

November 4, 2021

Good Morning,

I am Ken Ziegelbauer, father of a current student of the Tuxedo Union Free school district.

My wife, Dorothy Ziegelbauer has dutifully volunteered her time and energy over the past 11 years serving on the PTO and ultimately as president of the Tuxedo School Board. During her tenure, she and her colleagues have worked to keep the high school open and bring the budget under control. This work has allowed you all to occupy the positions on the BOE that you hold today. She has successfully worked to navigate through the pandemic with the assistance of some fine administrative staff and teachers.

My family has not been as fortunate. The pandemic gradually took its toll on my child through its forced isolation and remote learning. Well-documented effects of this period on adolescents affected our student.

As our daughter's performance declined from National Junior Honor society honor roll to struggling student we advocated for our child through open, legitimate channels.

The deepest depth of this decline occurred around May 2021 which happened to coincide with the beginning of the transition to a new district administration and BOE leadership. Just when our daughter needed compassion, we were presented with accusations of collusion and experienced a lack of empathy toward our daughter's

situation by the new administrations. Our family's motives were falsely portrayed and we began to meet resistance to basic educational support for our daughter.

All of you have faced the challenges of raising a child. Our challenges during this time included spending nights in emergency rooms and other health facilities.

We proceeded to address the district's failure to support our child using the district's processes only to find the truth twisted and decisions hidden behind closed doors.

During the last few weeks I have heard the term whistleblower used. Yes we are a whistleblower trying to break a coverup of the denial of services for our daughter.

This action against Dorothy is just another flimsy attempt to silence us. It is one of a pattern that has been used to remove many other individuals since the new administration took office. In each case, individuals suddenly 'resigned' .... prior administrators Paul Brown and Nicole Scariano and two or three teachers ... all have fallen victim to this tactic. Dorothy was also contacted and told it would be "better" if she just resigned. Resign? For what? For advocating for our child? No way. We won't be intimidated by such bullying, backroom political tactics.

We are here because as parents we have found the current BOE and administration has dramatically lost focus. It has chosen to ignore the needs of a district student in favor of supporting the now failed political dreams of the BOE president.

I was heartened during the first part of the October 15th meeting when the BOE members stood up to the BOE president and voted your conscience to allow public comment. It showed you to be individuals capable of making the right choice without undue influence from one individual.

I was also heartened to find that Tuxedo residents have also seen fit to reject this old-school bullying style.

The BOE must act in support of its students. When parents are vilified for advocating for their child's rights there is a fundamental misuse of power.

Please see this for what it is ... an attempt to silence a parent who only seeks delivery of education services for their child. See a dedicated, elected board member who is willing to stand up to intimidation in the face of falsehoods perpetrated behind closed doors. The community is not served by this tactic.