

#1

Dear WI School District Boundary Appeals Board,

My name is Jeannie Stroh. I have worked in this district for the past 7 years and am proud to have 4 children that attend this district as well. We are here today largely due to the continued lack of adequate statewide funding for its public schools as well as the poorly thought out open enrollment laws. Open enrollment laws have allowed an enormous amount of money to be stripped from our district and taken to larger districts EVEN THOUGH our district is meeting or exceeding state standards. Small schools should not continue to be punished by allowing students who wish to open enroll to take their funding to a bigger district if their home district is performing to state standards. They should have to incur that cost themselves. Why should my children's school suffer from a decrease in funds simply because some people believe a bigger district is better. Schools like jobs are not all one size fits all. All students are individuals with individual learning styles and needs. Some may do better at a bigger school and some would do better at a smaller school. Can bigger districts offer more electives? Of course they can. They have a lot more money and more students who may find interest to fill those classes. Could my children receive an adequate education in another district? I have no reason to believe otherwise. However, I do not want to have my children experience negative interactions from children in their "receiving" districts, and those that say this would not happen are either delusional or have had no interaction with teenagers in a really long time. They may be looked down upon by peers that have no personal connection to them and refer to them as "some of those kids from Palmyra Eagle". I don't want my children to be on the receiving end of resentful glances that they "took" one of "their" spots either in a class, at a play, on a committee, or on a sports roster. I don't want to see my child's face on graduation day when he/she looks around and sees no one he/she knows, no peers surrounding them that they have known their whole life, or no one that rushes up to them to get their pictures taken together. My oldest will be a Senior next year and the thought of him having to go somewhere new is crushing. I chose a small district for a reason and now it is being stripped away.

Many open enrollers have spoken at the two meetings that I have attended voicing their issues with "bullying", not enough academic supports, or poor management of funds. I find it frustrating when people talk poorly about PEASD due to mismanagement of funds when most of them don't even understand how the government funds are given. They don't understand that certain funds can only be spent for certain things. Maybe funds could have been more tightly managed but I challenge those that criticize to closely examine the spending habits of other districts. Just because you have more money to spend does not mean that it should be spent. The negative comments regarding our special education services were especially frustrating. Most of them probably have no idea of the legal criteria and severity that must be met to qualify a student in special education anymore. Our district has made excellent gains in its ability to support students who may be in need of help but may not qualify for special education services through our Response To Intervention services. As a parent, I can't tell you how often I hear parents complain about injustices toward their son/daughter at anything from sports teams to academics to social groups. Not once, do I hear them say what part their own child may have played in those "injustices". There is a general lack of perspective taking and behavioral ownership in our society today that is an absolute disservice to the children.

I also find it concerning that Mukwonago is "cherry picking" Eagle apart from the rest of our district. Funny, that this particular area of our district tends to contain far less financially disadvantaged and racially diverse students/families. Whitewater is not that much larger than Palmyra and yet the proposed divisions being discussed want to give the section of our district that is not seeing any tax base growth to them. I don't see the advantage for them at all. A suggestion would be to have Mukwonago take the entire district and keep all the schools in PEASD open with our high school keeping its own identity (mascots etc.). Open enrollment would pretty much become a non issue and our schools would get to take advantage of a growing tax base. I would prefer my children continue to attend PEASD as its own school district but I do not see that as a realistic outcome at this time. There are too many petty and vindictive individuals who feel that their way is the only way. I found it detestable that someone at these meetings had the audacity to say "you will be alright"! For an adult to say that to both the students and staff in the audience was to me very demeaning! They will not be the ones to have to make new friends, get to know new teachers, have to move entirely, or to have to find new jobs that may take them further away from their families.

My concern is not for my children's grades or their ability to enter a college or university setting post graduation. I feel that Palmyra Eagle has and will continue to adequately prepare my children for whatever academic futures they may pursue. My concern is much further down the road when they become adult members of our society. The values that students live and learn in a smaller rural school like Palmyra Eagle are the values that will allow them to do great things for their communities as well as themselves.

Looking forward to these students as future employees, spouses, parents, and community leaders. I know they will embody the values they learn here at Palmyra Eagle. They will be CONFIDENT. They will be RISK TAKERS. They will be HARD WORKING. They will be ACCOUNTABLE for their actions. They will TAKE CARE of their NEIGHBORS. They will be INCLUSIVE. They will be EMPATHETIC. They will EMPOWER others.

I beg of this board to consider the fact that any district could provide these students with a diploma but letting them continue to receive their education here in the small rural district of Palmyra Eagle will give them so much more. Don't let them become just a number at a new school.

Our small district is currently in the spotlight, but we truly are fighting for small districts throughout our state, not only for our Independence but from our ANNIHILATION!

Thank you to the members of this board who have taken on this enormous burden. Thank you for taking the time to read and listen to the many voices that make up this district.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Stroh (Resident, Employee, and Proud Parent of students at Palmyra Eagle)

Respectfully submitted November 21st, 2019



November 21, 2019

Dear Members of the Department of Public Instruction School District Boundary Appeal Board,

My name is Heather Fraaza and I am a very proud Palmyra-Eagle High School graduate. I feel compelled to write to you to tell you about my experience, but also an experience that I believe so many in the Palmyra-Eagle Area School District (PEASD) have shared. I grew up in the small town of Palmyra and attended school there from kindergarten on, graduating from Palmyra-Eagle High School in 1992. From there I went on to get a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services at UW-Oshkosh and a graduate degree in Social Work from UW-Milwaukee. I have now been working as a school social worker for Milwaukee Public Schools for the last 18 years. The reason that I am sharing this with you is that I would not describe myself as an overly confident or athletic kid by nature. Although I was social, I was not always eager to try new things and did not necessarily feel that I was going to succeed. I am so fortunate that I grew up where I did. I was encouraged to join activities, committees and have a voice during my school experience. I participated in sports as well as various clubs in the school that boosted my confidence and helped me to accept disappointments and embarrassments. If I had been at a larger school, I do not believe that I would have found the success or confidence that I did in my PEASD experience. I am aware that great successes come out of larger schools and that some students thrive. I am also aware, especially being a school social worker, that the larger school environments are not for every student and many students get a bit lost in the school community. Having a positive school experience personally directed me to my career path as well. I do not know if I would have been confident enough to make those post-high school educational choices if it was not for the encouragement of the PEASD staff or the experiences that built my confidence along the way. I am so grateful that this community was my reality growing up. I will forever be grateful to the teachers and staff who took the time to challenge me, accept me and encourage me along the way. Recently, I returned to Palmyra for an event. I was still greeted with open arms and received encouraging words from past teachers, staff, and former alumni's families. Although I realize that this is an emotional plea, I am hopeful that you will also recognize that there are many others that have similar stories to mine who have likely benefitted from the same cohesive, supportive experience that occurs in the Palmyra Eagle Area School District.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my story.

Sincerely,

Heather Fraaza, Proud PEHS Alumni

1321 Jefferson Street, West Bend, WI 53090

414-841-8900

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November 21, 2019

PEASD Dissolution

I'm writing this not only as a community member, but a business owner and President of the Palmyra Area Chamber of Commerce .

When my husband and I were looking for homes to buy in 1995 we were drawn to Palmyra because of its small quaint community but also for the smaller school. We knew we wanted to raise our future children in this area. School choice is an option and we choose small school and community just as some choose larger schools and communities. We have raised 2 children through this school district and our youngest has the privilege to graduate as well from PEASD this spring.

There are many personal reasons we prefer it here and those are very similar to others that prefer it here, which include, smaller classroom sizes, knowing almost everyone in the school, including staff, kids and parents, whole community involvement in so many activities just to name a few.

I cannot speak for the whole Chamber of course, but as the president I can see what kind of an impact closing the school will have not just on our community but our businesses as well.

The school is one of the largest employers in the community. When there's an event at school so many of the businesses profit from it. Traffic is coming into town stopping at the gas stations, restaurants, the grocery store, the hardware store and even things like the library and post office. When you take away the school you take away so much revenue throughout the community. The impact on Palmyra will of course be much greater than Eagle. They have never had a high school in their community, making it more of a drive thru community in that sense. Of course it will have an impact on my business as well, there's no doubt. Being able to serve my community and the school has given me a lot of personal satisfaction and pride. As our children grow older our personal involvement in the school is of course less and less, but being a business owner and working with the school I still am able to stay connected not only with what's going on and changes but with the staff and faculty as well.

Closing our school would not only be a hardship on our community, families and businesses but I fear that if this should happen, more and more rural schools throughout Wisconsin and the country will continue to close down.

It is my hope and prayer that the decisions that are made are the most fair and just to everyone with taking every facet into consideration.

Thank you,

Heidi Deuster

Mother

Community member

Business owner, Heidi's Hobbies Floral and Gifts

Palmyra Chamber President

Palmyra Lioness

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Dear members of the School District Boundary Appeals Board,

Thirty-seven years ago, my wife and I selected Palmyra to settle down in and start our family. Having the small-town school nearby was a huge point in our decision-making process, we didn't want our children to attend a large school where they would be lost in the shuffle of hundreds of kids. Our choice proved to be a good one as all three children have graduated and pursued higher levels of education, funding it themselves with minimal student loans. They all have a bright future ahead in their respective fields, Navy Pilot, Financing and a Doctor.

Palmyra has suffered from a lower tax base than equivalent land area due to the thousands of acres of State-owned land. We still need to maintain the town roads weaving thru the hills along with providing police and fire protection being paid with our local tax dollars. Not only did we lose the tax base that was once paid on that land, but more importantly we have lost the potential of high-end homes being developed in the beautiful wooded hills of the Kettle Moraine. Homes that would have a high value and help to distribute the tax burden we have been enduring for decades. Simple estimates of over a million dollars of tax income could come from those lost homes. That alone could have changed our school problem we are experiencing, but that is only a small piece of the problems that have brought us here.

Small towns such as Palmyra will always lose the choice battle with the diversity that larger schools can offer, and the school choice program has brought that problem to the forefront. I feel that if a family feels a neighboring school is better suited for their child then they should live in that district or pay a premium to transfer to the other school. Making our district suffer by causing enrollment to be below its minimal operating level is not being fair to their neighbors.

Twelve years ago, we were told we needed to expand of our school building due to the population growth, mostly in the Eagle area. Now the majority of Eagle wants to pull out of Palmyra and attend Mukwonago, leaving us with unused school buildings that we cannot afford. That will put unaffordable tax burden on us to maintain our school with a much smaller enrollment.

I don't envy your position in needing to decide for us, but please consider letting Eagle go to Mukwonago and keep Palmyra as its own school district. We'll need to come up with a fair way of dividing the school's buildings and expenses, including the remainder of the unpaid building expansion loan. It will be painful, but it will allow Palmyra to maintain the great feeling of the small school we've enjoyed, and years down the road we will hardly remember these rough times.

Richard and Sharon Martin
607 Planeview Dr
Palmyra, WI 53156

Welcome to the members of the DPI SDBAB and I guess welcome to the bitter nasty custody battle that has existed far too long within the Palmyra-Eagle marriage. I can't imagine any of you knew how messy and nasty this has been. I have been watching in stunned silence the Pamyra Purple Panther Pride on display at these recent DPI hearings. While there has been far too many instances of less than mature showings, the best example of this "Pride" is when PEASD teachers, mind you these are teachers, have spoke at the these hearings and declared to district residents "If you don't like our school MOVE, GET OUT" to the loud cheering of the peanut gallery of staff in the back. They assert acceptance of the school system is the only critera residents are required to use to live in the area. A school system *may be one* criteria used by people when deciding where to live but it is *certainly not the only or primary one*.

A side note to the teachers and staff involved in this showing of Panther "Pride":

Don't look now teachers and staff but you are doing exactly what this district is well known for, that being bullying. "If you don't like our school system MOVE, GET OUT". Pure tribal bullying. Sounds like someone needs some remedial ant-bullying training, you know that same anti-bullying training you are touting has been implemented and is working. Bullying no longer exists at PEASD according to you. WRONG. Look at your behavior at these hearings.

Your students are watching you and you are certainly teaching them well in the art of bullying by your own behavior.

I am sure some representaives of neighboring school districts are also watching you closely, you know the same districts that you will have to apply to when PEASD is dissolved. Do you really think these districts would be interested in having some sour 3-star grapes introduced into their fine 5-star wine, just saying.

You need to come out of your nice warm little cocoon you have spun to isolate you from the outside world with visions of unlimited taxes despite being below average and realize there is a great big world out there and your students need the ability and skills to navigate it. Decrying Open Enrollment while pointing to minor scholastic improvement within the last year does nothing to change the long standing opinion and voting of district residents.

Have you ever thought about how can you be below average with a student to staff ratio of 6:1 and spending per student far in excess of the statewide average? How can you be below average when this average has an incredibly low bar that requires only 50% of students be literate in the 3R's ?

I could be like the vast majority of speakers at these hearings and prattle on emotionally but I will not do so.

Unlike them I have done my homework and answer the criteria you will be using in your decision making process.

(1) Geographic / Topographic conditions existing and its relation to travel concerns

The Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit creates a roughly 5 mile wide natural boundary with a limited population between Palmyra and Eagle. This boundary is located along Jefferson-Waukesha County line.

PEASD does not have a large geographic footprint in comparison to most of the rural school districts in Wisconsin.

Current district distance between Eagle & Palmyra 6.1 miles

Proposed district distance between Palmyra and Whitewater 9.8 miles

Eagle and Mukwonago 7.6 miles.

A natural boundary already exists and a minor difference of a few travel miles could hardly be of concern.

Result: Yes to dissolution

(2) Educational Needs of all students

With nearly half of the entire student population already enrolled outside of the district it would be impossible for the SDBAB to do anything now on how to address the needs of all of the students that live within the district. It can be the said that the parents have already made the decision on what is best for their children, the way it should be.

Result: Yes to dissolution

(3) Proposed boundary changes effect on curricular and extracurricular activity

The WIAA is on record stating that there will be no effect or changes to a student's eligilibility

Result: Yes to Dissolution

(4) Testimony of the public

The results of recent voting, which had an outstanding voter turnout, have to be used. This is because threats, vandalism and acts of violence have kept people from voicing their true thoughts and opinions at these DPI hearings. It is not possible to accurately gauge public sentiment using only the testimony at these hearings.

Result: Yes to Dissolution

(5) Fiscal Effect

The fiscal state and finances of PEASD are a complete mess, no one can deny this. Spending per student is far above statewide average. The enormous multi-million dollar debt that has been floated for more than a decade began when a previous school board had a "Field of Dreams; Build it and they will come" mentality when they approved expansion and remodeling plans. No one came and now they are leaving in large numbers. Over 40% of students in the district are enrolled outside of the district and there is a 40% annual turnover of staff. We now lose 20% of the budget to debt service and have a BBB Bond Rating. Dissolution will only not improve the fiscal cost to district residents but neighboring districts have stated the fiscal effect of dissolution on their districts would be negligible. These districts have been proactively planning for a smooth transition for the remaining students enrolled at PEASD.

Result: Yes to Dissolution

(6) Socio Economic effect on the students involved

The data on this issue is not readily available but when studied it will probably be determined that the socio-economic conditions of Eagle students will be similar to those of Mukwonago students while same will be said when comparing Palmyra students to Whitewater students.

Result: Unknown

(7) Advisory Referendum Results

Failed

Result: Yes to Dissolution

Final tally: 6-0-1 YES to Dissolution

If anyone wants to dispute these facts please do so rather than making this a process based upon mere emotions. You, the SDBAB have clearly stated several times that you CAN NOT make your decision based solely upon emotion.

The Palmyra-Eagle marriage is irretrievably broken. No amount of time or money could possibly change this. It would take years if not decades to change the public opinion of PEASD where it could attract students rather than losing them in mass in a 12:1 ratio. PEASD loses at least twelve students for every one they attract.

Contrary to the gloom and doom some people think will occur when PEASD is closed, the students of PEASD will not be abandoned and have to act out Lord of the Flies tribal bullying in the hills of the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

Wait a minute....tribal bullying....where have we seen instances of that recently ?

Please act on this issue in a timely manner and allow for the healing that is desperately needed in this community. You can not make this our own miniature version of Brexit that has drawn on for years in Great Britain.

You can prove me wrong where I have already started calling this "PEexit, Don't pee on the Vote".

Through all of this, the students as well as the adults in this district will learn valuable life lessons, those being; Manage your finances while avoiding debt you can not afford and that YOUR VOTE MATTERS.

Michael Richards
Palmyra WI



Dear members of the School District Boundary Appeal Board,

Hello and Thank you for being members on this advisory board and listening/reading all of our testimonies.

Originally, I was not going to write a testimony. I felt you have been overwhelmed with our emotional views. But, on November 14th, I attended the first half of the public hearing in the Eagle Elementary Gymnasium. The majority of the people at this portion of the hearing were against the dissolution of PEASD.

One of the criteria that our Eagle community members have voiced several times for not passing our referendum in April is because of how it would impact their taxes. Their mill rate would go up from the current \$9.90 and therefore increasing their taxes. Mukwonago's mill rate is \$7.95 and they feel their taxes would decrease if they become Mukwonago residents. I don't want to sound too biased, but they don't seem to realize or care, that the mill rate in Whitewater is \$11.50, and it will negatively affect the Palmyra community by increasing their taxes. The mill rates are subject to change once a consolidation occurs, so to be honest we really don't know for sure how the mill rates will be affected.

During the hearing, I heard many people voice their concerns regarding bullying at PEASD claiming it to be a chronic problem. I am sure that it does go on, but it is unrealistic and naïve to think it doesn't happen in all schools. Palmyra-Eagle, as well as, others schools have protocols in place to deal with such behavior. Bullying should not be tolerated anywhere, but it will continue to occur in all schools regardless of the school's best interests to try and stop it.

This emotionally charged debate on whether to dissolve the Palmyra-Eagle Area School District is really about the ongoing feud between Eagle and Palmyra. For years there has been a group of Eagle residents who have wanted to separate from PEASD and, unfortunately for PEASD, that group is growing. This growth is because new large homes and subdivisions are being built adjacent to the original anti-PEASD subdivisions. These new community members have been told, by their realtors and future neighbors, that PEASD is substandard and that they would be better off going to another school, most are referred to Mukwonago's school district. The majority of these people have not even given PEASD a chance.

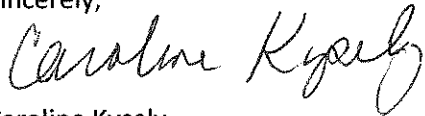
I sat a few rows behind the Superintendent of the Mukwonago School District. He was actually gazing around the Eagle Elementary Gymnasium, looking up at the ceiling, walls, corners and floors, with an affirmative nod. At first, I wasn't sure what he was doing, but then it dawned on me, it seemed as if he was assessing the Gymnasium. It left the impression that he felt that he had already attained the building and that it was in very good condition. He continued to do this several times, at least seven that I saw, but I wasn't watching him during this entire time. I know that I am not the only one that saw this. We all agree (believe it or not) that we are in this for the students, but he seemed to be treating this situation differently and it was so off putting. This entire consolidation and the gain of potential assets seems to be more of a priority than our students' best interest. Now I, for one, certainly do not want my children to go to a school district that seems to lack empathy for its potential "customers" and seems only interested in its' financial gain.

The school boards of both Whitewater and Mukwonago have voted in favor of graciously taking PEASD and their debts on, but the community members of these districts don't want this to happen. How can school boards make such monumental decisions without the community's support? In Mukwonago's statement they will be "demanding" financial assistance to accept PEASD. I'm not sure how they expect this to happen, but if the laws are going to need to be changed in order for the 3 districts to consolidate, why can't they be changed in favor of PEASD. PEASD is hurting financially mainly because of the money we have to give Mukwonago and other districts to take on PEASD students that open enroll out. When open enrollment was first introduced, I don't think people realized the negative impact it would have on smaller communities. We are not the only community feeling this impact, and if something is not done now, there are going to be many more smaller school districts that have to close their doors and you are all going to be very busy. Please, you have to somehow save these smaller districts.

Finally, I would love nothing more than to make both communities, Eagle and Palmyra, happy. I am so saddened by this conflict. If somehow PEASD could let all or just the opposition in Eagle go, I am most certain that PEASD will succeed financially. Perhaps then the Eagle families that are not in favor of the dissolution can open enroll to PEASD. Maybe the larger districts will not feel the financial impact that this causes. Unless they are relying on this income for their financial gain.

I again Thank You for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caroline Kysely".

Caroline Kysely
N2265 Cty Hwy E
Palmyra, WI 53156

(A proud parent of a middle school and high school student at PEASD).

My name is Heidi Hyatt and I am a single mom of 6. My oldest, Lucas is a 10th grade English Special Education teacher. Charlie is in 9th grade, honors English, honors geometry, band, jazz band, a Boy Scout and built his first computer at age 14. Konrad, 8th grade, is on student counsel and a Boy Scout. Arden, 6th grade, my only girl, loves sports, plays soccer and basketball. Suds, 4th grade, is Mr. Personality, with a kind heart and a never ending smile. Gibby, 3rd grade, is my quiet introvert. He loves math and learning obscure facts but prefers to keep to himself. Suds is his best friend.

When my kids and I moved to Eagle in 2011, we were told to Open Enroll to Mukwonago. Prairie View Elementary School was actually closer to our house than Eagle Elementary School. I didn't. Moving here from IL where we only had 1/2 day kindergarten, Charlie only knew sight words. Halfway through first grade, when he was already reading chapter books, I knew I had made the right decision. Even more so later, when Gibby struggled in 4K & 5K with paying attention and staying on task, the teachers worked along side me, trying methods like extra reward charts, a personal rocking chair at circle time, and yoga at rest time, rather than simply recommending medication.

At first, we lived on my parent's farm on the furthest north east corner in the town of Eagle. Being so far from the village or other families did not stop my kids from making amazing friends and it didn't stop our friends from helping me out when I needed it, which was often. Two years ago I started the search to purchase my first home to be close to the many friends we had made. I initially began to look in the village of Eagle. But based on the size of house I needed, I couldn't afford Eagle, so I decided to broaden my search to Palmyra. The most important thing for me was to stay in our district, and I quickly found the perfect house just blocks from school, a duplex, where I could rent out one unit to assist in paying my mortgage.

In Palmyra, we found a continuation of Palmyra-Eagle family. As a single mom, I have my kids 100% of the time. The issue of economically challenged families in Palmyra is an important consideration when deciding not to dissolve our district. We are one of those families. We are low income. I didn't have 6 kids to be a single mom, but unfortunately their father made poor choices, did not pay his taxes, and ultimately ended up in prison. I was open and honest about my family and never ashamed of what my ex husband did. Through this process, these facts were used against

me. I was chastised for the choices my ex husband made and for trusting him at one point. His bad choices put my family in a bad situation, but I did not let him keep us down. I have worked hard. I have saved. I have raised my kids with kindness and love. Without the close proximity to school and this tight knit community, my kids and I wouldn't have the opportunities we have. Dissolving our district and placing Palmyra in Whitewater would be a great hardship to many low income families. For us, the challenges of drive time in the opposite direction, the cost of transportation, and working around the schedule of 5 kids would be nearly impossible for a single parent home, even with the amazing friends.

I live in Palmyra. I work in Mukwonago. I do the bulk of my shopping in Mukwonago. I go to church in Mukwonago. My kids are involved in youth ministries at church in Mukwonago 2 nights a week. I drive past a Mukwonago elementary school, Mukwonago high school and middle school twice a day at a minimum for the last 8 1/2 years. Not once was I compelled to leave Palmyra-Eagle School District to send my kids to those schools. And even less so over the last year, after being teased and taunted by the opposing side. Memes made of our schools and supporters. People in our own community drawing on and mocking a picture of Tara and I after we went to the Capitol to speak with the governors k-12 policy advisor. I would not want my kids in the halls or on the bus with children of those parents. Ever.

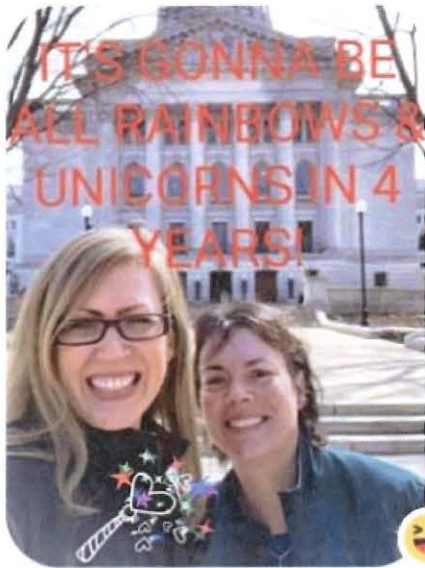
GPS has our house in the middle of the village 20 minutes from Mukwonago, 20 minutes from East Troy and 20 minutes from Whitewater high schools. That does not take in consideration poor weather and heavy traffic. I believe Mukwonago is a great school district, but I do not want a large district for my kids. If our district closes and Palmyra was placed in Whitewater school district, I would open enroll my 5 children to East Troy...and then...I would move there, so I could be a part of a community that supports its local district.

At the last hearing someone from the opposing side said, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. I don't believe that. I believe the things that try to kill you or hurt you or attack you just make you sad or angry. Strength comes from good things: your family, your friends, the satisfaction of hard work. Those are the things that keep you whole. Those are the things to hold on to.

Eagle Wisconsin Taxpayers



Kami Overlien Kluss



1 hr Like More



Catrina Marie

Kami Overlien Kluss Ha. Likely no. 2

1 hr Like More



Kami Overlien Kluss

Sooo Cute! Look at them just march right up to the capitol and wave their magic wand throw down a binder and POOF everything is solved! LOL!



1 hr Like More



Kami Overlien Kluss

They better put a bunch more binders together for the state legislature then too!



Eagle Wisconsin Taxpayers

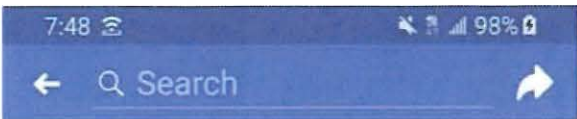


Catrina Marie ▸ Eagle Wisconsin Taxpayers

4 hrs · 🌐

The Machine went to Madison. We are supposed to believe from this post that "everything will be fixed for year 5! Just vote YES and Evers will fix it by then!" Hold on...

The reason that schools across the... [More](#)



Home About Photos Videos Event

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Eagle and Palmyra, Together Forever, Palmyra-Eagle added 6 new photos.

54 mins · 🌐

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." (Margaret Mead)

Today, two PEASD supporters joined hands and took their district straight to the Office of the Governor! When change is needed, it can't be done from behind a keyboard and you need to talk to people that can get things done! Meeting personally with the K-12 Education Policies Advisor,

these two moms now have PEASD on the Governor's radar.

Presenting a well prepared report which included district facts, our challenges, student testimonials and more (yes kids - your letters are now being read by those that determine our State's educational policies and funding! Thank you for being a voice for students across the State!).

Our concerns were heard, our ideas and questions were welcomed! Government needs to hear directly from those who are affected by their policies. Changes to Special Education, Sparsity Aid, and more - and even how Open Enrollment is looked at based upon our unique situation. Our district has brought to light many things never considered

Save

Save

Seen by 103



“Palmyra Eagle has issues” -- that’s why we are all here tonight, right? Some of us are here because we desperately want the opportunity to help fix the issues. While some are here tonight for quite different reasons.

I’ll say it again - “Palmyra-Eagle has issues” -but these are not my words. I’m actually reading an email that was sent to me by a real estate agent earlier this month. I have family that lives in CA nearing early retirement and plan to move out of state. So whenever I see a property for sale that may interest them, I look into it. So when I saw a new listing in Eagle near where I used to live and work, I submitted a real estate inquiry online with the listing agent. Imagine my surprise when I get the following response:

Nov 11 1:13 PM - “Here is the info sheet on the property. Legally you can have 10 horses, possibly more with a little work. That area is known for horse stables and training facilities. I live very close to this property and would love to talk with you about it. Also I am a School Board Member from the neighboring school district and have raised two teachers so I can speak to you about that also.”

“I am a school board member from the neighboring school district.” It seemed odd that in his very first contact with a potential home buyer the agent felt the need to indicate he was a school board member from a neighboring district. So a quick google search on my phone – Art Schneider, School Board member – and top search result shows “Art Schneider Mukwonago School District / School Board member.” The same phone number listed on different websites -one for Art the Realtor and one for Art the School board member.

I responded thanking him for info and mentioned that since the home was in PEASD the interested parties would set up a tour of schools before making decisions. This was followed by “If you want more information on the schools please have them talk to me. Palmyra Eagle has issues.”

And then another email “Palmyra Eagle district is dissolving ar the end of this school year but there is more to the story. I am on a school board “

I replied that we would be talking to the schools first (meaning Palmyra-Eagle) and trusted that they would have the most useful information to make informed decisions. To which I received a lengthier reply that said in part “Palmyra is being dissolved” and DPI is holding hearings to decide how to divide up the district.” .and he wrote “With open enrollment available in Wisconsin, districts need to attract people, so information from districts is not always complete”

Now, if he had done a little homework, he probably would have realized that of all the people to send this type of email too, sending it to me was a mistake. But he asked me to call him the next day so he could answer all my questions, so I obliged and called him at the number I had found online – but I wasn’t sure if I was calling the Realtor or the School Board member. While I won’t comment extensively on our phone call, it was quite evident he had every intention on trying to prevent me from talking to or considering Palmyra-Eagle and Open Enrolling into Mukwonago school district was recommended – despite being told the potential homebuyers were interested specifically in a small, rural district. In discussing the looming dissolution, he mentioned and I quote “Mukwonago needs the Eagle Elementary school building”.

I did question the ethics of his position and potential conflict of interest and that he and Mukwonago appear to be benefiting financially by using both of his positions. To which he assured him me this wasn’t the case.

However, I DO question the ethics and code of conduct here. It is now well documented on public record in these hearings of individuals moving into our district with no intention of every enrolling in our schools – leading in great part to the OE crisis we suffer from. While we know approximately 10% of our OE from this year are students that NEVER would have left our district had our referendum passed and our school board not filed for dissolution, I wonder how many OE in the last 12 years also happened to be clients of a Mukwonago School Board member? How many of those OE if not courted by a school board member throughout the course of the home sales, would have actually considered another district? As a school board member, it is pretty

obvious his interest is to increase enrollment and revenue gained through OE for the school district he is works for. As a realtor, his income relies on convincing a potential buyer the house they are considering has everything they want –I highly doubt any home buyers were made aware of the many good things our district does offer. He clearly has not made any effort to separate the 2 positions and actively uses his position as a school board member to influence home buyers and their decision to OE out of our district.

In reading the Mukwonago School Board Member Ethics , Section I specifies that members will:

“avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest and refrain from using their board positions for personal partisan gain.”

Reading further down, Section K indicates **“remember always that their first and greatest concern must be for the educational welfare of the students attending THE public schools”**.

I believe such actions have been done willfully and repeatedly over time and with intent to persuade clients to choose his district over the resident district and in doing so has caused considerable harm to our financial status and our entire student body -as evidenced by these very hearings. While we know other realtors also engage in this type of behavior, I am unaware of any others also serving as school board members who have potential for as much influence.

In reading their policy manual CONFLICT OF INTEREST – Wis Stat 19.59 states:

A “no Board member shall use his/her position as a Board member to obtain financial gain for himself/herself, immediate family, or ANY Organization with which he is associated

Clearly, Mukwonago school district has benefitted from having a real estate agent on the school board – doing “what districts need to do to attract people” – at the expense of the children in our district.

Problems can be fixed once the cause is identified. Clearly Open Enrollment is the has created undue burden on our district and it has been aided greatly by the very district that stands to benefit from our demise. Had the OE caps still been in place- like there was prior to the 10% cap being lifted in 2006/07, PEASD would certainly be in a much better position financially and none of us would be here tonight.

Our community would be less divided as homeowners would be more likely to be involved in and actually support their local school districts as well as their immediate community. Amending the current OE laws, enacting a temporary freeze for questionable conduct, or placing limits would go a long way to benefitting other districts and communities throughout the state. EVERYONE already had school choice – by your choosing where you live –However, blatant abuse of the Open Enrollment system is taking that choice away from communities like ours where majority of the residents still choose their local school district.

Tara LeRoy
N2577 County Rd E
Palmyra, WI 53156
262-495-8742

Public Facebook Profile

Same phone # for School Board & Realtor

masd.k12.wi.us/district/mdo-boardmembers.cfm

Apps New Tab Prodigy 24-7 Support: Geek... Gymhaws 0 Notifications Netflix

Art Schneider
School Board Member
Email
(262) 392-9110 (H)
(414) 313-1320 (C)
District-at-Large
Personnel Committee
Term ends April, 2020

Craig Vertz
School Board Member
Email
(262) 363-6300, x24904
West Region
Finance & Facilities
Committee
Term ends April, 2022



Art Schneider

Worked at Grasch Foods for 19 years and then have been a Realtor with First Weber for 19 years plus!



Add Friend



Message



More

Elected School Board Member at **Mukwonago Area School District**

Realtor at **First Weber Group**

Worked at **First Weber Realtors**

Studied at **None**

artschneider.firstweber.com

Apps New Tab Prodigy 24-7 Support: Geek... Gymhaws 0 Notifications Netflix YouTube camis registration... Camis Used Wobble Box A...

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43 total reviews ★★★★★

Property search

City, address, zip or MLS# \$ Minimum to \$ Maximum Beds Baths Property type

43,720 results

From: **Art Schneider** <aschneider@firstweber.com>
Date: Tue, Nov 12, 2019 at 6:00 AM
Subject: Re: Listings
To: Tara LeRoy <2fatponies@gmail.com>

DPI (Department of public instruction) will be making district report cards available today. You can go to their website and see how the districts did. With open enrollment available in Wisconsin, districts need to attract people, so information from districts is not always complete. As for Palmyra Eagle district, it is very possible that portions will become part of the Mukwonago school district next year. There are hearings going on now to determine how it will be divided now that it is being dissolved. DPI is holding the hearings to make that decision. The results of those hearings will be determined in the next couple of months.

Sent from my U.S.Cellular© Smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Tara LeRoy <2fatponies@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2019 10:24:08 PM
To: Art Schneider <aschneider@firstweber.com>
Subject: Re: Listings

Thanks, but we will talk to the schools first and make our decisions from there. I trust the school would have most current and useful information to help us make informed decisions.
Thank you for your time

On Mon, Nov 11, 2019, 10:18 PM Art Schneider <aschneider@firstweber.com> wrote:
That is why I was asking to talk to you so I can answer all questions. Please call me tomorrow, thanks.

Sent from my U.S.Cellular© Smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Tara LeRoy <2fatponies@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2019 9:05:27 PM
To: Art Schneider <aschneider@firstweber.com>
Subject: Re: Listings

I'm confused - are you on the school board for Palmyra-Eagle? What do you mean they are dissolving at the end of the year?
These folks are coming from California, which has its own set of problems! They are interested in a smaller school system and quiet country living.

On Mon, Nov 11, 2019 at 6:25 PM Art Schneider <aschneider@firstweber.com> wrote:
Palmyra Eagle district is dissolving at the end of this school year but there is more to the story. I am on a school board

Sent from my U.S.Cellular© Smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

On Mon, Nov 11, 2019, 6:09 PM Art Schneider <aschneider@firstweber.com> wrote:

If you want more information on the schools please have them talk to me. Palmyra Eagle has issues.

Sent from my U.S.Cellular© Smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Tara LeRoy <2fatponies@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2019 5:09:51 PM
To: Art Schneider <aschneider@firstweber.com>
Subject: Re: Listings

Thank you for the information. I see it is in the Palmyra-Eagle school district, (along with another property this family is looking it.) We are going to set up a tour of their schools first before deciding which property, if any, we will consider in that district.

Thank you!

On Mon, Nov 11, 2019, 1:13 PM Arthur Schneider via flexmls <listings@flexmail.flexmls.com> wrote:
Here is the info sheet on the property. Legally you can have 10 horses, possibly more with a little work. That area is known for horse stables and training facilities. I live very close to this property and would love to talk with you about it. Also I am a School Board Member from the neighboring school district and have raised two teachers so I can speak to you about that also.

Follow this link to see the page:

<http://www.flexmls.com/link.html?1g9r9h4ge31w%2C19%2C1%2C15296>

This link will no longer be available after 12/11/2019.

Clicking to view the listings in this email confirms you want to receive new listing updates.

Arthur Schneider
First Weber Inc - Waukesha
1507 E Sunset Drive
If you would like a work of Art, please call!!
Waukesha, WI 53189
aschneider@firstweber.com
<http://www.ArtSchneider.firstweber.com>
License # 53261-94
Office License # 833993-91

You are receiving this email because of your affiliation with
Arthur Schneider, 1507 E Sunset Drive, If you would like a work of Art, please call!!, Waukesha, WI 53189
You can unsubscribe from further emails by sending them a message: aschneider@firstweber.com

Nov 21, 2019

First, I want to thank the DPI board for taking the time to listen to the communities.

I also want to thank everyone in attendance tonight.

I want to start by stating that what I am about to talk about is my opinion, my thoughts. My intention is not to offend anyone. Everyone should be allowed to have an opinion, whether we agree or not, we should be respectful of each others opinion.

Worst case scenario (in my opinion), the DPI decides to close this school district, and our children are sent to other schools. Although our children have been through so much already regarding this issue, I believe they will be ok with our help and encouragement. However, here is the part that haunts me. Two years from now another school district decides they have no choice but to dissolve, and within that district some of the Palmyra-Eagle kids are attending there. It is hard enough to imagine kids from other districts having to go thru this, let alone Palmyra-Eagle kids doing it again. This actually tears me up inside.

What I am trying to get at is we have a vast problem that is much bigger than Palmyra-Eagle district. We need to fight for public education. No more taking for granted that the public schools will be here.

On a side note, (again my thought and opinion),

A community is like a human body. There are many parts of the body and **each one** plays an important role in keeping the body alive, but none more important than the heart which is the center of the body. It has the most impact on the other parts and their ability to stay alive. So too is the school district to this community. It is the very heart, of what and who we are as a community. Without it----- well lets just leave that for everyone to think about.

Thank You,

Debra Agen

105 E Bluff Rd

Palmyra WI 53156

Attn: DPI School District Boundary Appeals Board

Re: Palmyra-Eagle Area School District potential dissolution

The Palmyra and Eagle communities have been tied together by a joint school system for decades. This unfortunately has been the only thing the two communities have in common. Eagle has always been a bedroom community for larger cities in Waukesha Co. with a transient population. Palmyra, just a mere 7-8 miles to the west in Jefferson Co., has a structure more common to small towns in Wisconsin. If you have an Eagle address you live in Eagle, if you have a Palmyra address you are FROM Palmyra. When you just live in a community you tend to do what just benefits you at that particular time and don't worry about anyone else. When a person is FROM a community they invest in that community. They make the place better by building it up for their family and for future families and future generations. These are the differences between Palmyra and the vast majority of the Eagle community. It is important to understand those differences when you make a decision for our school system.

When it came time to support our school system through an operating referendum a small contingent of people that are FROM Eagle said yes. The voting areas of Palmyra, both Village and Town and the rural area of the Town of Sullivan said yes. Jefferson Co. residents knew it was important for our kids and community to maintain a school system here. The overall community of Eagle will never support a Palmyra-Eagle School District since so many open enroll already and feel the Palmyra community is inferior to Eagle. Therein lies the issue.

So what is an answer to our problem? Our dissolution issue is a direct result of unlimited State-Wide Open Enrollment allowed over a decade ago by the State of Wisconsin's Dept of Public Instruction, past legislatures and past governors. They unwittingly created the death of small school districts. We are the first in line but are not the last. The answer why so many OE from Palmyra-Eagle isn't singular. The only over-riding theme is most people in Eagle work to the north or east and don't ever go further west than Eagle. It is not convenient to have children there, they don't need a reason to leave and most don't care about their local community. Gone is the day of dealing with your issues and growing communities.

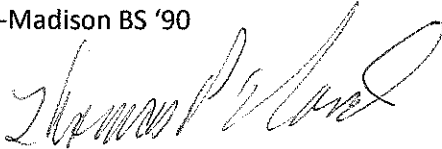
Economics 101 teaches about business cost structures and building enough widgets to keep a business solvent. Public schooling parameters do not allow most of these business practices to be used. Many onerous state and federal mandates are placed on public institutions that are not adequately funded. Policies created beyond the local school board and administrative staff has caused this failure. Past and present school administrators and board members dealt with budgets to the best of their ability, but when there aren't enough widgets (students) available to provide funding this is where we end up.

Our students get a good education at the Palmyra-Eagle School District and many go on to college and technical schools. Personally this observation is from 3 generations of experience. A final parting thought. If our district were failing as open enrollment suggests, why does our school report card keep increasing to the point where we are on par or better than surrounding districts? Makes one think why this is happening after so many of the "smart" families have left. Our students have not failed, rather one part of our joint community has failed our students.

Tom Novak – Town of Sullivan, self-employed, Farmer and Consulting Agronomist

W939 Northey Rd., Sullivan, WI 53178

UW-Madison BS '90



Good evening. My Name is Deb Ackermann.

I am here to ask you to please dissolve the Palmyra Eagle school District.

Tonight and the past nights you have heard emotional stories from both YES- Dissolve and No-do no dissolve---sides. The reality is for every good story told about PEASD there is a bad story being told as well. People have said that kids at not a number at PEASD, implying that somehow kids are a number in other districts. That is not true and unfair---Kids are not a number in other districts. There are good teachers in all districts.

Dissolve supporters have been told "shame on you for not working to correct this district", "shame on you for OE", "shame on you for not supporting OUR kids", "Don't like it move", and my personal favorite... "If your child was behind or struggling---it is your fault for not being involved. You should have got off your butt".

You do not know me-BUT...For the record...I did. My children attended the PEASD for 9 years before I open enrolled them. I was on a first name basis with two past superintendents and principals. I was one of the few parents who actually attended School board meetings regularly in those 9 years, I was heavily active in PTO, ran events & fundraisers, volunteered, worked to fulfill teachers needs, was on committees(building & referendum), and more. I had long conversations with past school board members when it came out years ago that the District had no funds in reserve, that enrollment was declining and it was a topic being ignored. I attended open interviews for superintendents. I fought for change for my children and this district...I wanted to make it better for all. The realization eventually came that nothing would change, improvement would not occur after being told over and over again by school board members and administration "we are fine and we like it the way it is". All of this prior to the mass exodus of open enrollment

At that time I chose my kids and their education and well-being--- over the district. Was it an easy decision...No.? I wanted to support PEASD and gave blood, sweat and tears to it, but our kid's came first and we choiced them out to Mukwonago.

Years ago I learned that the district was just getting by...funds were low, there was no reserve/budget for aging buildings and more. I attended school board meetings where educational classes and teachers were cut. I listened to excuses from past & present school board members & admin as to why enrollment was declining and why they could not combine elementary schools. So instead they cut educational programs. Again---all before the OE dam burst

When we chose out kid's future over PE and OE....we were surprised at how many families had already left. I have watched as more have continued to leave. All with similar stories. What is worse is that I have watched people not move into the area due to our school district. People today are not ignorant, they research the area and decide based on school reputation and taxes. Consider this fact... You are thinking of buying a house in the area...you love Eagle. You are looking at 2 houses --- 1 in the PEASD district, the other close by in KM or MASD. Houses are similar price & have similar amenities...if you do not have kids you look at the tax comparison: Eagle is higher than surrounding areas. If you have kids you look at school district and taxes. Eagle's taxes are higher and district offers less with a lower rating. Reality check: They will choose the other house. Why would they pay more for less? That is a huge issue for PE and the Eagle Community....more families choose to buy elsewhere with school aged

children than those that buy here. Those that do....a large percentage already have decided to choice their kids elsewhere.

The reality is that the dam has burst and the perfect storm has occurred. The district does not have the money to continue. Even with consolidating buildings, classes, and more---this will take money to achieve. Money they do not have and tax payers have shown they are not willing to write a blank check anymore. Unfortunately the change that needed to occur years ago---- did not. Now all the tiny holes have combined to become a flood of a problem that will take an unbelievable amount of money to fix & time. PE does not have time to fix it---they need students, growth and money now. PE has lost the support of the majority of the Eagle community--- and they have shown that with their voting down referendums and open enrolling their children. We don't wish to pay unrealistic overwhelming taxes to a district that will continue to have decreasing enrollment while other surrounding districts taxes are lower and have a better reputation. No one wants to be taxed to the hilt for a district that will continue to struggle. The Older generation does not wished to be taxed out of their homes. This community cannot support it financially

You have 8 criteria you are looking at to help you make this decision. Items 1-3 & 5-8 are already being shown by the students that are open enrolled to other districts. Mukwonago and whitewater are also answering those questions with their proposal as well. Item 4 is what you are doing with these meetings. If a majority of Eagle students are already being educated elsewhere and the majority of residents have voted numerous times to dissolve...then the best interest of Eagle would be to dissolve PE and take Mukwonago and Whitewater up on their proposal.

Please end this never ending madness

Thank you

~~Do you have any questions~~
Is there any questions you have for me?

11/21/2019

16

To whom it may concern;

My name is Alaina and I am a proud graduate from PEASD in 2005. I no longer live in the PEASD community but, I feel compelled to write this letter to you all to voice my concerns over the dissolution of my former school district.

The accusations of PEASD being a terrible school district to raise a family and where students receive a subpar education is not only hurtful to those of us who received an education there, it is untrue. I was privy to attending both Palmyra and Eagle elementary schools. I started my schooling in Palmyra for kindergarten and first grade, went to Eagle for second through early fifth grade, and completed fifth grade through senior year back at Palmyra. As a former student, I can tell you, test scores ARE NOT everything. The teachers and staff at PEASD make the school and its students thrive.

Our teachers and the school staff genuinely cared about us, as people, not just what we could score on a test. I moved to the Eagle side of the district in second grade due to my parents divorcing. The school counselors were there for me and my younger sister where other adults were not. They helped us cope, to manage our emotions, and work through a life event like we needed. Some of my fellow classmates were going through the same home-life situation; some of those people are still good friends of mine to this day because of those sessions. The time these professionals were able to devote to us will not be so readily available in a larger school district. The larger school districts simply have too many students to allow their staff to spend the time needed to help their students cope with life-events such as divorce.

PEASD not only taught me academically but they taught me how to be a good, charitable, community minded person. In 2003 I started running the blood drives at the high school with Mrs. Froehlich. I continued to run the blood drives until the year after I graduated. In 2011 I started to run blood drives at my financial institution office in Waukesha until 2016. We still host blood drives a couple of times per year but, I no longer host them. I am still a very active member of my communities, 15 years after graduation, because of what I was taught in school. I am an active member of a Lions Club, I serve as a Board of Director on a sub-committee for the Village of Big Bend, I volunteer with my local chamber of commerce, and am a passionate volunteer for the Relay for Life organization.

PEASD also taught me what it means to genuinely care for people because of the compassion showed by my teachers throughout all of my years in PEASD. I've been out of school for a long time and my best friends, who were my best friends on the day of graduation, and many, many years before, are still my best friends. Our school not only gave us the education we needed and deserved but taught us

11/21/2019

invaluable lessons of people, of friendship, and now I fear our future generations won't be given the same opportunities we had in a small community school district that I personally loved so much. This makes me really sad for current and future students.

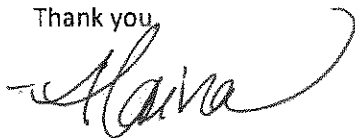
I'm asking you, as a former student, to not only look at the test scores. Look at the community, look at the alumni who are thriving in the world today. We are proof the education system of PEASD works. Some of us are bankers, some of us are doctors, some of us are lawyers, some of us are nurses, some of us serve in the armed forces, some of us manage and run our own companies and those are just examples from my graduating class. Think of all the good other classes put out into the world too.

ALL school districts have bullies, ALL school districts have students that excel and students who don't learn as quickly, ALL districts make a bad decision here or there regarding funding, NO school district deserves to be closed down completely. Without a school in Palmyra, I am fearful of the economy for the local businesses. What would prompt a family to move to the community if they have to ship their children over 20 minutes away for school every day? If I had young children, I would choose a different community to live in.

Please consider the good PEASD students have done and will continue to do in the future with what we've learned from our school and please, consider the community before you choose to shut down our school.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this letter.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alaina", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Alaina