



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Superintendent

John O'Brien, Superintendent

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Phone (907) 714-8888

August 30, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District:

It is with a heavy heart that I must compose this letter to you today. Union leadership continues to threaten this community with a strike that they state could occur “as early as September 16.” I believe that the serious action of a strike initiated by union leadership is preventable and unnecessary. Please know that I have directed the school district’s negotiation team to work tirelessly to engage the unions to find a fiscally responsible compromise to reach a tentative agreement. However, in the unfortunate event that a few union leaders call for a strike, you as parents must be prepared and ready.

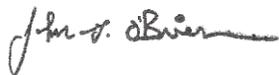
Now is the time for you to prepare contingency plans for your children. If union leaders call a strike, I will receive a 72-hour notice, and then be forced to place all of our schools into an EMERGENCY SCHOOLS CLOSURE (see attached document, “What Will Happen If There Is A Strike in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District?”). An EMERGENCY SCHOOLS CLOSURE consists of all 42 KPBSD schools, and includes all before and after school activities, sports, Connections Homeschool, charter and alternative schools, distance delivery programs, community school activities, pools, and any rentals or usage of school facilities. The emergency closure includes Boys and Girls Club activities in any KPBSD school or facility.

Specific to sports and activities, the unions are trying to assert that it is “the district’s choice to cancel sports.” This is not true. If there is a strike, the members of those unions will no longer be providing the educational and supporting services that they agreed to provide in their respective negotiated agreements. In addition, the teachers’ negotiated agreement includes the terms and conditions of employment for coaches and activity sponsors. The strike will cripple the school district’s ability to continue its critical and core reason for existence—the education of our students. As a result, I will have no option except to initiate a closure of all schools and all school activities.

Union leaders cannot dictate which contractual obligations of their negotiated agreement they will or will not perform. Therefore, a strike is a union leadership decision that requires a school district plan and response. If union leadership calls the strike, this will deny the educational community of its right to a public education and will result in the closure of all schools and all activities which occur in or on school facilities.

My efforts are intently focused on reaching an agreement. Any decision to strike is solely the decision of union leaders. The school district remains willing to meet as often and as long as necessary to find a fiscally responsible compromise to reach a tentative agreement and avoid an unnecessary strike.

With hopefulness,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John O'Brien".

John O'Brien
Superintendent

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