

#1

12/5/2019

To the School District Boundary Appeals Board,

First of all, thank you for participating on the Board, I do not envy your task at all. I have been to 3 of your sessions to date, very well done.

My wife Kathy and I are in favor of keeping the Palmyra-Eagle School District. Our own elementary education started in small schools located in northern Michigan, 360 miles north of Eagle. When my military tour of duty was complete, we relocated to Milwaukee, spent 9 years there where our oldest daughter started school. Our dream then became to locate in a small town with a small school, within which we wanted to raise our family. We found Eagle and the associated Palmyra-Eagle school district wherein we built our home. We have been in Eagle now for 42 years.

Our 4 daughters attended Palmyra-Eagle schools, 5 of our grandchildren have done so as well, and we have 2 more too young for school. Our oldest 2 (a valedictorian young lady , a high honors young man) recently graduated and are off to the college of their choice. One of the two young grandchildren was to start K4 next year in Palmyra, however, failure of the referendum caused his family last summer to relocate 360 miles north of Eagle to a location which will assure them of attending a small school. Heart breaking, they lived across the street from the Middle School parking lot in Palmyra. We have 2 grandchildren, one a junior and the other 7th grade, who are caught up within the dissolving environment at this time.

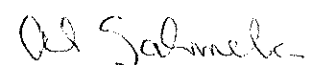
For 42 years we have been a proactive family, both physically and monetarily, with respect to supporting our youth and associated activities. We know PTO, girl scouts, softball, soccer, school band and athletics. I spent 20 years on the village of Eagle board, 4 of them as president, however, I won't bore you with those specific accomplishments, just want to talk about family.

We were in Waterloo last Monday night at our grandson's basketball game. When we walked into that gym, we were met by a sea of fans wearing purple, you would think one was in the Palmyra High School gym. Upon reviewing the crowd, I found families represented by 3 generations, we were not alone in that regard. We have known the families for years, have coached the old timers children and are now watching their grands as well. The girls basketball team was in attendance. This is one giant family.

From a dissolution perspective, I understand the economics, and have no issue with our big problem, school choice. However, why did we not see this problem coming and take appropriate action earlier, why did we not have a 5 year plan? My thoughts today are not to dissolve, but to come up with a solution as heartbreaking as it may be. The deepest cut could mean removing an elementary school, placing 6th grade into the middle school, and developing a local K4, K5 facility within both municipalities. Of course we will live with any decision you make and develop the environment for it. However, keep in mind that the long term core residents who developed the facilities of the village of Eagle are the Eagle folks whom vote for keeping the school district today.

Kathy and I have lived our dream now for 42 years. Hopefully our remaining family, and other long term Eagle families, can continue to live that dream as well.

Respectfully,



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#2

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Dear School District Boundary Appeals Board:

Thank you for your time in attempting to work out a resolution for our little rural District. Palmyra-Eagle Area School District (PEASD) is a wonderful District and I wish there was an easy solution and am not envious of your task. I am sure you have spent endless hours reading through written submissions, as well as those from both adults and students who have expressed and continue to express their opinions orally. This is such a terribly emotional situation and it is very difficult to keep those emotions at bay when it is such an important matter. My wish is for you to do everything in your power to keep Palmyra and Eagle together if at all possible.

My family is from Eagle and, although I know we are in the minority here, those who are for dissolution cannot and may not speak for everyone in Eagle. My family DOES NOT want this District to dissolve and we DO NOT agree with the sentiments of those from Eagle who do wish to dissolve. They have stated that connecting Eagle Elementary School (EES) to a neighboring district will help Eagle come together and heal and that it will be what is best for all the children. That is simply not the case. It will not heal the Eagle community. It will only tear it further apart because it IS NOT everyone's point of view. Not only is Eagle being torn apart because of all of this, but those who wish to dissolve are causing hard feelings between Palmyra and Eagle as well. I feel terrible that so many of our friends from Palmyra think we have all turned on them and I want them to know that is definitely not the case. There are many of us here in Eagle who will continue to fight right along with them.

We don't enjoy paying higher taxes, but we voted yes for the referendum last April and no to dissolution in the most recent election because we believe the kids are worth it. The Board stated that they would have to vote to dissolve if the referendum didn't pass. They said that DPI would then come in and see what could be done. That being said, that wasn't a definite dissolution at that point. I know there are many people from Eagle who voted no to higher taxes, but I don't believe that every one of those people wanted the District to dissolve and have stated that they don't want that to be the outcome. The April election may have turned out quite differently had many of the no voters known that this was a true possibility.

I also wonder how the vote would have turned out in Eagle and how many others would have voted not to pursue dissolution if those opposed wouldn't have swayed many voters their way by telling half truths about many things going on in the District. One example was a letter provided to you stating that "the facts are that most

of the open enrolled out kids were bullied.” There are approximately 400 kids who open enroll which means, if that person is correct, 400 children were bullied. That statement simply is not credible. Bullying is horrible and should not be tolerated anywhere, but I know that definitely was not the case. As a matter of fact, I know for a fact that many of the kids go above and beyond to make the special ed kids feel a part of things, from the football team and cheerleaders including them in their activities, to visiting outside of school at restaurants or in their own homes. Unfortunately, I’m also quite sure that, as sad as it is, bullying goes on in every district in some form or another. I know that was not the reason that 400+ kids school choiced out. Bad use of open enrollment is the reason all those children left our District.

A few years ago, many residents in Eagle began a tirade against EES and complained how horrible the school was. Realtors were selling houses in Eagle and telling buyers to choice out before they even gave PEASD a chance. That’s when the mass exodus of open enrollment began, and it has continued ever since. Statistics show that enrollment is down everywhere, but this certainly didn’t help our little District. I find it ironic how the school that these people were pulling their children from left and right, and choosing to open enroll out of because it wasn’t filling the needs of their children, is now the same school that they want to be absorbed by the Mukwonago Area School District (MASD). If EES wasn’t good enough for them while it is in PEASD, then why are they now singing its praises and saying it’s the only school worth saving and keeping open? Why is it now good enough to pull away and help destroy the very District from which they wish to remove it? I guess I’m confused as to whether the school is so terrible, which is why they chose to open enroll and continue to pull more and more children from PEASD, or whether it’s the best thing since sliced bread? It seems a bit drastic to break up a school district for the convenience of having bus service for your children. Those people had their choice and chose to do what is best for their children; however, in the process, they are taking the choice away from everyone who CHOSE to live here and CHOOSES to send their children to PEASD. That is just not right or fair.

The videos and stories you hear from all the kids in the District are absolutely true. This District is a family and these kids have been together and shared their small town lives and memories in the same schools for years, and many for the entire thirteen years. Now, by no fault of their own and without a choice, they are being threatened with possibly having to be placed in schools in other districts, most likely without some of their best friends, without teachers, coaches and staff who they have come to love and trust. These are the same teachers and coaches who know how they have performed academically, in clubs and through athletics. If we keep this District together, they would not have to start over with new teachers in classes in which they struggle or potentially fight for spots in clubs and on athletic teams with who knows how many more kids. The odds are that in a new district, unlike in PEASD, there will be so many children vying for spots that they won’t make the cut. This is something

they don't have to worry about in a smaller district where pretty much every child is able to join wherever he or she feels their interests and talents lie, whether it's Student Council, National Honor Society, helping with blood drives, joining plays or musicals or going from one sport to another throughout a school year.

We moved into this District thirty years ago with the intent of sending our kids to a small district. We did our homework and intentionally moved to Eagle to send our children to PEASD. We did not move to Eagle because the property was more affordable here only to send our kids to a neighboring district like so many recently have. Is our District perfect? Of course not. Every school district has issues and no district is perfect and sometimes a change needs to happen in order for a child to be nurtured and happier. If something like that happens and you and your children aren't happy, by all means choice out, but dragging others along with you with lies and deceit and making that decision for the children of others who choose to live in the District and are happy with the schools is not right. Those who wished to open enroll made their choice and they need to let others have theirs. They need to stop telling these kids that they will get over it and they will be fine. I wonder how they would be feeling if the shoe was on the other foot and someone else was making such a huge decision for their children.

Beside the lies and half-truths, I am also tired of hearing the people who continuously berate this District and talk of the inferior education the children are receiving compared to other districts. PEASD has many children for whom English is their second language. Despite that, the District recently moved up on the DPI report card to "exceeds expectations," which is the same accountability category as Mukwonago! Imagine what the kids could do had this whole dissolution not been bearing over them for the last year.

I believe my children received an excellent education and school experience. All three of them were involved in Student Council, National Honor Society and blood drives. My daughters participated in musicals, were captains of various sports teams, and were twelve-sport athletes throughout their time at PEHS. I believe that because it was possible for them to be involved in so many things, it made them very well rounded and helped all of them get into the colleges in which they chose to pursue their careers.

My belief in the quality of my children's education is corroborated by their success following graduation from PEHS. My son is employed in IT at a large Fortune 500 company in Milwaukee where he continues to receive the highest ratings at his annual reviews. His future is very bright.

Upon graduation from PEHS, my older daughter was chosen to play soccer for the UW Eau Claire Women's Soccer team. She may not have made the team had she

not done so well in soccer at PEHS where she was chosen as Player of the Year, a very rare occurrence for a goalie. I believe that helped her earn a spot on the team at UWEC. Odds are she may not have even made the soccer team in a larger district with all the competition. She has since graduated from UWEC with a Social Work degree and now works with autistic children in the Madison area.

My younger daughter was recently accepted into the very competitive nursing program at UW Oshkosh. She was one of five nursing students to receive a surprise \$2,500 Kennedy Nursing Fellow Scholarship for high academic achievement and future promise.

Many times, it's what you put into your education, showing up for classes and putting in the extra effort, that helps you succeed. So, you see, for my kids, the multiple opportunities they had because of being in a smaller district with fewer children and more opportunity never would have happened in a larger district. There is no way they would have been involved in so many academic and other clubs as well as having had the opportunity to be twelve-sport athletes in a district like Mukwonago. I firmly believe that because of every one of their experiences at PEASD it made them the wonderful hard-working adults they are today.

This all being said, what happens if this dissolution actually occurs? Can these other districts handle the influx of all the children from our District? Kettle Moraine and Whitewater have stated they aren't sure of their own future. What happens when all these children get shuffled around to other districts and then those districts have to make a choice to dissolve? Do these districts truly have the teachers, aids, staff or even the space or funds to care for not only the average child, but all of our children with special needs? What happens if future referendums are needed in order to keep these schools going after they have accepted our children? Yes, Mukwonago has stated that they would gladly take our kids from EES, but from what I understand would need to use EES in order to accommodate all the children choicing into their district. Would EES be able to accommodate all those kids? Because remember, if a referendum is needed in Eagle, the "Eagle Taxpayers" are notorious for voting no and have already stated "enough is enough," so these districts cannot expect any help from those no voters who wish to dissolve from Eagle.

I know money is an issue (isn't it always) and I'm sure cuts will need to be made in certain places, just like they are for people in their private lives, but please don't let this diamond in the rough slip away from us. Please do whatever you can to help the District stay the way it has been since EES was moved into this District from MASD almost fifty years ago. Our businesses, community and, most importantly, our children are counting on it. Thank you.

Dear SDBAB members:

When looking at the seven factors that you, the school district boundary appeals board, are to take into account in regards to your decision there are a few things you must consider:

#1 The geographical and topographical characteristics of the affected school districts, including the estimated travel time to and from school for pupils in the school districts.

In regards to this, the students in Palmyra and possibly in Eagle will have increased bus times if they have to travel to any of the other surrounding districts to attend middle school and high school. Although the distance from PEHS to WWHS is only 11.6 miles or a 20-minute drive with bus stops these students will possibly be on the bus for an extra 30-60 minutes depending on routes. Drive times to Mukwonago and East Troy would also be increased by about the same amount. In most cases, the students from PEASD will be the outer most portion of any new district and therefore will most likely be the first ones on the bus in the morning and the last ones off at night.

If these students drive to school, we are now taking the statistically most "at-risk" drivers and giving them a longer commute to and from school thus increasing the risk of accidents, injury or even death.

#2 The educational needs of all of the children residing in the affected school districts, the educational programs currently offered by each affected school district and the ability and commitment of each school district to meet those needs and continue to offer those educational programs.

Looking at this we have several factors that come to mind. First, the educational programs offered Agriculture and FFA are two programs that Mukwonago High School does not offer. We offer Tech Education classes that are more trades oriented and not engineering oriented. Mukwonago does not have 4K on-site and we do.

With a large part of our population as special education students, we have some concerns if there needs would be met at a larger district. In our school, not only do they get smaller class sizes, but also more one on one help during our 4th-hour resource or 9th-hour flexisched.

Statistics show that students who are involved in extra-curricular programs perform better on standardized tests. They are more well rounded and are better prepared for, not only college, but also the workforce and trades. If our students are now living farther away from their school the travel time alone may discourage them from participating.

The bigger schools do not have as many "spots" on the team and this too would most likely result in decreased participation in extra-curricular activities and thus possibly decrease their academic success.

#3 If territory is proposed to be detached from one school district and attached to an adjoining school district, whether the proposed detachment will have any adverse effect on the program currently offered by the school district from which the territory is proposed to be detached, including both curricular and extracurricular aspects of that

program. Not sure how this would impact the students other than the above-mentioned issues

If we give Eagle to Mukwanago this will impact the classes offered at PEHS and PEMS. We would most likely lose programs or elective classes due to scheduling restrictions and/or loss of staff and funding that goes with those students. Foreign language, music, Art, Agriculture, and other elective classes may not be offered. Having just 1-2 Math or Science teachers means smaller classes might not be offered like AP Calculus or Medical Terminology. Extracurricular programs will also be affected. We currently field three levels of teams in many sports and if we lose the Eagle portion of the district to Mukwanago we will most likely only be able to offer 1 in most sports.

#4 The testimony of and written statements filed by the residents of the affected school districts.

The testimony has overwhelmingly been in favor of not dissolving the current district. Many more people have spoken in favor of keeping PEASD alive. A few have spoken against keeping the district most citing incidents that happened years ago, only a few that had reasons for recently leaving the district. While several cited taxes would be too much to stay in their current homes we all know that even if taxes initially fall in Mukwonago or other districts, the addition of students, busing and the possible need for additions to an already full middle school and high school will most likely result in higher taxes at some point. In Whitewater, the mill rate was predicted to be 11.30 with the east-west plan causing much higher taxes for the Palmyra residents.

#5 The estimated fiscal effect of the proposed reorganization on the affected school districts, including the effect of the apportionment of assets and liabilities.

In the plan that was proposed by Mukwonago and Whitewater, the debt would have to be taken on by both Whitewater and Mukwonago, Whitewater does not know how that will change their taxes but most likely they would go up even more.

#7 The socioeconomic level and racial composition of the pupils who reside or will reside in territory proposed to be detached from one school district and attached to an adjoining school district or in a school district proposed to be dissolved; the proportion of the pupils who reside in such territory who are children at risk, as defined under s. 118.153 (1)(a); and the effect that the pupils described in this paragraph will have on the present and future socioeconomic level and racial composition of the affected school districts and on the proportion of the affected school districts' enrollments that will be children at risk.

Looking at the demographics of the surrounding districts Mukwonago only has 12.2% economically disadvantaged 11.94% of students with disabilities, and .36% ELL/LEP PEASD has 31.47%, 15.6%, 2.86% respectively. These are not even close. The racial composition is another disparity with PEASD Having a Hispanic population of 12.22% compared to Mukwonago at 4.84%. The students who would be put into the Mukwonago

district would be put in a district with a completely different racial, socioeconomic make-up. This could be a major disadvantage to the students and make them very uncomfortable and possibly cause them to become children at risk. The size of the other districts is another concern. A student who currently chooses to attend PEASD because it is a small school atmosphere will be completely overwhelmed when they are forced to join districts that are 2.5 times the size of PEASD (Whitewater) and 6.55 times the size of PEASD (Mukwonago).

The results of any referendum held under s.117.10.

The people have spoken and two things are clear. Most of the residents of Eagle do not support a school in Palmyra, but the residents of Palmyra clearly do.

Plans are in the works for looking at ways to make our district unique.

A 4 day a week school only adds about 1 hour to the day but saves money in less transportation costs, utilities, etc. It could also draw in students from surrounding districts putting us on the plus side of OE. This unique school would most likely draw teachers to open positions as well.

A charter school that focuses on the trades, agriculture, environmental and progressive education trends could also draw more students and teachers to the district.

As a staff member of the district for 34 years and a person who is working with community members to come up with a plan, I feel that you must vote not to dissolve the Palmyra-Eagle School District. Give us a chance to save our district and turn this district into one of the best in the state of Wisconsin.

Susan Fischer
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Have you considered a 4 day school week?

The benefits are extensive and the drawback few.

It would make us a unique district and not only help us retain students but most likely draw in students from other districts through Open Enrollment.

It would save us money in Busing (20%), Food Service (20%), Utilities (put on weekend mode saves heating/cooling costs), Staff (hourly staff would possibly work fewer hours per week).

Whether you have school 180 days at 6 hours a day or 144 days at 7.5 hours a day you still have 1080 hours of instructional face to face time in a year. Wisconsin only requires minutes not days anymore so any combination that gives you the number of minutes required would work. Because we are over on our current minutes we would only have to add about 1 hour to each day in order to go to a 4 day a week schedule.

Colorado started the practice back in 1980 with just 3 schools, in 1981 there were 12 districts and as of 2020-2021 109 districts have been approved to do a 4 day a week school.

Attached are some excerpts from a document about 4 days a week schools in Colorado:

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeedserv/fourdayschoolweekmanual>

Districts utilizing the four-day week tend to be rural and sparsely populated. Many have great distances for students to travel with long bus routes. Many also have major distances to travel to athletic events, as they participate in differing sports, conferences, and leagues. The majority of the four-day districts conduct no classes on Friday

Among districts that have implemented the concept, the practice of the four-day week is very popular among students, parents, and teachers. Satisfaction surveys indicate that 80% - 90% of community members favor continuing the four-day week in districts that have been on the schedule for several years. The opposition seems to come from members of the community not directly associated with the school, and from those who feel that school employees should work a traditional week.

Reasons for popularity vary from district to district. Some reasons offered are as follows:

- More time for family and family activities;
- Friday teacher preparation time instead of weekend preparation;
- A longer weekend break so that the intensity of the other days can be relieved and, also, as a strategy for increasing teacher recruitment and retention.

The initial reasons for going from five to four days of school per week have generally been financial. Once again, the financial picture differs from district to district. However, there are several general trends that are reliable.

FINANCIAL

Transportation

Transportation costs can be reduced by about 20%. In order to realize that level of

savings, districts must severely restrict or eliminate transportation for activities or programs not conducted on regular school days. The capital, insurance, maintenance, and administrative costs remain relatively constant. Fuel, oil, salaries, and supervisory costs can be reduced. Transportation employees will have a reduction in net pay.

Food Service

If districts are subsidizing the foodservice program from the general fund, 20% of that subsidy may be saved since the program runs only four days. However, certain fixed costs are not reduced.

Utilities

If buildings are actually closed and placed on a weekend cycle, savings compared to a three-day weekend can be realized. However, common practice is for buildings to be open for extra activities and for the use of staff. In most cases, heat is provided.

Staff

Most staff members are either on contract or on regular work weeks. Secretaries usually work 10-hour days with offices closed on the off day. Teachers and administrators usually receive the same annual salary. Hourly employees tied directly to the school day, such as aides and paraprofessionals, may or may not work the same number of hours per week.

CHILD CARE

The issue of baby-sitting seems to be a wash. With the longer school day, students get home at approximately the same time as their parents. The latchkey issue is virtually non-existent on school days. The issue is the full day of childcare needed on the fifth day. Most people have made the adjustment within neighborhoods or in other ways. With schools closed, more baby sitters are available. It does not seem more difficult to arrange for a single full day of babysitting than for a couple of hours five days per week. In many cases, a single day is simpler.

INSTRUCTION

The use of instructional time is probably the most controversial and least studied of all the issues. In the beginning, teachers clearly are faced with rearranging the instructional day. The major concern is for younger students and their ability to avoid fatigue.

When districts are strict about reducing interruptions of instructional time, the quality of that time can increase. The three-day weekend allows more flexibility for dealing with family and other conflicts that normally disrupt school. Appointments with doctors and dentists can be scheduled outside of school time. Sometimes, it takes all day to go to the dentist when a major drive is involved.

Some of the travel time associated with athletics and other activities occurs when school is not in session. A negative point is when a day of school is lost for any reason, it is a 20% longer day than a six-hour day, and, therefore, more hours are lost.

The general conclusion is that when strictly enforced, there are fewer disruptions to instructional time during the four-day week. Teachers, students, and parents are able to adapt to the longer day by planning creatively for and pacing the delivery of instruction.

This is true even for younger children.

CONCLUSION

The four-day week presents only one interesting method of utilizing time in ways other than the traditional. For many communities, it meets a need for efficiency. These communities tend to be small and rural in nature. Probably, these communities also have a larger percentage of traditional families with at least one parent not working outside the home. Many communities have a strong agricultural base with a tradition of family farms.

This idea would make us unique and different and could possibly be groundbreaking for the way education looks in Wisconsin. It is not only innovative but also cost-efficient.

More info on a school district in Colorado

<https://www.sd27j.org/Page/7882>

Susan Fischer

Palmyra-Eagle Math/Physics Instructor

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Dear School District Boundary Appeals board,

Palmyra-Eagle shaped me into the man, husband, teacher, and coach I am today. It blows my mind to see everything I see in the news about the possibility of a dissolution of my hometown school district and the place I love. When I was approached to write a response as to the positives of this school district I was very excited to share with you all why Palmyra-Eagle is such an amazing school district. I have had the privilege of living in both Eagle and Palmyra during my childhood. I have attended Eagle and Palmyra Elementary along with PEMS and PEHS. This is my story as to why this school should stay open and the positive impacts it has on a community.

When I was growing up, Eagle elementary was my favorite place to be. This was my home, truly it was. I was a very emotionally unstable kid. My parents were going through a divorce, which was very hard to deal with when I was a kid, I mean, who wouldn't struggle. I can remember the impact Mrs. Grayfowl had on me. She was our guidance counselor and would talk to me about how I was doing or feeling. These counseling sessions helped me so much. She taught me that there were other students in our school that were going through similar issues as I was. This made Eagle elementary a sanctuary for me. I learned so many life skills that laid the foundations for the building blocks for my successful education through this school district. Mind you, I was in first grade and had no idea how these coping skills would impact me for the rest of my life. I can still remember saying good morning to Mrs. Carpenter, walking into the gym and seeing the jump rope for heart banners, the giant eagle in the front lawn, the "blue" equipment, Mrs. Deck's classroom, and so many more memories. To this day I still talk to many of my old classmates and reminisce on our time at eagle elementary.

In 6th grade, I moved to Palmyra and that meant I was going to attend Palmyra Elementary. I remember how terrifying it was for me, leaving all of my friends in Eagle. I didn't know that this was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. I was joining a school that had the principal of the year in Mr. Greenquist, the nicest secretary in the office Mrs. DePorter, and my favorite teacher in 6th grade Mrs. Frehner. This is where I began to discover how people come from different backgrounds and situations. Although I wasn't in class with everyone at Palmyra elementary for long, that didn't matter to them. They included me, I wasn't bullied or picked on for being the new kid. I was having a difficult time, not getting people upset with me for not sitting next to them at lunch because everyone was inclusive and wanted me to feel comfortable. I then realized, that regardless of what community I was in, Eagle or Palmyra, that I truly had the best of both worlds. I knew that in 7th-grade kids from both of our small towns of Eagle and Palmyra would all come together and be "one" at PEMS. This is what I loved about our school, I had friends in two communities and the bonds I formed have been friendships that I still have today.

At PEMS I really started to get a diversified education by being exposed to new things like Tech Ed, FACS class, and a variety of different subject matters. This exposure, along with the small class sizes, allowed me to really develop trust with my teachers and classmates to create a positive learning environment for myself and others. The culture at PEMS was fantastic and they really challenged you to be the best you could be. Now having access to sports, band, choir, talent shows, you name it, was a really good experience for me. I did it all! I was a

football, basketball, baseball, trackster, MC of the talent show, saxophone in the band, and in the choir. Most people that do not attend a rural school district would not be encouraged or given the opportunity to take up so many extracurricular activities. Every teacher I had in my time in middle school was so supportive and understanding. These teachers started to make me think I want to be like them and be there for others. Middle school was a lot of firsts for me; making my own pillow by sewing, learning to cook, community service projects in Eagle and Palmyra, and finding who I was as a person.

High school, everyone said that it was going to be scary but not at Palmyra-Eagle. It didn't matter if you were a freshman or not everyone was accepting of everyone. My first couple of days in high school I can remember not getting my locker open and an upperclassman who had no idea who I was helped me. I couldn't believe it. I knew I was going to love this school even more and I was right! My school offered AP courses, business classes, metals/woodshop classes, FACS class, anything I wanted to gear my career around I had the exposure to. Again having smaller class sizes allowed our teachers to truly ensure they could check for our understanding of content. This allowed them to dictate what they would possibly have to review with us again or what students needed more help/needed to be challenged! Mrs. Sorenson's health class really peaked my interest in High School. Talking about our bodies/puberty, how drugs impacted our lives physically and emotionally, nutrition and so many other important topics really sparked my interest. This when I developed my lifelong passion for what I do today. I am a teacher because of everyone at the Palmyra-Eagle School district who had an impact on me. Our school was fun, my school was home, I never wanted to leave. All the people at the Palmyra-Eagle School District helped me have some of the best memories of my life. Mr. Valdovinos, Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Keelty, Mr. Tortomasi, Coach Peds, Lance, Hooky, Coach Wilde, Coach Meracle, Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Beaver, you made my high school experience amazing. The relationships you formed with me and pushing me to succeed are things I will forever be grateful for. You taught me things like, perseverance, hard work, responsibility, accountability, among so many other things. They led by example, thank you for teaching me how to be a good citizen for our state and country. Lastly, the reason why I am a teacher today is because one of my teachers cared enough to take me under his wing, Mr. McGraw. He showed me his joy and passion of teaching. I was lucky enough to be a student aide under him and be able to teach students first hand. Again, another amazing opportunity given to students at PEHS to help others in their school and learn valuable social skills. Without this opportunity, who knows where I would be today. This relationship was so strong, I now teach in the same school district as my inspiration.

Palmyra-Eagle dissolving would be the worst thing that could happen to these communities. I remember back in the summer of 2010 when a tornado hit our town, our family in Eagle. Everyone whether they were from Palmyra or Eagle, it did not matter, we pitched in to help one another. Volunteering to help each other when they needed it most. Not for money or seeking gratitude but simply just helping their family. I remember my classmates and I worked days and nights helping to provide families with water, clothes, or whatever they needed. This was a community united as one.

I am so proud of our school district and all the opportunities it allows for students, faculty and community. As I have grown older and am now a teacher, I still recall and tell stories of our

district, what it did for me. People want to go to Palmyra-Eagle and see first hand what it is all about. We have amazing things in this district. I don't have to continue to elaborate on all the success stories and everything that makes it great. Please do not dissolve this school. There are dozens of kids right now in our district that are getting an education in a positive learning environment that will change their lives forever. Do not take that opportunity away. Many WANT to be a part of this community. If someone wants to school choice their son/daughter to a different school that is their choice but do not make that choice for someone else's family. I want to thank all the people that are fighting for our district and using their voice in a positive way. I hope you, the board listen to these letters and our voices. I assure you that if you listen to us, you will be happy to see all the things that this district will continue to accomplish in the future. As my amazing physics teacher said to me, "Once a Panther, Always a Panther".

Thank you for your time in reading this and please help us save our district.

Kevin McGivern
2011 PEHS Graduate
Dodgeville Middle School
Health and Physical Education Teacher

TO: SDBAB Members
From: Ann Popp
235 Northwest St
Palmyra, WI 53156

(b)

December 1, 2019

I am writing this letter as a firm supporter of the Palmyra-Eagle Area School District and I am opposed to the dissolution of the District. I am both an employee and a resident, and have 2 children that graduated from the Palmyra-Eagle High School, beginning their education at Palmyra Elementary School in Kindergarten.

When my late husband and I were looking to buy a home in 1987, we explored several surrounding communities and settled on a home in Palmyra, a few blocks from the schools. Both my husband and I had attended large high schools and although our education was fine, our experiences lacked the ability to be involved in all the activities we were interested in, due to the sheer number of other students looking to be involved as well. We found a perfect fit with the Palmyra-Eagle Area School District.

Both of our children had the opportunity to participate in clubs and play team sports, even if they weren't the star on the field. That participation led to a lifelong love of running for my daughter and golf and basketball for my son. Educational outcomes are based on how much effort you are willing to put into it, and my children worked and succeeded in their academic careers. My son graduated from UW-Whitewater and is employed in the field of finance. My daughter graduated from Lawrence University, spent 2 years in the Peace Corps in the Republic of Georgia and was a Fulbright Scholar, teaching in Moldova. She is currently completing her second Master' degree at UW-Madison.

I have read a number of the letters that were sent to your committee and I am appalled by the lack of personal responsibility. Any education is only as good as the work you put into it. For parents and students to blame a school district for their struggles or failures is ridiculous. If they had attended a larger school and had issues there, would they still be as critical? I feel these comments are grasping at straws to support the fact that a number of people would like to detach from this district and join Mukwonago and they would say anything to accomplish that end. It's really ironic that in 1971, the taxpayers of Eagle petitioned DPI to **detach from Mukwonago**, because they didn't want to pay the tax increase to build a new high school, and Palmyra already had one. Unlimited open enrollment has caused a concentrated number of taxpayers to essentially hold our school district hostage and they expect DPI to bend to their will. If it works this time, I am sure that we will see this happening with many smaller, rural districts. I am requesting that your Board deny the dissolution, and help us find a solution to maintain our beloved school district. Thank you for your efforts.



Ann M. Popp

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I would like to again thank you for taking time out of your life and driving here over the past few weeks. I know you all believe in public schools or you would not be doing what you do. I also thank you for that. I spoke at the first meeting and have come to parts of all of them. I will say, at the last meeting it really hit home with me why we really need to stay open. Jefferson spoke and basically said no thanks, poor Kettle Moraine sounds worse than us. East Troy put on a fabulous presentation. Very energetic members of the district. But.....the day before that they put in for an operational only referendum for next April. Which means, if they don't pass they are in the same exact boat as us. I have been told we are only the tip of the iceberg. Many school districts are close to being in this same sad situation. I understand it sounds like a "bailout" but I am hoping it can be more of a "start over" with different people making the decisions and changes made. We were given such a short time with an ultimatum. I am so positive that if we would have known about this five years ago we could have made adjustments. We could have gotten feedback from the voters.

I understand how the state wanted to get out of funding for the schools and make it more local control, which I think is a good idea. The only problem is "community" is falling apart. I saw an article where only 38% of people know or interact with their neighbors. Our society, unfortunately, is becoming a me-me society. People with no children, which is part of the problem with less kids in the schools, older people on fixed income; when a referendum comes around they just think why should they pay for schools.

I truly think open enrollment is a big part of our problem. As I explained in my speech the first meeting, Eagle Elementary was thriving. My daughter was in 3rd grade in a trailer during an expansion due to overcrowding. It was great!! Then we had a few years of some bad administration and lost over 127 in a year. People were leaving for no reason other than their neighbors and friends were. If they got enough together they maybe could get bussed to Mukwonago. It split Eagle in two and it will never be the same. Very sad. All three of my kids had great experiences both in Eagle Elementary and PEHS. We were a community back then. All kids on the block playing together, kids doing community services for the community. It was why we moved out here and built a house. That is what we wanted for our kids and family.

I am hopeful that you will let us come up with a plan that will work for our community, the businesses in the community and the kids in our school. When this all began, someone said "if they close the school, you might as well plant grass down mainstreet." Please don't let this happen to our small town. Give us a second chance.

Again, thank you for your time. I could literally write a book as to why this is such a great school and needed to so many families-with changes we can make that happen.

Mary Ann Pronschinke

Michele Tomfohrde
503 Andrew Street
Eagle, WI 53186

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I was unable to finish my comments at the last meeting so here I am again!

At that meeting a board member said he wanted to hear testimony that pertained to the criteria you are required to consider when making your decision regarding the dissolution. So, I went back and reviewed the past dissolution decisions from the Wausaukee & Florence school districts. Many points that were made in those documents that helped those boards come to the decision to **deny** both of those requests are also present today in our district.

I took the following statements from the dissolution decision documents on the DPI's website:

Florence School District Document - 2005

- Bus travel for many students would be increased
- Cause bus contracting costs to increase
- Longer bus rides..difficult for younger children
- Winter road conditions...student safety factors
- Difficult for parents...to maintain strong parental involvement in their children's school activities
- Adding students to surrounding districts could have an adverse effect on their current educational programs
- Larger class sizes could negatively change the classroom learning environment
- Surrounding affected school districts may not be able to successfully handle the debt that would be transferred
- Acceptance of ..students in other communities
- Parent involvement would be more difficult
- Fiscal effects of the apportionment of assets and liabilities could be monumental

Wausaukee School District Document - 2008

- Increased bus travel for many students
- Adverse effect on students & community
- Loss of school would adversely affect community spirit and the pride parents and students have in the district
- School is the heart of their community
- Debt would be a significant burden to other districts
- Increased costs related to new bus routes or extension of existing ones
- Children who are economically disadvantaged and at risk with regard to academic success might be adversely affected if they were moved to different school districts, subject to longer bus rides, and put in an unfamiliar environment.
- More difficult for parents, particularly low-income parents, to conveniently travel to meet with teachers to discuss needs of their children or participate in school activities.

I think it's pretty apparent that our situation is very similar. We heard from the surrounding school districts at the last meeting and most of them brought up several of these points themselves.

You also asked for solutions. This isn't my own idea, and when I heard someone bring this up at the first meeting, I admit I was quite upset and offended. Unfortunately, after attending this meeting and the previous 2 meetings, it seems the best solution. Let Eagle go to Mukwonago. I hate saying that. It is very apparent that the citizens of Eagle are not going to pass a school referendum any time soon. This is not the solution I want, but I feel it is needed to keep the school district going. Although I don't think this is the best thing for Eagle, I do think this is what has to happen to save Palmyra. I don't like that the Eagle kids will now have to school choice back to their own school, but at least there would be a school for them to school choice to!

I used to be proud to say I lived in Eagle when people would ask me. I would either hear, Have you been to Old World Wisconsin? Or Oh, that is such a beautiful area in the Kettle Moraine Forest! Now, not so much. Now when someone asks where I live, I brace myself for the inevitable response of, "oh, that's the place where the schools are going to be closed"! And then I have to tell them that most of what they have heard about our school district is not true.

The number 1 reason I'm standing up here is the STUDENTS! They have done ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to deserve this! They have done what is expected of them, go to school and do your best. They have fought for their schools by going door to door handing out flyers, getting petitions signed, marching in parades and to the capital, writing letters, and speaking at these meetings. They have had to listen to all these terrible things being said about their school, and therefore about them. Trust me, they take this personally. My 2 Palmyra Eagle graduates are taking it personally! When they see their school described as failing and less desirable! That hurts!

I apologize for being long winded, but this is a very emotional issue for me and my community. Although I don't have children in the schools any longer, I still wonder what will happen to these children, friends and our community if there is no school here? Please ask yourselves what type of precedent this will set? If we are going to start dissolving smaller districts, then what is to stop other groups and large school districts from coming in and taking over smaller districts in the future? This could be the end of the small school district as we know it and that would be very sad. BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER!

So, Please, I BEG YOU, don't dissolve our school district!

Thank You for Your Time.

Sincerely,

Michele Tomfohrde

(8)

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARY APPEAL BOARD

Review of an Order of Dissolution Filed by the School District of Florence

ORDER
SDBAB 2006-09

NATURE OF THE REVIEW

This matter is before the School District Boundary Appeal Board (hereinafter referred to as Appeal Board) under sec. 117.10, Wis. Stats., pursuant to an order of dissolution filed by the School District of Florence, Wisconsin, with the Secretary of the School District Boundary Appeal Board on July 20, 2005.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On June 29, 2005, the school board of the School District of Florence voted to consider the dissolution of the School District of Florence per s. 117.10(1), Wis. Stats. On July 11, 2005, the school board of the School District of Florence voted to dissolve the School District of Florence. Public hearings were held in Florence, Wisconsin, on August 24, 2005, September 13, 2005, and October 18, 2005. The Appeal Panel toured the School District of Florence on August 24, 2005, the School District of Niagara on October 18, 2005, and the School District of Goodman-Armstrong Creek on October 19, 2005. On November 8, 2005, two referenda were on the ballot. The first was advisory and supported keeping the School District of Florence open. A second question was approved by the electors to move forward with a five-year, non-recurring plan to exceed revenue limits beginning with the 2005-06 school year. On November 15, 2005, the Appeal Board toured the School District of Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine and then met in Florence, Wisconsin, for discussion and possible action on the dissolution order.

The Appeal Board, consisting of the following members representing the various sized districts, was present at the meeting on November 15, 2005:

Patricia Silver	Richland School Board	Small school district
Walter Wetzel	Neillsville School Board	Small school district
Evelyn Pertzsch	Onalaska School Board	Medium school district
Therese Travia	South Milwaukee School Board	Medium school district
Dennis Kavanaugh	Oshkosh Area School Board	Large school district
Mary Thurmaier	Stevens Point Area School Board	Large school district
Tony Evers	Deputy State Superintendent	State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster's designee

Robert A. Soldner served as non-voting chair of the Appeal Board. Elizabeth Kane served as recording secretary.

The Appeal Board heard presentations of relevant information concerning how Order No. 2006-09 would impact the educational welfare of the children enrolled in the School District of Florence and in the surrounding school districts. It also reviewed the written record prepared for the Appeal Board review.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Appeal Board has considered all information presented in the dissolution order and has applied the required legal standards for school district reorganization, including the criteria under sec. 117.15, Wis. Stats. By a vote of 7-0 of its members, the Appeal Board has reversed Order No. 2006-09 of the school board of the School District of Florence and, therefore, has denied the dissolution of the School District of Florence.

The Appeal Board's reasons for Order No. 2006-09 are as follows:

Criteria 1:

The geographical and topographical characteristics of the affected school districts, including the estimated travel time to and from school for pupils in the school districts.

Bus travel for many students would be increased and would in all likelihood cause bus contracting costs to increase in neighboring school districts if the School District of Florence were to dissolve. It would not be geographically possible to shorten bus routes for students.

The longer bus rides would be especially difficult for younger children. Winter road conditions and longer bus routes were considered student safety factors. It would also be difficult for parents in the School District of Florence to maintain strong parental involvement in their children's school activities if the district were to dissolve.

Criteria 2:

The educational needs of all of the children residing in the affected school districts, the educational programs currently offered by each affected school district and the ability and commitment of each school district to meet those needs and continue to offer those educational programs.

The educational programs and achievements noted for the School District of Florence and the surrounding school districts were similar; test scores were good in all of the affected districts. There could be positive and/or negative impacts to the affected districts as they are all facing or could eventually face some of the same difficulties currently noted by the School District of Florence. Adding students to the surrounding school districts could have an adverse effect on their current educational programs, possibly resulting in particular courses no longer being available. It would be hard to replace curriculum that may have to be cut. Larger class sizes could negatively change the classroom learning environment. Local control regarding the educational needs of Florence students would be gone if the district were to be dissolved. There was concern as to whether a reading program currently offered at the School District of Florence could be maintained.

Criteria 3:

If territory is proposed to be detached from one school district and attached to an adjoining school district, whether the proposed detachment will have any adverse effect on the program currently offered by the school district from which the territory is proposed to be detached, including both curricular and extracurricular aspects of that program.

The surrounding affected school districts may not be able to successfully handle the debt that would be transferred to their districts. The added expense may drive the canceling of some educational programs in the surrounding districts. There was concern voiced regarding the acceptance of Florence students in other communities, and again, Florence parent involvement would be more difficult. There are many unknown factors as to what may happen in the next five years, making it hard to determine how a plan may affect surrounding school district class sizes, opportunities for extra curricular activities and staff assignments.

Criteria 4:

The testimony of and written statements filed by the residents of the affected school districts.

The Appeal Board heard from community members, members of the School District of Florence Board of Education as well as teaching and administrative staff members and students, and the superintendents of the surrounding school districts of Niagara, Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine, Goodman-Armstrong Creek, Laona, and Crandon. Tours of the facilities of Florence, Niagara, Goodman-Armstrong Creek, and Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine were also conducted. The Appeal Board complimented the districts on the high-quality condition of the facilities toured.

The majority of testimony supported maintaining the School District of Florence. The Florence community appeared to be divided in their opinion regarding the management of the school district and the Appeal Board expressed hope that over time, the community would work together to resolve their conflicts. The students who spoke were specific in their wish to see the School District of Florence remain open if the current curriculum offerings would be retained to meet their educational needs. Testimony regarding teacher contracts and negotiation factors were also considered. Prior to the November 8, 2005 election, the Florence district had experienced a number of failed referendums for additional revenue for district operations.

In addition to individual testimony, the Appeal Board received and considered numerous documents over the duration of the hearings held in Florence from members of

the same groups that testified. Statistical information was also provided, as requested by the Appeal Board, from the Department of Public Instruction.

Criteria 5:

The estimated fiscal effect of the proposed reorganization on the affected school districts, including the effect of the apportionment of assets and liabilities.

Following their discussion regarding the successful referendum held on November 8, 2005 to increase revenue for school district operations in Florence over the next five years, the Appeal Board noted their hope that the School District of Florence would be able to hold to the five-year plan if the district were to remain open. On the other hand, they also expressed concern as to whether the surrounding school districts would be able to afford the added debt and additional students without it negatively affecting those school districts if the Florence district were to dissolve. In particular, the Appeal Board discussed the fact that the retirement liability is a current concern in Florence which would continue to be a concern in the future, either to Florence or the surrounding districts, regardless of the Appeal Board's decision on the matter. It was determined that the fiscal effects of the apportionment of assets and liabilities could be monumental and would impact current mill rates. In any case, whether or not the School District of Florence were to dissolve, the mill rate for Florence residents would most likely increase. If the School District of Florence were to remain intact, that increase would be to a lesser degree.

Criteria 6:

Whether the proposed reorganization will make any part of a school district's territory noncontiguous.

All of the affected school districts border the School District of Florence.

Criteria 7:

The socioeconomic level and racial composition of the pupils who reside or will reside in territory proposed to be detached from one school district and attached to an adjoining school district or in school districts proposed to be consolidated or in a school district proposed to be dissolved; the proportion of the pupils who reside in such territory who are children at risk, as defined under sec. 118.153(1)(a); and the effect that the pupils described in this paragraph will have on the present and future socioeconomic level and racial composition of the affected school districts and on the proportion of the affected school districts' enrollments that will be children at risk.

All of the affected school districts were similar in population.

Criteria 8:

The results of any referendum held under s. 117.10.

The Appeal Board discussed and considered two referenda that were held on November 8, 2005. The non-binding, advisory referendum asked the Florence community whether the School District of Florence should dissolve. Eighty-three percent of the voters opposed the dissolution. The second referendum asked the voters to support a five-year, non-recurring referendum to exceed revenue limits; fifty-three percent of the voters supported the Florence School Board plan. It was determined that if the Florence district remains open, the residents, as well as the school staffs, would have to give the five-year plan a chance. The successful passing of the referendums demonstrated support from the community to move forward.

Criteria 9:

Other appropriate factors.

It would take the building of working relationships with the county and the community to address issues of economic development. It was noted that a school district is needed to promote growth in the area and, as stated by a member of the Appeal Board, "The

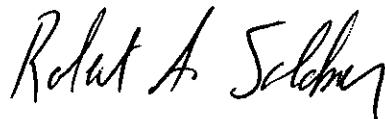
students will be the leaders and will lead the district to a better place. The citizens (of Florence) need to forget the past and work together to secure the future of the School District of Florence.”

Again it was noted that dissolution of the School District of Florence would not lower property taxes for Florence residents. Whether or not the School District of Florence were to dissolve, the mill rate for Florence residents would most likely increase.

The five-year plan does not guarantee a change in the funding formula will occur during that time; therefore, the members of the Appeal Board encouraged school board members and others to continue dialog and contact their elected state officials regarding the current funding formula.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT Order No. 2006-09 of the school board of the School District of Florence is hereby denied by Order of the School District Boundary Appeal Board.

Dated December 16, 2005.



Robert A. Soldner
School District Boundary Appeal Board

Order filed with the Secretary, School District Boundary Appeal Board on December 16, 2005.

Robert A. Soldner, Secretary

RIGHT TO APPEAL TO CIRCUIT COURT

Any person aggrieved by this order may appeal the order to a circuit court by filing an appeal within 30 days after copies of the order are filed with the secretary of the board under sec. 117.17(2), Wis. Stats., with the circuit court of any county in which any of the territory proposed to be detached from one school district and attached to another school district is located or with the circuit court of any county in which any territory of the school district to which the territory is proposed to be attached is located.

See sec. 117.14, Wis. Stats.

8

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARY APPEAL BOARD

Review of an Order of Dissolution Filed by the School District of Wausaukee

ORDER
SDBAB 2009-02

NATURE OF THE REVIEW

This matter is before the School District Boundary Appeal Board (hereinafter referred to as Appeal Board) under sec. 117.10, Wis. Stats., pursuant to an order of dissolution filed by the School District of Wausaukee, Wisconsin, with the Secretary of the School District Boundary Appeal Board on July 14, 2008.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On June 26, 2008, the school board of the School District of Wausaukee voted to consider the dissolution of the School District of Wausaukee per s. 117.10(1), Wis. Stats. On July 8, 2008, the school board of the School District of Wausaukee voted to dissolve the School District of Wausaukee. Public hearings were held in Wausaukee, Wisconsin, on August 26, 2008, and September 30, 2008. The Appeal Board toured the School District of Wausaukee on August 26, 2008. At the September 30, 2008 hearing the Appeal Board met for discussion and possible action on the dissolution order.

The Appeal Board, consisting of the following members representing the various sized districts, was present at the meeting on September 30, 2008:

Patricia Silver	Richland School Board	Small school district
Richard Eloranta	Owen-Withee School Board	Small school district
Steven Pate	Portage Community School Board	Medium school district
Therese Travia	South Milwaukee School Board	Medium school district
Dennis Kavanaugh	Oshkosh Area School Board	Large school district
Mary Kathleen Maloney	Green Bay Area School Board	Large school district
Tony Evers	Deputy State Superintendent	State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmester's designee

Elizabeth E. Kane served as non-voting chair of the Appeal Board. Janice Zmrazek served as recording secretary.

The Appeal Board heard presentations of relevant information concerning how Order No. 2009-02 would impact the educational welfare of the children enrolled in the School District of Wausaukee and in the surrounding school districts. It also reviewed the written record prepared for the Appeal Board review.

DECISION AND ORDER

The Appeal Board has considered all information presented in the dissolution order and has applied the required legal standards for school district reorganization, including the criteria under sec. 117.15, Wis. Stats. By a vote of 7-0 of its members, the Appeal Board has reversed Order No. 2009-02 of the school board of the School District of Wausaukee and, therefore, has denied the dissolution of the School District of Wausaukee.

The Appeal Board's reasons for Order No. 2009-02 are as follows:

Criteria 1:

The geographical and topographical characteristics of the affected school districts, including the estimated travel time to and from school for pupils in the school districts.

Dissolution of the School District of Wausaukee would result in increased bus travel for many students.

Criteria 2:

The educational needs of all of the children residing in the affected school districts, the educational programs currently offered by each affected school district and the ability and commitment of each school district to meet those needs and continue to offer those educational programs.

The electors of the School District of Wausaukee have approved a funding referendum that demonstrates the community's commitment to maintaining educational programs to meet the needs of all students. District officials have expressed the intent to maintain current program quality within the budget and improve over time. It is possible that students at the high school level would have access to more classes if dissolution occurred and they were moved into a bigger district. It was noted that increased enrollment in neighboring districts might strain the ability of those districts to maintain current programs.

Criteria 3:

If territory is proposed to be detached from one school district and attached to an adjoining school district, whether the proposed detachment will have any adverse effect on the program currently offered by the school district from which the territory is proposed to be detached, including both curricular and extracurricular aspects of that program.

Dissolution of the School District of Wausaukee would have an adverse effect on students and the community. It is not known if the surrounding affected school districts would be able to provide educational offerings similar to that which is currently available in Wausaukee. It is unlikely that programming in the adjoining districts would be enhanced and the possibility exists that special programs, such as gifted and talented or math that currently exist in Wausaukee, would be diluted, at best. Loss of the school would adversely affect community spirit and the pride parents and students have in the district.

Criteria 4:

The testimony of and written statements filed by the residents of the affected school districts.

The Appeal Board heard from students, parents, and other community members, members of the School District of Wausaukee Board of Education, as well as teachers and administrators from the district. A tour of the K-12 school at Wausaukee was also conducted.

An overwhelming majority of testimony indicated support for maintaining the School District of Wausaukee. The district officials, parents, and students that spoke at the hearings indicated their strong commitment to work together to sustain and improve the district, and carry out the long-term plan being developed based on the passage of the 10-year referendum. Students, parents, and district officials who spoke referred to the school as the heart of their community.

In addition to written and verbal testimony, the Appeal Board also heard from administrators of the surrounding school districts regarding bus routes and program offerings. Statistical data and profile information about Wausaukee and the neighboring districts were also provided by the Department of Public Instruction.

Criteria 5:

The estimated fiscal effect of the proposed reorganization on the affected school districts, including the effect of the apportionment of assets and liabilities.

Information from the districts bordering Wausaukee suggested that the debt that would be part of the division of assets and liabilities would be a significant burden. One or more of the neighboring districts would also experience increased costs related to the development of new bus routes or extension of existing routes.

Criteria 6:

Whether the proposed reorganization will make any part of a school district's territory noncontiguous.

Only districts bordering the School District of Wausaukee would be affected by dissolution.

Criteria 7:

The socioeconomic level and racial composition of the pupils who reside or will reside in territory proposed to be detached from one school district and attached to an adjoining school district or in school districts proposed to be consolidated or in a school district proposed to be dissolved; the proportion of the pupils who reside in such territory who are children at risk, as defined under sec. 118.153(1)(a); and the effect that the pupils described in this paragraph will have on the present and future socioeconomic level and racial composition of the affected school districts and on the proportion of the affected school districts' enrollments that will be children at risk.

The School District of Wausaukee has a relatively high poverty rate. Currently just under 50% of the students qualify for subsidized lunches. Children who are economically disadvantaged and at risk with regard to academic success might be adversely affected if they were moved to different school districts, subject to longer bus rides, and put in an unfamiliar environment with regard to school and community culture. Dissolution of the Wausaukee district might also make it more difficult for parents, particularly low-income parents, to conveniently travel to meet with teachers to discuss the needs of their children or to participate in school activities.

Criteria 8:

The results of any referendum held under s. 117.10.

The district did not hold a referendum on the question of dissolution. During the 2007-08 school year the district had two referendums for operating costs. The referendum held in February of 2008 failed by a substantial margin. A second referendum held in June 2008 failed by 19 votes. A third referendum held in August of the 2008-09 school year passed by a margin of 1,234 to 674. The successful passage of the third referendum, which will provide additional revenue to the district for a ten-year period, demonstrated support from the community to maintain the district.

Criteria 9:

Other appropriate factors.

The effort of students, parents, and staff to get the August referendum passed, and the strength of the vote demonstrate community support for the district and the plan being developed to ensure continued quality and financial soundness.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT Order No. 2009-02 of the school board of the School District of Wausaukee is hereby denied by Order of the School District Boundary Appeal Board.

Dated December 16, 2008.

Elizabeth E. Kane
School District Boundary Appeal Board

Order filed with the Secretary, School District Boundary Appeal Board on December 16, 2008.

Elizabeth E. Kane, Secretary

RIGHT TO APPEAL TO CIRCUIT COURT

Any person aggrieved by this order may appeal the order to a circuit court by filing an appeal within 30 days after copies of the order are filed with the secretary of the board under sec. 117.17(2), Wis. Stats., with the circuit court of any county in which any territory of any affected school district is located.

See sec. 117.14, Wis. Stats.

Order sent to:

Jan Dooley
District Administrator
School District of Wausaukee
P.O. Box 258
Wausaukee, WI 54177-0258

Ken Jones, Clerk
School District of Wausaukee
W6270 Barker Road
Amberg, WI 54102

Wisconsin Open Enrollment

Could that be the problem?

Statewide \$'s 1998-99 \$9,579,946, 2007-08 \$135,093,623, 2017-18 \$419,310,159

2017-18 Applications 38,738 413 Bullied/Harassed, 19 Crime Victims

(Tuition Waivers) Whitefish Bay 413/413

Your Samples 2017-18

<u>District</u>	<u>IN</u>	<u>OUT</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>WHERE ?</u>
Fennimore	83	17	+66	Boscobel -47
Gillette	18	95	-77	Shawano 20 Pulaski in/out
Green Bay	387	2147	-1760	ASH 1020,HS 544,DePere 417
Mercer	29	30	-1	
Portage	227	173	+54	Pardeeville -67
Sun Prairie	294	247	+47	Mad, Colum. DeF in/out
East Troy	98	230	-132	
Fort Atkinson	183	148	+35	
Jefferson	189	180	+9	
Kettle Moraine	529	187	+342	
Mukwonago	483	240	+243	
Oconomowoc	181	500	-318	
Palmyra-Eagle	25	340	-315	
Whitewater	75	154	-79	

Open Enrollment WINNERS

McFarland*	2,803
Wauwatosa	1197
Ashwaubenon	1020
Grantsburg*	819
Merrill	606
Howard-Suamico	544
Medford	471
Slinger	468
De Pere	417
Waukesha	372
Kettle Moraine	342
Beloit Turner	336
Elkhorn	336
Franklin	316
Saint Francis	314
Little Chute	306
Northern Ozaukee*	286
Union Grove	267
Tomorrow River	247
Monona Grove	244
Mukwonago	243
Cameron*	223
Kohler	194

Open Enrollment LOSERS

Milwaukee	3,945
Green Bay	1,760
Racine	1,315
Madison	804
Kaukauna	761
Delavan-Darien	569
Beloit	559
Kimberly	394
Kenosha	343
Hartford Jt. #1	336
Oconomowoc	319
Palmyra-Eagle	315
West De Pere	275
West Bend	259
Holmen	247
Eau Claire	244
Burlington	231
Neenah	218
Stevens Point	214
Menasha	206
Watertown	206
Sheboygan	204
Marinette	192

Palmyra-Eagle School District Dissolution

Some Basic Assumptions

- **The P-E School Board voted for dissolution as there last hope, not because of failing academics but perceived fiscal impossibilities.**
- **The Palmyra-Eagle School District currently has 606 students enrolled.**
- **Open-Enrollment was devastating to the school districts decline financially.**
- **The Mukwonago District has actively & successfully attracted open enrollment student to their district offsetting their own open enrollment losses to the Kettle Moraine District.**
- **The proposed “East-West’ plan created by the Mukwonago Board and considered by the Whitewater Board, is clearly a win for the Mukwonago School District. They gain students, equalized value and elementary school growth potential.**
- **Eagle is a rapidly growing community, Palmyra is not.**
- **Mukwonago calculates a gain of 498 students, 217 already attending Mukwonago, 219 from P-E and potentially 32 from East Troy and 30 from Kettle Moraine.**

- **Both Mukwonago and Whitewater would each accept 50% of the debt from Palmyra-Eagle by the “East-West” plan**
- **Whitewater would potentially gain 387 students from the areas including the Village of Palmyra and Towns of Palmyra, Sullivan, La Grange and Ottawa. They would also acquire the two school buildings in Palmyra.**
- **Utilization of those two buildings and busing are likely to become an issue. Open enrollment out of these areas to East Troy, Jefferson, Kettle Moraine and even Oconomowoc would be likely.**
- **The Whitewater schools are yet to weigh the impact of an “East-West” plan as forwarded by Mukwonago.**
- **If Palmyra were able to remain as a small district serving the 387 students, already in what would be the remaining attendance area, they would provide an alternative to the larger systems in the area**
- **Palmyra would be required to retain its portion of the debt by taxpayers who helped incur that debt and also voted to retain their school district**
- **The Eagle portion of the school district voted 74.5% to dissolve Palmyra-Eagle**
- **The Palmyra portion of the school district voted 71.6% to remain the P-E schools**

- The advisory referendum only yielded a narrow margin of a 53% vote to support the school board dissolve decision.
- There are currently 42 K-12 public school district in Wisconsin under 400 students, 98 under 600 students
- As a small district retaining quality facilities, Palmyra could offer unique opportunities including wrap-around and daycare in unused space in the elementary school.
- Small schools often have less avenues of opportunity but more access.
- Small schools have a higher percentage of their student body involved and engaged in their school.
- The main objective of the appointed boundary board is to meet the needs of students with the least disruption.

Albany 417	Alma 219	Alma Center 554	Almond-B 454	Arcadia 393	Athens 445
Augusta 587	Barneveld 436	Bayfield 416	Beecher-D-P 256	Benton 229	Birchwood 236
Blackhawk 399	Bowler 420	Bruce 495	Butternut 191	Cambria-F 391	Cashton 579
Cassville 237	Clayton 334	Cornell 438	DeSoto 552	Edgar 602	Elcho 313
Elkhart Lake-G 461	Elmwood 317	Fall River 531	Florence Co. 471	Fredric 544	Gibraltar 527
Gilman 400	Gilmanton 167	Goodman-A-C 114	Granton 244	Green Lake 254	Greenwood 427
Gresham 270	Highland 311	Hilbert 457	Hillsboro 541	Hurley 555	Hustisford 441
Independence 405	Ithaca 320	Juda 320	Kickapoo 479	Kohler 508	LaFarge 242
Ld Flambeau 557	L.Holcombe 308	Laona 222	Lena 417	Loyal 556	Luck 505
Marion 504	Mellen 308	Mercer 147	Monticello 365	Niagara 336	North Crawford 478
Oakfield 517	Owen Withee 490	Pecatonica 474	Phelps 149	Pittsville 588	Port Edwards 407
Potosi 326	Prairie Farm 316	Princeton 409	Rib Lake 486	Rio 435	River Ridge 555
Rosholt 556	Royall 604	Seneca 295	Sevatapol 566	Shullsburg 367	Siren 480
Solon Springs 308	South Shore 202	Southwestern 523	Stockbridge 240	Suring 391	Thorpe 593
Three Lakes 486	Tigerton 249	Turtle Lake 497	Wabeno 409	Washburn 490	Washington Island 72
Wausaukee 471	Wauzeka-St 292	Weston 284	White Lake 154	Wild Rose 557	Williams Bay 581
Winter 288	Wonewoc UC 385	Woodruff 453			

School District Of Palmyra, Wisconsin (2020-21)

A New Beginning

- In respect to the November advisory referendum, the April district referendum and the Palmyra-Eagle School Board dissolution decision; release the Village of Eagle and Town of Eagle to become a part of the Mukwonago School District.
- Surrender the approximately 49,013% of the former Palmyra-Eagle School Districts equalized value from the Town and Village of Eagle to the School District of Mukwonago.
- Transfer the Eagle Elementary school, its furnishings, equipment and adjacent acreage to the Mukwonago School District. Redrawing attendance lines to reflect the change.
- Transfer approximately 49.013% of the former Palmyra-Eagle School District debt to the Mukwonago School District
- Re-Constitute the Palmyra School District with a newly elected five-member school board retaining district properties in the Village of Palmyra and its approximately 50.987% of the former district's debt.
- Reduced staff from the P-E District will have first right of refusal for open and new positions within the Mukwonago Schools for which they are certified over the next three school years.

Rationale

- Least disruptive to students and their families.
- Addresses the wishes of referendums and board action
- Allows open enrollment decisions in varied directions to stand
- The Eagle School District that existed from 1931 to 1971 and detached from the Mukwonago High School District would return to its old boundaries. It would retain the elementary school built by the Palmyra-Eagle School District in 1987.
- Provides the opportunity to utilize quality existing buildings for their original purpose
- The 606 students currently attending the P-E Schools would be divided by residence to reflect current numbers with 220 in the village and town of Eagle as well as the Town of Ottawa in Mukwonago. The remaining 386 students from the towns of LaGrange, Palmyra and Sullivan, as well as those from the Village of Palmyra would remain in their current buildings in Palmyra.
- Fiscal strains will still exist within the newly constituted Palmyra School District but can be addressed by reduced staffing, refinancing and potential partnerships.
- A small school district alternative can serve the tri county area well.

Submitted by Jeff Tortomasi 12-5-19