

Board of Education District 156 and McHenry Community

As citizens of McHenry, we are inhabit "one of the fastest growing counties in the state" (Official City of McHenry website). It is crucial that we pay attention to the success and development of our city. What better way to strengthen our community than also strengthen our school system? To place our young citizens in an environment they need to become successful, well-rounded citizens themselves. We need to make our schools and our district and great as it can be, and that means hiring and holding onto the best teachers possible. The obvious way to do that is to create a great working environment for our teachers: providing reasonable pay, comparable benefits, community support, and good working conditions. If we are unable to provide these things as a community, the true foundation of the community will surely crumble.

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District 156 is filled with some phenomenal people. While their title may read "teacher", they are much more than that. They serve the students of the district as coaches, counselors, advisors, friends, mentors, and role models. The teachers in this district are active participants in their students lives. I can personally say that I have learned so much from the teachers in this district. They have taught me far more than a challenging curriculum. I know that I speak for everyone here when I say that I would have been lost in high school had it not been for the guidance of many of these amazing educators. Our teachers provide much more than merely educational support.

It is clear to me that McHenry is a community that strives to support the students of our district- both emotionally and financially. As the District 156 Mission Statement States: "We are committed to provide all students the skills they need to be lifelong learners and productive citizens." It would seem to me that we must then also provide our teachers with the tools they need to educate "lifelong learners and productive citizens". As I stated before, our teachers do not simply teach. They strive to "educate, support, enlighten, challenge, coach, motivate, guide, and inspire" our students. It is our duty as a community to support the work of the schools and the teachers who lead them to greatness. I whole-heartedly believe that these teachers are special and it is our duty as a community to support the work that they do.

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-Veronica O'Connor
MCHS-West Campus Class of 2012