

A Wife's Perspective: Service, Commitment, and the Cost of Standing Up

By Amy Stier

My name is Amy Stier. I am the wife of Master Sgt. Raymond Stier, First Sergeant with the 127th Medical Group. My husband also serves on the Richmond Community Schools Board of Education in Macomb County, where he was sworn in in January 2025.

I want to share our story—not to create more division, but because I believe there is an important lesson in everything our family has experienced.

In the spring of 2024, a temporary seat on the school board became available after a board member stepped down. Ray applied and interviewed for the position. There were two candidates.

After the interviews, during a board discussion that was recorded, comments were made by a couple of board members indicating that they did not believe the board needed a man. Ultimately, the vote ended in a tie, and neither candidate received the seat. The position went back to the interview process.

Ray then made the decision to run for one of the seats on the ballot in November 2024.

During that campaign, three sitting board members sent letters to community members encouraging them to vote for other candidates. The community response was overwhelming. Many residents told Ray they had never seen anything like that happen before. Instead of discouraging people from supporting him, it motivated many of them to stand behind him.

Throughout the campaign, we also heard from many members of our community who felt it was time for change. People shared their concerns about the direction of the board and what they described as toxicity and division. They wanted new voices and a different approach.

Ray ran—and won one of the two seats on the ballot.

He was sworn in in January 2025.

Then, toward the end of the summer, Ray received orders for a six-month military deployment beginning in October, with an expected return in April 2026.

Like any military family, we prepared.

Ray worked tirelessly to make sure our family had everything we needed before he left. But he also made arrangements to continue serving his community while serving his country. He set up a system on his laptop so he could participate in school board meetings remotely from overseas.

After arriving in country around October 1, he continued attending board meetings despite the time difference. There were meetings taking place around 2 a.m. his time. Sometimes he was attending meetings when he should have been sleeping or eating breakfast.

He did this because he took his commitment to the people who elected him seriously.

Then things changed.

Ray found himself in what he described to us as a “very spicy situation.” He was in a war zone, and eventually he was evacuated.

At the end of February 2026, he notified the board that he would no longer have the capability to attend meetings until further notice.

At that point, Ray had missed approximately two or three board meetings.

It was then that two board members publicly spoke about what they described as Ray’s “disservice to the district” because he had not resigned before leaving for his deployment.

One board member even referenced discussions that had taken place away from the public table and ultimately acknowledged that there was nothing they could do because the community had voted Ray into that position.

Other board members did come to Ray’s defense.

The argument was that the board had important votes coming up and that Ray’s absence left them with six members instead of seven. One of the issues mentioned was the selection of a new superintendent—a situation that arose only after Ray had already deployed and the superintendent at the time abruptly retired.

As his wife, I was furious. I was hurt. And honestly, I was not completely surprised by where some of these comments came from.

But I made a decision.

I did not call the media.

I did not contact news outlets.

I did not organize a campaign against anyone.

I simply shared the video on my personal Facebook page.

What happened next was completely unexpected.

The community responded.

Ray's story spread far beyond our expectations, and people began sharing their own thoughts about what had happened.

Since then, however, our family has faced another battle—this time on the home front.

For nearly six months, my family and I have experienced what we believe has been ongoing harassment and bullying connected to one of the board members and her husband. A Facebook page was created where accusations, personal attacks, and information about Ray's personal life have been posted.

What started with two people speaking publicly has grown into something much larger.

And while we can disagree about school board politics, policies, candidates, and decisions, I believe there is a line that should never be crossed: attacking someone's family and attempting to destroy their character.

Ray is home now.

His deployment was extended, but thankfully, he returned safely in late May.

For that, I am incredibly grateful.

There have also been positives throughout all of this.

Ray is home with his family.

Our district has a wonderful new superintendent whom I believe can bring amazing things to our schools and our students.

And our community has shown that it cares deeply about what happens within our school district.

Through everything, one thing has remained clear to me.

Our men and women in uniform are the backbone of this country.

They leave their families behind. They miss birthdays, holidays, milestones, and ordinary moments that most of us take for granted. They put themselves in dangerous situations because they took an oath to protect this country.

They don't do it for validation.

They don't do it for a pat on the back.

They do it because they believe in something bigger than themselves.

Ray did not stop being a husband, father, soldier, or community servant when he deployed.

If anything, he tried to continue fulfilling every responsibility he had.

He served his country while trying to serve the community that elected him.

I believe our military members deserve respect—not only when they are wearing a uniform, but also when they return home and continue serving their communities in other ways.

There are men and women across this country who serve in our schools, on our boards, in our communities, and in public positions while also serving in the military.

They should not have to choose between serving their country and serving the community they were elected to represent.

Ray was elected by the people.

He honored that responsibility for as long as circumstances allowed him to.

And when circumstances became dangerous and completely outside of his control, he did what he had to do to stay alive and return home to his family.

I am proud of my husband.

I am proud of the soldier he is.

I am proud of the husband and father he is.

And I am proud that, even through everything our family has experienced, he continues to care about his community and the students he was elected to serve.

We can disagree.

We can debate.

We can hold elected officials accountable.

But we can do all of those things without destroying families, attacking someone's character, or forgetting the sacrifices made by the men and women who serve this country.

At the end of the day, I am simply a wife who wants her husband home safe, a mother who wants her family left in peace, and a community member who believes we can do better.

We should expect better.

And most importantly, we should remember that behind every service member is a family who serves too.