must proceed from the point in negotiations at which we find ourselves. We can not go backwards and the community can not ask the Board to retreat and demand more give-backs from the teachers, as the law requires both parties to bargain in good faith avoiding unfair labor practices. How can we settle it from THIS point? There must be compromise. The Association recognizes this fact, thus the three proposals delivered to the Board Thursday evening. The Association is doing its best to help the parties progress toward resolution.

We in the community are hearing that the Board is refusing to sit down and bargain with the teachers. We are also hearing that this strike could have easily been avoided. If the BOE thinks that a strike that is tearing apart this small community is a good thing you are sadly mistaken. Get back to the bargaining table, do your job and settle this strike. Forcing a strike over minor contract language and not money is unforgivable!!

The strike could have easily been avoided by the teachers. Had they accepted the generous offer none of this would be happening. Don't blame the board, they're acting in the interests of the people of D-2 which is more than one can say of the union. Like it or not, these organized union ripoffs will end one way or another because nobody can afford their continuation. Might as well stand up to them now before homeowners have nothing left.

I'm afraid I am not sympathetic to the union's cause, here. Everybody else in America partially pays for their own retirement. Everybody else in America partially pays for their medical plan. For the union to strike over being asked to pay a portion of their retirement is selfish and stupid. Fire the striking teachers.

On the left center: I hope she is not my child's teacher. Anyone that disagrees with her viewpoint she becomes rude and disrespectful. I taught my kids to be polite, even to you when you are not. Sometimes you just have to agree to disagree. Lighten up, your not going to change peoples minds. Try solving the problem, not name bashing.

Not Name Bashing: good start now let's keep it up and discuss this with both sides keeping in mind that their thoughts are not completely correct. Maybe everyone needs to realize that they are right on somethings and wrong on others. Wow this brings back memories of being a lonely liberal in Lake County during the 80's.

There is no possible way that anyone can tell me that this strike is beneficial to the students. What would be, though, is their teachers setting a good example in realizing that you can't always get what you want. And if their union doesn't compensate them during a strike, then maybe they should consider a better form of representation. What's more, everyone knows administrators make too much and waste too much; let the teachers take that issue on, instead of taking on the community. That's where the extra money is.

Peschke you represent the worst of the anti education faction, an outsider just trying to stir up trouble. You are always negative toward teacher's, school's, and usually school boards unless it suits your anti education stance. Mr. Peschke you have always been against children and education and are not welcome in this discussion, but it is a free country so we have to listen to your negative drivel. People need to understand that the state mandates that 10.2% of a teacher's salary be paid toward retirement. How the board labels that is a media game that they manipulate very well.

Perhaps the BOE could answer this. Revenue derived from taxpayers and the various fees collected for registration, sports, etc. are, in our current

economy burdensome for the residents of Richmond and Spring Grove as well as most districts throughout the state. Comparatively, teachers make a decent salary but not great compared to other districts. However does the district receive adequate revenue from other sources (ex: taxes on business, real estate development, etc.)? Is the % of revenue received from these sources comparable to surrounding districts that don't seem to have these repeated headaches each contract renegotiation year.

I would love for the BOE to answer your questions too!! The village & BOE need to make sure businesses & Real estate developments are giving their fair share to help our children learn. Large businesses from all over the county should sponsor our schools to subsidize extra money that is always needed in education b/c the state is also, NOT doing it's fair share.

My guess is shopgirl has no children in the district. She obviously has passion for teachers. However, the reality here is the experience at the schools is less than stellar. If the teachers consistently made the children and parents extremely pleased with the experience, and our ISAT scores showed top ranks in the country, then open up the checkbooks! Reality is, they are not performing per the above and have to resign themselves to the true art of sacrifice - their wallets. P.S. The Village makes sure everyone pays their fair share - including retail and developments.

Large company's have cut their employee packages and wages. That's the beef of the taxpayers. The state is a large company. They cut back awhile ago. However, I do agree that the impact fees needs should of/and needs to be addresses by the village. In the past there were many local builders. That will not be the end all. Quit blaming the BOE, in the past they got us into this mess by giving ridiculous wages to some. What other alternative do you suggest?

Shop Girl, One more thought, what if every parent in District 2 decided not to fund the 200.00 fee to allow the to go to a PUBLIC school. Then let's not pay for the crazy fees at \$250.00 for our children to play sports. The BOE promised us as well to reduce those fee's. (seems fair, we gave during tough times, but they have not followed through on that either) What do you think the offer would be if parent's decided to stop paying?

Well,Luvmyboyz,your guess would be wrong. I do have kids at D2. You say your experience at the schools is less than stellar..I completely disagree! A solution- Go sub in your schools, see what teaching really is. See what kind of hurdles the teachers go through each day just to do their best & provide a productive 'learning' day for your kids! It is so clear a majority of the posters have NO IDEA what teachers do for your children & mine. If you think you can do a better job, fine, get your degree, TEACH!

Shopgirl..wake up the dream is over. Sounds to me like the teachers should quit if the job is that rough. Did they go to school to become teachers, or overpaid primadonnas? When's the last time you or someone you know lost % of their increases, had to accept an HMO (not PPO!!), increases in insurance premiums, and pension cuts? Those of us in the real world have had that and more. This is an argument you have no chance of winning. BOE, don't listen to her - she's delirious from all her extra money!

Shop Girl, I also have not experienced a stellar experience. (especially at the middle school) Just an FYI, both of my parents were educators. They retired very comfortable. They also worked during the summer, doing lunch duty and other perks that we do not get in the real world. One went onto another government job when not happy with the teaching. Both did not pay into SS, however, went onto work to receive SS credits. You see there are many options. One question for you, do you work?

Luvmyboyz-The 'world' we are discussing is the world of teaching. Your comments have me ROFL! Funny how no comment on whether you will be taking education classes starting Monday. Do all of you want to be part of the problem or part of the solution? Everyone needs to stop bashing teachers & KNOW this issue is much bigger than the teachers. The state needs to pony up & this small district needs to stop paying Admin salaries that are comparable to some states districts with over 100,000 students! Give me a break!!

I will agree with you on the admin. salaries. I have done some research and cannot understand why one principal has received a full time salary from district 2, and yet another salary from a different district. (in a tune of roughly 140,000.00 a year combined in 2005) I would hope that it is incorrect data. No one is bashing, many are great people, others I will refrain from saying. Only the teachers can make themselves happy, and if they are not there are other options. We pay for our benefits to keep our jobs.

Quit bashing the teachers & go after the big guns. Money is tight for everyone, including teachers & that issue 10 years from now will be the same-'money is tight'. The true issue is to write to your legislature & state dept DEMAND better funding for our kids! I will stand strong & tall beside my kid's teachers. United! I support the teachers!

Shopgirl...it will be lonely at the local drive-in, which is where the teachers belong if they don't suck it up like the rest of us and accept reality. You will

be the first one crying fowl when you get to the middle school and wonder how to explain to your child that they can't play a sport because the fees will be over \$300 PER activity. You see, your logic costs us WAY more in taxes, AND we'll have to pay more for activities since the BOE will have to look elsewhere for funding and make more cuts. You lose.

You said if the teachers don't like it there are other options-I assume you mean find another job. Well, then your solution would have our kids losing A LOT of great teachers! D2 has to stay competitive with neighboring counties with Teacher salary/benefits. It is well known McHenry Co has the lowest paying teacher salaries in Illinois. The average teacher salaries/ben in most neighboring districts do pay more. I want to keep & continue to hire great teachers so for my kids, we are with the teachers!

Shop Girl, As a product of two educators, there are other options. The days of staying competitive are over. People are blessed to have benefits and jobs? If I saw a difference in how I and my child was treated, and their education I would weigh in on performance. It's a business, and needs to be run like one. Stop being so emotional. Do you work? I ask this for those of us who do and have received cut backs and yet balance our budgets at home.

From the Champion.org Most recent data for 2006. Average salaries for area districts: Cary 70,211; Grant 62,300; Lake Zurich 64K; Wauconda 62K; Marengo 57,500; RBHS 56,900; Johnsburg 56,700; McHenry 56K; SEDOM 57,600; Fox Lake 56,500; Libertyville 55K; Woodstock 52,700; Harvard 52K; Nippersink 47,700; Big Hollow 47,700; McHenry 46,200; Mundelein 44,500. Of the 17 districts listed, Nippersink Dist. 2 is tied for 3rd lowest average salary. Statewide NSD2 ranks somewhere in the middle above southern rural districts.

What so many of the teachers posting here fail to realize is that the customer (taxpayer) has no obligation to justify their stance on whether D2 is a good value. Its a poor value if the taxpayers say it is, period, because they're paying the bills. Shopgirl, please don't insult our intelligence by referring to teachers as "the little ones" and pretending that they're not "the big guns". The NEA is the largest labor union in America. Teacher compensation is by far the largest part of the school budget. Some "little ones".

Fiscal responsibility would fix the problem, not liberal activism. Nowadays unions drive up wages artificially based on extortionary tactics rather than on performance. In other words, union members can get more money by not working rather than attempting to excell. That is the wrong message to send to my children. I don't believe that strongarming the community will win the teachers much support. Like I said before, teachers' pensions are not more important than my kids' education.

Some of the districts you listed include salaries of high school teachers which would increase the average. Once you take those numbers out of the calculations, ND2 isn't so far below average after all. And, you have to factor in that most of the other districts haven't been funding the pensions and insurance premiums to the extent that D2 has been. Besides, if other districts were offering significantly better salaries and benefits, our teachers wouldn't stay more than a year or two. TheGrassIsn'tAlwaysGreenerOnTheOtherSide.

Dist.2, not the children. If the community has to pay for more \$\$ for healthcare, and has to fund their own retirement, why do you think we need to open our wallets? If the environment was welcoming, and these great "mentors" were polite to the parents at certain schools it would be helpful. The overall picture is a reflection on how our children achieve, how we are treated (not at strike time), and what we pay as taxpayers for our healthcare and retirement. Next that should be addressed are the raises that the Admin. staff in 2&157.

So much hatred for teachers and education in general. I'm sorry if some of you have not had a good experience. My children have been treated to a wonderful experience at Richmond Grade School. Teacher's who care about my children, who have gone the extra mile to make sure that we work together when they struggle. I want to personally thank the teachers for all that they have done for my children!! I was at soccer games today and the community is pushing for a quick settlement. People can't believe that a strike over contract language can't be settled quickly.

My children have mostly had good experiences at the grade school level at SGS, and most of the ones that went to Nippersink have had good experiences there. The problem is when you have a child that is just to the left of "regular" as a student, that is where the D2 system falls apart at the middle school level.

BOE I hope that you are not listening to the Peschke"s and education haters out there. People in the community are talking about how this should never have gone to a strike in the first place. Nobody that I've talked to thinks that you did a very good job negotiating this contract. Maybe the Peschke's of the world are congratulating you, but the parents in this community want you back at the bargaining table working hard to settle this strike. Roll up your sleeves and get it done.

I am saddened by the total ignorance on this site. Two individuals in particular. To think this kind of ignorance pervades our society is sickening. I

would imagine these these 2 voices support Bush and Company at \$500,000 per minute in their phoney war on "terrorists." That is where most of your beloved tax \$ are going. Think about it if you are capable. Keep those SUV's fueled up so you can make it down those nasty roads come winter. Make your best contribution towards global warming while putting down true professionals. Teachers....the source of all problems. Get a grip! Get help!

Did anyone read the yellow flier put out by RSGEA? I'm not sure what's worse, the lies it tells, or the grammatical and spelling errors. They do say that there is only one item that still needs to be settled. It also says, "we are being forced to strike by a BOE that won't stop demanding MORE and MORE givebacks from employees. We HAVE made concessions". Here's the kicker. "Support staff will receive only cost of living adjustments". Ladies and gentlemen, when's the last time your raise was cost of living equivalent?

I believe that teachers strikes are already illegal in Illinois. Illinois has a compulsory education law calling for all students age 6-17 (I believe these numbers are correct) to be in school. The striking teachers are breaking the law by not being in school to teach the children everyday. I am not a D2 BOE member.

BM, I think you are wrong about that. Illinois is one of the few states where teacher strikes are expressly legal. Although you can't be faulted for thinking otherwise, since teachers routinely strike in states where such strikes ARE illegal. I've asked lawmakers if they would support a ban on teacher strikes. The answer I usually get is "We had more teacher strikes when it was illegal." To that I say the penalty was insufficient. Striking teachers should automatically lose their job, lose tenure, and TRS. Leaders should be up on conspiracy charges.

My children graduated from 12 years in this district and I will be happy to support the wonderful education they received. The hard work of all the staff helped them to succeed. Times are changing. Now money seems tighter and students needs and the state mandates are higher. Has anyone considered year round school? The attended days are the same with staggered breaks, the buildings are better utilized, the children do not lose knowledge, and families can vacation at different times of year. Our current system is outdated and our resources could be better utilized.

I would just like to know if Mr Russin and Mr Peschke, hate everyone else who tries to make a living and get ahead or just the D2 teachers. In order to negotiate you need two willing sides with a discussion about the facts. Not what you hear from your neighbor or what you saw in some paper. The only ones who know the facts, are not meeting to discuss them.

Thanks RSGEA for the flyer. We understand your issues & we fully support the teachers! It is unbelievable that during this incredibly stressful time for parents & teachers that some of BOE chose not to attend the mediation meeting. We are all have a "family emergency" now. BOE needs to get to the table & do the job they were elected to do. The teachers have conceded on 2 of their 3 issues & I know they conceded on all issues on their past 2 contracts. We all should THANK a teacher!

Russin you represent the fringe element of education hater's in this district. I have been out at soccer games, neighborhood meetings and have had many phone calls this weekend. The tone in our COMMUNITY is that both sides need to get back to the bargaining table and settle the strike. People are shocked by the hate and anger stirred up by people like you! Please BOE and teacher's get back to the table and settle the strike.

I have children at both middle and grade school level. Not all the teachers are as exceptional as you think. Also they don't feed breakfast to our children before school we do. They have a snack time and one of my children do not get there snack time because of the class from the yr before leaving food in the classroom!!! But there are some teachers in this district that are worth the money they are paid. But the teachers should contribute to their health and pension benefits.

Members of the BOE are elected and expected to run the district responsibly, not to cave to union demands. 47,000 is a fair wage; comparing Nippersink to areas like Cary is misleading unless you acknowledge the tax differences. Do we want our taxes to go through the roof along with teachers' salaries? While there are some great teachers, there are also some who are not so great. Not every teacher should get the same raise, especially raises above cost of living. This strike is extortion of the community driven by a union that cares about its bottom line.

I believe you do feed your kids breakfast BUT believe it or not, not all kids come to school at RGS&SGS eating breakfast at home. My sister daily feeds some of her students snack & routinely, breakfast. She has a big bin of food ready. She is not the only teacher who does. What do you think she should say to the child that says I didn't have breakfast? Of course, she will feed them. A child whose stomach is full has a better learning opportunity than 1 that is hungry. Believe it or not-it's true!

It would be great if all kids arrived at school after eating a healthy breakfast, getting a good nights sleep at a consistent bedtime, not watching/playing violent & aggressive TV/video games, not listening to mom&dad argue, completing homework on time, modeling good role models BUT even in

Rmd&SG that is not always the case. RGSmom you should complain to your principal about snack. If he doesn't do anything about it, go to BOE, Your kid & other students need it.

Let me explain how it works. A high quality teacher who wants to work in the county interviews with 3-4 school districts. They then have to weigh offers from 3-4 districts. If our district is at the bottom of the barrel we don't hire any of the highest quality teachers. The district ends up making offers to teachers that no one else wanted. If the district is in the middle of the pack we at least have a chance of hiring good teacher's. Years of being at the bottom eventually takes it's toll on the quality of education.

I don't know about you , but when I moved here 10 years ago the first thing I looked at was the quality of the schools. The quality of the schools is still my number 1 priority. If you gut the school district of quality. Very soon you will see the result reflected in the value of your house and the type of people attracted to the district. The Board and teachers need to start negotiating again now-the community is demanding it. SETTLE THIS STRIKE!!!

Shopgirl sure sounds like their a teacher herself. The average teacher salary per district is misleading. Johnsbury includes their high school. Dist 2 has two elementary schools. That list is not apples to apples. My child has had a first year teacher in the past and she was one of the very best my kids have had. New teachers could really be a great thing. I've also had a really great older teacher.

All public school systems are required to provide an education free of charge to everyone of school age in their districts. It's actually illegal for them to make us pay the \$200, but we do put up with that. The teachers need to realize we're doing our best as taxpayers and sign the contract. 2/3's I'm sure had to vote against this reasonable contract.

Teachers are getting strike pay I'm sure and once the union loses enough money, they will make the teachers agree to the contract. The board needs to implement some new hire rules into future contracts that change things slowly, but will pay teachers on performance. It will not pay for master degrees like they do now. \$63k for a gym teacher? 75k for a librarian Please!

Every parent I've talked to in person has said they support the board. They say that it's unheard of to get 100% health these days. It's too bad we can't protest or we all know that the teachers would give our kids a failing grade as much as they could. I'm sure those who are bringin coffee will gets A's.

Dist2parent-State FACTS not fiction. The teachers do NOT get paid during strike. The district does NOT pay for MS degrees. That was a cutback from the BOE long ago. What salary is fair for teachers? These are the people you have educating your children to go out in the world & make the best future they can. Teachers/parents have the most important job there is!! For my children, I want the best & to continue to hire the best-not the teachers who couldn't get jobs elsewhere. BOE stop dividing the community & show up to the table-Unbelievable!!!

Dist2parent-You said "I'm sure those who are bringin coffee will gets A's"- How ridiculous to insinuate such a comment! Way to keep dividing the community with that! How productive of you! BOE needs to actually show up to the mediation that they announced to try to make them look better in the media. We ALL are having "family emergencies" now. Let's all stop bashing & rehashing the problem. Start talking respectfully of possible solutions for both sides! There are 2 sides of this-all of us have to pay bills-even teachers. Money is an issue for everyone. BOE go to the table!

I completely agree it IS the responsibility of a parent to send their kids to school with full stomachs yet, it still happens b/c we do have some kids here in need. We've even collected Christmas gifts for families in need at our school. Whether you believe it or not, it is still true. Come on into the the school, sub in the classroom & find out truly for yourself (if you don't believe!!)

June 4 to 5, the State Council expert group on the South-North Water Transfer Construction Committee will progress in the city water works inspected, the Advisory. Provincial Secretary for the South-North Water Transfer Project Construction Authority Geng Fuming, accompanied by Deputy Mayor Hou Duan. City water project along the east line runs through the South and the North, involving a series of projects with auxiliary projects Nansihu, Liang Ji Canal, Liu Changhe and dig, Hanzhuang II, Pa, a long ditch, Tang floor, four pumping stations, Dasha, Sulu River Edge, Yangguantun River, Panzhuang four Regulators and the riverine cities and counties water cut in the district has eight derivative works. Currently, Hanzhuang will soon start construction of pumping stations, water control projects and Nansi Lake Dam Pumping Station II preliminary design has been completed and approved by the State departments finished, this year we will start the construction. Nansi Lake watershed sewage treatment work has been in full swing, releasing interception and diversion of water reuse project has been included in the main part of the plan for this year diversion project started. Experts and his party had a Nansi Lake View II dam, Liang Ji-Ditch canal and pumping station, a detailed understanding of the progress of the project.

About the Author

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