

Louise Boyd, NFT president, teacher

08 Jan 2012 — Bucks County Courier Times

By Christian Menno

Staff writer

My name is Louise Boyd. I am a teacher and the President of the Neshaminy Federation of Teachers, the union representing the 654 certified staff of the Neshaminy School District.

We have just informed the district that, effective Monday morning, Neshaminy teachers are on strike.

We've done everything possible to avoid this action, but the school board has left us no choice. Neshaminy teachers have endured nearly four years of negotiations and salary freezes. Through six contract proposals, we've offered ever-increasing financial sacrifices totaling millions of dollars. Through all these months and years of negotiations, the board has stonewalled.

This strike could easily have been averted if the board had negotiated with good will and in good faith. They haven't. In fact, as teachers have moved closer and closer to the middle, the board has moved farther and farther away. Every time we've come back with a counter proposal, the district has piled on more new demands - 60 plus at last count. It's become clear to us that this is not a board that is committed to reaching an agreement.

Our latest proposal, offered more than two months ago, would save the district millions of dollars through changes to the teachers' health care plan, prescription coverage and retiree health benefits. Instead, the board continues to stir up hard feelings in our community with hurtful rhetoric and divisive attacks on our teachers and our schools.

Teachers deserve better from this board. Our community deserves better. Most of all, our students deserve better.

Let me add that there is not a single teacher in Neshaminy who wants to be out on a picket line on Monday - not if we had any other choice. We want to be in our classrooms teaching. Sadly, a strike is the only way left for us to persuade the board to reach a fair settlement. We urge the board to come together with us to reach a compromise. Our students can't afford to wait any longer.

"Louise Boyd, NFT president, teacher" Bucks County Courier Times 08 Jan 2012: A11

