

more context on issue with athletic fund drives

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To "boe"<boe@bhpsnj.org>

Dear BOE Members,

Hi, I should have included this in my last email, but I've been busy trying to educate folks on how normalized government overreach is becoming in this country.

I want to flag two fundraising messages I received this month connected to Governor Livingston athletics, because they raise serious questions about **budget priorities, donation oversight, and third-party fundraising practices**.

Below is a text I received from one parent regarding basketball fundraising who represented this is the email they got:

"With your monetary support, the funds will help cover items that the team has already received, such as the new warm-ups, which totaled almost \$4,000. While the warmups will go back to the program next year, there are plans to supply players with additional team gear and team merch. Players have already received practice jerseys, shooting shirts which they get to keep, and their game uniforms; and we are looking forward to participating in the New Providence Inclusion game later in the season. Your donations will also go towards team-building activities that strengthen bonds and improve performance, such as our end-of-year team banquet, team bonding activities and gifts for our graduating seniors."

I have no issue supporting school programs. I do have an issue with what this reflects: **fundraising framed around "merch," banquets, team bonding activities, and gifts**, while many families in New Jersey and in our community are struggling to cover basic necessities.

If athletics is fundraising for luxuries, that raises a basic question: **what are the District's priorities, and what oversight exists when donations and fundraising are used for non-essential spending?**

And isn't this a clear indicator that athletics is disproportionately funded? Do the District really not have money for tutoring when we have athletics programs so deep in cash they're fundraising priorities center on "merch", "bonding activities" and "gifts"?

Now fencing. This is the email I received:

"The GL Fencing Team is excited to launch our new fundraiser with Vertical Raise. Each team member is asked to share a list of 20 contacts and cell numbers. Once the fundraiser launches each of our contacts will receive a text with a link that goes directly to

GL's Fencing Team's Donation page to make a donation. The money raised will be used to purchase equipment, fencing supplies, and money towards tournaments, food at the tournaments for the team and any other items needed for our team.

A representative from Vertical Raise will join the team at practice on Monday (Jan 12) to collect the contact sheets and give the team more information about the fundraiser.

Other GL sports teams have used this fundraiser and have had very successful results. There will be a prize for the team member that raises the most money."

This raises serious concerns about **student-driven collection of personal contact information** being handed to a third-party company for marketing and solicitation.

To be clear, I am asking:

1. What contract or agreement governs the District's use of Vertical Raise (or any third-party fundraising vendor)?
2. What information is collected (names, phone numbers, emails, etc.), and who has access to it?
3. How long does the vendor retain the data, and is it sold, reused, or shared?
4. What District policy governs student involvement in fundraising that requires collecting third-party contact information?
5. Is there a District-level review/approval process before a team can run this kind of campaign?

I look forward to receiving the responsive records connected to my OPRA request. If the District is approving donations, subsidizing athletics, and allowing third-party fundraising programs, then it must also be tracking and overseeing the funds and items tied to those programs.

Even if a third party "purchases" items directly, those items are being used in school activities. That raises another straightforward accountability question: **are donated goods and equipment inventoried, assigned a value, and tracked like other District property?**

Thank you,
John Migueis
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