

Dear Strongsville Community:

Over the past few months - News 5 Cleveland, the local ABC television affiliate - has made several public records requests regarding past legal fees for our District. The culmination of these requests was a story that aired this week on their station that reported on the legal fees associated with strikes occurring in school districts. It specifically referenced our District as one of the local school districts having dealt with one of the more recent teacher strikes in the area.

News 5 Cleveland requested an on camera interview for the story, but I declined. Although the strike is a part of the history of our District, it is in our past. It is a past that we acknowledge and have learned from; however, this past does not define us or our future. As a community and District, we have made great strides since the spring of 2013. We have rebuilt strong partnerships within our District and city and have laid the foundation for a successful future that will ensure we are providing the premier educational experience that our students and community deserve.

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In response to the story, I would like to highlight the following:

- Strongsville City Schools is the largest employer in our city. With any organization of our size, the use of legal firms is a necessary component of our operation.
- There are several legal firms with which our District works, each utilized for their area of expertise. In addition to the firm that handles negotiations and labor relations related to our certificated and non-certificated staff, we also work with firms dealing in construction and facilities, human resources, and special education law.
- The legal firms our District works with are paid on usage only. There is no retainer involved in the firms we utilize.
- In the last round of negotiations with the teachers, outside counsel was not used. The negotiations and the resulting three year agreement (through July of 2019) was handled exclusively by Strongsville administrators and teacher representatives.

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Should you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 440.572.7010 or by email at cryba@scsmustangs.org.

As a District and community, we have much to look forward to as we continue to move forward and strive to work together in making Strongsville a premier District.

Sincerely,

Cameron M. Ryba
Superintendent