

# Staff Editorial: R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Mob mentality at Board of Education meetings spreads misinformation, accomplishes nothing

\*Staff Editorials reflect the majority opinion of the *Image* staff

The Rockwood Board of Education was elected to make decisions in the best interests of all its students, but recent patron comments at meetings could lead you to believe the BOE has forgotten that mission.

It is the farthest thing from the truth.

And, the worst part is many of the comments are based on misinformation. As a news publication, we cannot stand that.

Per policy, the board does not respond to comments. That is explained at each meeting.

The fact that they do not respond or give in to demands made, does not give anyone the right to the behavior we are seeing at recent meetings. We are shocked at the utter disrespect shown to board members and district officials.

From a young age, we were taught if we want to be heard, we must conduct ourselves calmly and politely. Many attending BOE meetings seem unable to do that. It is embarrassing for Rockwood.

The mob mentality at meetings only feeds into the patrons' confirmation bias. Just because some people are loud, doesn't

mean they're accurate.

The regulars who attend to shout at the board believe they represent the majority opinion because it is all they hear. But, their voices are just the loudest--they do not represent the majority of the district's views.

Those who attend to express opposite views only stay away since the loud patrons have turned the meetings into a hostile environment.

In fact due to the atmosphere, the district has had to increase its budget for security at board meetings. Last year it was \$2,800. This year \$15,000 has already been allocated and almost half has been spent. Those funds could be used on more vital resources.

The BOE allows anyone to express concerns. But, there are more effective ways to be heard. First, do your homework. Get the facts before speaking. Next, instead of attending board meetings just to go on the attack, explore more mature ways to express your views.

We suggest visiting a kindergarten classroom to re-learn how to effectively and respectfully communicate.

