



Administrator, District_ <district_administrator@waunakee.k12.wi.us>

Public Comments for Tonight's Meeting

1 message

Todd Johnson <tjohnson@bunburyrealtors.com>

Mon, Oct 24, 2022 at 3:56 PM

To: "district_administrator@waunakee.k12.wi.us" <district_administrator@waunakee.k12.wi.us>

Hello Administrators and School Board Members,

I'm writing this email to you in full support of our current Men's Basketball Coach, Dana Mackenzie, and his entire staff.

As most of you know, I'm from Waunakee. I grew up here, went to school here, played sports here, and made a name for myself here. I moved my family back here in 2014. We decided to move back to Waunakee for two reasons. The first was Family, as both of our parents are in Waunakee. The second was that we believed this community held a value system that aligned with ours, and would assist us in our quest to raise 4 respectful, well educated, and active children. We believe it takes a village to raise children these days, and we believe Waunakee was the right choice to align ourselves with family, friends, and community members that keep our kids best interests in mind with each decision made within the community.

Fast Forward.....

I recently learned that our Men's Basketball Coach, Dana Mackenzie, has been put in a position to essentially wake up every day and defend himself against a few gentlemen that have their own self interests ahead of everyone else's. I've heard of the accusations that have been made against Coach Mackenzie, and I can't even believe he wants to coach here any longer. Dana Mackenzie, and his entire staff, have been nothing but dedicated coaches, teachers, and role models for kids of all ages in this community in their time here, especially the high school level boys basketball program. The fact that Coach Mackenzie has been bullied and abused by a few members of our community for no good reason, is just plain wrong. The fact that he continues to move forward with this program tells me a lot about him. It's the intent. It's clear to me that his intent is to move forward here because he loves these kids, he loves this community, and knows what he's doing here is in the best interests of the young men he coaches. I commend him for these efforts.

Dana and his staff have been here for years, since 2003 I believe. They took over a basketball program that had been unsuccessful since the early 90's, after legendary Coach Mark Hetzel stepped down. Post Hetzel years were tough, I know this because I was part of it, at its early stages. I don't take today's highly successful men's basketball program for granted. Coach Mackenzie and his staff rebuilt this program to where it is today. They have won several conference championships, have made it to the State Finals 2 times that I'm aware of, and in the process, have developed long lasting and trusted relationships with the young men that have played for them over the years.

Again, I've been made aware of the person and possibly an attorney that have been spreading lies about Dana and his staff, and it's not right. How these few people in this community have gotten this much time and energy out of our school board and administrators for their own special self interests is beyond me. I'm disappointed to be honest. Our school board is better than this. Our administrators are better than this. Our community is better than this. WE are all better than this. This boils down to Right from Wrong. What these few people have been able to get away with, the lies, the meetings, the pushing of their own agendas over the greater good of our basketball program and our entire community is nothing less than Toxic, and it's wrong.

I'm in full support of Dana Mackenzie and his staff continuing to coach our young men the game of basketball at the Varsity level. I'm in full support of Dana and his staff continuing to provide our youth basketball players with the basketball opportunities their program has been put together for these young players. I'm in 100% support of our community, our schools, and our athletic programs supporting these Men and Women in our community that put themselves ahead of others, and spend the majority of their adult lives coaching and molding our young children into respectful citizens within our community.

I believe this is a very important time for our community, our school board, administrators, and everyone involved to put our feet down and say "Enough!" It must be made known that this Toxic behavior by a few, will not be permitted in this community. I worry that if they are successful, this type of behavior will spread like wildfire. Also, I believe it should be known that a few men or women in this community do NOT speak for the rest of our community. I believe it's wrong to speak for someone else, or a group of people, unless you have been given consent to do so. The man saying our boys don't want to play for Coach Mackenzie and his staff is wrong for saying so. I never gave him consent to speak for me, or my son. The fact that he apparently spoke for us should be a huge red flag for everyone, shouldn't it? I want Dana

Mackenzie coaching my boys. As their father, I can say being given their consent, my boys want to play for Coach Mackenzie and his staff.

In closing, I'm asking for Dana Mackenzie and his staff to be retained with their current coaching positions. I strongly believe this is the right thing to do. For our children, for the Men's Basketball Program, and for our community. Coach Mackenzie and his staff have poured their hearts and souls into our basketball program, schools, and our community for many years. I believe it's time for us to stand up and support them.

Respectfully,

Todd Johnson