

Thank you school board members, Superintendent Olson, community members and my fellow educators. My name is Joe Rosh and I am a history teacher and president of Education Minnesota-Monticello.

I am here tonight as a representative of the 320 teachers who work in this district. Monticello teachers are passionate, caring and committed to the students in this community. Delivering a quality public education to our students is our top priority.

Unfortunately, the prolonged contract negotiations between the teachers and the district are distracting our teachers from their primary role, and the one we love most – helping our students succeed and preparing them for successful lives. It is also a concern when we look at recruiting and retaining our excellent teachers. Teaching must be an attractive profession, or else smart, talented young people are going to turn to other districts or other careers in the private sector that pay better. We need these people to prepare the next generation of Monticello and the surrounding communities.

Teachers have been bargaining since last April and have yet to reach an agreement with the district. Please know, we are ready to meet with the district any time, for as long as it takes, to reach a fair and competitive settlement. Teachers want this done so we can do our jobs and focus on our kids. Thank you for your time.