

August 18, 2020 Meeting
Views and Comments Submitted Electronically

1. 8/2/20 Debra Ehlert
2. 8/16/20 Tricia Herzog
3. 8/17/20 Heidi Jundt
4. 8/17/20 Bill Yazji

TO: Dr. Sue Savaglio Jarvis, KUSD Superintendent

FROM: Debra Ehlert, KUSD Parent/Guardian

DATE: August 2, 2020

RE: 2020-2021 School Year

Dr. Savaglio Jarvis

I am writing to express my extreme disappointment and frustration with the Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD) School Board (Board) 2 to 5 vote to begin the 2020 - 2021 academic school year as full virtual learning.

During the past several months there were three education options presented to parents and guardians of the KUSD community. These options included all virtual learning, choice of virtual or in classroom learning or all in classroom learning.

The Board's vote for all virtual learning has stripped parents and guardians of their rights to determine what is in the best interest of their children – KUSD students. The Board vote leads one to believe that the Board did not take into account any of the information, comments or thoughts that were provided during the discovery process as KUSD looked for alternative educational solutions necessary due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The Board's vote outlined the obvious disconnect between Board and the Kenosha School District Families - who the Board is to serves.

Not only did the Board vote strip parents and guardians of the right to make decisions related to their child's educational future, there was no plan outlined as how to return to the classroom setting learning other than the vote stands "indefinitely." This causes one to pause and consider whether the Board truly investigated the outcomes of the outlined options; or did they only look at the short-term solution- how to start the new school year.

As a KUSD parent the decision and the way information was provided left me feeling as though the Board was only going through the motions, and never intended to have students return to school this fall. This vote appears to reflect a predetermined outcome of all virtual learning; regardless of any information provided.

KUSD students have been in quarantine since March 18, 2020, with minimal social interaction. Forcing students who were connected to their friends, trusted teachers, sports, and social functions to wonder what to do with their time. Personally, I have watched the overall disintegration of these relationships while desperately trying to provide social interactions and educational opportunities through other avenues. These efforts have resulted in the withdrawal of social interaction, increased frustration, and anxiety of my children.

When sports were made available several parents and guardians including myself have commented about the complete change in mindset in our children. They are interacting with friends, coaches and teachers; they are social and thriving. The overall change in student's behavior overwhelmingly supports the need for the social interaction, and structure that can only be provided by in person education outlets for those who it applies to.

Parents and guardians have always had a choice in the education plan for their children. The parent or guardian made these decisions based on their children individuality, personal values and belief systems. The KUSD Board decision took away parents and guardians' right to choose what is right for their children, although they had this choice all along prior to COVID 19.

All virtual learning was not the only option as outlined, clearly offering parents and guardians a choice between virtual and in classroom learning was the right choice. Consider the following school districts that have offered their parents and guardians the option of to choose between the two learning styles. These schools and or districts include Oak Creek, Kansasville, Salem Elementary, Mequon and Oconomowoc. The Waukesha School

Board partnered with Waukesha County to establish the "Stay Safe to Stay Open" campaign in an effort to return to the classroom this fall.

Would in classroom learning have to change - of course it would. Everyone, every organization, every service industry, every business has had to pivot to be able to maintain its core focus while continuing to serve the population at large. The education system is no different. Extra in class room cleaning, mask wearing, plexi glass stands to protect teachers, block education units, and even blended in-person/online courses could have to be figured out.

As Board members you failed your community, our community and our children. I thank the two board members who stood up and voted for choice. I am grateful for the amazing teachers of River House from Mahone Middle School who showed true commitment to their students when the stay at home order first went into place. I have the utmost respect for the educators whom I know personally as well as those in my family. While understands there is not much that can be done at this time, I leave with these words:

"Schools are an essential part of the infrastructure of communities as they provide safe, supportive learning environments for students, employ teachers and other staff, and enable parents, guardians, and caregivers to go to work. Schools also provide critical services that help to mitigate health disparities, such as school meal programs, social, physical, behavioral, and mental health services. Communities should make every effort to support the reopening of schools safely for in person learning this fall."

Source CDC.Gov

Respectfully

Debra M. Ehlert

Parent of KUSD Students

Stacy Busby

From: Sue Savaglio-Jarvis
Sent: Sunday, August 16, 2020 10:03 PM
To: Kathleen DeLabio; Jessica Doyle-Rudin; Stacy Busby
Subject: Fwd: Consideration of Fall Sports

Stacy please see request below.

*Sincerely,
Dr. Sue*

Dr. Sue Savaglio-Jarvis
Superintendent of Kenosha Unified School District
ssavagli@kUSD.edu | P: 262.359.6320 | Fax: 262.359.7381

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Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sue Savaglio-Jarvis <ssavagli@kUSD.edu>
Date: August 16, 2020 at 10:02:11 PM CDT
To: T Herzog <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Dan Wade <dwade@kUSD.edu>, Mary Modder <mmodder@kUSD.edu>, Rebecca Stevens <rstevens@kUSD.edu>, Todd Battle <tbattle@kUSD.edu>, Tom Duncan <tduncan@kUSD.edu>, Tony Garcia <tgarcia@kUSD.edu>, Yolanda Adams <yadams@kUSD.edu>, Mark Aslakson <maslakso@kUSD.edu>, Quinton Maydaniuk <qmaydani@teachers.kUSD.edu>, "mjohnson@kenoshanews.com" <mjohnson@kenoshanews.com>
Subject: Re: Consideration of Fall Sports

Good Evening Ms. Herzog,
Please know that your email has been received and will be forwarded to Ms. Busby, School Board Executive Assistant. She will process accordingly.
Thank you.
Sincerely,
Dr. Sue

*Sincerely,
Dr. Sue*

Dr. Sue Savaglio-Jarvis
Superintendent of Kenosha Unified School District
ssavagli@kUSD.edu | P: 262.359.6320 | Fax: 262.359.7381

Kenosha Unified School District /3600 52nd Street / Kenosha, WI 53144

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On Aug 16, 2020, at 9:32 PM, T Herzog [REDACTED] wrote:

If time permits, please read aloud at school board meeting on Tuesday 8/18/20

To: Kenosha Unified School District School Board
CC: Dr. Sue Savaglio-Jarvis, Mark Aslakson (Cross Country Coach), Quinton Maydaniuk (Swim/Dive Coach), Mike Johnson (Kenosha News)
Date: August 17, 2020

On Friday 8/14/20 WIAA released their final decision on sports. As a parent of a high school senior, I was pleasantly surprised. After months of sports and activities being canceled, it was refreshing to hear that fall athletics will go on. Parents, students, and communities breathed a sigh of relief to hear that the WIAA voted in favor to continue fall sports in the state of Wisconsin. However, I know that the biggest hurdle to clear is the KUSD school board.

My daughter, [REDACTED], is a senior at Bradford High School. She has been a dual sport athlete since her freshman year, participating in cross country and swim; both of which are considered low risk sports. Her passion and commitment to her athletics is exceptional. [REDACTED] has learned so many valuable life lessons through her athletic career; the dedication and commitment it takes to improve, the focus it takes to be coachable, the joys in achieving a new PR, and the sportsmanship and grace of the defeat. Those skills cannot be taught in a classroom. This letter is a plea for the school board to allow the fall sports to continue.

Like so many others, I have watched my children "lose out" on countless activities and events. In our household, it's been "oh well, these are difficult times, everyone is losing out on something." We keep waiting for this to be over, but as time goes on we realize that this will not be over for a very long time. My daughter will not have a normal senior year, just as she did not have the anticipated ending to her junior year. Again we say, "oh well..."

However, I understand that this time around "virtual learning" will be equitable, fair and graded. I am hoping that it is engaging and challenging as well. While the children will not physically be in the building the message is clear, the students will be held accountable. So why not let fall sports continue? Why not give these athletes some glimmer of hope, some bit of normalcy? The athletes want to play. They want to prove that they can follow rules, practice social distancing, and wear a mask. They want to be leaders in their high school community, but they need you to give them a chance.

There have been so many "experts" that have come out of the woodwork during this pandemic. From time to time I read the comment section (brutal!). I do not

claim to be an expert and I am aware that whatever decision is made will not make everyone happy. If you allow fall sports, all or some to continue, you will get some negative feedback. I can hear it now, "No school, no sports." "If you can't have band or theatre then you can't have sports." Those comments have some merit but realistically not everything can be "fair." We've all learned that lesson the past 5 months.

I'm sure you've seen your social media pages flooded with parents posting about club sports: baseball, soccer, lacrosse and even basketball. There have not been any major outbreaks that resulted in shutting down these sports. KUSD did an exceptional job having a safe, intramural track season this summer. All the athletes followed the rules, no one contracted COVID, we did not have a community health crisis, nor did anyone have to be hospitalized. It just didn't happen and those are the facts.

We owe it to our kids to resume this school year on a positive note. We owe them our community support, trust, and confidence that they will do what is asked of them to remain healthy and safe. Sports are so much more than playing a game against another team. Athletics teach these young adults life skills that are essential for leadership, teamwork, and cooperative learning in the real world. By allowing them to play, students will understand that even through adversity, we give our best and we continue to persevere.

In closing, I implore you to consider not only the physical benefits of high school age students engaging in sports, but the strong impact it has on mental health. This should be a top priority for the district. The responsibility falls onto this board to take ALL of these factors into consideration. Covid_19 is not going away. As a society we need to start adapting to these changes. Give these athletes a chance to prove that they can make responsible decisions. Let them play!

Sincerely,
Tricia Herzog

August 17, 2020

Dear Mr. Duncan

My guess is that you have heard a wide range of opinions already about Fall Sports in Kenosha. I would like my "vote" to be heard and that is why I am sending this letter to you.

Please Vote "Yes" to Fall Sports in Kenosha.

I know I won't be able to convince you with data, or stats on CoVid, or protocols the coaches will take, etc. That info is outside my realm of expertise and I am sure you have about had enough of that.

Hopefully however, through an individual story you will be able to see the importance of letting our kids do what they love and keeping them healthy and strong during this unprecedented craziness. By this point in the process you may already know Coach Hoffman at Indian Trail has done a stellar job in keeping our boys safe during workouts this summer. The workouts are not ideal or "normal" for a "regular" season, but he has already shown that he can take extensive measures for safety and has proven that he can make it work and is not being careless with our boy's health at all.

Our family has been personally impacted by football at Indian Trail High School. My son is a rising Junior. He also is a double amputee who was adopted from China at age 7 in 2011. He has overcome many hurdles in his young life. For years, he begged to play football on a team. But, it wasn't until Spring of 2018 when he got new athletic prosthetics that he really had a chance to be on a team. We moved to Kenosha from Atlanta in Fall of 2018 after the season was over. So as soon as he could get signed up, he joined the football program at IT in the summer of 2019. He was entering his Sophomore year. They gave him the opportunity he had dreamed of. He absolutely LOVED it. It was unlike anything I've ever seen before. We were actually surprised they would take a kid with prosthetics at age 15 who had never played on a team before. But, they did and his passions were lit on fire.

During the season last year, he struggled a little due to a learning curve and some learning challenges that he has. His drive and passion would not let him quit. He was playing alongside guys who had both legs (seems basic unless you really think about it right?) and had been playing most of their lives. But, his drive and ambition and love for the game and his team kept him going. He had a sheet of plays that he took to bed with him so he could be the best player he could be for his team. Football is not only a sport for him but a dream being fulfilled.

Not every kid on the team will be heading off to college with a football scholarship. Some, like my son are loving football because of ALL the life lessons being learned as a team on and off the field. What a valuable tool for these kids especially during this crazy time.

Watching what IT Football has done for my son, I've done a 180 in my opinion of high school football. In the past, I may have been quick to judge those "jocks" and all the attention they get. I have had to tuck my own head and humbly admit that football is about something more than what I thought it was. IT Hawks have given him wings to fly and experience a dream coming true—isn't that what we all hope for our kids?

Fall football (and other sports as well) could give all the kids in our schools a chance to keep "something" to help them get through these days. The impact goes beyond the kids on the field. We have an opportunity to give the whole school a chance to have something this Fall



Fall 2019 IT Hawks Football

that will give them a sense of community and Team Spirit.

Right now you hold the future of a lot of kids and their personal stories in your hands. If you "can" give them something to keep them going for this season, why wouldn't you?

It will involve a HUGE amount of Trust. Trust that the guys will comply.

Trust that the coaches will continue to encourage the guys to do this with excellence.

I think it is time to TRUST people who want to do no harm. Safety is important. It always has been. I think this CAN be done!

This is an opportunity for Kenosha to shine and show the cities, counties, even country that we CAN do this! Trust us. Please just Trust us.

And
VOTE YES TO FALL SPORTS IN KENOSHA.

Thank you for your time,

Heidi Jundt

Stacy Busby

From: Sue Savaglio-Jarvis
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2020 10:36 PM
To: Bill Yazji
Cc: Tom Duncan; Mary Modder; Dan Wade; Yolanda Adams; Todd Battle; Tony Garcia; Rebecca Stevens; Susan Valeri; Leadership Council
Subject: Re: Change.org Petition Data
Attachments: petition1.pdf; ATT00001.htm; petition_signatures_jobs_23779079_20200817141054.pdf; ATT00002.htm; petition_comments_jobs_23779079_20200817142224.pdf; ATT00003.htm

Good Evening Mr. Yazji,

The purpose of this email is to share that your message has been received and forwarded to the appropriate personal who oversees the operations of the Board meeting and minutes.

Ms. Stacy Busby, Executive Assistant to the Board of Education is aware of your request.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Sue

*Sincerely,
Dr. Sue*

Dr. Sue Savaglio-Jarvis
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On Aug 17, 2020, at 10:23 PM, Bill Yazji <bill@yazji.net> wrote:

Dr. Savaglio-Jarvis, Mr. Duncan, Ms. Modder, Mr. Wade, Ms. Adams, Mr. Battle, Mr. Garcia, Ms. Stevens, Ms. Valeri:

Good evening,

Please find attached details of the petition circulated to garner support for parents to have a choice in their child's education. We would like to request this be read aloud at the board meeting, and incorporated into the boards notes.

Apologies on the export format, you'll find the core petition reason in one file, the signatures and comments in separate PDFs.

Thank you

Bill

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Welcome back to Change.org! A new petition wins every hour thanks to signers like you.



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A new petition wins every hour thanks to signers like you.

In-School Learning for KUSD!

What's new Petition details Comments Updates Discover



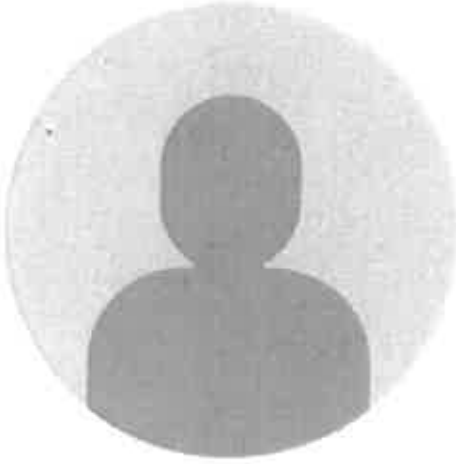
Kenosha Unified
School District

In-School Learning for KUSD!



Kenosha Unified
School District

1,722 have signed. Let's get to 2,500!



Bryan Easter started this petition to KUSD School Board

Parents are scrambling right now trying to decide what their future looks like. Many do not have the resources (financially & otherwise) to stay at home with their children. We are not teachers and our children are going to suffer from this horrible decision! Schools all around us are allowing in-person learning & the CDC says the following:

At the same time, the harms attributed to closed schools on the social, emotional, and behavioral health, economic well-being, and academic achievement of children, in both the short- and long-term, are well-known and significant. Further, the lack of in-person educational options disproportionately harms low-income and minority children and those living with disabilities. These students are far less likely to have access to private instruction and care and far more likely to rely on key school-supported resources like food programs, special education services, counseling, and after-school programs to meet basic developmental needs.[4]

Aside from a child's home, no other setting has more influence on a child's health and well-being than their school. The in-person school environment does the following:

- provides educational instruction;
- supports the development of social and emotional skills;
- creates a safe environment for learning;
- addresses nutritional needs; and
- facilitates physical activity.

Virtual learning should be an option to those who do not wish to send their child to school & in-person learning should be the standard! The survey that was sent to parents was obviously completely disregarded and had no bearing in this decision! It was a dog and pony show to allow parents to input their desires however, KUSD had no intent on using this information. We need in-person learning for our students. Tell the teachers to wear a mask like all other essential employees have been doing for the past several months and let's get back to school!

Start a petition of your own

This petition starter stood up and took action. Will you do the same?

[Start a petition](#)

[Start a petition of your own](#)

[This petition starter stood up and took action. Will you do the same?](#)

Updates

1. 2 weeks ago