

KASD Children First PAC Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Kutztown Area School Board to Consider Compulsory COVID-19 Vaccination on Teachers, Staff, and Volunteers

Monday, Sept. 20, 2021, Kutztown Borough, Pa. — The School Board of the Kutztown Area School District voted 7-to-2 to place on the agenda for the next Board meeting whether to require COVID-19 vaccination for teachers, staff, and volunteers. The School Board will now officially consider such a mandate for the next scheduled Zoom meeting. KASD Children First PAC has endorsed highly qualified candidates for the School Board who are committed to stopping that mandate, namely, Steven Morris for Kutztown Borough; Erin Engel for Maxatawny Township and Lyons Borough; and Jason Koch and Jeremiah Light for Albany and Greenwich townships and Lenhartsville Borough.

During the School Board meeting, Alan J. Darion introduced the motion, and it was seconded by Caecilia Holt. Both are Democrat school directors from Kutztown Borough.

“My point is, choosing to not get vaccinated is not truly a personal choice,” said Darion, “People who come into a school building, who are not vaccinated, have also made that choice for every kid they have contact with.” He also stated that a vaccination mandate is “the only way” to protect children under the age of 12.

The motion carried on the ground that it only means furthering the discussion. A vote in favor of the motion does not mean the school director supports the mandate.

“Darion’s statements are chilling because equally applicable to children. What stops a COVID-19 vaccine mandate for children based on those same rationales? The public has to stand-up for our teachers, staff, and volunteers for the sake of protecting everyone against such a bad precedent,” said William Mulgrew, a Republican Committeeman for Greenwich Township and a parent of a child in the School District.

“First it was Critical Race Theory when this Board unanimously passed Policy 832 last year and permitted an Equity Team to instigate racial division among kids. Then this Board pushed a

watered-down alternative to Policy 832 to try to deflate criticism. Then it was facemasking, even though our Republican legislature overrode Gov. Wolf’s disaster emergency declaration. Then this Board chose to hide from parents and voters by switching to virtual meetings. Now this,” Mulgrew added, “I’ve never seen such overreaching and scorn for our community. This School Board does not represent us at all.”

“The only way to stop this School Board is for a clean sweep—five out of nine of these school director positions are up for election this November 2nd,” said Mulgrew, “We need all of Berks County to stand together for our Republican candidates, and residents can contribute to our political action committee for that purpose.” Mulgrew is also the treasurer for KASD Children First PAC (www.KASDPAC.com), which accepts contributions online.

“I’m proud that all of our PAC’s candidates oppose any COVID-19 vaccination mandate,” Mulgrew added. The PAC has endorsed Steven Morris, Erin Engel, Jason Koch, and Jeremiah Light.

For residents of Kutztown Borough, **Steven Morris** is the Republican candidate for school director. Morris has served as a prison counselor in Berks County for more than 20 years, and has two of his own children in the School District.

For residents of Maxatawny Township and Lyons Borough, **Erin Engel** is the Republican candidate for school director. She is an assistant coach for the High School Girls’ Tennis Team, and has two of her own children in the School District.

For residents of Albany and Greenwich townships and Lenhartsville Borough, **Jason Koch** and write-in candidate **Jeremiah Light** are Republicans seeking two 4-year term positions. Constituents in those municipalities will have two votes. Koch and Light are also parents of children in the School District.

There was only one incumbent on the School Board who had the courage to expressly say, during the September 20th meeting, that a vaccine mandate was wrong rather than just an uncomfortable topic of discussion.

Through a special election to fill a vacancy for two years, **Michelle Batz** is a Republican who was appointed after the resignation of Jim Shrawder. Batz is seeking to be elected to serve the balance of Shrawder’s term for Albany and Greenwich townships and Lenhartsville Borough.

Batz is not currently endorsed by KASD Children First PAC. However, Batz opposed Darion’s motion. “There’s a lot of evidence that, even when you’re vaccinated, you can still carry and infect people,” Batz said, noting that COVID-19 vaccines do not have long-term data like others. “There’s a lot of unknowns. I feel like that’s not our decision to make for people.”

“It is insane that a school director in Berks County, like Alan Darion, could entertain the idea of coercing employees into giving-up the integrity over their bodies or else lose their job. Has liberalism disappeared now?,” said Clay Breece, Chair of the Berks County Republican Committee.

“Darion’s rationales are fallacious. There are other treatments for COVID-19. Healthy children are more likely to die from being struck by lightning than from this virus,” Breece added, “Any health choice by individuals can potentially affect others. Can the School Board impose mandatory diet and exercise programs on employees because improving their immune system? Darion offers no limiting principles. Residents in the Kutztown Area School District are stuck with Darion on the Board for another two years. He should resign.”

Breece said the Berks County Republican Committee (BCRC) has taken a more active role over school director elections than it did in the past.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Republicans in the Kutztown Area School District who desire to run for School Board in 2023 can direct their inquiry to Mulgrew by e-mail to KASDChildrenFirst@protonmail.com.

Republicans in Berks County, residing in other school districts, who desire to run for School Board in 2023 can direct their inquiry to the Berks County Republican Committee by e-mail to BerksAgainstCRT@protonmail.com.

The September 20th KASD School Board meeting can be viewed here and the discussion on the vaccine mandate begins at approximately the 1:49:00 mark:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSjkJmMGuMk>

Constituents can become appraised of the KASD School Board meeting schedule here:
<https://www.kasd.org/Page/68>

Constituents can e-mail their school directors with their opposition to any vaccine mandate. **Note: Please do not contact these school directors if you are not a constituent, because flooding their e-mail inboxes will crowd out the ability of constituents to be heard.**

Region 1 (Kutztown Borough)

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| Alan J. Darion (Term Expires 2023): | adarion@kasd.org |
| *Michael J. Hess (Term Expires 2021): | mhess@kasd.org |
| Caecilia Holt (Term Expires 2023): | cholt@kasd.org |

*Incumbent seeking re-election on Democrat ticket.

Region 2 (Maxatawny Township and Lyons Borough)

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| Randy T. Burch (Term Expires 2023): | rburch@kasd.org |
| *Eric Johnson (Term Expires 2021): | ejohnson@kasd.org |
| Dennis S. Ritter (Term Expires 2023): | dritter@kasd.org |

*Incumbent Democrat who declined to seek re-election.

Region 3 (Albany and Greenwich townships and Lenhartsville Borough)

**Karl H. Nolte III (Term Expires 2021): knolte@kasd.org

**Michelle R. Batz (Term Expires 2021): mbatz@kasd.org

*Charles Shurr (Term Expires 2021): cshurr@kasd.org

*Incumbent seeking re-election on Democrat ticket.

**Incumbent seeking re-election on Democrat and Republican tickets.