

M-T schools recall organizers about halfway to their goal

Group has until Aug. 20 to get signatures

By Lisa Curtis
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MEQUON — Organizers of the effort to recall four members of the Mequon-Thiensville School Board say they are about halfway to their goal of 4,200 signatures for each member.

Amber Schroeder, one of the parent organizers, said that total is about right given the group's deadline. They have until Aug. 20, or 60 days from their June 21 filing.

"We just need to keep the momentum going," Schroeder said.

Board members named in the recall are Wendy Francour, Erik Hollander, Akram Khan and Chris Schultz. Organizers, many of whom have also spoken out against the district's mask and social distancing policies, say the

board members have given too much authority to MTSD Superintendent Matthew Joynt in handling the pandemic.

The group also said that information released by the district suggests a significant drop in academic performance districtwide while spending has increased.

The district has previously told the News Graphic that it is aware of concerns about student achievement but has referred people to its website for information and context about achievement data, and has said in a statement it remains focused on planning for the next school year.

The group said they have candidates ready to run should they be successful in getting enough signatures for a recall election.

Members of the group have been circulating their petitions throughout the community, prompting a statement from Mequon Mayor John Wirth on just where signatures can be collected. Wirth, on his website

<https://wirth4mequon.com/>, said he has received many calls and emails about signatures being gathered in front of the library and community pool.

Many are unhappy with it, Wirth said, while others are upset that signs and banners are not allowed.

"People have the right to collect signatures or pass out literature on public property. Those are free speech and gathering rights guaranteed under the Constitution," Wirth said, also stressing in his message that the city takes no position on any candidate or recall petition.

Mequon ordinances do, however, prohibit posting signs or banners on public property. The ordinance is not directed at political activities and thus is legal, Wirth said. The sign prohibitions do not apply to those carried by people; people may carry protest or advocacy signs.

"The city and Police Department have been consistent in enforcing these standards," Wirth said.