

To the Geneva CUSD #304 School Board,

Ronald Reagan asked the American public as he ran for the Presidency in 1980, “Are you better off now than you were four years ago? Is it easier to go and buy things at the store”? For my family it is not, and I am not unique. Educators attempt to provide a middle-class lifestyle for our families. Personally, I have added duties at school and have even taken on a summer job to supplement my family’s income. That additional income is to pay bills, not to splurge or be elaborate. My family does not take vacations or drive new cars. In fact, my family has taken two vacations in eighteen years and drive two cars with a combined 190,000 miles.

I have proudly been a teacher, coach, department chair, game worker, Assistant Athletic Director, mentor, and so many more things at Geneva High School for eighteen years. When I interviewed for the Social Studies Department Chair position four years ago I was asked why I wanted the position. My answer was because I felt an obligation to a school that has given me so much. I did my student teaching at Geneva High School and I have never envisioned myself any place else - this is my home. I do not take sick days as I have over 180 days in my bank, and I regularly put in 60-70-hour work weeks which include Saturday’s and Sunday’s for the betterment of the Geneva community. During those eighteen years I, like other teachers, have missed out on my own children’s events and milestones in order to serve the Geneva community. My children have even volunteered their time to drag baseball diamonds, set up for events, or work a 10-hour day at wrestling tournaments. They had nothing to personally gain from any of this.

When I resigned my position as head varsity baseball coach in 2016, I said in my awards night speech that “this has been my life’s work. I have given all that I have, sometimes more than I had for the success of the Geneva High School baseball program”. That same feeling can be transferred to what many of us do daily for the Geneva community. As a loyal and dedicated public servant, I along with the other teachers of Geneva Community School District 304 are asking for just a part of that same sentiment in return.

As educators, we knew entering this profession that we would neither be rich or famous. What we do ask for is a certain level of appreciation, an acknowledgement of what we do, and a chance to be better off then we were four years ago.

Respectfully,

Matt Hahn
Geneva High School