



NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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COMMITTEES
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June 22, 2021

Randolph Board of Education
25 School House Road
Randolph, NJ 07869

Randolph Board of Education,

I am writing this letter to you extremely disappointed by what I witnessed by Board of Education members at your special meeting on June 21st. I attended the meeting expecting to see passionate public comment about your decision to remove holidays from the school calendar, followed by an intelligent conversation by the Board; hoping this would lead to a respectful apology to the community and a vote to reverse the decision. What I witnessed instead was an embarrassing display of delusions of grandeur by a few board members who have tainted the prestige of the position for all those who were there to witness it.

Most egregious was the attempt by a few board members to distract those watching from the issue at hand by trying to make the issue about adding Veterans Day as a day off during the school year. I am a Veteran and I was disgusted by the move. It was a disingenuous attempt to change the discussion and avoid culpability for their actions. Our Veterans are not pawns in your political theater and should not be treated as such.

As members of the Board of Education, you represent the people who elected you. A few board members dismissed the opinions of those who took issue with your actions as "a loud few" and not representative of their constituents. I'd like to remind you that in the 2019 election Susan DeVito was the top vote getter in the school board election and received just 2,475 votes. The petition circulating today asking for a recall vote currently has 4,500 signatures on it. That is over 2,000 more people than voted for any of the three candidates in 2019. This should be a wakeup call for the Board of Education to remind you that you are representatives of the community.

I would like to applaud the efforts of Board President Tammy MacKay for attempting to dissuade the board from engaging in any future political moves involving the calendar. Tammy articulated very well that the Board had stepped out of their lane and her speech was apologetic and sincere. Unfortunately, some of the other board members didn't seem to get the message and continued to ride around on their high horses, forgetting who they work for.

I truly hope that the Board of Education members will use this as an opportunity to refocus on what is most important in their job which seems to have been forgotten recently: the students in your schools. Please let your own words from your website guide you in your job. "We commit to inspiring and empowering all students in Randolph Schools to reach their full potential as unique, responsible and educated members of a global society."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Bergen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "B".

Brian Bergen
Assemblyman